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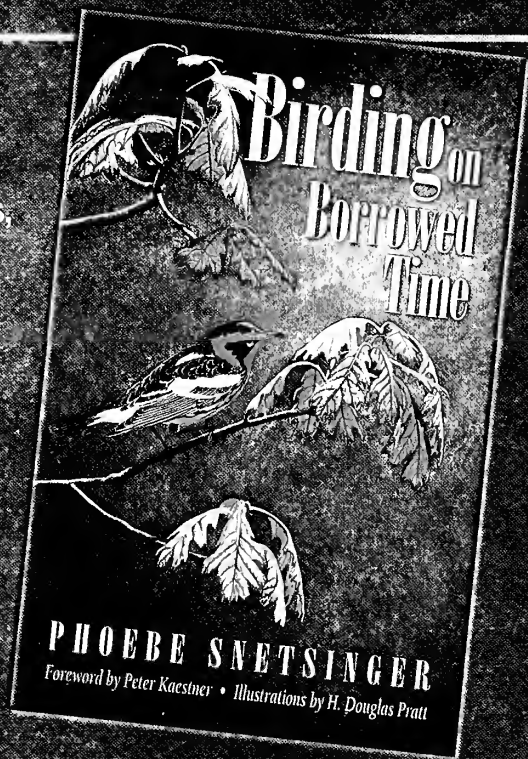
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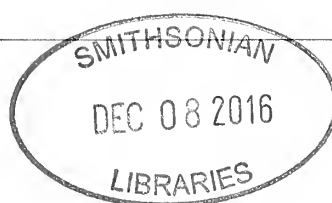
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ON THE COVER: This male Smith's Longspur was one of a small flock the Watson Lake airport in southeastern Yukon 26-27 (here 26) May 2009, a first record for that part of the territory and one of multiple records of migrants in spring 2009 that stretched east to Ohio. Photograph by Jukka Jantunen.



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Black-throated Blue Warbler  
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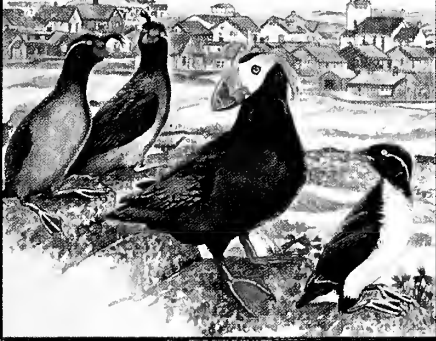
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# An Analysis of Unusual Flights of Neotropical Migrants to northeastern North America in April 2009

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An incandescent bird in a mostly leafless early April landscape, this Prothonotary Warbler at Winter Harbor, Maine 4 April 2009 was among the first signs of an unusual very early “fallout” of Neotropical migrants from New York and New England to Atlantic Canada. Photograph by Nathaniel Child.

## Abstract

Wind patterns are often invoked in a general way to help explain mass arrivals (fallouts) of spring migrants and the premature appearance of migrants and of vagrants well beyond their normal breeding ranges (overshoots). Two exceptionally early fallouts of overshooting Neotropical migrants and vagrants in northeastern United States and Atlantic Canada, beginning 4 and 8 April 2009, were apparently caused by displacement far over the Atlantic Ocean of migrants crossing the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea as a result of deep and extensive low-pressure systems moving slowly northeastward in the middle of the North American continent. There were indications of different geographic origins of birds involved in the two fallouts, some higher mortality among smaller species, and some later correction for migratory displacement.

## Background

During mid- to late afternoon of 4 April 2009, four unexpected Neotropical migrants—a Yellow-throated Warbler, a Worm-eating Warbler (Figure 1), and two Indigo Buntings—were found in Nova Scotia and reported by the few observers active on a day with fog, bouts of rain, and southerly to southeasterly winds (see Table 1 for scientific names of species frequently noted in the text). The bunting is rare but regular in April (usually later), with only one confirmed nesting record in the province, whereas the warblers were earlier than any previously recorded and well beyond their regular breeding range limits in New Jersey and southern Massachusetts, respectively. The reports encouraged more searching next day, and observers found five more Indigo Buntings, an Eastern Kingbird, and two Purple Martins, both abnormal-

ly early, as well as a Hooded Warbler and a Summer Tanager, which breed regularly north to Massachusetts and New Jersey, respectively. During the next two days, there were only four new finds, including a recently dead Kentucky Warbler, a species that nests north to Connecticut. Then, beginning 8 April, a new wave of early migrants and vagrants was detected, this time predominantly composed of Summer Tanagers. Birds that arrive exceptionally early in spring or beyond their normal breeding range, or both, are often termed “overshoots,” a term we will continue to apply, but there has been much confusion in the literature regarding the mechanisms that produce such arrivals (see Brinkley 2001 for a terminological review).

Such early and northerly spring arrivals have been linked to weather patterns in several essays in the past. Bagg et al. (1950) re-

viewed many early examples of wind-assisted spring migration. Gunn and Crocker (1951) used weather patterns, including maps of fronts and wind directions, to analyze a very early fallout (4-7 April 1947) of overshooting migrants and vagrants in the Great Lakes region and elsewhere. They concluded: "It seems most likely that many of the birds began their flight from the Mississippi valley south of the southern border of Tennessee."

Spring overshoots in the northeastern United States and Atlantic Canada have also been connected to meteorological circumstances. In a pioneering essay, Bagg (1956) inferred from a weather map for the night of 16 April 1956, which showed a low-pressure system centered near the central Great Lakes with a cold front moving towards the East, that a "strong north-eastward flow of tropical air from the Gulf to Massachusetts [...] produced [...] from Rhode Island through eastern Massachusetts to Maine and Nova Scotia, an outstanding incursion of straggler Indigo Buntings, Summer Tanagers, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks." Among more recent examples, "an unprecedented flight of Blue Grosbeaks and Indigo Buntings [...] and at least five Summer Tanagers [...] immediate-



Figure 1. This Worm-eating Warbler, found and photographed 4 April 2009 at Jeddore, Nova Scotia, was far beyond its breeding range and represents the Atlantic Provinces' earliest record ever—and among the first signs of the unusual April fallout. Photograph by Lucas Berrigan.

ly followed two southerly airflows" on 13 and 20 April 1978 (Vickery 1978). Another fallout beginning 21 April 1991 in the Maritimes, New England, and farther west was attributed to a "big coastal storm that pushed migrants out over the Atlantic" (Kaufman 1991). In 2001, Brinkley (2001) notes that "particularly in Nova Scotia, a fallout of cardinalids, chiefly Blue Grosbeaks, Indigo Buntings, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, occurred early and on the heels of a coastal northeaster ('Carolina low') that moved rapidly up the coast 18-19 April." McLaren (1981) concluded that a high inci-

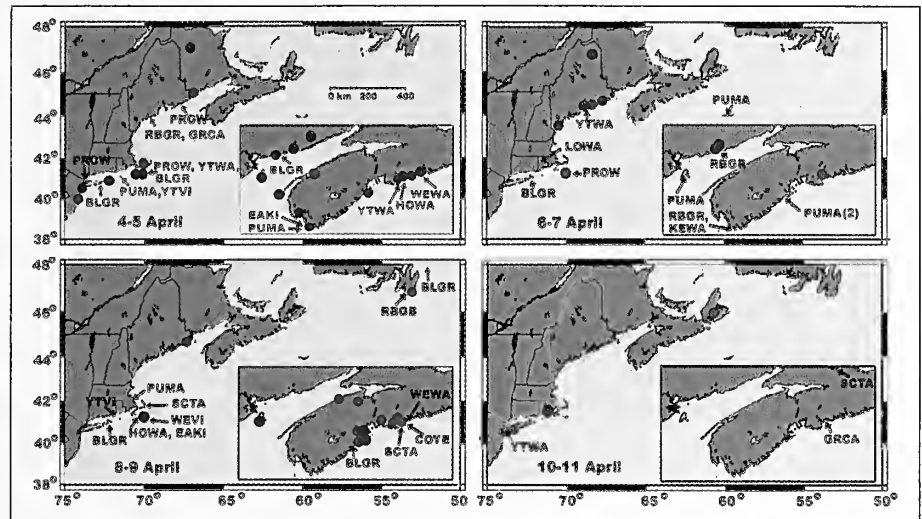


Figure 2. Approximate locations and dates of first appearances of early Neotropical migrants and vagrants in the northeastern United States and Atlantic Canada, early April 2009, with mainland Nova Scotia and southern New Brunswick as inserts. Blue dots are Indigo Buntings and red dots are Summer Tanagers. In alphabetical order, the abbreviations (banding codes) for other species are: BLGR, Blue Grosbeak; COYE, Common Yellowthroat; EAKI, Eastern Kingbird; GRAC, Gray Catbird; HOWA, Hooded Warbler; KEWA, Kentucky Warbler; LOWA, Louisiana Waterthrush; PROW, Prothonotary Warbler; PUMA, Purple Martin; RBGR, Rose-breasted Grosbeak; SCTA, Scarlet Tanager; WEVI, White-eyed Vireo; WEWA, Worm-eating Warbler; YTVI, Yellow-throated Vireo.

dence of spring vagrants on Nova Scotia islands was related the mean southwesterly airflow along the East Coast.

Compared with past examples, the two April 2009 events were unusual in the early arrival, number, and variety of overshooting Neotropical species involved. Resources circulated via the Internet allowed us to look more closely than in the past at patterns and circumstances associated with these fallouts. The species involved, and the northern limits of their normal breeding ranges along the Atlantic Coast, are presented in Table 1.

Most of the species are known to be trans-Gulf of Mexico and/or trans-Caribbean nocturnal migrants. In addition, a Swallow-tailed Kite and a Loggerhead Shrike were found 10 April in Nova Scotia, but these birds might not have been part of the 8 April fallout. The kite winters in South America but is believed to follow a circum-Gulf migration (Meyer 1995), and migratory northern populations of the shrike winter from the southern United States to southern Mexico, and they are known to be early spring migrants.

A search of mailing listserves, including rare bird alerts, for Atlantic Canada and

the eastern and southern United States indicated that there were similar arrivals of these Neotropical migrants along the coast from New Brunswick south to New York and that these had arrived in numbers during early April along the Gulf Coast and in Florida. At the same time, very few were reported along the Atlantic coast south of New York or inland in the northern states. We therefore investigated possible geographical origins of the

Table 1. The typical northern limits, in the East, of breeding ranges of birds noted in the present paper (as mapped in Dunn and Alderfer 2008).

Common Name	Scientific name	Northern breeding Limits
Swallow-tailed Kite	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	South Carolina
Eastern Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	Gaspé, Québec
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	Maryland
White-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo griseus</i>	Massachusetts
Purple Martin	<i>Progne subis</i>	Northern New Brunswick
Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>	Gaspé, Québec
Yellow-throated Warbler	<i>Dendroica dominica</i>	New Jersey
Prothonotary Warbler	<i>Protonotaria citrea</i>	New York
Worm-eating Warbler	<i>Helmitheros vermivorum</i>	Massachusetts
Louisiana Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>	Southern Maine
Kentucky Warbler	<i>Oporornis formosus</i>	Connecticut
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	Southern Labrador
Hooded Warbler	<i>Wilsonia citrina</i>	Connecticut
Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga ruber</i>	New Jersey
Scarlet Tanager	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>	Gaspé, Québec
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	Gaspé, Québec
Blue Grosbeak	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>	New Jersey
Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>	Central New Brunswick



Figure 3. Summer Tanagers were prominent in the second wave of early and vagrant Neotropical migrants that first arrived 8 April 2009 in Nova Scotia. This male at Mor-den was found 8 April but perished the next day. Photograph by Gary Myers.

birds and meteorological circumstances.

### Composition and timings of the fallouts

The dates of discovery of early Neotropical migrants and vagrants from Atlantic Canada to New Jersey were obtained from birding mailing listserves, and some of these reports were clarified by the authors' direct contact with regional observers. Some other Neotropical migrants that normally migrate in early April (e.g., Barn Swallow, *Hirundo rustica*) or also winter widely in the southern United States (e.g., Palm Warbler, *Dendroica palmarum*) had previously begun to appear in inland and northeastern states and are not considered here. A few scattered individuals of normally later-migrating Neotropical migrants were also reported by late March on birding mailing listserves for the interior United States and/or along the Atlantic coastal states north of Florida, and individuals of Northern Parula (*Parula americana*), Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting had been found up to six days prior to 4 April as far north as Massachusetts. These clearly did not form a coherent wave of Neotropical migrants moving northward prior to the events considered here. Although more unusually early migrants and vagrants were found in the region after mid-April (especially beginning 22-23 April in Nova Scotia), others had lingered from early April (notably Indigo Buntings, tanagers, and grosbeaks at feeders), making later patterns of arrival less easily discernable. Accordingly, we restricted our survey to 4-11 April, that is, up to three days after the start of the second fallout.

There were two clear peaks of arrivals (Figure 2). Beginning 4 April and continuing next day, 14 individuals of seven species were found in Nova Scotia and 23 individuals of nine species elsewhere, predominantly Indigo Buntings overall. During 6-7 April, only six

new individuals were found in Nova Scotia (including a Purple Martin on Sable Island, the small arc above the insert box on Figure 2), none of them Indigo Buntings. By contrast, the 14 new individuals to the west and south included six Indigo Buntings. Then, beginning 8 April through next day, more new birds were found in Nova Scotia (14 in total, including eight Summer Tanagers), and a Summer Tanager, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and a Blue Grosbeak even reached the southeastern coast of the Newfoundland; the first and last

were the earliest of those rare vagrants ever recorded there. During the same interval, only nine new birds (and only one Summer Tanager) were found from New Brunswick south to New York. Only a few more individuals were added during the next two days.

The number, variety, and especially the timing of migrant and vagrant Neotropical passerines in Atlantic Canada and the northeastern

United States in early April were unusual. There were no concentrations of these species moving northward in the United States prior to 4 and 8 April, which therefore presumably represent the two dates of arrivals of most or all the birds from more distant sources. The first fallout was more evenly distributed between Nova Scotia and coastal regions to the south and west, and Indigo Bunting was the dominant species. The second was more pronounced in Nova Scotia than elsewhere (and reached Newfoundland) and was dominated more by Summer Tanager (Figure 3). These different species compositions and distributions suggest that the two events were influenced by different geographical origins and different meteorological patterns.

### Neotropical migrants in probable source regions

Because electronic sources under-report routine birds and do not include measures of searching effort, we relied more heavily on data provided by the North American Avian Knowledge Network (AKN) (<<http://www.avianknowledge.net/content>>). This open-access site systematizes checklists submitted by

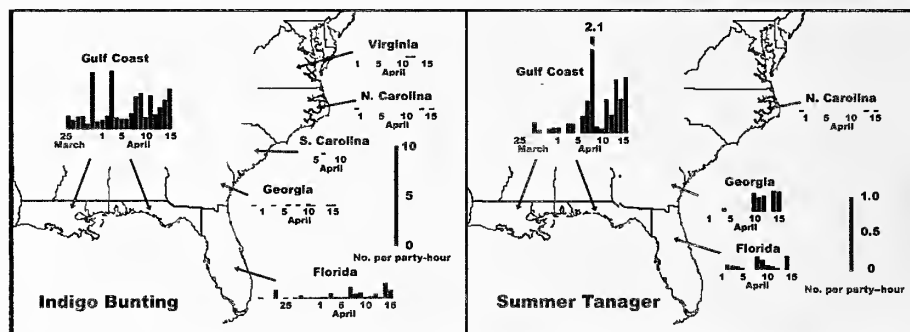


Figure 4. Numbers of Indigo Bunting and Summer Tanager counted per hour by birders submitting lists of all species in coastal states of the southeastern United States between 20 March and 15 April 2009. The counts from Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama south of 31° N and the Florida Panhandle west of 83° W are combined as "Gulf Coast."

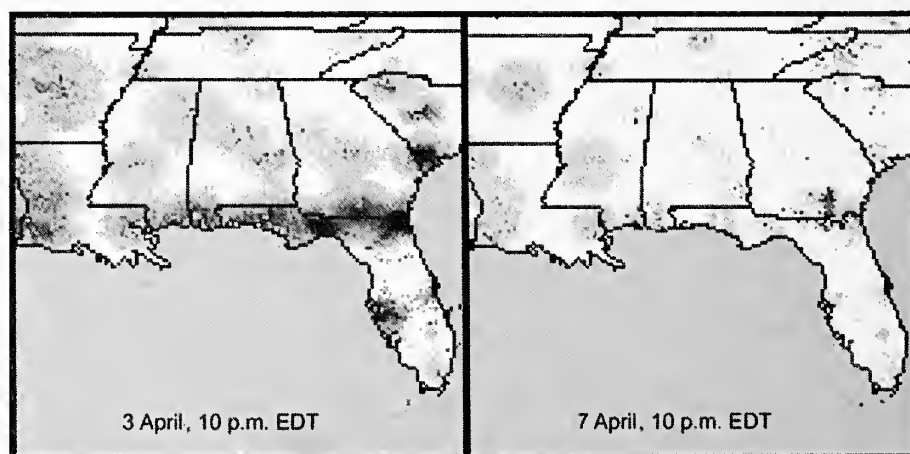
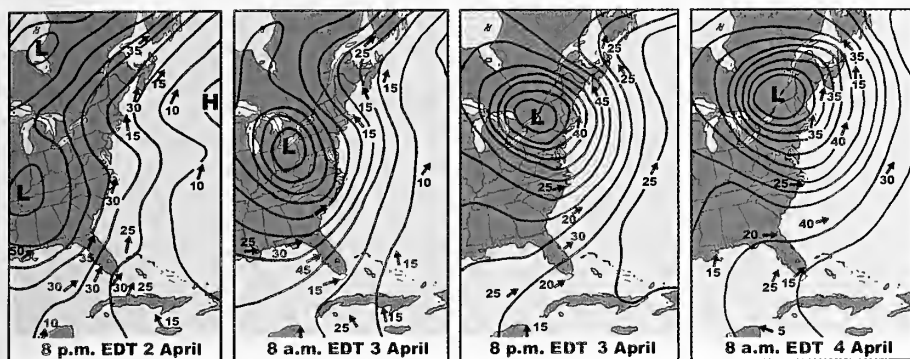
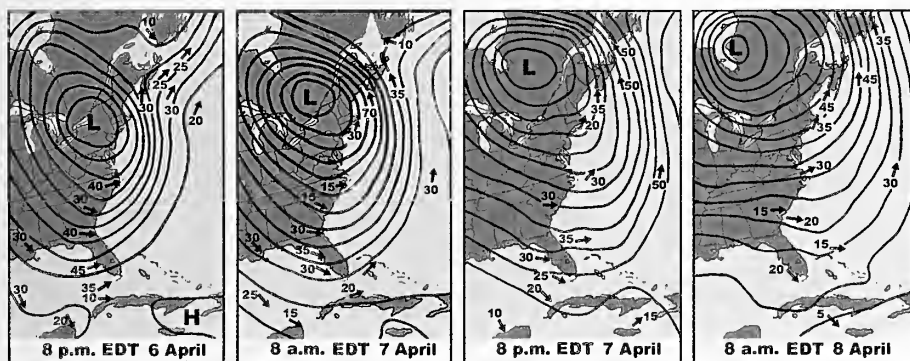


Figure 5. Nexrad images at times of early flights of night migrants preceding the fallouts of 4 and 8 April. Images from <<http://weather.noaa.gov/radar/mosaic/DS.p19r0/ar.us.conus.shtml>>. The color scales on the original images were converted to a comparable grayscale. There was little or no rain in the region during these evenings.





**Figure 6.** Pressure isobars (3 millibar spacing) and selected measured or estimated wind directions and speeds (in knots) at an altitude of approximately 1500 m (850 mb) between the evening of 2 April and the morning of 4 April 2009 at some coastal and offshore sites. Based on charts from <<http://nomads.ncdc.noaa.gov/ncep/charts>>. Jamaica and the tip of Yucatan Peninsula are near the lower boundary of the maps, and the island of Newfoundland is at the upper boundary.



**Figure 7.** Pressure isobars (3 millibar spacing) and selected measured or estimated wind directions and speeds (in knots) sites at an altitude approximately 1500 m (850 mb) between the evening of 6 April and the of morning 8 April 2009 at some coastal and offshore sites (cf. Figure 4 caption).

birders, mostly from North America. These are downloadable as spreadsheet files by species, year, month, state, and latitude/longitude. We downloaded all lists that included Indigo Bunting and Summer Tanager in March and April 2009 from all the East Coast states south of New York and from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Considerable editing for our purposes was needed. We narrowed the selections to eBird (<[www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)>) submissions for dates between 25 March and 15 April. To better understand effort, as number of birding hours, we also sought all counts made during the interval by downloading those that included one or more of the following common regional species: Mourning Dove (*Zenaidra macroura*), Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), and Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*). We eliminated duplications by different observers in the same group, place, and date and also removed all designated and apparent lists from feeders and backyards, for which hours of effort are probably not comparable with those from other surveyed sites. We then divided the resulting daily counts of Indigo Buntings

and Summer Tanagers by the total number of birding hours in each state on that date. Finally, to increase sample sizes from the relatively short stretch of Gulf Coast states, we combined counts and efforts from Louisiana and Alabama south of latitude of 31° and the Florida Panhandle west of 83° W longitude.

During the first half of April, Indigo Buntings and Summer Tanagers were almost absent in East Coast counts south of New Jersey, but both had arrived in good numbers along the Gulf Coast, with the former species considerably more common than the latter (Figure 4). There were several apparent peaks of numbers along that coast, including Indigo Buntings on 3 April, the day before their fallout much farther to the northeast, and Summer Tanagers prominently on 8 April, the day of their fallout. These results suggest that some Indigo Buntings deposited along the Gulf shore on 3 April could have continued that night to the northeast but that Summer Tanagers in the 8 April fallout and the pulse that arrived that day on the Gulf had both originated from a source farther south.

Another striking difference between the nights of 3-4 and 7-8 April is evident on Nexrad radar images from the southeastern

United States (Figure 5). At 10 p.m. EDT, when night migrants would be aloft not too distant from their points of departure, there was almost no apparent migration on the latter compared with the former night. This, too, suggests that some migrants that reached the Gulf Coast 3 April were being displaced farther eastward during night of 3-4 April, whereas the fallout birds of 8 April had largely bypassed the Gulf Coast.

## Meteorological patterns

Atmospheric analysis charts of pressures and winds in North America from the U. S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (<<http://nomads.ncdc.noaa.gov/ncep/charts>>) were used to assess meteorological conditions on nights preceding the 4 and 8 April fallouts (Figure 6, 7). We assumed that birds were flying at roughly 1500 m altitude (850 mb pressure). At this height, wind directions follow pressure isobars quite closely.

Prior to both fallouts, there were deep and extensive low-pressure systems centered near or approaching the Great Lakes, producing westerlies in the Gulf and Caribbean as well as strong southwesterly airflow off the Atlantic coast. Two evenings before both fallouts, any bird departing from the southeastern United States or farther south could have been propelled far over the ocean, with no wind assistance back toward the Atlantic Coast south of the northeastern United States and Atlantic Canada. But there were distinct differences in the meteorological patterns between the periods (cf. Figures 6, 7). On the night of 2-3 April, there was southerly airflow in the southern Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, whereas on the night of 6-7 April, winds were northerly in the Gulf and weak (with high pressure) in the southern Caribbean.

## Discussion

We assume that departures took place two evenings before the initial fallout days in Nova Scotia, as departures the nights before, even given the wind speeds indicated in Figures 6 and 7, would require unsustainable flight speeds for passerines. Evidently, migration was pronounced along the Florida Panhandle during evening of 3 April, following an increase that day of Indigo Buntings along the Gulf Coast. The apparent drop in numbers of Indigo Buntings along the Gulf Coast between 3 and 4 April, and their virtual absence during the next few days along the coasts of the southeastern United States, suggest that the birds had left Central America and Mexico (they only rarely winter in South America), along with other migrants, on the night of 2-3 April but were then displaced eastward over



**Figure 8.** A Scarlet Tanager on 8 April 2009 in Rochester, Massachusetts was part of the second fallout in that month, which included more tanagers (and larger Neotropical migrant species generally) than smaller taxa, such as warblers and *Passerina* buntings, which were predominant in the earlier fallout. Photograph by Pearl Thompson.

the ocean, the survivors only regaining land far to the northeast on 4 April. Most of the overshooting species detected on 4-7 April were smaller birds: 23 Indigo Buntings and 11 warblers, compared with 14 larger species in total (Eastern Kingbird, Gray Catbird, Blue Grosbeaks, Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, Purple Martins). In particular, the ratio of Indigo Bunting to Summer Tanager (3.3:1) was similar to those in the southeastern United States between 25 March and 15 April (Figure 2, 6.5:1) and during the breeding season in recent years (4.5:1 during 2005-2007 in the Eastern Breeding Bird region; Sauer et al. 2008). This suggests that the smaller and larger species suffered similar mortality en route.

The reversed ratio of Indigo Bunting to Summer Tanager during 8-11 April might indicate that the birds had left on favorable winds on the evening of 6 April—the tanagers from northern South America, the buntings from Caribbean islands (Figure 7). However, the greater prominence of larger birds (12 Summer Tanagers, three Scarlet Tanagers (Figure 8), one Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and three Blue Grosbeaks, one Eastern Kingbird, one Gray Catbird, one Purple Martin versus just two vireos, three warblers, and five Indigo Buntings) could also reflect greater mortality of smaller species during a longer flight over open ocean (cf. Figures 6, 7). A dead Kentucky Warbler was found 6 April in Nova Scotia, but three Summer Tanagers died after being found 8 April in Nova Scotia, and a dead Hooded Warbler was found 9 April in Massachusetts.

Male passerines are thought to be “time optimizers” that make long-distance flights to get to the breeding grounds rapidly and ahead of females for choice of territories; where specified, almost all the birds in the present fallouts were males. It is sometimes suggested that overshooting migrants have simply misjudged the distance of goals along their correct flight directions or that these birds are actively seeking out territories beyond the northern fringes of breeding range. As noted earlier, southwestern airflow in spring in eastern North America and along the East Coast is also thought to abet this misjudgment. The pattern of airflow around large low-pressure systems in central and eastern-interior North America (Figures 6, 7), however, suggests that unusually early events may involve much greater displacement—flights over the ocean from areas much farther to the south than has been generally surmised.

There also has been much speculation on the subsequent fate of such displaced birds, but few data exist to support suppositions about the extent of mortality among these birds. An interesting feature of timing and distribution of Indigo Buntings (Figure 2) was the apparent shift in the proportions of buntings: in Nova Scotia and elsewhere 4-5 April, they were roughly evenly distributed, but during 6-7 April, they were noted exclusively in New Brunswick and Maine, including one well inland. This suggests that some birds undertook corrective southward movements after their considerable displacement in the 4 April fallout. A similar movement

was indicated after a large fallout of “reverse migrants” in southwestern Nova Scotia in early October 1998 (McLaren et al. 2000).

The extreme displacement and restricted geographical distributions of the birds in these events offers an unusual opportunity for further detailing of the meteorological circumstances, geographical origins, and flight behaviors of successful birds using modern techniques of individual-based and spatially explicit migration models. Such an analysis is being undertaken by the junior author, for publication in the technical literature.

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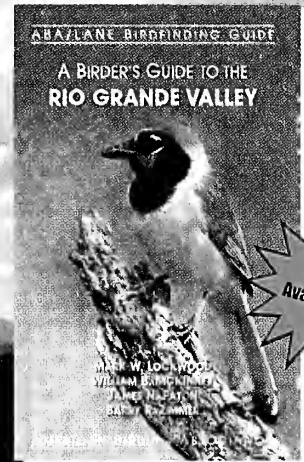
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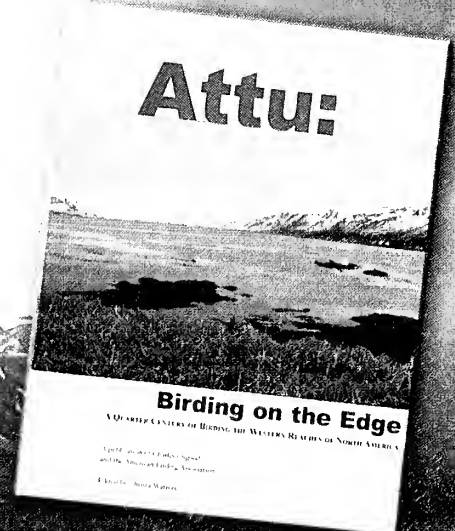
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# The Changing Seasons:

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As sometimes occurs along their spring migration route when conditions are adverse for onward migration, Lapland Longspurs flocked to feeding stations and fields in southern Yukon in mid-May (here 13 May) 2009 in Whitehorse, Yukon. Photograph by Cameron Eckert.

## The Weather (and Climate)

In the Lower 48 states, the meteorological spring (March through May) 2009 had an average temperature of 52.7° F, about 0.9° F above normal, and slightly (1.6 cm) above-normal precipitation. Of course, some areas had abundant rainfall, particularly the Southeast—Georgia had its second wettest spring in 115 years, and both Florida and Arkansas had their rainiest Mays on record. In much of the Midwest, planting was delayed because of a wet April and May, and Peoria broke the record for days above flood stage on the Illinois River. Just to the west, in the northern Great Plains, melt waters and spring precipitation caused disastrous flooding after a rainy autumn and very snowy winter conditions that continued well into March. Across a large area in North Dakota and western Minnesota, the Red River set records for consecutive days

above flood stage; in southern Manitoba, the flooding was the worst on record since 1826. From the Rockies westward, precipitation levels were closer to normal.

In the United States' East, spring 2009 came in like a lion, with a blustery, cold northeaster 1-3 March that dumped 15-30 cm of snow in a swath from Appalachian Georgia to eastern Maine. Temperatures in Richmond, Virginia bottomed out 10° F on both 3 and 4 March, breaking the all-time March minimum set in 1943; Tallahassee, Florida hit 26° F on 4 March. Despite this precipitation, the January-through-March period was the driest on record in Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey and nearly so in adjacent Pennsylvania and West Virginia (based on 115 years of data); March in the Northeast was also relatively dry. Over the rest of the season, however, temperatures were generally normal (mid-

Atlantic states southward) to above normal (New England). In late April, a warm spell set all-time high records in many locations; Portland, Maine topped 90° F for the first time ever in April! While the Northeast, especially interior areas, saw precipitation values slightly below normal through early May, abundant rains over coastal areas and the Southeast generally—the product of low-pressure systems tracking along a shifting jet stream—in April and May eased long-standing drought conditions in the Carolinas, Georgia, and adjacent areas. Weather systems of interest to birders are very thoroughly discussed in the New England, Southern Atlantic, and Florida regional reports (and briefly below), including a westward shift in early migrants such as geese in March, two notably early fallouts of Neotropical migrants in April (the subject of this issue's lead article), and a stalled low-

# Oscillations

pressure system off Florida in mid-May that shunted hundreds of pelagic migrants shoreward, north to North Carolina.

The eastern Midwest had mostly a warm, wet spring. March temperatures were above average in the southern Great Lakes states, and precipitation was copious along the lakeshores in particular, making it the third wettest March on record in Chicago. In the western Midwest, March was cooler, and Minnesota and eastern Iowa had a very soggy month, with precipitation measured at almost triple the norm in some areas. March snows and rains for Wisconsin and Michigan were normal, as were March temperatures, but April and May were cooler-than-average months in Minnesota and Wisconsin. A late snowstorm hit central Iowa 4-5 April. April showers were well above average in Illinois and Indiana, in some places double the norm, with a swath of much-above-normal precipitation stretching from northern Missouri through Illinois into central Indiana; rains in Minnesota, northwestern Iowa, northwestern Wisconsin, and eastern Ohio were below normal in April. From Illinois to Missouri, early April was much colder than normal, but the latter half of the month warmed quickly, so that temperatures for the month were “average” across most of the region, though it was a month of wild extremes for many locations. Across a very broad front, a stark warm-up 24-27 April brought Neotropical migrants northward by the truckload, some of them very early or in record numbers for the month. The month of May was near normal over much of the Midwest but much cooler than usual (5-8° F) in northwestern Minnesota. A cold snap 17-18 May brought record-cold temperatures to the southern Midwest, but a record warm-up came 19-21 May, with monthly records set at Gaylord, Minnesota—97° F on 20 May—and at Big Bay, Michigan (94° F) the next day. The progress of spring migration varied accordingly. Precipitation in the Midwest in May was half of normal in northwestern Iowa, central Minnesota, and northwestern Wisconsin and twice normal in eastern Kentucky and south of the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. Southern Minnesota, northwestern Wisconsin, and upper Michigan were dry in May, extending the drought in those areas. Farther south, in Kentucky and Tennessee, March was a bit warmer and rather dry, but the rest of the spring rela-

tively rainier than average, with mostly normal temperatures.

In the northern and western Gulf coast states, the spring was warm and mostly wet, though areas well inland, such as Huntsville, Alabama, had below-average precipitation in March but caught up with April and May showers. While Alabama enjoyed several productive fallouts, steady southerly winds over Louisiana were less favorable for coastal birding in April and May, which also had below-normal precipitation totals. Drought also persisted in eastern Texas: the Edwards Plateau and South Texas Plains were in “exceptional” drought through May, in fact, despite several productive April storms. Extensive hurricane damage to Gulf coastal habitats continues to dismay birds and birders alike, from Texas to Florida.

The Great Plains got plain walloped, one way or the other. In the north, March continued bitterly cold, with few respites from sub-freezing and often subzero temperatures, and heavy snows continued. Bismarck, North Dakota’s 101 inches (257 cm) of snow for the season nearly broke the old record. Some lakes remained frozen until a late April warm-up, and the thaw only made spring flooding worse. In addition to problems along the Red River, “the Missouri River at Bismarck flooded some areas for the first time since Garrison Dam was built in the 1950s,” according to regional editor Ron Martin. The extended period of flooding put a severe strain on many communities in North Dakota, western Minnesota, and southern Manitoba, but many of the levees held. May, especially in the southern Great Plains, was marked by weak precipitation patterns, with sizeable areas of the region receiving less than 70% of normal precipitation and even larger swaths getting less than half of normal; several locations reported the driest May on record. Eastern Nebraska (and later the Panhandle), north-central Kansas, and parts of South Dakota were hardest hit by the paucity of precipitation.

The Mountain West was a mosaic of weather patterns, as usual. Except for northern Idaho, western Montana, and parts of Wyoming, most of the region had a drier March than normal. Overall, the spring in Colorado and Wyoming was a little warmer than usual and essentially normal in terms of precipitation. Drought conditions gradually lessened, to the point that the “Drought Monitor” maps

looked relatively blank—better than they had since the late 1990s in some respects. The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook released 21 May anticipated that drought conditions in Colorado and Wyoming would improve still more through August. In April, interior areas of the Great Basin states, the Wasatch, parts of the central and Northern Rockies, and the plains of Montana, along with isolated pockets of southern Arizona, were wetter than normal. Western Montana was memorably both wetter and cooler than usual, and Bozeman reported 126 cm of snowfall in April—“the most ever reported there in *any* month,” according to regional editor David Trochlell. Great Falls, Montana tied its all-time snowiest April ever, with 90 cm. Parts of eastern Montana were downright cold in early spring, as much as 6° F below normal in March, for instance. The Southwest, by contrast, had one of its warmest spring seasons in 115 years of record keeping. The Great Basin states were likewise warm: Las Vegas, Nevada’s May was the warmest on record, and many sites in southeastern California and southern Arizona had their second-warmest Mays.

Alaska’s spring started out cool; March was the twenty-eighth coolest since records began in 1918, with temperatures 3° F below the 1971-2000 average. April bucked the trend, ending up 0.4° F above average. Fairbanks tied an all-time record on 29 April with 74° F and broke the record the next day with 76°. Thede Tobish notes that the “slow-melting, heavy winter snowpack [...] persisted well into early May, at which time the weather abruptly turned mild and unseasonably warm through the period.” Farther south, temperatures were mostly below normal in the northern portion of the United States’ West Coast and above normal in the southern half, especially southern California. Parts of the Pacific Northwest were up to 5° F cooler than usual in March: Seattle recorded its coolest March in 33 years and its fifteenth cooler-than-normal month out of the past 19 months. The Northern California editorial team reports that conditions were “cool and dry from March into May,” though a short heat spell 20-21 April brought all-time records to the San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas, with temperatures reaching as high as 104° F at King City. Hot weather more typical of summer arrived in late May, producing early thunderstorms east of the Sierra Nevada. In

## TEMPERATURE DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL Spring (Mar, Apr, May) 2009

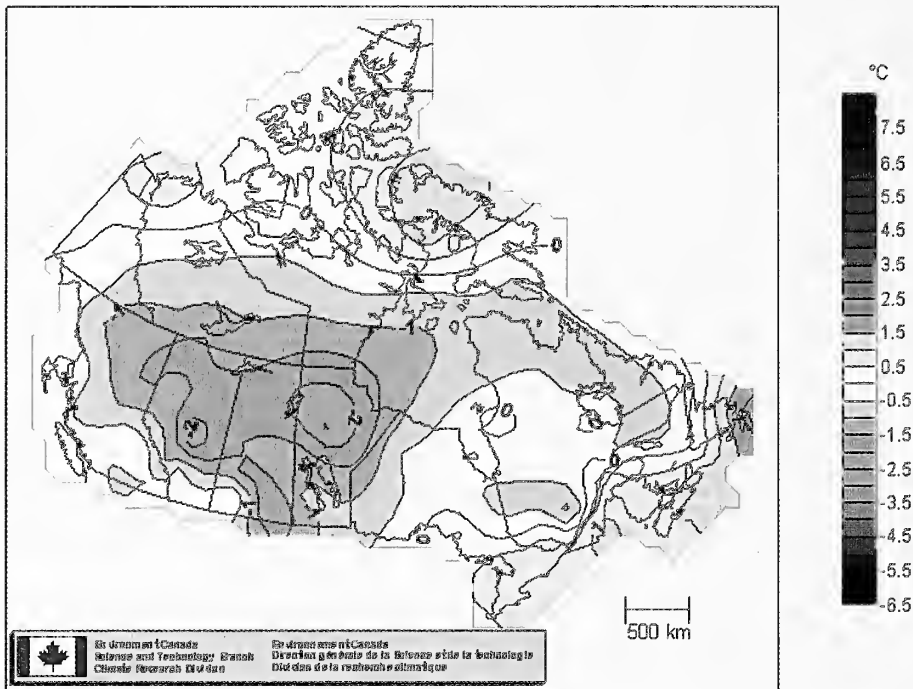


Figure 1. Although the spring of 2009 in Canada was just 0.4° C cooler than average on the national level, northern Manitoba was nearly 3° C cooler than usual, and much of northern/eastern Canada, especially the Arctic, remained locked in snow and ice well into June. Many species of birds delayed nesting or apparently failed to breed altogether. Map courtesy of and © Environment Canada/ Environnement Canada.

Hawaii, Hilo recorded its coolest March ever, and Lihue had its lowest average maximum temperature ever for March. From mid-April through late May, notes Peter Donaldson, "low-pressure areas and cold fronts continued to affect the islands [...] Rainfall distribution was very unusual, with some normally wet locations setting records for dryness, while normally dry locations had unusually wet weather"—a pattern more typical of winter months.

Part of the driving force for these unusual fluctuations, especially in the West, could be the transition from La Niña into El Niño conditions. In March 2009, La Niña conditions were present but weak in the tropical Pacific Ocean, and although El Niño/Southern Oscillation conditions were neutral during April and May, rising surface seawater temperatures in the tropical Pacific suggested that El Niño conditions would be felt in North America beginning in the summer. Such conditions usually bode well for those who dislike Atlantic hurricanes, which do not fare well with the wind shear set up during periods of strong El Niño conditions.

Southern Canadian weather in spring 2009 was similar to the adjacent northern-tier U.S. states. In the Maritime provinces, March was

cooler and April and May warmer than average; precipitation was above average for the first eight weeks of the period but below average in May. Weather values were near normal in Québec, cooler and wetter in the north, warmer and drier in the south. Alan Wormington, writing the report for Ontario, characterized the season as "cold (and late) just about everywhere—especially in the north." The province enjoyed the same warm-ups as the southern Great Lakes states in early March and late April, with similar bounties of early migrants in both cases.

In many areas of northern and central Canada (Figure 1), March remained solidly locked in a winter pattern, April had perhaps only a single, scant warm spell, and May continued cold and snowy, with some areas remaining in winter's grip well into June. In Northwest Territories, "spring came late to the Norman Wells and Mackenzie Valley areas but then erupted quickly. A rapid green-up gave way to subsequent cool and wet conditions," writes Cameron Eckert in the Northern Canada and Greenland region. "It remained essentially winter through May" in northern areas, according to Rudolf Koes and Peter Taylor in the Prairie Provinces region,

and "by the end of May, many shorebirds, flycatchers, vireos, and warblers were still in short supply in breeding areas." May temperatures in northern Manitoba were almost 4° C below the long-term average. According to Environment Canada, the spring of 2009 was record late in the entire eastern American Arctic. Six-foot snowdrifts blocked Churchill-area roads in May, and as of 11 June, there was still almost complete snow cover from James Bay northward, with more a meter of snow blanketing 90 per cent of northern Manitoba. "I have lived in Churchill since the 1950s, and this the latest spring I have ever seen here," said Pat Penwarden, local innkeeper who has hosted tens of thousands of birders over the years. "The spring of 1962 was almost this bad" (Alison 2009). A late spring in northern Manitoba in 1983 resulted in a summer with almost no recorded breeding or successful breeding in many bird species, particularly waterfowl and shorebirds, and that spring was not nearly as late as 2009.

The Hudson Bay area has had more frequent late springs than normal: 1997, 2000, 2002, and 2004. According to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration scientists, the Arctic is indeed warming, but more frequent annual oscillations in temperature are likely to occur, often resulting in late springs: "such major oscillations are part of a bumpy ride toward global warming," according to Thomas Karl of the National Climate Center. "For a while, at least, this will be the shape of things to come" (Alison 2009).

We read much about El Niño/Southern Oscillation in this journal and in other literature on bird distribution. But what of that "other" oscillation, the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)? We read rather little about the NAO on this side of the Atlantic, and even less in the literature on birds. Europeans, however, are rather well versed in the NAO and its apparent effects. Wikipedia (<[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)>) supplies the following definition: "The North Atlantic Oscillation is a climatic phenomenon in the North Atlantic Ocean of fluctuations in the difference of atmospheric pressure at sea level between the Icelandic Low and the Azores High. Through east-west oscillation motions of the Icelandic Low and the Azores High, it controls the strength and direction of westerly winds and storm tracks across the North Atlantic. It is highly correlated with the Arctic oscillation, as it is a part of it. Unlike the El Niño phenomenon in the Pacific Ocean, the NAO is a largely atmospheric mode. It is one of the most important manifestations of climate fluctuations in the North Atlantic and sur-

rounding humid climates.”

Because westerly winds coming into Europe are rather obviously heavily influenced in the “squeeze play” between the relatively permanent Icelandic Low and Azores High, birders there pay more attention to the NAO than do Americans. A “strong” NAO occurs when the difference in pressure between the two areas is high, producing stronger westerlies (and often more New World bird vagrants to Europe and the Azores). But the NAO is also thought to influence weather over eastern North America. According to Wikipedia: “During the winter, when the index is high (NAO+), the Icelandic Low draws a stronger south-westerly circulation over the eastern half of the North American continent, which prevents Arctic air from plunging southward.” In addition to warmer temperatures, a strong NAO increases rainfall in the East, which may have the effect of lowering ocean salinity and suppressing ocean upwelling. Some researchers think that the collapse of the cod fishery two decades ago, for instance, was related to a strong NAO. As one considers the various bird records in the next section—many of which were attributed to southwesterly wind flow by regional editors—it may be worth keeping this “other” oscillation in mind. Though we think of the NAO as primarily climatic, the ocean is clearly influenced, according to extensive European research, and some researchers attribute part of the phenomenon of stronger storms—surges in recent decades to a stronger NAO (e.g., Ullmann and Monbaliu 2009). Perhaps some of our own surges—such as the very unusual, “unexplained” tides that destroyed many colonial birds’ colonies on the Georgia coast this spring—are partly products of a NAO index that is stronger than normal.

### East of Normal

From Ontario to New England to Prince Edward Island, the regional reports detail an increase in migrant geese that typically winter in the central and western parts of the continent. In the first part of March, Greater White-fronted and Ross’s Geese put in appearances in above-average numbers, and these were linked, according to Simon Perkins, to a persistent westerly and southwesterly airflow during this period. Alan Wormington also cites one reason for the increase in goose numbers: “the widespread adoption of no-till farming in recent decades—when waste corn and stubble remain in farm fields through spring—has facilitated an eastward expansion of migration patterns for both [Ross’s] and

other prairie geese.” He notes that Point Pelee, Ontario, which had its first record of Ross’s Goose only in 1994, recorded minimally 44 by 10 March this year, with 42 or more elsewhere in the province away from Hudson Bay, two of which were rare blue-morph birds. (Another blue morph was seen at Cap Tourmente, Québec 18 May.) During precisely the same window, New England had a flock of 17 Greater White-fronted Geese at Saugus, Massachusetts, apparently of western subspecies *frontalis*. Perkins writes: “The great majority of recent Greater White-fronted Goose records in the Region have pertained to *flavirostris*, from Greenland.” Shortly after these arrived, at least 15 Ross’s Geese were found in Massachusetts (more than twice the New England maximum count), Maine had its second, and Prince Edward Island had three singles, that province’s third through fifth records. (Blake Maybank notes: “Oddly, Nova Scotia remains the only one of the four Atlantic provinces without a record of Ross’s Goose.” (Any takers on odds that 2010 will be the year?)

If we search for a broader pattern, we find that a total of ten Greater White-fronted Geese in upstate New York included a group of eight at Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area 8 March, likely part of the eastward shift; and the species was found in above-average numbers in Québec (44) as well. But a remarkable 16 in Westmoreland County, Virginia 8 May set not only a high count but were also very late. It was not clear which subspecies was (or were) involved in these reports; we should strive to determine this whenever possible with this interesting, dynamic species. Unlike Ross’s and pink-billed Greater White-fronted Geese, Cackling Goose was not as widely reported east of usual areas; New England had just seven and New Jersey three, but New York had about 78, almost entirely upstate. Two in late May at Labrador City were the first for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Barnacle Geese were likewise not in the numbers we have come to expect lingering from winter: only a single was reported, at Victoriaville, Québec 19 April–9 May. The weather maps in the New England report seem rather compelling: the episodes of strong southwesterlies surely could have caused an eastward shift in movements of prairie-wintering geese, as Perkins suggests. And even though, as Wormington points out, the trend is toward increasing numbers east of past wintering areas and past migration routes, the sharp, simultaneous spike in records in a short period in New England, which lies well east of migration routes,

suggests something like a “fallout” of *frontalis* Greater White-fronted and even of Ross’s, which is more expected in the region, if not in such numbers and not during this time frame. If the southwesterlies were a proximate factor in shifting the prairie goose flight eastward, could the North Atlantic Oscillation be a factor in the strong southwesterlies?

In the spring out West, the annual appearances of passerines that breed in the East or boreal forest are carefully catalogued by birders, who have, over the decades, documented trends that mirror the birds’ population trends but are not clearly or directly correlated to distinct weather phenomena (e.g., Patten and Marantz 1996). Western birds do appear in the East in spring, of course, but patterns of occurrence seem sketchy and usually weak: where the West might get two-dozen Prothonotary Warblers in a “good” spring, a haul of three Townsend’s Warblers in an area of equal size in the East is about as many as one might expect.

One might think, given the general prevalence of westerly winds over the continent, that western birds’ appearances in the East in spring would be quite common, if weather systems are the chief proximate cause of such displacements (see Brinkley 2001 for more comprehensive discussion). For autumn vagrants to Massachusetts, Veit (2000) holds that “movement behavior does not vary much between years” and that “large numbers of vagrants are the consequence of large numbers of young being produced.” Autumn vagrants in the East tend to concentrate in coastal areas (oceans, bays, large lakes) and in urban “traps”—micro-habitats that are a far cry from the oases of wooded habitat in the West that are so legendary for producing eastern vagrants in spring. Indeed, many have argued, in this journal, that the more lushly vegetated East simply conceals western vagrants, which are simply more dispersed, less concentrated because they can be. Others have suggested that because few truly western species make long water crossings in spring migration, their tendency to get caught up in unfavorable weather systems is far lower than eastern/boreal forest species’. Still others have suggested that migration distances and migration strategies in many western passerines differ sufficiently from eastern ones, so that dramatic “errors” associated with appearances of vagrants are simply fewer. Probably because of the relative paucity of data, no “eastern” equivalent to the ground-breaking paper of Patten and Marantz (1996) exists, so we continue to hazard conjecture here.

Spring 2009 was an above-average season for western and mid-continental birds in the East. Well, at least for passerines: other than the above-mentioned geese, single Buff-breasted Sandpipers in Illinois and Virginia, a Ferruginous Hawk in Iowa, a Prairie Falcon in Indiana, a Swainson's Hawk in Tennessee, and a Whooping Crane in Québec (we could add a few more but will leave off the Harris's Hawk in Ontario), it was not an impressive spring season for nonpasserine birds east of typical range. Regional editors east of the hundredth meridian, however, often commented on western passerines, particularly emberizids and cardinalids (including *Piranga* tanagers). Steve Dinsmore, writing of the spring in Iowa and Missouri, notes that "the season [...] had a distinctly western flavor, with reports of Western Tanager, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Lazuli Bunting." Mark Lockwood, Eric Carpenter, and Willie Sekula comment on "a clear push of western birds eastward that was highlighted by much larger-than-average numbers for species such as Lark Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, and Western Tanager into the eastern half of the state." Joe Grzybowski and Ross Silcock, in the Southern Great Plains report, write that

"this season will also go down as the year of Lazuli Buntings, especially in eastern and central Oklahoma" and note higher-than-normal numbers of Black-headed Grosbeaks in the eastern half of their region; however: "there was no eastward shift noted for other species—distribution of other western taxa seemed more normal."

It makes perfect sense to attribute the above-average appearances of species such as Lazuli Bunting and Western Tanager to "persistent southwesterly air flow," as Dinsmore does, just as other editors ascribe the appearance of geese in the Northeast to such winds. We do this routinely in the late autumn season, when Ash-throated Flycatchers and Cave Swallows materialize like clockwork in the East after southwesterlies blow from the southern Great Plains, so why not in spring?

It is probably correct to suggest some connection, and certainly our lead article in this issue—which does almost all the heavy lifting we might have done here for the month of April—gives a very convincing argument for the long-distance, over-ocean transportation of hundreds of Neotropical migrants, all flying downwind on southwesterly winds and making landfall far to the north of normal for that time of year, as winds at last blew shoreward at the latitude of the Northeast. The sorts of fallouts documented by our longtime contributor Ian McLaren and his son James McLaren in this article are not altogether rare, but it is rare that we get such a clear association between, and analysis of, such fallouts and weather patterns. (We look forward to further publications on this phenomenon by James McLaren.) Certainly, this case is extreme, in a sense: birds flying over open ocean with unfavorable winds have far fewer options for refuge than birds flying over terrestrial environments, which in most cases may simply arrest migration when conditions for flying prove unfavorable—the longspurs in our frontispiece make a good example, as does the 26 May fallout of grounded warblers on the streets of Grand Forks, North Dakota, where 250 Tennessee, 34 Bay-breasted, 32 Chestnut-sided, 52 Blackpoll, 23 Blackburnian, and 17 Magnolia Warblers, plus a rare Yellow-throated Warbler, foraged in American Elm flower litter at the feet of local residents. (Folks, that had to be colorful.)

Try as we may, we do not yet have a clear understanding of what conditions might produce eastward displacements of western birds in spring. Part of the problem is obvious: the appearance of "western" birds in the East during spring migration may not or always indi-

cate long-distance longitudinal displacement by winds with a westerly component. Take, for instance, the situation with Western Tanagers, one of the examples mentioned in multiple regional reports (Table 1). In addition to the 24 birds listed in the table, Texas birders found at least 13 on the upper and central coasts 1 March through 20 May, while Minnesotans and North Dakotans found nine in total. And I have probably missed a few records here and there, though a check of eBird did not reveal additional reports of vagrants between March and May 2009. First, we have to consider the possibility that birds found in areas east of past migratory routes indicate a gradual eastward expansion in breeding range (and thus, potentially, migratory pathways). Alan Wormington indicates that "Western Tanager is now an annual spring visitor to northern Ontario, where birds invariably appear at feeders" (but: "six this spring was rather outlandish"); the species has been seen in ten of the past 11 years in Québec; and spring and early summer records from several parts of Manitoba are clearly on the increase. If Western Tanagers are becoming less and less western, then the temptation to associate easterly migrants with weather patterns should be resisted.

Many of the birds in Table 1, in fact, in the East were noted at bird feeders, including the Western Tanager that joined the remarkable wintering Scarlet Tanager in Louisiana. And in the southernmost states, some of these birds were discovered rather early in the spring season, much earlier than typical migrants. Indeed, some of the birds probably never departed the United States, instead wintering—like western hummingbirds and orioles—in food-rich neighborhoods, with ornamental plantings, occasional emergences of insects, and those irresistible bird-feeding stations. (In 1981, a generous retiree in Virginia Beach, Virginia supplied a wintering Western Tanager with cheese grits, scrambled eggs, and fruit salad. As a chilly teenager waiting for the bird's appearance, I was tempted to help myself to the breakfast bar!) Regional editors Veit, Paxton, and Rohrbacher in the Hudson-Delaware region comment that a Western Tanager in New Jersey 11-14 April "seems bizarre for this usual fall vagrant but follows closely the occurrence of another in Central Park last spring." But the bird could hardly be considered "bizarre" if it had wintered not too far away. Out West, in Southern California, Guy McCaskie and Kimball Garrett probably hit the nail on the head: "We long ago ceased presenting 'arrival dates' for

**Table 1.** Reports of Western Tanager in the eastern half of North America, spring 2009. Note that Gulf coastal states produced the only March records of the species in the East this season. In addition to the records below, the Minnesota had five Western Tanagers on unspecified dates.

Harahan, Jefferson, LA	2-9 Mar
Niceville, Okaloosa, FL	9-10 Mar
Tallahassee, FL	22-28 Mar & 5 Apr
Plainfield, Union, NJ	11-14 Apr
Putnamville, Putnam, IN	24-28 Apr
Juneau, WI	27 Apr
Omaha, NE	28-30 Apr
Roberval, Québec	29 Apr-4 May
McCormick Place, Chicago, IL	1 May
Madison, CT	8 May
Cherokee, Cherokee, IA	9-10 May
Harris Hill, Rainy River, ON	11-15 May
Kenora, Kenora, ON	12 May-4 Jun
Balmoral, Manitoba	14-19 May
Cerra Garda, IA	15-17 May
near Douglas, Manitoba	18-22 May
Beverly Shores, Parter, IN	19 May
Thunder Bay, ON	19-20 May
Waukesha, WI	19-21 May
Dryden, ON	21 May
Mississagi Light, Monitaulin, ON	22 May
Winnipeg, Manitoba	23-27 May
Longlac, Thunder Bay, ON	2 birds; late May



spring migrants because of the Region's geographical complexity and the difficulty of teasing apart truly early spring arrivals from birds that wintered locally but went undetected during the winter."

So just as we recognize that many wintering birds (or birds that attempt to winter) out of range were often "reverse" migrants in autumn, so perhaps some of our off-course spring migrants were merely birds that wintered in an unconventional location, some of these certainly, or perhaps, autumn vagrants. If we think about the case of Rufous Hummingbird, which winters by the hundreds in the Southeast but was nearly a vagrant there 30 years ago, it can be difficult to imagine the process by which "rarity" became "regular." Food resources and winter survivorship were surely key to the steady increase and rapid change in nonbreeding range. And nowadays, flyby *Selasphorus* at coastal Atlantic migration sites, even in August and September, are not unheard of. Such is the process by which a westerner becomes an easterner.

Returning to tanagers, we might ask: what if some of these spring Western Tanagers (some of them adult males) are returning to winter again in Gulf coastal states? If so, then again, they probably aren't best considered "vagrants" when intercepted in spring in the Midwest or in Ontario: they are low-level migrants. And what of Summer Tanager, a species that was found in droves (48!) in the Western Great Lakes this spring, that deserved an "S.A. Box" in the Prairie Provinces regional report (where it has become an almost-regular rarity), and that features prominently in this issue's lead article? Appearances of this species have increased rapidly at the northern boundary of its breeding range, and records continue to accumulate, more slowly and unevenly, at feeders in southeastern North America in winter. How does one account for a Summer Tanager 28 March in Orleans, Massachusetts this spring? Was it an early fallout bird that departed the tropics far too early and found itself over open ocean until it reached Cape Cod? Or did the bird winter somewhere in eastern North America and begin to forage away from its favorite feeder as the weather warmed? Neither explanation seems satisfying or intuitive at first. But consider Alaska's wintering Orange-crowned Warblers. Thede Tobish writes of one that wintered in Kodiak through this past season that it "remained at its favored site through 8 March. This is a typical pattern for rare passerines that manage to survive a winter, usually at a coastal feeder, in that they all

end up departing their food source well ahead of what is the otherwise normal arrival period for that species—i.e., they nearly always leave a winter site between early March and early April, to go who knows where." So a Summer Tanager in late March in coastal Massachusetts could be something very different from the Summer Tanager that shows up in leafless trees in Nova Scotia just a week later. When considering these birds north, or east, of range, we should resist the temptation to produce patterns among records of birds that are possibly disparate in their contributing factors.

Before we attempt to speculate further, let's look at other western birds east of normal in spring 2009 and ponder the question: Were these birds blown off course by (south)westerly winds on their otherwise normal migration, or were they moving back toward typical breeding range after wintering a bit east of usual areas or even in an extralimital setting?

Let's tackle the mostly patternless records first. Many "singular" western vagrants in the Plains, Midwest, and East in spring are species whose migration is not terribly epic but rather gradual or at least not long-distance. Some of these species do winter in the tropics, but many can "overwinter" in the United States, either in the border states or the next tier of states to the north. The only species in this cadre that may begin to show a pattern is Lesser Goldfinch, which seems to be increasing as a vagrant on all fronts and is clearly expanding its range northward in the West. A black-backed male attended feeders in Beaufort, North Carolina 2-4 March, furnishing one of very few records for the East, but most of the records are recent. A Violet-green Swallow near Hawarden, Iowa 14 May was the state's first. For those who think of Iowa as being way out west, well ... the birds do not necessarily agree: birds from the far West are not abundantly represented in the Iowa avifaunal record as vagrants. Flycatchers from the West ignored the Midwest and East this spring; a Say's Phoebe in Astatula, Ohio 12 March and another in Cape May, New Jersey 30 April through 2 May were exceptions. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, which breed marginally in the southern Midwest and the Southeast (and winter by the dozens per site in Florida), were few in the East this spring, but who considers these "western" vagrants any longer? A Rock Wren in Jefferson County, Kentucky 11 May was only the state's second and certainly notable, if not a champion Neotropical migrant (these hardy birds

could probably hang on through a local winter, though more likely this was a bird that wintered a bit farther south). The usual smattering of western warblers included single Townsend's Warblers at Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York 25 April, at Rondeau Provincial Park, Ontario 8 May, and at Cap Tourmente, Québec 17 May; two Audubon's Warblers in Maryland 2 March and 19 April and one in Ontario 10 May; and a Black-throated Gray Warbler in southern Florida 7 March. Certainly, any of these birds could have wintered in the East or Southeast, and the Maryland and Florida birds almost certainly did. The Green-tailed Towhee at Hadden, New Jersey was a wintering bird that stayed through 3 May, and a Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch in St. Louis County, Minnesota 17 March may well have been a northbound migrant but was just one state east of typical winter range. A female Bullock's Oriole in Tallahassee, Florida 10 March was in a location "where the species occasionally winters," according to Bruce Anderson and Andy Bankert. No Bullock's Orioles were reported in the East otherwise this spring.

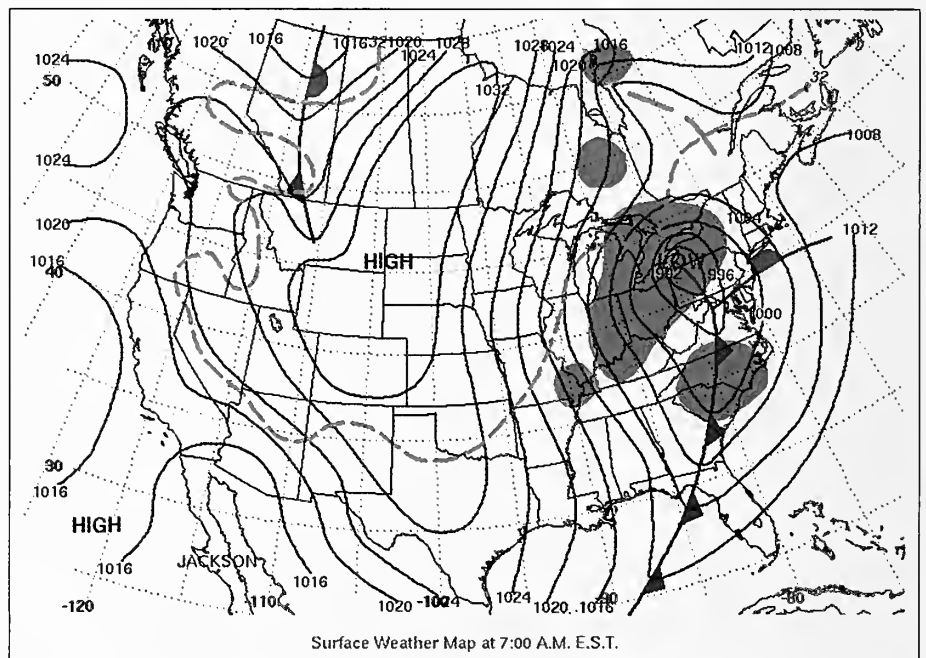
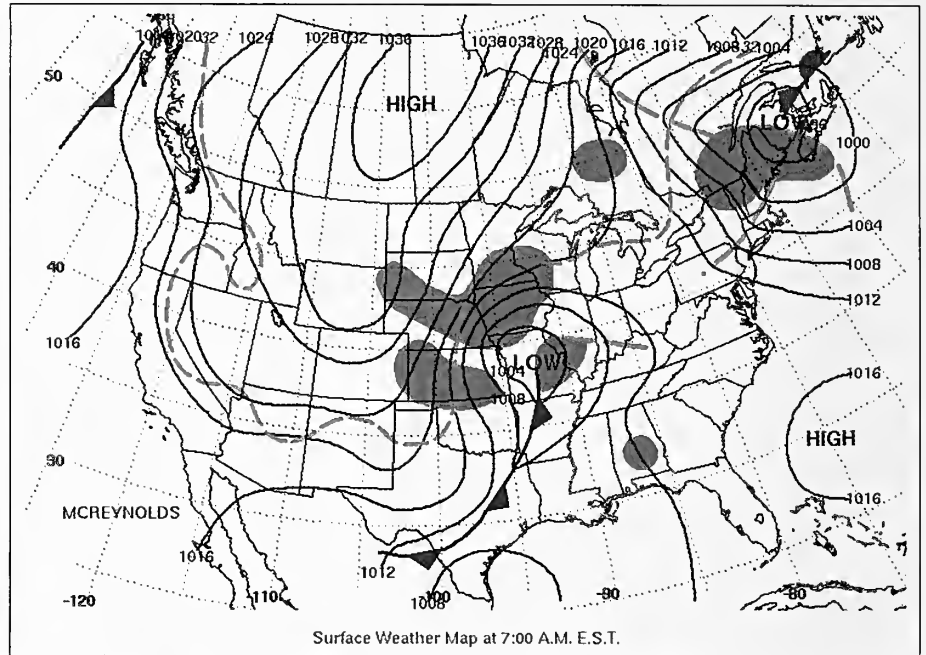
Québec had two of the cutting-edge "western" vagrants this spring: a Hooded Oriole at Macamic 30 May–2 June, and a Black-capped Vireo at Pointe-aux-Outardes 24 May, each representing a third record for Canada. Pierre Bannon, Olivier Barden, Normand David, Samuel Denault, and Yves Aubry write: "In late May, strong westerly winds were associated with some spectacular diurnal migrations of warblers flying windward almost at ground level on the North Shore. But these strong winds were probably not the ultimate cause for the appearance of some extreme rarities like Black-capped Vireo and Hooded Oriole." Presumably, these birds belong to a class we call "overshoots" in spring, often found during warm spells, but when birds are thousands of kilometers beyond the northern edge of their breeding ranges, they were almost certainly not simply displaced by a weather system. Although the vireo and oriole are "western" species to most easterners, their appearances in southern Canada would place them arguably in this essay's next section, the inevitable "Southern Birds North."

Before we pass from the more singular rarities to the more widespread, we should consider several remarkable records of those enigmatic nonpasserines, the swifts, this season. For easterners who assume that all western states have at least a handful of substantiated records of Vaux's Swift, think again: reports from Colorado 1 May and Texas 16 April



Figure 2. This male Black Swift made repeated passes over the visitor center at Point Pelee National Park on 17-18 (here 17) May 2009, providing a second record of the species for Ontario. There are scattered reports of Black Swifts (and large, dark swifts) in eastern North America, but this individual was the first to be confirmed by photograph. Photographs by Brandon R. Halden.

would be the first, pending acceptance, for those states, though both were sight records. Single Black Swifts at Point Pelee, Ontario 17-18 May (Figure 2) and Leighton, Alabama 7 April would both be seconds. And Florida had its first White-throated Swift, an ailing bird found on a condominium balcony at Navarre Beach 9 April (not the first Florida mega-rarity to be found on a condo balcony!). Interestingly, the Alabama swift was associated with a fast-moving low-pressure system (Figures 3, 4) with a high-pressure air mass just west of it that passed swiftly eastward, bringing northerly winds to the states along the northern edge of the Gulf of Mexico. Steve McConnell writes of this front "the passage of a strong cold front from 6 April through northern Alabama, preceded by unseasonably warm weather, resulted in thermometer readings the morning of 7 April around 11° C lower than the previous day. This temperature change brought thousands of insectivores such as martins, swifts, and swallows to forage low over almost any standing water." Looking at this system, one is tempted to suggest that the White-throated Swift might also have been grounded by it: Santa Rosa is in what some call "Southern Alabama," that part of Florida that lies south of Alabama, and the bird was discovered just two days after the Black Swift. The storm system, which gathered steam 3 April in the central



Figures 3, 4. Surface weather maps for 5 and 6 April 2009. This fast-moving low-pressure system grounded aerialists such as swifts and swallows by the thousands in the Southeast, including an apparent Black Swift in northern Alabama at Leighton and possibly a White-throated Swift at Santa Rosa, Florida, on the Gulf coast halfway between Destin and Panama City. But the early date for the Black Swift suggests that it was not a western bird but instead perhaps a Caribbean breeder that overshot its breeding grounds but was grounded (with thousands of swallows) when southerly winds shifted abruptly to northerly. Map courtesy of and © the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Rockies before intensifying and plunging southeastward into the Great Plains (western Kansas) the next day, certainly had enough strength to move even strong-flying birds. But Black Swifts arrive in the Rockies in May—late May, usually (or even June)—not in early April! So it seems unlikely in the extreme that

this bird would have been a western Black Swift, of subspecies *borealis*. In the Greater Antilles, Black Swifts of the nominate subspecies begin arriving in March, so perhaps the bird was from a West Indian population, as several tentative Florida reports of large, dark swifts are believed to be? Ah, the perils and

the joys of speculation!

There does, however, seem to be a pattern of Lazuli Buntings east of typical migratory pathways this spring. In the central and eastern Southern Great Plains, at least 65 were considered notable, including one feeder that hosted 13 at once. Moreover, a territorial Lazuli was seen in Oklahoma's Wichita Mountains, along with a Lazuli  $\times$  Indigo hybrid in late May. In Texas, the regional editors indicate that there was an "obvious eastward shift in the migration of Lazuli Bunting, with numbers well above average through the central portion of the state; most notable was one in Smith County 29 April." Other Lazulis out of range were in Florida (4 March–19 April; the state's thirteenth), Missouri (singles 3 and 15 May), Iowa (5–7 May), Ontario (31 May; the province's ninth), plus two together in Minnesota (23–27 March). An interesting *Passerina* bunting banded at Tomoka State Park, Florida 22 April appears to be a hybrid Lazuli  $\times$  Indigo (Figure 5). In order to make educated guesses about this seemingly disparate pile of data, we should first ask whether Lazuli Bunting is one of those species whose range is advancing eastward. Greene et al. (1996) suggest that some eastward expansion may be occurring but do not elaborate further. Certainly, Indigo Bunting has made strong inroads westward into the central Great Plains, and hybrids of these species are relatively common, but I have yet to locate information that Lazuli's range has shown similar eastward expansion. (Range expansion in Painted Bunting is accompanied by a strong pattern of vagrancy, including at least eight in the Midwest this spring, mostly late April through mid-May.)

A second question to ask: in this journal's records over the past decade or so, do we detect a signal that Lazuli Buntings are increasingly found in the Southeast? There does not appear to be any such increase, unlike such trends for hummingbirds, orioles, some flycatchers, and tanagers. Although the March records from Florida and Minnesota make one scratch the head, the concentration of records from central Texas through central and eastern Nebraska, with a sprinkling of birds to the East, appear to support the idea of a shift in the eastern boundary of the migratory pathway this spring. In lieu of evidence of expanding breeding range or new wintering patterns, it seems reasonable to suggest that wind-drift during migration caused this eastward shift. Although the "signal" is not is strong in this season's data on Black-headed Grosbeak, the sharp spike in mid-continental records (from

the eastern halves of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska), along with the surge in Iowa reports (clustered tightly 13–19 May), suggests that something similar may have happened with that species. Singles, mostly at feeders, in Lakeland, Florida in early March, in Hope, Maine through 11 April, and in Hope Valley, Rhode Island 24 March make at best an average spring showing for the East Coast states.

But what does one do with the real rash of Golden-crowned Sparrow records in the Midwest and East? Singles were reported in Dakota County, Minnesota 25/30 March, in St. Louis County, Minnesota 29 March–2 April, in Hancock County, Ohio 7–24 April, at Orwell, Vermont 13–24 April, in Stephenson County, Illinois 16–23 April, and at Natick, Massachusetts 18–19 April. Although the latter four records suggest a pattern of northbound migrants, at least one of the Minnesota birds was a bird from the winter season that reappeared after an absence of three weeks, and the other bird may also have wintered near its site of discovery. In the absence of reports from the mid-continent, however, all of these records suggest birds that had arrived in the Midwest and East during the previous autumn. The same may be the case with single Mountain Bluebirds in Ohio 30 March–17 April, Iowa 3–4 April, and Nova Scotia 10 May, as there is no hint at all of a pattern of displaced migrants elsewhere.

I can't resist an excursus here on those fascinating mid-continental grassland birds, the longspurs and Sprague's Pipit. Over the years, and especially in the past five or so years, I have noticed an increase in slightly extralimital and sometimes very extralimital records of Sprague's Pipits and of Chestnut-collared, Smith's, and even McCown's Longspurs. This spring, a Sprague's Pipit that wintered at Apalachicola, Florida remained through 4 April, and Lenny Fenimore found a startling 11 at Eglin Air Force Base in Okaloosa County, Florida 21 March, certainly the state's highest count. Steve Dinsmore notes that "reports of Sprague's Pipit were above normal" in Iowa and Missouri, with seven birds between four sites 22 March through 16 May. And Joe Grzybowski and Ross Silcock write: "As observers learn where to look, a count of 25 Sprague's

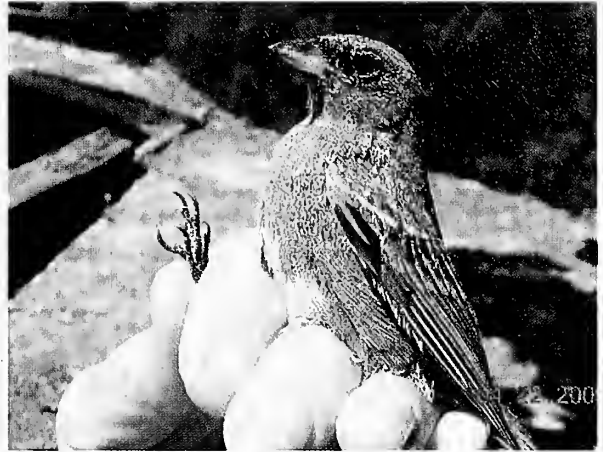


Figure 5. This apparent Indigo Bunting  $\times$  Lazuli Bunting hybrid was banded at Tomoka State Park, Volusia County, Florida 22 April 2009, the first of this cross detected in the state. Although the numbers of Lazulis and hybrids found well east of typical range do not seem to be increasing sharply, population increases in other *Passerina* species north of Mexico suggest that numbers of vagrant Lazuli Buntings may also show an increase in years to come. Photograph by Meret Wilson.

Pipit was obtained in Lancaster County, Nebraska 7 May." In my estimation, the increase in records at range edge in this species has been mostly a product of birders knowing not just where to look but also how to look for this species. In the Salton Sink of California, Guy McCaskie describes one observer jogging large loops around otherwise unproductive fields and turning up this unobtrusive species regularly in winter!

Spring 2009 was memorable for longspurs at the edges of range and beyond. Before this year, Michigan had four records of Smith's Longspur in spring. This season, 40+ were in Berrien County 27 April–9 May, and another was in Keweenaw County 12 May. Seven in Kandiyohi County, Minnesota 24 April were notable, but to the south, numbers were "typical" in Iowa and Missouri, with reports from a dozen locations 3 March–22 April. However, Ohio observers, armed with knowledge of habitat and phenology of migration, hit the jackpot, with two Smith's Longspurs in Rockport 11 April—a little group that grew to a flock of 40 or more in a week's time! The first Smith's ever recorded in the relatively well-birded southeastern part of the Yukon, a flock of three at the Watson Lake airport 26–27 May, provides our cover photograph as well as a lovely image of a female in Pictorial Highlights. Chestnut-collared Longspurs east of range included singles at Dunn Ranch, Missouri 15 March (the state's first since 2001), in Dakota County, Minnesota 18 April, and at Thunder Cape, Ontario 30 May (the province's sixth); to the west, Idaho's second ever was in Canyon County 25 April. Mc-

Cown's Longspurs out of range are less frequently reported than Chestnut-collareds or Smith's; one in Grand Forks County, North Dakota 19-20 May was the only extralimital bird this season. As with the pipits, my impression has been that range-edge records of migrant longspurs have been largely the product of patient, careful searching, and perhaps too, on the continental level, of lectures and articles on this beautiful group of birds, by experts such as Lehman, Dunn, and Kaufman, to name a few. All longspur species show a tendency to start and stop migration abruptly, depending on weather conditions, and spring seasons with see-sawing temperatures and late-season snowstorms can produce impressive aggregations, such as the 150,000 Lapland Longspurs counted moving northward at Minot, North Dakota 14 April during a warm-up, or the many thousands of Laplants that swirled around feeding stations and "blanketed backyards" during a cold snap 13 May around Whitehorse, Yukon, depicted on the first page of this essay.

### South → North

Although Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continue to be poster-birds for the "Southern Birds North" crowd—with records this season from Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, plus new locations in all the Gulf coast states and in Oklahoma and nesting (again) in Tennessee—ibises are still the most widespread wanderers and northerly pioneers, outdoing even kites, Black Vultures, and Black-necked Stilts for the breadth of their peregrinations. In the apt words of former regional editor Henry T. Armistead, "Everyone gets a piece of the action" (Table 2). While Glossy Ibis (Figure 6) continues to forge trails westward and northward, White-faced Ibis has become a fixture in the Midwest and East in recent spring/summer seasons, and extralimital records continue to push the envelope in the cooler months in both *Plegadis*. Hybrids are now widely reported, as White-faced Ibis take up residence in Glossy Ibis colonies (Figure 7) and vice-versa. Spring 2009 continued the spread of both species into new areas of the interior, including many places where nesting of one or both species has never been confirmed. (To a lesser extent, this pattern has started to develop in White Ibis as well.) The chilly spring, however, meant that records of wandering ibis in southern Canada were fewer this year, and in general, White-faced Ibis seems to be charging a bit harder in the past few seasons than Glossy, as the table suggests.

In the southern-central part of the continent, where both *Plegadis* are expanding into new areas with each year that passes, it has become difficult to track their spread or summarize them here in tabular form (eBird, help!). In Alabama and Mississippi, about 20 Glossies were reported, including birds well inland, and the first confirmed Mississippi nesting for White-faced Ibis came from Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge 20-25 May: 10 adults! Eight Glossies were in Nebraska 23 April–17 May, and in Colorado, there were a dozen reports of Glossy, but fewer than half were documented (and three reports of hybrids were not documented). We should point out that identification of some ibises can be very tricky, and so committees' insistence on documentation is by no means untoward!

West of the Mississippi River, White-faced Ibis numbers continue to rise in many areas, sometimes dramatically: up 14 between 13 Iowa locales 24 April–22 May; a top count of 42 in Holt County, Missouri 9 May; over 300 at Elkhead Reservoir, Colorado 25 April; 60 at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R., North Dakota 5 May; 75 nests in Arizona's Parker Valley 31 May; 31 between four western Wash-

**Table 2.** Selected records of *Plegadis* ibis and apparent hybrids mentioned in the regional reports, spring 2009.

Glossy Ibis	New Brunswick (2 singles)	Not provided
Glossy Ibis	Avondale, AZ	12 April
Glossy Ibis	Bitter Lake N.W.R., NM	12 April–16 May
Glossy Ibis	Dickey County, ND	13 April
Glossy Ibis	Village Creek Drying Beds, TX	14 & 25 April
Glossy Ibis	Bosque del Apache N.W.R., NM (2)	16–21 April
Glossy Ibis	near Bishop, Inyo County, CA	19 April
Glossy Ibis	Socorro, NM	21 April
Glossy Ibis	Sangamon County, IL	21 April
Glossy Ibis	Plains Flats, PA	22–23 April
Glossy Ibis	Hornsby Bend, TX	24 April
Glossy Ibis	Topton, PA (11)	24 April
Glossy Ibis	Cheyenne Bottoms, KS	24 April
Glossy Ibis	Hackberry, NE	24 April+
Glossy Ibis	Zuni, NM	26 April
Glossy Ibis	Lake Avalon, NM	27 April
Glossy Ibis	Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce, Québec	3 May
Glossy Ibis	Lubbock, TX	5 May
Glossy Ibis	Cabarrus County, NC (well inland)	5–7 May
Glossy Ibis	Fayette County, IL (2)	7 May
Glossy Ibis	Fort Sumner, NM	8 May
Glossy Ibis	Richland W.M.A., TX	8–16 May
Glossy Ibis	Sedgwick County, KS	9 May
Glossy Ibis	Alfalfa County, OK (7)	17 May
Glossy Ibis	Parker Valley, AZ (1 & 2 birds)	21 & 31 May
Glossy Ibis	Malheur N.W.R., OR (fourth state)	23 May
Glossy Ibis	Atamosa County, CO	23 May
Glossy Ibis	St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Is.	23 May
Glossy Ibis	McLean County, ND	26 May
White-faced Ibis	Lake City, FL (2)	through 24 March
White-faced Ibis	Hernando County, FL	17–22 March
White-faced Ibis	Ipswich/Essex, MA	7–10 April
White-faced Ibis	Bellrose, IL (2)	10 April
White-faced Ibis	Saul's Fish Farm, AR (inland)	17 April
White-faced Ibis	Snow Hill, MD	18 April
White-faced Ibis	Prime Hook N.W.R., DE	18–19 April
White-faced Ibis	Berlin, MD	18–27 April
White-faced Ibis	Big Stone County, MN (8)	25 April
White-faced Ibis	Long Point, KY (third state record)	25–26 April
White-faced Ibis	Wayne County, MI	25 April–15 May
White-faced Ibis	Scarborough, ME	26 April
White-faced Ibis	Cahokia Mounds S.P., IL (2)	27 April
White-faced Ibis	Frog Bayou W.M.A., AR (20)	30 April
White-faced Ibis	Jamestown, RI	3–5 May
White-faced Ibis	Beaver Swamp W.M.A., NJ	3–7 May
White-faced Ibis	Dodge County, WI	9 May
White-faced Ibis	Cape May, NJ	9–30 May
White-faced Ibis	Forsyth N.W.R., NJ	15–19 May
White-faced Ibis	Monroe County, MI (2)	15 May+
White-faced Ibis	Manchester, MA	19 May
White-faced Ibis	near Arkansas City, AR	21 May
White-faced Ibis	Washtenaw County, MI	21 May
White-faced Ibis	Tuscola County, MI	21–22 May
White-faced Ibis	American Bottoms, IL (3)	27 May
White-faced Ibis	Berrien County, MI	28 May
White-faced Ibis	Chincoteague N.W.R., VA	30 May
Glossy × White-faced hybrid	Washington Fields, UT	21 April
Glossy × White-faced hybrid	Red Slough	21 April
Glossy × White-faced hybrid	Hackberry, NE	24 April+
Glossy × White-faced hybrid	Bear River refuge, UT	27 April
Glossy × White-faced hybrid	Parker Valley, AZ	31 May
Unidentified dark ibis	Brown County, MN	17 April
Unidentified dark ibis	Greene County, IN	2 May
Unidentified dark ibis	Chicago, IL	8 May
Unidentified dark ibis	Montgomery County, TN	9 May
Unidentified dark ibis	Point Pelee, Ontario	11 May



Figure 6. Nevada's long-awaited first Glossy Ibis was found 24 May 2009 (here) at Pahrangat National Wildlife Refuge, Lincoln County. It remained through at least 7 June, offering many observers an opportunity to view this well-documented individual. This was the last of the contiguous western states to record the species, following April and May records in North Dakota this spring. Photograph by Greg Scyphers.

ington locales 12-18 May and 19 between four eastern Washington sites 20-30 May; nearly 100 across western Oregon 9 May and later, including flocks of 35 and 40; and large counts from Northern California generally, with 56 at Arcata Marsh 16 May and 71 in Monterey County 19 May among the higher counts.

Ibises demonstrate a mix of patterns each spring—single overshoots (probably including wandering nonbreeders), new colonists, and strengthening colonies. Very few other southerners, however, show such a pattern, though we may see it soon in perennial spring favorites like Snowy Plover (seen in Minnesota, northern Ontario, and twice in Iowa this spring), Neotropical Cormorant (Missouri), Anhinga (30+ in Tennessee; 10 in Illinois!), and Brown Pelican. Wait, what? Brown Pelican is a saltwater species, right? Well, I thought so, but we have seen more and more records of wanderers into interior areas each year—birds that stay for quite a while, fishing, begging, and making birders ride a lot of lakeside roads they might not have seen before. Could they begin nesting at some point? This season's prize winners were at Melvin Price Lock and Dam, Illinois 11 May and later; on Lake Cumberland and two other Kentucky lakes 23 April through the end of the season; and on Percy Priest Lake, Tennessee and nearby spots 9 April through 10 May. In Missouri, a bird present in February was still seen through 3 March at Lake of the Ozarks, and a different immature was at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary 11-31 May. It's doubtful that all of these birds were simply hurricanes' "leftovers" from the previous year.



Figure 7. Though no further evidence of breeding was found, this adult White-faced Ibis scored an "N" code on the current state Breeding Bird Atlas project when it was seen dropping into a probable nest site at Kettle Island, Manchester, Massachusetts 19 May 2009. Photograph by Simon Perkins.

Not impressed by Brown Pelicans in the Midwest any more? How about a Snail Kite in Georgia 23 April and another (found dead) in North Carolina 10 April? Or onshore Red-billed Tropicbirds in Virginia and North Carolina? Or a Wilson's Plover and Boat-tailed Grackle (said to have dark eyes?!) in Nova Scotia? We would be remiss if we left out our "leapfrog" colonizer, Fish Crow, which added the state of Michigan to its list of conquests in southern Berrien County 16 May and later (the bird was also seen in LaPorte County, Indiana, where a rarity). Alan Wormington asserts that "It appears that Fish Crow is destined to colonize the Lower Great Lakes"; four were recorded in Ontario 21-30 April (see the S.A. Box in that report) this spring. And Newton County, Missouri had a record 9 March. Dinsmore opines: "None was detected in Iowa, although perhaps this is due to a lack of concerted searches in April and May." When will Ohio finally hear its first *uh-uh*?

## Onshore winds, East and West

Over the period 17-23 May, and especially 19-21 May, the Southern Atlantic Bight—that stretch of coastline and adjacent ocean between northern Florida and North Carolina's Outer Banks—was buffeted by onshore winds, the product of a high-pressure cell centered between the Chesapeake Bay and Delaware Bay (with its clockwise winds) and an interesting low in the eastern Gulf of Mexico (counterclockwise winds) (Figure 8). The low-pressure system was reported in various media as a subtropical storm or even tropical storm, but it was apparently part of a cold front that stalled over the Gulf and developed from it. The interaction of these systems brought tropical-storm-force winds, with gusts over 50 knots, to a large area of the Southeast, where pelagic migrants were observed in longshore flights and some even rested on beaches. The Florida and Southern Atlantic reports cover the seabird movements thoroughly, and their commentaries make

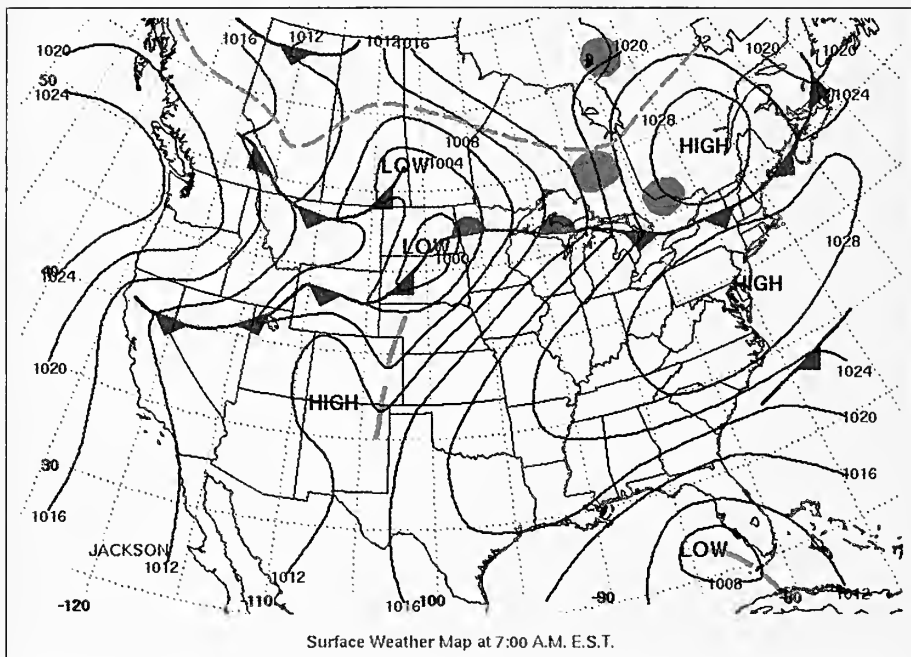


Figure 8. Surface weather map for 20 May 2009, showing strong onshore wind flow in the Southeast, with most of Florida's Atlantic coast affected by southeasterly gales while Georgia and the Carolinas had easterly winds. Seabirds noted from shore in Florida were many and varied and included two species of booby, two of tropicbird, and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, whereas the Carolinas and Georgia missed these species but noted ample numbers of migrating storm-petrels, shearwaters, jaegers, South Polar Skuas, Arctic Terns, many of these very near shore. Note also in this map that California's onshore winds of March and April have started to slacken. Map courtesy of and © the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

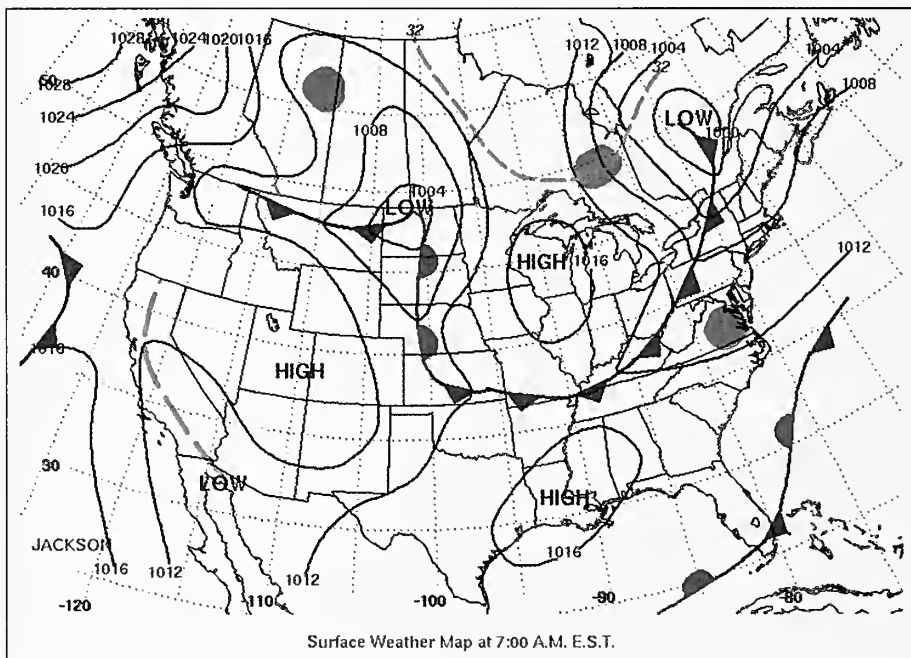


Figure 9. Surface weather map for 31 May 2009, showing the almost windless conditions along most of the California coast. Map courtesy of and © the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

fascinating reading. Among the species affected were scores of storm-petrels, including large numbers of Leach's, many Sooty Shearwaters, a few Arctic Terns and jaegers, and a handful of Greater, Manx, and Cory's Shear-

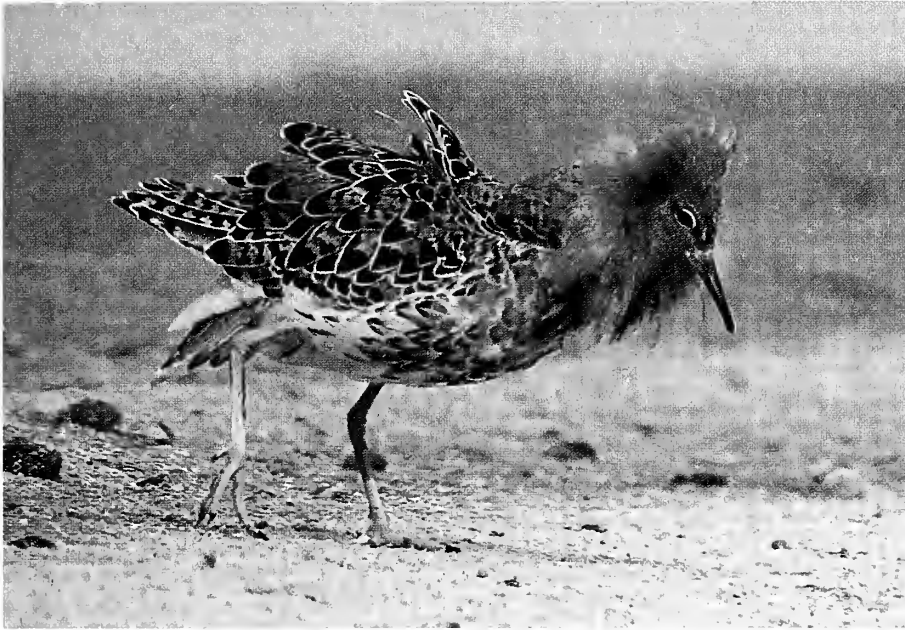
waters, as one would expect during mid-May. South Polar Skuas were relatively common within sight of land in North Carolina but were not recorded in Florida, while Floridians found both Red-billed and White-tailed

Tropicbirds onshore and both Brown and Masked Boobies, as well as five or more Band-rumped Storm-Petrels, none of which turned up along beaches of the Carolinas or Georgia during this event. Offshore of North Carolina, counts of all three jaegers, South Polar Skua, Arctic Tern, Sooty Shearwater, and Leach's Storm-Petrel were well above averages, with counts of the skua off the charts for the North Atlantic Ocean. One has to wonder, too, whether the two White-checked Pintails in Palm Beach County, Florida 25 May arrived with the strong southeasterly gales from the Bahamas; there are at least a few similar records of the species associated with nontropical lows like this, even in cooler months.

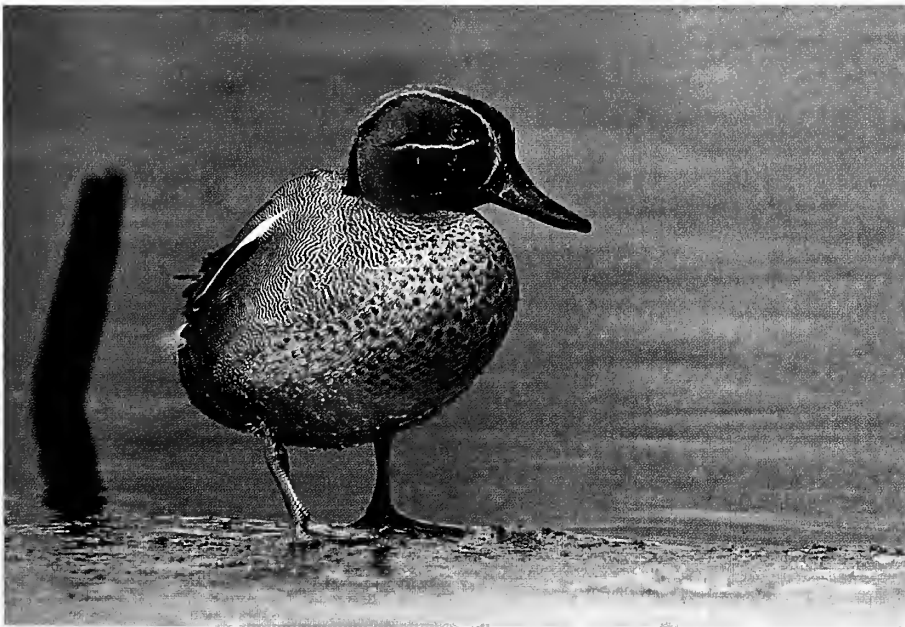
The transition out of La Niña and toward El Niño conditions that seemed to be occurring toward the end of the spring 2009 season in the Pacific was accompanied by a slackening of onshore winds, especially in California. Steve Rottenborn, Mike Rogers, Jeff Davis, and Ed Pandolfino write that in the early part of the spring, the "winds generated considerable upwelling and cold sea surface temperatures, conditions accompanied by high marine productivity and krill abundance." When these conditions abated, food became scarce, and Common Murres, Brandt's Cormorants, several species of gull, and other seabirds suffered breeding failure and in some cases high mortality. The association between wind, upwelling, and bird productivity has been understood in the eastern North Pacific for some time, though other factors, such as epidemic disease, sometimes complicate the picture. In the East, however, very little research has been done on the effects, for instance, of strong southwesterly winds on colonial waterbirds. Such offshore winds are known, to fishermen at least, to make fishing poor over large areas of the South Atlantic Bight—and known to birders to make counts of jaegers and other migrants rather low in spring. If the North Atlantic Oscillation is relevant to such conditions, perhaps we should be more mindful of its status as we seek to relate what we see out birding to not just weather but also climate.

### Eurasian ... settlers?

We have become resigned to the idea that Eurasian Collared-Dove may soon be renamed Pandemic Collared-Dove, in honor of its ever-expanding range, and most contributors who live within earshot of one or two (many of us) remember the days before we heard its faintly squeam-inducing flight call,



**Figure 10.** This male Ruff, which spent 16-23 (here 18) May 2009 at the Madera sewage treatment ponds in Madera County, was the Northern California region's first ever for late May. Five Ruffs, three of them well inland, have previously lingered into May in Northern California, one as late as 9 May. Associated with this late date was a high hormonal level that led the bird to display to a nearby Black-necked Stilt! Photograph by Gary Woods.



**Figure 11.** This Eurasian Teal, present in Newton, Massachusetts throughout the spring 2009 season (here 17 March), was paired with a hen Mallard—and he defended her aggressively from all interlopers. This subspecies appears to be increasing in both the Northeast and the Northwest, along with intergrades between the nominate subspecies and the American subspecies *carolinensis*, Green-winged Teal. Photograph by John Crookes.

which recalls a similar noise made by Curly Howard (Jerome Horwitz) of the Three Stooges, when he noticed something interesting. But these almost-ubiquitous Eurasians are only the most conspicuous of escapee-visitors from the Old World. Ontario and especially Michigan and Québec experienced

what appeared to be a “flight” of Common Chaffinches in May 2009 involving over a dozen birds, and European Goldfinches were even more widespread in the Midwest and southern Canada. While no one suggests that these birds were anything other than escaped cage birds (from intentional releases in Illi-

nois?), the matter of provenance may become less interesting than the question of the status of such species as breeding birds. A Eurasian Tree Sparrow at the famous Whitefish Point feeders on Michigan's Upper Peninsula 20 May would seem to fit a recent pattern of recent expansion from its core range (this season involving one in Boone County, Missouri, and 12 in Rock Island County, Illinois), but one wonders whether some of these birds might have been among those birds released in Illinois recently? Four Hooded Crows at Beebe Plain, Québec near the U.S. border 28 May made a nice counterpoint to Hooded Merganser, Warbler, and Oriole in that province this season; but if a foursome, what are the chances that at least one male or one female is among them? Pretty good!

We know that “wild” Eurasian birds occasionally linger to nest in North America, or at least attempt to do so; spring Ruffs (Figure 10), which seem to be increasing in the past 10 years after a few decades of apparent decline, give rise to hope that the species will take root as a permanent breeder in North America's high latitudes. The *North American Birds* network has seen ever-increasing reports of what we call “Eurasian Teal,” the nominate subspecies of Green-winged Teal, often called just “Teal” or “Common Teal” in other publications. Moreover, reports of intergrade (Eurasian × Green-winged) teal have been on the rise, not just in the Pacific Northwest, which has both keen observers and abundant waterfowl, but also in the Northeast, which reported 20 Eurasians and nine intergrades between New Jersey and Nova Scotia this spring. Are we simply paying more attention to teal, or are more Eurasian Teal visiting nowadays? I suspect the latter case is true, and with more birds from perhaps both the Pacific and Atlantic sides of North America visiting, intergrade individuals are bound to increase. One ambitious Eurasian Teal in Massachusetts even laid claim to a female Mallard this spring (Figure 11)!

### Keen eyes

Keeping our eyes on some uncommon prizes, we should commend here not just the observers who turned up the marvelous birds digested above but also some of the subtler and stranger birds of spring 2009. A Magnificent Hummingbird × Anna's Hummingbird near Eureka, California 2-5 April was surely among these, as was a Magnificent Hummingbird × White-cared Hummingbird hybrid at the famed Davis Mountains Resort, in far-western Texas 29 April–11 May. See these



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Figure 12. This large rail at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, Socorro County, New Mexico 10-12 (here 11) May 2009 was identified by Gulf Coast rail experts and others as a typical Gulf Coast Clapper Rail—a species not previously recorded in New Mexico. Photograph by Nancy E. Hetrick.

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Figure 13. This pair of Eastern Bluebirds, nesting in southwestern New Mexico at Playas, Hidalgo County 10 April 2009, appears to represent the eastern subspecies *sialis*, now an annual breeder in New Mexico's Rio Grande Valley. This locale is in view of the Chiricahua Mountains in Arizona, where the southwestern subspecies *fulva* breeds. Photograph by James R. Morgan.

glamorous birds in the Pictorial Highlights section. Last but not least, from one of the most interest states for bird records in the past decades, New Mexico, there were two gems not to be overlooked. First, a reported King Rail from Bosque del Apache (Figure 12) was determined, after much discussion and study, to be a Clapper Rail—a long way from home, whether it came from California, Arizona, or Texas—but at least some authorities feel that a Gulf coast population is involved. In southwestern New Mexico, at Playas, keen observers noted a nesting pair of “Eastern” East-

ern Bluebirds (nominat *sialis*), just a stone's throw from the nesting range of southwestern *fulva*. The mantra we hear from all of the world's great birders: *Look at each bird with a fresh and critical eye.*

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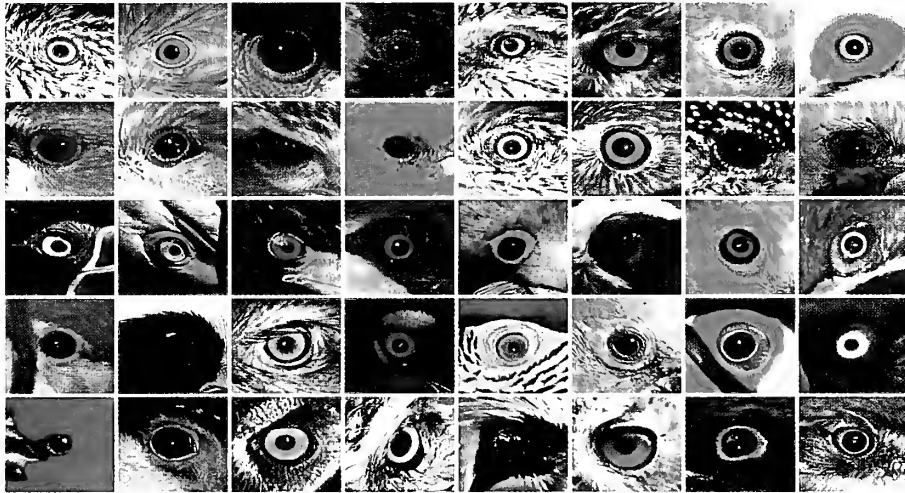


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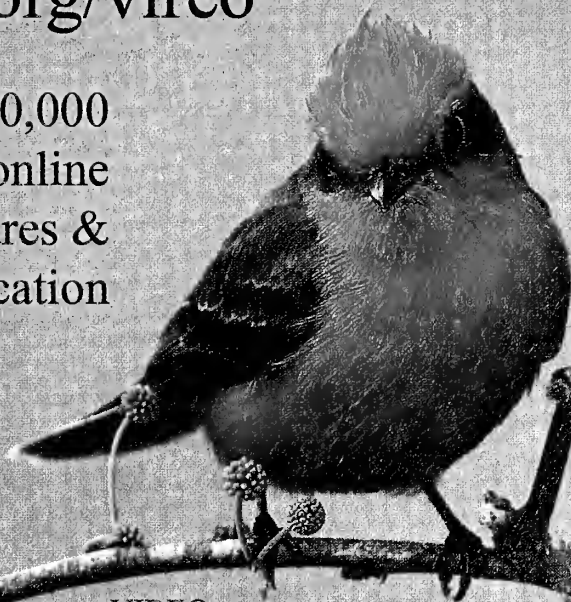


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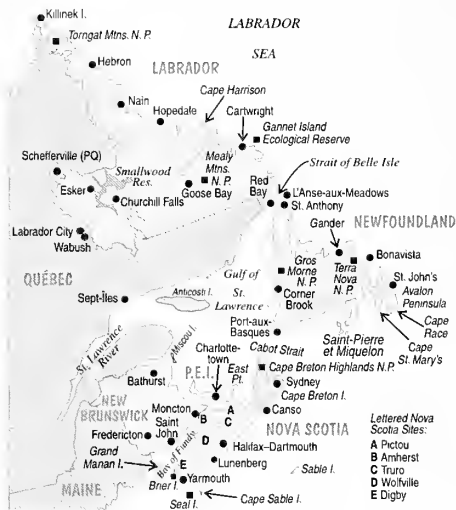
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# Atlantic Provinces & St. Pierre et Miquelon



## Blake Maybank

Across the Atlantic provinces, March was colder ( $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and wetter (+60%) than average, while April and May were warmer ( $+2.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), April being wetter than normal (+60%) and May much drier (-30%). Ground snow cover persisted into early April, and the winter's pattern of twice-weekly storms continued through mid-April, but thereafter there were few significant weather events to hinder migration. The island of Newfoundland had a rougher time of it, as the Avalon endured another winter and spring of heavy snow, though May was not especially harsh. Two early fallouts of Neotropical migrants made news in the Region, and these are treated in depth in a paper included in this issue.

Many rarities are still reported without any details and/or documentation. A few such reports are included herein, but only with the advice of the local compilers. Nevertheless, species of notable rarity and/or those difficult to identify are always excluded from this report if they lack documentation.

Abbreviations: Brier (Brier I., NS); C.S.I. (Cape Sable I., NS); Grand Manan (Grand Manan archipelago, NB); H.R.M. (Halifax Regional Municipality, NS); Newfoundland (the island of Newfoundland and Labrador); P.E.I. (Prince Edward I.); S.P.M. (Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, France).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH GROUSE

The overwintering *flavirostris* Greater White-fronted Goose in Halifax was last noted 12 Mar. On 15 Apr, another was photographed at Isle Lamèque, NB (*vide* ST). Most northbound Snow Geese in the Region pass through New Brunswick, where the peak count was 3500 at

Atholville 30 Apr (RD), including 8 blue morphs. A group of 5 Snow Geese was at Wolfville, NS 8 Mar, and one at South Harbour Beach, Cape Breton I., NS 12-26 May was rare for the island (Fritz McEvoy). There was an unprecedented influx of Ross's Geese into Prince Edward I., where the province enjoyed its 3rd through 5th records, generally within large flocks of Canada Geese: 21 Mar at Tryon (ph. DO); 3 & 11 Apr at Malpeque Bay (Les Holmans; DO, DM, ph.); and 11 Apr at Borden (DO, DM, ph.). Oddly, Nova Scotia remains the only one of the four Atlantic provinces without a record of Ross's Goose. Two Cackling Geese within a flock of 11 Snow Geese 24 May at Labrador City, NL were the first for the province (GP, Lorne Slaney, Steve Boone). The Avalon Pen. had a typical complement of a dozen or so Eurasian Wigeons, and 6 were noted in Nova Scotia and 4 in New Brunswick. Freshwater marsh duck numbers continue to increase in Nova Scotia due to ongoing marsh development. On 19 Apr, along the Fundy shore of Cumberland, NS, there were 10 Gadwalls, 30 American Wigeons, 31 Northern Shovelers, and 145 Ring-necked Ducks (BMY). Two Gadwalls at Tamarack Cr., NL 9 May (m.ob.) were new to w. Labrador. A male Garganey at St. John's, NL 15-17 May (KK et al., ph.) was the province's 3rd: the previous records were also in mid-May. Eurasian Teal may be increasing in the Region. Single males were at Canning, Kings, NS 28 Mar (EM), Fort Lawrence, Cumberland, NS 15 May (Jeff Ogden), Waterside, NB 10 Apr (Bill & Marguerite Winsor), and Jemseg, NB 16 Apr (JW). In addition, Marie Reid photographed a large flock of migrant Green-winged Teal on frozen Cow Bay Pond, NS 2 Apr and circulated a low-resolution copy of the photograph. When the original image was magnified and studied, it became apparent that the flock held at least one male Eurasian Teal and up to 5 male Eurasian  $\times$  Green-winged intergrades. Another male intergrade teal was at Three Fathom Harbour, NS 11 May (Elizabeth Doull). Observers are encouraged to study spring Green-winged Teal more closely; currently, there is no way known to identify females to subspecies in the field. A count of 61 Harlequin Ducks at St. Pierre 17 Mar is an encouraging sign. An



Representing a third record for Prince Edward Island was this Ross's Goose at Tryon 21 March 2009; two others were also found in the province in spring 2009. Photograph by Dwayne Oakley.

impressive flock of 75 Barrow's Goldeneyes at Cap Brule, NB 26 Mar contained a Common Goldeneye  $\times$  Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid (Roger LeBlanc). A flock of 5 Hooded Mergansers at Labrador City, NL 18 May (GP) was notable so far n. in the Region. Spruce Grouse are usually elusive, especially when searched for, so 22 females near the Smoky Mountain Rd., Labrador City, NL 26 Mar (GP) was a superb count.

## TUBENOSES THROUGH RAPTORS

A well-described Audubon's Shearwater was reported on the offshore Scotian Shelf, NS in mid-Apr (Karel Allard), at a time of strong southerly winds that brought us several other



Spring 2009 brought an unprecedented number of Eurasian Teal—as well as intergrades of Eurasian with Green-winged Teal—into the Atlantic Provinces. At top left is an intergrade among Green-winged, found 9 April 2009 near Canning, Nova Scotia. At top right is a pure Eurasian with a Green-winged, also 9 April, at Fort Lawrence. Below is a sample from a group of 26 largely drake teal noted 22 March on the waning ice of Cow Bay Lake, near Dartmouth. Among them were a pure Eurasian (left) and several apparent intergrades. Photographs by Richard Stern (top left), Jeff Ogden (top right), and Marie Reid (below).



This Sandhill Crane twosome near Canard, Nova Scotia 28 May 2009 might be a pair but may be from different populations. The one at left has distinctly shorter bill, neck, and tarsus, as well as a paler gray nape, not contrasting as much with its white "cheeks." These are features of the tundra-nesting subspecies *canadensis*. The larger, heavily brown-stained bird at right seems not quite as "rangy" as the prairie-boreal subspecies *tabida*, which breeds in the continent's center to southeastern Alaska (and spreading eastward in recent years). It might be from the widespread taiga-breeding population, sometimes designated subspecies *rowani*, a taxon that may be best considered a cline of intermediates between *tabida* and *canadensis*. Photograph by John Brett.

southern overshoots and strays. The species has yet to be photographically documented in Nova Scotian waters, although there are convincing sight records. Audubon's are typically extremely scarce even off the Carolinas at this time of year, making this a most unexpected report. Nova Scotia experienced one of its strongest "southern heron" spring seasons in many years, with some birds arriving as early as the first week of Apr. Thereafter, egrets and herons were reported across the province, and with some birds wandering, it was impossible to obtain an accurate count of the number of individuals involved. Tricolored Herons were especially welcome, as they are not seen every year. New Brunswick enjoyed some of the same largesse, though with lower numbers of birds (except, oddly, for Glossy Ibis). Prince Edward I. hosted little of the influx, though a Tricolored Heron was at Stratford 25 May (DSh); there are few prior records for that province. St. Pierre and Newfoundland also fared poorly in the receipt of egrets, but Newfoundland could brag about having the rarest egret of the season, a Little Egret in the Codroy Valley 29 May (Dave Brown, Jen Harding, ph.), furnishing the 8th provincial

**Table 1.** Records of wading birds from the Atlantic Provinces and St. Pierre et Miquelon, April–May 2009.

Species/Province	NS	NB	PEI	SPM	NL
Great Egret	40+	5	1	0	1
Snowy Egret	12+	3	0	2	1
Little Blue Heron	4	2	0	0	1
Tricolored Heron	7	1	1	0	0
Cattle Egret	3	2	1	0	0
Green Heron	4	3	0	1	0
Glossy Ibis	0	2	0	0	0

record.

Turkey Vultures continue their gradual colonization of the Maritimes provinces. They are most prevalent in New Brunswick (the only province where breeding has been confirmed), where there was a notable concentration of 30 at Mount Pleasant, Charlotte 14 Apr (Ralph Eldridge). In Nova Scotia, most sightings were along the Fundy coast, especially North Mountain s. to Brier, and in the Cobequid Hills around Apple R. and Advocate Harbour. The species is barely annual on Prince Edward I., where this spring one was reported at Earnscliff 24 Apr (Kevin Doyle) and 2 were at Cape Egmont 15 Apr

(Bill Harford). A Swallow-tailed Kite paused briefly on the roof of a house in Truro, NS 10 Apr (ph. Kimberley Forster). Fortunately, the photographer recognized the rarity of her remarkable find and obtained several excellent images before the kite flew off. Of the seven previous provincial records, only one has (barely adequate) photographic documentation. The kite's occurrence might be related to Fall-out #2. Repeated sightings of a Golden Eagle near Wabush, Labrador 13-23 May may refer to a single bird (GP, m.ob.).

**RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS**

A Purple Gallinule was discovered in a ditch along Rte. 450, near Lavillette, Gloucester, NB 9 May (Alphonse Thibodeau). A Common Moorhen on St. Pierre 6-17 May (LJ, m.ob., ph.) was most unexpected and co-operative, though not unprecedented. Ten Sandhill Cranes were noted on the mainland, 3 in Nova Scotia and 7 in New Brunswick, including a pair near Havelock, NB that has returned for the 12th spring—but with still no confirmation of breeding!

European Golden-Plovers are essentially annual in e. Newfoundland during the period 20 Apr–15 May, especially at Cape Bonavista, from which all this spring's sightings originated, including one 22 Apr, 5 on 1 May, 8 on 5 May, and 3 on 13 May (Jon Joy et al.). Nova Scotia's 12th Wilson's Plover was found and

photographed at Sable I. 7 May (ZL). A group of 17 Killdeer at Wabush airport, Labrador 20 May represented a local record high count for this species, near the edge of its range (GP, Maxine Lewis). Two Black-necked Stilts in Liverpool, NS, 14-28 Apr (DP et al., ph.) brought the province's total records of this now nearly annual species to 17. A Greater Yellowlegs at St. Pierre 9 Apr was record early by four days (FPA). Willets at the edge of their range in the Region included the pair returning to Renew's, NL for the 3rd year (still no evidence of breeding; *fide* BMT) and one at St. Pierre 7-8 May (LJ). Prince Edward I.'s first Whimbrel of the season was notably early on 26 Apr at Little Harbour (DO, DS). A Eurasian Whimbrel on

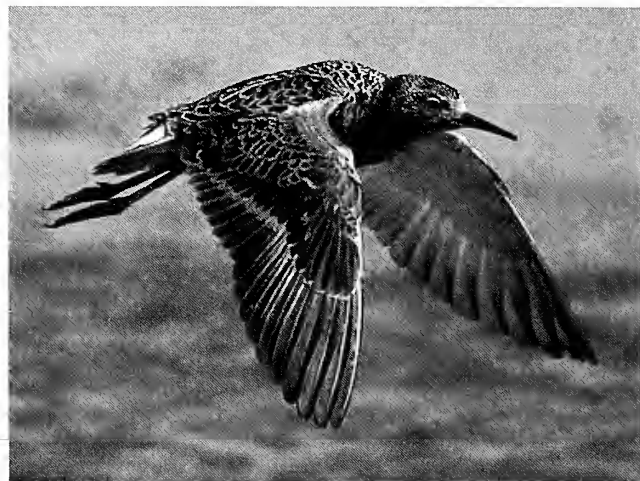


A brief visitor to Truro, Nova Scotia 10 April 2009, this Swallow-tailed Kite was only the second to be photographed in the province, of seven or eight prior records. Photograph by Kimberley Forster.

Sable I., NS 26 Apr–early May (ZL) made 12th or 13th provincial record. A Marbled Godwit on C.S.I. 26-31 Apr (MK et al.) was about the 26th for the province. There was a minor influx of Ruffs into the Region in late May, with single males at Fredricton, NB 18-



A Wilson's Plover found 7 May 2009 on Sable Island, Nova Scotia was a great find, as only about a dozen have occurred here, only four photographed, and only three since the mid-1980s. Photograph by Zoe Lucas.



Ruff had never been photographed in New Brunswick before the spring of 2009, when these two images were taken less than a week and 240 kilometers apart. The male was present at Fredericton 18-20 (here 20) May, while the female was at Maissonnette Dune 26 May. New Brunswick has fewer than 25 records since the early 1970s. Photographs by Halli MacDonald (male) and Robert Doiron (female).

20 May (ph. Peter Pearce), Stephenville Crossing, NL 18 May (Paul Linegar), and Renew, NL 25 May (ph., *fide* BMT), and a female at Maissonnette Dune, NB 26 May (ph. RD). There are more than 20 previous records of the species for New Brunswick,



These Black-necked Stilts at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia were nicely photographed 18 April 2009; records continue to increase north of past range across much of North America. Photograph by Eric Mills.

but this spring's Ruff and Reeve are the first to be documented by photographs in the province. A Wilson's Phalarope at Little Harbour, PEI 27 May (DO, DS) was a very rare provincial spring record.

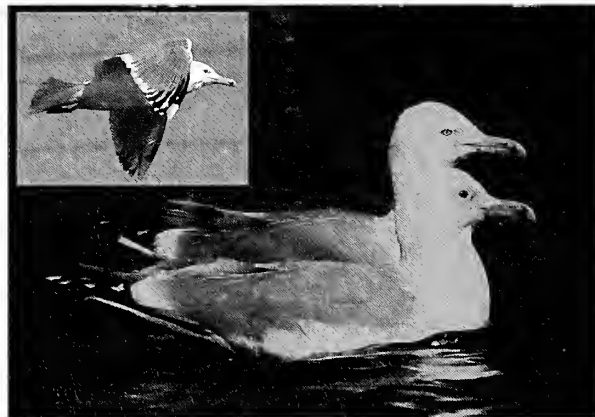
The 22nd Franklin's Gull for Nova Scotia was photographed at Hartlen Pt., 21 May (MK). There was a modest arrival of ad. Laughing Gulls in the Region. The first turned up at St. John's, NL 18 Apr, notably early, and lingered through 3 May (m.ob.). Reports of other singles included one unusually far inland at Scotch L., York, NB 4 May (*fide* Bev Schneider), one at Broad Cove, NS 8-9 May (Sylvia Fullerton), one at Bon Portage I., NS 16 May (Claire Diggins, m.ob.), and one at Cow Bay, NS 21 May (MK); 3-4 were on

Grand Manan 21-22 May (ST et al.). The wintering ad. Yellow-legged Gull in St. John's, NL was last seen 25 Mar. Iceland Gulls, routine in the Region at this season, are rarely discussed in this report, but they are worth examining. Pascal Asselin of St. Pierre decided to count the Iceland Gulls in the harbor 8 Mar and was astonished to find 325 present. We don't expect large counts of white-winged gulls in Apr, so tallies of 325 at Riverview, NB 17 Apr and 640 in *Prince*, PEI 19 Apr (DO) were noteworthy. And from Nova Scotia, Ian McLaren offers this Iceland Gull observation: "I am struck by the number of purely-white-winged Iceland Gulls lingering at the mouth of Halifax Harbour. There were six first-cycle birds and an adult 19 Apr. It may be that these are Kumlien's, bleached by the late winter and spring sun, rather than nominate Iceland Gulls from Greenland, but it's a problem to be solved. Do these northern gulls with limited melanin in primaries bleach more readily than ones with much more?" Or are they nominate Iceland Gulls from Greenland? A Slaty-backed Gull in St. John's 25 Mar was the same individual that had been noted twice in Feb. Twenty Caspian Terns at Prince Edward Island N.P. 28 May (DS) was a good spring count; the species is a scarce breeder in the province.

### DOVES THROUGH STARLING

Durlan Ingersoll found 2 Yellow-billed Cuckoos on Grand Manan 10 May; they are rare in spring, and these were unusually early. A few

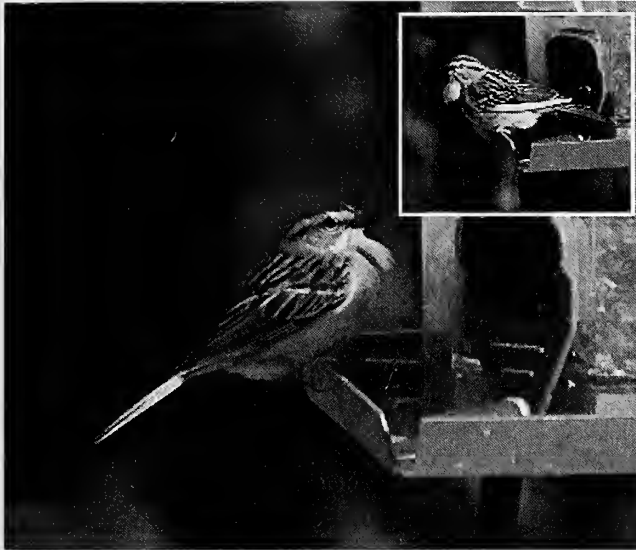
Northern Hawk Owls made the news, not surprisingly, following the multiple reports this past winter. One was found dead 13 Mar at Green Hill, *Pictou*, NS (KM); another was seen at Waterside, NB, 20 Mar (DC, Mary Majka); and another was at East Pt., PEI 28 Apr (Jim Sutton). The 5th Great Gray Owl for Prince Edward I. was heard calling just w of Summerside on 10 Mar (Ray Cooke). Whippoor-wills are close to extirpation in the Region, so a singing bird in Fairview, PEI 31 May+ (Linda Thomas, Roberta Palmer) was slightly encouraging. Numbers of Chimney



The photographer found this odd Herring Gull or hybrid at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia (here 8 April 2009). With dark irides and reddish orbital rings, the bird is not typical of the American subspecies *smithsonianus*, but these, in context of the rest of the bird's features, also do not fit well for other taxa in the Herring Gull group. Photograph by Bernard Burke.

Swifts in Nova Scotia remain distressingly low: the largest spring roost in New Glasgow averaged just over 200 swifts a night, down about 33% from last year. Two swifts, however, did reach St. Pierre in May, where they are not annual.

The wintering Red-headed Woodpecker on Cape Breton I., NS was last reported 26 Mar.



The "beard" on this Chipping Sparrow in East Montrose, Nova Scotia 25 May 2009 could be the result of some sort of mutation or tumor. Photograph by Father Joseph Christensen.

The strong autumn and winter flight of Red-bellied Woodpeckers across the mainland provinces dissipated this spring, with only 8 in New Brunswick (including 3 on Grand Manan I. 23 May) and 15 or so across mainland Nova Scotia, where none were noted in late May. There were no signs of any nesting activity. St. Pierre enjoyed several less-than-annual flycatchers: Eastern Wood-Pewee 22-23 May (PH, PB); Least Flycatcher 24 (PHA) & 26 May (LJ); Eastern Phoebe 1 May (LJ); and several annual (though rare) Eastern Kingbirds, the first quite early 23 Apr, with 7 between 12 & 29 May.

A singing Loggerhead Shrike at Sandy Cove, H.R.M., NS 10-16 Apr (HT, Laura Elliot et al.) furnished just the 6th provincial record since 1980 for this formerly annually occurring species. It was a productive spring for White-eyed Vireos, which may yet nest in the Region. New Brunswick had one at Mispec, Saint John 4 May (MC) and up to 3 on Grand Manan I. 20 (MC), 22 (MC, DI), & 26 May (DI). Singles in Nova Scotia were at Jeddore Oyster Ponds, H.R.M. 28 Apr (LB, ph.) and Hartlen Pt., H.R.M. 2-4 May (Terry Paquet et al.). A singing Yellow-throated Vireo at Nichol's L., H.R.M. 30 Apr (ph. BMy) was away from migrant traps, in suitable breeding habitat, and was only the 2nd singing individual of this species found in the province. An extralimital Purple Martin reached St. Pierre 13-19 May (RE et al.), where there was also a rare Cliff Swallow 1-4 May (PH). The only Carolina Wren reported was in York, NB 15 May (Beverly Schneider). A singing Sedge Wren was discovered 31 May at the Tiddville Marsh, Digby Neck, NS (Becky Stewart, m.ob.); it persisted well into breeding season, though it did not appear to attract a mate. There are two previous breeding records for the province. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, all in May, were split 5/2 between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Nearly all spring wheatear records in the Region are from May, so a Northern Wheatear at St. Pierre 6 Mar (FP) was remarkably early and made only the 2nd spring record for the department. Perhaps not coincidentally, there was another early sighting, 18 Mar at Martinique Beach, NS (Bill McCormick). An Eastern Bluebird at St. Pierre 29 May (ph. PB) was but the 2nd local record, the previous being in Dec 1994. Nova Scotia's 9th Mountain Bluebird, at Oak Hill L., Dartmouth, H.R.M. 10 May (Earl MacDonald), lingered only five minutes, but during that time it was well studied and described. Wood Thrush continues its decline in the Region,

**Table 2.** Fallout #1: Neotropical migrants recorded in the Atlantic Provinces, 4 April 2009 and later.

Yellow-throated Warbler	4-5 Apr	Hartlen Pt., H.R.M.	Liz & Shane Gidney
Worm-eating Warbler	4 Apr	Jeddore Ponds, H.R.M.	LB
Kentucky Warbler, male	6 Apr	C.S.I., dead on beach	JN
Hooded Warbler, male	5-6 Apr	Hartlen Pt., H.R.M.	MK, m.ob.
Summer Tanager, male	5 Apr	Cornwallis, NS	Liz & Shane Gidney
Summer Tanager, male	5-17 Apr	Grand Manan I.	DI
Summer Tanager, male	6 Apr	Bedford, NS	m.ob.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak, male	6 Apr	Saint John, NB	Gwen & Clint Galley
Rose-breasted Grosbeak, male	7 Apr	C.S.I.	JN
Blue Grosbeak, male	5 Apr	Little Lepreau, Charlotte, NB	Louise Malloch
Indigo Bunting, males	4-5 Apr	8 across Nova Scotia	m.ob.
Indigo Bunting, males	4-7 Apr	7 across New Brunswick	m.ob.

**Table 3.** Fallout #2: Neotropical migrants recorded in the Atlantic Provinces, 8-9 April 2009 and later.

Yellow-throated Warbler	16 Apr	St. Pierre 7th SPM record	FP
Worm-eating Warbler	9 Apr	Hartlen Pt., H.R.M.	Elizabeth Doull
Common Yellowthroat	8 Apr	Hartlen Pt., H.R.M.	LB
Summer Tanager, males	8-11 Apr	Nine birds across Nova Scotia: 2 later died, one taken into care	m.ob.
Summer Tanager, male	9-14 Apr	St. Vincents, Avalon Pen., NL	KK
Scarlet Tanager, male	8 Apr	Hartlen Pt., H.R.M.	MK
Scarlet Tanager, male	10 Apr	Pictou, NS	Tim Brennan
Rose-breasted Grosbeak, male	14-26 Apr	Bay L'Argent, NL	Freeman House
Blue Grosbeak, male	9 Apr	Lewisporte, NL	Warren Ball
Indigo Bunting, males	14-18 Apr	3 in n. Nova Scotia	m.ob.

**Table 4.** Arrival of Neotropical migrants in the Atlantic Provinces 21-23 April 2009 and later.

Summer Tanager, male	21 Apr	Louisbourg, Cape Breton I., NS	<i>fide</i> SM
Summer Tanager, male	21 Apr	Kilmuir, Kings, PEI 3rd provincial record	Sid Watts
Summer Tanager, male	23 Apr	Brier I., NS	June Swift
Summer Tanager, male	24 Apr-2 May	Tryon, Queens, PEI 4th provincial record	Betty Howatt
Scarlet Tanager, males	23-24 Apr	2 in Lunenburg, NS	m.ob.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak, male	25-26 Apr	Renews, NL	Clara Dunne
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	23-30 Apr	30+ across Nova Scotia	m.ob.
Blue Grosbeak	21-28 Apr	8 (6 males) across mainland Nova Scotia	m.ob.
Blue Grosbeak, male	24-25 Apr	East Baltic, PEI 11th provincial record	Sheila Eastman
Indigo Bunting, male	24 Apr	St. Pierre, record early by one day	Joseph Beaupertuis
Indigo Bunting, males	24-30 Apr	20+ in Nova Scotia, including 5 males at one feeder in Granville Ferry	m.ob.
Indigo Bunting, male	26 Apr	Bay L'Argent, NL	Freeman House
Indigo Bunting, male	30 Apr-3 May	Port-aux-choix, NL	m.ob.
Bobolink, male	24 Apr	Beach Meadows, Queens, NS	Don MacNeill

**SA** There were two weather-related events—beginning 4 Apr and 8 Apr—that deserve special mention here, though they are treated in greater detail in an article in this issue. These will be labeled Fallout #1 and Fallout #2 (Tables 2, 3). A later arrival of Neotropical migrants in the 3rd week of Apr was not so spectacular, in that many of these species are arriving at the n. edge of breeding range during this period, but the species composition and numbers were significant for the Region (Table 4), as they were for New England, which had many similar records during these events.

On nights preceding both early Apr fallouts, there were deep and extensive low-pressure systems in e. N. America, both producing westerlies in the Caribbean Region and strong southwesterly airflow off the East Coast. Any bird setting out in early evening from the se. U.S.A. or farther south could have been propelled far over the ocean, with no favorable tailwind back to the Atlantic Coast s. of the Northeast and Atlantic Canada. But there were distinct differences in the meteorological patterns underlying the two fallouts. On 2 Apr, birds attempting to cross the Gulf of Mexico toward the se. U.S.A. would have been aided by tailwinds. On 6 Apr, headwinds might have discouraged departure by birds in Mexico or the w. Caribbean, whereas those setting out from South America or the e. Caribbean could later have been forced to make an even wider excursion and a longer flight over the ocean beyond their intended points of landfall.

**Fallout #1.** During mid-to-late afternoon of 4 Apr, several unexpected Neotropical migrants—a Yellow-throated Warbler, a Worm-eating Warbler, and 2 Indigo Buntings—were discovered in Nova Scotia and reported by the few observers active on a day with fog, bouts of rain, and strong southerly and southeasterly winds. The reports encouraged more searching the next day, with 5 more Indigo Buntings, a Hooded Warbler, a Summer Tanager, an Eastern Kingbird, and 2 Purple Martins discovered. During the next two days, there were four new discoveries, including a recently dead Kentucky Warbler. Equal numbers of these early migrants were discovered in both Nova Scotia (18 individuals, nine species) and elsewhere in the Region and from Maine to New York (predominantly Indigo Bunting).

**Fallout #2.** Beginning 8 Apr and through the next day, a new wave of early migrants and vagrants was detected both in Nova Scotia (14 birds, including 8 Summer Tanagers) and elsewhere in the Region (a Summer Tanager and Blue Grosbeak reached Newfoundland, both the earliest of these rare vagrants ever recorded there).

The birds involved in these fallouts had clearly been displaced from areas well s. of Nova Scotia. Almost all are trans-Gulf and/or Caribbean migrants (a Swallow-tailed Kite and a Loggerhead Shrike, both found 10 Apr in Nova Scotia, might not have been part of Fallout #2).

Although more unusually early migrants and vagrants were found in the Region after mid-Apr (especially beginning 22-23 Apr) in Nova Scotia, others had lingered from early Apr (notably Indigo Buntings, tanagers, and grosbeaks at feeders), making later arrival patterns less clear. The very early date for the Eastern Kingbird, 5 Apr on C.S.I. (MN), indicated that it was a participant in Fallout #1. Likewise, of the four reports of Purple Martin totaling 6 birds across Nova Scotia in Apr, 4 were discovered very early, 5-6 Apr, thus likely part of Fallout #1. Sadly, there was no sign this spring that Purple Martins were attempting to re-establish colonies in the province.

with only two credible reports this spring: on St. Pierre 26-27 May (ph. JD), the 5th local record, and a window-stunned bird at the Kouchibouguac N.P. headquarters, NB 27 May (Denis Doucet). There were two wintering Varied Thrushes that remained into spring: the female in Kings, NS was last seen 14 Mar, while the male at North Cardigan, PEI (just the 2nd provincial record) was last reported 31 May. There were 6 Brown Thrashers reported in New Brunswick from late Apr through late May, while Nova Scotia had 5 birds in May, as well as an unusually early arrival 5 Apr, at Hartlen Pt. (MK). A far-flung Northern Mockingbird reached St. Pierre 23 May (PA).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

An Orange-crowned Warbler wintered in Halifax, NS; more remarkably, one at East Pt., PEI 27 May (DSe, DO) was but the 11th provincial record. Five Orange-crowns were noted in New Brunswick in May. A Pine Warbler

survived the winter at Pt. Pleasant Park, Halifax, NS. A rare spring Prairie Warbler (singing!) was at Riverside-Albert, NB 9 May (Gilles Belliveau et al.). On the heels of Prince Edward I.'s 3rd and 4th Summer Tanager records (Table 4), another bird, a male, appeared 23-25 May in Charlottetown, PEI (Cindy MacMaster), in the same locale where the province's first Summer Tanager appeared in 1993. After the Apr influx, there was but one Summer Tanager in Nova Scotia in May.

There were 6 Eastern Towhees in May (an average total), one in Nova Scotia, the rest in New Brunswick. A Clay-colored Sparrow wintered at a Canso, NS feeder (TK). Field Sparrow reports from late Apr through May numbered eight, split equally between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Two different Lark Sparrows discovered in Nova Scotia in Mar had likely wintered nearby. A Grasshopper Sparrow on Machias Seal I., NB 25 May (RE) was a rare spring find. Lorne Slaney, in a determined effort to count Snow Buntings in

the Labrador City, NL area 22 Apr, following heavy snows, tallied 781 birds. A male Indigo Bunting at Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NF 17-18 May was very far afield and may represent a first local record (Carol Ann Wilcox).

A large grackle reported by multiple birders ("four different parties") on C.S.I. 21-23 May was noted first at a local feeder, then in a nearby salt marsh. Details were posted on a local listserv by Clarence Stevens, Jr. Later, at a feeder in nearby Barrington Passage 25 May, another large grackle was reported (presumably the same bird), and a poor photograph was secured. Some are satisfied that the bird in question was a Boat-tailed Grackle, which would be a provincial (and Regional) first. The bird was described as having dark eyes, whereas the expected Boat-tailed Grackle subspecies *torreyi* has yellow eyes. The record awaits review by the Nova Scotia Birds Records Committee. In what was an average spring, 10+ Orchard Orioles were noted across Nova Scotia in May, with 8 in New Brunswick. Baltimore Orioles are scarce on Prince Edward I., so it was gratifying that a pair returned to Cornwall for the 4th straight year (Sharon Clark). A male Yellow-headed Blackbird took up residence at the Bell Street Marsh, Moncton, NB 10-31 May (Janet Cormier et al.). Following this winter's modest redpoll incursion, there were still sightings through mid-May, among which were 4 Hoary Redpolls in New Brunswick and 2 in Nova Scotia. The decline in House Sparrow numbers across the Region is real, though there has been no systematic census. But on well-watched Brier I., NS, for example, there are but two pairs left (EM), and others report other local declines.

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Mean temperatures for the spring were close to normal throughout Québec, with anomalies ranging from  $-0.6^{\circ}\text{C}$  on the Lower North Shore to  $+0.8^{\circ}\text{C}$  in southern Québec. Overall precipitation quantities were close to or below seasonal normals in most regions, with the exception of some areas of extreme northern Québec. The total of 16.7 cm received at La Grande between March and May represented the station's highest amount since 1976. On the other hand, in many areas of the south and some areas of central Québec, the season was characterized by below-normal snowfall. The number of hours of sunshine was particularly higher than normal in Montréal, Québec City, Gaspé, and Sept-Îles. May was also fairly windy along the St. Lawrence River Valley. In late May, strong westerly winds were associated with some spectacular diurnal migrations of warblers flying windward almost at ground level on the North Shore. But these strong winds were probably not the ultimate cause for the appearance of some extreme rarities like Black-capped Vireo and Hooded Oriole.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH IBIS

Greater White-fronted Geese were reported in above-average numbers, as evidenced by a total of at least 44 individuals from 22 different localities. A rare blue-morph Ross's Goose was reported at Cap Tourmente 18 May but without supporting photographs (S. Rioux, JS. Guénette). A Barnacle Goose found at Victoriaville 19 Apr was photographed by many until 9 May (CR). Single Trumpeter Swans

turned up at Rouyn-Noranda 28 Apr (J. La-pointe), Fàbre 7-10 May (J. Fréchette), and Lac-Dufault 31 May (M. Lessard, S. Prince). A total of 8 Eurasian Wigeons was considered normal. A gathering of 150 Harlequin Ducks at Cap-Bon-Ami 24 May was an exciting find (S. Brodeur). Especially intriguing was an imm. female Willow Ptarmigan found dead 2 Mar at Québec City, presumably after a collision with a building (ph. N. Davignon, *vide* M. Gosselin). The specimen was sent to the Canadian Museum of Nature for examination. The only other specimen for Québec City dated back to Dec 1895.

A count of 350 migrating Red-throated Loons in a one-hour period at Cap d'Espoir 5 Apr was notable for this early date (AC). An Eared Grebe at Victoriaville 1-4 May was photographed by many (D. Gagné et al.). Only a handful of records exist for this species in the Region. Single Cattle Egrets showed up at Bonaventure 20 May (L. Arsenault), Forestville 30-31 May (L. Boucher, *vide* JPB), and Île Verte 31 May (C. Soulard et al.). A Green Heron at Tadoussac 30 May represented just the 2nd record for the North Shore (SB, P. Côté). The lone Glossy Ibis of the spring was seen at Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce 3 May (L. Laflamme, N. Barden).

## VULTURES THROUGH CUCKOO

A Black Vulture was located at Rivière-au-Renard 29 May-2 Jun (J. Bernatchez et al., ph. Y. English). An ad. Cooper's Hawk at Gaspé 6 May furnished a rare sighting for the Gaspé Pen. (S. Marchand). Out-of-range Sandhill Cranes were spotted singly in the Magdalen Is. 10-25 May (DGG, CA. Gaudet et al.) and at Ivujivik, Nunavik 27 May (*vide* G. Cyr). A high count of 40 was notable between Hérouxville and Saint-Narcisse 10 Apr (*vide* M. Sokolyk). For the 3rd year, a pair successfully nested at Dundee (ph. DG). A stunning find was a Whooping Crane seen soaring over Mont Saint-Hilaire 25 Apr (C. Côté, M. Laramée). The plumage showed some faint brown color, on the back and on the head also, suggesting that this individual was in its first year.

A Piping Plover at Gaspé 22 May was apparently the first since 1973 for the Gaspé Pen. (ph. D. Jalbert). Single Willets at Baie-du-Febvre 19-23 Apr (record-early date) (M. Raymond), at Rivière-Ouelle 10 May (CG, CA), and at Port Saint-François 22 May (D. Lever) were apparently of the *inornata* subspecies, while one at Barachois 31 May was of the nominate subspecies (PP, R. Bisson et al.). Rare in spring, single Stilt Sandpipers were

seen at Amos 18 May (P. Perreault) and at Rivière-Ouelle 20 May (JF Rousseau). Even more surprising in spring, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper brightened Val-d'Or 30 May (ph. LI et al.). A Ruff visited Masson 5-7 May (J. Montplaisir et al.). Single Wilson's Phalaropes were considered unusual at Longue-Rive 21-23 May (F. Gallant et al.) and at Val d'Or 29 May (R. Ladurantaye). A total of 8 Little Gulls, all in May, was about normal for spring. Single Laughing Gulls were encountered at Paspébiac 14 May (AC) and Rivière-Ouelle 23 May (CA, CG). A first-cycle Franklin's Gull stopped at Pointe-au-Pic 30 May (D. Boutin, JL), while an ad. was at nearby La Malbaie 31 May (G. Lemelin, K. La Plante).

A Eurasian Collared-Dove at Sainte-Félicité 22-26 Apr provided our 6th Regional record (ph. J. Deschênes), while a White-winged Dove at Cap Tourmente 22-23 May was not totally unexpected, as close to two-dozen records are now known in the Region (D. Lavoie et al.). Rare in spring, single Yellow-billed Cuckoos turned up at Laval 15 May (F. Bussièrès) and Gatineau Park 23 May (J. & A. Brisebois).

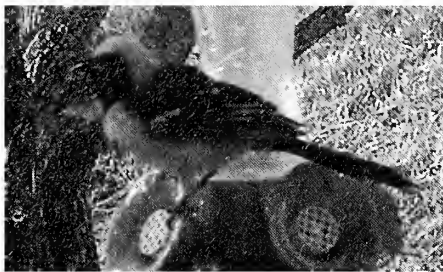
## OWLS THROUGH WARBLERS

Late Snowy Owls included singles at both Boucherville (M. Ostiguy) and Bergeronnes (R. Pintiaux) 30 May. Northern Hawk Owls were still widely reported in Mar, whereas Great Gray Owls were scarcer, with some lingering on the s. shore until May, as evidenced by singles at Rivière-Ouelle 10 May (CG, CA), Rimouski 15 May (JM. Turgeon), and Île Verte



It was almost a miracle that the photographer encountered this vagrant Black-capped Vireo, which was present only for a short period at Pointe-aux-Outardes, near Baie-Comeau, Québec 24 May 2009. Photograph by Jean-Pierre Barry.

23 May+ (P. Franche, Y. Gauthier et al.). An encouraging count of 739 Chimney Swifts entering a chimney roost was tallied at Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 18 May (A. Beauchamp). Single Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported in the Laurentides region at Lachute 9-10 May (ph. C. Dagenais, C. Barfuss) and Blainville 11-14 May (ph. J. Desmeules, E. René). A total of 8 Red-bellied Woodpeckers was re-



This adult male Hooded Oriole was fed at a hummingbird feeder at Macamic, near LaSarre, Abitibi, Québec 30 May (here) through 2 June 2009. Photograph by A. Lebel.



One of the four male Common Chaffinches seen in the central part of Québec in late May and June 2009, this bird was photographed at Saint-Fulgence 28 May 2009. Photograph by Germain Savard.

ported, including pairs at Morgan Arboretum in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 27 Apr (J. Koppes) and at Philipsburg 9 May (M. Arnaudin). It was a most excellent spring for vagrant White-eyed Vireos in the Region, with birds reported from Sherbrooke 29 Apr–2 May (R. Tanguay), Cap Tourmente 14 (C. Vachon, D. Boutin, Y. Hamel) & 22–24 May (R. Lepage, m. ob.), Québec City 18–22 May (L. Mesely, m. ob., ph.), and Rimouski 26 May (ph. G. Proulx). A Black-capped Vireo photographed 24 May at Pointe-aux-Outardes, Côte-Nord, some 2900 km from its nearest breeding grounds, was an astounding first record for Québec and the 3rd for Canada af-

ter British Columbia's record last fall. The male vireo entertained JP. Barry for two minutes and was not relocated subsequently.

Four Hooded Crows of most certainly captive origin were photographed on a lawn at Beebe Plain, near the U.S. border 28 May (P. Vallières). A Townsend's Solitaire at Rimouski 3 May was surprising after last winter's shutout (C. Hébert). An out-of-range Wood Thrush was at Aiguebelle Park, Abitibi 30 May, one of that region's very few records and only recent one (LI, JG, É. Hovington). A male Blue-winged Warbler banded at the Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue McGill B.O. 14 May was the station's 2nd (MA. Hudson); single males were also found at Lac-Brome 16 May (G. Poirier) and Godmanchester 22 May+ (A. Quenneville, L. Goneau). A Black-throated Blue Warbler at Bromont 27 Apr tied the previous early arrival date (JP. Santerre). A male Townsend's Warbler was beautifully described at Cap Tourmente 17 May (J. Bernier, G. Lord), exactly one year after last year's sight record at the same location. A female Prairie Warbler was at Cap Tourmente 16 May (JPO). Transient or lost Cerulean Warblers were seen singly at Mont-Tremblant Park 15 May (JG. Papineau) and Mount-Royal Park 22 May (SD et al.) A singing male Worm-eating Warbler was observed in Québec City 24 May (JPO, M. Lafleur). An obviously record-early Hooded Warbler was photographed while snow was still on the ground at Rimouski 22 Apr (ph. H. Dionne, A. Patry). The last spring record in the Region dated back to 1997. A record-early Canada Warbler was at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 2 May (M. Beaupré).

### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

It was an even better spring for Summer Tanager than last years' harvest: ad. males were at l'Anse-à-Beaufils 28–29 Apr (record-early date; R. Côté, ph. AC) and Baie-Saint-Paul 3

May (B. Cloutier, ph. A. Henry), a first-spring male was at Jonquière 5–9 May (L. Potvin et al., ph. GS), and a female was at Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive 24 May (C. Charlotte, H. Mead et al.; ph.). A first-spring male Western Tanager was at Roberval 29 Apr–4 May (G. Guay et al., ph. C. Bellemare); the species has now been seen in all but one of the past 11 years in the Region. A Chipping Sparrow at Dundee 25 Mar (DG) could be record early, but the label should be used with caution, considering the unusual number reported last winter. A Lark Sparrow at Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé 20 Apr was record early (ph. AC, Y. Cyr et al.), while another visited Saint-Mathieu-de-Rieux, Bas-St-Laurent 2–3 May (P. Fradette, ph. JL). An ad. male Blue Grosbeak was beautifully documented at Sainte-Luce 29–31 May (L. Lefebvre, ph. JL). A spring first for the archipelago, a Dickcissel was at l'Étang-du-Nord, Magdalen Is. 23 May (DGG et al., ph. AR). An ad. male Yellow-headed Blackbird was at Authier-Nord, Abitibi 24 May (ph. JG, C. Plante). Single ad. male Orchard Orioles were seen at Île de la Visitation (Montréal) 16 May (J. Coutu), Matapédia 22 May (G. Bélanger), and Saint-Armand 31 May+ (N. Bourdon). An ad. male Hooded Oriole at Macamic, Abitibi 30 May–2 Jun (ph. A. Lebel) furnished an astonishing 2nd record for Québec and 3rd record for e. Canada. The Region's previous record, also an ad. male, was found 22 Nov 1998 at Matapédia.

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**SA** A rapid and puzzling flurry of **Common Chaffinch** reports hit the cen. part of the Region in late May, with an additional record in summer in the Québec City region. All records were of single males photographed at feeders, most likely different individuals: Saint-Léonard-de-Portneuf 25 May (ph. JC. Laplante, J. Braga), Baie-Sainte-Catherine 26 May–9 Jun (ph. Y. Tremblay, G. Vallière, *vide SB*), and Saint-Fulgence 28–29 May (C. Cormier, ph. GS). Before these, there was but one single sight record of the species, not admitted to the Québec official checklist (18 Nov 2000 at Saint-Benoît-du-Lac). Another pseudo-invasion of Eurasian finches was noted in the Great Lakes region s. of the U.S. border, with European Goldfinch and Common Chaffinch as the two main jail-breakers, and up to 8 Common Chaffinches at Whitefish Pt., Michigan! Coincidentally, at least one European Goldfinch was reported at Cap Tourmente 23–27 May (P. Larouche, m.ob.), and more followed throughout the Region in summer, including some in far-fetched locations.

Meanwhile, a few thousand kilometers to the northeast, Iceland experienced an unusually large influx of Common Chaffinches this spring totaling 70+ birds, mostly in a window spanning 5–17 Apr but with some birds being discovered through early May (*vide Y. Kolbeinsson*). However, with no reports of the species from the Atlantic Provinces or the U.S. Northeast in spring 2009, it seems far more likely that the Québec chaffinches were escaped (or released) cage birds rather than Old World vagrants.



## WATERFOWL

At a time when they would have just begun their northward migration, geese that normally migrate well to the w. of the Region were deflected eastward by strong southwesterly winds. On 7 Mar, 17 Greater White-fronted Geese, by far the largest number ever found at one locality in the Region, appeared in Saugus, MA and remained through 22 Mar (P. Peterson et al., ph.). The entire flock was comprised of birds belonging to one of the pink-billed taxa, almost certainly *frontalis*. Greater White-fronted numbers in other states included 9 in Connecticut and 2 in New Hampshire; and 2 described as *flavirostris* were noted in Sharon and Hadley, MA in Mar. The great majority of recent Greater White-fronted Goose records in the Region have pertained to *flavirostris*, from Greenland. A week after the arrival of the Saugus birds, a minimum of 15 Ross's Geese hit the ground in Massachusetts. This figure more than doubled the previous Regional maxima that had become routine among the fall throngs of Snow Geese on the shores of L. Champlain. Readers are left to their own devices to guess whether some of the following records involved some of the same individuals: 7 commuting daily between Ipswich and Plum I. 15-23 Mar (ph. RH et al.); one in Ipswich/Plum I. 22-31 Mar (N. Landry et al.); 2 on the Merrimac R., Haverhill 19-28 Mar (ph. S&JM et al.); 8 in Easthampton 16-18 Mar (B. Beida et al., ph.); 5 in Hadley 20-22 Mar (A. Mueller et al.). Clearly, based on dates, the Easthampton birds were not the Ipswich/Plum I. birds, and while it is less clear, it is probable (based on proximity) that the 5 in Hadley were part of the Easthampton flock. Another, single Ross's Goose in Biddeford, ME 15-18 Mar (P. Moynahan et al., ph., p.a.), which brought the Regional total to a minimum of 16, represented the 2nd record for the Pine Tree state. Connecticut's first Black Brant was in Stratford 10-13 Apr (ph. NB et al.). No Barnacle Geese were found this



Representing Connecticut's first record of this western subspecies of Brant, this Black Brant was in Stratford 10-13 (here 11) April 2009. Photograph by B. Finnan.



New England's only Eared Grebe of spring 2009 was in Sanford, Maine 26 May 2009 and later (here 1 June). Photograph by Doug Hitchcox.



This White-faced Ibis at Jamestown, Rhode Island 3-5 (here 3) May 2009 was the first non-adult ever identified in New England. Photograph by Dan Finizia.

year, but Cackling Goose was represented by 3 in Connecticut, 2 in Massachusetts, one in Rhode Island, and one in New Hampshire.

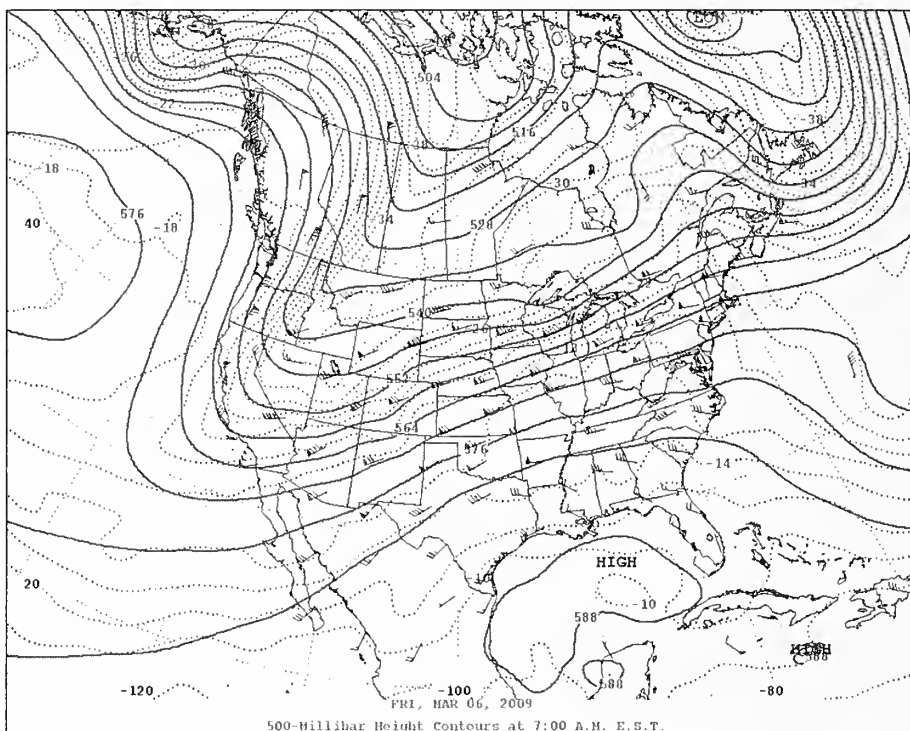
An impressive count of 300+ Wood Ducks came from Haverhill, MA 20-21 Mar (J. Fenton). No fewer than 14 Eurasian Teal included 6 in Massachusetts, 3 in New Hampshire, 3 in Connecticut, and 2+ in Maine. One of the 6 drakes in the Bay State paired with a female Mallard in Newton and stayed through the season (m.ob., ph., vt.). Eurasian Teal × Green-winged Teal intergrades were noted in Maine



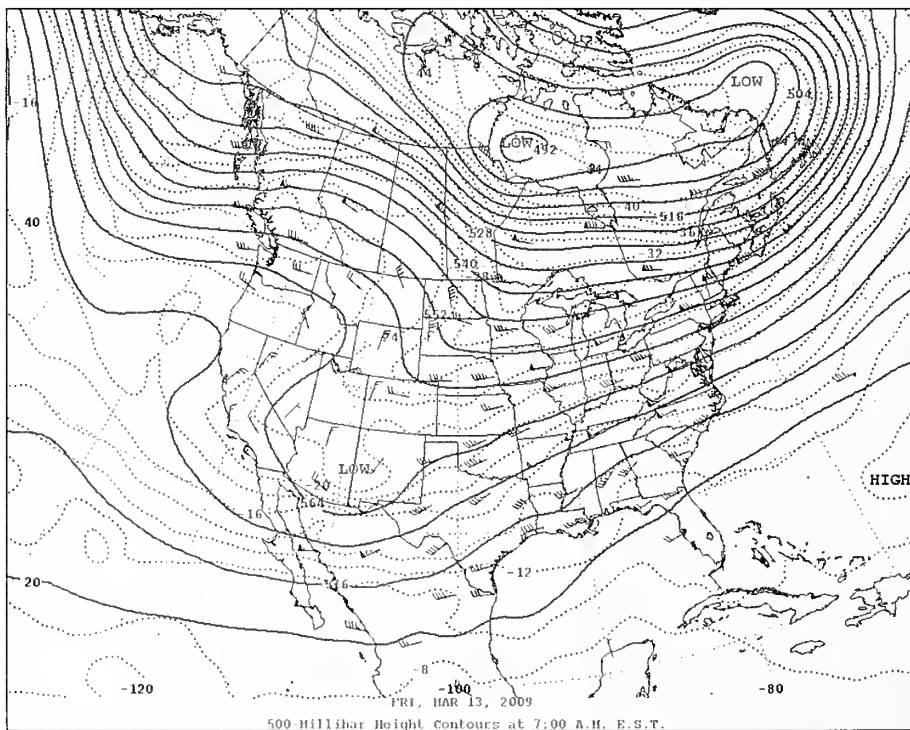
## Simon Perkins

The spring season got off to a quick start. In the first half of March, a strong, persistent airflow from the west/southwest delivered record numbers of Greater White-fronted and Ross's Geese (Figures 1, 2). Two "bookend" weather events at the beginning and end of April also stood out. Back-to-back storm systems in the first week of April conspired to produce a textbook fallout of Neotropical migrants that spanned the Region's coasts (Figures 3, 4; Table 1). Then, for a full week at the end of the month, another strong and persistent airflow from the southwest culminated in temperatures reaching the high 80s Fahrenheit on 25-26 April and topping out in the 90s on the 28th. This deep wind flow "air-mailed" huge numbers of migrants northward and accounted not only for many early arrivals but also delivered many on-time species in numbers far above average (Figure 4; Table 2). This influx in late April included a wide assortment of taxa, from bitterns to buntings, but warblers were especially well represented. By the end of April, no fewer than 29 species of warblers were already "in." The majority of the records that are included below to document the big influx were from Massachusetts. This is not necessarily because there were more birds in the Commonwealth than there were elsewhere in the Region. Rather, it reflects the fact that more birders live in Massachusetts. In the words of the late, great Ludlow Griscom, "birds are where people are."

Abbreviations: L. Champlain (Vermont side of L. Champlain); M.A.R.C. (Massachusetts A.R.C.); Nantucket (Nantucket I., Nantucket, MA); Plum I. (Newburyport, Newbury, Rowley, Ipswich, including Parker River N.W.R., Essex, MA); Tuckernuck (Tuckernuck I., Nantucket, MA).



**Figure 1.** Weather maps depicting surface conditions can be very useful for analyzing migration, but the mid-altitude maps that show the steering currents up higher in the atmosphere can be even more illuminating. The 500mb maps in Figures 1-4 paint pictures that are worth a thousand words. Figure 1 depicts relatively strong westerly and southwesterly airflows in early (here 6) March 2009 that must have been associated with the appearance of 17 Greater White-fronted Geese of the subspecies *franklinii* in Saugus, Massachusetts 7 March. Maps presented in Figures 1-4 all courtesy of and © the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



**Figure 2.** Continuing southwesterly airflow in mid- (here 13) March 2009 brought about 15 Ross's Geese to Massachusetts 15 March, on the heels of the high count of *franklinii* Greater White-fronted Geese a week earlier. The spring season of 2009 had a strong western flavor, with Swainson's Hawk, Hudsonian Godwit, *hendersoni* Short-billed Dowitcher, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Townsend's Warbler, and Golden-crowned Sparrows. At least some of these could have been displaced eastward during their northbound migration.

(3) and Massachusetts (one). As it did last year, the mouth of the Abbagadasset R. in Bowdoinham, ME hosted big numbers of waterfowl immediately after ice-out. Totals 11 Apr included 7000+ American Black Ducks, 3500+ Mallards, 50+ Northern Pintails, 500+ Green-winged Teal, and 500+ Ring-necked Ducks (PV). A Regional total of 4 Tufted Ducks included a drake and a hen together in L. Champlain (S. Hero, VT) 21 Mar (JM et al.), only the male seen thereafter, 22-25 Mar; a male in Portland, ME that continued from the winter season at least until 14 Mar (T. Duddy); and a male on the Sudbury R., Sudbury-Concord, MA 12-14 Mar (J. Hines et al., ph.). A pair of Redheads at L. Josephine in Easton, Aroostook, ME late Apr+ (BS) was probably the same pair that established the first Regional breeding record there last year. Four King Eiders in Westerly, RI 3 Mar (C. Raithel) represented a high count for the Ocean State. Very rare anywhere inland, a Common Eider was on the Aroostook R., Caribou, Aroostook, ME 26 Apr (ph. BS), and 14 were on Christina Res, Fort Fairfield, Aroostook, ME 22 May (BS). Numbers of staging Common Mergansers peaked at 6000 at L. Waramaug, New Preston, CT 25 Mar (R. Belding).

## LOONS THROUGH IBISES

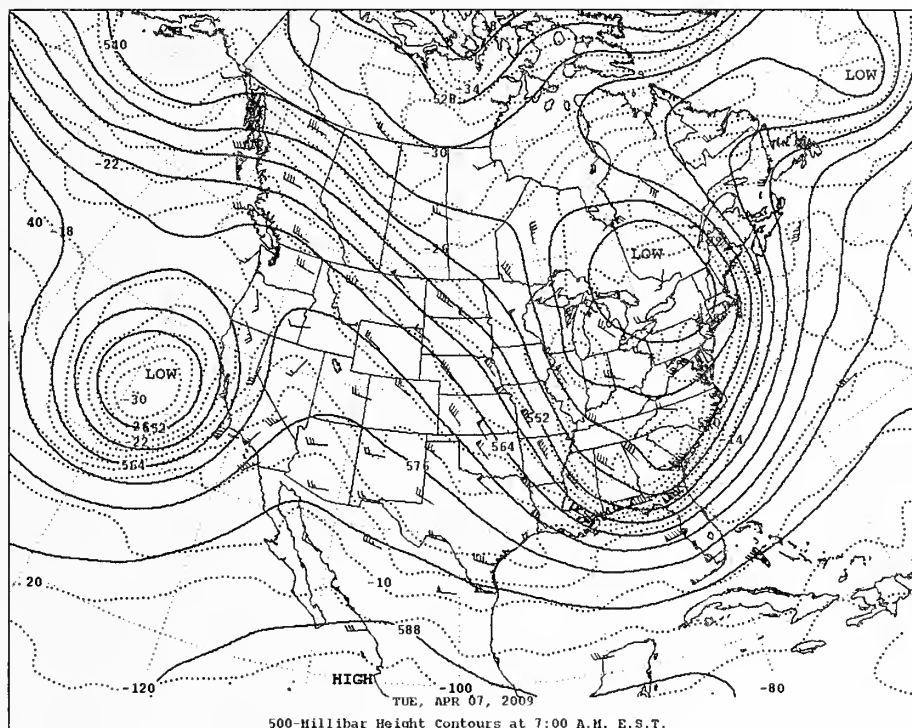
A single Pacific Loon was found off Rockport, MA 5 May (RH), and multiple Pacifics at Block I, RI 28 Apr-8 May possibly numbered 8 on 4 May (T. Magarian). The Region's only Eared Grebe was in Sanford, ME 26 May+ (ph. DL et al.). A written report of a Black-browed Albatross observed at close range from a fishing vessel as it sat on the water eating offal at Cashes Ledge, Gulf of Maine 29 Mar (tj. Wright) included a description of the black-to-white ratio on the underwing as being roughly 50/50 and the bill as being dull yellow with a gray tip. Both these features rule out Yellow-nosed, and the bill color indicates that the bird was probably a subad. bird. An early Cory's Shearwater was reported from Stellwagen Bank, n. of Provincetown, MA 30 May (F. Wasti), and other early shearwaters included a Sooty off Provincetown 8 Mar (BN) and a Manx off Point Judith, Narragansett, RI 4 Apr (MI).

Three American White Pelicans made a brief showing in Westport, MA 15 Apr (D. Eastman), and 2 more made a pass through Rowayton, CT 27 May (M. Moore). Two Great Cormorants in St. Agatha, Aroostook, ME 17 May (BS) were far inland, and an Anhinga must have caused quite a stir for two birders when it passed overhead in Carolina, RI 24 Apr (DF et al.). Leading off the list of species that arrived early on the late Apr heat wave were single Least Bitterns at Plum I. 28 Apr (RH)

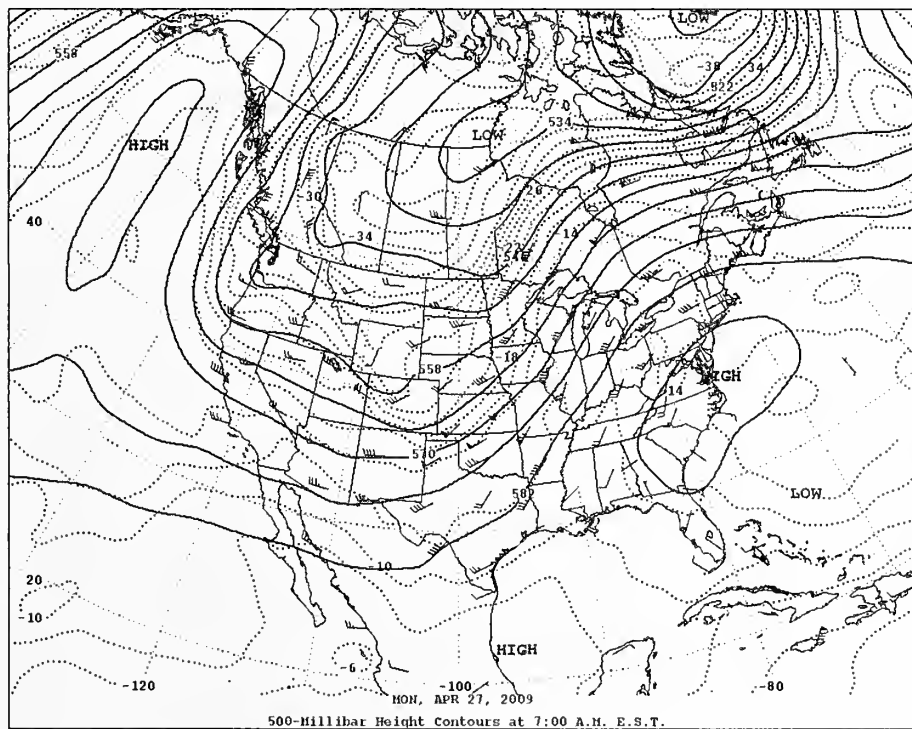
and Buxton, ME 30 Apr–15 May (J. Stevens et al., ph.). Much scarcer inland in spring than in late summer, 3 Snowy Egrets on the Connecticut R. in Walpole, NH 22 May (L. Tanino) were noteworthy, as was a moderately extralimital Yellow-crowned Night-Heron “down east” in Milbridge, ME 23 May (C. Moseley). With the increased regularity of spring occurrences of White-faced Ibis in the Region, it was no surprise when surveyors found an ad. White-faced among the nesting Glossy Ibis while conducting an annual census at the state’s largest heronry at Kettle I., Manchester, MA 19 May (ph. SP, JB et al.). The bird scored an “N” code for the current state Breeding Bird Atlas project when it was seen dropping down out of sight to a probable nest site. However, just one bird was observed, and the next visit to the island revealed no White-faced. Other single White-faceds appeared in Ipswich/Essex, MA 7–10 Apr (ph. RH et al.), Scarborough, ME 26 Apr (ph. DL, LS), and Jamestown, RI 3–5 May (ph. DF). The latter bird was the first non-ad. to be identified in the Region.

## VULTURES THROUGH RAPTORS

An influx of Black Vultures into Vermont included 6 in Waterbury, 3 in Colchester, and one in Brattleboro, all 31 Mar; 3 in Brattleboro and 5 in Moretown 1 Apr; 5 in Shelburne 3 Apr; 2 in Bristol 4 Apr; one in Pittsford 10 Apr; and one in New Haven 12 Apr. The highest counts outside Connecticut included a roost of 23 in the s. Berkshires, Sheffield, MA 7 Mar (J. Drucker) and 16 in Ashaway, RI, also 7 Mar (*vide* R. Farrell). Maine logged a single Black Vulture in Pownal 25 Mar (DA). A report of 2+ Swallow-tailed Kites in Brewster, MA 10 May (D. Clapp) may have represented the first time that more than one has been seen at the same location in the Bay State. Possibly one of the lingering Brewster birds, a Swallow-tailed also was reported from Eastham and Truro 31 May (B.O.), and for the 2nd consecutive year, one passed a hawkwatch at Bradbury Mt. in Pownal, ME 28 Apr (DA). Despite the return this spring of Mississippi Kites to their 2008 nesting sites in Connecticut and New Hampshire, and appearances in Maine and Rhode Island, none were detected in Massachusetts, even on Cape Cod, where they have been a “lock” for at least 10 years. The Maine report pertained to 2 together in Cumberland 31 May (W. Russell), and the Rhode Island bird was in Coventry 16 May (C. Pedro). A count of 413 Broad-winged Hawks at the Bradbury Mt. hawkwatch in Pownal, ME 25 Apr (DA) furnished an above-average daily tally in spring, and a seasonal total of 121 Northern Harriers (117 in Apr alone) at the hawkwatch at Plum I. was also higher than



**Figure 3.** A powerful low-pressure system (here 7 April 2009) brought westerly winds to the Gulf of Mexico and strong southwesterly winds over the Atlantic waters off the Eastern Seaboard. At least some Neotropical migrants crossing the Gulf of Mexico or Florida Straits were shunted out over the ocean by this airflow and made landfall in New England and Atlantic Canada. A few days earlier, similar conditions precipitated a smaller fallout with similar species composition, and the records associated with these patterns are digested in Table 1. (See also the Atlantic Provinces regional report and an article on these fallouts in this issue.)



**Figure 4.** Late (here 27) April 2009 produced a rather spectacular array of long-distance migrants in New England, many of them early and/or in very large numbers for the dates (Table 2). Favorable southerly/southwesterly airflow, much of it fueled by a high-pressure cell centered on the Carolina coast, is credited with this event. Indeed, by the end of the month, 29 species of warbler had been recorded in New England.

**Table 2.** Records of migrants found on early dates and/or large numbers for the date in New England in the last week of April 2009, in association with strong southerly and southwesterly airflow as depicted in Figure 4.

Species	No.	Location	Observer or Source	Date(s)
Least Bittern	1	Plum I.	RH	28 Apr
Least Bittern	1	Buxton, ME	J. Stevens	30 Apr
Spotted Sandpiper	1	Fort Fairfield, Aroostook, ME	BS	26 Apr
Acadian Flycatcher	1	Little Compton, RI	GD	30 Apr
Red-eyed Vireo	5	singles in 5 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	23-30 Apr
Red-eyed Vireo	1	Carmel, ME	M. Lucey	26 Apr
Red-eyed Vireo	1	CT	<i>fide</i> GH	27 Apr
House Wren	20	3 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	26, 28 Apr
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	17	Plymouth, MA	I. Davies	26 Apr
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	16	Plum I.	RH	28 Apr
Blue-winged Warbler	5	Cambridge, MA	<i>Bird Observer</i>	29 Apr
Blue-winged Warbler	5	Plum I.	RH	28 Apr
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	Medford, MA	MR	27 Apr
Nashville Warbler	9	Medford, MA	MR	30 Apr
Northern Parula	20	Plum I.	RH	28 Apr
Northern Parula	25	Medford, MA	MR	29 Apr
Yellow Warbler	22	2 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	28 Apr
Chestnut-sided Warbler	26	Quabbin Res.	L. Therrien	30 Apr
Magnolia Warbler	1	Augusta, ME	N. Famous	22 Apr
Magnolia Warbler	8	6 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	27-29 Apr
Black-throated Blue Warbler	15	5 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	28-30 Apr
Yellow-rumped Warbler	270	Medford, MA	MR	25 Apr
Yellow-rumped Warbler	285	Plum I.	RH	28 Apr
Black-throated Green Warbler	30	7 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	25-30 Apr
Yellow-throated Warbler	3	singles in 3 MA localities	<i>Bird Observer</i>	26-30 Apr
Blackpoll Warbler	1	Concord, MA	SP	29 Apr
Blackpoll Warbler	1	CT	<i>fide</i> GH	29 Apr
Cerulean Warbler	1+	CT	<i>fide</i> GH	25
Cerulean Warbler	1	Cambridge, MA	JT	27 Apr
Black-and-white Warbler	22	Plum I.	RH	28 Apr
Black-and-white Warbler	21	2 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	29 Apr
American redstart	1	Augusta, ME	N. famous	22 Apr
Hooded Warbler	4	3 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	26-29 Apr
Hooded Warbler	1	Exeter, NH	P. Chamberlain	29 Apr
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	CT	<i>fide</i> GH	25 Apr
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	Hampton, NH	S&JM	28 Apr
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	18	8 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	21-30 Apr
Blue Grosbeak	2	2 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	26-29
Indigo Bunting	11	7 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	21-30 Apr
Painted Bunting	1	Whatley, MA	B. Benner	30 Apr-3 May
Orchard Oriole	14	7 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	25-30 Apr
Baltimore Oriole	22	6 MA locations	<i>Bird Observer</i>	25-28 Apr

usual (B.O.). A rare dark-morph Broad-winged Hawk was photographed in Durham, NH 31 May (ph. E. Markey), providing one of few firm records in the East. A carefully studied light-morph Swainson's Hawk passed the

Bradbury Mt. hawkwatch 3 May (DA), and a Golden Eagle made a highlight there 25 Mar (DA). A late Rough-legged Hawk visited an airfield in Bedford, MA 20-24 May (ph. JT et al.). Pairs of Merlins on territory in Sandwich

and Concord contributed to the ongoing consolidation of the species' breeding status in s. New Hampshire.

## CRANES THROUGH ALCIDS

The task of trying to enumerate the many sightings of Sandhill Cranes accurately has become an exercise in futility. Suffice to say that, each spring, migrants are now spotted across most of the Region. At this point in their colonization of New England, their breeding distribution will probably provide the best measure of their local status. The occurrence of 5 American Golden-Plovers in the Region was unusual for a species that, in some years, goes entirely unreported in spring. These were in Middletown, RI 4-7 Apr (ph. R. Larson), Middleboro, MA 6 Apr (ph. H. Levesque), Chatham, MA 26 Apr (B. Harris), Duxbury, MA 5-9 May (ph. R. Bowes), and Phippsburg, ME 14 May (ph. M. Fahay). Two Black-necked Stilts made a one-day visit to Wellfleet, MA 25 Apr (D. Reynolds), 5 stilts made an equally short stop in Harwich 5 May (D. Hall), and an American Avocet was another one-day wonder in Rowley, MA 20 May (S. Simpson et al.). Arriving roughly two weeks early in n. Maine, a Spotted Sandpiper in Fort Fairfield 26 Apr (BS) was probably delivered by the strong southerly winds during that period. The rarest shorebird species in the Region this spring was a Hudsonian Godwit that appeared in Lamaine, ME 30 May (ph. J. Smith). Massachusetts, for example, has hosted fewer than 10 spring Hudsonians ever! Four Marbled Godwits in the Region represented a high spring total, with singles in Stratford, CT 25 Apr (*fide* GH), Yarmouth, ME 2 May (ph. DL et al.), Seabrook, NH 11 May (G. Tillman), and Charlestown, RI 16 May (P. L'Etoile). The only report of Western Sandpiper came from Nantucket 30 May (ER). A Curlew Sandpiper in Duxbury, MA 24 May (ph. RB) was an especially unusual spring find. The only Ruff of the season was a female in Stonington, CT 20 Apr (D. Wadlow). A *hendersoni* Short-billed Dowitcher was well photographed in Scarborough, ME 17 May (ph. L. Alexander), and another was carefully studied in Seabrook, NH 17-18 May (S&JM, B. Griffith). This subspecies is uncommon in the Region in "fall" migration (Jul-Aug); there is just one prior spring report in the Region, at Newburyport, MA 24 May 1998 (RH). Of less-than-annual Regional occurrence in spring, a Long-billed Dowitcher dropped into Newburyport Harbor, MA 3 May (ph. RH et al.). A Red-necked Phalarope found inland at Concord, NH 28 May (R. Quinn) was part of a more widespread fallout of shorebirds. For example, a



At least one of these two pairs of Mississippi Kites that nested in Newmarket, New Hampshire in 2008 returned in May 2009 (here 13 May). Photograph by Steve Mirick.

check of suitable habitat at various points on both sides of the Connecticut R. between Charlestown and Hindsdale, NH 28 May produced counts of 7 Black-bellied Plovers, 100 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 20 Dunlins, and 250 Short-billed Dowitchers (EM).

A Mew Gull of the nominate subspecies



More often recorded in summer than in spring in New England, this Curlew Sandpiper made a one-day showing in Duxbury, Massachusetts 24 May 2009. Photograph by Rick Bowes.

was in West Haven, CT 20 May (ph. NB et al.). Single first-cycle Thayer's Gulls in Massachusetts were in Gloucester 8 Mar (ph. JT), at Plum I. 14-19 Mar (ph. JT), and in Provincetown 12 Apr (MI). Among the masses of wintering gulls at Low Beach, Nantucket, numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls have continued to increase to the point where they now occasionally eclipse the numbers of Iceland Gulls that also occur there. A count there 10 Mar yielded 115 Lesser Black-backed and 80 Iceland Gulls (VL). Counts of 50+ Iceland Gulls and 20+ Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Provincetown, MA 3 May (BN) represented high totals for that locality and date, and 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Caribou, Aroostook, ME 10 Apr (BS)

were a surprise in interior n. Maine. The usual smattering of migrant Caspian Terns included an early bird in Stratford, CT 10 Apr (NB), and the highest counts, both from L. Champlain, included 8 at Delta Park 22 Apr (B. Macpherson) and 8 in Charlotte 21 May (TM). Caspians have nested on islands on the New York side of L. Champlain and have been suspected of doing so on the Vermont side. Migrant Caspians are rarely seen in spring away from L. Champlain or the coast, so one in Turners Falls, MA on the Connecticut R. 21 Apr (M. Fairbrother) was noteworthy. Also rare inland was an Arctic Tern in Hinsdale, NH 29 May (EM). A



Rare in the Northeast in spring, this Long-billed Dowitcher visited Newburyport, Massachusetts 3 May 2009. Photograph by Jeremiah Trimble.

Sandwich Tern in Provincetown, MA 12 May was notably early (BN). Offshore boating opportunities in winter/early spring are rare, so any trip is noteworthy. The avian "bycatch" on a cod-fishing cruise out of Galilee, RI 28 Mar included 12 Dovekies, 11 Common Murres, 15 Thick-billed Murres, and an Atlantic Puffin (JS). The latter was seen roughly 10 km se. of Block Island.

**SA** Another chapter was added to the ongoing Boston Manx Shearwater story. To recap, a single bird was noted at Revere Beach in early Apr 2006; 2 were seen there in 2007; and the 2008 numbers peaked at 8. Numerous 2008 observations of multiple birds included some flying over the beach (often vocalizing) and 2 copulating in the water. It was at this point that birders began seriously entertaining the notion that the birds might be breeding locally. This year, the first birds returned sometime around 10 Apr, and numbers peaked at 30 by the end of May (J. Baur). Eight were also seen off Carson Beach in South Boston 24 May (R. Donovan). At the outset of a nighttime boat excursion 13 May, as part of an effort to locate a breeding site, 13 birds were seen at dusk in the waters off Revere and Winthrop (SP, RHS, JT et al.). However, despite the use of audio playback and night-vision optics, this effort revealed no birds after dark and no further breeding evidence. Various references describe the process whereby Manx Shearwaters establish new colonies as highly protracted and incremental, with many false starts over several years. Perhaps the Boston birds are still just "going through the motions," so to speak. Assuming they do select, or have selected, a more or less typical site (island with turf and no/few mammalian predators), their options are rather limited, at least within Boston Harbor.

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

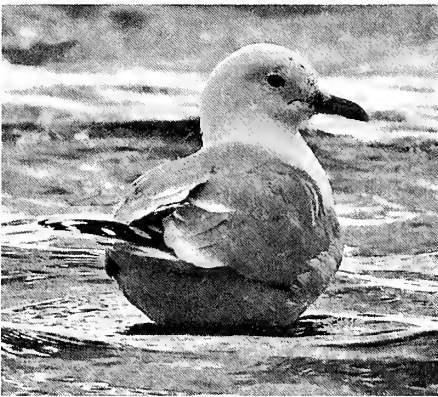
The total of 3 White-winged Doves may have represented a new seasonal maximum for the Region. Birds in Portland, ME (through 8 May) and Branford, CT (through 14 Mar)

**Table 1.** Neotropical migrants observed in New England 1-10 April 2009 in association with the weather system depicted in Figure 3.

Species	Date(s)	Location	Observer or Source
Whip-poor-will	10 Apr	Lyme, CT	D. Provencher
Eastern Kingbird	8 Apr	Tuckernuck I., Nantucket, MA	RRV
Yellow-throated Vireo	5 Apr	Block I., RI	DF
Yellow-throated Warbler	4 Apr	Nantucket, MA	E. Ray
Yellow-throated Warbler	6 Apr	Little Cranberry I., Hancock, ME	vide W. Townsend
Prothonotary Warbler	4 Apr	Winter Harbor, ME	ph. N. Childs
Prothonotary Warbler	10 Apr	Harpwell, ME	ph. J. Howland
Hooded Warbler	9 Apr	Tuckernuck I., Nantucket, MA	RRV
Summer Tanager	1-3 Apr	Swan I., ME	K. Dutille
Summer Tanager	7-10 Apr	Northeast Harbor, ME	vide WT
Summer Tanager	8-9 Apr	Trescott, ME	ph. K. McCrimmon
Summer Tanager	4-8 Apr	Eastham, MA	J. Hequembourg
Summer Tanager	9 Apr	Bar Harbor, ME	vide WT
Scarlet Tanager	8 Apr	Rochester, MA	ph. P. Thompson
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5 Apr	Bremen, ME	vide WT
Blue Grosbeak	5 Apr	Southwest Harbor, ME	vide R. Grierson
Blue Grosbeak	8 Apr	Nantucket, MA	N. Slavitz
Indigo Bunting	5 Apr	Hulls Cove, ME	L. Hatch
Indigo Bunting	6 Apr	Deer Isle, ME	vide WT
Indigo Bunting	7 Apr	Presque Isle, ME	BS
Indigo Bunting	7 Apr	Plymouth, MA	K. Morehouse
Indigo Bunting	10 Apr	Little Compton, RI	GD

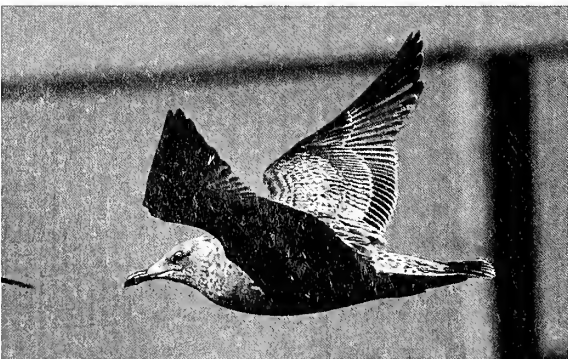


A Hudsonian Godwit in Lamoine, Maine 30 May 2009 took honors as the rarest shorebird of the season in New England. Photograph by Jerry Smith.

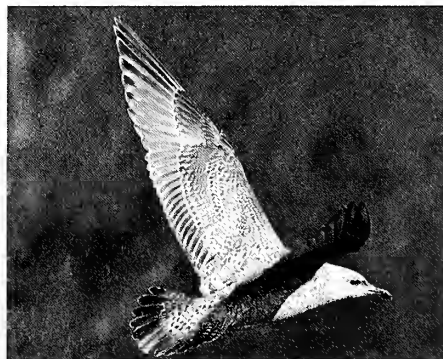


This Mew Gull of the nominate subspecies was in West Haven, Connecticut 20 May 2009, furnishing one of few state records. Photograph by Mark Szantyr.

were probably both holdovers that had been seen sporadically through the previous winter, while one at Nantucket, MA 29-30 May (EFA) was new. The Northern Hawk Owl that was present in Center Harbor, NH since mid-Jan was last reported 1 Mar (*vide* PH), and another wintering hawk owl in Bristol, ME was last reported 15 Mar. Two Great Gray Owls included one in Lubec/Trescott, ME 16-21 Mar (D. Scull, ph. C. Bartlett et al.) and one much farther south in Durham, NH 4-9 Apr (T. Bronson et al., ph.). Counts of 75 and 85 Common Nighthawks in Merrimack, NH 20

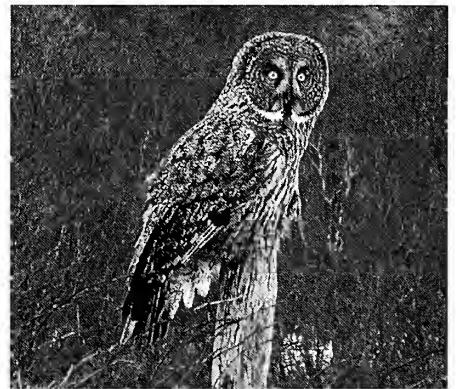
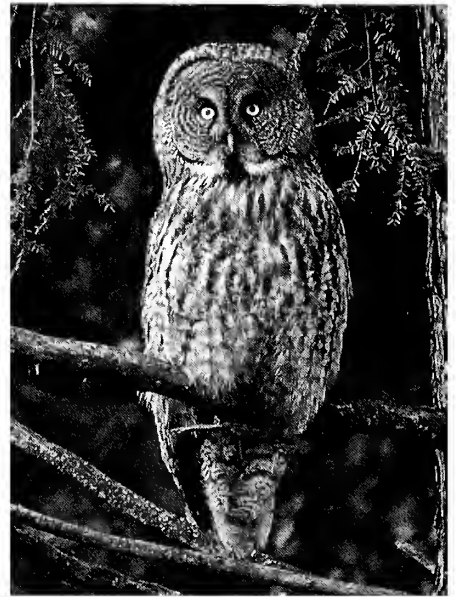


Among a total of three Thayer's Gulls in New England in spring 2009, these first-cycle birds were nicely documented in Gloucester, Massachusetts 8 March (left) and Plum Island, Massachusetts 14-19 (here 14) March. Photographs by Jeremiah Trimble.



May (T. Young) and Concord, MA 25 May (W. Hutcheson), respectively, represented high spring tallies. An early Whip-poor-will in Lyme, CT 10 Apr (D. Provencher) may have arrived with the aforementioned coastal fallout of Neotropical migrants. Though it represents the 2nd highest total on record for the Region, the 51 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds tallied as they migrated past a point on Plum I. 10 May (RH) may be found to represent a fairly typical mid-May count for that locality; 71 were counted at Plum I. 11 May 2004. A Black-backed Woodpecker appeared 25 Apr-17 May on Nantucket, far s. of its n. New England haunts (L. Snell et al., ph.). Having survived record-low, local temperatures of  $-50^{\circ}\text{F}$  a few weeks earlier, a very hardy Northern Flicker in Caribou, Aroostook, ME made it at least through 13 Mar (*vide* BS).

Tying the earliest state record, an Acadian Flycatcher in Little Compton, RI 30 Apr probably arrived with the aforementioned influx at the end of Apr, and a very early Eastern Kingbird at Tuckernuck I., Nantucket, MA 8 Apr was part of the fallout of Neotropicals at the beginning of the month. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Arlington, VT 9-10 May (B. Powers et al., ph.) was thought to be different than another found roughly 50 km away in West Rutland, VT 12-13 May (J. & K. Houghton et al., ph.). Even rarer than the Scissor-tailed was a Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Nantucket 7 May (D. Lang). In addition to early Red-eyed Vireos associated with the late Apr influx, a Red-eyed in S. Kingston, RI 14 Apr was, inexplicably, a full two weeks early (*vide* RF). A Fish Crow in Augusta, ME 6 Apr (NF) was n. of the species' known nesting range in the state, and Common Ravens reached a new southernmost nesting outpost on Long Island Sound in Waterford, CT (DP). A Cliff Swallow in S. Kingston, RI 12 Apr (C. Pedro) was the earliest on record for the Ocean State. In Massachusetts, House Wren was another conspicuous component of the late Apr influx, as was Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (Table 2). Two



Two Great Gray Owls in New England in late winter 2009 included one in Trescott, Maine 16-21 (here 19) March (top) and one in Durham, New Hampshire 4-9 (here 4) April. Photographs by Jeremiah Trimble (top) and Chris Bartlett.

male Varied Thrushes at the same feeder in Saco, ME continued from the winter season at least until 3 Mar; one was still there 15 Mar; and another wintering male continued at a feeder in Portland, ME at least through 2 Mar (M.A.R.B.A.). Another Varied Thrush visited a feeder in Bristol, CT on an unspecified date in the first week of Mar (L. Michaud), and yet another appeared in Palmer, MA 24 Apr (ph. J. Atherton). Following another big flight year, a flock of 1000 Bohemian Waxwings in Burlington, VT 5 Apr (L. Clarfeld) represented the largest aggregation reported this spring.

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

By the end of Apr, no fewer than 29 species of warblers had already been reported in the Region, 27 in



This male Black-backed Woodpecker on Nantucket, Massachusetts 25 (here 26) April through 17 May 2009 was far south of its northern New England haunts. Photograph by Vernon Laux.

Massachusetts alone. Perhaps better than any other set of records, this unprecedented species total illustrated how large the late Apr influx really was (Table 2). Other noteworthy warbler records included a Townsend's Warbler in Newton, MA 14-19 Apr (D. Romps et al., ph., vt.) and an apparent Audubon's Warbler at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA 13 May (J. Mullen). A warbler wave 17 May yielded single-day maxima on Cape Ann, Essex, MA that included 73 Northern Parulas, 68 Magnolias, 66 Black-throated Greens, and 73 Black-and-whites (RH). A high count of 65 American Redstarts came from Provincetown, MA 31 May (BN). An early Summer Tanager in Orleans, MA 28 Mar (C. Kennedy) preced-



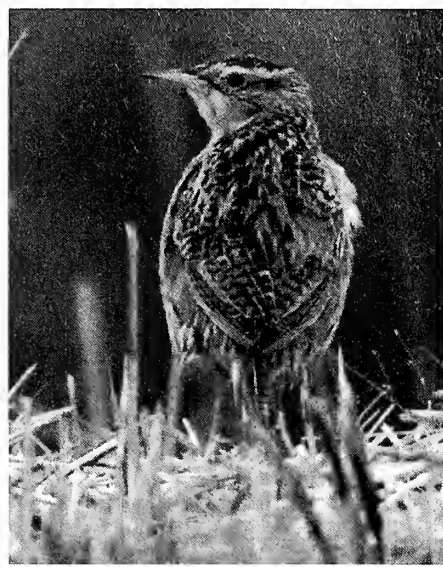
Among an above-average total of five American Golden-Plovers found in New England this spring, this individual was in Phippsburg, Maine 14 May 2009. Photograph by Mike Fahay.

ed by about a week the fallout of this species and other Neotropical migrants. More frequent in the Region in fall than spring, a Western Tanager was a nice find in Madison, CT 8 May (J. Connolly).

A late American Tree Sparrow lingered at Tuckernuck 16-17 May (SP et al.). A Lark Sparrow in Exeter, NH 17 Mar (ph. S&JM) furnished a rare spring record for the Region, and a big slug of 400 White-throated Sparrows put down in Provincetown, MA 9 May (BN). A Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow in Scarborough, ME 1 Mar (ph. LS, ph. DL) may have wintered locally, and single Golden-crowned Sparrows visited feeders in Orwell, VT 13-24 Apr (N. & M. Latourelles, ph., vt.) and Natick, MA 18-19 Apr (ph. P. Loranger). Ten Lapland Longspurs in Chatham, MA 26 Apr were decidedly late (B. Harris). Black-headed Grosbeak is less than annual in the Region, so the occurrence of 2 this year was noteworthy. One in Hope, ME continued from the winter until at least 11 Apr (ph. D. Reimer); the other appeared in Hope Valley, RI 24 Mar (ph. B. Sweisford). The occurrence of a Painted Bunting in Whatley, MA 30 Apr-3 May (B. Benner, *vide* SK) coincided with the influx of the many other migrants at the end of Apr. Another Painted Bunting was discovered at Nantucket 8 May (J. Papale). Once more regular, Western Meadowlark has all but disappeared as a visitor to New England. Pending acceptance by the M.A.R.C., a Western Meadowlark in Westport, CT 21-24 Apr would represent the first fully documented record for the state (T. Green, ph. J. Hand, vr. NB). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at feeders at West Gardiner, Kennebec, ME 27 May (ph. G. Benoit), at Milford, CT 7-15 Apr (S. Hanks et al.), and continuing from the



One of two in the New England in spring 2009, this Black-headed Grosbeak remained in Hope, Maine from the winter season through at least 11 April (here). Photograph by Don Reimer.

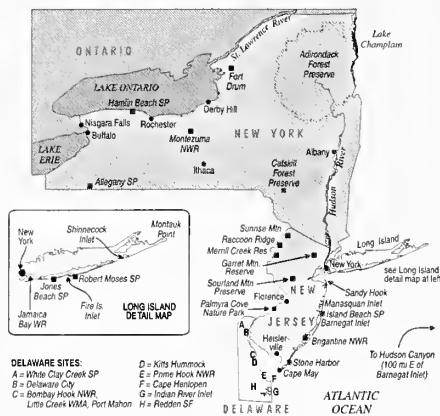


Careful scrutiny of this apparent Western Meadowlark in Westport, Connecticut included detailed study of recorded vocalizations. Photograph by A. J. Hand.

winter season at Salisbury, MA 1-5 Mar (P. Cozza). A Yellow-headed that was found foraging in a field in Haverhill, MA 19 Mar (S&JM) roughly 21 km from the Salisbury bird may have been the same individual. A three-hour count of American Goldfinches migrating past a point on the New Hampshire seacoast 11 May produced a total 1504 (S&JM). Two similar efforts by the same observers last year netted totals of 1516 on 7 May and 1270 on 18 May. It's becoming apparent that these large diurnal flights of American Goldfinches along this stretch of coastline (including Plum I.) are typical in mid-May.

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Abbreviations and locations: Avalon (Avalon Seawatch, Avalon, Cape May, NJ); Batavia (Batavia W.T.P., Genesee, NY); Braddock Bay (Braddock Bay B.O., Rochester, NY); Brigantine (Forsyth N.W.R., Atlantic, NJ); Bombay Hook (Bombay Hook N.W.R., Kent, DE); Captree (Captree S.P., Suffolk, Long I., NY); Chazy (Chazy R. mouth, Clinton, NY); Democrat Point (Fire Island Inlet, s. shore of Long I., NY); Derby Hill (Derby Hill Hawkwatch, Oswego, NY); Hamburg (Hamburg Hawkwatch, near Buffalo, NY); Hamlin Beach (Hamlin Beach S.P., near Rochester, NY); Heislerville (Heislerville W.M.A., Cumberland, NJ), Howland I. (Howland Island W.M.A., Cayuga, NY); Iroquois (Iroquois N.W.R., Genesee/Orleans, NY); Jamaica Bay (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Gateway N.P., New York City); Jones Beach (Jones Beach S.P., s. shore of Long I., NY); Moriches (Moriches Bay and inlet, Suffolk, Long I., NY); Little Creek (Little Creek W.M.A., Kent, DE); Mannington (Mannington Marsh, Salem, NJ); Montauk (Montauk Pt., Suffolk, Long I., NY); Montezuma (Montezuma N.W.R., Seneca, NY); Palmyra Cove (Burlington, NJ); Pike's Beach (Moriches Bay, Suffolk, Long I., NY); Prime Hook (Prime Hook N.W.R., Sussex, DE); Riis (Jacob Riis Park, Queens, New York City); Ripley (Ripley Hawkwatch, Chautauqua, NY); R.M.S.P. (Robert Moses S.P., Fire I., Suffolk, NY); Sagaponack (Sagaponack Pond, Bridgehampton, Long I., NY); Sandy Hook (Sandy Hook Unit/Gateway National Recreation Area, Monmouth, NJ); S.C.M.M. (South Cape May Meadows, Cape May, NJ); Shinnecock (Shinnecock Bay and Inlet, Suffolk, Long I., NY); Ted Harvey (Ted Harvey Conservation Area/Logan Lane Tract, Kent, DE); Tonawanda (Tonawanda W.M.A., Genesee/Niagara, NY).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH PELICANS

As part of their continuing northward expansion, 4 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were found on private property at Cape May 26 May (MO'B, m.ob.); the Silver Beach, DE bird from last fall remained through the summer (MSG, m.ob.). A single group of 8 Greater White-fronted Geese at Oak Orchard W.M.A., Genesee, NY 15 Mar (PY) was unusually large, but otherwise there were rather few reported; 2 singles were in the Hudson-Mohawk region of New York 12-15 Mar (WY). Larger counts of Snow Geese included 125,000 at Montezuma 8 Mar (TL), 10,000 at Champlain, Clinton, NY 7 Mar (JMCP), and 6031 at Brigantine 12 Mar (AM et al.). About 8 Ross's Geese reported included 4 in the Rochester, Monroe, NY area, 2 on Long I., and one in Delaware. Two Black Brant, one at Corona Park, Queens, NY 20 Mar (Karlo Mirth, SA) and another at Wolfe's Pond, Staten I., NY 25 Mar (AnW) were likely the birds that wintered, and another was at Sandy Hook 13 May (TBo). A regional total of about 80 Cackling Geese included 40 in the Niagara area, 37 around Rochester, 3 in New Jersey, and 1-2 at Easthampton, Suffolk, NY 1-15 Mar (AnW). A count of 12 Trumpeter Swans at Savannah, Wayne, NY (LL) indicates continuing increase in this introduced population. Some 2100 Tundra Swans on the Groveland Flats, Livingston, NY 14 Mar (JK) made a large count from this location, where spring migrants are often recorded. A slightly below-average 11 Eurasian Wigeons were found through 25 Apr, but there was only one Eurasian Teal, the wintering bird at Hackensack Meadowlands, NJ. Larger totals of waterfowl included 2000 Green-winged Teal at Sale, Salem, NJ 5 Apr (WK), 25,000 Northern Pintails at Savannah, Wayne, NY 15 Mar (R&SSp), and 8000 Canvasbacks on the Niagara R. 1 Mar (D&DS). Twelve thousand Greater Scaup at Great Kills, Staten I. 4 Mar (SBI) is a large total, given their recent decline. A Regional 11 King Eiders included 3 at Cape May 31 Mar (MO'B) and 3 at the unusual location of Plum Beach, Brooklyn, NY 8 May (DG). Forty Harlequin Ducks at Barnegat Inlet made an average count for recent years, even though their wintering in these numbers in New Jersey is a new phenomenon (maximum in 1997 was just 20). Single female Harlequin Ducks at Staten I., NY 3-25 Apr (JGa, m.ob.) and at Niagara Falls 7 May (JP, WW) were late, and the former was at an unusual lo-

cation. Concentrations of scoters were mostly small compared to some in recent years, but 1100 Surfs, 3000 Blacks, and 6000 unidentified dark-winged scoters were at Cape May 11 Mar (CJV), and 1250 White-wingeds made a fine count at Hamlin Beach, Monroe, NY 12 Mar (WS). One hundred Black Scoters at Pt. au Roche, Clinton, NY 26 May (CH) marked a first spring record for that county. Barrow's Goldeneyes continue to increase; 3 were found in the Rochester area in Mar (G.



Among many wandering Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks in the East in spring 2009 were these at Cape May, New Jersey on 26 May. Photograph by Bob Fogg.

Chapin, JK et al.), one was at Wickham Marsh, Essex, NY 15 Mar (MAM), and 2 other singles were at the coast at Sandy Hook 4-14 Mar and at Orient Harbor, Suffolk, NY through 14 Mar (m.ob.). Twenty-five hundred Common Mergansers at Crown Pt., Essex, NY 8 Apr (Theodore Mack) was a county record.

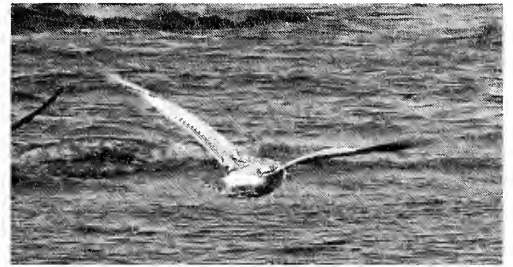
Many subregional editors have commented



This Swallow-tailed Kite was seen at Higbee Beach, Cape May Point, New Jersey during the World Series of Birding 9 May 2009 (here), the only one seen that day and one of three present at Cape May during the following week. Photograph by Rick Wiltraut.

on the uncertain status of Ruffed Grouse. Given its substantial population fluctuations, we may expect considerable variation in counts over long periods of time. Nevertheless, the few reports from upstate New York in recent decades suggest a long-term decline, while a single report from Calverton, Long I. is one of the very few reports in recent years from the





This second-cycle Thayer's Gull was a rarity at South Amboy, New Jersey 29 April 2009; the plumage is rarely documented in the East. Photographs by Tom Boyle.

coast. Eared Grebes were found at Round Valley Res., *Hunterdon*, NJ 1 Mar (FS), at Staten I., NY 1-31 Mar (SW, RRV, m.ob.), and at Bayonne Park, *Hudson*, NJ 6 May (MI). Two identifiably different Western Grebes inhabited the Raritan Estuary between Staten I., NY and the New Jersey shore 7 Mar-22 Apr (Ed Johnson, SB et al.); while these may be returning birds, there has clearly been an increase in occurrence of this species in recent years, and it is quite possible that more than 2 have been present. Six Sooty Shearwaters flying over and then resting on Moriches Bay, *Suffolk*, NY 17 May were an unusual sight (SSM, PJL), and 20 Sooty Shearwaters and a Manx Shearwater were at Montauk 22 May (AnW). During a seaway from North Brigantine, *Atlantic*, NJ 23 Apr, Tony Leukering counted 3200 Northern Gannets streaming northward. There were reports of 6 American White Pelicans, perhaps involving some overlap but nevertheless an impressive number: 2 were at Chautauqua L., *Chautauqua*, NY 25-29 Mar (Margaret Lane, Jim Berry et al.), one at Cuba L., *Allegany*, NY 22 Apr (Betsy Cashing), 2 at Braddock Bay 8-9 Apr (J. Lawrey), and one on Long Pond and nearby Braddock Bay 3-14 May (F. Lawrence, m.ob.). Brown Pelicans farther n. than usual included one at L. Montauk 5 Apr (J. Passie) and one at Sandy Hook 25 Apr (M. Newlon).

## HERONS THROUGH RAPTORS

A Great Egret at Hamburg, *Erie*, NY 9 Mar was the earliest spring record for that area by 11 days (WW, JP), and 106 were counted at Motor I., *Erie*, NY, the northernmost colony in the Region, 12 May (MM). Snowy Egrets were rather far n. at Beaver Island S.P., *Niagara*, NY 28 Apr (Debbie Sharon) and at Dunkirk Harbor, *Erie*, NY 5-15 May (Marie Hayes). A Little Blue Heron at Queensbury, *Saratoga*, NY 7-8 Apr (Mona Bearor) was both early and unusually far inland. A Tricolored Heron at Easthampton, Long I. 9 Apr was early and rather far e. (AnW), and one at Tiff Nature Preserve, *Erie*, NY 24 May (Brandon Erick) was n. and far inland. Cattle Egrets continue to be scarce, but singles were at Pomfret, *Chautauqua*, NY 3 May (Terry Mosh-

er, DN) and Van Buren, *Onandaga*, NY 31 May (J. Brin). An ad. White Ibis clearly photographed at Great Swamp, *Morris*, NJ 19-23 May (Simon Lane, Ray Duffy) adds to the increasing number of northerly records. Similarly increasing are White-faced Ibis, with at least 4 in the Region this spring: one at Prime Hook 18-19 Apr (BGP), one at Beaver Swamp W.M.A., *Cape May*, NJ 3-7 May (TR), one at Cape May 9-30 May (BF), and one at Brigantine 15-19 May (Eric Reuter, SB, m.ob.). Even considering their well-known northward range expansion, Black Vultures made news this spring. At least 13 were found on Long I. and Staten Island 14 Mar-24 May; 3 were seen from the Ripley and Hamburg hawk-watches 13-23 Mar; one was over Saranac Lake High School, *Franklin*, NY 12 Apr (Tom Dudones); and 2 were seen at Braddock Bay 31 Mar (DT) and 16 May (Mike Tetlow). Even more startling was the number of Swallow-tailed Kites; a minimum of 9 was seen: singles were at Cape Henlopen, DE 25 Apr and 6 May (Sue Gruver, Lynn Smith) and inland at Greenville, *Greene*, NY 17 May (WY), while at Cape May, birds were seen 13 Apr (J. Guerard), 23-24 Apr (MG), 27 Apr (Mike Rosengarten et al.), 5-9 May (m.ob.), and 3 together 11 May (DF, KL et al.). Three Mississippi Kites were at Cape May 5-12 May (MW, CJV, m.ob.), and 2 were at Sandy Hook 9 May (LM, SB), but there were none farther north. A pair of Northern Harriers seen displaying at Cedar Beach, *Suffolk*, NY 16 May and others at the Grumman property, *Suffolk*, Long I. suggests likely breeding by this declining grassland raptor. One of the major migration days of the spring was 25 Apr, when 1104 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 10,284 Broad-winged Hawks, and 96 American Kestrels were counted at Braddock Bay (J. Lawrey). Four Swainson's Hawks appeared in the Braddock Bay area 27 Apr-12 May, the largest spring total on record: an imm. light morph flew over Braddock Bay 27 Apr (J. Lawrey, DT), a imm. dark morph was trapped and banded at Manitou 9 May (D Niven), a "molting imm." was seen at Braddock Bay 9 May (DT), and yet another was seen at Braddock Bay 12 May (DT). Two more Swainson's Hawks were at Derby

Hill 24 Apr and 6 May (Kyle Wright et al.). Twenty Rough-legged Hawks over Braddock Bay 17 Apr was a small maximum for the spring there, but one at Braddock Bay 20 May was late (KCG, DT, GL).

## RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS

Once again this spring, Yellow Rails were heard calling at Turkey Pt., *Cumberland*, NJ 19-24 Apr, with a maximum of 2-3 birds heard 18 Apr (Harvey Tomlinson, Steve Glynn et al.). Less unusual but nonetheless noteworthy were single Black Rails at Turkey Pt. 1 May (A. LaQuidara), Cape May 9 May (TJ), and Jakes Landing, *Cape May* 23-24 May (Kevin Ripka, TR). A King Rail at Savannah, *Wayne*, NY 20 May (DT, m.ob.) was near breeding localities of 40 or 50 years ago, and 2 seen and heard near Schroepel, *Oswego*, NY after 16 May were the first ones there since 1992 (Mickey Scilingo et al.). American Coots nesting at Aquebogue were said to be the only ones on Long I. (SSM et al.). Sandhill Cranes are near-



A Say's Phoebe at Cape May, New Jersey was found 30 April 2009 (here 13) and remained until 2 May, furnishing a very rare spring record. Photograph by Michael O'Brien.

ly common in upstate New York; 27 were seen in the Niagara area 14 Mar-15 May, 54 were found in the Rochester, NY area during Apr (DT, m.ob.), and the seasonal total of 28 birds over Derby Hill was the all-time record (Kyle Wright). Outside of that area, one was at Bombay Hook 28 Apr (Jeff Holmes), 2 were at Delaware City, *New Castle*, DE 19 May (AG), and one was at Gabreski Airport, *Suffolk*, Long I. 17-18 May (C. Borelli, A. Simmons, m.ob.).

High counts of Black-bellied Plovers included 500 at Jamaica Bay 26 May (SSM), 400 at Nummy I., *Cape May*, NJ 12 May (CJV), and 375 at Heislerville 9 May (TL), similar to last spring. There were 11 American Golden-Plovers reported, 6 of these in New Jersey, 3 in New York, and 2 in Delaware, 2 more than last year. Peak counts of Semipalmated Plovers were 1000 at Brigantine 19 May (SC) and 305 at Heislerville 8 May (TL); 323 Killdeers were at Braddock Bay 1 Apr (DT). North of Delaware, one or 2 Black-necked Stilts were in Cape May 29 Apr–10 May (Al Maples, PD et al.), 2 were at Brigantine 20 May (m.ob.), and another was at Oceanside, *Nassau*, Long I. 8–15 May (Pat Egen, Rich Carlan). Two American Avocets were at Heislerville 12–16 May (KL et al.). Peak counts of yellowlegs were 200 Greater at Brigantine 28 Apr (CJV), 151 Lessers at Tonaawanda 3 May (WW), 100 Lessers each at Brigantine 9 May (CJV) and Cape May 12 May (GD), and the earliest local record ever (by two weeks) of Lesser at Batavia, *Genesee* 10–12 Mar (Elaine Dart, Doug Beattie). Three one-year-old Western Willets were found on e. Long I. 24 Apr–25 May (AnW, SSM, PJJ); this subspecies has not been widely reported here at this time of year. An exceptionally large group of 28 Willets, presumably of subspecies *inornata*, was seen at Bemus Pt., *Chautauqua* L., *Chautauqua*, NY 30 Apr (Paul Baglia et al.). An Upland Sandpiper at Cape May 30 Apr (RC) was early, and the largest groups of Whimbrels reported were 200 at Cape May 10 May (V. Zollo) and 134 at Hamlin Beach 31 May (WS). Only 2 Marbled Godwits were reported this spring, both in s. New Jersey.

Larger counts of small sandpipers included 2700 Sanderlings at Pike's Beach 28 May (SSM) and 2300 at Plum Beach, *Brooklyn*, NY the same day (DG); 20,000 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Brigantine 19 May (SC) and 10,000 at Heislerville 14 May (WK); and up to 3 Western Sandpipers at Heislerville, where uncommon in spring, 25 Apr (RRV) and 9 May (TL). Vast flocks of Dunlins roosting at Heislerville numbered up to 30,000 on 25 Apr (RRV). At least 3 Curlew Sandpipers were

found: 2 at Heislerville 10–25 May (Harvey Tomlinson, TR, m.ob.) and one at Nummy I., *Cape May* 20 May (LZ, MO'B). There were at least 8 Stilt Sandpipers found this spring: 2 at Heislerville 22 Apr (CJV) were early, and singles at Sagaponack 17 May (HM) and Sodus Pt., *Wayne*, NY (LL, RG) were farther e. and n., respectively, than usual. Five thousand Short-billed Dowitchers were at Heislerville 25 May (MF), 2500 were at Brigantine 12 May (CJV), and 3 Long-billeds at Brigantine 21 May (AM) were migrants. The only Ruff reported this spring was one at Fowler's Beach, *Sussex*, DE 11 Apr (BGP). About 35 Red-necked Phalaropes were seen on the ocean off the s. shore of Long I. 25–29 May (SSM et al.).

Six Parasitic Jaegers off the Cape May ferry 16 May (TL) was the largest number reported. About 5600 Laughing Gulls at Nummy I., *Cape May* 5 Apr made a particularly large concentration (CJV). Forty-three Little Gulls at Fort Niagara 10 Apr (JP, WD'A) were far more than have been seen in recent years, though not topping the Region's maximum of 78 seen in Nov 1981. Also on 10 Apr, 4 Little Gulls were seen on Spruce Run Res., *Hunterdon*, NJ (FS), which suggests a peak in migratory activity near that date. About 10 Black-headed Gulls were seen Regionwide, including one late one on the Niagara R. 29–30 May (JP). The 5784 Bonaparte's Gulls at Fort Niagara S.P. 10 Apr (JP, WD'A) constitutes one of the largest spring totals on record. Seven Glaucous Gulls and 28 Iceland Gulls were average numbers for spring; single Glaucous Gull × Herring Gull hybrids were at Cape May 21 Apr–4 May (TL, SG) and South Amboy, NJ 12–29 Mar (A. Laquidara et al.). A second-cycle Thayer's Gull was clearly photographed at South Amboy 29 Apr (TBo). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were more widely reported than they have been in recent springs, and the large numbers that have been wintering in the Philadelphia area seem to be expanding north-eastward. One hundred nineteen were on Spruce Run Res. 10 Apr (FS), and the Regional total of about 200 birds includes 23 on Long I. and 12 on the Niagara R. 13 Mar–21 May. Gull-billed Terns have been expanding east-

ward on Long I.; 10–15 birds were seen at Jones Beach in mid-May (Sharon Brody, JGI), not far from where up to two pairs have nested most years since 1975. Larger counts of Caspian Terns were 271 at Wilson, *Niagara*, NY (WD'A) and 7 at Georgica Pond, *Suffolk*, Long I. 23 Apr (HM). Two Common Terns on the Niagara R. at Lewiston 6 Apr (BC) were near the record-early date of 2 Apr; Common Terns in first-summer plumage were at Jones Beach and Moriches Inlet, Long I. 16 & 25 May, and 2 second-summer birds were at Cup-sogue 25 May (both SSM, PJJ); young Common Terns usually stay on their wintering grounds, and the few that come n. seldom arrive before Jun. Eleven Forster's Terns at Braddock Bay 9 May was a large number for spring (DT). A Dovekie carefully studied on the water from Staten I. 9 Mar (Starr Saphir, Lenore Swenson) was very unusual for that locality. A Thick-billed Murre that wintered at Ditch Plains, *Suffolk*, Long I. was still there 1 Mar.

## DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The population of Eurasian Collared-Doves at Selbyville, *Sussex*, DE has contained 20–30 individuals since about 1997, and 6 were seen there 14 Mar (FR); elsewhere, singles were seen at Cods Rd., *Sussex*, DE 25 Apr (BGP), Cape May 15 May (TR), and Hamlin, *Monroe*, NY 6 Mar (RSp). It is not clear that the Selbyville colony is the source of any of our Regional records, which have been concentrated around Cape May. The season's only White-winged Dove was at Indian River Inlet, *Sussex*, DE 16 May (AG). Forty-five Monk Parakeets were seen near the epicenter of their distribution near Edgewater, *Bergen*, NJ (MI), and 30 were seen over nearby Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx 5 Apr (SSM). Another was at Amityville, *Suffolk*, Long I. 13 Apr (SSM); recent evidence suggests population growth and spread following many years of little growth. Following a major winter flight, about 10 Snowy Owls remained in the Region up until 11 Apr (with one outlier at Oneida L. 22 May [BPu]); the southernmost was at Cape May until 15 Mar (LZ et al.). Two Northern Hawk Owls continued from the winter season in *Clinton*, NY; one at Peru through 15 Mar (Chris Bennett et al.), the other at Champlain through 28 Mar (Donna & Thomas Gooley). About 27 Short-eared Owls were reported, including 14 in the Niagara area and 12 in New Jersey through 18 Apr. About 22 Long-eared Owls reported included a nesting pair at Rensselaerville, *Albany*, NY (WY). A Boreal Owl was found roosting in Wilson–Tuscarora S.P., *Niagara*, NY 27 Mar (BPo), furnishing only the 5th record for that area. It was a slow spring for Northern Saw-whet Owls, with only

**SA** There was some cause for optimism for Red Knot numbers this spring. The maximum count for Delaware Bay was more than 20,000 birds (U. S. Geological Survey, New Jersey Division of Fish, Game, and Wildlife, and Delaware Division of Fisheries and Wildlife), which is up from the all-time low of 13,300 in 2005. It was a strong breeding season for Horseshoe Crabs, whose eggs provide the primary food for knots during their stopover in Delaware Bay, and it was thought that the good egg crop this year was the reason for the larger knot totals. An estimated 150,000 knots used Delaware Bay during spring migration into the early 1980s. It seems plausible that restrictions on crab harvest in recent years may be doing some good, but at least one paper questions whether these restrictions are adequate to save this population (Niles, L. J. et al. 2009. Effects of Horseshoe Crab harvest in Delaware Bay on Red Knots; are harvest restrictions working? *BioScience* 59: 153–164).



This Western Tanager at Plainfield, New Jersey 11-14 (here xx) April 2009 appeared to be a first-year male. Photograph by Bill Boyle.

4 banded at Manitou. Single Chuck-will's-widows were found in the Westhampton, Suffolk, Long I. area 26 Apr (SSM), and a Whip-poor-will was a bit early at Staten I. 25 Apr (SW). About 40 Red-headed Woodpeckers reported included one n. to Saranac L., Franklin, NY, where rare these days, 25 May (Erin Walkow). An American Three-toed Woodpecker was at Elizabethtown, Essex, NY 2 May (Peter Briggs), and 6 Black-backed Woodpeckers were reported from the Adirondacks. On the major flight day of 25 Apr, 320 Northern Flickers were counted passing by Derby Hill (Kyle Wright). A female Pileated Woodpecker banded at Crown Pt., Essex, NY 17 May (JMCP) is only the 5th to be banded there since 1997 and indicative of the continuing reforestation of the area.

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

Fourteen Yellow-bellied Flycatchers banded at Manitou 29 May (B.B.B.O.) was below last year's record-breaking 28 birds but still indicative of this species' recent increase in the Region, and singles seen at Central Park and Staten I. 8 May were a bit early. Thirty-four Willow/Alder Flycatchers banded 29 May at Manitou is also an impressive total. A Say's Phoebe, very rare in spring anywhere in the East, was at Cape May 30 Apr-2 May (Al Maples, LZ, MO'B, TL, m.ob.), and an Eastern Kingbird at Plattsburgh, Clinton, NY 30 Apr (CH) was a record early for the county. Both White-eyed and Warbling Vireos at Hempstead Lake S.P., Nassau, Long I. 8 Apr (SSM) were early, but even more unusual was a Yellow-throated Vireo at Baiting Hollow, Suffolk, Long I. 5 Apr (Linda Sullivan): the earliest ever for New York is 4 Apr. On 19 May, 7000 Blue Jays migrated

past Derby Hill (Kyle Wright). Common Ravens were especially numerous this spring; at least 9 were found in and around New York City 25 Mar-21 May, and 41 were at East Burlington, Otsego, NY 13 Mar (MAY). Up to 5 Fish Crows were seen in the Rochester, NY area 12 Apr-3 May (K. Frisch, GL, M. Peter). A Purple Martin at Hither Hills S.P., Suffolk, Long I. 12 Apr (SSM) was a bit early, as was a Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Cold Spring Harbor, Nassau, Long I. 25 Mar (SSM). Other early swallows include a Bank at Tillman Road W.M.A., Erie, NY 10 Apr (RSa) and a Barn at Cape May 30 Mar (DF). The only Sedge Wren reported was one at Bashakill, Sullivan, NY 2 May (Jim Clinton, Jr.), a regular location. Eastern Bluebirds numbered 425 at Hamlin Beach 16 May (DT), and a Veery was early at Central Park, Manhattan 25 Apr (TF). A Bicknell's Thrush was reported

singing in Forest Park, Queens 10 May (Jean Loscalzo, Jeff Ritter et al.), and early Swainson's Thrushes included one at Franklin, NY 25 Apr (TD) and 3 in Buffalo, Erie, NY 27 Apr (D. Gordon). A Wood Thrush was far n. and early in Franklin, NY 25 Apr (TD). The Varied Thrush that wintered at Sands Pt., Nassau, Long I. remained until 25 Mar (DK). Indicative of some major "flight" days were 10,600 American Robins at Braddock Bay 1 Apr (DT) and 720 American Pipits at Hamlin Beach 16 May (DT). Bohemian Waxwings remained into Apr after the major flight last winter; about 450 were reported from the Adirondacks, including a flock of 110 as late as 10 Apr at Cumberland Head, Clinton, NY (Nancy Olsen). Outside the Adirondacks, 30 were seen at Northumberland, Saratoga, NY 12 Mar (WY), and, much more unusual, a single bird was at Sandy Hook 4 Mar-7 Apr (TBo et al.). On the flight day of 16 May, 1190 Cedar Waxwings passed over Braddock Bay (DT).

### WARBLERS

A Blue-winged Warbler was early at Wilson-Tuscorora S.P., Niagara 25 Apr (WD'A), though general arrival was recorded at the coast on that day. Golden-winged were also a bit early at Amherst S.P., Erie, NY 25 Apr (Scott Meier) and Sheridan, Chautauqua, NY 27 Apr (DN). Four Brewster's and 2 Lawrence's Warblers were seen in the Niagara area during May, and 2 more Lawrence's were near Rochester. Orange-crowned Warblers seen at Cape May 14 Mar (TM) and Alley Pond Park, Queens, NY 22-31 Mar (m.ob.) likely wintered locally. A Northern Parula at Hempstead Lake S.P., Nassau, Long I. 31 Mar (SSM) was nearly a record-early date for New

York after one 30 Mar 2005. Two Magnolia Warblers and a Cape May Warbler appeared in Central Park, Manhattan 25 Apr (DK, TF, Chris Cooper), and a Bay-breasted Warbler was there 26 Apr (Phil Jeffrey, m.ob.), possibly a record-early date for New York. Both male and female Audubon's Warblers were carefully described in Princeton, Mercer, NJ 7-12 May (Charles J. Brine, Sharyn Magee); there are about 20 Regional records of this w. subspecies, only two of those in spring. A Townsend's Warbler was photographed in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY 25 Apr (Seth Ausubel et al.) for about the 25th Regional record. Eight Yellow-throated Warblers were found in New York City Parks 10 Apr-24 May, a total that is a bit above average. One hundred Pine Warblers in the Shu Swamp, Nassau, Long I. 8 Apr (Mary Normandia) is reminiscent of counts made in the 1940s and 1950s and indicates the increase in abundance over the past 20 years or so. Two Cerulean Warblers appeared early on Staten I.—a female 18 Apr (SW) that was joined by a male 19 Apr (EJ)—and 8 others were seen in New York City parks 27 Apr-24 May. Two Ceruleans at L. Alice, Clinton, NY 18 May constituted the 6th and 7th records for that county (James Osborn, BK). Twelve Prothonotary Warblers in New York City parks 12 Apr-10 May is far below the record-breaking 26 of 2005 but still a bit above average for recent springs, and one at Camden, Camden, NJ 1 Apr (MW) was early. A Worm-eating Warbler at Beaver Island S.P., Erie, NY 12 May was far north (Debbie Sharon). Two Swainson's Warblers heard singing, one at Sandy Hook 23 May (SB et al.) and one at Hamilton, Mercer, NJ 28 May (Chris Brown), add to the increasing number of spring occurrences of this elusive species. A Kentucky Warbler at Brigantine 17 Apr (Ray Duffy) was early, and 9 were in New York City parks 27 Apr-27 May. Filling out the list of early arrivals were a Wilson's Warbler at Prospect Park 19 Apr (DG) and a Canada Warbler at Central Park 26 Apr (TF).

### TANAGERS THROUGH DICKCISSEL

Sixteen Summer Tanagers in the New York City area 6 Apr-21 May was below the record-breaking totals of 23 in 2005 and 2006, and another was far n. at Golden Hill S.P., Niagara, NY 17-18 May (JP, Greg Coniglio). A Scarlet Tanager was very early at Snug Harbor, Staten I. 10 Apr (Eva Callahan), and 172 were counted migrating over Braddock Bay 14 May (DT). A one-year-old male Western Tanager clearly photographed at Plainfield, Union, NJ 11-14 Apr (Holly Hoffman et al.) seems bizarre for this usual fall vagrant but follows closely the occurrence of another in Central Park last

spring. The Green-tailed Towhee that wintered at Hadden, *Camden*, NJ remained until 3 May (John & Peggy McDevitt). A Clay-colored Sparrow wintered in *Sussex*, DE and was present until 7 Mar (ES), and single migrants were seen at Keene, *Essex*, NY 30 Apr (J&PT), at Manitou 1 May (b.; B.B.B.O.), and at Wilson-Tuscarora Park, *Niagara*, NY 16 May (JP, WD'A). A Lark Sparrow at Smyrna, *Kent*, DE 1 Mar (Roger Masse) had probably wintered locally, but one at Jones Beach 24 Apr (Sam Jannazzo) was an unusual spring migrant. A Grasshopper Sparrow at Riverside Park, Manhattan 18 May (TF) was unusual, as these are rarely seen in spring away from breeding locations, and a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Marine Park, Brooklyn 22-29 Apr (DG) was early for a spring migrant and may have wintered nearby. Two hundred White-throated Sparrows at the s. end of Staten I. 22 Apr (RRV) was, surprisingly, the largest concentration reported this spring, and a Harris's Sparrow photographed at Raritan, *Hunterdon*, NJ 20-23 Apr (Pamela Petropoulos) furnished about a 30th Regional spring record. A Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow at Shinnecock 1 Mar (SSM, PJJ) probably wintered nearby. Flocks of 60-100 Lapland Longspurs at Middletown, *Kent*, DE 24 Mar (Kitt Heckscher) and 60 at Yates, *Orleans*, NY 2 Apr (MM) were large, as was one of 400 Snow Buntings at Eagle, *Wyoming*, NY 10 Mar (MM). Unlike Summer Tanagers and most "southern" warblers, Blue Grosbeaks appeared in as large or larger numbers than they did during the record spring of 2005; 18 were found around New York City and on Long I. 5 Apr-17 May, and an additional 8 "likely breeders" were seen at now almost traditional sites on Long I. 14 May+ (SSM). Oddly, considering the numbers of Blue Grosbeaks reported, only 5 Indigo Buntings appeared on Long I. 5-22 Apr. One or 2 green Painted Buntings were at Cape May 29 Apr-5 May (MSG, KL); these have appeared regularly in recent springs. Two Dickcissels 8-15 May made a relatively low number at Cape May this spring, and one wintered at Clarence, *Erie*, NY until 19 Apr (Deb Abgot).

## BLACKBIRDS THROUGH FINCHES

Some 1745 Bobolinks were counted over Braddock Bay 14 May (DT), while 209 Rusty Blackbirds at Hamlin Beach 18 Apr (JBa, CW) and 210 at Braddock Bay 28 Apr (J. Lawrey, DT) were notable tallies. A male Brewer's Blackbird was at Murray, *Monroe*, NY 4 May (KCG). Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen: a female at Bear, *New Castle*, DE 2 Mar (Charlie Jackson) and a male at Webster, *Monroe*, NY 25 Apr (D. & D. Traver). A flight of 516 Baltimore Orioles was observed at

Braddock Bay 14 May (DT).

The substantial "winter finch" flight produced several spring records of interest. Three Pine Grosbeaks were in *Clinton*, NY (Judy Read), and another was at Lincklaen, *Chenango*, NY in early Mar (MAY). On the Buffalo Ornithological Society's Apr count 19 Apr, 327 Purple Finches were tallied, and 260 flew past Braddock Bay 28 Apr (DT). Red Crossbills were broadly distributed in w. and cen. New York into early May. About 40 were in the Morgan Hill S.F. in Truxton, *Cortland*, NY, and these and others in cen. New York were recorded uttering vocalizations of four or five different types (MAY), suggesting origins from different geographical localities. White-winged Crossbills were more widespread and found in larger flocks: 150 were in the Morgan S.F. through early May (MAY), about 100 were in the Niagara Frontier region until the end of May (MM), 30 or so were in the Cooley Bog in Parksville, *Sullivan*, NY with a few remaining until late May (MF et al.), 40 were at Rochester 3 May (L. Crowell), and 30 made it out to the coast at Easthampton, *Suffolk*, Long I. 3-4 May (HM). Thousands of Pine Siskins persisted through the winter, and a very pronounced northward migration was also evident: 1276 were banded at two Adirondack stations through 8 May (JMCP, Gary Lee), 1138 were counted over Hamlin Beach 18 Apr (JBa, CW), 1065 passed Braddock Bay 14 May (DT), and 120 were at Calverton, *Suffolk*, Long I. 11 Apr. Common Redpolls were not as numerous but nevertheless widespread: there were about 150 throughout Mar in the Niagara area (MM) and 60 in the Burnt Hills, *Albany*, NY 17 Mar. Multiple Hoary Redpolls were reported: high counts of 10 and 8 came from Hamlin Beach 1 & 3 Mar (DT, RC), respectively; one of these, on 1 Mar, resembled Greenland Hoary Redpoll, subspecies *hornemanni* (CW). Other Hoaries were at Holland, *Erie*, NY through 3 Mar (Chris Newton et al.) and at Buckhorn Island S.P., *Erie*, NY 6 Mar (WW). A few small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks were seen at widespread locations in New York, s. to the Hudson-Mohawk area 30 Apr. It was a very large spring for American Goldfinches (following a near record fall in 2008), and 3450 were counted at Hamlin Beach 16 May (DT).

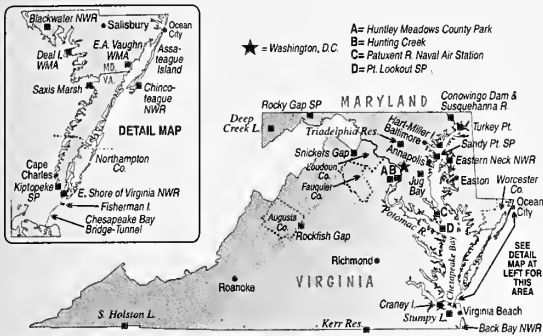
Observers (subregional compilers in bold-face): Deborah Allen (Central Park, NY), Seth Ausubel, Scott Barnes (North Coast Region, NJ: Sandy Hook B.O., P.O. Box 553, Fort Hancock, NJ 07732), Jessie Barry, Shane Blodgett, Michael Bochnik (Hudson-Delaware, NY: 86 Empire St., Yonkers, NY 10704), Jeffrey S. Bolsinger (St. Lawrence Region, 98 State St., Canton, NY 13617), Tom Boyle (TBo), Braddock Bay B.O. (B.B.B.O.), Tom Brown, Thomas

W. Burke (New York Rare Bird Alert), Barbara Butler (Dutchess County, NY), Brad Carlson, Richard Crossley, Seth Cutright, Willie D'Anna, Glen Davis, Tom Dudones, Peter Dunne, Vince Elia (South Coast and Delaware Bay Regions, NJ: C.M.B.O., 600 Rte. 47 North, Cape May Courthouse, NJ 08120), Tom Fiore, Bob Fogg, Valerie Freer, Don Freiday (Cape May: C.M.B.O. R&E Center, 600 Rte. 47 North, Cape May Courthouse, NJ 08120), Mike Fritz, Sam Galick, Mark S. Garland (Cape May, NJ), John Gavrity, John Gluth (JGI), Doug Gochfeld, Anthony Gonzon, Kevin C. Griffith (Genesee Region, NY: 61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, NY 14612), Rich Guthrie, Candace Hess, Marshall J. Iliff, Ed Johnson, Tom Johnson (Finger Lakes Region, 150 Tripphammer Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850), William Keim, Jim Kimball, Bill Krueger, Doug Kurz, Robert J. Kurtz, Laurie Larson (LLa; New Jersey), Anthony J. Lauro, L. Lauster, Greg Lawrence, Tony Leukering, Patricia J. Lindsay (Long I. and New York City: 28 Mystic Circle, Bay Shore, NY 11706), Karl Lukens, Linda Mack, Tom Magarian, Al Martens, Melanie A. McCormick, Hugh McGuinness (Eastern Long I., NY: P.O. Box 3005, Southampton, NY 11969), Shaibal S. Mitra (Long I. and New York City: Biology Department, College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd., Staten Island, NY 10314), Mike Morgante (MM) (Niagara Frontier region, NY: 59 Briar Hill Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127), Dave Neveu, Michael O'Brien, Jim Pawlicki, Bruce G. Peterjohn, John M. C. Peterson (Adirondack-Champlain Region, NY: 477 County Rte. 8, Elizabethtown, NY 12932), Betsy Potter, Bill Purcell (BPu) (Oneida Lake Basin, NY: 281 Baum Road, Hastings, NY 13076), Rick Radis (nw. New Jersey: 69 Ogden Ave., Rockaway, NJ 07866), Tom Reed, Richard Salembier, Frank Sencher, Ed Sigda, Robert & Susan Spahn (RSp) (Genesee Ornithological Society), David & Debbie Suggs, W. Symonds, David Tetlow, John & Patricia Thaxton, Christopher J. Vogel, William Watson, Matt Webster, Carol & Owen Whitby, Timothy P. White, Angus Wilson (AnW), Chris Wood, Seth Woolney, Will Yandik (Hudson-Mohawk NY: 269 Schneider Rd., Hudson, NY 12534), Peter Yoerg, Matthew A. Young (Susquehanna, NY: Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850), Robert P. Yurnick, Louise Zemaitis. 🐦

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Mark T. Adams  
Matt Hafner

The season opened with a major winter storm that affected the Eastern Seaboard and the southern Appalachian Mountains 1-3 March. Averaged across the season and the Region's geography, however, spring temperatures were mostly near normal, though Maryland was warmer than average in April. The season became wetter as it progressed. March precipitation showed a distinct gradient from much below normal in the northwest to near normal in the southeast. April was wetter in Maryland than Virginia, but rainfall amounts were well above average east of the Chesapeake Bay in both states. May was wet everywhere outside central and eastern Virginia, which were closer to normal though still above average. Observers reported many rarities, including Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Red-billed Tropicbird, Eurasian Whimbrel, Long-billed Curlew, and Common Murre. The lamentable lack of pelagic birding trips in the Region continues to leave a lacuna in our understanding of the current distribution of pelagic terns, tubenoses, jaegers, tropicbirds (but see below), and skuas off Virginia and Maryland.

In addition to this report's many individual contributors, we thank Todd Day, Adam D'Onofrio, YuLee Larner, Roger and Linda Mayhorn, Robert F. Ringler, Jo Solem, and Bill Williams for their assistance in compiling and interpreting the season's records.

**Abbreviations:** Assat. (Assateague I., Worcester, MD); Bay (Chesapeake Bay); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, linking Northampton and Virginia Beach, VA); C.C.B. (Center for Conservation Biology, College of William and Mary/Virginia Commonwealth University); Chinc. (Chincoteague N.W.R., Accomack, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); Hart (Hart-Miller I., Baltimore, MD); O.C. (Ocean City, Worcester, MD); Poplar (Poplar I., Talbot, MD); V.C.R. (Virginia Coast Reserve of The Nature Conservancy).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH IBISES

Though the species has occurred with increasing frequency throughout the East since the mid-1990s, 10 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were still an excellent find at L. Churchill, *Montgomery*, MD 30 May (K&BH). Another delighted birders at Richmond, VA 19-25 May (AB et al.). Rarely seen in the Region in numbers in May, 16 Greater White-fronted Geese were grazing on young wheat with 3000 Canada and 2 Cackling Geese at Leedstown, *Westmoreland*, VA 8 May (FA). A single Greater White-fronted Goose continued from the winter at Piney Res., *Garrett*, MD through 8 Mar (ML et al.); and another single visited Gibson I., *Anne Arundel*, MD 22-26 Mar (CV et al.). Lone Ross's Geese were at Chestertown, *Kent*, MD 7 Mar (MB), Blackwater N.W.R., *Dorchester*, MD 8 Mar (JB), and near downtown Lynchburg, VA 27-30 May (TDa et al.); 2 were in *Kent*, MD 17 Mar (SA). A flock of 112 Brant at Grandview Beach Park, *Hampton*, VA 25 Apr (NF et al.) was a noteworthy number locally. Three Brant at Poplar 9 Mar (JR) and one at Cobb I., *Charles*, MD 1 Apr (JH, JB, JCu) were both good finds, as the species is rare in Maryland away from *Worcester*.



Long-billed Curlew has been a rare, annual visitor to Virginia's barrier islands in recent years, but most records appear to refer to one or two returning individuals. This one was photographed 30 May 2009 on the eastern side of Elkins Marsh, Northampton County, near where one has been recorded most years since 2003. Photograph by Barry Truitt.

A Mute Swan at Deerfield, *Augusta*, VA 11-12 Apr (LT, *vide* YL) furnished just the 3rd county record in spring. A Trumpeter Swan visited Rocky Gap, *Allegany*, MD 23 Mar (ph. ML). Four Trumpeter Swans continued at Violette's Lock, *Montgomery*, MD from the winter through 17 Mar (DCz et al.). The Trumpeter Swan at Upper Marlboro, *Prince George's*, MD continued from the winter through 23 Mar (FS et al.) and is presumed to

be #962, though the bird has lost its wing tag. A lone Trumpeter Swan remained at Lakeside Business Park, *Harford*, MD from the winter through 31 Mar (m.ob.). A Tundra Swan at Chesapeake Farms, *Kent* 28 May (RFR) was not seen afterward.

The male Eurasian Wigeon continued from the winter at Ridgeway Park, *Hampton* through 4 Mar (BCo); others were at Patterson Park, *Baltimore City*, MD 1 Apr (DCu), at Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R. 7 Mar (GK&MAK), and at Chinc. 4 & 17 Apr (AL et al.). A Canvasback lingered at Ramsey L., *Anne Arundel* until 20 May (JRa). A male Ring-necked Duck was similarly late at Shirley Plantation, *Charles City*, VA 17 May (AB). Four Greater Scaup were well past their typical departure date at Hart 23-30 May (EJS et al.). The season's eiders were a King at O.C. Inlet, *Worcester*, MD 21 Mar (AS et al.) and 2 Commons at O.C. Inlet 18-21 Mar (WW, DB et al.). Two Harlequin Ducks were at O.C. Inlet, *Worcester* 11 Apr, and an imm. male remained through 22 May (ML, JL, JB), establishing a new late date for Maryland (Virginia has had summering Harlequins). Notable inland Surf Scoter records included an ad. male on the James R., *Richmond* 17 Apr (AB); 2 birds at Violette's Lock, *Montgomery*, MD 20 Apr (DCz); and one at Seneca, *Montgomery* (m.ob.) that remained from the winter through 20 Mar. Two White-winged Scoters were a nice find at Riley's Lock, *Montgomery* 15-21 Mar (GH et al.), as were the 2 at Violette's Lock, *Montgomery* 20 Apr (DCz). A White-winged Scoter at O.C. Inlet 17-22 May (BH et al.) was the season's latest. Fourteen Long-tailed Ducks discovered at Mill Creek L., *Amherst*, VA 14 Apr (MJ et al.) were unprecedented for the county; 4 at Bell's Lane 28 Mar (AL) were the first in *Augusta* since 1990; a female visited a *Fauquier*, VA pond 11 Apr (J&BJL); and a male stopped at Sandy River Res., *Prince Edward*, VA 12 Apr (ph. TM). A Bufflehead at *Cambridge*, *Dorchester* 23 May (ZB) was late, as was a Common Goldeneye at Hooper's I., *Dorchester* 28 May (JM). Hooded Merganser was confirmed this season as a Maryland breeding species in *Prince George's*, *Montgomery*, *Anne Arundel*, *Carroll*, and *Frederick*.

A Red-throated Loon at Carvins Cove Res., *Botetourt*, VA 27 Mar (MP et al.) made a first Roanoke Valley record. Single Red-throated Loons were welcome inland finds at Little Seneca L., *Montgomery* 2 Apr (DCz) and at Cylburn Arboretum, *Baltimore City* 12 Apr (KGr et al.). The 217 Common Loons flying over Manchester at *Carroll*, MD 10 Apr (MSc) represented an excellent count for this Piedmont location. A Common Loon at L. Moomaw, *Bath*, VA 27 May was late (GS et

al.), as was a Horned Grebe at Rigby's Folly, *Talbot*, MD 25 May (HTA). This was an above-average spring for Red-necked Grebe, with about 40 birds reported from 35 locations in 20 Maryland and Virginia counties, plus in D.C. Very rare in the spring, an Eared Grebe continued from the winter at 32nd St., *Worcester*, MD through 21 Mar (m.ob.). Another Eared Grebe was on the Potomac R., *Fairfax*, VA 28 Mar (KG). An Eared Grebe in breeding plumage was an exceptional find at the sewage treatment plant in Roanoke, VA 20-21 Apr (KD, MS, MP).

As often happens, persistent easterly winds in mid- to late May produced multiple coastal Sooty Shearwater records. Three and 8 Sooty Shearwaters were at O.C. Inlet 17 (JB et al.) & 19 May (SD et al.), respectively. An exhausted Sooty Shearwater rested near Smith I., *Northampton*, VA 23 May (J&HL, *fide* HTA); one was at Fisherman's Island N.W.R., *Northampton* 24 May (ph. SR); and another was closely observed at the C.B.B.T. 30 May (ph. AD, TT). Single Leach's Storm-Petrels were sighted on *Worcester* pelagics 24 (JLS et al.) & 30 May (MB). An ad. Red-billed Tropicbird was carefully studied for five minutes at distances as close as 5 m overhead at Ship Shoal I., *Northampton* 24 May (ph. AW, ND). If accepted, this will represent a first record for the Region. It is possible that this tropicbird was the same individual as observed onshore in Mar/Apr at Buxton, NC. American White Pelicans were well reported: 30 continued from the winter at Blackwater N.W.R., *Dorchester* through 7 Apr (m.ob.); one was seen soaring over Hog I., *Surry*, VA 18 Mar (FB, SDe, BW, BT); and another at Swards, *Dorchester* 5 Apr+ (m.ob.) was presumably one of the Blackwater flock that moved away from the refuge. The 500+ Brown Pelicans at Pt. Lookout, *St. Mary's*, MD 5 Apr (PR) was an excellent early season count. A Brown Pelican at Ft. Smallwood, *Anne Arundel* 17 Apr (SRi et al.) was unexpected, as the species is very rare n. of the Bay Bridge. A Great Cormorant was seen flying downstream at Violette's Lock, *Montgomery* 4 Apr (DCz); imms. were at Hart 9 May (EJS et al.) and at O.C. Inlet 17 May (BH et al.). Primarily rare visitors to se. Virginia in the Region, Anhingas were seen well away from Hampton Roads cities this season: singles were at Lilypons, *Frederick*, MD 3 May (JMo et al.), over *Bedford*, VA 8 May (RB), and on the Occoquan R. at Belmont Bay, *Prince William*, VA 10 May (MO), and 2 were at Susquehanna S.P., *Harford* 22 May (p.a., KGr, JD).

An American Bittern was heard at Finzel Swamp, *Garrett* 24 May (MH et al.), suggesting possible breeding. The 6 Snowy Egrets at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, D.C. 7 May

(GM, BC) made an unusually high spring count. A Cattle Egret was a bit out of place at Veteran's Park, *Prince William* 5-17 Apr (TJ, MF, MR); other singles were on the Mall, D.C. 21-22 Apr (JF et al.), at E. Potomac Park, D.C. 4-6 May (GM, BC), and at Shirley Plantation, *Charles City* 5 May (RE). Two Cattle Egrets at Lilypons, *Frederick* 1-3 May (MW et al.) were also away from the species' usual locations. A rare and local transient and summer visitor in the Piedmont, a juv. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron delighted observers in Madison Heights, *Amherst* 5-10 May (RB et al.).

A White Ibis at Sparrows Pt., *Baltimore*, MD 4-9 May (RRo et al.) provided a rare spring record for Maryland. Single Glossy Ibis were good finds on the James R., Newport News, VA 3 Apr (NF); at Dameron Marsh Natural Area Preserve, *Northumberland*, VA 4 Apr (TS); at Hains Pt., D.C. 15 May (PP); and at E. Potomac Park, D.C. 26-27 May (PP). Single ad. White-faced Ibis were at Snow Hill, *Worcester* 18 Apr (JLS) and Berlin, *Worcester* 18-27 Apr (RG et al.). A White-faced Ibis at Chinc. 30 May (AD, TT) made the first Virginia spring record since 2006.

## KITES THROUGH ALCIDS

One or 2 ad. Swallow-tailed Kites were seen between the Eastern Shore Virginia N.W.R. and near Painter, *Northampton* 1-6 May (DR, SH; GF); another graced the skies near Burke L., *Fairfax* 9 May (SB). A Mississippi Kite in *Halifax*, VA 1 May (JBI) was at approximately the same location where the species has been seen annually since the 1998 Virginia Society of Ornithology Foray. Mississippi Kite had an above-average spring in Maryland, including 6 birds at Ft. Smallwood and five additional reports. The 2009 C.C.B. Bald Eagle survey documented 71 nesting pairs in coastal Virginia, including 52 on the Eastern Shore (*Accomack* had 36 pairs, *Northampton* 16 pairs). Seven and 12 nesting Bald Eagle pairs were recorded in Hampton/Newport News and lower Tidewater, respectively (BWa, MBy). A Northern Goshawk at the College Creek Hawkwatch, Williamsburg, VA 21 Mar (BT et al.) provided only the 3rd record for this location. A Rough-legged Hawk sighted above Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 1 Mar (AL) furnished the 2nd county record in spring. The 19 Golden Eagles at Dan's Rock, *Alleghany* 5 Mar (ML, JB Churchill) made an excellent spring count. A subad. Golden Eagle was unexpected in *Westmoreland*, VA 11 Mar (TD). A Merlin was a nice find at Ft. Smallwood, *Anne Arundel* 22 May (SRi et al.). A Peregrine Falcon seen at Oakton, *Fairfax* 3 Apr (FA) had an antenna attached to its back, possibly the bird dubbed "Ross" that was hacked from the

New River Gorge N.P. in summer 2007 and has been tracked by the C.C.B.

Always rare and elusive in the Region, 3 Yellow Rails were heard well at Rumbly Pt., *Somerset*, MD 24-25 Apr (HH et al.). Two Black Rails called from the Saxis marsh, *Accomack*, VA 24 Apr (S&SK, *fide* DM). One of the few reliable Virginia locations for this species, 4 King Rails were at Occoquan Bay N.W.R., *Prince William* 3 May (KG et al.). A Purple Gallinule was an excellent find at the James River S.P., *Buckingham*, VA 14 May (ABr). An impressive total of 24 Sandhill Cranes was reported from nine locations, including 10 birds at the Patuxent Research Refuge, *Prince George's*, MD 10 Mar (EG, AG); 3 flying over Ferndale, *Anne Arundel* 10 Mar (Stan and EA); and 5 at Columbia, *Howard*, MD 31 Mar (BE et al.), a 6th county record.

A rare spring transient in the Region, an American Golden-Plover was found in *Albemarle*, VA 23 Mar (THo); another was at Jug Bay, *Anne Arundel* 5 Apr (POs, DK). Two Piping Plovers were notable at Bethel Beach, *Mathews*, VA 17-22 Mar (G&RH, AB); singles were at Craney I. 23 Apr (DC) and Hughlett Point Natural Area Preserve, *Northumberland* 24 May (TS). An American Oystercatcher at Hart 31 Mar-2 Apr (EJS et al.) was unusual. A Black-necked Stilt was a nice find at Great Oak Pond, *Kent* 9 May (WE, NM); 4 were at Snow Hill, *Worcester* 31 May (MHo). Two Black-necked Stilt nests with eggs were discovered at Hart 30 May (RFR et al.). Single Western Willets were at Ft. Smallwood, *Anne Arundel* 1 May (BH), at Sandy Pt., *Anne Arundel* 7 May (DH et al.), and Shirley Plantation, *Charles City* 17 May (AB). A Eurasian Whimbrel at Assat. 24 Apr (ph. JLS) made just the 2nd Maryland record. The 130 Whimbrels at Dyke Marsh, *Fairfax* 18 May (KG et al.) were an unusually high count for the location. A Long-billed Curlew was still at Elkins Marsh, *Northampton* 30 May (ph. BTr, FSm), where at least one has visited periodically since 2003. A rare spring transient, especially away from the immediate coast, a Marbled Godwit flew over Blackwater N.W.R., *Dorchester* 9 May (JMo). Inclement weather hampered the C.C.B./V.C.R. coastal barrier islands Red Knot migration investigations. The peak count for this spring was 6079 birds 25 May, comparable to the peak 2006 and 2007 counts of 5783 and 5939 birds, respectively, but well below the 8000+ typically observed in the mid-1990s, the 7802 birds recorded in 2008, and the high of 9150 Red Knots tallied in 2005. Two Sanderlings at Summit Hall Turf Farm, *Montgomery* 31 May were well inland (DCz). Very rare in the spring, a well-described Western Sandpiper was at Blackwater N.W.R.,

*Dorchester* 9 May (TA, *fide* HTA). A Purple Sandpiper was out of place at Chesapeake Beach, *Calvert*, MD 3 Apr (ML), and 38 continued from the winter at Poplar through 27 Apr, where 2 remained as late as 18 May (JR). Rarer in the spring than the fall, 3 Stilt Sandpipers were a good find at Hart 9 May (EJS et al.), as were 4 at Poplar 11-12 May (JR et al.). Single Stilt Sandpipers were at Brown's Station, *Prince George's*, 16-18 May (BH et al.); along Rt. 309, *Queen Anne's*, MD 17 May (ZB); and at Chesapeake Farms, *Kent* 25 May (SA et al.). A very rare find anywhere in the East in spring, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Craney I. 13 May (ph. BT; BW, RB) was just the 2nd spring Virginia record; the first was at Chinc. 1-27 May 1964. A species noted more frequently in fall migration in the Region, a female Ruff was at Chesapeake Farms, *Kent* 25-27 May (SA et al.). Another rare spring transient, a Long-billed Dowitcher at Chinc. 14 May was a trip highlight (LM et al.).

The 230 Wilson's Snipe at Swoope, *Augusta* 2 Apr (AL) made a good spring count. Three Wilson's Snipe at Finzel Swamp, *Garrett* 28 Apr (ML) were winnowing at a potential breeding location, though breeding has yet to be confirmed anywhere in the Region. Two Wilson's Phalaropes at Craney I. 13 May (BW, RB, BT) were the only report of this rare spring transient. At least 26 Red-necked Phalaropes were observed at nine locations 17-30 May; the most unexpected were single birds in D.C. at E. Potomac Park 26 May (PP) and Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens 27 May (WP, WK).

More typically a rare summer through fall visitor, an ad. Franklin's Gull was a surprise at Back River, *Baltimore* 20 Apr (BC). Ad. Little Gulls were reported from four locations: up to 2 at Lapidum, *Harford/Cecil* 24-29 Mar (JH et al.); up to 2 at Back River, *Baltimore* 27 Mar-2 Apr (ML); one at C.B.B.T. 5 Apr (JMc, KGe); and one at Hart 18 Apr (KGr et al.). Single ad. Black-headed Gulls visited Back River, *Baltimore* 28-29 Mar (SA et al.) and Lapidum, *Harford/Cecil*, MD 29-31 Mar (ML et al.). Six Iceland Gulls were reported from five locations, all but one for a single day. The most notable were singles at Centennial L., *Howard* 8 Mar (DZ et al.) and one at O.C., *Worcester* 2-24 May (HH et al.). Lesser Black-backed Gull reports included 45 at Assat. 24 Apr (JLS) and 8 at Skimmer I., *Worcester* 24 May (MH et al.); regular surveys at Back Bay turned up 208 on 9 Mar, 143 on 6 Apr, and 52 on 26 May (RLAk, DLH). The first-cycle Glaucous Gull at Oyster, *Northampton* last winter continued through the spring (D&ES, AD, TT); another was at Skimmer I., *Worcester* 24 May+ (MH et al.). Thirteen Caspian Terns at Fisherville, *Au-*

*gusta* 20 Apr (AL) provided an impressive inland count; one was at Mill Creek L., *Amherst* 6 May (MB). A rare transient and summer visitor along the coast and in the lower Bay, a Roseate Tern was an excellent find at the O.C. Inlet, *Worcester* 17 May (JB et al.); the date is a good one for spring migrants, especially during periods of onshore winds. Two Common Terns were at Rocky Gap, *Allegany* 26 May (DY). There were only eight reports of 1-2 Black Terns each from Maryland and D.C. 2-27 May; 3 were noted at Back River Reef e. of Poquoson, VA 30 May (BP). Two Black Skimmers observed at Van Ness, D.C. 8 Apr (p.a., *fide* GA) and 2 at Hart 20 May (RFR et al.) were notable. A Parasitic Jaeger chased a Forster's Tern at Chinc. 30 May (AD, TT). A breeding-plumaged Common Murre was a most unexpected discovery at O.C. Inlet, *Worcester* 11 Apr (JB, ML, JL), although the species is said to be relatively regular through early spring off s. New Jersey by bird surveyors working over Continental Shelf waters.

## DOVES THROUGH WARBLERS

A Eurasian Collared-Dove at South Boston, *Halifax* 12 Mar+ (PG) was joined by another in late May, probably the same birds that visited this location Jul-Sep 2008. One or 2 collared-doves were in *Rockingham*, VA 23-27 Apr (AL, BTe); one continued from winter at South Pt., *Worcester* through 25 Apr (m.ob.); and 2 continued at Pocomoke, *Somerset* (m.ob.). A White-winged Dove was spotted from an office window in *Halifax* 2 Apr (PG); another was at Hughes Hollow, *Montgomery* 26 Apr (PD). Black-billed Cuckoo seemed unusually common in the Region this spring, with over 15 reports, including one on the coast at Cape Charles, VA 5 May (ESB). The last of this winter's Snowy Owls included singles at Havre de Grace, *Harford* 8-10 Mar (PPo et al.) and downtown D.C. 10-16 Mar (m.ob.). A Northern Saw-whet Owl was reported calling at the Saxis marsh, *Accomack* 23 Apr (S&SK, *fide* DM), a very unusual date for this species and location. A Common Nighthawk at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 4 Apr (BTe) was an extraordinarily early spring arrival. A Chuck-will's-widow at Ft. McHenry, *Baltimore City* 28 Apr (KEC, LN) was a migrant at the fringe of this species' range.

An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Spencerville, *Montgomery* 26 Apr (CC) was very early. A singing Alder Flycatcher was at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve, *Loudoun*, VA 16 May (GK&MAK); 2 sang at Straight Fork, *Highland*, VA 24-27 May (DSH, G&RH). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at Port Republic, *Rockingham* 8 May (*fide* KR); one near Waynesboro, *Augusta* 28 May (p.a. AC) would pro-

vide a first county spring record. In Maryland, where the species is less often recorded, an ad. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Eastern Neck N.W.R., *Kent* 26-27 May was well seen and photographed (JGr et al.). A few Loggerhead Shrikes were reported, including 2 at Clifton Farms, *Russell*, VA 15 Mar (TH), 2 near Wardell, *Tazewell*, VA 30 Mar (TH), one at Elk Garden, *Russell* 15 Mar (TH), one along Rte. 15, cen. *Loudoun* 17 Mar (LW, *fide* Joe Coleman), and one at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 21 Mar (AL). A rare spring migrant on the Eastern Shore, a Warbling Vireo at Blackwater N.W.R., *Dorchester* 9 May (WR) was notable. Single Philadelphia Vireos were noted at Huntley Meadows Park, *Fairfax* 11 May (KG, RR), at Upper Watts Branch Park, *Montgomery* 12 May (PO), at Green Ridge, *Allegany* 17 May (JLS, EB), and at Merrimac Farm W.M.A., *Prince William* 17 May (MR).

Common Raven continues to spread eastward in Maryland, and this season had many new reports from the Laurel area of *Prince George's* and *Anne Arundel*, plus a few reports from *Harford*. One at Swan Creek, *Anne Arundel* 14 May (MG) was well away from any known breeding locations. Two Carolina Chickadees seen and heard at Bond's Landing, *Allegany* 17 May (JLS, EB) were interesting; the species is very rare in *Allegany*, and these birds looked phenotypically like Carolinas. A Brown-headed Nuthatch at S. Holston Res., *Washington* VA 7 Mar (ph. LMc, Rbi) was possibly the same bird detected on the Dec 2008 Bristol C.B.C. and is the only Virginia Mountains and Valleys record s. of the New R. region. Unexpected single Sedge Wrens were at Patterson Park, *Baltimore City* 30 Apr-8 May (DCu et al.), at Patuxent Branch Trail, *Howard* 5-7 May (Steve Collins et al.), and at Finzel Swamp, *Garrett* 8 May (JBC). A Bicknell's Thrush was recorded singing and calling at Pasadena, *Anne Arundel* 18-20 May (v.r. BH et al.); another cooperative Bicknell's sang at Upper Watts Branch Park, *Montgomery* 20-22 May (PO et al.). A Wood Thrush along Rte. 610, *Augusta* 17 Mar (WPl, *fide* YL) was extremely early. An American Pipit lingered late at Patton Turf Farm, *Montgomery* 17 May (AM). Single Brewster's Warblers were at James River Park, *Richmond* 19 Apr (AB) and Clifton Farms, *Russell* 26 Apr (ph. TH). A Brewster's Warbler at Old Legislative Rd., *Allegany* 7 May (ML) sang Golden-winged Warbler song; this area hosted a Brewster's in 2007. An Orange-crowned Warbler at Upper Marlboro, *Prince George's* 13 May (FS) was late. Most spring records for this species in the Region occur in Mar/Apr. Single Audubon's Warblers were notable at Hollywood, *St. Mary's* 2 Mar (PC) and at Noland's Ferry, *Fred-*

*erick* 19 Apr (DP). A Swainson's Warbler at Weyanoke Sanctuary, Norfolk, VA 11 May (BK) acted as if on territory, an unusual location for such behavior. A Mourning Warbler at Bridgewater, *Rockingham* 10 May (BB, RP) was a nice find, as was another Mourning Warbler at James River Park, Richmond 12 May (AB). The populated and well-birded Western Shore of Maryland and D.C. had a typical spring for Mourning Warblers, with five reports from Maryland and two or three from Rock Creek Park in D.C., all of single birds.

## SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

A dozen Vesper Sparrows in *Rappahannock*, VA 9 Apr was an impressive count (TD, IT, BJ); 9 were in a mixed sparrow flock at Sky Meadows S.P., *Fauquier* 28 Mar (SB). An Ipswich Sparrow at Hughlett Pt., *Northumberland* 21-25 Mar (AB, FA) was notable: this endangered subspecies is rare away from the dune line of the immediate coast. A Henslow's Sparrow at Bonnie Branch Middle School, *Howard* 9 May (BO, EH) provided the first county record since 1990. It was an above-average spring for migrant Saltmarsh Sparrows in Baltimore, with single birds noted at Ft. McHenry, *Baltimore City* 28-29 Apr (KEC, LN) and at Hart 2 May (RFR et al.); 3 were at Ft. Howard, *Baltimore* 22 May (KEC). Two Seaside Sparrows at Elkton, *Cecil* 26 Apr (SM) were unusually far up the Bay and likely overshooting migrants. The 60 Song Sparrows recorded as nocturnal flyovers at Gaithersburg, *Montgomery* 19 Mar (AM) provide documentation of this species' migration timing. Rarer in the spring than fall, a Lincoln's Sparrow was a notable find at White Oak Park, Alexandria, VA 7-8 May (PKJ); 3 were at Huntley Meadows Park, *Fairfax* 11 May (KG, RR). A Harris's Sparrow was well observed and photographed at Columbia, *Howard* 19 Mar-25 Apr (KC et al.); another visited a private residence in *Rockingham* 10-25 Apr (LC et al.; ph. BTe, KS). An ad. Dark-eyed Junco feeding fledged young along the Blue Ridge Parkway, *Augusta* 28 May (AL) provided an early breeding record. An alternate-plumaged Snow Bunting lingered at Salisbury, *Wicomico*, MD 26-27 May (ph. SD et al.), well past the previous Regional late date of 1 Apr. Two Painted Buntings continued from the winter at Virginia Beach, VA through 16 Mar (SHu, EE, NF); one at Columbia, *Howard* 11 Mar-11 Apr (SCL et al.) marked just the 2nd county record. A Dickcissel found 27 Feb at South Pt., *Worcester* continued through 8 Mar (WB et al.). Dickcissel numbers were typical elsewhere, with birds arriving and singing in reliable locations across the Region: Egypt Rd., *Dorchester* 10 May (JB); Antietam, Wash-

ington 16 May (m.ob.); *Prince William* 17 May (MR); Grassdale Rd., *Fauquier* 24 May (GK); Cecilton, *Cecil* 25 May (LJ); and the Wilna Unit, Rappahannock River Valley N.W.R., *Essex*, VA 29 May (SS). Observers reported Bobolink flocks in n. Virginia in early May, including 200 near The Plains, *Fauquier* 1-2 May (TD, DSw) and 150 near Middletown, *Frederick* 2 May (J&BJL). A Yellow-headed Blackbird was a one-day wonder yard bird near Fredericksburg, VA 15 Mar (JG). The season's largest Rusty Blackbirds flocks included 75 birds at Huntley Meadows, *Fairfax* 11 Mar (BL, SHo) and 200 at Sycamore Landing, *Montgomery* 18 Mar (JGr). A Brewer's Blackbird at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 28 Mar (AL) and another at Augusta Springs Wetlands 9 Apr (EL) were just the 4th and 5th county spring records, respectively. Three Boat-tailed Grackles seen flying southward across the James R. to Hog I., *Surry* 24 May (BT) were unusual; there are only two other records for this species there.

Late Purple Finches visited feeders in *Buchanan*, VA 9 May (RM), at Springfield, *Fairfax* 17 May (SP), and at Chesapeake Landing, *Kent* 21 May (WE, NM). A female Red Crossbill was among White-winged Crossbills at Lappans, *Washington*, MD 14 Mar (FS). A male Red Crossbill was at Constitution Gardens, D.C. 23 Apr (JF); and up to 2 Reds visited a feeder at Woodlawn, *Carroll*, VA 30 Apr-7 May (BPe). The strong winter White-winged Crossbill invasion into Maryland and D.C. continued into Mar and did not begin to subside until mid-Apr. For instance, up to 58 White-winged Crossbills visited Hagerstown, *Washington*, MD from the winter through 19 Apr (m.ob.). The latest report was a single White-winged Crossbill at a Creswell, *Harford* feeder 20 Apr (DL). A single Common Redpoll flew over Chino Farms, *Queen Anne's* 6 Mar (DS); 2 visited a feeder at Reston, *Fairfax* 14 Mar (OJ, DSt) among 60 Pine Siskins. Pine Siskins continued at feeders and in the field in numbers across the Region through the season, even into mid-May on the coast, though no out-of-range nesting was reported.

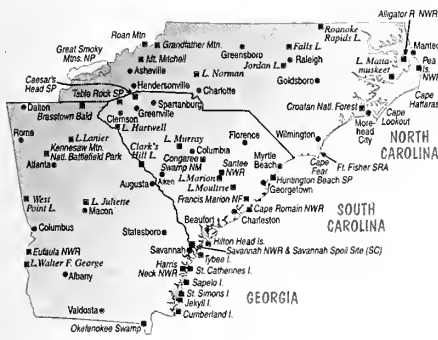
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## Ken Blankenship

April showers bring May... showers? Such was the sentiment among many of the Region's birders, as spring delivered soaking rains to the Southeast in April, and even more in May. On the bright side, this deluge brought an end to a two-year period of severe drought; by early June, even the worst-affected areas virtually disappeared from the U.S. Drought Monitor. A rare heavy snow event swept through central Georgia and both Carolinas in early March, areas of southern Georgia experienced flooding after torrential rains in early April, and parts of western North Carolina experienced their wettest May on record. Persistent easterly and southeasterly winds related to a low-pressure system to the south of the Region produced an impressive pelagic birding season, displacing many migrating seabirds (see S.A.). Sadly, exceptionally high water generated by the storm wiped out nests of several colonial species on the Georgia coast. The season's prolific wet weather was welcomed by birds that rely on sustained wetlands for successful breeding, such as rails and colonial nesting waders. Many small ponds and mud holes were likewise rejuvenated, to the delight of shorebirds and birders alike.

**Abbreviations:** A.W.M.A. (Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area, McIntosh, GA); CCU (Coastal Carolina University); H.B.S.P. (Huntington Beach S.P., Georgetown, SC); K.M.T. (Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Cobb, GA); L.W.E.G. (Lake Walter F. George, Clay, GA); NCMNS (North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences); P.S.N.P. (Phinizy Swamp Nature Park, Richmond, GA); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper, SC).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH TROPICBIRDS

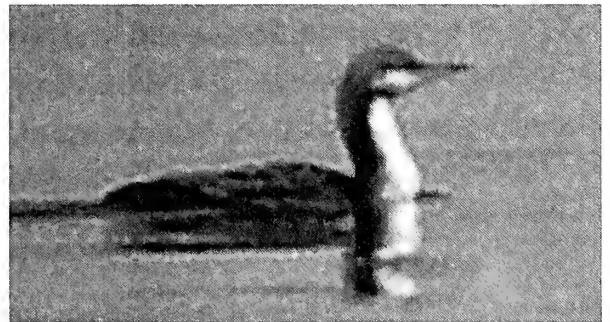
Most reports of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks came predictably from established breeding areas such as Donnelly W.M.A., SC and A.W.M.A.; the high count of 40+ came

from the latter location 4 May (NF). Away from those sites, possible indicators of expansion included one in Horry, SC 12 Mar (RL), 50+ flying over a farm in Beaufort, NC 19 Apr (fide AM), and 17 in Savannah, GA 7 May (JJ). Lingering geese included single Greater White-fronted Geese in Gordon, GA 11 Apr (JSp) and at Cedar I., NC 26 Apr (JF); single Snow Geese in Columbus, GA 14 Apr+ (WCh) and Newton, GA 24 May (PB, TM); and a flock of 50 Brant at Oregon Inlet, NC 4 Mar (NA). The high count of Tundra Swans was 500 still at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 8 Mar (WC); though a common wintering bird in the Region's n. reaches, 2 juvs. in Walker, GA 21-30 Mar (LK, m.ob.) caused quite a stir. A single Mottled Duck at Eagle I., NC 2 May made only the 4th confirmed state record and is a reminder that the species may be expanding northward into that state (RD). A male Canvasback still at Roanoke Rapids L., NC 9 May was likely injured (RD), while lingering Ring-necked Ducks included a male at Vogel S.P., GA 12 May (DF) and a female at Bass L., NC 30 May+ (RD). An inland count of 430 mixed scaup was notable at Carter's L., GA 15 Mar (NF et al.), while 2 Lesser Scaup were quite late at Bass L., NC 30 May+ (RD). A male Surf Scoter remained at Oak I., NC 24 May (SS), a male White-winged Scoter appeared inland at Columbus, GA 5 Mar (WCh), and a possibly injured White-winged was in Morehead City, NC 28 Apr (JF). A female Bufflehead was late in Watauga, NC 13 May (JS, DS), whereas the handful of Common Goldeneyes left over from winter had all departed by the end of Mar. Rare and local breeders in the Southeast, Hooded Mergansers with young were observed in Floyd, GA 18 Apr (DR) and at Jordan L., NC 20 May (JSo), both known nesting areas. Common Merganser reports included a female at Bear Creek Res., GA 9 Mar (MM) and 5 at L. Crabtree, NC 30 Mar (AI), while lingering Red-breasted Mergansers were in Towns, GA 12 May (MD), Raleigh, NC 13 May (DL), and Catoosa, GA 27 May-1 Jun (DH).

Only 2 inland Red-throated Loons were reported: one at Bear Creek Res., GA 27 Mar-3 Apr (JM, v.ob.) and one at L. Varner, GA 30 Mar (MM). Two Pacific Loons on L. Russell 19



Charge! Defending their small farm pond against several Canada Geese were these two juvenile Tundra Swans, present from 21 through 30 (here 29) March 2009 in Walker County, Georgia, where this species is rarely observed. Photograph by Dan Vickers.



Splitting its fishing time between Georgia and South Carolina was this Pacific Loon on Lake Russell from 19 (here 23) April through 24 May 2009; the bird provided the first photographic evidence of the species in the latter state. Photograph by Jeff Catlin.



One of eight Fea's Petrels seen between 20 May and 7 June 2009 during a very productive pelagic birding season off Hatteras, North Carolina, this bird was photographed 23 May. Photograph by Monte M. Taylor.

Apr-24 May (JFl, m.ob.) spent time in both Georgia and South Carolina waters, providing the first photographically documented record of the species in the latter state. The high count of Common Loons inland was a remarkable 821 at L. Lanier, GA 29 Mar (JFl). Pied-



The Gulf Stream off Hatteras, North Carolina produced sightings of at least four Bermuda Petrels in spring 2009, including this one 23 May. Photograph by Edward S. Brinkley.



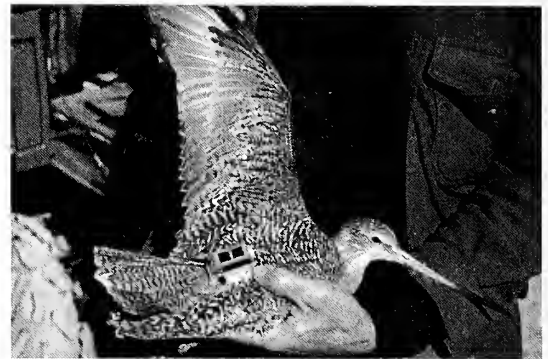
This Wilson's Storm-Petrel was photographed from the pier at Oak Island, North Carolina 26 May 2009, during easterly winds that also moved many Leach's Storm-Petrels into in-shore waters. Photograph by Harry D. Sell.

billed Grebes again nested in Clayton, GA, as ads were seen with young 28 Apr (CL); a breeding-plumaged Horned Grebe on Tybee I., GA 15 May was quite late (GB); a Red-necked Grebe again appeared on L. Crabtree, NC 29-30 Mar (GGB, AI); and Eared Grebes were reported sporadically in all three states.

Observation of seabird migration this spring was phenomenal. Some reports during pelagic birding trips and even from shore were unprecedented (see S.A.), and many were related to predominant strong easterly winds for many consecutive days, generated in part by a non-tropical cyclone that lashed the w. Atlantic 18-20 May. Rarer gadfly petrels were well represented this spring on 19 daily pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC 20 May-7 Jun (BPI): 5 Trinidad (Herald) Petrels, 8 Fea's Petrels, and 4 Bermuda Petrels, 3 of which were photographed 29 May, certainly the highest count on record for North America. Notable Black-capped Petrel sightings included 54 in South

Carolina and Georgia waters 30 May (ND et al.) and a high count of 60 off Hatteras 6 Jun (BPI); the season total off Hatteras was 359 (BPI). As expected, the larger shearwaters did not arrive in numbers until late in the season: the high count of 130 Cory's Shearwaters came on 6 Jun, while 13 was the highest tally of Greater Shearwaters on 7 Jun (BPI); not often seen from land, one of the latter species was viewed from Long Beach, NC 23 May (RD). An impressive season total of 491 Sooty Shearwaters was tallied off Hatteras, 361 (74%) of which were seen between 20-23 May in the wake of the gale (BPI); the storm generated several rare onshore sightings as well: 30 off Long Beach, NC 23 May (RD); one dead at Cumberland I., GA 24 May (†PL); 3 at Ft. Macon and Pine Knoll Shores, NC 24-25 May (JF); and 2 at Ocean I., NC 25 May (TP), one of which flew under a fishing pier. The smaller shearwaters were also observed in good numbers this season: 8 Manx Shearwaters was the highest count off Hatteras 21 May, where the season total was an above-average 29 (BPI); the highest count of Audubon's Shearwaters was predictably later in the season, as 80 were off Hatteras 6 Jun, with a season total of 395 (BPI).

There were many unusual onshore sightings of storm-petrels, as well as a few rarities recorded offshore. Notable Wilson's Storm-Petrel sightings included: on 23 May, 6 at Long Beach, NC (RD) and 20 at Ft. Macon, NC (JF); on 25 May, 8 at Ocean I., NC (TP), 12+ at Oak I., NC (SS), and 2 off Cumberland I., GA (JFI, EH), on 26 May, 2 at Myrtle Beach S.P. (P&ST), where dead birds were also found, one at H.B.S.P. (RL), and 2 still at Oak I., NC (ph. HS). The highest one-day count of 465 Wilson's was recorded off Hatteras 20 May (BPI). A very rare European Storm-Petrel was spotted off Hatteras 29 May (BPI, ph. CS). Leach's Storm-Petrel sightings of note included: one in the Pamlico Sound w of Ocracoke I. 18 May (GA, JFa et al.); on 24 May, a moribund bird at Fort Macon, NC (RN) and 2 flying plus one dead at Pine Knoll Shores, NC (JF); on 25 May, 4 at Ocean I., NC (TP), 12+ at Oak I., NC (SS), and 11+ storm-petrel species plus one dead Leach's at Wailes I., SC (CH, \*CCU); 2 at H.B.S.P. 26 May (RL), and 4 dead birds salvaged on Hutaff I., NC 29 May (GG, \*NCMNS). The high counts of 36 Leach's were off Hatteras 23 & 24 May (BPI). Another Swin-



One of six Marbled Godwits outfitted with satellite transmitters in Georgia the previous winter, this bird migrated to breeding grounds in the Dakotas in spring 2009. Photograph by Bridget Olson.



Representing only the fourth state record was this Black-headed Gull mingling with migrating shorebirds in St. Catherine's Island Sound, Georgia on 9 May 2009. Photograph by Brad Winn.



This group of seven Red-necked Phalaropes loafed in the surf on Core Banks in Carteret County, North Carolina on 15 May 2009. Photograph by Pat Bland.

hoe's Storm-Petrel off Hatteras 6 Jun (BPI, ph. SH) suggests that perhaps the species is not as "accidental" in the w. Atlantic as previously believed. As is considered typical, no Band-rumped Storm-Petrels were observed from shore, and the high count offshore was 16 off Hatteras 27 May (BPI). Single White-tailed Tropicbirds were observed in Georgia waters during a 30 May pelagic trip (ND et al.) and off Hatteras 3 Jun (BPI). The most interesting Red-billed Tropicbird sighting was a full-tailed ad. onshore at Cape Point, NC 10 Mar and 21 Apr (PM et al., ph. BPI); 5 were seen off Hatteras during the period (BPI); and a juv. was in Georgia and South Carolina offshore waters 30 May (ND et al., ph. CSn).

**SA** Spring seabird migration off North Carolina's Outer Banks, meticulously monitored by Brian Patteson's record 19 daily pelagic trips 20 May–7 Jun this year, was most impressive. Easterly and southeasterly winds predominated on many days, as in several past productive spring seasons (e.g., 1970, 1987, 1992). This spring, a very strong easterly gale 18–20 May produced several records without precedent: storm-petrels were seen near shore Regionwide, including the aforementioned Leach's Storm-Petrel in Pamlico Sound, NC. The winds also generated a tremendous run of **South Polar Skuas**: 47 were counted during the period (just a few per spring is average), including 30+ on 20 May, 9 the next day, with many single birds seen quite close to shore, including one inside Hatteras Inlet 24 May (BPI). Numbers of Long-tailed Jaegers and Arctic Terns were much higher than usual, with above-average numbers of Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers likewise recorded. Participants on these pelagic trips marveled that they were able to actually hear numerous jaegers, skuas, and Arctic Terns calling—most unusual! The winds of mid-month were produced in part by a low-pressure system centered over the Gulf of Mexico, which pumped easterlies into the Southern Atlantic Bight for nearly a week altogether. The majority of these sightings occurred on 20–24 May trips (Table 1), in the wake of this weather pattern.

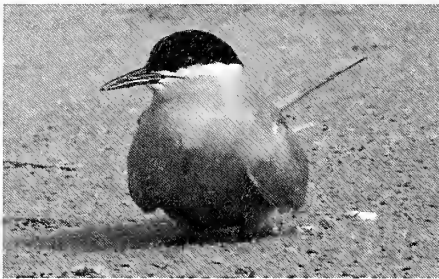
As is often the case, the larger shearwaters such as Cory's and Greater did not arrive in numbers until early Jun, and Bridled and Sooty Terns were not recorded until 26 and 29 May, respectively. An impressive high count of 17 pelagic species was recorded offshore 23 May (BPI); the highest species count off North Carolina is still 18 species (22 May 1992). The 1992 season, one of the most dynamic seen so far, unfortunately went unrecorded in *American Birds*, which did not publish a spring report for this Region, but some of the records appeared in *The Chat* (Carolina Bird Club). Species not detected in this spring's flight but recorded off Hatteras in at least one spring in the past included unidentified large skuas (not South Polars) and Red Phalarope, while Northern Fulmar, Black-legged Kittiwake, Brown Noddy, and Sabine's Gull have all been detected on May pelagic trips off Oregon Inlet.

During the easterly winds of 2009, Patteson detected near-shore flights of Manx, Sooty, and Cory's Shearwaters, all three jaegers, South Polar Skuas, Arctic Terns, and Leach's and Wilson's Storm-Petrels, all flying east-northeastward toward Cape Pt., Buxton, Dare County. Up to 30 Sooty Shearwaters and a Greater Shearwater were observed flying in the same direction at Long Beach, NC 23 May (RD). Loggerhead Sea Turtles were also noted close to shore, as they apparently also move northward at this season. Red-necked Phalaropes were recorded on seven pelagic outings, the latest being 2 birds on 1 Jun; most have moved northward to cooler water by late May.

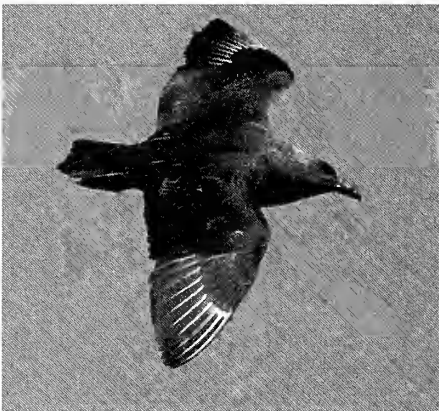
In the not-too-distant past, from-shore sightings of skuas and Manx Shearwaters were almost disbelieved, but enormous flights of seabirds at Cape Pt. were documented as early as 1970 (P.A. Buckley), when over 10,000 shearwaters and 2 skuas were seen over a four-day period spanning 30 May–2 Jun. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, seawatching from Cape Pt. was at its most intensive, and there were fortuitously several years with easterly winds during that period. This allowed many birders to observe Greater, Manx, Sooty, and Cory's Shearwaters, Leach's and Wilson's Storm-Petrels, and jaegers from shore at leisure, some of these in flights numbering in the many hundreds, in addition to several inshore rarities (Brown Booby, Dovekie, Audubon's Shearwater, and a probable Cape Verde Shearwater, have each been recorded here once). Interestingly, the deepwater gadfly petrels and Band-rumped Storm-Petrels, although recorded annually offshore, have not been recorded from shore in the absence of a tropical cyclone; none were detected from shore this season. A full-tailed ad. Red-billed Tropicbird, an age class extremely rare in Carolina waters and not recorded onshore previously, was seen 10 Mar and 21 Apr at Cape Pt. (PM et al., ph. BPI), flying around the beach at the Point and to the s., nearer Frisco, but White-tailed Tropicbird has not yet been confirmed for the site. Because Cape Pt. is now closed to vehicular and foot traffic (accessible only by boat) during the nesting season, seawatching there is no longer an option for most people, but a few seabirds can still be seen from the beaches of Frisco, if not in nearly the numbers or as close as at the Point itself.

Table 1. Seabirds recorded off Hatteras, North Carolina in May and June 2009 on *Stormy Petrel II* (Brian Patteson et al.).

Species / Date	20 May	21 May	22 May	23 May	24 May	25 May	26 May	27 May	28 May	29 May	30 May	31 May	1 Jun	2 Jun	3 Jun	4 Jun	5 Jun	6 Jun	7 Jun	Total
Trinidad (Herald) Petrel	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
Fea's Petrel	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8
Bermuda Petrel	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Black-capped Petrel	12	13	10	17	13	9	19	6	10	34	32	7	13	8	14	11	35	60	36	359
Cory's Shearwater	16	15	12	53	21	17	7	17	18	33	13	23	28	15	20	27	55	130	72	592
Greater Shearwater	6	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	9	13	39
Sooty Shearwater	166	92	63	40	25	16	16	16	14	25	6	-	2	3	-	2	3	2	-	491
Manx Shearwater	3	8	6	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	3	29
Audubon's Shearwater	-	4	10	39	22	13	25	6	25	14	11	10	18	16	6	13	45	80	32	395
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	465	355	271	360	97	342	300	450	72	375	175	74	343	315	89	172	350	406	330	5341
European Storm-Petrel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Leach's Storm-Petrel	7	10	14	36	36	25	10	15	1	1	-	-	-	3	-	4	12	12	13	214
Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel	2	7	10	13	5	11	12	16	8	5	4	15	7	13	7	15	7	5	13	175
White-tailed Tropicbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Red-billed Tropicbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
Northern Gannet	-	-	-	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	2	-	1	-	2	10
Red-necked Phalarope	3	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	7	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Sooty Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Bridled Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	7	1	-	-	1	3	-	-	19
Arctic Tern	5	6	3	2	-	1	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
South Polar Skua	30+	9	4	4	4	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	56+
Pomarine Jaeger	11	11	8	10	5	4	3	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	1	63
Parasitic Jaeger	5	2	2	3	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	18
Long-tailed Jaeger	2	10	11	3	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	33



Blown ashore by a powerful gale was this Arctic Tern on Cumberland Island, Georgia on 24 May 2009, representing the state's ninth record overall and only its third coastal record. Photograph by Patrick Leary.



A tremendous run of South Polar Skuas was generated by strong easterly winds associated with a low-pressure system in the western North Atlantic Ocean in spring 2009. This individual was one of 56 or more observed off Hatteras, North Carolina between 20 (here 23) May and 7 June! Photograph by Monte M. Taylor.

## GANNET THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

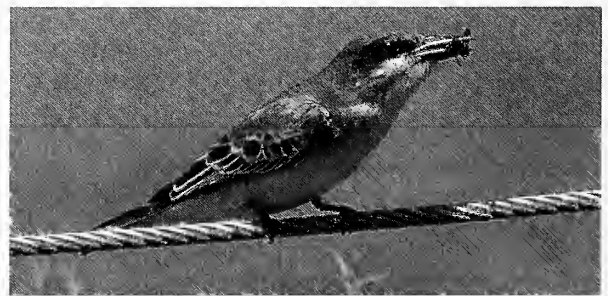
A count of 25 juv. Northern Gannets at Ocean I., NC 25 May (TP) was notable for the date. A coastal wintering species, the high count of American White Pelicans came predictably early in the season, as 60-80 were at Bear Island W.M.A., SC 6 Mar (BN); notable inland records included 12+ on L. Robinson, Greenville, SC 18 Apr (JBH) and 16 on the Yadkin R., NC 26 Mar (PH). A Brown Pelican seen again at L.W.F.G. 30 May (JSe, CL) may be a permanent resident in the area. Georgia's 2nd inland Great Cormorant was last observed at L.W.F.G. 7 Mar (PMc et al.). Continuing their inland range expansion were Anhingas: one in Clayton, GA 4 Mar (CL), one in Cobb, GA 7 Mar (DHe), 5 in Johnston, NC 19 Apr (MDa), 5 in Halifax, NC 4 May+ (FE), and 4 at Pee Dee N.W.R., Anson, NC 10 May (MMc). Only one Magnificent Frigatebird was reported, a female soaring over Bald Head I., NC 23 May (RD). Wandering waders of interest included one Tricolored Heron at P.S.N.P. 2 May (LS et al.) and 2 in Stewart, GA 9 May (WCh); a wintering juv. Reddish Egret at Hilton Head, SC until 24 Apr (DLo); 2

Black-crowned Night-Herons in Durham, NC 12 Apr (BM) and one far inland in Murray, GA 24 Apr (JSp); and a remarkably far inland Glossy Ibis in Cabarrus, NC 5-7 May (TP et al.). Early Roseate Spoonbill arrivals included 2 juvs. at Bear I., SC 23 Apr (ph. CF) and 2 at the S.S.S. 24 Apr (SC). Wood Storks began appearing in the Region in late May.

Swallow-tailed Kite sightings signifying possible expansion of breeding range into North Carolina included one in Chatham 19 Apr (PB), one on the Outer Banks 25 Apr (JL), one in Carteret 28 Apr (BP), and 5—including two male-female pairs—on the Cape Fear R. 23 May+ for the 5th consecutive year (RD); nesting is strongly suspected in the area but has not been confirmed. A dead, emaciated Snail Kite was an extraordinary find near L. Waccamaw, NC 10 Apr (†GC, KR, \*NCMNS). The bird's leg bands indicated it was a male from the Florida population banded 12 years ago. Incredibly, another Snail Kite was reported soaring over Bainbridge, GA 23 Apr (PR). Both sightings would represent first state records if accepted; South Carolina's first record came in spring 2007. In an effort to better understand the ecology of the threatened, non-migratory Southeastern American Kestrel (subspecies *paulus*), 5 were outfitted with radio transmitters, including a female whose eggs were actively hatching 14 May (ph., †NK). Three Black Rails were heard calling at the rejuvenated marsh in Greene, GA 10 May (PWS), while a Purple Gallinule was unusually far inland in Muscogee, GA 19-25 Apr (JMc, m.ob.). A Sandhill Crane was near Beaufort, NC 22-23 May (PHo), in an area where escaped cranes have been noted since at least 1999.

American Golden-Plovers were reported in above-average numbers Regionwide, while impressive counts of Semipalmated Plovers included 940 at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 8 May (RD) and 819 at the S.S.S. 9 May (SC). Wilson's Plovers and American Oystercatchers were among Georgia's breeding birds whose first beach-nesting attempts were destroyed by high water generated by the mid-May storm (BW). Rare inland Black-necked Stilts were spotted at P.S.N.P. 19 Apr (GZ) and in Bostwick, GA 7 May (JSe, ph. VL), while the high count of 240 was at the S.S.S. 21 May (SC); the S.S.S. also provided the high count of 537 American Avocets 27 Apr (SC). Other notable shorebird counts at the S.S.S. included 60 Solitary Sandpipers 27 Apr and an astounding 3075 Lesser Yellowlegs 24

Apr (SC). Upland Sandpipers were reported in average numbers but in some locally unusual places: on Sapelo I., GA 3 Apr (*vide* DCo), at a former landfill site in downtown Charleston, SC the week of 16 Apr (BD), and at A.W.M.A. 18 Apr (PBr, HG). An impressive staging of migrating Whimbrels was observed at St. Simons I., GA 25 Apr (SW et al.), as 500+ were resting on the beach and flying northward offshore. The Marbled Godwit satellite-tagging project in coastal Georgia quickly yielded useful results: 3 out of 6 tagged birds departed in Apr, arriving in the Dakotas by early May for the breeding season; 2 did not migrate and split time between Georgia and South Carolina, while the 6th stopped transmitting 20 Apr (BW, <www.seaturtle.org>). A rare inland Ruddy Turnstone was spotted in Northampton, NC 9 May (RD), while encouraging Red Knot sightings included flocks of 400+ at St. Simons I., GA 20 Apr (BS) and Sunset Beach, NC 5 May (RCI). Quite unusual was a flock of 25 White-rumped Sandpipers that took refuge from a storm in the mts. of Henderson, NC 24 May (WF, MW); single Baird's Sandpipers were reported from Georgetown, SC 9 May (ND) and Bartow, GA 24 May (CT). A lingering Purple Sandpiper at Tybee I., GA 15 May represented a new state late date (GB). While a count of 4310 Dunlins was impressive at the S.S.S. 13 Mar (SC), two tallies of Stilt Sandpiper were extraordinary: 860 at the S.S.S. 2 May (SC) and 130 inland at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 8 May (RD). There were three sightings of Ruff this spring, all in coastal South Carolina: at Donnelley W.M.A. 25 Apr (ND) and at Tom Yawkey W.A. 27 Apr and 9-10 May (ND). The S.S.S. furnished the most impressive counts of both dowitchers: 1591 Short-billed 9 May and 599 Long-billed 24 Apr (SC). Wilson's Phalaropes were noted at South I., SC 11 Apr



One of several unusual northerly sightings of the species in spring 2009 was this Gray Kingbird on Ocracoke Island, North Carolina 24-28 (here 28) April. Photograph by Harry D. Sell.

(ND) and at the S.S.S. 2 & 9 May (SC). Rare onshore sightings of Red-necked Phalaropes included 7 on the beach at Core Banks, NC 15 May (*vide* JF, ph. PBI) and 10 flying past Long Beach, NC 23 May (RD); among inland reports were singles in Greensboro, NC 28 Apr (SD,



Though many have been well documented in Georgia over the years, this Warbling Vireo in Monroe County on 25 April 2009 was only the fourth to be definitively photographed in the state. Photograph by Dan Vickers.

LSk); near Linville, NC 17-18 May (PBu, ph. JP); in Bartow, GA 24 May (CT); and at the S.S.S. were 4 on 21 May and 8 on 22 May (SC). A very rare inland Red Phalarope was on L. Crabtree, NC 29-30 Mar (GGB, AI), while 10 were observed off Beaufort, NC 24 Apr (RM).

## GULLS THROUGH KINGLETS

Providing only the 4th state record was a Black-headed Gull spotted in St. Catherine's I. Sound, GA 9 May (ph. BW). Particularly rare for spring were 2 Franklin's Gulls at St. Simons I., GA 18 Apr (PBr, HG). One inland Lesser Black-backed Gull was reported, a first-winter bird in Edgecombe, NC 9 Mar near the site of a huge gull flock from winter (RD). Only 2 Glaucous Gulls were found, both in North Carolina: one at Cape Point 4 Mar (NA) and one in Wanchese 25 Mar (fide JL). Ten Sooty Terns off Hatteras 29 May (BPI) represented the Region's only sighting, while the first Bridled Tern appeared there 26 May (BPI); both species are much more common in the w. Atlantic in late summer and early fall. Nearly all natural nesting attempts by Least Terns, Gull-billed Terns, and Black Skimmers in s. coastal Georgia were wiped out by the wicked weather of mid-May (BW). The only Roseate Tern reported during the period was one at Hatteras Point 24 May (AJK, DC, m.ob.). Blown off course by the e. winds were many Arctic Terns: a total of 29 were observed off Hatteras 20-27 May (BPI), and one on Cumberland I., GA 24 May (ph. PL) represented that state's 3rd coastal record and only the 9th overall. In addition to many South Po-

lar Skuas farther n., one was off Murrells Inlet, SC 16 May (JPe). All three jaegers made very impressive showings: totals off Hatteras 20-28 May included 54 Pomarine, 16 Parasitic, and 31 Long-tailed—including a high count of 11 on 22 May (BPI); rarely seen from shore, 2 Pomarines were at Ocean I., NC 25 May (TP).

White-winged Dove sightings included singles at the Okefenokee Swamp, GA 11 Mar (VL); Jekyll I., GA 5 Apr (MC); James I., SC 23 Mar (JW) and 6 Apr (ph. BMC); Morehead City, NC late Mar (AH); Florence, SC 1 Apr (BG); Savannah, GA 11 Apr (SWa); and A.W.M.A. 27 Apr (DM et al.). There were nine reports of Black-billed Cuckoos, the majority from breeding areas in w. North Carolina. Lingering Short-eared Owls were spotted in Stewart, GA 5 Mar (BL) and at Folly I., SC 6 Mar (CSn). Rare breeders in the s. Appalachians, Northern Saw-whet Owls were heard calling in Todd, NC late Mar (WCo), on the Blue Ridge Pkwy., NC 16 Apr (WF, RS), and on Roan Mt., NC 12 May (RK). The latest lingering Rufous Hummingbird departed Morehead City, NC 12 Apr (CR). A nice surprise during a 16 May Balsam Mts., NC bird survey were 5 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, 3 of which were in previously undocumented areas (MW); sapsuckers are very rare and local breeders in the s. Appalachians and are considered by some authorities to be a separate subspecies. An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Winston-Salem, NC 14 May (ph. JH) was the only one reported, while 14 Alder Flycatchers furnished a great count in the Shining Rock W.A., NC 16 May, a known breeding area (MW). There was a series of Gray Kingbird sightings in unusual places: on Ocracoke I., NC 24-28 Apr (SM, ML, ph. HS); in Georgetown, SC 10 May (ND); at Ft. Fisher, NC 14 May (BSm et al.); and near Southport, NC 23 May (RD). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers appeared in McDuffie, GA 7 May (LD) and in McDonough, GA 9-28 May (DV, RC, m.ob.), where only the male of a former breeding pair has arrived for several years. Warbling Vireos returned to Forsyth, NC 25 Apr (JH) and Cabarrus, NC 12 May (TP), both in somewhat recently colonized breeding sites; one found in Monroe, GA 25 Apr (ph. DV) was only the 4th to be photographed in that state. An impressive 67 Red-eyed Vireos were tallied at K.M.T. 1 May (GB). Four reports of Common Ravens e. of North Carolina's mts. indicates that colonization of lower elevations continues in that state. Surrounded on all sides by the ubiquitous Carolina Chickadee, isolated

breeding populations of Black-capped Chickadees persist in some areas of the Smokies and s. Great Balsam Mts. in North Carolina over 1500 m; on 16 May, a spring survey at the latter location detected areas where Black-capped was the only chickadee song heard (MW). Once considered rare in Georgia's mts., Red-breasted Nuthatches appear to be uncommon breeders in appropriate habitat: in May, multiple pairs were detected in Fannin, Union, and Rabun, including a high count of 7 on Overflow Creek Rd. 3 May (KB). A Brown-headed Nuthatch at the high elevation of 823 m in Union, GA 9 May was extremely unusual (JFI). Nesting Brown Creepers were first documented in Georgia in 2008; surveys in Rabun this season were likewise productive: on Overflow Creek Rd 3 were singing 3 May (KB), with two additional territories detected 18 May (BB); one was delivering food on Coleman River Rd. 10 May (KB). Golden-crowned Kinglets are also likely summering in Rabun, GA: singing vigorously were males on Coleman River Rd. 10 May and 1 Jun (KB, NF) and Hale Ridge Rd. 24 May (PMc, KM).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Warbler migration was generally reported to be productive this spring; K.M.T. lived up to its reputation as one of the best destinations in



One of two rare definitive documentations of breeding by the enigmatic Red Crossbill in the Region this spring was this male feeding a fledgling in Brevard, North Carolina on 13 May 2009. Photograph by Carolyn Powell.

the East for observing these colorful dynamos: 26 different species were recorded 24 Apr (GB)! Hybrid *Vermivora* sightings included single Brewster's Warblers at K.M.T. 27 Apr (AMe et al.), in Shady Grove, NC 8 May (CK, CSm), and in Ashe, NC 15 May+ (fide CSm); a rare Lawrence's Warbler was a good find in Orange, NC 2 May (CW). Par for spring, K.M.T. hosted large numbers of migrating Blackpoll Warblers and Cerulean Warblers, with high counts of 47 on 1 May and 8 on 24 Apr, respectively (GB). Good news for the declining Cerulean came in late Apr when surveys of specially-designed forest cuts in n. Georgia revealed that as many as 7 out of 10 treated areas hosted pairs (NK). High counts of declining Swainson's Warblers at breeding sites included 21 on the Roanoke R., NC 2-4 May (FE) and 8

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in Rabun, GA 3 May (KB). An Ovenbird that wintered in Manteo, NC was present until 25 Mar (JL). Several unique Connecticut Warbler encounters involved 2 singing males at Henderson Park, DeKalb, GA 13-26 May (JSe, ph. SSL, m.ob.). Mourning Warbler sightings included one at the Botanical Gardens, Clarke, GA 9 May (JM et al.); one at Clyde Shepherd N.A., DeKalb, GA 20 May (JSe); and one in Greensboro, NC 30 May (HL et al.).

A wintering Clay-colored Sparrow in Edgecombe, NC was last seen 19 Mar (RD), while one was quite late at the S.S.S. 9 May (SC). A Lark Sparrow visited Henderson, NC 9 Apr (RS, ph. WF). Increasing Regionwide are Lincoln's Sparrows, with seven reports including 2 in Gilmer, GA 4 May (KB). Remarkably, a male Snow Bunting was spotted near the 1676 m summit of Snake Mt., Watauga, NC 8 Mar (BBo). A wintering Summer Tanager remained in Wilmington, NC until 30 Mar (AW), while a total of 52 Scarlet Tanagers was notable at K.M.T. 1 May (GB). Unusually far inland were single Painted Buntings near Merrimon, NC 22 Apr (HP), in Barrow, GA 30 Apr (VJ), and in Jackson, GA 2 May (BW). This spring phenomenon has been documented for several years, and efforts are underway to determine if these birds represent eastern overshoots or migrating western birds, using genetic techniques from blood and tail feather samples from populations in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia (PWS). Dickcissels were very widely reported this season, including breeding colonies in all three states; the high count of migrating Bobolinks was 800+ at A.W.M.A. 3 May (NF). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were observed in Georgetown, SC 4 Apr (B&JM) and in Wilmington, NC 8 Apr (LL); a dead male was found in Houston, GA 28 Mar (fide JSe). A male Shiny Cowbird was collected on Sullivan's I., SC 21 May (fide WP); this species has proven very scarce in recent years.

Though known to nest in the Region's mts., direct evidence of breeding Red Crossbills is rare: ad. males were observed feeding fledglings in Rabun, GA 25 Apr (vt. KB) and in Brevard, NC 13 May (ph. CP). The Georgia birds were part of a flock that had been resident near feeders for almost a year; audio analysis proved them to be Type 1 Red Crossbills (KB, †MY). Invading forces of Pine Siskin began their retreat from the Region late Apr, though some lingered well into May. Usually nesting only in the high-elevation spruce-fir zone of North Carolina, ads. were surprisingly observed feeding fledglings at Durant Nature Park, NC 30 May (JC) in the lower piedmont; this hints at the possibility that above-average numbers nested across the Region as hold-

overs from the large irruption. One banded 11 Jan in Lamar, GA turned up dead in Kalkaska, MI 13 May (CM). Perhaps the most exciting vagrant of the season was an ad. male Lesser Goldfinch that visited feeders in Beaufort, NC 2-4 Mar (RM, ph. HS); this black-backed individual provided only the 2nd record for the state and Region.

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**Bruce H. Anderson**  
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The season was one of unusual storms and local record rainfall. In late March and April, a shift in the jet stream produced several surface and upper-level areas of low pressure across the lower southeastern United States and Gulf coast. Rainfall at Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa County, totaled 21 cm or more in about seven days. Strong easterly and southeasterly winds sometimes in excess of 20 knots, in combination with late cold fronts, brought squalls across the northern and central peninsula and diverted rather large numbers of Blackpoll and Cape May Warblers to the Gulf coast, where they are usually uncommon. However, no fallouts were detected in the panhandle. Smaller numbers of seabirds were affected; most notable were several Sooty Shearwaters and Florida's fourth, fifth, and sixth Northern Fulmars on or near shore. Then, on 17 and 18 May, a late cold front stalled across the central peninsula, where a strong low-pressure system formed over the Gulf of Mexico, bringing rain to most of the peninsula. The low stalled, and from 19 through 23 May, the peninsular coast, from Brevard County north to the Florida/Georgia line, was pummeled by the low's counterclockwise winds of up to 52 knots, and record seasonal rainfall amounts in excess of 50 cm in Volusia and Flagler Counties caused local flooding. Again, unusual numbers of Sooty Shearwaters were drawn in close to shore, along with numerous Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels. On 23 May, Ron Smith drove up the coast from Volusia County to Nassau County and reported that he had Leach's Storm-Petrels in the surf "at every stop along U.S. A1A." A few Arctic Terns were reported along the beaches, but

notably absent from this non-tropical storm were large numbers of Sooty or Bridled Terns or other pelagic seabirds typical of tropical storms.

The stellar vagrant of the season was North America's second (and Florida's first) Greater Sand-Plover in the northern peninsula. Another first for Florida was a White-throated Swift in the panhandle. Other rarities included a Say's Phoebe, Tropical Kingbird, and Harris's Sparrow that remained from winter; a Kirtland's Warbler and South Polar Skua; and from the Bahamas and Antilles, La Sagra's Flycatcher, Loggerhead Kingbird, Thick-billed

Vireo, Bahama Mockingbird, Western Spindalis, Yellow-faced Grassquit, and Shiny Cowbird.

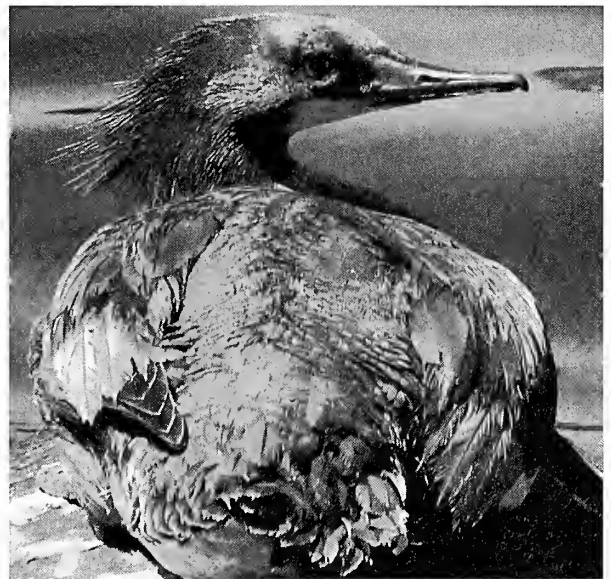
**Abbreviations/definitions:** F.O.S.R.C. (Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee); L. Apopka (L. Apopka Restoration Area, Orange unless otherwise stated); Payne's Prairie (Payne's Prairie Preserve S.P., Alachua); record (only those reports verifiable from photograph, videotape, or specimen evidence); report (any observation); S.T.A. (Stormwater Treatment Area); UCF (University of Central Florida, Orlando); UF (Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH HAWKS

Five Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks in Walton 23 May (Geri Bucheitet) were w. of their expanding range. Lingering geese included a Greater White-fronted Goose at S.T.A. 1W, Palm Beach 22 Mar (E. Gehring); 7 Snow Geese in Levy 1 Mar (Frances Seiler), and singles in Pinellas 19 Mar (DM) and Charlotte 1 Mar (Bill & Eleanor Marr); 2 Ross's Geese at Gainesville, Alachua 1 Mar (Cecelia Lockwood); and a probable Lesser Canada Goose at Stock I., Monroe until 17 Apr (CrG). Stock I. also hosted 3 Wood Ducks in late Apr (CrG), well s. of their peninsular range. Although their appearance coincided with strong southeasterly winds, 2 White-cheeked Pintails at Belle Glade, Palm Beach 25 May (BrH) were considered to be of unknown

provenance. Late waterfowl included a Gadwall at L. Apopka 31 May (HR), an American Wigeon in Miami-Dade 7 May (RoT), a Northern Shoveler and a Green-winged Teal in Orange 23 May (HR), a Greater Scaup at Tallahassee, Leon 23 May (GM), and a Long-tailed Duck at Cape Canaveral, Brevard through 26 Mar (Jim Eager). All three scoter species remained at Alligator Point, Franklin until mid-Apr, with 10 Surf, one White-winged, and 20 Black 19 Apr (DaS, AB). A well-photographed female Common Merganser on the Gulf Harbors G.C., New Port Richey, Pasco 3-5 Apr and 6 May furnished the state's 4th record (ph. KT, m.ob.). Heading eastward, presumably from the Gulf, 575 of 711 Common Loons counted over inland Alachua were seen 20-27 Mar (AK, Rex Rowan et al.); a single Red-throated Loon was observed there by Rowan 15 Mar.

The Marine Science Center at Ponce Inlet, Volusia received 3 locally stranded Northern Fulmars 22-24 Mar; the lone survivor was released in the Atlantic 24 May (MBr, \*UF, \*UCF). Another fulmar flew past Ormond-By-The-Sea, Volusia 26 Apr (MBr). These bring the number of fulmar reports for Florida to seven. Warm Gulf Stream waters in the



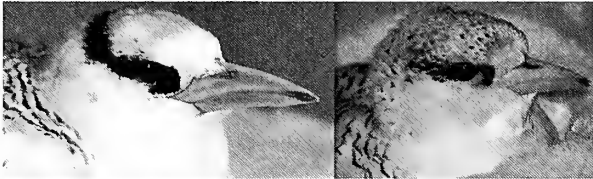
This female Common Merganser at New Port Richey, Pasco County 3-5 (here 4) April and 6 May 2009 furnished Florida's fourth record. Photograph by Andy Bankert.

Atlantic continue to hold the only reliable Black-capped Petrels, where 3 were 92-130 km off Ponce de Leon Inlet, Volusia 24 May (MBr et al.). Wind-driven pelagics seen from land on the Atlantic 19-27 May included one Cory's and 6 Greater Shearwaters in Brevard (DF); 11 Sooty Shearwaters and 20+ Wilson's, 130+ Leach's, and at least 5 Band-rumped Storm-Petrels from Duval to Brevard (m.ob.); a White-tailed Tropicbird in Flagler 27 May



Three Northern Fulmars (here two) were brought into the Marine Science Center, Ponce Inlet, Volusia County, Florida on 22 March 2009. Photographs by Michael Brothers.

and a Red-billed Tropicbird 23 May, also in Flagler (MBr, \*UF); and in Brevard, single Masked Boobies at Canaveral N.S. 20 May (MH) and Patrick A.F.B. 21 May (DF), and 2 Brown Boobies at Patrick A.F.B. 21 May (DF) and one perched on the Eau Gallie Causeway 31 May (ph. Patty Corapi). Notable pelagic species offshore were Band-rumped Storm-Petrels off Ponce de Leon Inlet 24 May (5; MBr et al.) and e. of Dry Tortugas N.P., *Monroe* 29 Apr (5; CrG); single White-tailed Trop-



These Red-billed (23 May 2009) and White-tailed (27 May 2009) Tropicbirds were both found moribund in Flagler County, Florida. The former (top left; bottom) shows more extensive black behind the eye and heavier dark barring on the back. Photographs by Michael Brothers.

icbirds 130 km e. of Ponce de Leon Inlet 24 May (MBr et al.) and 19 km e. of Dry Tortugas N.P. 27 Apr (JS), a Red-billed Tropicbird off Biscayne N.P., *Miami-Dade* 23 May (RoT et al.); and a Masked Booby 78 km off Ponce de Leon Inlet 10 May (BW, MBr). Sixty-seven Masked Boobies were at Dry Tortugas N.P., Florida's only breeding site, 16 Mar (TJ et al.), while up to 6 Brown Boobies loitered there 27 Apr (JS). More than 20 Brown Boobies were counted off Biscayne N.P. 23 May (RoT et al.). Unlike a Magnificent Frigatebird at Gainesville 20 May (Sea McKeon), Brown Pelicans inland in *Alachua* (2; Geoff Parks), *Seminole* (3; Paul Hueber), and *Orange* (6; EK, BHA, John Thomson) are rare but regular and were not the result of storms.

A Great White Heron wandered n. to St. Marks N.W.R., *Wakulla* 29 Mar (JM). Rare but annual, up to 2 White-faced Ibis remained at Lake City, *Columbia* through 24 Mar (Bob Richter, PaB), and another appeared at McKethan Lake, *Hernando* 17-22 Mar (ph. DaS et al.). Rare and local in the cen. and s. peninsula, a White-tailed Kite pair fledged 4 young at Avon Park Air Force Range, *Polk* 16 Jun (DR), but one at *Wakulla Springs*, *Wakulla* 29 Mar (Chris Borg) was a vagrant. Probably expanding their range northward, lone dark-morph Short-tailed Hawks were reported at Chassahowitzka W.M.A., *Hernando* 8 May (Kristin Wood) and n. of Old Town, *Dixie* 10 Apr (Sean McCool). A Broad-winged Hawk at Port Orange, *Volusia* 16 Apr (MBr) and a Swainson's Hawk at Tampa, *Hillsborough* 3 May (Doug Wassmer, Lilian Saul) were rare migrants, and a Crested Caracara at Frog Pond W.M.A., *Miami-Dade* 14 Mar (TM) was far south.

## RAILS THROUGH JAEGERS

Infrequently encountered in ne. Florida, a Black Rail was heard at Talbot Island S.P., *Duval* 19 Mar (TJ et al.). Within 32 km of Georgia, 3 Limpkins

remained at Lake Henrietta, *Leon* through Apr (GM et al.). Up to 7 Whooping Cranes, probably from Wisconsin's migratory flock, lingered at Paynes Prairie throughout the season (JK, FL), and 2 others, likely from Florida's introduced resident population, visited L. Apopka 5 & 8 May (HR). By far the rarity of the season and only the 2nd for the continental United States, a Greater Sand-Plover amazed visitors at Huguenot Memorial Park, *Duval* 14-26 May (ph. RC, m.ob.); its presence was not obviously associated with any weather system, and it appeared to be in its first-alternate plumage. Rare on the Atlantic coast, a Snowy Plover that wintered at Crandon Park, *Miami-Dade* remained through 9 Apr (CS, James Sigbee). Rare in spring, 7 Upland Sandpipers were reported in Apr in *Monroe* (2; LaM, CrG), *Miami-Dade* (RoT, CS), *Orange* (3; HR), and *Duval* (RC). Always a good find, single Long-billed Curlews were at Ft. De Soto Park, *Pinellas* 2 & 23 Apr+ (RoS et al.) and Little Estero Island Critical Wildlife Area, *Lee* 16 May (CE). At Ft. George Inlet, *Nassau*, Leary had a high count of 1048 Red Knots 18 May; 17 of season's 114 banded knots had been in South America. A count of 320 White-rumped Sandpipers in *Palm Beach* 24 May (MBE) was impressive, and single Baird's Sandpipers at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 5 Apr (RAD, LD) and Huguenot Memorial Park 21 May (Alex Harper) were rare. On the Atlantic coast, several Purple Sandpipers lingered into Apr s. to *Brevard*, with the latest photographed at Huguenot Memorial Park 27 May (Devin Bosler). Also rare in spring were a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Dry Tortugas N.P. 15 Apr (LaM), a Ruff at Alligator Lake, *Columbia* 17-28 Mar (PaB), and 3 Wilson's Phalaropes at St. Marks N.W.R. 11-19 Apr (Andy Wraithmell et al.). During the May storm, 5 Red-necked Phalaropes came ashore at Ft. Clinch S.P., *Nassau* (RoS), with up to 3 at Huguenot Memorial Park (RC), while at the other end of the peninsula, one was photographed at Eco Pond, Flamingo, Everglades N.P., *Monroe* 20 May (BS, TM). Two Red-neckeds were offshore of Ponce de Leon Inlet 10 May (MBr, BW), and the next day one was near shore at Jetty Park, Cape Canaveral (DF).

Unusual in spring, a first-cycle Franklin's Gull visited Jaycee Park, *Okeechobee* 11 & 14 Apr (DaS). Rare gulls (many p.a.) included single California Gulls at Daytona Beach Shores, *Volusia* 2 & 25 Mar (AK, MBr) and Central Disposal Facility, *Cocoa*, *Brevard* 27 Mar (MH); a Thayer's Gull at Daytona Beach Shores 2 Mar (MBr, AK) and 2 at Central Disposal Facility 6 Mar (MH); an Iceland Gull at Huguenot Memorial Park 1-2 Apr (RC), one at Crystal River, *Citrus* through 18 Apr (Pat





Florida's first White-throated Swift was rehabilitated and released after being found on the balcony of a condominium at Navarre Beach, Santa Rosa County, Florida 9 April 2009. Photograph by Lucy Duncan.

Bazany, DaS), and at least 4 at Daytona Beach Shores through 25 Mar (MBr et al.); single Glaucous Gulls at Daytona Beach Shores through 13 May (MBr), at Central Disposal Facility 7 May (Danny Bales), and at Huguenot Memorial Park through 23 Apr (PtL, RC); and a Black-legged Kittiwake at Ponce Inlet 25 Mar (MBr, \*UCF). Brothers photographed a presumed Herring Gull  $\times$  Lesser Black-backed Gull hybrid at Daytona Beach Shores 19 Mar. A single Black Noddy associated with Brown Noddies at Bush Key, Dry Tortugas N.P. 19 Apr–3 May (LaM, Brennan Mulrooney). Storm-related Sooty Terns were at Newnans Lake, Gainesville 20 May (2; John Hintermister) and Barefoot Beach, Collier 29 May (Jan Bachrach). The May storm carried 14 Bridled Terns to shore at Ft. George Inlet 19 May (RC) and destroyed 16 Gull-billed Tern nests at Bird I., Nassau Sound, the largest colony in Duval in 15 years (PtL). Over 40 Roseate Terns were counted at the country's only rooftop colony at Marathon, Monroe 17 May (BR). Arctic Terns sought shelter at Huguenot Memorial Park 24 May (Bob Carroll, Dan Irizarry); Ponce de Leon Inlet 19 & 23 May (2; MBr); and Boynton Beach, Palm Beach 23 May (BrH). With fewer than 10 reports of the species for Florida, a South Polar Skua was a welcome sight 74 km off Ponce de Leon Inlet 24 May (MBr et al.; p.a.). Parasitic Jaegers came ashore in Duval 4 Apr (Kevin Dailey) and *Volusia* 2 Mar (MBr, AK), as did a Pomarine in Duval 18 May (KA, James Wheat).

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

Whether a White-winged Dove at Alligator Point 4 Apr (JM) was from the established population at Pensacola, Escambia or the introduced population in the peninsula is a matter of speculation. Goodrich reported an unidentified *Leptotila* dove at Stock I. 3 May (p.a.);

White-tipped Dove has been documented in Florida twice. Nearly extirpated in Florida, 5 Budgerigars at Spring Hill, Hernando 11 Apr (Alan Whitehead) were one of only a few small flocks that remain. A vocalizing Mangrove Cuckoo was n. at Wolf Branch Creek Preserve, Hillsborough 31 May (KA), and early singles were singing in late Mar in Miami-Dade (RoT) and Monroe (CrG). Single Black-billed Cuckoos at Ft. De Soto Park 21 Apr (Tina Mossbarger) and on the Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41), Miami-Dade 15 May (RoT) were rare for spring.

Four Smooth-billed Anis continued at Dania Beach, Broward (JK), the only reliable location for this endangered species. Caribbean Short-eared Owls were found n. at Bonnet House, Ft. Lauderdale, Broward 29 May (ph. Tom Friedel) and at Ft. Zachary Taylor S.P., Key West, Monroe 16 Apr (CrG). Casual away from the extreme s. peninsula, a Lesser Nighthawk turned up at Dry Tortugas N.P. 16 Apr (LaM). Also in Monroe, an Antillean Nighthawk was early at Stock I. 11 Apr (LaM), while others were seen in Key West and Marathon later in the season (m.ob.). Florida's first White-throated Swift was found injured on the balcony of a condominium at Navarre Beach, Santa Rosa 9 Apr (Clive Beattie, ph. LD) and released 26 May (fide LD). Two Rufous Hummingbirds lingered at Valrico, Hillsborough through 14 Mar (Steve Backes).

Late wintering flycatchers included a Say's Phoebe at Astatula, Lake through 12 Mar (Jim Swarr); a Vermilion Flycatcher at Ft. Walton Beach Spray Fields, Okaloosa through 11 Mar (KJ); an Ash-throated Flycatcher at L. Apopka through 29 Apr (HR); and a Tropical Kingbird at "Dump Marsh," Miami-Dade through 10 Apr (m.ob.). Brown-crested Flycatchers were at two Miami-Dade locations, C-111E Canal 7-21 Mar and Matheson Hammock Park 31 Mar (both RoT et al.). A La Sagra's Flycatcher at Bill Baggs Cape Florida S.P., Miami-Dade 27 Apr was the first to be banded in the continental United States (b., ph. RD), and another was at Dry Tortugas N.P. 11 Apr (LaM). Single migrant Gray Kingbirds at L. Apopka 15 Apr and 6 May (HR) are annual at this inland location. A leucistic Loggerhead Kingbird at Ft. Zachary Taylor S.P., Key West 12-23 Apr (ph. CrG et al.) provided Florida's 3rd record in as many years. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher at Ft. Zachary Taylor S.P. 25-

26 Apr (BW, ph. CrG) was another one of the city's many rarities this season.

Rare vireos included a Thick-billed Vireo at Spanish River Park, Broward 2 & 10 Apr (BrH; p.a.); lone Bell's Vireos at Naples, Collier 11-16 Apr (AM et al.), Boca Raton, Palm Beach 20 Apr (BrH), Woodmont Natural Area, Broward 2 Mar–17 Apr (John Hutchison, RT), and 2 at Frog Pond W.M.A. 7-21 Mar (RoT et al.); and a Warbling Vireo at Cape Canaveral 23 Apr (+PH, MH). Single Black-whiskered Vireos wandered n. to Ft. De Soto Park 24-29 Apr (Rick Greenspun et al.) and Green Key, Pasco 20 May (KT). Three singing Horned Larks at two locations in Jackson 30 May and 4 Jun (DaS, BRo) provided the first suggestion of breeding in Florida. Away from Miami-Dade breeding colonies, single Cave Swallows were noted at St. Marks N.W.R. 29 Mar (JM, Alan Knothe; a breeding colony was verified there in Jun), Honey-moon Island S.P., Pinellas 10 Mar and 1 Apr (DG et al.), with 4 at Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Palm Beach 17 Mar (RT), and up to 6 *P. f. pallida* at Key West 6 Mar–17 Apr (CrG). Three Ruby-crowned Kinglets at L. Apopka



One of two reported this season, this La Sagra's Flycatcher at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, Miami-Dade County, Florida 27 April 2009 was the first to be banded in the United States. Photograph by Robin Diaz.

10 May (HR) were late. A fallout at Dry Tortugas N.P. 15 & 16 May included about 500 thrushes; the most common was Wood Thrush, usually the rarest at that location (LaM). A Bicknell's Thrush at Bill Baggs Cape Florida S.P. 7 May was the 3rd banded there (RD) and the 9th verified for Florida. A Bahama Mockingbird visited Key West Tropical Forest and Botanical Garden, Stock I. 17-25 Apr (CrG). Rare and local in the panhandle

and Big Bend in winter, a Sprague's Pipit remained at Apalachicola, *Franklin* through 4 Apr (JM), but 11 at Eglin A.F.B., *Okaloosa* 21 Mar (Lenny Fenimore) made an all-time high for Florida. Large numbers of Cedar Waxwings moved s. to *Broward* and *Miami-Dade* in late Apr (m.ob.).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

From mid- to late Apr, 7 Blue-winged Warblers were reported statewide, and Golden-winged Warblers were in *Brevard* (MH) and two locations in *Pinellas* (DG, m.ob.). A Tennessee Warbler at Green Key 20 May (KT) was late, as were single Orange-crowned Warblers in *Broward* (MBe, BRo) and *Monroe* (CrG) 18 Apr. Six Nashville Warbler reports in Mar, from *Escambia* to *Monroe* (RAD, LD, Julie Cocke, BAh, Bill Boeringer, CrG, LaM), was unusual; the species is most often reported in winter, but at least some of these may have been early migrants, as several were at well-birded sites. Unusual in spring, single Chestnut-sided Warblers were in *Pinellas* 8 (Jeff Hooks) & 21 Apr (DG), along with a Bay-breasted 30 Apr (DM). A Cerulean Warbler visited Avon Park Air Force Range, *Highlands* 8 Apr (DR). A Black-throated Gray Warbler at Bill Sadowski Park, *Miami-Dade* 7 Mar (Bonnie Ponwith, TM) and a Kirtland's Warbler at Lori Wilson Park, *Brevard* 24 Apr (Ken & Barbara Keskinen), both casual species in Florida, were photographed. The male Kirtland's, Florida's 5th record, had been banded in *Oscoda*, MI in 2008 (*vide* PM). Strong easterly and southeasterly winds forced substantial numbers of Cape May (82), Black-throated Blue (133), and Blackpoll (156) Warblers and Common Yellowthroats (190) to Ft. De Soto Park 30 Apr (BAh, RoS) and Blackpoll Warblers (100) and American Redstarts (150) to Ft. George Island, *Duval* 21-22 May (RC). Of the 15 migrant Swainson's Warblers reported, one at Dry Tortugas N.P. 16 Mar (TJ) was the earliest. Inexplicably scarce, Connecticut Warblers were reported only at A. D. ("Doug") Barnes Park, *Miami-Dade* 9 & 11 May (CS, RoT). Very rare migrants, a Mourning Warbler stopped at Brandon, *Hillsborough* 27 Apr (EK), and Wilson's Warblers were at Honeymoon Island S.P. 22 Apr (DG), *Pinelake* Park, *Sarasota* 11-15 Apr (Valerie Ponzo), A. D. Barnes Park, *Miami-Dade* 1-9 Mar (TM), and near Flamingo 26 Mar (CS). Ten Yellow-breasted Chats were at L. Apopka 24 Apr (HR), where the species has been found year-round. Lone Western Tanager visited feeders at Niceville, *Okaloosa* 9-10 Mar (Blake Hardison) and Tallahassee 22-28 Mar and 5 Apr (FR).

A male Western Spindalis enlivened Seacrest Scrub Natural Area, Boynton Beach 19

May (Ron Crandall), and other males were at Ft. Lauderdale at Evergreen Cemetery 12 Mar (Jerry Sniderman) and Snyder Park 4-6 May (BRo et al.); at Key West and Stock I., at least 2 males were observed 28 Apr-3 May (m.ob.). An apparent West Indian Yellow-faced Grassquit (the nominate subspecies) was studied at Ft. Zachary Taylor S.P. 20-27 Apr (CrG, ph. MG et al.), furnishing Florida's 8th report, notably the 5th for spring and the 6th from *Monroe*. Lingering sparrows included a Clay-colored Sparrow at Cedar Key, *Levy* 18 Apr (DH); a Savannah Sparrow at Archer, *Alachua* 22 May (June Hinson); a Le Conte's at Gamble Rogers S.P., *Flagler* 23 Apr (DaS); up to 3 Saltmarsh Sparrows in *Pinellas* on the Gulf coast a Honeymoon Island S.P. through 24 Mar, and another at nearby Shell Key Preserve 7 Mar (ph. BP et al.); and the Harris's Sparrow that wintered at Paynes Prairie 11 Mar (FL et al.). Rare Lincoln's Sparrows were found at Withlacoochee S.F., *Citrus* (DaS) and at Seminole, *Pinellas* 12 & 22 Mar (DM), respectively. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Mahogany Hammock, Everglades N.P., *Miami-Dade* 7 Mar was early (JHB); the species was in normal numbers in the peninsula, where it is rare, except locally on the Gulf coast, where 20 was the high at Honeymoon Island S.P. 21 Apr (DG). A male Black-headed Grosbeak paused a feeder at Lakeland, *Polk* about 8 Mar (*vide* ph. Chuck Geanangel). A second-year male Lazuli Bunting, providing Florida's 13th report, visited Oviedo, *Seminole* 4 Mar-19 Apr (ph. Rachel Christensen, *vide* Marry Acken). An Indigo-type bunting with two wingbars and a white belly was banded at Tomoka S.P., *Volusia* 22 Apr (ph. Meret Wilson) and was likely a Lazuli Bunting × Indigo Bunting hybrid, a first for Florida. Casual inland in the Big Bend, a Painted Bunting was at Tallahassee 12 Apr (Melissa Forehand). Eleven Dickcissels were found in the Big Bend, peninsula, and keys; 4 stopped at Key West 21-22 Apr (CrG).

In Mar, lone Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at L. Apopka (HR) and in *Miami-Dade* at Cutler Ridge (RoT, TM) and at Homestead (LaM, ph.); 2 were at Cocoa 18 Mar-23 Apr (DF et al.). The only Rusty Blackbirds reported were up to 4 at Lutz, *Pasco* 1-9 Mar (ph. David Bowman). A female Brewer's Blackbird was far e. in nw. *Duval* 5 Apr (RC et al.). Very local in the panhandle, a pair of Boat-tailed Grackles was at Ft. Walton Beach, *Okaloosa* 13 Apr (KJ). Shiny Cowbirds were unusually widespread, with singles at Pensacola 12-13 May (Ann & Dan Forster); Alligator Point 6 May (JM); Cedar Key 28 Apr+ (DH; annual since 1990); Weeki Wachee, a first for *Hernando* 17 Apr (MG); St. Petersburg, *Pinellas* 1-

30 May (ph. D&LM, RoS); in *Miami-Dade* at Castellow Hammock, Miami 1 Mar (Roger Hammer) and Homestead 7 Mar (LaM); and at Dry Tortugas N.P. 16 Apr (LaM); up to 2 were at L. Apopka 15-22 Apr (HR) and Flamingo 1 & 20 May (JS, BS). Bronzed Cowbirds were less prominent, with loners at Tallahassee, a first for *Leon* 25 Apr (Bill Huggens), Cedar Key 21 & 22 Mar and 28 Apr (Matt Hafner, DH et al.), Plantation Linear Preserve, *Broward* 22 May (RT), and Cutler Wetlands, *Miami-Dade* 9 Apr (BR). Although Brown-headed Cowbirds have been reported throughout the peninsula during the breeding season, there are few reports of successful breeding; this season, two Eastern Bluebird nests were found with one and two cowbird eggs, respectively, at Sarasota in Apr (*vide* Jeanne Dubi). An Orchard Oriole pair was feeding nestlings at The Villages 16 May (James Dinsmore) for the first *Sumter* breeding report. A female Bullock's Oriole was at Tallahassee 10 Mar (FR), where the species occasionally winters. Not known to be established in *Miami-Dade*, *Collier*, or *Monroe*, House Finches were at Bill Baggs Cape Florida S.P. 3 Mar (2; RD), a feeder at Naples 23 Mar (2; AM), and at Key West 28 Apr (ph. MG). The past winter's Pine Siskin invasion continued, with up to 40+ at DeLand, *Volusia* through 11 Apr (Peter May) and up to 80 at Salt Springs *Marion* through 13 May (Angela Luzader), the latest report.

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### Alan Wormington

It was a dismal and very cold winter across Ontario, and the spring was similarly cold (and late) just about everywhere—especially in the north. But as usual there were short periods of above-average temperatures associated with strong weather systems, resulting in excellent migration. One such period was in early March, when across southern Ontario record-high temperatures of around 66° F were widespread. This sparked a massive flight of expected migrants into the area, particularly waterfowl, blackbirds, Killdeer, and others. But the most interesting period was the last week in April (starting on the 24th), when a blast of warm air swept through southern Ontario; in the extreme southwest at Windsor, the daily high exceeded 85° F on four consecutive days 24-27 April, inclusive. This early heatwave resulted in a surge of Neotropical migrants across southern Ontario, when record-early arrivals were established at numerous locations. A diversity of warblers characterized this event, and by the end of the month seven species were found in Manitoulin District and a record 14 species at Presqu'île Provincial Park. Even more remarkable, the warbler total at Point Pelee was 34 species, easily an all-time record there for the month of April. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of early dates for the season. In northern Ontario, however, significant numbers of Neotropical migrants did not arrive until the last week of May, and this late migration set the stage for a very delayed nesting season.

On 9 May, a visible reverse migration of birds flying south off Fish Point at Pelee Island, Essex County, included 550 Nashville Warblers, 50 Scarlet Tanagers, 190 Indigo Buntings, a single Dickcissel, and 280 Baltimore Orioles (MVAB, JGB, KGB).

Exceptional rarities found during the peri-

od included Snowy Plover, Black Swift, Bell's Vireo, Townsend's Warbler, Chestnut-collared Longspur, and Lazuli Bunting. There was a surprising number of occurrences for species that just a few decades ago would have been considered quite exceptional—Western Grebe, Black Vulture, Mississippi Kite, American Avocet, White-winged Dove, Fish Crow, Kirtland's Warbler, Western Tanager, Lark Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, and Painted Bunting are species that are now being found much more frequently in Ontario.

Abbreviations: H.S.A. (Hamilton Study Area), K.F.N. (Kingston Field Naturalists), L.P.B.O. (Long Point B.O.), N.L.B. (North Leeds Birders), Point Pelee (Point Pelee Birding Area, a standard C.B.C. circle centred just n. of Point Pelee N.P.). Mentioned often are Thunder Bay and Thunder Cape (Thunder Cape B.O.), both of which are in Thunder Bay District. Ontario is divided into "north" and "south" regions along the 47° N latitude. A place name in italics refers to a county, district, or regional municipality.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH WILD TURKEY

Numerous Greater White-fronted Goose sightings in the south included 9 at Erieau, Chatham-Kent 1 Mar (JTB, KJB), 2 at Hillman Marsh, Essex 6-14 Mar (DJW), one at Etobicoke, Toronto 13 Mar (GLKJ), and at the Kaiser Crossroad Wetland, Prince Edward, 4 birds 17 Mar increased to 5 birds 18-24 Mar, with one lingering through 15 Apr (PSt et al.). On 20 Mar, a single was at Peters Corners, Hamilton (DRS, LSF). Birds in Ottawa were one at Carlsbad Springs 19 Mar, increasing to 2 birds 21

Mar (WB, NVM), and singles at Bells Corners 2 Apr (RC), at Carp 5 Apr (FH), and again at Bells Corners 11 May (TFMB). A Greater White-fronted Goose shot 14 Apr just sw. of Moosonee on the Kwatabohegan R., Cochrane (JT) was a rare sighting for the Hudson Bay Lowlands. The 198 Snow Geese at Hillman Marsh 10-17 Mar (AW et al.) made a record-high spring count for Point Pelee. Greater Snow Goose continues to increase as a spring migrant through e. Ontario, with the first 250 birds detected 7 Mar at Ingleside, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Some select counts include 10,000 at Williamstown 22 Mar and 8000 e. of Bainsville on 30 Mar, both Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and 40,000 at Bourget 10 Apr and 20,000 at Alfred 22 Apr, both Prescott and Russell (*vide* BLM); finally, an aerial survey over ten e. Ontario sites 4 May tallied 61,000 birds (Canadian Wildlife Service).

A single Brant inland in a farm field with Canada Geese at Peters Corners 21 Mar (RZD et al.) was certainly unusual, and the early date suggests local wintering somewhere nearby. Peak Brant numbers at Kingston, Frontenac were 1800 on 12 May and 1600 on 24 May (both JHE, AKBR). The 52 Wood Ducks at Point Pelee 6 Mar was an exceptional count for the early date, which included 19 flying southward off the Tip in apparent reverse migration (AW, MBR). On 14 May, a Gadwall was at Rainy River, Rainy River (DHE), a local rarity. Ten Eurasian Wigeons are probably more than any previous spring season; singles (all males) were found at Point Pelee 15-19 Mar (AW et al.) and a different bird there 16 Mar (AW), at Presqu'île P.P., Northumberland 17-23 Mar (KW et al.), at Bourget, Prescott and Russell 30 Mar-3 Apr

**SA** Ross's Goose numbers exploded this spring across s. Ontario, remarkable for a species that was recorded for the first time in the south only in 1970. Throughout its range, there are perhaps several reasons why Ross's Goose is increasing, but in s. Ontario specifically, it is probable that the widespread adoption of no-till farming in recent decades—when waste corn and stubble remain in farm fields through spring—has facilitated an eastward expansion of migration patterns for both this and other prairie geese.

In s. Ontario, the epicenter was Hillman Marsh at Point Pelee, where first arrivals were 6 birds 5-8 Mar (AW) with an additional 4 birds 8 Mar (DJW), then increasing to a total of 22 birds 9 Mar (DJW), and finally an impressive 44 birds 10-15 Mar (AW et al.). Point Pelee recorded its first Ross's Goose in 1994! Concentrations elsewhere included 12 birds at Grand Bend, Lambton 20 Mar, 2 of which were of the blue morph (MPA); 8 at Northville, Lambton 10-26 Mar (AHR et al.); 4 at Desbarats-Echo Bay area, Algoma 9-15 Apr (KAM et al.); 3 at Townsend, Haldimand on 14 Mar (NCM, IC); 2 birds 11-12 Mar, increasing to 3 on the last date, at Rockton, Hamilton (CEE et al.), and probably one of these remaining through 19 Mar at Sheffield (JEH, RWS, GDB); and 2 at Long Point Inner Bay 14 Mar (NCM, IC). Single Ross's were found in Ottawa 3-10 Apr at Richmond (JMT et al.), 18 Apr at Carlsbad Springs (RAB, RJC et al.), 18 Apr at Corkery (RMP), and 11 May at Nepean (TFMB), and 14 Mar at Whitby, Durham (GCo et al.), 18 Mar at Townsend, Norfolk (KGB), 31 Mar at Reesor Pond, York (SL et al.), and 28 Apr at Russell, Prescott and Russell (PS).

Excluding the Hudson Bay shoreline, where Ross's Goose is a common spring migrant and breeder in small but increasing numbers, the species is normally scarce elsewhere in the north, and this spring the only reports were singles at Dryden, Kenora 15-16 Apr (AMM et al.) and one very late at Thunder Bay 18-24 May (BJM et al.).

**Table 1.** A selection of record-early occurrences for local areas in Ontario, spring of 2009.

Species	No.	Date(s)	Location	Observer(s)
Gadwall	1	15 Mar	Hare's Cr., <i>Manitoulin</i>	RT, CTB
American Wigeon	1	15 Mar	L. Wolsey, <i>Manitoulin</i>	CTB, RT
Red-breasted Merganser	3	29 Mar	Algonquin P.P. (L. of Two Rivers)	RGT
Red-throated Loon	1	17 Mar	Presqu'île P.P., <i>Northumberland</i>	FMH
Eared Grebe	1	1 Apr	Pelee Island, <i>Essex</i>	ACP
Semipalmated Plover	1	25 Apr	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i>	JMT et al.
Greater Yellowlegs	1	23 Mar	L. Wolsey, <i>Manitoulin</i>	RT, CTB, TL
Whimbrel	1	28 Apr	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i>	BRH, LFR
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1	30 Apr	Pelee I., <i>Essex</i>	ACP
Caspian Tern	1	28 Mar	Big Island Marsh, <i>Prince Edward</i>	RTS
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	27 Apr	Leslie Street Spit, <i>Toronto</i>	SMF
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	7 May	Long Point (Old Cut), <i>Norfolk</i>	WW, RR
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	27 Apr	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i>	NV, EPL
Belted Kingfisher	1	8 Mar	West Bay, <i>Manitoulin</i>	CTB
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	15 Mar	Rondeau P.P., <i>Chatham-Kent</i>	PAW
Alder Flycatcher	1	3 May	Prince Edward Pt., <i>Prince Edward</i>	K.F.N.
Great Crested Flycatcher	1	27 Apr	Kingston, <i>Frontenac</i>	K.F.N.
Blue-headed Vireo	1	28 Apr	South Baymouth, <i>Manitoulin</i>	RT, CTB
Warbling Vireo	1	25 Apr	Fifty Pt., <i>Hamilton-Niagara</i>	RZD et al.
Warbling Vireo	1	26 Apr	Harmony, <i>Perth</i>	MPD, RD
Warbling Vireo	1	27 Apr	Presqu'île P.P., <i>Northumberland</i>	WDG, DPS, RIS
Red-eyed Vireo	1	28 Apr	Kortright, <i>York</i>	LF
Barn Swallow	1	15 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (West Gate)	PJB
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	24 Apr	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i>	AW, RPC, HTD
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	26 Apr	Brantford, <i>Brant</i>	WGL
Cedar Waxwing	3	15 May	Algonquin P.P. (Wildlife Research Station)	CES
Golden-winged Warbler	1	28 Apr	Presqu'île P.P., <i>Northumberland</i>	DPS
Nashville Warbler	2	29 Apr	Indian Pt. & L. Wolsey, <i>Manitoulin</i>	CTB, RT
Northern Parula	1	28 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (Wildlife Research Station)	DL
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	27 Apr	Burlington, <i>Halton</i>	SK et al.
Magnolia Warbler	1	30 Apr	Aldershot, <i>Halton</i>	WER
Cape May Warbler	1	28 Apr	Presqu'île P.P., <i>Northumberland</i>	DPS, RIS
Cape May Warbler	1	29 Apr	Prince Edward Pt., <i>Prince Edward</i>	DO
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	25 Apr	Prince Edward Pt., <i>Prince Edward</i>	DO
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	27 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (Kathlyn L.)	SH, HK
Black-throated Green Warbler	2	24 Apr	South Baymouth, <i>Manitoulin</i>	CTB
Blackburnian Warbler	1	26 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (Bat L.)	DL
Pine Warbler	1	15 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (Cache L.)	DPa
Palm Warbler	1	2 Apr	Presqu'île P.P., <i>Northumberland</i>	SPe
Blackpoll Warbler	1	26-28 Apr	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i>	EPL, JMT, RJC et al.
Blackpoll Warbler	1	27 Apr	Pelee I., <i>Essex</i>	DJW, ACP
American Redstart	1	29 Apr	Charleston Lake P.P., <i>Leeds and Grenville</i>	N.L.B.
American Redstart	1	5 May	South Baymouth, <i>Manitoulin</i>	RT, CTB
Prothonotary Warbler	1	27 Apr	Presqu'île P.P., <i>Northumberland</i>	JTa, AB, JR
Worm-eating Warbler	1	25 Apr	Kingston, <i>Frontenac</i>	EBa, AS
Connecticut Warbler	1	9 May	Toronto Is., <i>Toronto</i>	ALA
Wilson's Warbler	1	27 Apr	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i>	MBR et al.
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	30 Apr	Cayuga, <i>Haldimand</i>	BPom
Scarlet Tanager	1	8 Apr	Pelee I., <i>Essex</i>	CESa
Scarlet Tanager	1	4 May	Gore Bay, <i>Manitoulin</i>	MD
Scarlet Tanager	1	9 May	Algonquin P.P. (Louisa Lake Rd.)	DCT
Eastern Towhee	1	25 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (Tea Lake Dam Road)	KC, RGT et al.
Swamp Sparrow	1	6-14 Mar	Point Pelee, <i>Essex</i> (Tip)	AW et al.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	20-22 Apr	Algonquin P.P. (Visitor Centre)	JP et al.
Indigo Bunting	1	16 Apr	L. on the Mountain, <i>Prince Edward</i>	PSt
Baltimore Oriole	1	13 Apr	Cayuga, <i>Haldimand</i>	BPom



A Black Vulture at Rondeau Park townsite, Chatham-Kent, present from early March through 16 (here 15) March 2009, was one of seven found this spring in Ontario. Photograph by James T. Burk.

(VBL et al.), at Port Maitland, *Haldimand* 2 Apr (RG), at Luther Marsh, *Dufferin* 13-14 Apr (MDC, RW et al.), at Thunder Bay 20-29 Apr (DNB et al.), at Nipigon, *Thunder Bay* 27 Apr (KOJ), at Presqu'île P.P. 27 Apr (FMH), and at Point Pelee 29 Apr-3 May (JL et al.). Very high counts for Northern Pintail were 925 at the Grand R. se. of Cayuga, *Haldimand* 13 Apr (RZD, CEE), 600 at Holland Landing, *York* 17 Mar (RJF), and 550 at Kaiser Crossroad Wetland 5 Apr (JHE, RDW). The 23,000 Greater Scaup at Point Pelee 26 Mar (AW) made a local record-high count, and the 18,000 at Prince Edward Pt., *Prince Edward* 8 Mar (JHE, RDW) was another count of significance. Three King Eiders at Port Alma, *Chatham-Kent* 6 May (AW) was a good sighting for w. Lake Erie. The wintering first-year male along the *Toronto* waterfront since 3 Feb (BPB et al.) was last seen 24 Apr, and one of the 3 observed since Jan at the Leslie St. Spit was a female still there 8 Mar (NCM, IC). Other singles were a third-spring male 14 Mar at Vineland, *Niagara* (WCD, BP); a first-year male at Stoney Creek, *Hamilton* 17 Mar-15 Apr (KAMcL et al.) and a female there 19-28 Mar (RWS, JEH et al.); and one at Thicksons Pt., *Durham* 24 May (BH), rather late. A scattering of Harlequin Ducks included 2 at Sarnia, *Lambton* 1-8 Mar (GAH, GLH et al.); 3 at Port Credit, *Peel* 30 Mar-13 Apr (JL et al.) and then 15-29 Apr at Humber Bay East, *Toronto*; one off Oshawa Second Marsh, *Durham* 26 Apr (TH); and 4 at Prince Edward Pt. 29 Apr (MB, DO). Wintering Barrow's Goldeneyes in *Ottawa* were a male and female on the Rideau R. at Hwy. 417 through 2 Apr



This immature Mississippi Kite on 22 May 2009 was one of four birds recorded this spring at Point Pelee, Ontario, a locality that is the premiere site for this species in the Great Lakes Region. Photograph by Robert Curry.

and a male at Britannia through 22 Apr (m.ob.); the only other reports were of single males at Muscote Bay, *Prince Edward* 16 Apr (HG) and at Lakefield, *Peterborough* 25-27 Apr (WJC et al.), both very late occurrences. For the first time ever, 2+ Wild Turkeys successfully wintered at Algonquin P.P., *Nipissing*, feeding mostly on natural foods and not dependent on feeders; the species was first recorded there in 2002 (*vide* RGT).

## LOONS THROUGH IBISES

The 99 Red-throated Loons that passed Thunder Cape 4 May (JMW, MEW, JRB, SLS) made quite a significant count for a species that is normally rare on L. Superior. Away from the lower Great Lakes, one Eared Grebe was found 11 Apr at Southampton, *Bruce* (BW); another in *Bruce* at Ripley 17-18 May was thought to be the same bird as seen about 12 km away at Kincardine 20-28 May (JAT et al.). The wintering Western Grebe at Ashbridge's Bay, *Toronto* since 13 Feb (EO et al.) was last reported 28 Mar. What was presumably a different bird was present at Etobicoke 17-24 Apr (MVAB et al.); the only other report was one at Prince Edward Pt. 23 May (DO, MJCB, EAM, AC), the Kingston Area's 2nd ever. American White Pelicans seen at non-breeding locations were 50+ birds late Apr-late May at Sault Ste. Marie, *Algoma* (KAM); 5 at Atikokan, *Rainy River* 23 Apr (DHE); 5 at Dundas Marsh, *Hamilton* 14-17 May, with one remaining through 23 May (MDaly et al.); 2 flying northward over e. *Hamilton* 9 Apr (TK); 2 at Guelph L., *Wellington* 10 Apr (PC et al.); and one at Rattray

Marsh, *Peel* 25 May (DEP, MHC). An ad. Great Cormorant 20 May flying eastward past Fifty Pt., *Hamilton/Niagara* (GEH) provided only the 4th spring record for Ontario.

An early Great Egret was at Point Pelee 19-24 Mar (DJW et al.), and one in Billings Township 8 May (RF) was rare for *Manitoulin*. The only Snowy Egret observations were single birds at Holland Marsh, *Simcoe* 28 Apr (RDM), at Big Creek Marsh, *Essex* 2-16 May (DJW et al.), and at Etobicoke 6 May (LSF). There was a scattering of Little Blue Herons, with an ad. at Point Pelee 4-5 May (RBF, DCMF et al.), a first-year imm. at Kingston 13 May (ELF), a first-year imm. at Point Pelee 15 May (JHS, JMT et al.), an ad. at Strathroy, *Middlesex* 16 May (TB), and an ad. at Kettle Pt., *Lambton* 19 May (AHR). Cattle Egret reports were limited to just two singles—at Red Rock, *Thunder*

*Bay* 11 May (LAS, VES et al.) and another at *Hamilton Harbour* 18 May (SC). An early and northerly Green Heron was present at South Baymouth, *Manitoulin* 26 Apr-5 May (DR et al.). An unidentified *Plegadis ibis* 11 May at Point Pelee (BSC et al.) was the only report of this genus.

## RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A total of seven Black Vulture sightings was certainly unexpected. One at Rondeau Park townsite, *Chatham-Kent* 13-16 Mar (DC et al.) was reported by local residents to have been present for a week prior, while the others were noted s. of Glen Morris, *Brant* 21 Mar (WGS); at Kingston 23 Mar (VPM); in *Norfolk* at Turkey Point Marsh 28 Mar (KK et al.) and the next day at St. Williams; at Point Pelee 11 Apr (CES, SJC et al.); at New Scotland, *York* 27 Apr (CC); and at Ferndale, *Bruce* 17 May (VEM, GS, MG). The 3100 Turkey Vultures at Grimsby 2 Apr (BRH) made a record-high count for H.S.A. A very early Osprey was at *Hamilton Harbour* 19 Mar (GCh, NC). Multiple sightings of Mississippi Kite at Point Pelee were thought to involve 4 birds, with an ad. 11 May (GTH et al.) and single first-year imm. 11 (JI, RJP et al.), 13 (EWH et al.), & 22 May (RCu, GJS et al.). A nesting pair of Bald Eagles at Dundas Marsh was not successful, but it did provide the first modern breeding attempt for w. L. Ontario (*vide* RZD). The wintering ad. Red-shouldered Hawk at Kanata, *Ottawa* was last seen 13 Mar (m.ob.) and was probably the same bird that wintered there 2007-2008. One seen flying eastward (and high) over Brighton, *Northum-*

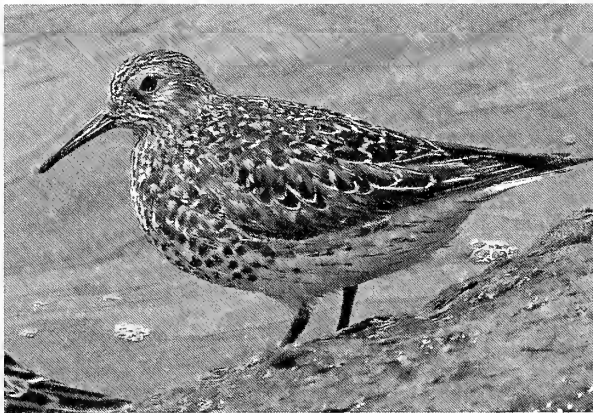
*berland* 4 Mar (RDM) was locally an early spring migrant. Fifty-seven Broad-winged Hawks were counted in one hour flying eastward along L. St. Clair at Puce, *Essex* 21 Apr (AW); this area is known for spring raptors, even though flights there are rarely reported. The 4316 Broad-wingeds tallied at Grimsby 24 Apr (m.ob.) provided a record-high spring count for H.S.A. At Amherst I., *Lemnox and Addington*, Rough-legged Hawks peaked 12 Apr, with 80 birds (MB, DO), while one at Blackheath, *Hamilton* 31 May (BRH) was presumably a non-breeder. A nesting pair of Merlins returned to London, *Middlesex* (PSB et al.), the southernmost in the province. The ad. gray-morph Gyrfalcon originally found 21 Feb at Thunder Bay (BJM et al.) was last seen 1 Mar, and a white-morph ad. was present 3-14 Mar at Wolfe I., *Frontenac* (BME et al.).

The endangered King Rail was reported only once, a single bird at Stone Road Alvar, Pelee Island 8-11 May (JKing et al.). A flock of 54 "northern" Sandhill Cranes flying northward at Atikokan 20 Apr (DHE) was locally significant. Very unexpected was a Snowy Plover on the n. shore of L. Superior at the Wolf R. mouth, *Thunder Bay* 22-23 May (SJF et al.), the 8th provincial record but the first ever in the north. Single migrant Piping Plovers included a color-banded male at the Tip of Long Point 30 Apr-6 May (L.P.B.O.) and another marked bird at Darlington P.P., *Durham* 27-29 May (TH et al.). It was another banner spring for American Avocets, with



Snowy Plover is not a species one expects to see on Lake Superior, but this individual was present 22-23 (here 22) May 2009 at the Wolf River mouth, Thunder Bay District, to provide a first record for northern Ontario. Photograph by Susan J. Fagan.

42 at Erieau 30 Apr (JTB); 20 s. of Morpeth 3 May, then shortly thereafter at Rondeau P.P. (DP et al.); 11 at Point Pelee 25 Apr (DJW et al.) and another 14 there 2 May (AW); and 2 at Rondeau P.P. 7-8 May (B. Yott et al.). The 27 avocets at Wheatley Harbour, *Chatham-Kent* 3 May (GAH, GLH et al.) departed at 3:15 p.m. and were then seen at 5:45 p.m. some 55 km due w. at Lakewood Beach, *Essex* (AW);



Purple Sandpiper is rarely detected during spring migration in Ontario, but this cooperative bird was present at Cobourg, Northumberland County on 28-29 (here 29) May 2009. Photograph by William J. Edmunds.

they were last seen flying northward up the Detroit River. At least 194 Willets were tabulated at Point Pelee during the period of 25 Apr-17 May, with high counts of 85 at Hillman Marsh 27 Apr (BRH, LFR et al.) and an additional 43 birds at the same location 28 Apr (AW et al.). There were surprisingly few birds elsewhere, but these included singles at Alfred 18 Apr (JMB), at Etobicoke 7-8 May (BM et al.), at Foxey, *Manitoulin* 10 May (CTB, RT), and at Embrun, *Prescott and Russell* 29-30 May (PWH et al.). In *Thunder Bay*, 2 were at the Wolf R. mouth 15 May (GGO), while along the Thunder Bay waterfront there were 2 on 19 May and singles (probably the same birds) on 17, 20, & 22 May (JRB). Point Pelee hosted 54+ Marbled Godwits during the period of 24 Apr-17 May, all at Hillman Marsh, with maximum counts of 25 birds 28 Apr (BRH, LFR et al.) and a different 16 birds 1 May (m.ob.). Elsewhere in the s., single birds were present at Blenheim, *Chatham-Kent* 9 May (GTH et al.), at Gore Bay, *Manitoulin* 14 May (CTB, TL, RT), at Amherst I. 16-29 May (K.F.N.), and at Presqu'île P.P. 24 May (MJCB). In the n., *Thunder Bay* recorded 9+ birds during the period of 17-27 May (m.ob.), while one at Atikokan 27 Apr (DHE) provided a first local record. Collections of shorebirds including 2 Ruddy Turnstones just w. of Dryden 28 May (CDE), and 4-6 American Golden-Plovers and 13 Whimbrels 30 May-2 Jun at Dinorwic (PB), furnished rare sightings for that area of Kenora. Red Knot reports continue to be few, and the only numbers reported were 60 at Cobourg, *Northumberland* (CEG) and 91 at Presqu'île P.P. (RIS et al.), both 28 May, and another 60 birds at Kaiser Crossroad Wetland 31 May (GDB). A flock of 6 Sanderlings at Fish Pt., Pelee Island (ACP) was certainly unusual for the early dates of 30 Apr-2 May. A Semipalmated Sandpiper at Hillman Marsh 22

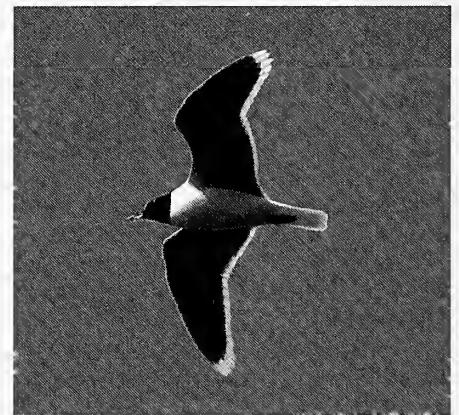
Apr (AW) was very early but not record-early for Point Pelee. Extremely rare in spring, a Baird's Sandpiper was observed at close range along the Toronto waterfront 28 May (ALA). A Pectoral Sandpiper at Munster, *Ottawa* 28 Mar (VBL) was locally very early. Rarely reported in spring, single Purple Sandpipers were intercepted at Presqu'île P.P. 24 May (WDG et al.) and at Cobourg 28-29 May (CEG et al.). Dunlin numbers at Presqu'île P.P. peaked at 12,000+ birds 24 May (BMDL et al.), an exceptional number anywhere in the province. A Stilt Sandpiper at Atikokan 21 May (DHE) made only a 2nd local record. The only reported Ruff was a rufous-morph male 4-7 May at Drumquin, *Halton* (DEP et al.). Very rare in spring, Long-billed Dowitchers were at Point Pelee 30 Apr-1 May (5; AW, WGL, DRG et al.), 9 May (one; RJP, JI, AR), and 15-18 May (one; JI et al.); another was at Pelee Island 1 May (MVAB, KGB), and 2 were at Blenheim 9 May (GTH et al.). On 14 May, a whopping 256 Wilson's Phalaropes were at the Rainy River sewage lagoons (DHE), a very high count for Ontario. The only reported Red-necked Phalaropes in the s. were single birds at Blenheim 15 May (JW) and at Hillman Marsh 17 May (DF, EB, LM et al.).

### GULLS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS

There were 10,000 Bonaparte's Gulls at Erieanu 3 Apr (JTB), and amongst this flock was an ad. Black-headed Gull (JTB). Three ad. Little Gulls at Englehart 25 May (MW, SGE) represented a new species for *Timiskaming*. Notable counts for the locations were 10 ads. at Erieanu 3 Apr (JTB), 30 at Port Dover, *Haldimand* 4 Apr (PT), 10 ads. at Kaiser Crossroad Wetland 24 Apr (RTS), and 43 at Oshawa Second Marsh 26 Apr (TH); by late May, first-year immes. were regular at Point Pelee, where at Hillman Marsh 8 on 28 May was the maximum count (BRH). Single Laughing Gulls (all ads.) were found at Point Pelee 24-26 Mar (DJW et al.) and 16 (JHS, JMT, RGT), 25 (BRH, DJW), & 28 May (BRH); at Blenheim Landfill 1 May (KJB); at Rondeau P.P. 13 May (CCh); at Long Point Tip 17 & 24 May (L.P.B.O.); and at Cobourg 28 May (CEG). An ad. Franklin's Gull at Thunder Cape 12 May (JMW, MEW, JRB, SLS, ARS) was only the 4th record for *Thunder Bay*. Elsewhere, the only reports were a first-cycle Franklin's at Rondeau P.P. 9 May (JTB), an ad. following tillage machinery at Demorestville,

*Prince Edward* 17-21 May (SD), and at Presqu'île P.P. 30 May (JHS). An ad. California Gull (nominate *californicus*) at the Tip of Point Pelee 9 May (JMP, DAG, RVZS) was a 7th local record. A first-cycle Thayer's Gull at Wheatley Harbour 26 May (BRH) was record late for Point Pelee. An ad. Great Black-backed Gull was at Thunder Bay 22 Apr (AFG), a very rare species anywhere on L. Superior. Along the Ottawa R., where Arctic Tern is regular in spring, 10 were present at Constance Bay 24 May (JHS) and 2 at Deschênes Rapids 31 May-2 Jun (RAB, CAL et al.). Elsewhere in the s., 2 were at Presqu'île P.P. 16 May (PP, RCe) and one along the Burlington lakeshore, *Halton* 23 May (RZD, DRD, CEE). The wintering juv. Pomarine Jaeger along the *Hamilton* lakeshore since 1 Feb (KMN et al.) was last reported 6 Apr.

A Eurasian Collared-Dove at Rondeau P.P. 22 May (KJB) furnished a 2nd local record. Single White-winged Doves were found at Blenheim Landfill 24 Apr (KJB) and at Thunder Cape 22-23 May (JMW, MEW, SLS, ARS). The 2 wintering Great Horned Owls of subspecies *scalariventris* at Leslie St. Spit, noted since 14 Dec (JI et al.), were last seen 21 Mar. Amherst I. hosted a significant 21 Snowy Owls 12 Apr (DO, MB), with the last one there 26 May (PJG). Other late singles were at Strathroy 29 Apr (DS) and at Jessopville, *Duf-*



Most regions of Ontario have recorded Little Gull, but this fine adult (along with two others) established a first record for *Timiskaming* District when found at Englehart on 25 May 2009. Photograph by Michael Werner.

*ferin* 22-26 May (MJL); the latter may have been the same bird seen se. of Dundalk 28 May (AR). In the s., Great Gray Owls from winter included last sightings of one at Assiginack Township, *Manitoulin* 23-25 Mar (JDI) and 3 at Dunrobin, *Ottawa* 13 Apr (m.ob.). One at Holland Landing since 14 Feb (DKS et al.) was last seen 3 Mar. If not nesting, one at West Guilford, *Haliburton* 7 May (WG) was very late. Last of the wintering Boreal Owls at Amherst I. was a single bird 1 Mar (BY et al.),



This male Townsend's Warbler was a one-day wonder on 8 May 2009 at Rondeau Provincial Park, Chatham-Kent, providing a fourth local record and thirteenth for Ontario. Photograph by Gary A. Houghton.

while singles were found dead 3 Mar in *Manitoulin* in Honora (GF) and Little Current (CT). An ad. Northern Saw-whet Owl with 3 owlets 17 Apr (JPI, DPi) was an unexpected nesting record for Fort Erie, *Niagara*. A singing male Chuck-will's-widow at Old Cut, Long Point 28 Apr (YSA, SIM) was a record-early spring migrant for Ontario and the only report this season. A singing male Whip-poor-will 30 Apr–14 May at Pelee Island (MVAB, KGB et al.) was thought to be on territory, which is exceptional for Essex.

## SWIFTS THROUGH WAXWINGS

Quite remarkable was a male Black Swift at Point Pelee on 17–18 May, which repeatedly flew low over the Visitor Centre where it was photographed (EWH, BRH, SKH, LFR et al.). Another large, dark swift 12 May at the Tip of Long Point was also reported as a Black Swift (and also photographed), but the observers acknowledged that similar tropical or Palearctic species could not be eliminated (RWW, PT, JJ, JBF). There is only one prior record of Black Swift for Ontario—at the Tip of Long Point 21 May 2006 (see *Ontario Birds* 26: 199–202, 2008). The chimney at the Sault Ste. Marie Courthouse hosted a significant 1500–2000 Chimney Swifts during mid- to late May (JRAL et al.), and many were regularly preyed by local Herring Gulls; but not far away a single bird at South Baymouth 13 May (CTB, RT, DR) was the first *Manitoulin* record since 2005. A Red-headed Woodpecker at Bracebridge 13–14 May (TG et al.) was a locally rare sighting for *Muskoka*. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Silver Islet 28 Mar (WSC) was very early for *Thunder Bay*. A male American Three-toed Woodpecker at Thunder Cape 20 May (ARS, JMW, MEW, SLS) was presumably a late spring migrant, as suitable breeding habitat is not present at this site. A Pileated Woodpecker at Long Point P.P. and Courtright Ridge 28 Apr (RR, KGB et al.) was only the 4th record ever for the Long Point

peninsula. An Eastern Wood-Pewee at Rondeau P.P. 26 Apr (BAM) was early, as was an Acadian Flycatcher at Point Pelee 29 Apr (BRH, LFR); another Acadian at Toronto Islands 29 May (DDB) was rare for *Toronto*. On 10 May, a Say's Phoebe was at Squaw Bay (Pass Lake), *Thunder Bay* (JB), about the 9th record for n. Ontario. A Western Kingbird at Thunder Cape 14 May (JMW, MEW, SLS, ARS) was the only one reported. An Eastern Kingbird at Cornwall in far e. Ontario 3 Apr (BLM) was record early for

the province and was undoubtedly related to the fallout of exceptional early migrants in the Maritime Provinces and Northeast starting 4 Apr, which also included this species. A very early Scissor-tailed Flycatcher delighted observers 30 Apr–3 May at Long Sault Parkway, *Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry* (JK et al.), and another was found at Tehkummah, *Manitoulin* 20–22 May (AJA et al.). The nesting Loggerhead Shrikes at Newburgh, *Lennox and Addington* numbered five pairs 27 Mar+ (KH). On 15 May, a Bell's Vireo was at Point Pelee (GJDP et al.), a first local record since 2004 of this very rare visitor to the province. East of the permanent populations in western *Rainy River*, single Black-billed Magpies were found along L. Superior at *Thunder Bay* mid-Apr–2 May (m.ob.) and w. of Nipigon in mid-May (FJJ).

Common Ravens at the extreme s. edge of their range were seen at Pinery P.P., *Lambton* 28 Mar (RDT) and at Waterloo, *Waterloo* 5 Apr (KRR), a 9th local record. A nesting at Woodlands Park, *Toronto* (m.ob.) was unsuccessful but was the first attempt within the city boundaries since about the 1840s (*vide* RBHS). On 8 & 25 May, a pair of Northern Rough-winged Swallows was at a nest cavity

along Hwy. 60 (28 km marker) in Algonquin P.P. (JP), a first nesting attempt for the park, where the species has been very rare since 1995 (*vide* RGT). Single Tufted Titmouse observations at or beyond the species' range in s. Ontario included one at Wasaga Beach, *Simcoe* 19 Mar–6 May (SAMr) and another along Lake Opinicon Rd., *Frontenac* 20 May (JM, BMC). "Hundreds" of Red-breasted Nuthatches picking up gravel (salt?) along Hwy. 593 in extreme sw. *Thunder Bay* 14 Mar (JHA, ERA) must have made an impressive sight. A wintering Carolina Wren noted since Jan well n. at South Goulais R., *Algoma* was last reported 27 Apr (*vide* KAM). A very late Golden-crowned Kinglet was at Point Pelee 19 May (DM, KM). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at South Baymouth, *Manitoulin* 28 Apr (RT, CTB) was both rare and early for that location; another north-of-range individual was present at Sault Ste. Marie 18–19 May (DMB), a local first. A male Mountain Bluebird was at Eton-Rugby, *Kenora* 23–24 May (BGra); this rare species seems to be appearing less frequently in the province. The 2 Townsend's Solitaires wintering at Parry Sound, *Parry Sound* continued into the spring season, with both noted on 13 Mar and one remaining through 23 Mar (*vide* BT). Another was seen at Kagawong, *Manitoulin* 5–24 Mar (RT et al.). The 17 Gray-checked Thrushes counted at Point Pelee 26 Apr (STP, DHL et al.) was exceptional for the early date. A wintering Varied Thrush noted since 17 Dec at Watsons Corners, *Lanark* (KD et al.) was last seen 18 Mar, while another since 2 Feb at Napanee, *Lennox and Addington* (SP et al.) was last seen 15 Mar. One was observed at Bowmanville, *Durham* 18 Mar only (OP), presumably a migrant. A Northern Mockingbird at Pukaskwa N.P. (Oiseau Bay), *Thunder Bay* 28 May (JWH, MLA) was a bit unusual for L. Superior. Late concentrations of Bohemian Waxwings were 200 birds at Westport, *Leeds and Grenville* 8 Apr (N.L.B.)

**SA** It appears that **Fish Crow** is destined to colonize the Lower Great Lakes. The first Ontario occurrence was in 1978 at Point Pelee, but now 16 records have accumulated and all are restricted to the n. shore of L. Erie from Point Pelee to Long Point. All have been spring migrants, but 2 birds in 1999 at Point Pelee remained into summer, and breeding was suspected. It has always been assumed that Ontario Fish Crows originate from the Mississippi R. drainage, but occurrences in nearby states have been slow to materialize. For example, Indiana did not record its first Fish Crow until 1991, and occurrences there have been limited to just five counties (Kenneth J. Brock, pers. comm.). Michigan recorded its first Fish Crow just this spring in *Berrien* (2009) along the Indiana border, and throughout the summer, multiple birds were present and presumably nested (Allen T. Chartier, pers. comm.). What is most peculiar, however, is that Ohio still lacks any record (William D. Whan, pers. comm.), even though one could expect the species to occasionally occur in that state along L. Erie or the Ohio River. The saga continues. For a detailed account of this species arriving from the Atlantic Seaboard to colonize the Finger Lakes Region of New York State—where Fish Crow was first recorded in 1974—one is referred to the excellent paper by Wells and McGowan (1991) in *The Kingbird* 41: 73–81.

Ontario occurrences this spring included a single at the Tip of Long Point 21 Apr (SAM, RWW et al.), 2 together at Point Pelee 26 Apr (STP, DHL et al.), and one at Rondeau P.P. 30 Apr (JL).



Every spring, a dozen or two Summer Tanagers are found in Ontario as overshooting migrants, but nesting has never been confirmed in the province. This bird, apparently a well-marked female, was at Point Pelee on 11-12 (here 12) May 2009. Photograph by Nathan D. Beaulne.

and 240 birds at Ottawa 15 Apr (MB), and late birds were one at the Torrance Barrens, Muskoka 28 Apr (GDB et al.) and 2 at Darlington P.P. 9 May (TH).

### WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS

A Blue-winged Warbler at Indian Point 3 May (CTB, RT, JDi) marked the first Manitoulin record since 2004. Early but not record-early warblers in Toronto included a Blue-winged Warbler 27 Apr (NCM, MVL) and an Ovenbird 24 Apr (NCM, ALA) at Toronto Is.; a Tennessee Warbler at Etobicoke 26 Apr (GVR); and four species at Leslie St. Spit: a Yellow Warbler 20 Apr (SMF), a Chestnut-sided Warbler 27 Apr (SMF), 3 Cape May Warblers 26 Apr (HGC et al.), and a Worm-eating Warbler 25 Apr (fide GCP). A Yellow Warbler at Thicksons Woods, Durham 18 Apr (GCo) was also very early. In Peel, a Prairie Warbler at Clarkson 25 Apr (DEP et al.) was rare and early, and one at Charleston Lake P.P., Leeds and Grenville 26 May (MVAB, CR, EBk) provided a first park record since 1978. The 700 Yellow-rumped Warblers at Pelee Island 1 May (MVAB, KGB) was a high count. A male Audubon's Warbler at Eton-Rugby 10 May (MG) was a local first for the Dryden Area. A male Townsend's Warbler 8 May at Rondeau P.P. (GG, BG, MCo, SG et al.) represents a 4th local record and 13th for Ontario. The 6 Yellow-throated Warblers reported this spring were spread widely across the south: one at Sault Ste. Marie 23-24 Apr (JO) was a local first; singles were at Point Pelee 24 Apr (LMon, LR), 29 Apr (JMT, EPL, RJC et al.), and 3 May (MCh, LjN); one at Etobicoke 30 Apr (MLi); and one at Round L., Frontenac 4 May (fide MC). Kirtland's Warbler is now an annual spring migrant in s. Ontario, with individuals found this season in a narrow window: 9 May at Pelee Island (MEB, JH, AH), 13 May at Point Pelee (SBeau et al.), 15 May at

Rondeau P.P. (AJB, SB), and 17 May at L. Manitou, Manitoulin (THa). On 25 Apr, a very early Bay-breasted Warbler was at Point Pelee numbered 8 birds 27 Apr-13 May (m.ob.), while Pelee Island tallied 8+ birds 26 Apr+, with one or more remaining on territory (fide ACP); scattered individuals were reported elsewhere, including one well n. at Carnarvon, Haliburton 18 May (JD). Point Pelee recorded 9 Worm-eating Warblers 27 Apr-28 May (m.ob.), with one on the last date (BRH) being locally record late. Scattered individuals were recorded elsewhere, the most significant being singles at Kingston 25 Apr (EBa, AS), at Prince Edward Pt. 29 Apr (MB, DO), at Thicksons Woods 3 May (m.ob.), and at Darlington P.P. 9 May (TH). Kentucky Warblers at Point Pelee numbered 7 birds 24 Apr-15 May, about normal (m.ob.), and 4 were found at Rondeau during May (fide BAM); scattered individuals were found elsewhere, including at Port Credit 9 May (WER). A Yellow-breasted Chat 23 May at Chaffeys Locks, Leeds and Grenville (MC) was in an area where the species is known to breed.

Wayward Summer Tanagers in n. Ontario were first-spring males at Atikokan 8-9 May (TjN et al.) and at Thunder Bay 19-20 May (GAW et al.). Point Pelee logged 9 birds during 25 Apr-24 May (m.ob.), Long Point 5+ birds 27 Apr+ (L.P.B.O.), Pelee Island 5+ birds 3-9 May (MVAB, KGB), and scattered individuals were widespread elsewhere in the extreme s., including one 10 May at Prince Edward Pt. (DO). Western Tanager is now an annual spring visitor to n. Ontario, where birds invariably appear at feeders; 6 this spring was rather outlandish: one at Harris Hill, Rainy River 11-15 May (CAEG, GRLG), one at Kenora, Kenora 12 May-4 Jun (WRZ et al.), one at Thunder Bay 19-20 May (GAW et al.), one at Dryden 21 May (JM), and 2 at Longlac, Thunder Bay in late May (MRE et al.). In the s., one was found at Mississagi Light, Manitoulin 22 May (CTB).

### SPARROWS THROUGH BUNTINGS

The Spotted Towhee wintering at Point Pelee since 11 Nov (AW et al.) was last reported 26 Mar, the longest-staying bird of about 24 records for the province. A wintering male Eastern Towhee since November at Carnarvon Township, Manitoulin (WC et al.) was last seen 16 Apr, and another n. of range was at Sault Ste. Marie 11-12 Apr (KO). Northern Ontario had a flurry of Lark Sparrows in late May, with singles at Cameron Falls, Thunder Bay 28 May (KOJ), at Rainy River 29 May (JEVDB), and at Thunder Cape 31 May+ (JMW, MEW, SLS, ARS). In the s., there was another string of occurrences, but earlier: singles at Long Point Tip 5 Apr (DJR); at Prince Edward Pt. 25 Apr (KF, M. Burge et al.); at Tyneside, Haldimand 27 Apr-2 May (RL et al.); at Pelee Island 4 May (ACP); at Point Pelee 7 (CCI) & 14 May (BB, LR); and at Walsingham, Norfolk 16-17 May (MTT et al.). Single male Lark Buntings were found at Amherst I. 27 May (BMDL), the 3rd record for the Kingston Area, and at the Tip of Long Point 31 May (RWW). A Grasshopper Sparrow at Thunder Cape 21 May (JMW, MEW, SLS, ARS) was one of few records for n. Ontario. Migrant Henslow's Sparrows at Point Pelee were singles 17 Apr (MI), 25 Apr (STP, BAM et al.), and 1 May (WGL, AW et al.), which were the only reports. A Le Conte's Sparrow at Darlington P.P. 14 May (TH, GV) was rare that far east. Two Lincoln's Sparrows at Leslie St. Spit 26 Apr (HGC et al.) were early for Toron-



Not in normal habitat, this stunning male Smith's Longspur was found 20 May 2009 on an exposed beach along the north shore of Lake Superior at the Wolf River mouth, Thunder Bay District, Ontario. Photograph by Michael G. Bryan.

to. On 24 Apr, an estimated 5000 White-throated Sparrows were at Point Pelee N.P. (FJU). Notable flocks of Lapland Longspur in the s. were 300 birds at Erie Beach, Chatham-Kent 24 Mar (JTB) and 500 at Tapleystown, Hamilton 9-11 Apr (JEH et al.), with one there 23 May (RZD, DRD, CEE) being record late for H.S.A.; another very late bird was seen at Barrhaven, Ottawa 25 May (RWA). Always hard to find during migration, a male



Smith's Longspur at the Wolf R. mouth 20 May (NGE, SCB, MGB) was the only report. A definitive male Chestnut-collared Longspur caught and banded at Thunder Cape 30 May (JMW, MEW, SLS, ARS) made the 6th record for Ontario.

An isolated population of Northern Cardinal (one or two pairs) continues to be present at Marathon, *Thunder Bay*, confirmed by a male singing there 28 May (AW); a female at Lerome Lake, *Rainy River* 7 May (MK) was also well north. On 27 Apr, an early Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at South Baymouth, *Manitoulin* (DR). The 7 Blue Grosbeaks found in s. Ontario were far more than usual: a female at Point Pelee 27 Apr (BRH, LFR), female at Long Point's Courtright Ridge 28 Apr (AA, HMJ), first-spring male at Dealtown, *Chatham-Kent* 6 May (AW), a definitive male at Wyoming, *Lambton* 10 May (DMF), a first-spring male at Point Pelee 14 May (MWH, JAH et al.), a female at Point Pelee 19 May (DJM et al.), and a definitive male at Sault Ste. Marie 26-31 May+ (WHE). Of greater significance was a definitive female banded at Thunder Cape 19-20 May (JMW, MEW, SLS, ARS, REB), one of few records for n. Ontario. A first-spring male Lazuli Bunting at Crooks, *Thunder Bay* 31 May+ (SEI, RII et al.) was the 9th Ontario record; all records pertain to spring migrants, with the exception of a previously unpublished summer record of a territorial definitive male Jul-Aug 2008 at Candy Mt., *Thunder Bay* (RLZ). Flashy male Painted Buntings were found at Brantford, *Brant* 28-30 Apr (DAF) and at Clarksburg, *Grey* 17 May (PN), the former a first record for H.S.A. Other than the single Dickcissel at Pelee Island (see introduction), a male at Atikokan 12-13 May (FK, JKim) was, surprisingly, the only other report for the whole province.

## BLACKBIRDS THROUGH FINCHES

In the s., the only reported Western Meadowlarks were singles at the Tip of Long Point 6 Apr and 18 Apr (L.P.B.O.) and at Point Pelee 5 May (KAMcL, RLW, GBM). Five male Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Mitchell's Bay, *Chatham-Kent* 13 May (JRC, VLC) almost certainly indicates local breeding in the adjacent marshes of Lake St. Clair. In the n., out-of-range singles were found in *Thunder Bay* at Rosspoint 24-25 May (DJS), at Manitouwadge 24-26 May (TBH), at Otter Cove in Pukaskwa N.P. 26 May (JWH, MLA), at Longlac in mid-May (2; FJJ), while in *Kenora*, singles were found at Sioux Lookout 23 Apr (ML) and at Waldhof 15 May (JAB). A Rusty Blackbird successfully wintered in the n. at Heron Bay, *Thunder Bay* (WM). The 5250 Rusties over

the Richmond Fen, *Ottawa* 30 Apr (JHS) was a very high count for this species. In the extreme s., sightings of Brewer's Blackbirds were few, with singles at Erieau 5 Apr (JTB, KJB) and also Long Point Tip 3 Apr, 6-7 Apr, and 4 May (L.P.B.O.). With just two prior Orchard Oriole records for *Thunder Bay* (1986 and 1994), 5 there this spring is indicative of the ongoing northward expansion of the species; singles were found at Nipigon 14-15 May (GC), at Thunder Cape 20 May (SLS, JMW, MEW, ARS), at Geraldton 21-25 May (LFZ), at Thunder Cape 23 May (ARS, JMW, MEW, SLS), and at Terrace Bay 29 May (AW).

Two Pine Grosbeaks at Hillman Marsh 17 Mar (PSB, IMR) was a locally rare sighting for Point Pelee in the deep s. of the province. On 24 Apr, there were still 36 White-winged Crossbills at Stratford, *Perth* (AMJ), and 2 were at Long Point (Gravelly Bay) 14 May (SAM), which suggests local nesting. The 2+ Common Redpolls flying over Wilson Tract, *Norfolk* 22 May (RR) were extremely tardy and record late for the Long Point Area. Lingering Hoary Redpolls in the s. included one at Kingston 13 Mar (MC), one at Presqu'île P.P. 21 Mar (FMH), 2 at Constance Bay, *Ottawa* 24 Mar (JHS), one at Algonquin P.P. Visitor Centre 11 Apr (CMH et al.), and one particularly late bird at Wallaceburg, *Chatham-Kent* 15-16 Apr (BAM). On 2 Apr, a rare Greenland Hoary Redpoll (nominate *hornemanni* subspecies) was at Fonthill, *Niagara* (KJR, DRoy). Pine Siskin was abundant at many locations, but their movements were complex. In the s., many lingered after the huge, peculiar influx that materialized in Jan, and these were supplemented by spring migrants that began arriving in late Apr. Nesting birds were detected at numerous locations (s. to London), presumably derived from wintering birds that had been present for months. In n. Ontario, spring migrants passed through in massive numbers, peaking late in the season. In late May, hundreds were visiting bird feeders at every town along the n. shore of L. Superior in *Thunder Bay* (AW), and Thunder Cape B.O. banded an astounding 4732 siskins during their spring session (more than 50% of all birds banded). Evening Grosbeak continues to be remarkably scarce across the province, for reasons that are largely unknown. Only a single bird (16 Apr) was reported in the Kingston Area, and a visit across the entire n. shore of L. Superior 26 May-5 Jun (AW) failed to record the species; on 1 May, a single female was at Long Point's Old Cut (YSA, JBF).



This female Orchard Oriole on 29 May 2009 at Terrace Bay, Ontario was one of five birds found this spring in Thunder Bay District, an area that previously had only two known occurrences. Photograph by Alon Wormington.

Exotics and escapees: A male Common Chaffinch was at Thunder Cape 4 May (JMW, JRB, MEW, SLS). Single European Goldfinches were found at West Lorne, *Elgin* 10 Mar-12 Apr (CM, PM), at Marathon 15 Apr (CCV), at Gore Bay, *Manitoulin* 5-6 May (LT), and at Long Point's Courtright Ridge 22 May, with a different bird there 30 May (EP, AE, MKa). A photographed Harris's Hawk 25 Mar at Bass Lake P.P., *Simcoe* (TW) is problematic, as the species is regularly kept in captivity but birds considered wild have been recorded as far n. as Ohio.

Corrigenda: The Blue Grosbeak at Longlac 23 May 2007 (*North American Birds* 61: 436-437) was actually present 22-23 May. The Western Tanager sightings last spring at Pass Lake, *Thunder Bay* (*North American Birds* 62: 401) were later determined to be 2 different birds (both first-spring males) as follows: one 24-27 Apr 2008 (Douglas D. Thomas) and the other 27 Apr-6 May 2008 (Julie Welsh et al.).

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# Eastern Highlands & Upper Ohio River Valley



**Victor W. Fazio, III**  
**Gabe Leidy**  
**Rick Wiltraut**

If there was a theme to this spring, it was one of migrant concentrations. In what was close to an average phenology with few exceptions, several record counts and/or widespread flights stood out. Weather is an integral part of such concentrations of migrants, so too the very rapid communication among birders, which permits close examination of a passage or fallout of a species. Changes in bird populations and the shifting use of flyways and habitat mean that our counts of birds are always in flux. The degradation or outright loss of key habitat, whether for migratory stopovers or breeding, reduces bird populations in the long run but may serve, in the short term, to concentrate some species into fewer locations: the Special Attention box on gulls within the Ohio interior is a good example of XXX. We urge birders to continue documenting such concentrations, and especially to continue providing deep context for observations, so that we may better understand changes in our avifauna.

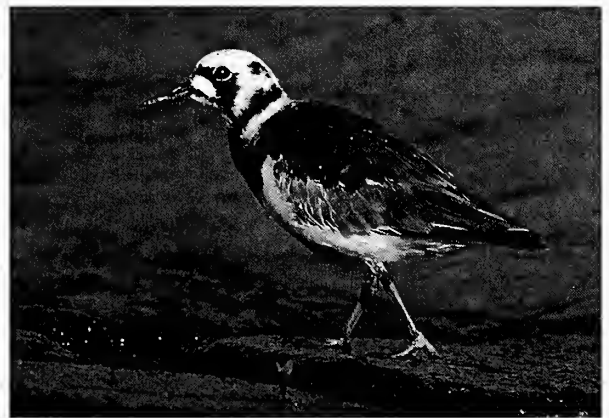
Abbreviations/locations: Berlin L. (*Stark/Portage/Mahoning*, OH); B.S.B.O. (Black Swamp B.O.); Buck Creek (Buck Creek S.P., *Clark*, OH); Byrd Dam (Robert C. Byrd Lock & Dam, *Mason*, WV); Caesar Creek (Caesar Creek S.P., *Warren/Greene*, OH); Conneaut (Conneaut Harbor, *Ashtabula*, OH); Deer Creek (Deer Creek W.M.A. and S.P., *Fayette/Pickaway*, OH); Funk Bottoms (Funk Bottoms W.M.A., *Ashland/Wayne* OH); Green Bottom (Green Bottom W.M.A., *Cabell*, WV); Headlands (Headlands Beach S.P., Headlands State Nature Preserve, and Mentor Marsh/Lagoons, *Lake*, OH); Hoover (Hoover Res., *Delaware and Franklin*, OH); J.H.N.W.R. (John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia/Delaware*, PA); Killbuck (Killbuck Marsh W.M.A., *Wayne/Holmes*, OH); Killdeer Plains (Killdeer Plains W.M.A., *Wayne/Holmes*, OH); Magee (Magee Marsh W.M.A., *Lucas/Ottawa*, OH); Metzger (Metzger Marsh W.M.A., *Lucas*, OH); M.C.W.M. (Middle Creek W.M.A., *Lancaster/Lebanon*, PA); Ottawa (Ottawa N.W.R., *Lucas/Ottawa*, OH); Presque

Isle (Presque Isle S.P., *Erie*, PA); S.R.C.F. (Susquehanna R. at Conejohela Flats, *Lancaster*, PA); T.M.H. (Tussey Mt. hawkwatch, *Huntingdon/Centre*, PA).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH VULTURES

The 122 Greater White-fronted Geese, a strong showing in Ohio, included 42 at Mercer W.A., *Mercer* 7 Mar (RA), 32 in *Hardin* 18 Mar (RC), and up to 14 in *Holmes* (H. Mason et al.). In *Berks*, PA, 12 at three locations 3 Mar–9 Apr may have involved two subspecies, *frontalis* and *flavirostris* (RK). Other Greater White-fronted Geese in Pennsylvania were in *Beaver*, *Franklin*, *Lehigh*, *Chester*, *Bucks*, *Montgomery*, and *Lancaster* (m.ob.). Snow Goose passage through Ohio peaked with a flock of 150 in se. *Wayne* 11 Mar (Reuben Miller), while one lingered in the sw. in *Preble* 17 May (B. Wulker). The Regional peak of 100,000 also came 10–11 Mar at M.C.W.M.A. (CC et al.). Seven Ross's Geese at Cowan Lake S.P., *Clinton* 13 Mar (RA, LG) was a high count for Ohio, where additional reports included 2 in *Clark* 22–27 Mar (DO, RLY, m.ob.), with singles in *Delaware* 1 Mar (SWI), *Hardin* 8–11 Apr (RC), and *Tuscarawas* 25 Apr (ph. G. Benish), the latter a first county record. Notable were singles at *Muse*, *Washington*, PA 17–21 Mar (C. Campsey et al.), and in *Jefferson*, WV 30 Mar (E. Kirshbaum, MO). Additional Pennsylvania singles were noted across *Lancaster*, *Berks*, *Chester*, and *Northampton* (m.ob.). Ohio Cackling Goose reports fell within the norm of 4 birds in Mar, while 6 at *Struble* L., *Chester*, PA 9 Mar (LL) was the Regional high count. Tundra Swan high counts included 368 at *Ottawa* N.W.R., *Ottawa*, OH 1 Mar (D. Vogus) and 260 at *Akron*, *Summit* 11 Mar (G. Bennett). In Pennsylvania, 1900 Tundra Swans were on the Susquehanna R., *Lancaster* 5–10 Mar (CC), and 1731 was a seasonal tally at T.M.H. (JK, NB). The peak of 3600 came 5–10 Mar at M.C.W.M.A. (CC et al.). A flock of 400+ American Black Ducks in *Highland* 8 Mar (JyS) was accompanied by 700 Mallards. There were 130 Northern Shovelers, 180 Northern Pintails, and 250 Green-winged Teal at *Big Island* W.M.A., *Marion* 16 Mar (JMc). The spring flight of Eurasian Wigeon (Table 1) was the strongest on record. A subspecies of annual Regional occurrence, a Eurasian Teal was at *Hidden* L., *Bucks*, PA 9 Mar–24 Apr (B. Keim). Noteworthy inland Ohio tallies of Canvasback

included 100 at *Grand* L., *St. Mary's*, *Auglaize/Mercer* 8 Mar (JBo) and 200 at *Deer Creek* the following day (RR). That same flight produced 200 at *L. Arthur*, *Butler*, PA 8 Mar (D. Darney) and 600 at *Pymatuning* L., *Crawford*, PA 9 Mar (SKi). A good count of 2500 Redheads was made at *Deer Creek* 9 Mar (RR), and 650 were at *Metzger* 9 Mar (KK). Better counts of Ring-necked Ducks were 429 at *Green Lane* Res., *Montgomery*, PA 11 Mar (G. Francois) and 700 at *Pymatuning* L., *Crawford*, PA 9 Mar (SKi); one tarried in *Wetzel*, WV 9 May (WJ). The 2500 Lesser Scaup at *Deer Creek* 9 Mar (RR) and 650 at *Pleasant Hill* L., *Ashland*, OH 14 Mar (SS) marked an average w. migration. Recovering numbers of Greater Scaup could be seen in the 671 around *Kelley's I.*, *Erie* OH 21 Mar (TB, Sandy Tkach). A late Greater Scaup accompanied a Lesser off *Pipe Creek* W.M.A., *Erie*, OH 16 May (GLy). The main Ohio Surf Scoter migration late Mar–ear-



Providing just the fifth record for Allegheny County, Pennsylvania was this Ruddy Turnstone, which spent 25 May 2009 feeding along the bank of the Allegheny River behind PNC Park. Another turnstone was seen the same day 13 kilometers upriver on the Allegheny. Photograph by Geoff Malosh.

ly Apr saw an average of 28 birds reported, with one lingering at *Grand* L., *St. Mary's*, *Auglaize/Mercer* 14 May (MM). A remarkable 30 White-winged Scoters, most inland, highlighted this w. scoter passage. Inland, 4 were at *Caesar Creek* 7 Mar (B. Lacker) and three-somes in *Warren* 9 Mar (RA, J. Habig, S. Egleston), *Clark* 5 Apr (RA), and *Wayne* 19 & 28 Mar (BG, SS). Two White-winged Scoters at *Peace Valley* Park, *Bucks*, PA 27 May (AM) and one in *Mason*, WV 3 May (MO) were late. Noteworthy were 5 Black Scoters in *Forest*, PA 9 May (F. McGuire) and 2 on the *Shenandoah* R., *Jefferson*, WV 20 Apr (MO). Some 30 Ohio Long-tailed Ducks were reported, most from inland locales, with a high count of 9 at *Piedmont* L., *Belmont/Harrison* 19 Mar (BG), while 35 were on the *Susquehanna* R., *Lancaster*, PA 14 Apr (CC). Buffleheads staged a good early Apr flight, when G. Bennett tallied 860+ at 11

**Table 1.** Records Eurasian Wigeon from Ohio and Pennsylvania, spring 2009.

Date	Location	Observer(s)
Feb-4 Mar	Octoraro L., Lancaster, PA	<i>vide</i> SK
6 Mar	Delaware, OH	CB
8 Mar	M.C.W.M.A., PA	D. Stoner et al.
6-9 Mar	Killbuck, Wayne, OH	H. & K. Ostermiller, ph. E. cornelius
7-9 Mar	Clinton, OH	JLh, m.ob.
15 Mar	Custards, Crawford, PA	RL
17-21 Mar	Metzger, OH	PC, KK
2 Mar-8 Apr	Killdeer Plains, Wyandot, OH	M. & S. Reifsnnyder, m.ob.
23-24 Mar	Black Swamp, Lawrence, PA	B. VanNewkirk
24 Mar-11 Apr	Hardin, OH	RC
Feb-9 Apr	L. Ontelaunee, Berks, PA	RK
9-11 Apr	Seneca/Hancock, OH	RSs, B. & J. Cullen
10-16 Apr	Seneca, OH	B. & J. Cullen, KM
9-10 May	Wayne, OH	A. E. Yoder et al., JFY et al.

ne. Ohio lakes 6 Apr. The 824 Common Goldeneyes counted from Kelley's I. 20 Mar (TB) and the passage of 6946 Red-breasted Mergansers in Lake, OH 28 Mar (JP) were typical seasonal peaks for L. Erie. A Common Goldeneye at Presque Isle 25 May was late (M. Birdsong), as was a Red-breasted Merganser in Clermont, OH 25 May (A. Scruggs), and 2 Red-breasted at S.R.C.F. 31 May (BS). Hooded Mergansers were confirmed breeding in Pennsylvania in York (R. Clearly), Lawrence (M. Vass), and Northampton (M. Sabatine).

A Northern Bobwhite took up residence at a small, restored prairie outside the COSI museum in downtown Columbus, OH 25-26 May (J. Tinianow). Eight Red-throated Loons passed through Ohio, all singles, save 2 at Clear Fork Res., Richland/Morrow 28 Mar-2 Apr (RHr, BG, Greg Miller, m.ob.). Another 19 were reported 10 Mar-9 May in Pennsylvania. A seasonal total of 668 Common Loons was tallied at T.M.H. (JK, NB). Red-necked Grebes staged a strong flight through Ohio, with 37 birds reported in all; 7 were at Tappan L., Harrison 19 Mar (BG), and a wayward bird at Cuyahoga Valley N.P., Summit 21-22 Mar (D. Vogus) was a first for the national park. Equally impressive were 75+ across 24 Pennsylvania counties 1 Mar-17 Apr; a high count of 11 came from the Susquehanna R., Lancaster 28 Mar (JH). The fallout spilled into West Virginia, where 3 each were at Byrd Dam 26 Mar (WA) and on the Shenandoah R., Jefferson 20 Mar (MO). An Eared Grebe lingered at a "sky pond" in Bellevue, Sandusky 25 Mar-26 Apr (BC, JLh, m.ob.), with another joining it 27 Apr (VF). Another was on Pleasant Hill L., Ashland, OH 14 Mar (KKI). The highest tally of Horned Grebe in Pennsylvania was 60 on Keystone Res., Armstrong 19 Mar (M. & R. Higbee). An imm. Brown Pelican, possibly a pre-

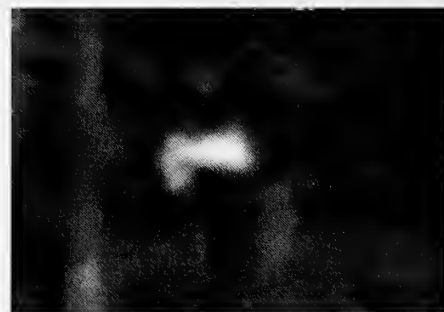
cursor to the summer influx, was well described from Winfield, Putnam, WV 9 May (CE). Apart from a wintering bird present through 6 Mar at Grand L., Auglaize/Mercer (JBo), this was the weakest flight in years for American White Pelicans in Ohio; singles were at Hoover 19-28 Mar (CB), at Clear Fork Res., Morrow/Richland 21-22 Mar and 8 Apr (GCo et al.), and at Magee 14 May (J. O'Callaghan). The 600 Double-crested Cormorants over Shawnee Lookout, Hamilton 18 Apr (JyS), an excellent spring count from sw. Ohio, was surpassed by the 1500 on Clear Fork Res., Morrow/Richland, OH 11 Apr (JFY), possibly a state record count for an inland reservoir.

Although the species is in decline Regionally, reports of American Bittern were especially widespread, with 17 across Ohio and more than 30 from Pennsylvania. In Ohio, 15 Snowy Egrets were counted at Magee 21 Apr (J. Witter). Singles were noted inland to Hamilton 2 May (NC) and Auglaize 14 May (MM), with 4 at Killbuck 27 Apr (KKI). Singles at Presque Isle 1 May (R. Hollebeck) and in Mason, WV 30 Apr-3 May (MO, M. Griffith) were less expected. Two Little Blue Herons were early arrivals at Magee 2-4 Apr (T. Kellogg). Elsewhere, Ohio birds numbered 3 at Killbuck 30 Apr-3 May (*vide* BG, GL), with singles in Montgomery 2 May (RA, S. Egleston), at Mogadore Res., Portage 6 May (KM), and Armler Park, Hamilton 8 May (FF). In the e. highlands, individuals reached Jefferson, WV 25 Apr (L. Prillaman), Bucks, PA 27 Apr (AM), and Chester, PA 8 May (LL, KF). Cattle Egret high counts included 15 at Arrowhead Business Park, Lucas, OH 28 Apr (*vide* J. Habig) and 8 at Killbuck 30 Apr (Allen Troyer), the latter a high count for the Allegheny foothills. Three were in Bucks, PA 9-6 May (*vide* AM). A Glossy Ibis at Plains Flats, Luzerne, Pa 22-23 Apr was unusual for the locale (K. Ripka), and a high of 11 was seen near Topton, Berks, PA 24 Apr (P. Saenger). At least 10 other Glossies were reported in Pennsylvania, most in late May (m.ob.). Black Vultures continue expanding, despite state-approved control measures. Groups of 5 were in Mason, WV 12 Apr (GR), and over the Ohio Turnpike near Sandusky, Erie 8 May (C. Martin).

## RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

In Pennsylvania, Mississippi Kites were found at Breezyview Overlook, Lancaster 29-31 May

(CC, D. Hoffman et al.), where up to were 2 present, and singles were at Pennsy Swamp, Mercer 13 May (R. Nugent, M. Little), Blue Marsh L., Berks 14 May (J. Silagy), and Promised Land S.P., Pike 23 May (K. Loughlin); one was over n. Coshocton, OH 26 Apr (DHY et al.). An early Swallow-tailed Kite at Presque Isle 21 Apr (ph. JM) was a local first for this migrant trap and one of very few L. Erie records in the United States. We have been reporting on the remarkable spring raptor counts from Conneaut for several years. Yet those numbers would not have prepared one for the flight of 24 Apr, when 590 Sharpshinned Hawks, 2 Northern Goshawks, 5687 Broad-winged Hawks, 2 Swainson's Hawks, 97 American Kestrels, 12 Merlins, and 9 Peregrine Falcons were tallied; more than 6600 raptors on the day. Additional Ohio goshawks passed through Geauga 15 Mar (B. Baber, EB), Conneaut 24 Mar (EB), and Lake 25 Apr (JP). A few km farther e. along the shoreline, the new hawkwatch at Presque Isle produced counts of 3264 Broad-winged Hawks 21 Apr and 3347 on 24 Apr (JM); an albino was studied there 2 Apr (JM). Nest-building Northern Harriers were observed in Ashtabula, OH 29 Apr (CH), and another pair was in Pickaway, OH 30 May (RLy). The count of 170 Red-shouldered Hawks at Conneaut 17 Mar (BG) was a sign of the species' recovery. A solid passage of Golden Eagles through Ohio included up to 2 at Killdeer Plains 1-22 Mar (C. Witt, J. Davis, BWh, m.ob.), 5 migrants past Magee



A long-awaited first for the extreme southwestern corner of Pennsylvania was this Little Gull, one of three that appeared at Ambridge Reservoir, Beaver County during a substantial fallout of Bonaparte's Gulls in the area; at least 438 Bonaparte's were present at Ambridge Reservoir that same day. Photograph by Geoff Malosh.

28 Mar-22 Apr (PC, CK, L. Garling, J. Hubinger, C. Goulart), with singles over Cochoc-ton 18 Apr (DHY et al.), Holmes 18 Apr (KKI), and Conneaut 25 Apr (BG). Lingered birds in the West Virginia highlands included an ad. in Fayette 21 Apr (W. Perrone), one in Tucker 26 Apr (C. Rucker), and one at Grant 9 May (F. Atwood). A seasonal total of 200 at T.M.H., the 2nd highest there, was led by 37 on 18 Mar (JK, NB). Peregrine Falcons re-



Totally unexpected in northern Pennsylvania was this Snowy Owl that appeared on Pittsburgh's North Side 31 March 2009, here on top of a church a few blocks from Heinz Field. It was also seen at the U.S. Steel Building plaza and at Point State Park during its stay, which lasted through at least 6 April. Photograph by Geoff Malosh.

turned to the Parkersburg–Belpre Bridge over the Ohio R., where a chick was found in a nest 28 May (R. & J. Esker).

A King Rail was reported at Julian, Centre, PA 7 May (J. Lee), and one returned to Green Bottom 2 May (P. Drescher). A rail fallout at Killbuck 6 May included 72 Soras and 43 Virginia Rails (SWr, M. Weaver). Single Sandhill Cranes in West Virginia were at Green Bottom 6 Apr (WA) and Beech Fork S.P., Wayne 24 Apr (JN). Sizable concentrations of American Golden-Plovers this spring included 2000 in Marion, OH 22 Apr (TSh), 600+ at Ottawa, OH 20 Apr (PC), and 500+ in Logan, OH 18 Apr (BWh). Two in Berks, PA marked a first spring record there (K. Lebo, M. Wlasniewski). Ohio birders enjoyed a Piping Plover in Wayne near Funk Bottoms 2-4 May (*vide* BG, SS, m.ob.). One at Presque Isle 4 May was color-banded (K. Ryan). Another was sighted at Maumee Beach S.P., Lucas 6 May (B. Stanley). Black-necked Stilt pairs returned to Bellevue, Sandusky 28 Apr (DA) and near Killbuck Marsh 2 May (BG); singles were in Ottawa, OH 23-27 Apr (PC, Vic & Terry Machas) and near Annville, Lebanon, PA 15-18 May (R. Koury, ph. T. Johnson). A flock of 23 American Avocets dropped into Ottawa 25 Apr (GLy, JLh, SD), and singles were in Lorain 12-15 May (DA, Gly), in Fayette, PA 18 May (W. Shaffer), and at S.R.C.F. 10 May (BS, CC), where 2 had been 26 Apr (J. Book).

Early Spotted Sandpipers in Ohio were found at Paint Creek L., Ross 24 Mar (J. McMahon) and at Dillon S.P., Muskingum 5 Apr (M. Smith). Willets showed well in Ohio, with 43 at Killdeer Plains 2 May (D. Sanders) and 26 at Buck Creek 7 May (RA), while 36 at Presque Isle 1 May (JM), 6 at Moraine S.P., Butler (S. Tirone), and 4 at Fox Chapel, Allegheny 1 May (B. Shema) led Pennsylvania reports. Migrant Upland Sandpipers were encountered in Delaware, OH 18 Apr (SWi); in Madison, OH,

a nocturnal migrant was heard 5 May (AB). Three Upland Sandpipers were at Pymatuning L., Crawford, PA 24 Apr (JF). Whimbrels were largely missed, although 43 passed North Perry, Lake 21 May (JP). A rare spring Marbled Godwit was noted in Ottawa, OH 25-27 Apr (JLh, PC, m.ob.). The 117 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Armleder Park, Hamilton 14 May was surprising for sw. Ohio (RF, FF). A Western Sandpiper, rare in spring, was studied at Conneaut 26 May (CH). Three Least Sandpipers were in Hamilton, OH 5 Apr (B. Hull).

The 1450 Dunlins near Magee 27 Apr (VF) were early for such numbers. Normally limited to 2-3 in spring, an Ohio record flock of 11 Stilt Sandpipers was in Wayne 14 May (AHY et al.). Another 3 were in Hamilton 14 May (RF, FF). A molting Ruff sporting head plumes was discovered at Ottawa 20 Apr (BTe); it was last seen 22 Apr (S. Hites). Another male Ruff was at Ottawa 19-22 May (I. Campbell). Single Long-billed Dowitchers were noteworthy in Logan, OH 1 Apr (TSh), at Funk Bottoms 4 May (AHY et al.), and at Green Bottom 24 May (WA); 3 were in Ottawa 11 Apr (JP). A notable flight of Red-necked Phalaropes saw singles in Berkeley, WV 28 Apr (MO), in Philadelphia, PA 1 May (F. Windfelder), in Berks, PA 16-20 May (*vide* RK), at Ottawa 19 May (B. Tekin, J. Engel), at Green Bottom 26 May (WA), and in Crawford, PA 27 May (M. Weible).

After a winter visit by a first-cycle Black-legged Kittiwake, an ad. at Hoover 1-6 Mar (DSr, K. Davis & JD, K. Hall, m.ob.) represented another rare inland Ohio record. A Black-headed Gull passed North Perry, Lake, OH 18 Apr (JP), and 3 were on the Susquehanna R., including one in Dauphin 15 Mar (A. Markel) and singles in Lancaster 26 Mar (CC) and 10 Apr (JH). A flight of 2000+

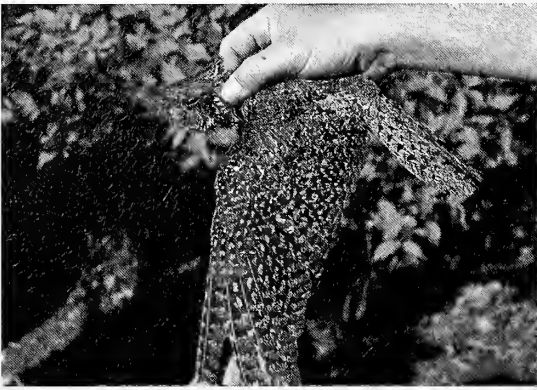
Bonaparte's Gulls in four sw. Pennsylvania counties 17 Apr was unusual (*vide* PH). While Little Gulls went unreported in Ohio this season, up to 6-7 were along the Susquehanna R., Lancaster, PA 28-29 Mar (JH, E. Witmer). Additional birds in Pennsylvania were at Peace Valley Park, Bucks 8 Mar (AM, J. Mirabella), Nockamixon S.P., Bucks 4-5 Apr (AM et al.), with 3 at Ambridge Res., Beaver 17 Apr (G. Malosh et al.). Laughing Gulls were at Magee 9 May (TB, JBr, m.ob.), Conneaut 18 May (CH), and in Montgomery, OH 25 May (RA). A Franklin's Gull in Wood 11 Apr (BC, JC) and 2 in Ottawa 20 Apr (PC) were the only Ohio reports.

A first-cycle Thayer's Gull and at least 6 Iceland Gulls were found at Oberlin Res., Lorain in early Mar (GLy, JMc), while one Iceland lingered in Ashtabula 18 May (CH). Nine Glaucous Gulls for the season within the Central Basin included 5 at Oberlin Res., Lorain 1 Mar (JMc). The 431 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Nockamixon L., Bucks, PA 23 Mar was among the higher counts for North America; only Virginia and Florida have higher counts. Twelve Great Black-backed Gulls at Oberlin Res., Lorain 1 Mar (JMc) made a notable tally away from the L. Erie shoreline. The 308 Caspian Terns passing along the L. Erie shoreline in Lake, OH 25 Apr (JP) was among higher such tallies. Two Arctic Terns were at S.C.R.F. 29-30 May (BS, CC, J. Book et al.). A flock of 65 Forster's Terns at Yellow Creek S.P., Indiana, PA 9 May (M. & E. Fowles) was a high concentration. Two Least Terns along the Delaware R., Delaware, PA 29 May (AG) were local rarities. Black Terns were reported from seven Ohio locales as singles/pairs with the exceptions of 9 at Metzger 14 May (MA), 7 near Medusa Marsh, Erie 18 May (GLy), and 4 in Holmes 10 May (SS).

## DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

The discovery of a Eurasian-Collared Dove nest on a grain elevator in Celina, Mercer OH 18 Apr (TSh and BWh) follows two years of

**SA**s in 2008, the annual overland flight of gulls in late Feb–mid-Mar through Ohio's interior drew special attention. When reservoirs are frozen during this window, the resulting large larid concentrations draw much attention from birders. This season's counts of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls were even higher than last season's, and there were strong numbers of white-winged and black-backed gulls away from L. Erie as well. The 10,000+ Ring-billed Gulls at Hoover 1 Mar (DSr, Rly) set a new state inland record, and 5000 at Berlin L. 5 Mar (BMn) was high but far from the prior record of 8000 set there in 2008. Another five inland lakes hosted 1000+. Observers picked through these to find 4 Glaucous Gulls during the first week of Mar, including singles at Hoover (K. Davis, JD, Rly, DSr), Berlin L. (CH), Deer Creek (RR), and L. Milton, Mahoning (E. Kistler). Another 2 appeared 21 Mar in Hancock (RSs) and Richland (GCo). Great Black-backed Gulls had a huge presence, with an interior record 6 at Chippewa L., Medina 7 Mar (K. Ostermiller), followed closely by 5 at L. Milton, Mahoning 4 Mar (*vide* E. Kistler), extraordinary for the Allegheny Plateau. Other singles were s. to Deer Creek (RR), Summit 13-24 Mar (G. Bennett), Berlin L. 5 Mar (BMn), and Hoover 3-19 Mar (DSr, CB). The 15 Lesser Black-backed Gulls across the interior was above average but short of the flight in 2008.



About the fifth report (third this decade) from the Western Basin of Ohio, this Chuck-will's-widow was netted by banders of the Black Swamp Bird Observatory 21 May 2009. Photograph by Mark Shieldcastle.

local observations. An individual returned to the vicinity of Baltic, *Tuscarawas*, OH 4 Mar (AHY) and remained for the season, while another appeared near Bunker Hill, *Holmes*, OH 28 May–Jun (M. Hershberger, Emery Yoder). Left over from winter, 2 Snowy Owls were in Cleveland 1 Mar (G. Cudworth), and another remained in Pittsburgh 6 Apr (fide S. Kinzey). Two Barn Owls at Stone Valley, *Huntington*, PA 2 May (D. Wentzel, J. Potter) were locally unusual. The B.S.B.O. banded a Chuck-will's-widow in *Ottawa*, OH 21 May for an exceptional record from the Western Basin marshes; singles at Lavaleite, *Wayne*, WV 27 May (GR) and in *Bucks*, PA 29+ May (fide AM) were unexpected. A Chimney Swift in *Preston*, WV 29 Mar (J. Boback) was well ahead of all of other reports.

Early Eastern Wood-Pewees reached Coal Center, *Washington*, PA 20 Apr (AT) and *Hamilton*, OH 27 Apr (R. Ripma), while early Olive-sided Flycatchers were in *Hocking*, OH 1 May (D. Horn) and *Huntingdon*, PA 2 May (GG et al.). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers visited Crown City W.M.A., *Gallia/Lawrence*, OH 20 May (J. Dunlap, fide JMc) and L. Winola, *Wyoming*, PA 26–27 Apr (M. Catalano, fide A. Lambert). For the 2nd year, Willow Flycatcher appeared in Apr, with one the 27th in *Delaware*, OH (SWi). A transient Loggerhead Shrike in *Sandusky*, OH 17 May made the state's only report (J. Kuenzli). Eight Northern Shrikes were reported, including 2 at Magee through 18 Mar (KK, CK) and one through 28 Mar in *Holmes*, OH (SS). Bell's Vireos returned to nesting grounds in *Hamilton*, OH (NC) and *Franklin*, OH (RLy) in late May. A Blue-headed Vireo in *Wood*, OH 9 Apr (J. Cullen, BC) set an early date for the Toledo area. Common Ravens returned to *Jefferson*, OH, but nesting was not confirmed (E. Hall, fide AB, RLy, KM, m.ob.). Ravens fledged 3 young at Prickett's Fork S.P., *Monongalia*, WV 16 May (J. Herron). Observations of 5 birds in *Wetzel*, WV 9 & 25 May (WJ) were just 16 km

from *Monroe*, OH, a potential enclave for the species. A Fish Crow at Donegal L., PA 7 Mar (RL) was a first for *Westmoreland*. A Northern Rough-winged Swallow in *Clermont* 24 Mar (B. Doss) and a Barn Swallow in *Ottawa* 30 Mar (KK) follow a recent trend of early arrival. Early-arriving Ohio Sedge Wrens included one in *Butler* 2 May (JyS) and one in *Union* 3 May (RTh). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet in *Greenbrier*, WV 28 May (AN) was unexpected at the Region's s. border. A second-year male Mountain Bluebird near the Toledo Airport, *Lucas*, OH was first seen 30 Mar (D. Barda, P. Hayes) but not widely viewed until 5-

17 Apr (fide G. Links, m.ob.). *Catharus* thrush migration was ahead of schedule by many accounts, with 9 Gray-cheeked and 47 Swainson's at Magee 25 Apr (VF) one example. A Hermit Thrush was a late migrant at Magee 28 May (RNI). A Varied Thrush flew past veteran observers at Headlands 14 May (EB, RH). An American Pipit was still in *Wayne*, OH 23 May (JFY, KKL). An early Tennessee Warbler 18 Apr in *Greene*, OH (M. Ruane) heralded a widespread flight that saw 20+ individuals across the state by 26 Apr. A Yellow-throated Warbler in *Franklin* 23–24 Mar (B. Masters) was early, while one in *Monroe*, PA 25 May was n. of its normal range in e. Pennsylvania (RW). Five Kirtland's Warblers in Ohio matched the record 2006 season, with singles in *Adams* 12 May (C. Bedel, P. Whan), in *Cuyahoga* 16 May (a window-strike; fide D. Kramer), a second-year male at Magee 17–18 May (A. Johnson, SWs, J. Mizanin, m.ob.), in *Lake* 21 May (JP), and at Magee 21–22 May (KM, RNI, D. Snuffer). Numbering 200, Palm Warblers eclipsed even Yellow-rumped at Magee 27 Apr (RNI). Single Yellow Palm Warblers were seen in *Jefferson*, WV 16 Apr (MO) and in *Cochocton*, OH 19 Apr (James E. Yoder). An early Louisiana Waterthrush was sighted in *Franklin*, OH 14 Mar (RTh). A cooperative Swainson's Warbler held territory at Cooper's Rock S.F., *Preston*, WV 24 May–13 Jun (L. Graffious, B. Johnson, AN, m.ob.), about 160 km n. of the usual haunts for the species. Five Connecticut Warblers were netted at Navarre Marsh, *Ottawa*, OH 27 May (B.S.B.O.). Two Mourning Warblers at Marklesburg, *Huntingdon*, PA 29 Apr (D. & T. Kyler) and one in *Monongahela* N.E., *Pocohontas*, WV 28 Apr (K. Brown) were early arrivals. A Yellow-breasted Chat in *Bucks*, PA 27 Apr was the earliest ever there (AM).

Summer Tanagers in Pennsylvania included singles at Powdermill Nature Reserve, *Westmoreland* 18–19 May (RL, M. Lanzone, E. DeLeone, T. Vechter) and at Buhl Farm Park, *Mercer* 7 May (S. Sanford). Quite late was a Clay-colored Sparrow at *Ottawa* 29 May (CK), one of 11 reports this spring, with all but two from nw. Ohio. The species had returned to its summer grounds at Canaan Valley N.W.R., *Tucker*, WV 24 May (MO). Lark Sparrows are proving to be wide-ranging across the w. portion of the Region. A pair was discovered by an ornithology class on The Ohio State University campus, *Franklin* 11–15 May (A. Champagne, J. Lennon); the pair remained into summer. The wintering bird in *Crawford*, OH was present through 3 Mar (J. Muchow). Three at Byrd Dam 26 Apr (JN, M. Keatley) were a surprise. Another was in *Holmes*, OH 9 May (KKI, SWr). A Grasshopper Sparrow near Walnut Creek, *Holmes*, OH 9 Apr (Wayne E. Miller) was early. A singing Le Conte's Sparrow in *Paulding*; OH 15 May was a county first (MD). A vocal Nelson's Sparrow was in *Lucas* 17–18 May (DO, PC), while one at Killbuck 15 May (KKI, JFY) provided only the 2nd spring record for e-cen. Ohio. Ohio's first Golden-crowned Sparrow visited a *Hancock* feeder 7–24 Apr (RSs, J. Loughman, m.ob.). A Harris's Sparrow was in *Lancaster*, PA 8–27 Apr (CC et al.). A Lincoln's Sparrow was an early arrival in *Wetzel*, WV 31 Mar (WJ). The Oregon Junco reported in Feb from Harborcreek, *Erie*, PA remained until 14 Mar (M. Franz). Some 4503



Studious review of the literature, and subsequent scouring of weedy cornfields along the western frontier in Mercer County, led to the discovery of Ohio's first migrant flock of Smith's Longspurs in decades; as many as 40 present 11–25 (here 16) April 2009. Photograph by George Sydowski.

Lapland Longspurs and 331 Snow Buntings passed an *Ottawa* hawkwatch 17 Mar (B.S.B.O.). On 11 Apr, longtime suspicions of a migration through far w. Ohio were confirmed when 2 Smith's Longspurs were discovered in a weedy cornfield in Rockport, *Mercer* (fide BG). This number quickly grew to 40+ birds 18 Apr, and the last birds were reported 25 Apr (TSh, Jlh, BWh, m.ob.).

An atlas block-busting effort produced a Blue Grosbeak in *Carroll*, OH 30 May (C. McClagherty), exceptional for the ne. Allegheny foothills. An early Indigo Bunting was noted in *Washington*, PA 3 Apr (P. Brown). A wintering Dickcissel in *Franklin*, OH was last observed 15 Mar (B. Simpson). Another feeder visitor appeared in *Warren*, OH 2-9 Apr (A. McVey). In Pennsylvania, single Dickcissels were at M.C.W.M.A. 7 May (R. Ferry) and at Bensalem, *Bucks* through 10 Apr (D. Molotsky). Western Meadowlarks were detected in five Ohio counties this spring: *Holmes* (fide RHR), *Logan* (TSh), *Ottawa* (JP), *Paulding* (MD), and at two locations in *Wood* (T. Kemp, RLY, m.ob.). One was in *Lykens*, *Dauphin*, PA 2-11 May (S. Zook, ph. D. Weber). Ohio Yellow-headed Blackbirds returned to *Ottawa* 16 Apr (J. and H. Rose) and *Lucas* 18 Apr (RNL), while several were on territory at Metzger in late May (SWs). One was in *Lancaster*, PA 12-22 Apr (CC et al.). Two Brewer's Blackbirds were n. of Killdeer Plains OH 28 Mar (BWh), and one visited a feeder at Peach Bottom, *Lancaster*, PA 20-22 Apr (BS). Oak Openings Metro Park, *Lucas*, OH hosted up to 13 Red Crossbills 15-18 May (MA, J. Lesser, G. Cottier, m.ob.), and another visited *Franklin*, OH 28 Mar (S. Landes). A female was observed feeding a juv. at Hamiin L., *McKean*, PA 21 May (JF). White-winged Crossbills were plentiful and widespread throughout the Region. High counts in Ohio were of 25 birds each in *Washington* 1 Mar (B. Hohman), *Summit* 9 Mar (D. Powers-Kissel), and *Woodlawn Cemetery*, *Lucas* 14 Mar (T. Haney), with 20 remaining at *Kidron Park*, *Wayne* 3 May (D. Weaver). The species peaked in West Virginia 2 Mar with 200 in *Cabell* (CE, K. Kazmierski), with 13 remaining in *Ohio* 17 Apr (S. Albaugh). In Ohio, stragglers were seen in *Wayne* through 10 May (M. Weaver), in *Hamilton* 5 May (8; JyS), and at Holden Arboretum, *Lake* 24 May (4; R. Thompson). In Pennsylvania, 39+ were in *Washington* 3 May and 22 were in *Nazareth*, *Northampton* 23-28 May (ph. RW), a flock that included juvs., which suggests local nesting. There are no confirmed breeding records for Pennsylvania. In *Fremont*, *Sandusky*, a female was observed collecting nesting material with an attendant male and carrying it to a nearby pine stand 16 Mar, but nothing further came from this observation (R. Morton). A late Common Redpoll visited a *Lake* feeder 10 May (JP), while 30 were on S. Bass I., *Ottawa* 7 Mar (E. Heine-man, fide L. Brohl). Capping an impressive incursion in Ohio were reports of Pine Siskins exhibiting nesting behavior statewide (C. Caldwell, CH, S. Butcher m.ob.). Some 100+ at *Lake* feeders 8-10 May (JP) were followed

by stragglers into Jun. In Pennsylvania, Pine Siskins were confirmed breeding in *Northampton* (S. Boyce), *Westmoreland* (D. Matuza), *Lancaster* (J. Bosler), *Dauphin* (DH), *Philadelphia* (F. Windfelder), and *Washington* (S. Greenfield). A female Evening Grosbeak was in *Lake* 29 Apr (JP).

Observers (subregional compilers in boldface type): OHIO: Dane Adams (DA), Matt Anderson (MA), Rick Asamoto (RA), Emil Bacik (EB), Tom Bartlett (TB), Gerry Bennett (GB), Charles Bombaci (CB), Aaron Boone (AB), Jill Bowers (JBo), Jenny Brumfield (JBr), Neil Cade (NC), Phil Chaon (PC), Gary Cowell (GCo), Becky Cullen (BC), Jim Cullen (JC), Julie Davis (JD), Micki Dunakin (MD), Sherrie Duris (SD), Vic Fazio (VF), Robert Foppe (RF), Bruce Glick (BG), Ray Hannikman (RH), Robert Hershberger (RBr), Craig Holt (CH), Kenn Kaufmann (KK), Kevin Kline (KKI), Ned Keller (NK), Chris Knoll (CK), Jay Lehman (JLh), Gabe Leidy (GLy), Robert Lowry (RLy), Jim McCormac (JMc), Kent Miller (KM), Mary Mispion (MM), Ben Morrison (BMn), Rick Nirschl (RNL), Doug Overacker (DO), John Pogacnik (JP), Robert Royle (RR), Troy Shively (TSh), Dave Slager (DSr), Su Snyder (SS), Jay Stenger (JyS), Brenda Tekin (BTe), Rob Thorn (RTh), Suzanne Wagner (SW), Samuel Weaver (SWr), Bill Whan (BWh), Sean Williams (SWi), Sam Woods (SWs), Adam H. Yoder (AHY), David H. Yoder (DHY), James F. Yoder (JFY). PENNSYLVANIA: Nick Bolgiano (NB), Chuck Chalfant (CC), David Eberly (DE), John Fedak (JF), Kevin Fryberger (KF), Greg Grove (GG), Al Guarante (AG), Jonathan Heller (JH), Paul Hess (PH), Deuane Hoffman (DH), Steve Kacir (SK), Delaware Valley RBA, Jon Kauffman (JK), Rudy Keller (RK), Scott Kinzey (SKi), Robert Leberman (RC), Larry Lewis (LL), Geoff Malosh (GM), Mark McConaughy (MM, Central PA Birdline), Jerry McWilliams (JM), August Mirabella (AM), Nick Pulcinella (NP), Bob Schutsky (BS), Amy Taracido (AT, RBA Western PA), Rick Wiltraut (RW). WEST VIRGINIA: Wendell Argabrite (WA), Cynthia Ellis (CE), Jeanette Esker, Wilma Jarrell (WJ), Andy Newman (AN), J. Norheimer (JN), Matt Orsie (MO), Gary Rankin (GR). ☼

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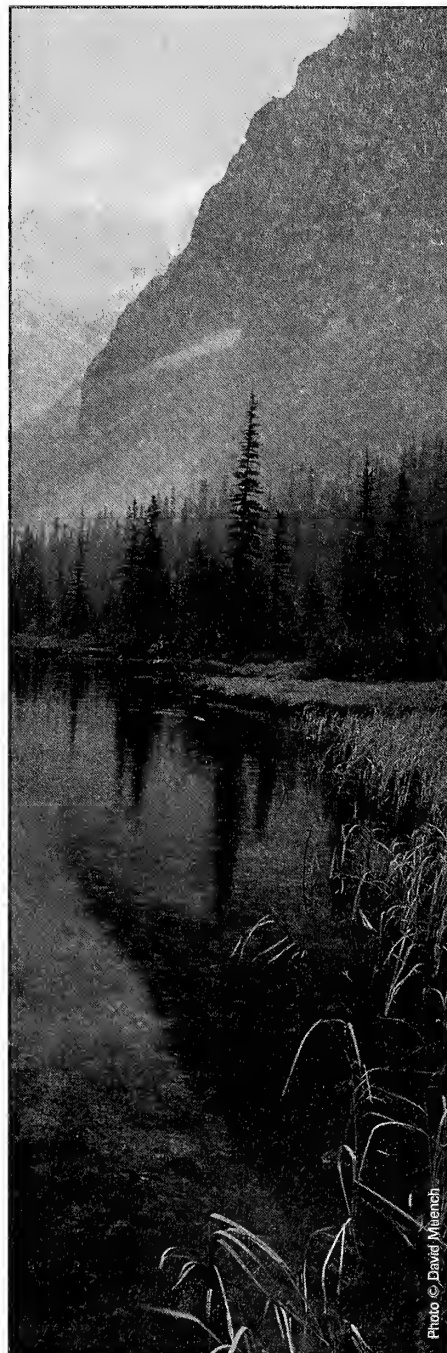


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# Illinois & Indiana



James D. Hengeveld  
Keith A. McMullen  
Geoffrey A. Williamson

The Region experienced a relatively warm and wet spring. Temperatures throughout were significantly higher than average in March and slightly higher in both April and May. However, the first half of April was much colder than normal, slowing down migration during that period. Total rainfall for the period was approximately 7.6 cm above normal, as April and May experienced significantly higher levels of rainfall. Along the lakefront, however, March was a very soggy month, proving to be the third wettest on record in Chicago; in fact, the January–April period was also the wettest on record for Chicago.

Significant sightings for the period included Barrow's Goldeneye, Brown Pelican, Anhinga, out-of-range Fish Crows, Western Tanager, and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

Abbreviations: Bellrose (Bellrose Reserve, Pulaski, IL); Bev. Sh. (Beverly Shores, Porter, IN); Cane Ridge (Cane Ridge W.M.A., Gibson, IN); Carl. L. (Carlyle L., s. Illinois); Dunes (Dunes S.P., Porter, IN); F.W.A. (Fish and Wildlife Area); Goose Pond (Goose Pond F.W.A., Greene, IN); Hawthorn (Hawthorn Mine, Sullivan, IN); Horseshoe (Horseshoe L., Madison, IL); Montrose (Montrose Pt. in Chicago's Lincoln Park); N. Pt. Marina (North Point Marina, Winthrop Harbor, IL).

## WATERFOWL

Heavy rains along the lakefront provided abundant habitat for waterfowl, which appeared in good numbers, with many birds lingering. Augmenting the few accepted records of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck for Illinois were 2 birds at Bellrose 7 May (MM-L), 2 more in Pope 26 May (JKD, *vide* MSS), and one at Horseshoe 31 May+ (ph. FRH,

m.ob.). Greater White-fronted Goose flocks included 5000 in Whiteside, IL 10 Mar (MJB) and 3500 in Rock Island, IL 20 Mar (SMF). At Carl. L., 300,000 Snow Geese were tallied 2 & 7 Mar (KAM, DMK). Ross's Geese peaked with 30+ at Bellrose 5 Mar (KAM). Late Ross's included singles in Kankakee, IL 9 May (JBH), at Muscatatuck N.W.R., Jackson, IN 10–12 May (ph. DC et al.), and at L. Calumet, Chicago 31 May (†WJM).

Among dabbling ducks, 3500 Gadwalls in n. Brown, IL 31 Mar (MJB) and 1281 Blue-winged Teal at Goose Pond 11 Apr (DG) were notable, the latter furnishing a new spring high for Indiana. A Cinnamon Teal lingered at Salamonie Res., Wabash, IN from 12 Apr (JAH) through 1 May (GP). Remarkably, 3 apparent Blue-winged × Cinnamon Teal hybrids were reported: at Kingsbury F.W.A., La Porte, IN 1 Apr (ph. BH), at Evansville, IN 2–11 Apr (ph. TG et al.), and at Des Plaines C.A., Will, IL 16–18 Apr (TAL, ph. MT, CMA et al.). A fine tally of 1000 Redheads occurred at Woodford State F.W.A., Woodford, IL 16 Mar (MJW). A Greater Scaup 31 May+ at L. Calumet, Chicago (WJM) was late.

The first-year male Harlequin Duck that wintered at Hammond, IN was last reported 4 Mar (JJM); an ad. male was in Waukegan, IL 17 Mar (ph. NAL). It was an excellent spring for scoters. Ad. male Surf Scoters seen away from the lakefront included 4 on L. Lemon, Brown, IN 10 Mar (JDH) and singles at Horseshoe 30 Apr (KAM), at the Grant St. wetland, Lake, IN 2 May (JJM et al.), near Arlington, IL 24 May (MAM), and in Chicago 18 May+ (SBB). A 2nd consecutive outstanding spring flight of White-winged Scoters was topped by 38 birds at Bev. Sh. 14 Mar (JJM) and 18 at Montrose 2 Apr (RDH); late birds were at Montrose 8 May (JSA, JRS) and at Whalon Lake Forest Preserve, Will, IL 21 Apr–29 May (MAM, KAM, JS). Three of the 6 Black Scoters reported at the lakefront were late birds recorded at Dunes 17 Apr (JJM); a female remained at Rend L., Franklin, IL 21–28 Mar (LSt). Excellent counts of 75 and 135 Long-tailed Ducks were made at Illinois Beach S.P. 14 Mar (RDH) and 16 Mar (DFS), respectively. An ad. male Barrow's Goldeneye at Montrose 8 Mar (RDH, †GAW et al.) was a rare sight.

## LOONS THROUGH HERONS

Numbers of spring Red-throated Loons continue to climb, with a record-high 89 at Dunes and Bev. Sh. 16 Mar (JJM) and 13 more in Lake, IL (DFS) the same day. Seven inland birds included singles at L. Monroe, Monroe, IN 23 Mar and 13 Apr (DRW) and a late bird at Whalon Lake Forest Preserve, Will, IL 16

May (PM, JS). An excellent total of 150 Pied-billed Grebes was at Cypress Creek N.W.R., Pulaski, IL 12 Apr (DMK, MSS). Single lakefront Red-necked Grebes were at Dunes 17 Apr (JJM) and in Chicago's Jackson Park 3 May (JSM); Illinois's latest ever was at Spoon L., Knox 27 Apr–29 May (MJB, AA, m.ob.). Of 9 Eared Grebes reported in the Region, 2 on L. Gibson, Gibson, IN 15 Mar (G&LB) were early, and a late bird was at the Celery Bog, Tippecanoe, IN 1–2 May (EMH et al.).

Indiana's highest-ever American White Pelican tally, 165, was made at Cane Ridge and Hovey L., Posey 31 Mar (JSC, AK). Very rare for the Region was a Brown Pelican that took up residence at Melvin Price Lock & Dam, Madison, IL 11 May+ (ph. WMR, m.ob.). The 15,000 Double-crested Cormorants at Rend L., Franklin, IL 13 Apr (KAM) represented a huge spring congregation; an unprecedented 1799 nests were counted at the East Chicago, IN rookery 27 May (JSC, AK). Anhingas invaded s. Illinois: one was seen soaring near the Lower Cache Access in Buttonland Swamp, Pulaski 1 May (CKM), 6 were there 23 May (MM-L), and up to 3 were observed there through the end of the season.

Among the many reports of bitterns, a very early American was in Jasper, IL 12 Mar (CLH), with the peak count being 14 at Goose Pond 4 May (LWS). Goose Pond also produced the high count of Least, with 7 there 30 May (LWS). One Least Bittern at Hammond Sanctuary, Lake 25 Apr (CAM) furnished the first Apr record for the Indiana lakefront. Snowy Egrets arrived early, one appearing at Horseshoe 23 Mar (FRH) and another at L. Gibson, Gibson, IN 5 Apr (G&LB). The 200 Snowy Egrets at Dogtooth I., Alexander 30 May (DMK, MSS) provided a record-high spring count for Illinois. The Region hosted 3 Tricolored Herons this spring, including one at Waukegan, IL 29 Apr–2 May (JOS, ph. NAL, ph. KH, m.ob.), another in Fairmont City, St. Clair, IL 24 May (DMK), and a third at Hammond, IN 30 May+ (ph. JJM, KJB, JKC, SRB, LSH et al.). Part of an impressive flight, 600 Cattle Egrets were seen 30 May at Dogtooth I., Alexander (DMK, MSS), establishing a new state high count for Illinois. At the East Chicago rookery, a record-high 238 Black-crowned Night-Heron nests were tallied 27 May (JSC, AK), while an excellent total of 16 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons was at Horseshoe 18 Apr (FRH). Reports of *Plegadis* ibis were numerous and widespread, particularly in Illinois. A Glossy Ibis was noted in Sangamon, IL 21 Apr (HDB), and 2 were in Fayette, IL 7 May (CLH, RES). Illinois reports of White-faced Ibis involving multiple birds included 2 at



Bellrose 10 Apr (KAM), 2 at Cahokia Mounds S.P., *St. Clair* 27 Apr (FRH), and 3 at American Bottoms, *Monroe* 27 May (C&PD). At least 5 other single birds were noted. Single *Plegadis* were seen 2 May at Goose Pond (ph. LuS, *fide* LWS) and 8 May at Montrose (JSA, JRS).

## VULTURES THROUGH RAILS

Two Black Vultures at Prairie Creek Res. 11 Apr (ph. BG) furnished the first record for *Delaware*, IN; noteworthy were singles at Carl. L. 11 Apr (MSS, DMK) and in *Marion*, IL 14 May (MSS), with 2 in *Washington*, IL 20 May (MSS). Well n. of its normal range in Indiana, a Mississippi Kite was discovered in ne. *Tippicanoe* 2 May (DA, *fide* JBD). Single Swainson's Hawks were noted 1 Apr in both *Knox*, IL (MJB) and *DuPage*, IL (REF), while 3 were tallied near the breeding sites in *Kane* and *McHenry*, IL 25 Apr (RAM, ALM). Very rare in Indiana, a light-morph Swainson's was discovered in nw. *Jasper* 23 Apr (BJG, PBG, JJM, LP). The dark-morph Harlan's Hawk that wintered at Hawthorn was present through 1 Apr (DRW et al.). A Rough-legged Hawk in *McHenry*, IL 14 May (RAM) was unusually late. Representing the first record for the n. tier and the latest ever for Indiana, a Prairie Falcon was found at Kankakee F.W.A., *LaPorte* 21 Mar (KJB, SRB, JKC, TH, LSH). The only Yellow Rail reports for the season came from Karl Bartel Land and Water Reserve, *Marion*, IL 16 & 18 Apr (RES et al.) and Goose Pond 25 Apr (LWS). Single Black Rails called from three different locations at Goose Pond 4, 23, & 24 May (LWS et al.).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

Notable among the shorebirds were many early arrivals. A fine tally of 6803 American Golden-Plovers was made 25 Apr in *Benton*, IN (BO). In *St. Clair*, IL, a Piping Plover 3-4 Apr (TJD, DMK, MSS) provided a record-early arrival date for Illinois. All other Piping Plover reports came from Waukegan, IL, with one noted 1-2 May (DD, MJB, TBL), 2 there 3-4 May (JSS, NAL), and one 9 May (EWW, APS, m.ob.). Four Black-necked Stilts at Cane Ridge 5 Apr (CC) provided Indiana's 2nd earliest spring record, and a state-high count of 35 American Avocets was logged there 2 May (S&RV et al.). An avocet in East Chicago 28 Apr (AK, JSC) was the first seen at the Indiana lakefront since 1998.

Record-high counts in Indiana for both species of yellowlegs were established at Goose Pond this spring, with 497 Greater-tailed 2 Apr (LWS, BF, BkF) and 1300 Lessers 16 Apr (LWS, MC). Part of a "wave" of Willets in late Apr-early May, Indiana's two high-

est spring counts ever for the lakefront consisted of 35 birds in East Chicago 28 Apr (AK, JSC) and 26 birds at a Gary wetland 2 May (MTp, KJB, JJM, EMH et al.). A Spotted Sandpiper at Horseshoe 23 Mar (FRH) provided a record-early arrival date for Illinois. Three mid-May Whimbrels were reported from Illinois: 14 May in *Madison* (DJS), 18 May in *Cook* (AA), and 18-21 May in *Sangamon* (HDB). Good numbers of Hudsonian Godwits were reported from Illinois, including 12 w. of *Victoria*, *Knox* 17 May (MR, PJR), 6 near *Meredosia*, *Morgan* 14 May (TW), 7 there 17 May (KR), 3 at *Farina*, *Fayette* 16 May (DMK, MSS, KAM), and 3 at *Spoon R.*, *Stark* 17 May (MHB). Single Marbled Godwits were noted 22 Apr at Chicago (DRD et al.) and in *Sangamon*, IL (HDB); 2 were at *Swan L.*, *Calhoun*, IL 25 Apr (RQR); and one was at *Goose Pond* 27 Apr (LWS). A strong flight of Red Knots included 6 in *Waukegan* 21 May (EWW) among 9 reported for Illinois. A nice count of 15 Baird's Sandpipers was made at *Spoon R.*, *Stark*, IL 24 May (MHB). The 400 Dunlins at *Santa Fe Bottoms*, *Clinton*, IL 4 May (DMK) were notable, and the 15 Stilt Sandpipers at *McCool Basin*, *Porter* 13 May (JCK) provided a record-high spring count for Indiana. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper discovered 9 May in w. *Union*, IL (VMK) provided the 6th spring record for Illinois. Short-billed Dowitchers had a fine season: one 25 Apr at *Bellrose* (KAM, MSS) was record-early for Illinois, and excellent flocks of 127 and 120 were found at *Pierce Rd. wetland*, *St. Joseph*, IN 13 May (BH) and *Santa Fe Bottoms*, *Clinton*, IL 4 May (DMK), respectively. A fine count of 369 Wilson's Snipe was logged at *Goose Pond* 30 Mar (LWS). A record-early Wilson's Phalarope was noted 8 Apr in *Pulaski*, IL (GL, KAM, MSS), while a group of 4 Red-necked Phalaropes seen 21 May (MHB) and 28 May (KR) in *Peoria*, IL were part of the highest spring total (11) ever for Illinois.

Laughing Gull numbers are on the rise in the Region: 17+ were reported, including 3 in *Waukegan*, IL 26 Apr (EWW) and a pair seen copulating at N. Pt. Marina 31 May (DRD). A Laughing Gull × Ring-billed Gull hybrid was noted 7 Mar in se. Chicago (AA). An amazing 400 Franklin's Gulls were at *Lock & Dam* 14, *Rock Island*, IL 16 May (SMF), and an ad. Little Gull was photographed at *Melvin Price Lock & Dam*, *Madison*, IL 11-12 May (DMK, MSS, KAM et al.). An ad. California Gull was at N. Pt. Marina 16 Mar-12 Apr (ph. CSF, m.ob.), and a second-cycle bird was there 30 May (ph. TBL). The 8 Thayer's Gulls at N. Pt. Marina 14 Mar (RDH) provided the highest spring tally for Illinois in 12 years, and 4 Iceland Gulls there 7 Apr (EWW) were notable.

In *Waukegan*, IL, lingering Iceland Gulls included a first-cycle bird 13 May and a second-cycle bird 14 May (EWW). There were 7 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at N. Pt. Marina 14 Mar (RDH), and an exceptional count of 9 was made there 7 Apr (EWW). Four inland Lesser Black-backed were reported in Indiana, including an ad. near *Wakarusa* 4 Mar (ph. LS, ph. HK) and 2 ads. at *Prairie Creek Res.* 11 Apr. (BG). A first-cycle Lesser Black-backed remained at N. Pt. Marina 24-28 May (EWW), and a second-cycle was in *Waukegan*, IL 25 May (EWW). A rather late first- or second-cycle Glaucous Gull was at *Michigan City Harbor*, *LaPorte*, IN 9 May (SRB, NM). The lakefront enjoyed a record spring flight of Great Black-backed Gulls, the peak count consisting of 17 birds at various Indiana sites 14 Mar (KJB, SRB, JKC, LSH et al.).

Single Caspian Terns in se. Chicago (WJM) and at *Montrose* (GAW) 24 Mar were record early for Illinois, and impressive flocks of 465 and 350 were noted at *Michigan City Harbor*, *LaPorte*, IN 1 May (JJM) and *Montrose* 7 May (GAW), respectively. Common Terns had a strong presence on L. Michigan, with 575 at *Waukegan*, IL 14 May (EWW) and 425 at N. Pt. Marina 21 May (EWW), while the 107 at *Goose Pond* 13 May (KkR) represented a fine inland count. Least Terns reported away from s. Illinois included singles 14 May in *Sangamon* (HDB) and 21 May in *Fulton* (KR).

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

For the 11th consecutive spring, White-winged Doves were reported in the Region, with single birds at *Montrose* 2 May (LK, ph. MT et al.), in *Boone*, IN 7 May (RLH, CH, LP), and at *Dunes* 18 Apr (BJG, JCK, RJP, KJB et al.) and 14 May (KJB, JKC). Two Monk Parakeets seen in *Hammond*, IN 2 May were observed building a nest there 8 May (JJM). A census of known Barn Owl nest sites in Indiana in Apr and May yielded a minimum of 37 birds, including 22 ads. (AK et al.). A Chimney Swift in *LaGrange* 29 Mar (SP) was Indiana's 2nd earliest ever. The 89 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at the *Mississippi R. bluffslands* in *Monroe*, IL 28 May (C&PD) provided Illinois's 2nd highest spring count.

An Olive-sided Flycatcher in *Adams* 25 Apr (AGD) was record early for Illinois. Western Kingbirds were plentiful in Illinois this spring. In addition to the birds at the *Granite City* breeding site (KAM et al.), an early returner was in *Joppa* 24 Apr (FKB), another was at *Horseshoe* 8 May (FRH), and in the n. tier, singles were in *Lake* 18 May (TA, JG), in *DuPage* (REF) and *Stark* (DFS), both 19 May, at *Montrose* 29 May (RDH), and in *Lake* 30 May (JOS). Providing the 2nd

earliest Illinois arrival date was an ad. male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in East Cape Girardeau, *Alexander* 8 Apr (WE). Other Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were noted near Ware, *Union*, IL 25 Apr (ph. KAM, MSS), in *Maccoupin*, IL 5 May (EWW), in *Effingham*, IL 14-15 May (CLH, RES, m.ob.), and in Chicago's Jackson Park 24 May (BS). Loggerhead Shrike numbers were down across the Region. Of the 5 reported in Indiana, 2 were observed building a nest in *LaGrange* 11 Apr (LS, GC). There was an excellent flight of vireos. An early Bell's Vireo was in *Johnson*, IL 24 Apr (DTW, SDB), while the 39 at Hawthorn 5 May (DRW) constituted Indiana's 2nd highest spring count; one at Bev. Sh. 30 May (JKC, SRB, JJM, KJB, LSH) was surprising, as the species is very rare along the lakefront. Indiana's earliest ever Yellow-throated Vireo was recorded in *Evansville* 13 Mar (TG), and a Red-eyed Vireo on *Deckard Ridge*, *Brown* 5 Apr (DRW) was also recorded early for Indiana.

A northward extension of confirmed Fish Crow records in Indiana occurred when a bird that was being seen in *Berrien*, MI wandered southward into *LaPorte* 26 May (BB); the location is about 320 km n. of other Indiana nesting sites. A Northern Rough-winged Swallow near the Ohio R. in *Posey*, IN 26 Mar (LWS, BF) was early. Notable because of the southerly location, 2 Brown Creepers, one building a nest, were observed in nw. *Monroe*, IN 31 May (VW). A Bewick's Wren at *Siloam Springs S.P.*, *Adams*, IL 21-26 May (KAM, MSS et al.) was expected, but one very early in *Urbana* 14-15 Mar (MM-L, ph. GSL, m.ob.) was unusual. A state-high 77 Swainson's Thrushes were recorded in nw. *Greene*, IN 9 May (JDH, SEH, RK). Unusual for spring was a male Varied Thrush in *Evansville*, IL 25 Mar (ph. MCv).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

The 79 Yellow Warblers at L. Calumet, Chicago 9 May (WJM, SBB, MLB) provided a nice tally, as did 6 Black-throated Blue Warblers 9 May in *Lake*, IL (DRD). Fine counts of 558 and 400 Yellow-rumped Warblers were made at Dunes 24 Apr (KJB, JKC, JJM, MTP) and at Carl. L. 2 May (DMK, MSS), respectively. A Yellow-throated Warbler in *Evansville* 13 Mar (ph. TG) was recorded early for Indiana, while a tally of 17 at *Pomona*, *Jackson*, IL 23 Apr (KAM, MSS) was notable. The 26 Pine Warblers detected in a longshore flight at Dunes 25 Apr (KJB, JKC, SRB, JJM et al.) represented a state high. On 9 May, excellent totals of 31 Blackpoll Warblers in *Lawrence*, IN (AK, NK) and 33 Northern Waterthrushes at Dunes (LSH et

al.) were tallied. An early Louisiana Waterthrush was at Ft. Massac S.P., *Massac*, IL 15 Mar (DMK, KAM, MSS). The 21 Mourning Warblers at *Montrose* 30 May (GAW) provided the largest Illinois spring tally since 1997, and the 42 Canada Warblers at North Pond in Chicago's Lincoln Park 30 May (SJH) represented a record-high count for Illinois. Remarkably, 3 Western Tanager were logged this spring: one at a feeder near *Putnamville*, *Putnam*, IN 24-28 Apr (ph. JL, *vide* WM), one at *McCormick Place* in Chicago 1 May (DEW), and one at a Bev. Sh. feeder 19 May (JE, JR).

The wintering Spotted Towhee in *Ogle*, IL was last seen 1 Mar (BAH). A phenomenal 125 Chipping Sparrows were tallied along the Indiana lakefront 25 Apr (KJB, JJM, JKC, SRB, RJP). Quite early were 4 Lark Sparrows at *South Bottoms*, *Adams*, IL 26 Mar (AGD) and a Grasshopper Sparrow at *Cane Ridge* 22 Mar (G&LB). A Henslow's Sparrow at *Prairie Ridge State Natural Area*, *Marion* 26 Mar (CLH) tied the 2nd earliest arrival date for Illinois. All 4 Nelson's Sparrow reports and the 4 Harris's Sparrow reports came from Illinois. A Golden-crowned Sparrow found in *Stephenson*, IL (AS) remained 16-23 Apr (DFS, ph. GN, ph. DL, ph. CJW, m.ob.), providing one of fewer than five Illinois records. Very late, a Lapland Longspur was in nw. *Cook*, IL 17 May (ABA). At Hawthorn, a record spring count of 17 Blue Grosbeaks was logged 5 May (DRW), and a fine total of 20 Orchard Orioles flew past Dunes 8 May (JJM). A very early Baltimore Oriole was heard at *Eagle Creek Park*, *Indianapolis* 29 Mar (LP).

There was substantial carry-over from the extensive winter finch irruption. A longshore watch at Dunes 18 Apr produced 60 Purple Finches (BJG). Red Crossbill reports consisted of 5 and 7 birds at *Big River S.F.*, *Henderson*, IL 26 Mar (PJR, LM) and 29 Mar (DJM, MJB), respectively; 3 were at *Lowden Miller S.F.*, *Ogle*, IL 9 Mar (MAM); and 6 were at a feeder in *Bloomington*, IN 7 May (DRW, BW). White-winged Crossbills were well represented, as 45 were at *Rock Cut S.P.*, *Winnebago*, IL 6 Mar (DTW), 35 were at the *Morton Arboretum*, *DuPage*, IL 3 Mar (FM), and 23 were in *Bloomington*, IN 9 Mar (SRE). Lingering birds were represented by 14 in *Bloomington*, IN 5 May (JDH, SEH), 3 near *Mundelein*, *Lake*, IL 6 May (SDB), and 18 at Dunes 9 May (LSH et al.). Common Redpolls were still present in good numbers: 100+ were at the Chicago Botanic Gardens in *Glencoe*, IL 1 Mar (DMK, KAM), and 80 were in *Mundelein* 2 Mar (SD). Indiana's latest was noted in *Chesterton*, *Porter* 27 Mar (KJB),

while single late birds in Illinois were at the Chicago Botanic Gardens 11 Apr (MH) and at *Sand Ridge S.F.*, *Mason* 19 Apr (KR). Several Hoary Redpolls also persisted, with one at the Chicago Botanic Gardens 1-3 Mar (AFS, ph. NAL et al.) and one in *McLean*, IL 5 Mar (MJB, KR). Exemplifying the lasting presence of Pine Siskins were an astounding 53 birds in *Greene*, IN 8 May (JGw) and a flock of 47 at Dunes 19 May (BB, LSH, JCK, KJB). Eurasian Tree Sparrows penetrated the n. tier of Illinois, with 12 seen at *Lock & Dam* 16 on the Mississippi R. in *Rock Island* 16 Mar (SMF).

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## Western Great Lakes



Adam M. Byrne

Minnesota experienced a very wet March; precipitation totals in the central and northern portions of the state were triple the monthly norm. Wisconsin and Michigan had normal precipitation amounts, and all three states had near-normal temperatures. April and May were rather dry and cool for both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Michigan's Upper Peninsula was cool and dry, especially in May, while the Lower Peninsula had near-normal temperatures but above-average rainfall. All three states had a brief spell of record or near-record temperatures around 24-27 April, a warm spell that ushered in an early push of migrants.

It was a great season for rarities in Minnesota, with 24 reports of casual or accidental species, highlighted by the state's fifth Golden-crowned Sparrow, a bird that lingered from winter, along with a surprising find of the sixth record at a Twin Cities feeder! Michigan had its share of rarities, but the season was better characterized by large influxes of several uncommon species. Large numbers of geese, especially Snow and Ross's, were reported in March. Late April brought a big influx of Cattle Egrets, with reports of multiples from several counties.

### WATERFOWL

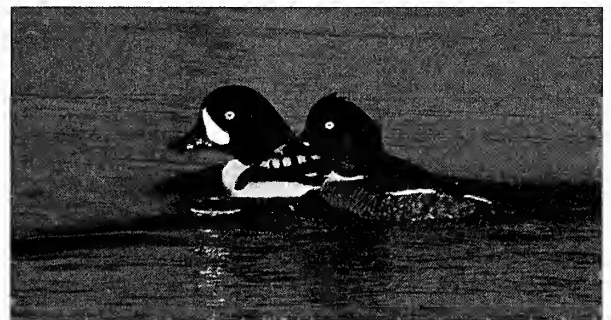
Greater White-fronted Goose was reported in above-average numbers in Michigan, with at least 60 from seven counties; Snow Geese are rarely seen in large numbers in Michigan, so

flocks of 84 in *Allegan* 8 Mar and counts of 103 and 251 at *Shiawassee N.W.R.*, *Saginaw* 9 & 17 Mar, respectively (all DJP), were significant. Minnesota's peak counts for Greater White-fronted and Snow Geese were 10,000 and 5000, respectively, in *Jackson* 15 Mar (JCC). Minnesota reported Ross's Geese from 27 of 87 counties, including a first for *Houston* 24 Mar (DB). Michigan had at least 20 birds in seven counties, and Wisconsin had reports from 14 counties. A Brant was photographed in *Marathon*, WI 11 May (DaB, JS), and 2 flew past *Whitefish Pt.*, *Chippewa*, MI 27 May (AMB, PCC), representing only the 5th spring record in Michigan in the past 10 years. Minnesota hosted the only Eurasian Wigeons, drakes in *Wabasha* 28-30 Mar (RMD, DAB, ARW, JWH) and *Chippewa* 10 Apr (JRa, JP). Single Cinnamon Teal were found in *Polk*, MN 17 Apr (NE) and *Sauk*, WI 9 May (TP, QY, PS). A high count for Minnesota was 3245 Greater Scaup, along with 3420 unidentified scaup, in *St. Louis* 24 Apr (PHS). Minnesota had female Harlequin Ducks at *Duluth*, *St. Louis* 5-6 May (KJB, PHS) and 24 May (SMC) that may have been the same individual, and a male lingered through 11 Mar along the Minnesota/Wisconsin state line (DBa, LS, m.ob.). Wisconsin had one stay through 9 Apr in *Sheboygan* (D&MB), while Michigan had one through 1 Mar in *Mason* (DD). Scoter numbers were near normal Regionwide, highlighted by a White-winged in *Kandiyohi*, MN 2 May (D&BM) that furnished a first county record. Long-tailed Duck numbers peaked in Michigan with 10,000 in *Ottawa* and 5000 in

*Muskegon* 4 Mar (CF). Wisconsin had 6000 Long-taileds in *Sheboygan* 15 Mar (CW), contrasting with an unusually large high count for Minnesota of 232 in *St. Louis* 6 Mar (PHS). A male Barrow's Goldeneye lingered through 8 Mar in *Douglas*, WI/St. Louis, MN (PHS), and another male was found in *Itasca*, MN 8-9 Apr (KT, EEO, m.ob.).

### QUAIL THROUGH IBIS

Northern Bobwhite continues its precipitous decline in Michigan: 1-2 were reported from only two counties, compared to nine counties two years ago. Wisconsin had an excellent spring for Red-throated Loons, with 12 reports from L. Michigan and L. Superior and an



Furnishing the first record of Barrow's Goldeneye for Itasca County was this drake at Grand Rapids, Minnesota 8 and (here) 9 April 2009. Photograph by Earl E. Orf.



More often found along the North Shore of Lake Superior in fall, this Harlequin Duck was a pleasant surprise at Duluth, Minnesota 5 and (here) 6 May 2009. Photograph by Peder H. Svingen.



Providing the second record for Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge and the eleventh overall for Minnesota was this Snowy Plover at Lansing Parker Pool on 30 May 2009. Photograph by Barbara Williams.

inland report from Dodge 22 Apr (JO). Minnesota had unprecedented numbers counted at Duluth, most seen migrating in a westerly direction from L. Superior in the early morning hours, capped by a state record high of 117 on 3 May (KJB); inland were single Red-throats in Stearns 22 Apr (PCC) and Benton 24 Apr (RLE, m.ob.). The only Pacific Loon was at Whitefish Pt., Chippewa, MI 28 May (AMB). Three Eared Grebe reports from Minnesota and six in Wisconsin were near average. Wisconsin had 2 Western Grebes, singles in Racine 27 Apr (JW) and Trempealeau 18 May (DS). In Minnesota, Clark's Grebes were reported from Meeker 22 Apr (DMF) and Anoka 11-12 May (DWK, KL).

An American White Pelican in Brown, WI 3 Mar was record early (JSw). A Great Egret in Cass 6 Mar (DSc) was almost certainly a contender for the state's earliest record. Snowy Egrets were reported in above-average numbers from both Michigan and Wisconsin; Minnesota reported 8 from five counties. A Tricolored Heron was at Horicon N.W.R., Dodge 24-28 Apr (*vide* JB). Michigan experienced a remarkable influx of Cattle Egrets, with most appearing 26-29 Apr; the state had reports from at least six counties and high totals exceeding 12 in two counties. Minnesota had Cattle Egrets in 14 counties, with peak counts of 16 in Douglas and 13 in Grant 10 May (BWF); Wisconsin had nine reports from six counties. The only report of Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was of 2 birds in Hennepin, MN 24-28 Apr (*vide* AXH). *Plegadis ibis* records have been increasing over the past decade; nearly half of Michigan's records have occurred since 2000. This season, no Glossy Ibis was reported, but there was a surprising influx of White-faced Ibis. Wisconsin had one in Dodge 9 May (SF, DG), and Minnesota had 8 in Big Stone 25 Apr (MJB, SW, FG), while Michigan had singles in Wayne 25 Apr-15

May (WP, m.ob.), Tuscola 21-22 May (m.ob.), Washtenaw 21 May (ATC; p.a.), and Berrien 28 May (TB, MH, p.a.), plus 2 on 15 May+ in Monroe (AMB, PCC; p.a.). Minnesota also reported an unidentified *Plegadis* in Brown 17 May (BTS).

## VULTURES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Michigan's 20th Black Vulture was in Washtenaw 1 May (JeS); 14 of the 20 records have occurred in the past decade. Single Mississippi Kites graced Milwaukee, WI 2 May (WM) and Jackson, MI 15-19 May (DH, LC). Unusual was a melanistic Cooper's Hawk in Lyon, MN 17 Apr (RJS). Michigan and Wisconsin each had single Swainson's Hawks, birds in Chippewa 13 May and Polk 21-24 May (TS), respectively. Rare were 2 Harlan's Hawks, one each in McLeod 6 Apr (KRE) and Stearns 9 May (PCC), and a Ferruginous Hawk in Meeker 4 May (DMF), all in Minnesota. A tardy Rough-legged Hawk was seen in Dane, WI 31 May (LA). The only Gyrfalcon was in Michigan's Chippewa 27 Mar (SB, EP), while single Prairie Falcons were reported from Rock, WI 4 Apr (AP) and Becker, MN 16 Apr (SK). Wisconsin had four Yellow Rail reports from four counties, about average for spring, while Minnesota had first county records in Meeker 2 May (D&BM) and Stearns 17 May (RMD). A Common Moorhen in Sherburne, MN 25 May+ (PLJ) was unusual, as was an early migrant Sandhill Crane in Wadena, MN 8 Mar (DBM).

Michigan reported American Golden-Plovers in exceptionally high numbers, with high counts of 95 in Berrien 29 Apr (ATC, m.ob.) and 31 in Monroe 25 Apr (WP). Minnesota hosted a Snowy Plover in Marshall 30 May (D&BW, JM) and Piping Plovers in five counties; Wisconsin experienced an average spring for Piping Plovers, with singles in six counties. A pair of Black-necked Stilts returned to last year's nesting location in Dodge, WI 25 Apr+ (EH); the same pair was likely seen earlier on 25 Apr in Columbia (DGr, CM). American Avocets were observed in off-the-chart numbers in Michigan, with at least 31 birds in four counties; Wisconsin had eight sightings in five counties. Michigan had at least 35 Willets in seven counties, probably the best numbers in the last decade. Unusual away from Minnesota's North Shore were Whimbrel reports of 2 in Polk 21 May (JCC, HHD), 3 in Marshall 23 May (REM et al.), and 6 in Kandiyohi 23 May (DAB, JWH). Eight

Whimbrel and nine Hudsonian Godwit reports from six and nine counties, respectively, were above average for Wisconsin. Minnesota birders found Red Knots in St. Louis 21 (PHS) & 23 May (DWK) and Marshall 23 May (REM et al.). Wisconsin had seven reports from five counties, while all 7 of Michigan's Red Knots were in Bay. Baird's Sandpiper, a casual spring migrant in Michigan, was found in Baraga 14 May (LD) and Keweenaw 16 May (JK, AL; p.a.). Minnesota had record-early Dunlin in Brown 27 Mar (BTS) and a notable high count of 480 in Marshall 24 May (PHS, m.ob.). Rarely observed spring migrant Buff-breasted Sandpipers were found in Swift, MN 18 May (WCM) and Adams, WI 30 May (DT). The only Ruff was in Dakota, MN 14 May (JPM, m.ob.).

## GULLS THROUGH NIGHTJARS

Very unexpected was a Black-legged Kittiwake in Sanilac, MI 2-4 Apr (MW, KO, DHa). An impressive 2020 Bonaparte's Gulls at Duluth 14 May (KJB) were part of a movement that brought 2 ad. Little Gulls to the Duluth area 14-18 May (KJB, D&SG, PHS). Wisconsin had Little Gulls in Manitowoc 20 May (CS) and Kewaunee 26 May (PS), and Michigan had one in Iosco 21 May (JBU). Both Laughing and Franklin's Gulls were seen in above-average numbers in Wisconsin; Michigan had a



The dark iris, reddish orbital ring, and characteristic bill markings can all be seen in this "digibinned" image of an adult California Gull at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, Marshall County, Minnesota 23 May 2009. Photograph by Kim R. Eckert.

Laughing Gull in Berrien 30 May (TB) and single Franklin's Gulls in Berrien 18 Apr (RJ, AV) and Houghton 14 May (JK, LD). Minnesota had the only California Gulls, a subad. in St. Louis 4 May (JCG; p.a.) and an ad. in Marshall 23 May (KRE, m.ob.). Thayer's Gulls, both first-cycle (PHS) and second-cycle (KJB), were late at Duluth 30 May, as was a second-cycle Iceland Gull in St. Louis 18-21 May (KJB). Still noteworthy in Minnesota were single Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Hennepin 28 Mar-5 Apr (DWK, PEB, WW) and



Minnesota's twelfth Sage Thrasher was the fourth to be found in heavily birded Hennepin County, at urban Lake Harriet 13 (here) and 14 May 2009. Photograph by Matt Dufort.

Martin 10 Apr (BWF). The wintering Slaty-backed Gull in Sheboygan, WI was last reported 29 Mar (CS). Minnesota birders reported ad. Arctic Terns in Dakota 13-14 May (JPM, ADS) and Duluth 21-23 May (PHS, MLH). Rare in spring was a Pomarine Jaeger in Douglas, WI 16 May (PHS); Parasitic Jaegers were at Duluth 25 May (MLH) and Chippewa, MI 29 May (AMB, PCC).

Eurasian Collared-Doves are found practically statewide in Minnesota, with reports from 34 counties, compared to only seven Wisconsin counties and a single Michigan report in Mason 24 Apr (CD). The only White-winged Dove was in Baraga, MI 10 May (JK). Northern Hawk Owls lingered through 21 Apr in Lake of the Woods, MN (TD) and through 4 May in Luce, MI (DS). The only Boreal Owl observed away from Whitefish Pt., where 73 were banded this season, was one in Cook, MN. Keeping pace with each other were Chuck-will's-widows each returning for their 5th years in Berrien, MI 4 May+ (MB, m.ob.) and Jackson, WI 11 May+ (JO).

## WOODPECKERS THROUGH WARBLERS

Still rare in Michigan was an American Three-toed Woodpecker in Keweenaw 23 May (JH). A Willow Flycatcher in Waukesha, WI 27 Apr (DG) was exceptionally early. Minnesota hosted Say's Phoebes in Cottonwood/Jackson 2 May (KRE et al.) and Anoka 12-13 May (D&PG), while Michigan's only Western Kingbird was in Alger 30-31 May (JC, SHi, MHu, JHu). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was in Milwaukee, WI 30 Apr (fide NC). Both Wisconsin and Minnesota report-

ed good numbers of Loggerhead Shrikes, while Michigan had no reports. A Bell's Vireo in Morrison, MN 18-23 May (FG) was n. of usual. The Region's first Fish Crow frequented a landfill in s. Berrien, MI 16 May+ (MH, TB, m.ob.; p.a.). Carolina Wrens seem to have survived last winter's record snowfalls in Wisconsin, while Minnesota had only one in Houston. Minnesota hosted the only Townsend's Solitaires and had an early Swainson's Thrush in Hennepin 18 Apr (ALD). All three states reported lingering Varied Thrushes. Northern Mockingbirds put on a good show in both Wisconsin and Minnesota, and a Sage Thrasher was in Hennepin, MN 13-14 Apr (TAT, m.ob.).

A wintering Orange-crowned Warbler was still present on 11 Mar in Marquette, MI (L&PC). Quite early were a Northern Parula in Dane, WI 18 Apr (MNo) and a Blackburnian Warbler in Muskegon, MI 25 Apr (CF). Seven Yellow-throated Warbler reports from six counties was the most ever for Wisconsin. Michigan had out-of-range Yellow-throateds in St. Clair 22-23 Apr (DM, RE, m.ob.) and Keweenaw 15 May (fide SH), while one in St. Louis, MN 18 May (CE, PHS, DOK) made only the 2nd county record. Wisconsin's Kirtland's Warbler population seems to be slowly growing; this spring, there were 6 females and 8 males in Adams (fide JT). Also in Wisconsin were Prairie Warblers in Ozaukee 27 Apr

lone record was one in Hennepin 15 May (TAT, ADS).

## TANAGERS THROUGH WEAVER FINCHES

Summer Tanagers showed up in impressive numbers for the 2nd consecutive spring: Wisconsin had over 30 birds; Minnesota had reports from 11 counties, including firsts in Carver and Waseca; and Michigan had at least 7 birds in four counties. May brought 5 Western Tanagers to four Minnesota counties; Wisconsin had singles in Juncau 27 Apr (GB) and Waukesha 19-21 May (PD). Minnesota again hosted the only Spotted Towhees, birds in Lac Qui Parle and Lyon. Michigan had Lark Sparrows in Washtenaw 26 Apr (MSJ, m.ob.), Mackinac 21 May (GV), and Barry 28 May+ (BR, m.ob.); Minnesota reported one in St. Louis 17-19 May (KJB, PHS). A Henslow's Sparrow in Pennington, MN 24-27 May (KRE) was an unusual nw. record. Migrant Nelson's Sparrows were reported from Milwaukee, WI 8 May (SL) and Berrien, MI (TB, MH). Minnesota's wintering Golden-crowned Sparrow reappeared in St. Louis 29 Mar-2 Apr after a hiatus of more than three weeks; even more surprising was the appearance of another at a feeder in Dakota 25 & 30 Mar (JPM, ADS, TAT). Michigan had only four spring records of Smith's Longspur prior to 2009, so a flock of up to 40+ in Berrien 27 Apr-9 May (AV, RJ; p.a.) was unprecedented.



Lark Sparrow, considered a vagrant along the North Shore of Lake Superior, was nicely photographed at Park Point, Duluth, Minnesota 19 May 2009. Photograph by Peder H. Svingen.

(TSc) and Racine 20 May (JD); Minnesota had Prairies in Rice 13 May (DTa) and Blue Earth 23 May (CH). A Yellow Palm Warbler was in Wayne, MI 24 Apr (JAC). All three states reported Worm-eating Warblers; Minnesota's

An additional one was in Keweenaw, MI 12 May (JK, LD), and 7 were in Kandiyohi, MN 24 Apr (RSF). Unusually far e. was a male Chestnut-collared Longspur in Dakota, MN 18 Apr (MD, SW). Late were 3 Snow Buntings in Door,



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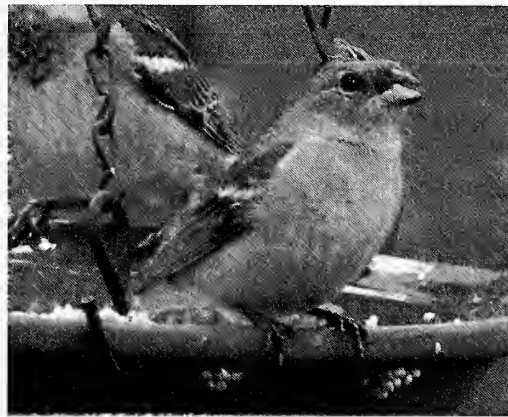
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This female Lazuli Bunting lingered at Star Lake, Otter Tail County, Minnesota 23-27 (here 26) May, and an adult male was seen at the same feeder 23-24 May. Photograph by Peder H. Svingen.

WI 22 May (RL). Minnesota produced 4 Blue Grosbeaks, including an early female in *Blue Earth* 30 Apr (DAC, RBJ) and a first county record for *Nicollet* 21-29 May (RMD, CH, CMB, m.ob.); 4 Blue Grosbeaks in Wisconsin were the most spring reports in memory. Buntings in Minnesota included a male Lazuli 23-24 Mar and a female 23-27 Mar at a feeder in *Otter Trail* (AR, PHS, m.ob.) and male Painteds in *Clay* 19-21 May (KB, PBB, DAC, m.ob.) and *Rock* 20 May (fide BAF). Other Painted Buntings were males in *Door*, WI 27 Apr (fide RB), *Midland*, MI 6 May (JPF, JZ), and *Alcona*, MI 10-14 May (REr, CWh). Very early was a Dickcissel in *Nicollet*, MN 24 Apr (RMD); another in *Carlton* 31 May (DC) was unusual for ne. Minnesota.

Great-tailed Grackles were in two Minnesota counties. A Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch was in *St. Louis*, MN 17 Mar (MR; p.a.). After the big winter invasion, White-winged Crossbills remained widespread in Mar, but few were reported in the s. portions of Michigan or Minnesota in Apr or May; Michigan's peak count was 100 in *Livingston* 14 Mar (LH, CK), an impressive total for s. Michigan. Pine Siskins did linger s. of normal in Michigan, with evidence of breeding in 19 s. counties. All three states reported lingering Hoary Redpolls, with the latest record on 10 Apr in Minnesota. A Eurasian Tree Sparrow visited the Whitefish Pt. feeders in *Chippewa*, MI 20 May (CN).

Corrigenda: From spring 2008, the Snowy Plover in *Green Lake*, WI was the state's 5th, not 2nd, state record.

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Stephen J. Dinsmore

The 2009 spring season continued the cool and wet pattern experienced in 2008, although not to record levels. March was a month of extremes, with a more than 80° F temperature fluctuation in Iowa; Missouri exhibited a more normal pattern. The first half of April was cool Regionwide, with more normal temperatures appearing after mid-month. A late snowstorm dropped up to 25 cm of snow across central Iowa on 4-5 April, and much of the eastern part of the Region was wetter than normal. May weather patterns were near normal, although all but northwestern Iowa remained wetter than normal. There were few strong cold fronts in May to stall migrants, but persistent southwesterly air flow in early May produced numerous western rarities. The best finds included Red-throated Loon, Brown Pelican, Neotropical Cormorant, Anhinga, Ferruginous Hawk, Snowy Plover, Ruff, Little Gull, and a Fork-tailed Flycatcher in each state (a first for Missouri). The season had a distinctly western flavor, with reports of Western Tanager, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Black-headed Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, and Iowa's first Violet-green Swallow, and Mountain Bluebird.

**Abbreviations:** E.B.C.A. (Eagle Bluffs C.A., Boone, MO); Hawkeye (Hawkeye W.A., Johnson, IA); O.S.C.A. (Otter Slough C.A., Stoddard, MO); R.M.B.S. (Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles, MO); Riverton (W.A., Fremont, IA); S.C.R. (Squaw Creek N.W.R., Holt, MO); Saylorville (Saylorville Res., Polk, IA); S.O.C.A. (Schell-Osage C.A., Vernon/St. Clair, MO); W.B.S.P. (Weston Bend S.P., Platte, MO).

## WATERFOWL

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continue to

appear in the Region. Iowa had singles at Diamond L., Poweshiek 30 Apr (†MPr, m.ob.) and at Hobbs Pits, Carroll 1 May (†SJD, m.ob., ph.), and 2 were in Missouri at E.B.C.A. 14-16 May (†Dick Baskett, m.ob.). Snow Geese were numerous only in Iowa, with a peak of 100,000 in Monona 13 Mar (GLV). Ross's Geese were plentiful this season, with 500 at Grand Pass C.A., Saline, MO 11 Mar (EW) and 3500 in Page, IA 5 Mar (KDy). Trumpeter Swans were widely reported in both states, while the only Tundra Swans were in Iowa through 4 Apr. Cinnamon Teal were scarce: 3 males were in nw. Missouri 13 Mar-14 May (m.ob.), and one male was in Boone, IA 6 Apr (Jim Moreland). Scoter reports included single Surf Scoters at Saylorville 28 Apr-4 May (JB, m.ob.) and in Crawford, IA 3-21 May (SJD, m.ob.); single White-winged Scoters were noted at R.M.B.S. 1 Mar (PKe) and in Grundy, IA 20 Mar (RIA, PHA); and 4 Black Scoters were at R.M.B.S. 4 Apr (JWE). Four Long-tailed Ducks were detected in a narrow window, 12-17 Mar, in both states. Among the tardy waterfowl reported this spring were an American Wigeon at R.M.B.S. 15 May (JPU), a Greater Scaup on 10 May in Marion, IA (SJD, JG), 2 Buffleheads at O.S.C.A. 26 May (JPU et al.), and a Common Merganser in Guthrie, IA 11 May (DTh).

## GROUSE THROUGH RAPTORS

Gallinaceous birds were not well reported this spring. Gray Partridge were detected in five cen. and n.-cen. Iowa counties, where most recent reports have occurred. No Ruffed Grouse were reported from their remaining haunts in Iowa. Greater Prairie-Chicken numbers continue to dwindle in Missouri with fewer than 100 reported on leks statewide (BJ); a maximum of 15 was reported at the Kellerton, Ringgold lek in Iowa. A Red-throated Loon at Badger Creek Recreation Area, Madison, IA 22-28 Mar (RIA, PHA, JG, ph.) was unusually early and a rare spring find. The large grebes appeared only in Iowa, with 6 Red-necked Grebes at five locales 25 Mar-21 May and Western Grebes at 10 locales 25 Apr-27 May. Missouri hosted 2 Brown Pelicans this spring: an imm. lingered from Feb through 3 Mar at L. of the Ozarks, Camden (†BJ), and another imm. was at R.M.B.S. 11-31 May (†BRu, m.ob.). The season's only Neotropical Cormorant, a subad., appeared 25-26 Apr at S.O.C.A. (†BJ, EW, m.ob.). A lone Anhinga at O.S.C.A. 11 & 26 Apr (†CBa) was also no-

table. Southern heron reports were lean. Little Blue Herons were reported from one Iowa and two Missouri locales 7 Apr-2 May; Snowy Egrets were at four Iowa locales 20 Apr-10 May; and a Tricolored Heron was at S.O.C.A. 25 Apr (BJ, ph.). White-faced Ibis had a good spring showing in both states, with up to 14 at 13 Iowa locales 24 Apr-22 May and a peak of 42 in Holt, MO 9 May (DE). Surprisingly, there were no reports of Glossy Ibis.

Black Vultures continue to march northward in Missouri; 1-7 birds were reported from Camden, Dallas, St. Charles, and Ste. Genevieve, and nesting is now suspected at the latter site (JPU et al.). Mississippi Kites returned early to Missouri, with 1-2 birds at O.S.C.A. 25 Apr (JWE) and in Jasper (LH); in Iowa, 1-2 birds returned to Polk beginning on 19 May (JB et al.). Three Northern Goshawks in Iowa 29 Mar-11 Apr were surprising after a lackluster winter showing. Large spring flights of Broad-winged Hawks are seldom witnessed, so 1500 in Decatur, IA 23 Apr was notable (Ben Baldwin). An ad. Ferruginous Hawk in Van Buren, IA 24 Mar (†JWR) furnished one of few spring records for the state and was far from the species' normal Missouri River Valley haunts. Rough-legged Hawks lingered through 15 Mar in Benton, MO (JWE) and through 22 Apr in Kossuth, IA (MCK). Six Golden Eagles in Iowa 2-27 Mar represented an above-average number for the spring season.

## RAILS THROUGH TERNS

The only Yellow Rails were in Story, IA, with 2 on 22 Apr (SSP) and one on 3 May (Carl Kurtz). Single King Rails were found at O.S.C.A. 2 & 9 May (JWE et al.), in Holt, MO 22 May (MBR et al.), and in Greene, IA 28-29



This adult male Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Iowa's second record in less than two years, was seen by many 25-27 (here 26) April 2009 near Dysart, Tama County. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore.

May (Tyler Harms, SJD), a poor showing for this once uncommon breeder. Common Moorhen was reported from seven Iowa locales 29 Apr-24 May, mostly in the n. half of the state. Sandhill Cranes continue to solidify their breeding range in the Region. Broods were seen Polk (BE et al.), Winnemago (CJF),



This stunning male Western Tanager, one of two that appeared in Iowa in spring 2009, was present 9-10 (here 10) May at Cherokee, Cherokee County. Photograph by Paul O. Roisen.

and *Winneshiek* (EB) in Iowa, and lingering ads. at S.C.R. (KM, m.ob.) and E.B.C.A. (BJ, m.ob.) were suggestive of nesting in Missouri.

The spring shorebird migration was at best average, and many species moved through the Region later than normal. Among the few notable early records were a Solitary Sandpiper in *Butler*, MO 22 Mar (†CBA), a Greater Yellowlegs in *Warren*, IA 7 Mar (AB), a White-rumped Sandpiper at S.O.C.A. 24 Apr (BJ), single Dunlins at R.M.B.S. 22 Mar (JPU) and at Saylorville 2 Apr (SJD, JG), and single Wilson's Phalaropes at Riverton 21 Mar (POR, KDy) and at Horseshoe L., *Buchanan*, MO 25 Mar (LL). Iowa hosted 2 Snowy Plovers this spring, one in *Woodbury* 22-27 Apr (†POR, ph.) and one at Saylorville 25-27 Apr (†JB, m.ob.). Piping Plovers appeared at one Missouri and four Iowa locations after 19 Apr. The northward march of Black-necked Stilts slowed this spring: there were four Missouri reports of 1-2 birds along the Mississippi R. in *Lincoln* and *St. Charles* 8 Apr-16 May. Farther n. in Iowa, there were reports of one at *Hawkeye* 29 Apr (Chris J. Caster et al.), 2 at *Cone Marsh, Louisa* 1 May (James Fuller), and one at *Riverton* 14-15 May (KDy, JG). In Missouri, American Avocets were confined to *Holt*, with a maximum of 27 on 9 May (MBR et al.), except for 2 on 14 May at R.M.B.S. (JWE). They were more widespread in Iowa, where most reports came from the s. half of the state and where the peak count of 28 came from Saylorville 25 Apr (AB et al.). Willets were widely reported in Missouri 5 Apr-9 May, with a peak of 100 at L. Jacomo, *Jackson* 26 Apr (Sandra Wallace, ph.). Smaller numbers occurred across Iowa 18 Apr-31 May. Whimbrel reports included one at R.M.B.S. 14 May (JWE) and a flock of 6 at *Forney L., Fremont* 15 May (†KDy, ph.). Hudsonian Godwits were plentiful along the Missouri River Valley,

with peak counts of 141 at *Riverton* on 8 May (KDy) and 116 in *Holt*, MO 9 May (DE et al.). Aside from a single report in Missouri, all Marbled Godwits were in Iowa, with an impressive movement on 17 May that included 18 at Saylorville (SJD, JG) and 29 at *Dan Green Slough, Clay* (Lee A. Schoenewe). A record-early Ruddy Turnstone appeared 26 Apr at Saylorville (BE); elsewhere there were 1-2 birds at three Missouri locales 9-19 May and 1-9 birds at five Iowa locales 16-30 May. The 213 Stilt Sandpipers in *Holt*, MO 9 May was a good spring count (DE).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper is a rare spring migrant in the Region; the only reports were one at *Dunbar Slough, Greene*, IA 2 May (CJF) and 2 at S.C.R. 22 May (MBR et al.). Single Ruffs appeared in each state: a stunning black-maned male in alternate plumage at O.S.C.A. 22-25 Apr (†Bill Reeves, m.ob., ph.) and a molting male at *Cone Marsh, Louisa*, IA 28 Apr (†Jim Forde, ph.). Red-necked Phalaropes were reported at nine locales in Iowa 10-31 May; the only Missouri report involved 9 in *Holt* 14 May (MBR, Jon King).

The only Laughing Gull was a single ad. along the Mississippi R. in *Scott*, IA 11 May (Steve M. Freed). An ad. Little Gull at R.M.B.S. 11 May was an especially rare find so late in spring (Dan Kassenbaum, m.ob.). Large gulls exited the Region quickly, mostly during the rapid ice melt in mid-Mar. Tardy Herring Gulls included single first-cycle birds at R.M.B.S. 30 May (BR) and at Saylorville 31 May (DTh). A Thayer's Gull lingered until 2 Apr at Saylorville (SJD), and Iowa hosted 3 Glaucous Gulls, with the last on 24 Mar at *Fort Madison, Lee* (JWR). Away from the Missouri R., single Least Terns appeared at R.M.B.S. 14-16 May (JWE, MT) and at *Ames, Story*, IA 29 May (SJD). Other terns appeared in good numbers in Iowa, with 55 Caspians at Saylorville 17 May (SJD, JG) and 1000 Blacks in *Linn* 14 May (BSc). Common Terns appeared in numbers in both states: up to 13 in Missouri 8-15 May and up to 5 in Iowa 29 Apr-27 May.

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

Eurasian Collared-Doves now occur Region-wide and were noted expanding into rural areas in both states. White-winged Doves were noted in both states. In Missouri, there were six reports, including returning birds near a nest site in *Mississippi* (JWE). In Iowa, singles appeared in *Decatur* 5 Apr (Nathan Miller)

and in *Page* 25-27 May (KDy). On the heels of a good winter showing, Snowy Owls lingered in both states. Oddly, the latest birds were in Missouri, singles in *Caldwell* 15 Mar (SK, m.ob.) and in *Livingston* 19 Mar (SK). Four single Snowies in the n. half of Iowa were detected in a narrow window, 3-7 Mar. Long-eared Owls nested unsuccessfully in *Livingston*, MO, near a site where they have nested previously (SK). Chuck-will's-widows were considered plentiful in Missouri, with a high count of 8 in *Holt* 9 May (DE); one was more unusual in *Fremont*, IA 22 May (KDy). *Empidonax* flycatchers made the news in both states this spring. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were well reported in Iowa 18-30 May, whereas 3 reported in cen. and w. Missouri 13-22 May were more unusual. Alder Flycatchers were also well reported from Iowa 17-31 May but went unreported in Missouri. Willow Flycatchers appeared in good numbers in both states, with high counts of 19 in *Palo Alto*, IA 27 May (SSP) and 5 at R.M.B.S. 30 May (BR). Western Kingbirds continue to spread eastward in Missouri, with eight reports 25 Apr-31 May outside their normal haunts along the nw. edge of the state. An unusually early Scissor-tailed Flycatcher appeared 18 Mar in *Jasper*, MO (Jeff Cantrell).

Few Loggerhead Shrikes were reported in Missouri, although reports from 20 Iowa counties indicate a better-than-average spring showing. Northern Shrikes lingered in 14 Iowa counties, with the last reported in *Hancock* 30 Mar (PH); 5 Missouri individuals lingered through 15 Mar in *St. Charles* (JPU et al.). White-eyed Vireos are scarce in n. Missouri and Iowa, so reports of 9 in *Livingston*, MO 9 May (SK) and 5 in *Johnson*, IA 30 May (CRE) were notable. Bell's Vireo has a patchy distribution in the Region and is most common along the floodplain of the Missouri R., where 13 in *Woodbury*, IA on 24 May (TLu) made a good count. A Black-billed Magpie nest was discovered at the Broken Kettle

**SA** Amazingly, 2 Fork-tailed Flycatchers appeared in the Region this spring. The first was an ad. male near *Dysart, Tama*, IA 25-27 Apr (†Mary Ann Gregory, m.ob., ph.), just 17 months after the state's first was discovered only miles away. Missouri's first was an imm. near *Muskat L., Buchanan* 26-28 Apr (†Connie C. Thompson, m.ob., ph.). Both birds were well photographed and both of the highly migratory *savana* subspecies. The simultaneity of these records suggests that their appearances involved common circumstances, almost certainly a combination of reverse-migratory impulses and continental weather patterns, as has been postulated in the literature for some time.



Grasslands in *Plymouth* 21 Apr (TLu, POR), the only regular Regional location for this species. Fish Crows appeared in *Newton*, MO 9 Mar (EW) but did not show evidence of any major range expansions this year. None was detected in Iowa, although perhaps this is due to a lack of concerted searches in Apr and May. A Violet-green Swallow near Hawarden, *Sioux* 14 May (†Ken Hollinga, †Dan Reinking, ph.) was the first for Iowa. The bird was found foraging low over water with other swallows on a cold morning, conditions that appear to be ideal for detecting this species. Carolina Chickadee continued its slow spread northward in Missouri with 3 in *Callaway* 15 Apr (EW); observers should be aware of the possibility of hybrids near the zone of contact with Black-capped Chickadee. Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce this spring, although they lingered late in both states, with 2 at *Watkins Mill S.P.*, *Clay*, MO 2 May (KM) and one in *Des Moines*, *Polk*, IA 17 May (JG, SJD). Bewick's Wrens remain a scarce breeding bird in the Region with just three reports of singles: at the usual *Lee*, IA locale after 14 Apr (Charles Fuller), in *Jasper*, MO 15-22 Apr (LH), and in *Decatur*, IA 5 May (Ben Baldwin).

A Mountain Bluebird near Camp Mitgwa, *Boone*, IA 3-4 Apr (†Jorgen Johansen, ph.) was Iowa's first since 2004. A late Townsend's Solitaire at *Pioneer Park*, *Mitchell*, IA 11 May (RIA, PHA, ph.) may have wintered nearby. Thrush movements in cen. Iowa on 6 & 13 May included large numbers of Swainson's and a few Gray-cheekeds (SSP). Hermit Thrush is an earlier migrant in the Region, as hinted by the excellent count of 140 in *Boone*, IA 8 Apr (LGD). American Pipits were plentiful, with above-average counts of 150 in *Hancock*, IA 30 Mar (PH) and 60 at O.S.C.A. 4 Apr (JPU, Scott Schuette). Four reports of Sprague's Pipit were above normal for the Region: 2 at *Taberville Prairie*, *St. Clair*, MO 22 Mar (JWE), 2 at *Wah' Kon-Tah Prairie*, *St. Clair*, MO 22 Mar (JWE), 2 n. of *El Dorado Springs*, *St. Clair*, MO 8 Apr (BJ), and one in *Fremont*, IA 16 May (†Karen Viste-Sparkman).

## WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS

The warbler migration was close to average in terms of timing, numbers, and diversity. Most seemed to trickle through the Region slowly, although there was an exceptional fallout 17 May across e. Iowa. Many species were either absent or sporadically reported from the w. third of Iowa, a pattern that is typical of most springs. The 7 Blue-winged Warblers at *Stephens S.F.*, *Lucas*, IA 22 May (AMJ) and 5 Golden-winged Warblers at W.B.S.P. 9 May (MBR et al.) were notable totals. Cape May Warblers were most numerous in Iowa, with

reports from 15 counties 6-22 May; reports at *Hawarden*, *Sioux* 8 May (POR) and in *Sac* 10 May (Stan Buman) were w. of their normal migration routes. Cape May reports in cen. Missouri, where the species is notable, included one at E.B.C.A. 16 May (JPO, EW) and 2 in *Livingston* 16 May (SK, LL). The five reports of Black-throated Blue Warbler made an excellent spring total and included one at *Wildcat Park*, *Newton*, MO 15 May (Bob Dyer) and 4 in Iowa: a male at *Union Grove S.P.*, *Tama* 6 May (MPr), a male at *Algona*, *Kossuth* 11-12 May (Sharon Arndorfer), a female at *Indianola*, *Warren* 13 May (James Sinclair), and a male at *Ames*, *Story* 16 May (SJD). Yellow-throated Warbler has a local distribution in the Region; a bird after mid-Apr at *St. Joseph*, *Buchanan*, MO (Jack Hilsabeck) and 2 at *Blackhawk L.*, *Sac*, IA 13 May (Pete Erzen) were at unexpected locales. Pine Warbler is a rare migrant in Iowa, where singles were noted at *Grammar Grove Park*, *Marshall* 6 May (MPr), at *Matsell Bridge W.A.*, *Linn* 14 May (BSc, PH), and at *Shimek S.F.*, *Lee* 18 May near a previous nesting locale (JWR). Different Prairie Warblers in *St. Charles*, MO on 16 (MT) & 21 May (PKe) were notable for that state. Cerulean Warblers were well reported in Iowa, with a peak of 11 at *Mines of Spain*, *Dubuque* 29 May (CRE) and a lost individual at *Bacon Creek Park*, *Woodbury* 21-22 May (GLV et al.). An early Prothonotary Warbler in *Des Moines*, *Polk*, IA 23 Apr (AMJ) presaged a good showing across the se. half of Iowa. Out-of-range Worm-eating Warblers included singles at *Elk Rock S.P.*, *Marion*, IA on 10 May (JG, SJD), at *Cardinal Marsh*, *Winneshiek*, IA 22 May (EB), and at W.B.S.P. 25 May (Helen Hewins, Nancy Leo). A pair of Louisiana Waterthrushes nested in *Sioux City*, *Woodbury* (POR), far from their normal e. Iowa haunts. Similar to 2007, the Connecticut Warbler flight was excellent in both states. In Missouri, there were four reports of singles in *Webster* 25 May (Andrew Kinslow), at *Columbia Bottoms C.A.*, *St. Louis* 17 May (JPU), at *Tower Grove Park*, *St. Louis* 23 May (MT), and at *Grindstone Park*, *Boone* 31 May (BJ). A total of 19 birds was reported in Iowa 13-31 May; one at *Bacon Creek Park*, *Woodbury* 22 May (GLV) was unusual for nw. Iowa. Hooded Warblers are unusual in nw. Missouri, where there were 4 at W.B.S.P. 22 May (MBR et al.); the nine Iowa reports 25 Apr-31 May was an above-normal count for recent years. An early Summer Tanager was noted at *Whiterock Conservancy*, *Guthrie*, IA 15 Apr (†Scott Schmidt). Iowa hosted 2 male Western Tanagers this spring: at *Cherokee*, *Cherokee* 9-10 May (†Dick Bierman, †POR, ph.) and in *Cerro Gordo* 15-17 May (†Rita Goranson, †CJE, ph.).



This lingering male White-winged Crossbill graced a Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri feeder through 3 April 2009 (here 20 January). Photograph by Bonnie Gibeson.

## TOWHEES THROUGH SISKINS

Seven Spotted Towhees in Iowa included a late individual at *Smith W.A.*, *Kossuth* 21 May (PH, MCK). Clay-colored Sparrows were well reported in both states; a record-late bird was at *Bigelow Marsh*, *Holt*, MO on 22 May (MBR et al.), and presumed nesting birds were in Iowa on 26 May in *Winnebago* and 28 May in *Worth* (SSP). Henslow's Sparrows are doing well in Iowa, with many reports from se. Iowa and a few as far nw. as *Clay* and *Emmet* in May (SSP). The only Nelson's Sparrows were in Missouri, with 2 at *Prairie S.P.*, *Barton* 9 May (Steve Hilty) and 2 at *Jefferson Barracks Park*, *St. Louis* 17 May (BRu). In Missouri, lingering sparrows included a Lincoln's at R.M.B.S. 30 May (BR, JWE) and a Dark-eyed Junco in *Livingston* 9 May (Terry McNeely). Lapland Longspurs appeared in large numbers in Iowa during the last 10 days of Mar, highlighted by a peak of 4000 in *Grundy* 20 Mar (MPr). Reports of Smith's Longspur came from two w. Missouri locations and 10 Iowa counties 3 Mar-22 Apr, about typical for spring. A Chestnut-collared Longspur at *Dunn Ranch*, *Harri-son*, MO 15 Mar (SK) was an excellent find and the first since 2001. Black-headed Grosbeaks invaded Iowa this spring, with single males recorded at *Story City*, *Story* 13-14 May (†Sue Yeakel), in *Woodbury* 14 May (†POR), in *Boone* 17 May (†LGD), at *Sioux City*, *Woodbury* 17-18 May (†Kim Mounts), and at *Sioux Center*, *Sioux* 19 May (†John Van Dyk). Lazuli Buntings appeared in both states, with one at *Wildcat Park*, *Newton*, MO 3 May (LH), one in *Des Moines*, *Polk*, IA 5-7 May (†Michael

Cigelman, m.ob., ph.), and one in Cass, MO 15 May (†Joan Jefferson). A lost Painted Bunting appeared 5-31 May in Jefferson City, Cole, MO (JPo, m.ob.). There were few reports of Rusty Blackbirds, but these did include Iowa flocks of 300 at Forney L., Fremont 21 Mar (KDy) and 350 at Mallard Marsh, Cerro Gordo 11 Apr (JB). Great-tailed Grackle numbers may be dwindling, as there were not many reports this spring, although Missouri reports from Livingston and Macon were deemed unusual.

Winter finches lingered well into spring, holdovers from an excellent winter showing. Red Crossbills, oddly, appeared only in Missouri, with 3 at St. Joseph, Buchanan through 14 Mar (LL) and 2 in Webb City, Jasper 22-27 Apr (Kelly Hall). White-winged Crossbills appeared in both states, with seven reports of 1-9 birds in Iowa through 29 Mar and one male

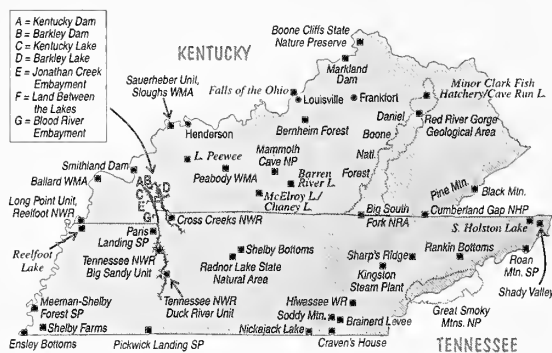
at Kansas City, Jackson, MO through 3 Apr (Bonnie Gibeson). Common Redpolls lingered through 11 Apr at Liscomb, Marshall, IA (MPr) and through 2 Mar at Lee's Summit, Jackson, MO (Ruth Simmons). After an outstanding winter showing, it was not surprising that Pine Siskins lingered in both states, with nesting evidence was noted in Cerro Gordo, Crawford, Hardin, Jefferson, Kossuth, Palo Alto, Polk, Story, Warren, and Webster, probably equaling all previous nesting reports for the state. Eurasian Tree Sparrows continue to expand in the Region slowly; one in Boone, MO 31 Mar-6 Apr (BJ, EW) was such a pioneer.

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## Tennessee & Kentucky



### Chris Sloan Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

The spring 2009 season's weather was relatively typical overall. Mean temperatures were warmer than normal across the Region during March but near normal Regionwide during April and May. Precipitation was somewhat variable over the Region during the period. March was dry across much of Kentucky but especially so in the north-central part of the state, where Louisville and Lexington received less than half the normal amount of rainfall. In contrast, most of the Region received above-average rainfall during April and near-normal to slightly above-normal precipitation during May. The lack of spring cold snaps bode well for natural and ornamental food supplies.

Rarity highlights included Brown Pelican,

Anhinga, White-faced Ibis, Western Kingbird, Northern Shrike, Rock Wren, Clay-colored Sparrow, Painted Bunting, and lingering White-winged Crossbills in Kentucky, and Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Brown Pelican, Swainson's Hawk, and White-winged Dove in Tennessee. In contrast to the spring of 2008, shorebirds were neither particularly diverse nor numerous despite the presence of some good habitat. Boreal finches lingered well into spring, and Pine Siskins apparently attempted to nest at a few locales.

Abbreviations: Ensley (Ensley Bottoms, including the EARTH Complex, in sw. Shelby, TN); Falls of the Ohio (Jefferson, KY); Long Point (Long Point Unit Reelfoot N.W.R., Fulton, KY); Robco L. (Shelby, TN); Sauerheber (Sauerheber Unit Sloughs W.M.A., Henderson, KY); Standifer Gap (Standifer Gap Marsh, Hamilton, TN).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH IBIS

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were at Ensley 2 May+ (VR, m.ob.), with a high of 7 on 3 May (JRW). A pair was seen copulating 26 May (ph. JRW), and at least one pair nested for the 2nd consecutive year. Another pair was at Coro L., Shelby, TN 22 May (RG). A Greater White-fronted Goose at Upper Douglas L., Cocke, TN 7 May (MS) was very late.

A Cackling Goose on L. Barkley, Trigg, KY 6 Apr (†BL) established a new late departure date for the state, while 2 at Chester Frost Park, Hamilton, TN 14-15 Mar (DJ et al.) were the first ever known from se. Tennessee. There were only three reports of Tundra Swan: 4 from the wintering flock at Sauerheber were last seen 8 Mar (CC), one at Chaney L., Warren, KY 19 Mar (DR), and one in Hawkins, TN 22-28 Mar (WC).

A male and 2 female Greater Scaup in Shelby Bottoms, Nashville, TN 13 Apr (PC) tied the late date for the Nashville area. There were only two reports of Surf Scoter: 5 including an ad. male on the Ohio R., Jefferson, KY 23 Apr (JBe, PB), and 2 females on Kentucky L. above the dam 1 May (BPa). There were four reports of White-winged Scoter: one at Fishpond L., Letcher, KY 12 Mar (RD), 2 including a wintering ad. male lingered on the Ohio R. at Louisville, KY through 13 Mar (BPa), one at Wilbur L., Carter, TN through 23 Mar (RiK), and 3 at Pickwick L., Hardin, TN 31 Mar (DSi). The only Black Scoter reported was a female/imm. at Ballard W.M.A., Ballard, KY 20 Mar (SR). There were four reports of Long-tailed Duck: one at S. Holston, Sullivan, TN lingered through 10 Mar (RoK); a male and female were at TVA L., Ensley 1-10 Mar (ph. JRW); a female was on Kentucky L., Marshall, KY 15 Mar (BY, MY, EHu); and a male was on Kentucky L. above the dam 15 Mar (JR). Rare loons were scarce, with only three reports of single Red-throateds from

Booker T. Washington S.P., *Hamilton*, TN 9 Mar (TR), Kentucky L., *Marshall*, KY 21 Mar (†BPa), and S. Holston L., *Sullivan* 26 Mar (RiK). The lone Red-necked Grebe reported during the season was at Boone L., *Sullivan/Washington*, TN 4 Mar (GE, RiK). Three Eared Grebes at S. Holston L., *Sullivan*, TN 17 Mar (RoK et al.) were the last of the wintering flock seen.

In addition to being quite a rare find for Kentucky, a female Anhinga nw. of Wickliffe, *Ballard*, KY 26 Mar (†JBr) was early for state by over a month. Six Anhingas and three nests were found in *Haywood*, TN 22 Apr (SS), and a remarkable flock of 24 at Chickasaw N.W.R., *Lauderdale*, TN 7 May (ph. MCT) was the highest count in the Region in decades. Perhaps the same imm. Brown Pelican was present in Kentucky on L. Cumberland, *Russell* 23-25 Apr (ph. T&CS), then on Cave Run L., KY 6 & 8 May (ph. CLe), and finally on L. Carnico, *Nicholas* 16 May+ (fide W&GK, WH, ph. MMO, ph. BY). Similarly, in Tennessee, perhaps the same Brown Pelican was present on Percy Priest L., *Davidson/Rutherford* 9-13 Apr (ph. SS) and Old Hickory L., *Davidson* 10 May (KO).

There were six Kentucky and six Tennessee reports of one to 2 American Bitterns 22 Mar-9 May. The only Least Bittern reported in Kentucky was one heard on the N. Fork Dryden Creek embayment of L. Barkley, *Lyon* 20 May (EHa). In Tennessee, one was calling at Williamsport Lakes, *Mauzy* 26 May (BPu), and one or more were present at Standifer Gap 3 May+ (KAC, DJ). A total of 355 Great Egret nests were counted at Shelby Forest, *Shelby*, TN 22 Apr (SS). A rare spring Tricolored Heron was at Gallatin Steam Plant, *Sumner*, TN 25 Apr (ph. DK). A *Plegadis* ibis, thought to be a Glossy, was in *Montgomery*, TN 9 May (SY). A White-faced Ibis entering alternate plumage was present at Long Point 25-26 Apr (ph. DH et al.) and represents a 3rd Kentucky record.

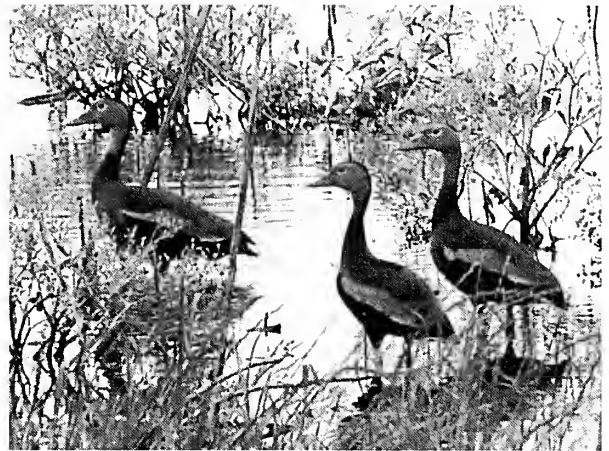
## RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

Single Mississippi Kites at Boatwright W.M.A., *Ballard* (SR), and at Clarks River N.W.R., *Marshall*, (HC), both 24 Apr, established a new early arrival date for Kentucky by two days. Mississippi Kites are rare outside the w. portion of the Region, so one at Sharp's Ridge, *Knox*, TN 26 Apr (CN et al.) and 2 in *Cheatham*, TN 9 May (JSt, JD) were noteworthy. A male Northern Goshawk was in Knoxville, *Knox*, TN 6 Apr (†CW). Two Rough-legged Hawks at Peabody W.M.A., *Muhlenberg*, KY 19 Apr (DMt) were the latest to be reported. An imm. Swainson's Hawk, one of only a handful ever documented in the

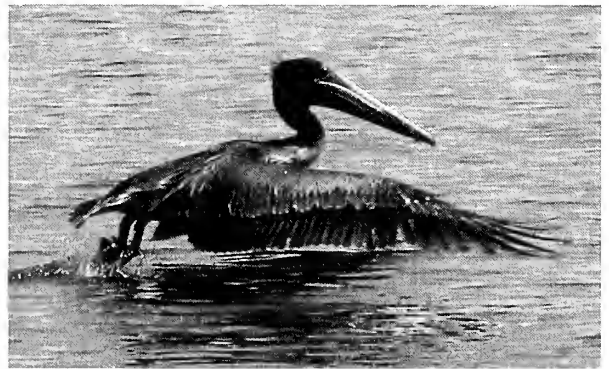
Region, was at Ensley 25 Apr (ph. JRW). There were four reports of Golden Eagle: 2 juvs. at the Dry Creek Overlook, Daniel Boone N.F., *McCreary*, KY 21 Mar (RD); an imm. at Standifer Gap 13 Apr (DJ, JHe, DCn); a juv. or subad. over w. *McCracken*, KY 25 Apr (†JR); and one over Beargrass Creek S.N.P., *Jefferson*, KY 3 May (MW et al.) that was especially tardy. One to 2 Merlins were reported at three Kentucky locales 4 Mar-5 Apr. In Tennessee, singles at Royal Blue W.M.A., *Campbell* 31 May (†JM et al.) and at Roan Mt., *Carter* 2 Jun (†DWi) were very late. Other than known nesting pairs, one to 2 Peregrine Falcons were reported from four Kentucky and four Tennessee locations. A newly established nesting pair of Peregrines in *Boone*, KY was incubating eggs during May (KH, LMcN, et al.).

There was only one Kentucky report of Virginia Rail: one at Lewis County W.M.A. 6 May (SF). In Tennessee, some were present through the season at Standifer Gap (fide KAC) and in Shady Valley, *Johnson* 16 Apr+ (RiK), both known breeding locations, although no breeding evidence was reported. One Virginia Rail at Kyker Bottoms, *Blount*, TN 30 May (BH) was also possibly breeding. It was another poor season for migrant Soras, with only one to 3 reported at four Kentucky locales 4 Apr-17 May; in Tennessee, 2 were at Standifer Gap 3 May (KAC, DJ), and one was there 9 May (DPa). Single Sandhill Cranes in *Sullivan*, TN 21 Apr (RiK) and at Rankin Bottoms, *Cocke*, TN 4 & 7 May (MS) were very late.

Two Semipalmated Plovers at Ensley 12 Apr (JRW) were early. Two Black-necked Stilts at Long Point 20 Mar (ph. BPa) established a new early arrival date for Kentucky. One at Brainerd Levee, *Hamilton*, TN 25 Apr (LW et al.) furnished the first se. Tennessee record. There were two reports of American Avocet: ca. 20 at Kentucky Dam Village S.P.,



Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were at the Ensley Pits, Shelby County, Tennessee 2 (here 28) May 2009 and later, with a high count of seven on 3 May. A pair was seen copulating 26 May, and at least one pair nested for the second consecutive year. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.



An immature Brown Pelican (here 23 April 2009 on Lake Cumberland, Russell County, Kentucky), was found at different times on three different Kentucky reservoirs during April and May 2009, suggesting that it might have been the same individual. Photograph by Carol Stroud.



Anhingas are rare but annual in small numbers in western Tennessee, but this flock of 24 photographed 7 May 2009 at Chickasaw National Wildlife Refuge, Lauderdale County was remarkable. Photograph by Mike Todd.

*Marshall*, KY 27 Apr (BPa, EHu) and ca. 20 at Barren River L. 28 Apr (MV fide DR). It was not a good season for migrant Willets, with only one to 4 reported at four Kentucky and one Tennessee locales 21 Apr-3 May, although a significant number apparently passed through the Region 9 May, with two flocks of about 12 and 40 at Minor Clark Fish



Both species of *Plegadis ibis* are rare in the Tennessee & Kentucky region, although White-faced is the more unusual. This White-faced was present in Fulton County, Kentucky 25-26 (here 25) April 2009 and established a third state record. Photograph by Don Hanks.



Bald Eagles are known for their massive stick nests, but this condominium (here 23 March 2009) constructed in one season in western Henderson County, Kentucky, has to be a record-breaker. Photograph by Charlie Crawford.

Hatchery/Cave Run L., Rowan, KY (EM) and a flock of 20 at Old Hickory L., Davidson, TN (ph. CS et al.). Two to 4 Upland Sandpipers were reported at and near Chaney L., Warren, KY 18 & 21 Apr (DR/DR, DB). In Tennessee, 3 were at Shelby Farms, Shelby 3 Apr (GKi), 4 were in Haywood 16 Apr (ph. JRW), and 2 were at Ensley 23 Apr (JRW), with 6 there 2 May (JRW). There was only one report of Ruddy Turnstone: one at Chaney L., Warren, KY 10 May (DR). A Sanderling at Kentucky Dam Village S.P., Marshall 8 May (BY, MY) was the only report. The wintering Spotted Sandpiper in Kingsport, Sullivan, TN was last seen 29 Mar (RiK). A Baird's Sandpiper, always rare in spring, was at Ensley 12 Apr (JRW). A flock of 20 Greater Yellowlegs at the Phillipy Pits, Lake, TN 14 Mar (NM) was

noteworthy for so early. A Hudsonian Godwit was at Ensley 17 May (ph. JRW, VR, CBu). A Western Sandpiper at Open Pond, Fulton, KY 27 Apr (BPa, EHu) was the only report. Long-billed Dowitchers passed through in large number 27-28 Apr: a tally of at least 145 in three flocks in the Lower Hickman Bottoms, w. Fulton 27 Apr (BPa, EHu) represented a new Kentucky high count, and 97 in Lake, TN 28 Apr (ph. MCT) was also a remarkable number. There were only two Kentucky reports of Wilson's Phalarope, both at Long Point: 2 there 22 Apr (DR, DB) and one there 27 Apr (BPa, EHu). In Tennessee, a female was at Ensley 23 Apr, and 2 were there 3 May (both JRW).

Laughing Gulls were found at four locales: an ad. at the Falls of the Ohio 13-15 Mar (DSr et al.), with 2 ads. there 1 May (EHu); 2 ads. at Kentucky Dam 1 (DR, BPa) & 2 May (BY, MY); one at Reelfoot L., Lake, TN 18 May (JRW); and a first-cycle bird at L. Carnico, Nicholas, KY 28 May (BPa, MMo, G&WK). Likely the same first-cycle gull, apparently a Thayer's Gull x Iceland Gull hybrid, that was seen below Kentucky Dam in late Jan was still present there 21 Mar (ph. BPa). Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were still in the vicinity of Kentucky Dam 22 Apr (DR, DB), and an ad. or third-cycle bird lingered there through 1 May (DR, BPa). A first-cycle Glaucous Gull continuing in the vicinity of Kentucky Dam from the winter season lingered there through 22 Apr (DR, DB). A first-cycle Great Black-backed Gull continuing from winter lingered in the vicinity of Kentucky Dam through 11 May (DR, HC). A Forster's Tern at Robco L., Shelby, TN 1 Mar (JRW) was early. Black Terns were scarce, with only two reports of 2 birds in the vicinity of Kentucky Dam 8 (BPa, EHu, MMo) & 17 May (BL).

### DOVES THROUGH GROSBEAKS

A White-winged Dove was in Hawkins, TN 18 Apr (DE *vide* RiK), and 2 were at President's I., Shelby, TN 22 May (JRW). Two Common Nighthawks in Hamilton, TN 16 Mar (DSn) were exceptionally early. In contrast to spring 2008, it was an excellent, early season for Yellow-billed Cuckoos in Kentucky; one at Louisville 22 Apr (JBe, PB, CBe) was the earliest to be reported, with a few reports by the last weekend of Apr and widespread reports of good numbers by the first week of May. It was an excellent season for

Black-billed Cuckoos: singles were detected at 15 Kentucky and eight Tennessee locales 24 Apr-25 May. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at New Concord, Calloway 25 Mar (†BG) and at Paducah, McCracken 25 Mar (†JN) represented new early arrival dates for Kentucky. A Northern Saw-whet Owl was at Ft. Campbell, Montgomery, TN 2 Mar (DMo).

Single Olive-sided Flycatchers was reported from four Kentucky and five Tennessee locales 1-19 May, and 2 were at Radnor L. 6 May (DK). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were reported in average numbers. Transient Alder Flycatchers were reported in above-average numbers, with reports of one to 3 from five Kentucky and six Tennessee locales 4-20 May. A Western Kingbird was found in w. Boone, KY 9 May (LMcN, ph. JcM, KCm, GP); in Shelby, TN, the population is growing annually, with as many as 24 individuals and six nests counted 2 May+ (m.ob.). Unfortunately, no Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were seen in the vicinity of two recent nesting territories in Livingston and Lyon, KY this spring, and there were only two reports of vagrants: one in w. Fulton 26 Apr (JR) and one in e. Shelby 20 May (CM, *vide* HB). In Tennessee, where the species is an annual local breeder, singles were reported in Blount 8-9 May (KB, TH), Lauderdale 22 Apr (SS), and Washington 24



Swainson's Hawks are rare vagrants to the Tennessee & Kentucky region. This subadult was photographed 25 April 2009 at the Ensley Pits, Shelby County, Tennessee. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.

May (RoK, RiK, ph. LMcD), the latter representing a first county record. Three were in Hardin, TN 15 May (AT), and 2 ads. with 3 young were at President's I., Shelby, TN 23 May (JRW). A female Western Kingbird x Scissor-tailed Flycatcher hybrid was seen



This Hudsonian Godwit, always rarity in the Tennessee & Kentucky region, was at the Ensley Pits, Shelby County, Tennessee on 17 May 2009. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.

paired with a male Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Shelby, TN 3 May (JRW).

A first-year Northern Shrike was present in s. Jefferson, KY 4-5 Mar (ph. EHu et al.). A Rock Wren in ne. Jefferson, KY 11 May (ph. BPa, ph. MMo, ph. JHu et al.) represented a 2nd state record. There was only one Kentucky report of Sedge Wren: one in e. Calloway 9 May (RH); in Tennessee, up to 2 were at Bell's Bend Park, Davidson 18-19 Apr (DK, TL), 2 were at Ft. Campbell, Montgomery 22 Apr (DMo), and one was at Black Bayou W.M.A., Lake 18 May (MCT). A Gray Catbird in e. Calloway, KY 27 Mar (HC) was quite early. Cedar Waxwing numbers peaked in Kentucky during Apr, somewhat earlier than recent years. Numbers of transient warblers were generally lower than average. Black-throated Blue Warblers are rare away from the higher elevations of e. Tennessee; presumably the same male lingered at Radnor L. 29 Apr-9 May (LK, CS, m.ob.). There were only two Kentucky reports of Con-



This Northern Shrike, the fourth to be found in Kentucky since 2003, was present 4 and (here) 5 March 2009 in southern Jefferson County. Photograph by Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

necticut Warbler: 2 in w. Boone 9 May (JCM) and 3 in e. Calloway 9 May (RH); in Tennessee, Connecticut were widely reported in above-average numbers, with at least 15 individuals reported from eight locales 5-20 May. Single Mourning Warblers were reported on ten occasions at six Kentucky locales; one to 2 were regularly reported 7-17 May at regular locations in Davidson, TN. A tally of at least 9 Wilson's Warblers at Land Between the Lakes, Lyon, KY 8 May (BPa et al.) was impressive. A first-year male Summer Tanager in Marshall, KY 20 Mar (†ME) represented a new early date for the state by nearly three weeks; it is conceivable that this bird wintered in the Region at a feeder.

Fifteen Lincoln's Sparrows in Lauderdale, TN 28 Apr (MCT) was a noteworthy

concentration. The only report of Bachman's Sparrow was of 4 at the traditional breeding areas on Fort Campbell (3 in Trigg, KY and one in Montgomery, TN) 17 Apr (DMo). In Kentucky, up to 4 Clay-colored Sparrows were present at the Lexington cemetery 8 May (ph. JSw et al.); in Tennessee, one was in Knox 26 Apr (ph. AH). As is the norm, small numbers of Vesper Sparrows were reported from scattered locales mid-Mar-mid-Apr; a bird seen in e. Mercer, KY 4 May (GSc) was especially tardy and possibly on territory. Reports of Lark Sparrows in Kentucky were limited to

sightings in recently used breeding areas on Fort Campbell, Trigg 17 Apr (DMo), in s. Warren 25 Apr (BPa, EHu), and in w. Henderson 5 May (CC). There were two reports of late or possibly territorial Savannah Sparrows in Kentucky: 2 including a singing bird at Fonthill, Russell 16 May (RD) and one at the Starfire Mine, Knott 20 May (KH). Two to 3 Le Conte's Sparrows continuing from winter at Long Point 20 Mar (BPa) represented the only report. In Tennessee, Henslow's Sparrow populations continue to increase at known breeding locations and to expand into new locations, including one in Overton, TN 23 May (SJS). A Dark-eyed Junco at Lexington, KY 16-18 May (ph. DCl) was quite tardy.

Eight Brewer's Blackbirds in

Washington, TN (TM, RB) were rare away from w. Tennessee. A male Painted Bunting was in the same vicinity as several other reports from recent years in Knoxville, Knox, TN 14 Mar (†GW), and one was seen a few km n. of Murray, Calloway, KY 9 May (†MMi). Purple Finches increased during late Mar and early Apr as migrants passed through; 2 males in n. Anderson, KY 6 May (TA) were the latest to be reported. Two to 7 White-winged Crossbills lingered at St. Anne's Convent, Campbell, KY into mid-Mar (FR, DMt; TU, JL, fide FR), with 4 or 5 last seen there 15 Mar (FR). Abundance and distribution of wintering Pine Siskins remained relatively stable into early spring, with larger numbers in the ne. portion of the Region; e.g., ca. 70 were still outside Morehead,




Gulls that appear intermediate between Iceland Gull and Thayer's Gull occasionally show up in Tennessee and Kentucky. This first-cycle individual (photographed 21 March 2009 at Kentucky Dam) was probably the same individual seen at Kentucky Dam, Marshall/Livingston Counties, Kentucky in late January. Whether or not such individuals represent extremes in one "species" or the other is unclear, but a hybrid certainly makes sense. Photograph by Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

Rowan, KY 23 Mar (SF); ca. 80 were at Bee Rock Recreation Area, Daniel Boone N.F., Pulaski, KY 31 Mar (RD); "great numbers" lingered at South Williamson, Pike, KY through the first week of Apr (JCr); more than 50 were still near Big Gimlet, Elliott, KY 9 Apr (EM); and 40+ were still at St. Anne's Convent, Campbell, KY 26 Apr (FR). A notable pulse of migrants appeared during the last week of Apr and first week of May; e.g., at least 50 arrived at Panorama Shores, Calloway, KY 3 May (KCo); numbers increased to 150-200 at Mt. Zion, Pulaski, KY during the first few days of May (RD); and numbers "increased to medium size flock" in e. Daviess 4 May (MTh). The species remained relatively widespread into the 2nd week of May, then decreased rapidly, with the latest reports being one at Bardstown, Nelson, KY on or about 29 May (PG), and 2 at Mt. Zion, Pulaski, KY 26 May with one still there into the first week of Jun (RD). In Tennessee, siskins were present through the sea-

son at Roan Mt., Carter, TN, and a pair was feeding 3 nestlings there 12 May (RiK); one was also gathering nest material in Cocks, TN 2 May (MS). In Kentucky, evidence of breeding was limited to the observation of two pairs gathering nesting material in e. Fayette during the 2nd week of Apr (DSv). Evening Grosbeaks have become a rarity in the Region, so 10 at Big Cypress Tree S.P., Weakley, TN 24 Mar (DWk) were quite noteworthy.

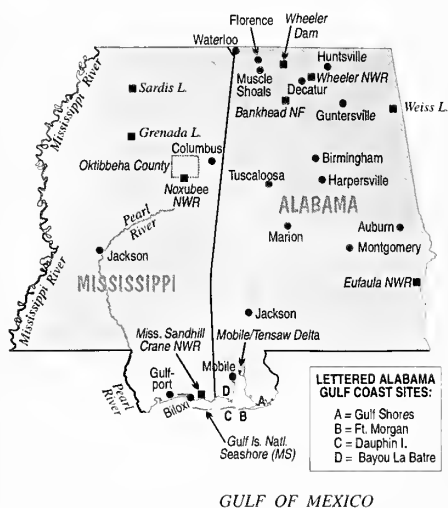
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## Alabama & Mississippi



### Steven W. McConnell

**B**irders in the field this spring generally found temperatures 1.0 to 1.5° C above normal across our Region. Rainfall amounts were more or less normal except for the opposite ends of Alabama.

During March, on the coast, Mobile accumulated 13 cm above average, while in the Tennessee Valley, Huntsville recorded 4 cm below normal. A stationary front late in the month was responsible for more than 50% of the Mobile excess and produced excellent fallout conditions at the coastal traps like Fort

Morgan, where many of the Hummer/Bird Study Group's banding nets had to be closed in order to keep pace with the rate of captures. The situation reversed itself in April and May: Mobile was 10.5 cm below normal in rainfall, while Huntsville was 15.8 cm above. The coastal total was indicative of fast-moving, relatively dry fronts that did little to bring migrants down to humans' eye level. A strong front 6-7 April brought a final cold snap to northern Alabama, apparently causing many early migrants to change their feeding and possibly migratory patterns. A wet front lingered over and just north of our Region 1-3 May, bringing several interesting "storm" birds down from the clouds to enjoy.

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks once again headlined our Region's rarity parade. In addition, the season provided several truly rare sightings, most with excellent photographic documentation. Mississippi logged its first confirmed nesting record of White-faced Ibis. A fantastic series of rarities found by Alabama birders included a probable adult Kelp Gull (potential first record), a Black Swift (second record), and an immature Fork-tailed Flycatcher (fourth record).

**Abbreviations:** Dauphin (Dauphin I., Mobile, AL); Delta (Mississippi Delta of nw. and w. cen. Mississippi); Ft. Morgan (Fort Morgan State Historical Park, Baldwin, AL); G.C. (Gulf Coastal region, s. Alabama; not "golf

course"); Grand Bay (Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Preserve, Jackson, MS); I.C.P. (Inland Coastal Plain region of s. cen. Alabama); M.R. (Mountain region of n. Alabama); Noxubee (Noxubee N.W.R., Noxubee/Oktibbeha/Winston, MS); Ross Barnett (Ross Barnett Res., Rankin/Madison, MS); Seaman (Seaman Rd. lagoons, Jackson, MS); T.V. (Tennessee Valley region of n. Alabama); T.V.A. (Tennessee Valley Authority); Wheeler (Wheeler N.W.R., Limestone/Morgan/Madison, AL); Yazoo (Yazoo N.W.R., Washington, MS).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH STORK

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck sightings continue to accumulate from across our Region, where the species was considered a true rarity not that long ago. Nine reports were received from Mississippi observers, mainly at Delta or coastal locations, with a maximum of 18 seen 14 May at Pascagoula, Jackson, MS (JNW). Alabama observers recorded their 8th through 10th state records; a maximum count of 8 came from Mobile, Mobile/Baldwin 21 May+ (KG, ph. BS, CH). A flock of 3-5 on Dauphin 19-29 Mar (KM, RW) provided Alabama's earliest record ever. A late Greater White-fronted Goose frequented a private lake just n. of Grand Bay, Mobile, AL 18-24 Apr (ECS, BKF, m.ob.). Two reports of tardy Snow Geese in Mississippi included 13 at Dutch Brake, Sunflower 12 Apr (RH) and one until 23 May at Tupelo, Lee (ph. WP). Ross's Geese are now



Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were once again in evidence across the Gulf Coast states. Shown here are five from Alabama's tenth record of the species, a small flock present 21 May into summer 2009 on the Mobile causeway, Mobile County. Photograph by Bill Summerour.

found in small numbers seasonally in our Region; however, the lone bird in Warren, MS 25-27 Apr (JC, AH) was notably late. The Wood Duck nest box program at Wheeler has evidently paid excellent dividends in recent years, as evidenced by the new spring T.V. maximum of 176 birds totaled during the refuge spring count 2 May (m.ob.).

Nine reports of scoters were collected, all but one from coastal counties. Point aux Chenes Bay, Grand Bay, Jackson, MS continued to host significant rafts of these sea ducks through the period, with up to 200 Surf and 12 Black Scoters cavorting with a lone White-winged (NB, JNW, DMC). An imm. male Surf Scoter at Ft. Morgan 30 May (RDL) and a male Black Scoter last seen on Dauphin 26 May (EL) were very late. Also late to depart was the female Common Goldeneye 17 May at Town Creek marsh, Colbert, AL (SWM). The discovery of a female Common Merganser in the Tennessee R. just e. of Waterloo, Lauderdale, AL 15 Mar was a pleasant surprise; the species, once regular, had not been reported from this location in several years (ph. SWM). The bird was relocated 2 Apr (JRW). The disturbing downward trend in Northern Bobwhite observations continues in Alabama. Simultaneous area counts for Birmingham and Wheeler held 2 May only managed to detect one and 5 birds, respectively (m.ob.). These ridiculously low results could not have been imagined even a few years ago. Rarely found in spring, a late Red-throated Loon was seen daily at Dauphin's w. end 22-29 Apr (LRD, RAD, ph. SWM). Even more surprising were the 2 Pacific Loons, one in alternate plumage, discovered 4 May in the Tennessee R. near Waterloo, Lauderdale (DJS, JTG, SWM). These birds were with 20 Common Loons, a large number so late, and furnished the latest inland record ever for Alabama.

Two large shearwaters, probably Cory's, were a rare and noteworthy find from shore off the Ft. Morgan pen. 13 Apr (LRD, RAD, CHB). Inland Brown Pelicans made a strong showing this season with four reports. The 5th and 6th T.V. records were established by an imm. at Wheeler Dam, Lauderdale/Lawrence 17 May (SWM) and an ad. in the Tennessee R. near Decatur, Limestone/Morgan 30 May (†HS). Mississippi also had two records, with the continuing flock of 4 at Ross Barnett 1 Mar (present since fall 2005; G&SK) and another bird near Starkville, Oktibbeha 27-28 May (DD, ph. MC). Up to 3 Anhingas, including a pair, returned 2-31 May to the Saginaw swamp, Shelby, AL, where breeding has been suspected for several seasons (HHW, JMI, m.ob.); the species is only rarely found in the M.R., and if breeding is confirmed here, this would be the only currently known n. Alabama breeding site. Rarely detected in numbers, 8 American Bitterns were found at Ross Barnett 11 Apr (G&SK), a very impressive count. A Least Bittern heard at the Intergraph Wetlands in Madison, AL 1 Apr (DRC) established a new

early T.V. date; a visit 17 May found 2 birds. Only occasionally detected inland in Alabama, a Tricolored Heron was at Swan Creek W.M.A., Limestone 2-3 May (ph. SWM, SRM). Tricolored Herons also returned to nest again at Yazoo, where breeding has been recorded for about the last nine years; during this season, nesting was detected in four different rookeries (DL, SA, ph. MK). Five Glossy Ibis reports totaling around 20 individuals were received from our Region. Most were along the coast, but noteworthy observations were made of a single at Wheeler 28-29 Apr (CDC, ph. SWM) for only the 7th T.V. record and 2 birds at Noxubee with a single White-faced Ibis 20-23 Apr (DR, TLS, MS, m.ob.), only the 3rd area spring record. White-faced Ibis also made headlines later in the season at Yazoo, where the first confirmed nesting for Mississippi was documented 20 May (ph. DL). Later return visits found at least 10 ads. and more nests 25 May; nestlings were document-

ed during the summer season (†PJB, m.ob.). An ad. Roseate Spoonbill was a rare spring find at Yazoo 25 May (†PJB, m.ob.). Even though spring Wood Storks are occasionally found in Alabama, the 20 at Hacoma, Geneva 16 Mar were exceptionally early (OJ).

## RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Osprey nesting at Wheeler and in the surrounding Tennessee R. area continues on a welcome upward trend. A new early T.V. record was set by a single bird at Wheeler 9 Mar (MM). The impressive afternoon flight of 27 Swallow-tailed Kites, 104 Broad-winged Hawks, and a few accipiters at Henleyfield, Pearl River, MS 31 Mar must have been a sight to behold (NB). Harlan's Hawk is rarely recorded in Alabama, making the observation of one at Leighton, Colbert 17 Mar noteworthy (DJS). King Rails were detected, and likely nested again, at Oakland marsh, Lauderdale, AL 15 Mar-4 May (v.r. SWM). More impressive was the population of up to 10 pairs present throughout the spring season in the Kiln/Waveland area, Hancock, MS (NB). Five ad. Purple Gallinules were discovered at Ross Barnett 11 Apr (G&SK), a strong inland count. Also inland, a Common Moorhen was a surprise find during the Wheeler spring count 2 May (CDC, MSG, RJM).

Late in the season, a pulse of Black-necked Stilts moved through n. Alabama, including



White-faced Ibis were found nesting at Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge, Washington County (here 20 May 2009) for the first documentation of breeding in Mississippi. More adults, nests, and fledglings were found through the end of spring and into the summer. Photograph by David Linden, United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

up to 6 at Swan Creek W.M.A., Limestone 2-3 May (JMH, MM) and 6 more in Colbert 6 May+, where two nests with eggs were discovered 30-31 May, furnishing only the 2nd state inland breeding record (DRC, RC, ph. SWM, JMH). A flock of 28 Solitary Sandpipers in a roadside pool on the Ft. Morgan pen. 15 Apr (GDJ) was a surprising number for the species, even during migration. The



This black-backed gull was photographed 14 March 2009 by a vacationing birder as his cruise ship was departing the Mobile harbor for Mexico. It appears to be an adult Kelp Gull, a species never before documented in Alabama. Photograph by Wayne Patterson.

total of 490 Lesser Yellowlegs 24 Apr compiled in *Colbert/Lauderdale* during a shorebird survey furnished a new inland Alabama maximum (DJS). Four Upland Sandpiper reports were received, including an excellent total of 21 at two locations in *Hancock/Pearl River*, MS 13 Apr (NB). Continuing a recent Alabama spring tradition, migrant Whimbrels returned in large numbers again to stage in the vicinity of Grand Bay, *Mobile*. This year's highest count was 372, most of these in a private pasture n. of town 25 Apr (MSchaf, AGM, ph. ECS, m.ob.). Large flocks of larger shorebird species have been scarce in recent years in our Region, making the 49 Marbled Godwits at Biloxi Beach, *Harrison*, MS 2 Apr especially noteworthy (JNW). An all-time high T.V. total for Western Sandpipers was attained with a count of 38 in *Colbert/Lauderdale* 26 May (DJS). Also that day, 91 White-rumped Sandpipers were counted along the same shorebird survey route (DJS), but this total was surpassed 30 May by the 159 at one *Colbert* site—a new, high inland Alabama count (SWM). Seven Baird's Sandpiper reports from our Region seemed above normal for spring, when the species is rarely found. Easily the high point was the flock of 132 counted in *Lauderdale* 16 May (DJS) for a new Alabama maximum. The previous record count was 121. Large numbers of Dunlin were noted staging in the Grand Bay area 3 Mar–15 Apr; 2320 on 11 Mar was the highest count (JNW). On the Mississippi coast 30 Apr, about 100 Stilt Sandpipers were tallied at Seaman (NB, m.ob.), while 1500 unidentified dowitchers were noted at Grand Bay 3 Apr (JNW). Still another high shorebird total was obtained from the survey on 24 Mar when 208 Wilson's Snipe were found in *Colbert* for a new maximum T.V. count (DJS).

## GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Fewer than two-dozen state Black-legged Kittiwakes have been recorded in Alabama, making the two records of first-cycle birds this season noteworthy. The first M.R. record came from Logan Martin Dam, *St. Clair/Talladega* 28-30 Mar (ph. GDJ, DGJ), while one on Dauphin 20 May furnished the latest record in Alabama by a month (ph. EL). Early spring gatherings of Bonaparte's Gulls are not unexpected in our Region; however, the 4500+ estimated at Guntersville Dam, *Marshall* 5 Apr (LB, RAR) set a new inland Alabama record for

spring. Both Laughing and Franklin's Gulls are rare but regular spring transients through the inland portions of our Region. This season brought five Laughing reports (28 Mar–29 May; all of 1-2 birds) and two Franklin's sightings (24 Mar–2 Apr; both single birds), all from Alabama locations. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were detected early in the season at three inland locations: one ad. was near Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, AL 15 Mar (SWM); 2 ads. were a surprise at Guntersville, *Marshall*, AL 20 Mar, where one had wintered again (SWM); and a fourth-cycle bird continued through 1 Mar at Ross Barnett, where it had been seen in winter (G&SK). Still rare, the species is now expected at most regular large gull gathering sites. Coastal Glaucous Gulls were represented by a rather late bird on Dauphin and at Ft. Morgan 11-17 May (ph. DWD, BMC) and by a Mississippi bird lingering from winter at Grand Bay 3 Mar–23 Apr (ph. JNW, NB, DMc). A first-cycle Great Black-backed Gull on Dauphin 31 Mar (JNW) was the only report this season. A vacationing birder was readying to depart Mobile harbor, *Mobile*, AL 14 Mar (ph. WP) on a cruise to Mexico when he noticed a large, dark-backed gull perched in a restricted access area. Fortunately, he was able to photograph the bird, apparently a Kelp Gull. Pending acceptance, this would constitute the first Alabama record of the species. Gull-billed Terns made a good showing this spring along the coasts of both states. In Mississippi, up to 43 were seen from early Mar into May at the Waterfront, *Hancock* (NB). Two pairs seemed to be performing territorial displays; however, by 12 May, all had disappeared.

Two White-winged Dove reports came from inland Alabama, where the species is rarely detected—one near Leroy, *Washington* 27 Mar (MR) and 2 at Coosada, *Elmore* 18

Apr (MJJ). After becoming well established on the coast during the past decade, more inland reports can be expected. Inca Dove seems to have established a toehold in Mississippi, where 2 were seen 1 Apr+ in Sumner, *Tallahatchie* (ph. MW). At least four nesting groups are known: three in the Delta and one at Pass Christian, *Harrison*, where up to 12 frequented feeders last winter (*fide* GK). Five Yellow-billed Cuckoos netted at Ft. Morgan 27 Mar–1 Apr were unusually early (b. RRS, MBS, FB). A new high T.V. total of 63 Yellow-billed Cuckoos was recorded 2 May by observers on the Wheeler spring count (m.ob.), while the wave of 100+ on Dauphin 23 May was an excellent number for so late in migration (EL). Also on Dauphin, a Black-billed Cuckoo 10 Apr was much earlier than most (JNW). Another Black-billed heard calling at Monte Sano S.P., *Madison*, AL 24 Apr was a rare inland find (JE). A birder camping at Guntersville S.P., *Marshall* was astounded to wake before dawn to a calling Long-eared Owl 18 Mar (RSD). Alabama has 16 previously accepted records, but, surprisingly, this is only the 2nd one for the T.V. A Short-eared Owl was a rare find on the G.C. on Grand Batture I., *Mobile* 3 Mar (JNW). An amazingly early Chuck-will's-widow was heard 21 Mar near Starkville, *Oktibbeha*, MS, where it beat the prior area arrival date by 12 days (TLS, MS). Three Common Nighthawks in *Jefferson* 6 Mar (RRS, MBS) likewise made a new early Alabama record, and another 4 at Ft. Morgan 5 Apr set a new early G.C. date (MJJ). The passage of a strong cold front 6 Apr through n. Alabama, preceded by unseasonably warm weather, resulted in thermometer readings the morning of 7 Apr around 11° C lower than the previous day. This temperature change brought thousands of insectivores such as martins, swifts, and swallows to forage low over almost any standing water. In the middle of all this activity, a sharp-eyed observer picked out a large, all-black swift at a small field pond near Leighton, *Colbert* (DJS). If accepted as a Black Swift, this observation would furnish the 2nd state record but first inland. After a few passes, the swift disappeared into the windy skies. By late afternoon, the large gatherings had disbanded, and only a few hundred swallows remained. A female Black-chinned Hummingbird was a late and rare find in *Montgomery*, AL 18 Mar (b. FB). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers made an unusually strong showing at Ft. Morgan 28-29 Mar when 24 were banded—a new Alabama spring high count (b. RRS, MBS, FB). A very late sapsucker was discovered during the Wheeler refuge count 2 May (LBR, RAR, HD).



## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SISKINS

Much tougher to find in spring than in fall, an Olive-sided Flycatcher was noted near Starkville, *Oktibbeha*, MS 9 May (TLS, MS), only the 3rd spring area record. Eastern Wood-Pewees put in an excellent showing on the Wheeler spring count 2 May, when 47 were totaled for the new spring T.V. record. A rare Willow Flycatcher responded to a tape with calls and song at a site w. of Florence, *Lauderdale*, AL 4 May (SWM, DJS, JTG). An Alder/Willow Flycatcher furnished a new early Alabama arrival date at Ft. Morgan 4 Apr (b. RRS, MBS, FB). Participants on the 2 May Wheeler count rarely found themselves out of earshot of calling Great Crested Flycatchers: 72 were totaled for a new T.V. maximum (m.ob.). Two early Scissor-tailed Flycatchers appeared on the G.C.: a male at Ft. Morgan 30 Mar (b. FB, MWI) and another at a Dauphin golf course and later Ft. Gaines 31 Mar–5 Apr (HEH, JNW, ph. SWM). An imm. Fork-tailed Flycatcher discovered late in the afternoon of 21 May at Blakeley I., *Mobile* (BMc, HEH, ph. DWD, ph. JD) was among the rarest of the season's discoveries. Unlike the previous three Alabama records (all around the 3rd week of Apr) that stayed for only a few minutes each, this bird remained in the area for about two hours, allowing several local birders time to enjoy it.

An astounding 252 White-eyed Vireos were banded at Ft. Morgan 1 Apr, a new maximum Alabama count (b. RRS, MBS, FB). Warbling Vireos were noted in the area of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, AL 4–18 May (SWM, DJS, JTG, DC), where the species was a rare breeder several years ago. Nesting was suspected this season also but was not confirmed. Philadelphia Vireo made a good push through Alabama during May, as evidenced by four records received of 5 birds. The 2 birds on Dauphin 24 May established a new late G.C. date (CH). A new high spring total for Horned Lark in Alabama—40—was set 2 May during the Wheeler refuge count. During an early spring cold snap 7 Apr, counts of up to 2750 were made among just four or five sites within a few miles of each other in the T.V. Most were Tree Swallows (2050), establishing a new record count for inland Alabama. Three records of late Bank Swallows were received from Alabama: 3 at Blakeley I., *Mobile* 22 May (SWM, GDJ), one on Dauphin 24 May (CH), for a new late G.C. date, and one at White Hall, *Lowndes* 25 May (LFG). Cliff Swallow nesting locations continue to proliferate, and colonies already established continue to grow in size. The 290 Cliff Swallows counted 2 May on the Birmingham area count was an excellent number for Alabama, and a new spring Alabama maximum was set the same day during the Wheeler

count, with 980. Three Cave Swallow reports were received from the coast, where the reports of the species have increased in recent years. One was with a large flock of other swallow species at the Dauphin airport 31 Mar–3 Apr (HEH, JNW); another was with hundreds of Cliff and Barn Swallows near Waveland, *Hancock*, MS 4 Apr (NB); and one was noted at Grand Bay, *Jackson*, MS 15 Apr (JNW). Very rare in s. Alabama, a White-breasted Nuthatch was well described at Bon Secour N.W.R., *Baldwin* 28 May (JVH), for only the 6th G.C. record. Three Sedge Wrens recorded at Oakland marsh, *Lauderdale*, AL 12 Apr set a new spring T.V. high count (SWM). Another new T.V. record spring count was established by the 97 Eastern Bluebirds found during the 2 May Wheeler refuge count. A tardy Veery was observed 25 May on Dauphin (JNW).

A very rare Lawrence's Warbler was observed at the Oak Grove Birding Trail, *Jackson*, MS 6–8 Apr (JNW). Six Alabama Nashville Warbler reports 4 Apr–7 May was an unusually high number for this casual spring migrant. Despite the fact Northern Parula is one of our earliest migrants, the 5 seen in *Montgomery*, AL 8 Mar (LFG) was a very good inland number for such an early date. Near season's end, 11 Yellow Warblers were on Dauphin 25 May (JNW), for an excellent late count. A male Chestnut-sided Warbler on Dauphin 31 May established a new late G.C. record (C&BW), and a Cape May Warbler on Dauphin 23 May furnished a new late date for Alabama (EC). Inland Black-throated Blue Warblers are always noteworthy in our Region during spring, especially away from the edge of their migration corridor in e. Alabama. This season, three observations of 3 birds came from sites all within about 40 km of each other in the T.V. 21 Apr–3 May (m.ob.). Very rare in the Region, a male Audubon's Warbler furnished a 12th Alabama record and was enjoyed by many observers at a bottlebrush hedgerow on Dauphin 11–18 Apr (ph. HEH, DWD, CD, m.ob.). A tardy Black-throated Green Warbler was on Dauphin 25 May (JNW) for a new late G.C. record. Also late were Blackburnian Warblers: one at Ft. Morgan 24 May (MJJ) and 3 on Dauphin 23–25 May (JNW, EC, CH). Two Yellow-throated Warblers at Lake Guntersville S.P., *Marshall*, AL 23 Mar (MM) set a early T.V. record. The 106 Prothonotary Warblers



This immature Fork-tailed Flycatcher was a stunning find 21 May 2009 at Blakeley Island, Mobile County and furnished Alabama's fourth record. Unlike the previous three records (all in late April), this bird stayed around two hours and was enjoyed by several local birders before nightfall. Photograph by David W. Dortch.

counted 2 May during the Wheeler count surpasses the previous inland Alabama record. A wave of Worm-eating Warblers arrived at Ft. Morgan 28 Mar, where 72 were banded for a new spring Alabama record (b. RRS, MBS, FB). A singing Swainson's Warbler was a welcome find on the T.V.A. Reservation, *Colbert*, AL 30 May+ (SWM), where the species has nested sporadically in past years. A Connecticut Warbler was early 30 Apr in *Madison*, AL, where the species is a rare but regular late spring migrant (SRM). The warbler migrant wave at Ft. Morgan 28 Mar also included many Hooded Warblers, as evidenced by the 126 banded that day (b. RRS, MBS, FB). A Scarlet Tanager on Dauphin 23 May (EL) marked a late G.C. record.

A Lincoln's Sparrow in *Madison*, AL 29 May (DRC, RC) was the state's latest ever. New high counts for White-crowned Sparrows were established in two inland Alabama regions: at least 10 were near Atmore, *Escambia* in the I.C.P. 11 Mar (CH), and 12 were found at Oneonta, *Blount* in the M.R. 26 Apr (L&DB). The only Lapland Longspur report received this season was a locally late observation of 6 in *Noxubee*, MS 1 Mar (TLS). A Painted Bunting pair returned to evidently nest again in *Montgomery*, AL, where a singing male was noted 3 May (LFG); the species is a rare breeder in inland Alabama. Flowering clover attracted 1272 Bobolinks during the Wheeler count 2 May, for a new T.V. record. A male Shiny Cowbird 20 Apr at Fairhope, *Baldwin*, AL was the only report received this season (†DWD, CD). Also rare were up to 5 Bronzed Cowbirds continuing their presence from winter at Ansley, *Hancock*, MS (NB). The impressive Pine Siskin invasion from the winter carried over into spring, with flocks at nearly everyone's feeders. Record-setting spring Alabama reports of

500+ came from Clay, Jefferson 1 Mar (RRS, MBS) and from Loxley, Baldwin (CK), where flocks of up to 500 had dwindled to 12 birds on 11 May. Excellent numbers of siskins also were reported from the Mississippi coast: up to 100 were present through this season at Henleyfield, Pearl River until 10 May, when the final 8-10 birds were noted (NB).

Initialed observers (subregional editors in boldface): Stephanie Allison, Philip J. Barbour, Fred Bassett, Ned Boyajian, Cecil H. Brown, Lynn & Duane Brown, Eugenia Carey, David Chaffin, Joan Clarke, C. Dwight Co-

ley, Margaret Copeland, Dean R. Cutten, Raelene Cutten, Denny Daniels, Harry Dean, John Dixon, Carrie Dortch, David W. Dortch, Lucy R. Duncan, Robert A. Duncan, R. Scot Duncan, John Ehinger, Barry K. Fleming, Lawrence F. Gardella, Jeff T. Garner, Keith Gaudin, M. Scott Gravette, Jim M. Harris, Allyson Harrison, Rob Hefflin, Chazz Hesselein, Howard E. Horne, Jay V. Huner, John M. Imhof, Debra G. Jackson, Greg D. Jackson (Alabama), Odis Johnson, Michael J. Jordan, Mike Kelly, Gene & Shannon Knight, Claire Krusko, Robert D. Leier, Eric Liffmann, David Linden, Ken Marion, Steven W. McConnell,

Bailey McKay, Don McKee, Anne G. Miller, R.J. Moore, Matt Morrow, Sue R. Moske, Wayne Patterson, Linda B. & Richard A. Reynolds, Dave Richardson, Matthew Rouse, Martha B. Sargent, Robert R. Sargent, Maureen Schaffer, Marion Schiefer, Terence L. Schiefer (Mississippi), Damien J. Simbeck, Harry Smith, Eric C. Soehren, Bill Summerour, Jacob N. Walker, Carl & Brittany Way, Ruth White, Mona Whitten, Jeff R. Wilson, Mary Wilson, Harriet H. Wright. 📍

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## Arkansas & Louisiana



Steven W. Cardiff

Seemingly relentless strong southerly winds, a general lack of penetrating cold fronts, and gradual onset of moderate drought conditions, especially in Louisiana, characterized the last two-thirds of the season. Conditions were generally unfavorable for migrant fallouts on the coast, but there were some fairly spectacular groundings in the interior, most notably in northeastern Arkansas, where large numbers of early shorebirds were precipitated during late March and a good showing of passerine migrants occurred around 10 May. Considering the domination of onshore winds, a surpris-

ing variety of rarities were found on the coast. And at least a few of the notable birds found inland may have been wind-assisted.

**Abbreviations:** B.K.N.W.R. (Bald Knob N.W.R., White, AR); C.F.H. (Centerton Fish Hatchery, near Centerton, Benton, AR); C.F.P. (Craighead Forest Park, Craighead, AR); C.N.F. (Camp Nine Farm, near Arkansas City, Desha, AR); N.L.T. (Ninestone Land Trust, Franklin, AR); S.F.F. (Saul's Fish Farm, Prairie, AR); W.W.P. (Woolsey Wet Prairie, near Fayetteville, Washington, AR). Counties/parishes (italics) are indicated only for the initial mention of a specific locality, and states are indicated only for the initial mention of counties/parishes, except to avoid confusion. For records of "review list" species, documentation has been received and records have either been accepted by, or acceptance is pending by, the respective state bird records committee. Significance for Arkansas records is based on *Arkansas Birds, their Distribution and Abundance* (James and Neal 1986) plus the Arkansas Audubon Society online bird record database, and, for Louisiana, on the bird record card file database and the Louisiana Bird Records Committee archives at the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science, as well as the most recent draft of the forthcoming *Birds of Louisiana* (Remsen, Cardiff, Dittmann, and Dickson).

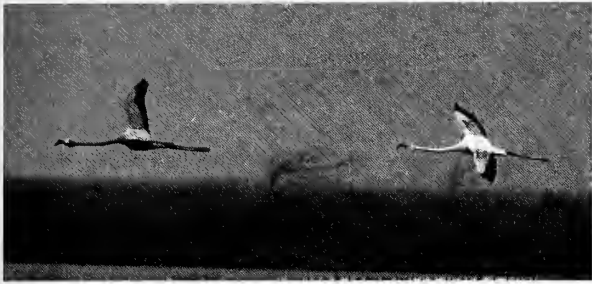
### WATERFOWL

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continue their dramatic spread through the Region. Most men-

tionable among many reports received were several sightings relatively far n. in Arkansas, including 2 at Murfreesboro 9 May (a first for Pike; Kelly Chitwood), 2 near Mulberry 15 May (2nd Franklin occurrence; B&TB), and 13 near Alma 20 May (possibly the first for Crawford; B&TB). In s. Louisiana, the species has become so widespread that observers have largely stopped submitting reports, but a few interesting exceptions were of 55-60 at New Orleans, Orleans 23 Mar (JOC, Tom D. Coulson) and 6 at Mandeville, St. Tammany 18 May (ph. Jim Holmes; few parish records). Four Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at New Orleans 14 Mar (Pamela Pitcher, Glenn Ousset) were assumed to be spring migrants; an estimated 3900 in the Lake Arthur/Thornwell area, Vermilion/Jefferson Davis 9 Mar (JBo, DBo) was a hefty total, although not unprecedented. The species is rare in Arkansas, so at C.N.F. one 19 May and an impressive 27 there 21 May (DB) were worthy of mention. A scarce migrant in nw. Arkansas, 2 Ross's Geese were at C.F.H. 7 Mar (JBr, MAM), and one at W.W.P. 25 Apr (AS), if a healthy bird, would be record late for Arkansas. Three unbanded Trumpeter Swans



Cinnamon Teal are rare but annual visitors to Louisiana, but females are seldom documented. This handsome pair was an excellent find near Cheneyville, Rapides Parish 15 March 2009. Photograph by Jim Johnson.



Making their second (but first "chaseable") appearance within two years in Louisiana, these two banded flamingos, a wild American Flamingo on the left (marked "HDNT," originating from Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula in 2005) and an escapee Greater Flamingo on the right (marked "492," from the Sedgwick County Zoo, Wichita, Kansas) delighted birders at Grand Chenier, Cameron Parish 1-14 (here 7) May 2009. Photograph by John P. Sevenair.

at Waldenburg, Poinsett 11-12 Mar (ph. DB) were thought to represent the first ne. Arkansas occurrence in 100 years!

Mottled Ducks are now expected in small numbers in se. Arkansas, but still of interest were a hen with 3 ducklings near Mellwood, Phillips 10 May (LA, TM) and up to nine pairs at C.N.F. during late May, including a hen with 4 ducklings 21 May (DB). Reports of Regionally rare Cinnamon Teal included an ad. male at Sabine N.W.R., Cameron 5 Mar (GG, RD) and a pair near Cheneyville, Rapides 15 Mar (ph. Jij); the latter represents one of the few convincing occurrences of a female in Louisiana. Twelve Northern Shovelers near Cheneyville 25 May (Jij) was a large number for so late; although not unprecedented in late spring and early summer, it is unclear if these relatively large groups represent flocks of late migrants or just aggregations of unhealthy lingering/summering birds. A male Northern Pintail at B.K.N.W.R. 23 May (ph. JDx) and a Canvasback on the Red R., Bossier 24 May (ph. Jf&JT)—the latter latest ever in spring for nw. Louisiana and one of very few late spring occurrences for the state—may also have involved defective individuals. A massive concentration estimated at 145,000 Lesser Scaup on the Gulf of Mexico off the Rutherford Beach area, Cameron 15 Mar also included a sprinkling of all three scoter species: one White-winged, 11 Surfs, and 4 Blacks (JBo, DBo). The only reports of late coastal scoters involved one very worn female Surf at Holly Beach, Cameron 17 May (vt. PAW, DPM) and a female Black there 16-20 May (vt. PAW, DPM, JVH). A Long-tailed Duck on L. Pontchartrain at Metairie, Jefferson since late Dec remained through 20 Mar (ph. BW). Two Ruddy Ducks at S.F.F. 30 May (ph. JDx) were very late and possibly summering.

## GREBES THROUGH PLOVERS

A mind-boggling estimated 800+ Horned Grebes counted at various points along the n.

shore of L. Pontchartrain, St. Tammany 2 Mar (JBo) more than doubled the previous Louisiana high count! Brown Pelicans continue to be reported inland with increasing frequency. Single imm. were encountered at L. Conway, Faulkner, AR 14-21 Mar (ph. K&LN, DS, SH), Cotile L., Rapides, LA 16-18 Mar (JVH), and in the Atchafalaya Basin in Pointe Coupee just e. of Krotz Springs 6 Apr (Joseph Morlan, Robbie Fischer); whether their presence was still related to

last fall's hurricanes or some other phenomenon is unclear. Thought to be arriving spring migrants, 2 Anhingas at Jacobs L., Arkansas 7 Mar (DS, K&AR) were exceptionally early for Arkansas; 5 in Monroe 19 Apr (DS, DBr) may have been a first for this county in e.-cen. Arkansas. Sightings of an American Bittern at W.W.P. 1 Mar and 4 Apr (JCN, AS, JBr, MAM, David Woolsey et al.) likely pertained to the same bird reported there during the preceding winter season. C.N.F. continues to produce new record Arkansas counts of Least Bitterns, the latest benchmark being 32 on 21 May (DB); singles at W.W.P. 24 Apr (JCN, AS, SE, SD) and 24 May (MAM) were unusual for nw. Arkansas, and one on the L. Pontchartrain causeway, Jefferson 8 Mar (Stefan Woltman) was very early. Still a rare bird in the n. corners of Arkansas, especially in spring, Tricolored Herons were spotted in Mississippi 6 May (ph. Timothy P. Jones) and in Crawford 20 May (B&TB); up to 8 incubating ads. at a heronry at Mibermel rice farm near Powhatan, Natchitoches 9-12 May (HH, BH, Mac Hardy) provided another confirmed

breeding site for n. Louisiana. A Green Heron at N.L.T. 6 Mar (JAG) was record early for nw. Arkansas by almost a month, and another at Fayetteville, Washington 6 Apr (HDC) was also very early. Unusually large numbers of White Ibis penetrated northward into e. Arkansas, starting with a single imm. at C.N.F. 2 May (DB, RoH, KN), followed by 41 near Helena, Phillips 10 May (LA, TM), 34 at B.K.N.W.R. 14 May, and 101 ads. there 17 May (both KN). Also generally rare in the n. interior, far inland sightings of White-faced Ibis included one at S.F.F. 17 Apr (DBr), an impressive 20 at Frog Bayou W.M.A., Crawford 30 Apr (B&TB), and one at C.N.F. 21 May (DB); breeding is unconfirmed away

from the immediate coast, so it is unclear if these birds are migrants (to points n. and w. of the Region), spring "overshoots," or wandering nonbreeders. Two Wood Storks at Spanish L., Ascension/Iberville 5 May (Jim Ragland, Frank Bonifay) and another nearby near St. Gabriel, Iberville 10 May (ph. DLD) were relatively early; 40 near Cheneyville 24 May (ph. Jij) was also a large flock for so early. After a first appearance back in early fall 2007, the now-famous Texas/Louisiana American Flamingo (a.k.a. "HDNT") made its Louisiana encore, once again accompanied by the equally famous escapee Greater Flamingo "492," and was enjoyed by many birders 1-14 May at Grand Chenier, Cameron (Butch Conner, *vide* Cyndi Sellers, vt. PAW, CCS, ph. DBo, BMM, ph. PEC, ph. JPS, JVH, m.ob.); this represents the 2nd state occurrence of American Flamingo.

Noteworthy Swallow-tailed Kite sightings included a rather early returnee at Pearl River, St. Tammany 5 Mar (JOC; although one was also reported here 14 Feb), a rare and early sw. Louisiana migrant at the Lacassine N.W.R. Pool Unit, Cameron 7 Mar (GG, RD) and another on the immediate coast of Cameron 17 Apr (BMM, PEC), and a cen. Louisiana migrant near Gardner, Rapides 24 Mar (JVH, Judith M. Huner). A breeding pair of Red-tailed Hawks at Thornwell through the period (Dennis Demcheck, Kay Radlauer, DLD, SWC)



Louisiana typically hosts one to a few Glaucous Gulls per year, but two in the same area, much less in the same view, is almost unheard of. These two first-cycle individuals crossed paths on Holly Beach, Cameron Parish, Louisiana 28 March 2008. Photograph by Paul E. Conover.

was, surprisingly, the first confirmed nesting so far sw. in Louisiana. Two imm. Golden Eagles wintering in se. Stone, Arkansas were both seen through 1 Apr, and one remained until 14 Apr (ph. Herschel Raney). A pair of Crested Caracaras at Grand Chenier 26 Apr (DLD, SWC) was interesting on the immediate coast and a bit farther e. than normal. Most noteworthy among several reports of Peregrine Falcons in Arkansas were relatively late individuals at Cabot, Lonoke 12 May (K&LN), Lollie Valley, Faulkner 16 May (DS, KH), and near Bunge, Desha 20 May (DB); one was also very late (especially near the coast) at Cameron Prairie N.W.R., Cameron, LA 17 May (SWC, DLD). American Golden-Plover con-



The jury is still out, but some experts believe that this subadult dark-backed gull at Holly Beach, Cameron Parish 2 May 2009 exhibits characteristics consistent with Slaty-backed Gull, which would constitute a first for Louisiana. Photographs by Paul E. Conover.

centrations estimated at 4000 in Poinsett 26 Mar (DB) and a whopping 10,000 in Crittenden 29 Mar (J. R. Wilson et al.) wiped out the previous record high counts for Arkansas. Good numbers were also noted at Vaughn, Benton, where 225 on 13 Apr (JCN, Lynn Christie) upped the local record high count; 3 at Lollie Valley 30 May (JDx) were relatively late. Providing only the 5th confirmed Louisiana breeding record, a female Snowy Plover was found attending a small chick at Rutherford Beach 2 May (ph. DLD, SWC). About the 16th and 17th Arkansas spring records, single Piping Plovers were at S.F.F. 17 Apr (JDx) and at C.F.H. 7-8 May (MAM, Charles McCutchen, JBr).

### STILT THROUGH TERNS

A Black-necked Stilt at C.N.F. 20 Mar (ph. DB) was record early for Arkansas. Most noteworthy among five Arkansas reports of inland Willets (presumably migrating *inornatus*) were nice flocks of 33 at S.F.F. 28 Apr (K&LN) and 22 at Harrison, Boone 30 Apr (Sheree & Hank Rogers), plus a possible first for *Faulkner* at Lollie Valley 17 May (KH, J&JJ, RHe). Eighteen Solitary Sandpipers at W.W.P. 29 Apr (MAM) may represent a record high count for Arkansas; singles near Cameron (PAW, DPM) and at Fayetteville (MAM), both 17 May, were rather late. Surprisingly rare in Arkansas, 3 Whimbrels at Lollie Valley 16 May (AM, K&RaH, DS et al.) were the first for *Faulkner* and added to only a dozen or so previous state spring records. Three Long-billed Curlews were unexpected on the cen. Louisiana coast at Racoon I., Terrebonne 4 Apr (EJR); the species is rare in the Region away from the sw. coast. Relatively far e. for the species was a Hudsonian Godwit at Georgetown, White, AR 17 May (K&LN), and 4 were in the same area 18 May (KN). Only the 2nd for *Faulkner*, and a good bird anywhere in the interior, especially in spring, a Marbled Godwit was at Lollie

Valley 17 May (KH, J&JJ, RHe); 10 Ruddy Turnstones there 16 May (K&RaH, AM) made an apparent county first and also a very respectable count for the interior. A Sanderling at C.N.F. 15-17 Apr and 2 there 29-30 Apr (DB) were the only inland reports of this rare interior migrant. Coinciding with the above massive grounding of American Golden-Plovers, and setting a new high for Arkansas, were a remarkable 7000 Pectoral Sandpipers in Poinsett 26 Mar (DB). A Ruff at C.N.F. 15 Apr (DB) was about the 12th for Arkansas; most of the other records are also from spring. A hefty 5000 Short-billed Dowitchers at Port Fourchon, Lafourche 17 Apr (PAW, DPM, RDP) may represent an all-time high for Louisiana. Red-necked Phalaropes are very rare migrants in the Region, so three reports from Desha, AR in one season was impressive: 2 males near Kelso 18 May, a female there 24 May, and a male at C.N.F. 19-26 May (all ph. DB).

An ad. Laughing Gull at L. Dardanelle, Pope, assumed to be the same individual that has wintered there since 1998-1999, remained through 28 Mar (K&LN). An alternate-plumaged ad. Franklin's Gull in Pulaski 11 Mar (ph. Dennis Eagle) was incredibly early but, surprisingly, not unprecedentedly so for Arkansas; one at Holly Beach 28 Mar (ph. DBo) was also very early for Louisiana. An unexpected dose of rare Glaucous Gulls began in Mar with several sightings in the Holly Beach/Johnsons Bayou area. Most encounters in that area 12-29 Mar (ph. JVH, ph. PEC, BMM, ph. DBo, ph. JBo, ph. GB) were thought to pertain to the same bird (rumored to have been present since 21 Feb), but another individual was confirmed 28 Mar (ph. PEC) and was seen again 17 Apr (ph. BMM, ph. PEC). Yet another first-cycle Glaucous was present at Grand Isle, Jefferson 18-19 Apr (Jeff

Webster, vt. DPM, vt. PAW, ph. DLD, ph. Kevin Colley, ph. DBo, m.ob.). The most interesting gull, and potential best bird of the season, was at Holly Beach 2 May (ph. PEC, vt. PAW, CCS); initially identified as a subad. Great Black-backed, subsequent analysis of documentary images has sparked debate as to whether the bird is actually a Slaty-backed Gull, which would be a state and Regional first. Another large, dark-backed subad. gull at Grand Isle 18-19 Apr (ph. DLD, SWC) was thought to be a Great Black-backed x Herring hybrid. A first-cycle Black-legged Kittiwake near Cameron 18 Apr (ph. GB) was the only report of the species.

Surely propelled inland by the unrelenting late spring southerly winds, Arkansas's first Gull-billed Tern appeared at C.N.F. 26 Apr (ph. D&SB, ph. CM, DS). A flock of 36 Caspian Terns at Lollie Valley 16 May (K&RaH, AM, Kathleen Mueller) was apparently the state's record high number of this scarce spring migrant. Common Terns are detected surprisingly infrequently in the interior in



The best guess regarding the identity of this subadult dark-mantled gull at Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana 19 April 2009 was hybrid, most likely Great Black-backed Gull x Herring Gull. Photograph by Donna L. Dittmann.

spring, so one at Fayetteville 25 May (HDC) and 7 at Lollie Valley the same day (David Ray) were of interest. Black Terns continue to be detected much earlier than previously considered normal, with 3 near Cameron 15 Mar (JBo, DBo).

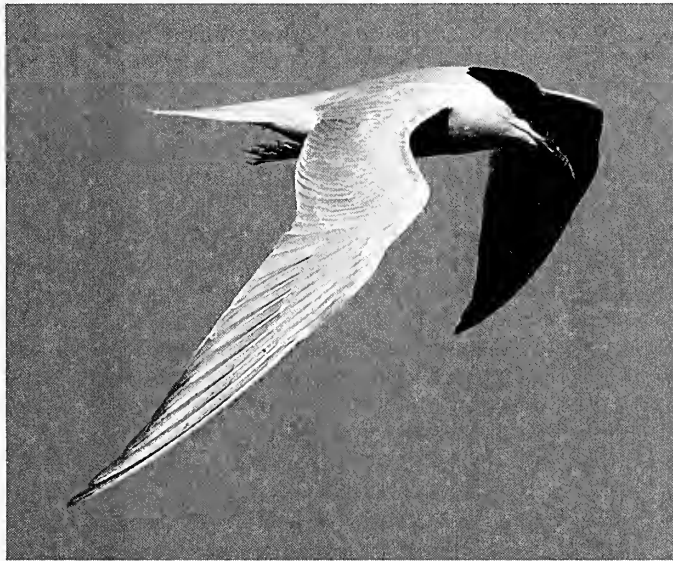
### DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

Illustrating the dramatic recent push of White-winged Doves into the Region's interior, Arkansas's first was recorded only 15 years ago, but there are now 40+ occurrences for the state; this spring's contributions included

a first in Arkansas 9 May (ph. K&AR) and *Pulaski's* 2nd at Maumelle 11 May (ph. K&RaH); part of the same pattern included singles in n. Louisiana in *Caddo* 19 Mar (Linda Adrion, Pat Lonacker) and *Claiborne* 13 May (ph. JD). Seldom detected in Arkansas, especially in spring, a Common Ground-Dove visited C.N.F. 1-2 May (ph. DB, RoH, KN); one at Alliance, *Plaquemines* 5 Apr (DPM, PAW) was also a good bird for se. Louisiana. A Short-eared Owl at C.F.H. 28 Mar (ph. JBr) was record late for nw. Arkansas and among the latest ever for the state. A Lesser Nighthawk discovered at Johnsons Bayou 11 Apr (ph. GB) represented the lone report for the season. Four Common Nighthawks at Trinity I. in the Isles Derniers barrier island chain, *Terrebonne* 3 Apr (EJR) were record early for the coast, and 2 far to the nw. in *Caddo* the same day (RS) were even more surprising; a concentration of 87 streaming northeastward through *Caddo* 16 May (RS) provided another nice late migration data point. Earliest ever for n. Louisiana was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird at L. *Claiborne*, *Claiborne* 8 Mar (MEL), and a male at Fayetteville 8 Apr (HDC) was also record early for nw. Arkansas. A Pileated Woodpecker in n. *Plaquemines* 10 Apr (Wendy Rihner) furnished yet another spring occurrence well s. of the species' normal distribution.

Much scarcer in spring than fall, an Olive-sided Flycatcher was observed at Johnsons Bayou 17 May (PAW, DPM). Thirteen Least Flycatchers at C.F.P. 9 May (DB, RoH) was an excellent spring total for anywhere in the Region. A Say's Phoebe spending its 2nd winter near Kaplan, *Vermilion*, LA remained well into the spring and was last observed 7 Apr (JVR, PEC, DP, JBo, DBo et al.). Small numbers of Ash-throated Flycatchers are now routine in Louisiana during fall and winter, but there are still few spring records. One in New Orleans 1 Apr (ph. David LHoste, Denise LHoste) had likely wintered in the area and provided a valuable "last observed" date; another at Johnsons Bayou 4-5 May (ph. GB, BMM, JVH) was considered a true spring migrant. Louisiana records of Great Kiskadee continue to pile up. This spring, one was found at the White Lake Preserve, *Vermilion* 14 Apr (MAS, ph. PEC; 2 birds suspected, and unconfirmed reports of a pair by the preserve staff); an apparent migrant was seen briefly at the Oak Grove Sanctuary, *Cameron* 16 Apr (ph. JaS,

JMM); and a territorial pair was discovered near Rockefeller Refuge headquarters, *Cameron* 2 May+ (SWC, ph. DLD, vt. PAW, ph. MTP, ph. DBo, vt. MAS, m.ob.). The latter birds, Louisiana's first documented breeding pair, were well along on nest construction 2 May, but the presence of eggs or young could not be confirmed during the period. Still casual in Louisiana, a Tropical/Couch's Kingbird near the White Lake Preserve 29 May (ph. MAS) could not be identified to species. Annual in spring at Grand Isle but still a Review List species in Louisiana, a Gray Kingbird (possibly 2) was there 19 Apr (SWC, ph. DLD, DPM et al.). Five Western Kingbirds in the Alliance-Diamond area, *Plaquemines* 5



The highlight of the season in Arkansas was this long-overdue first Gull-billed Tern at Camp Nine Farm near Arkansas City, Desha County 26 April 2009, possibly delivered courtesy of strong southerly winds. Photograph by Charles Mills.

Apr (DPM, PAW) were considered residuals of the flocks that had wintered in that area, but one near St. Francisville, *West Feliciana* 7 Apr (ph. MB, Don Thibadeaux), if a migrant, would be record early for Louisiana, and about three weeks so for the s. interior. Similarly, 13 Scissor-tailed Flycatchers at Alliance-Diamond 5 Apr (DPM, PAW) and one at Grand Isle 11 Apr (DPM, PAW, RDP) were considered wintering holdovers, whereas one at Baton Rouge, *East Baton Rouge* 25 Mar (ph. Amy Shutt) would set another early date for Louisiana's s. interior; singles in *Desha* 29 Mar (D&SB) and in *Phillips* 10 May (LA, TM) were unusually far e. in Arkansas.

### VIREOS THROUGH PIPIT

Although Bell's Vireos are scarce and local, but regular, breeders in nw. Arkansas, 3 different birds found in the Fayetteville area 4-7 May (JCN, DO) were thought to represent migrants; Louisiana's only report was from along

the Red R. at Bossier City, *Bossier* 30 May (ph. JfT, TD), also an area with a small and local breeding population. A Yellow-throated Vireo at Tickfaw S.P., *Livingston* 8 Mar (ph. JaS, Jessica Evans) was the 3rd earliest ever for Louisiana and the earliest in over half a century; other relatively early Yellow-throateds included 3 in *Cameron* 15 Mar (JBo, DBo), and one in *Monroe*, AR 20 Mar (David Luneau). A Red-eyed Vireo in *Caddo* 26 Mar (RS) was record early for nw. Louisiana. Two Yellow-green Vireos, about the 7th and 8th well-documented Louisiana occurrences, were found at Johnsons Bayou, the first at the Baton Rouge Audubon Society Sanctuary 16-18 May (ph. GB, vt. DPM, vt. PAW, ph. DP, ph. PEC, ph. MTP, ph. DBo, m.ob.), the other a few km away 17-18 May (vt. DPM, vt. PAW, ph. PEC, ph. DBo et al.). Several reports of Black-whiskered Vireos included the obligate 1-2 at Grand Isle, one on 19 Apr (EJR, Hannah Tetreault, RS) and one on 3 May (ph. GC), at least one and possibly 2-3 at Johnsons Bayou 28 Apr-9 May (JVH, ph. GB, BMM, ph. TF), and one along the Sabine N.W.R. nature trail 5-7 May (JVH, ph. JPS, NLN).

Seldom recorded along the sw. coast, an American Crow was an unexpected sight (and sound) at Johnsons Bayou 26 Apr (CF). Spectacular concentrations of Tree Swallows included estimates of one million over the marshes n. of Creole, *Cameron* 5 Apr (BMM) and 200,000 at C.N.F. 15 Apr (ph. DB). Reports of breeding or suspected

breeding Tree Swallows included up to 8 at nest holes in snags at two sites on the Mibermel rice farm 9-13 May (HH, BH), 2 ads. at Cotile L. 20 May (JVH; would be 5th consecutive year at this site), and a possible pair in *Caddo* 30 May (vt. JfH); there are fewer than 10 previous confirmed breeding records for Louisiana. Two Bank Swallows at separate locations in *Cameron* 28 Mar (ph. PEC) were quite early; there are few records from before mid-Apr. Whether wintering birds that went undetected or very early spring migrants, 2 Cave Swallows were quite a surprise at Fontainebleau S.P. on the n. shore of L. Pontchartrain, *St. Tammany* 2 Mar (ph. JBo); one at Grand Isle 19 Apr (SWC, ph. DLD et al.) was the first "hard evidence" occurrence there, although there are several prior sight reports. Perhaps more anticipated, but still mildly surprising, were at least 4 Cave Swallows presumably breeding under a bridge near Vinton, sw. *Calcasieu* 1 May+ (DFL,



Although Great Kiskadee nests are not unprecedented in Louisiana, the few reported in the past have been constructed by lone individuals. A pair completing construction of a nest near the Rockefeller Refuge headquarters, Grand Chenier, Cameron Parish 2 May 2009 (here) and later thus represented the first confirmed breeding attempt in the state. Photograph by Donna Dittmann.

JMM, JVH, ph. TF).

Testifying to the species' remarkably early spring departure from the Region, a Brown Creeper at Corney L., *Claiborne* 4 Apr (JD) ranked as one of the latest ever for Louisiana. More intriguing was a "late" individual at Grassy L., *Hempstead* 19 Apr (CM, JCN); there is a previous record of 2 there in early Jun 1974, and there are a few other late spring and summer records from cypress swamp habitats in Arkansas, including confirmed breeding in *Monroe* in 2004. A Winter Wren at Grand Isle 28 Mar (Melvin Weber) was also very late, especially for the immediate coast. Separate Bewick's Wrens at Fayetteville 13 (MAM) & 19 Mar (MAM, HDC) were considered transients, but 4, including a possible pair, in the Maysville/Gravette area, *Benton* 21 May+ were more likely local breeders; the latter birds were thought to be brown-backed "western" birds rather than reddish-backed "eastern" birds (JCN, Sarah Thompson). A Marsh Wren at C.F.H. 2 May (MAM, JBr) was considered a rare spring transient in nw. Arkansas. Veery is considered a rare migrant in nw. Arkansas, so singles at Fayetteville 4 & 20 May (MAM) were of interest. Two American Pipits at W.W.P. 10 May represented the latest for Arkansas in several decades; another at Fayetteville 3 May (both MAM) was late as well.

## WARBLERS THROUGH DICKCISSEL

Early Blue-winged Warblers were noted at Baton Rouge 25 Mar (DFL), at New Orleans 28 Mar (Craig Mineo), and at Crossett, *Ashley* 3 Apr (JNel); a singing male was on territory at N.L.T. by 18 Apr (JAG). Six Golden-winged Warblers associated with the fallout at C.F.P. 9 May (DB, RoH) may represent a record count for Arkansas. A "golden-winged" Blue-winged Warbler (i.e., a Blue-winged × Golden-winged backcross hybrid) was at Johnsons

Bayou 16-17 Apr (Brian J. O'Shea, ph. BMM). Tying the record-late date for Louisiana was an Orange-crowned Warbler in *Caddo* 10 May (RS, Bill Wood); one at Grand Isle 26 Apr (ph. EI&CJ) was also very late, especially for the coast. Conversely, a Yellow Warbler at Johnsons Bayou 28 Mar (ph. PEC, JVH) established a new early arrival date for Louisiana; 19 at Fayetteville 19 May (MAM) were somewhat late and provided an impressive spring count for the interior. The impressive warbler fallout at C.F.P. 9 May produced 27 Chestnut-sided and 36 Magnolia Warblers, both of which are 3rd highest spring counts ever for Arkansas (DB, RoH). Early Magnolia Warblers included one at Johnsons Bayou 12 Apr (a new record arrival date for Louisiana; BMM, PEC) and one at Grand Isle 18 Apr (DBO). Always exciting to find in the Region, a nice assortment of Cape May Warblers was highlighted by a record-early individual at Grand Isle 28 Mar (ph. GC); more typically timed migrants included one at Grand Isle 18-19 Apr (DPM, m.ob.), 3 there 26 Apr (EIJ), one at Johnsons Bayou 30 Apr-2 May (EIJ, PAW et al.), one at Fayetteville 2 May (HDC), 2 there 19 May (MAM), and 2 at Millwood L., *Hempstead* 3 May (CM).

Two Black-throated Blue Warblers were found in Arkansas, a female at Crossett 3 May (JNel), and a male in *Pope* 8 May (LA); in Louisiana, one was at Grand Isle 21 Apr (ph. GC), and 2 were there 27 Apr (ph. EI&CJ); this species is quite rare in spring, especially in the interior. An early Black-throated Green Warbler in *Claiborne* 25 Mar (JD) fit the fairly well established pattern of early arrival records mainly detected in the n. interior rather than on the coast. An apparently territorial male at Cherry Bend, Ozark N.E., *Franklin* to 22 May (JCN, JBr, DO) provided more evidence of a small breeding population in the Ozarks Region of nw. Arkansas, and 22 at C.F.P. 9 May (DB, RoH) made a record spring count for Arkansas. For the 3rd consecutive spring, C.F.P. furnished a nice burst of Blackburnian Warblers, this year 20 on 9 May (DB, RoH). A territorial male Prairie Warbler was record early on the breeding grounds in *Livingston* 21 Mar (CF, JaS), and another was relatively early in *Claiborne* 5 Apr (ph. JD). A Palm Warbler at Grand Isle 10 May (vt. PAW, DPM) ranked among the latest ever for Louisiana, and a Blackpoll Warbler at Baton Rouge 19-21 May (vt. JfH) established

a new late spring record for the Louisiana interior. A count of 23 Blackpolls at Fayetteville 19 May (MAM) narrowly missed setting a new high for Arkansas, and 11 in *Sebastian* 11 May (BB) was a good number as well. Although found breeding there in 1994, up to 12 territorial male Cerulean Warblers at the Cherry Bend area 24 Apr+ (JCN) was an excellent concentration of this declining species. An Ovenbird accidentally netted at Baton Rouge 29 Mar (ph. Matt Brooks) was a day earlier than previously recorded for the Louisiana interior and one of the earliest ever for the state. A Northern Waterthrush at Oak Grove 15 Mar (JBo, DBo) was "too early" for a migrant and had probably wintered in the area; one at Johnsons Bayou 7 Apr (DBO) was more likely a legitimate early spring migrant. A singing Louisiana Waterthrush in *Caddo* 9 Mar (Larry R. Raymond) and another at Corney L. the same day (vt. JD) became the earliest spring occurrences ever for Louisiana; one at N.L.T. 8-10 Mar (JAG) was also possibly earliest ever for Arkansas; and another at Fayetteville 12 Mar (HDC) was also quite early. A Wilson's Warbler at Fayetteville 31 May (HDC) was one of the latest ever found in Arkansas in spring. A Yellow-breasted Chat at Baton Rouge 2 Apr (JaS, JVR) was about the 4th earliest spring record for the state.

A wintering male Scarlet Tanager discovered at Harahan, *Jefferson* 21 Feb remained through at least 5 Mar and, amazingly, was joined by a Western Tanager 2-9 Mar (ph. Cathi DiSalvo, ph. Beth Wiggins)! Chipping Sparrows near Milton, *Lafayette* 25 Apr and 24 May (EIJ) were, surprisingly, the latest ever for Louisiana's s. interior away from the breeding distribution. Up to 26 Clay-colored Sparrows were at Johnsons Bayou 5 Apr, with 2 still present as late as 19 Apr (ph. PEC, ph. BMM, DP); such numbers are unprecedented for Louisiana, especially in spring, when the species is considered casual. A Clay-colored Sparrow at Cabot 7 May (LN) was unusually far e. in Arkansas, and 7 in *Benton* 8 May (JCN) was a high (but not unprecedented) number for nw. Arkansas. Single Grasshopper Sparrows detected at Johnsons Bayou 5 Apr (ph. PEC, BMM, DP) and at Oak Grove 17 Apr (ph. PEC) were suggestive of spring migrants on the coast; one at Fayetteville 5 Apr (MAM) was earliest ever for nw. Arkansas. Two singing Henslow's Sparrows at Flanigan Prairie N.A., *Franklin* 25 Apr (KN) were possibly representatives of the small breeding population there. Representing a new spring high count for Arkansas, 24 Lincoln's Sparrows were at Fayetteville 3 May (MAM). Three Harris's Sparrows in *DeSoto* 26 Apr (HH, Pat Hervey) and a Dark-eyed Junco at

Baton Rouge 18 Apr (vt. JfH) were both the 3rd latest occurrences ever for Louisiana; also late was a Harris's Sparrow at Devil's Den S.P., Washington, AR 3 May (ph. Karen Garrett).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Grand Isle 21 Mar (ph. GC) was astoundingly early (and record early by two weeks) for a spring migrant. Also early, but less dramatically so, were Rose-breasteds at Thibodaux, Lafourche, LA 7 Apr (ph. Mike Constant), at Shreveport 17 Apr (Floyd Galliano), and at West Monroe, Ouachita 18 Apr (female; Stephen Pagans); a female at Metairie 28 May (NLN) and a male at Springdale, Washington, AR 31 May (DO, JBr) were very late. An amazing two reports of Lazuli Buntings in Arkansas included a "pair" near L. Wilhelmina, Polk 30 Apr (and a few days prior; ph. Pat & Jim Pawley) and a male at Paron, Saline 10-13 May (Tony Harris, DS, Patricia Braddy, ph. RHe); there are about a dozen previous records for the state, all but one since 1994. A first-year male Indigo Bunting at Keithville, Caddo 21 Mar (ph. Phil Bradley, *vide* TD) was the 2nd earliest for nw. Louisiana. One of the more shocking finds of the season was Louisiana's 2nd Varied Bunting, another stunning ad. male, along the Sabine N.W.R. nature trail 26 Apr (ph. Jody Louviere). A Dickcissel wintering at Baton Rouge since 20 Nov 2008 was last observed 14 Apr (vt. JfH).

## BLACKBIRDS THROUGH SISKIN

A Yellow-headed Blackbird at W.W.P. 24 Apr (ph. AS, JCN, SE, SD) and 5 near Dardanelle, Yell 9 May (K&LN) were noteworthy for Arkansas. Continuing a recent trend, Boat-tailed Grackles continued to penetrate farther inland in s.-cen. Louisiana; this spring, a displaying male was found at Morganza Spillway, Pointe Coupee 10 Apr (ph. MB et al.); another flyby male was seen near St. Gabriel 19 Apr (JVR); and a male plus 2 females were attending nests in ornamental palms at a development just s. of Baton Rouge 13 May+ (JVR). Up to 10 Great-tailed Grackles near Powhatan 9 May (HH, BH), including several females at nests scattered through a heronry, would be the first confirmed breeding occurrence for Louisiana's Red River Valley, although there are several previous "probable" breeding records; one in Bossier 25 May (ph. Jf&JT, TD) was also noteworthy. Another valuable "last observed" date pertained to a wintering imm. male Orchard Oriole at Thibodaux from 10 Feb-31 Mar (B&SM); a singing imm. male near St. Gabriel 15 Mar (SWC, DLD) was considered a migrant and would tie the state's earliest arrival date. Providing a relatively early arrival date for Louisiana was a singing male Baltimore Oriole near St. Gabriel 5 Apr (JVR),

but, interestingly, an ad. male wintering at Thibodaux since 26 Sep remained through 6 Apr (B&SM). Although one of our fairly regular w. vagrants during fall and winter, there are surprisingly few well-documented records of spring migrant Bullock's Orioles in Louisiana; thus, at least one ad. male at Johnsons Bayou 3-12 Apr (Donna Bordelon, BMM, ph. PEC et al.) was an outstanding find.

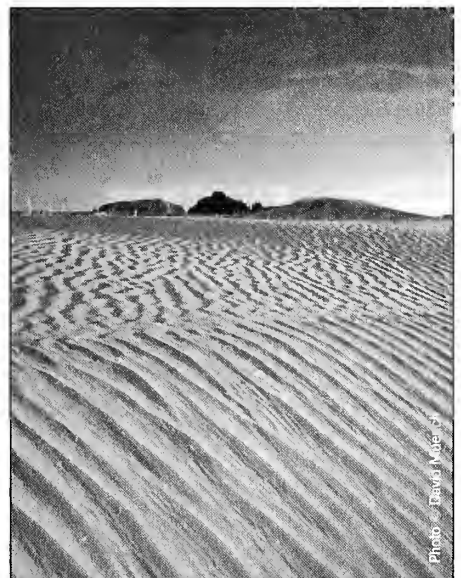
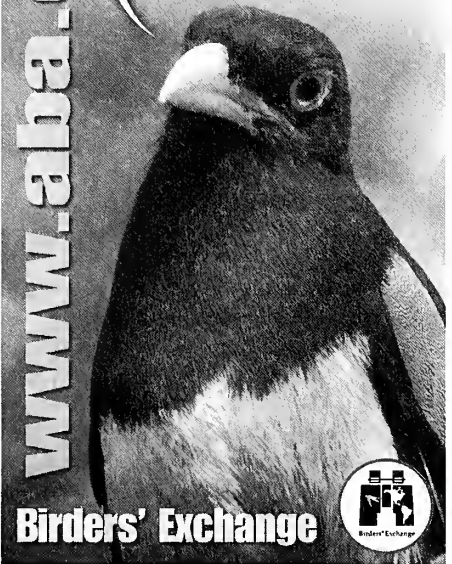
For the 2nd consecutive spring, there was an unusual presence of lingering Pine Siskins in Louisiana: in St. Tammany, flocks of 15-40 individuals were noted at Abita Springs through 17 Apr, with 2 still present 19 Apr (SW), and 3 were at Covington 9 May (Marlyn and Harvey L. Patten, NLN et al.); at L. Claiborne, 3-5 were present 8-13 May, with one 14 May (MEL); 2 were in Rapides 10 May (JVH); one was at Homer, Claiborne 15 May (JD); and the latest was in Caddo 17 May (Paul M. Dickson). Perhaps more intriguing was a pair observed carrying nest material into a pine tree at Fayetteville 4 Apr (MAM, DO, JBr); there is one previous confirmed breeding occurrence for Arkansas, in Benton Aug-Sep 2005.

Initialed observers (subregional editors in boldface): Leif Anderson, Dick Baxter, Sarah Baxter, Bill and Toka Beall, Devin Bosler (DBo), Justin Bosler (JBo), Dennis Braddy (DBr), Gary Broussard, Jacque Brown (JBr), Murrell Butler, Steven W. Cardiff (Louisiana), H. David Chapman, Gayle Clement, Paul E. Conover, Jennifer O. Coulson, Terry Davis, John Dillon, Donna L. Dittmann, Jim Dixon (JDx), Robin Doughty, Susan Drouilhet, Steve Erwin, Tom Finnie, Carol Foil, Gay Gomez, Judith Ann Griffith, Bill Hall, Jeff Harris (JfH), Robert Herron (RHe), Hubert Hervey, Karen & Ray Holliday (RaH), Samantha Holschbach, Ron Howard (RoH), Jay V. Huner, Ceci & Erik I. Johnson, Jim Johnson (Jij), John & Joyce Jones, Daniel F. Lane, Mary Ellen Lewis, James M. Maley, Beth and Sammy Maniscalco, Teresa Mathews, Charles Mills, Michael A. Mlodinow, Allan Mueller, David P. Muth, B. Mac Myers, Joseph C. Neal (Arkansas), James Nelson (JNeL), Nancy L. Newfield, Kenny Nichols, LaDonna Nichols, David Oakley, Dave Patton, Matthew T. Pontiff, R. D. Purrington, Kathy & Andy Radomski, E. J. Raynor, J. V. Remsen, Sheree & Hank Rogers, Jacob Saucier (JaS), Andrew Scaboo, Dan Scheiman, Rosemary Seidler, John P. Sevenair, Michael A. Seymour, Curtis C. Sorrells, Jeff (JfT) & Jean Trahan, Phillip A. Wallace. ☺

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# Northern Canada & Greenland



## Cameron D. Eckert

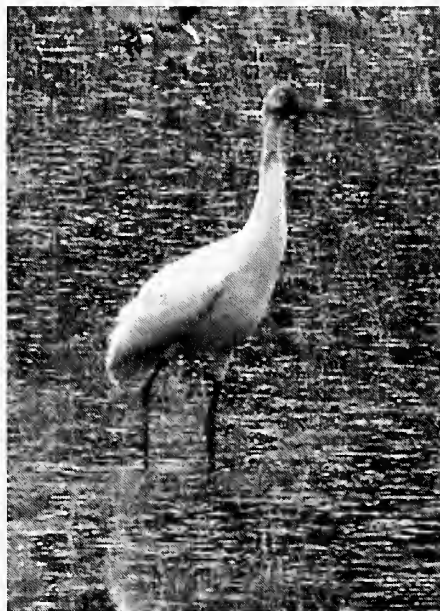
Our Region, which now includes Greenland, covers an area of 5.7 million km<sup>2</sup>—twice as big as Alaska and Texas combined. The northern landscapes are dramatic, remote, and encompass much of the planet's last remaining true wilderness. Sparse populations with few birders in most areas means that visiting birders, scientists, and tour guides are essential to increasing our knowledge of the Region's birdlife. Please take time to submit observations from your birding adventures in the North, and if those adventures take you to Greenland, well then even better! Spring migration for some species in southern Yukon was flavored by record snowfalls during the previous season; for example, lingering snow coverage in early May likely accounted for the large flocks of Lapland Longspurs that invaded towns and settlements. However, migration progressed normally for other species groups such as waterfowl, shorebirds, and warblers. In Northwest Territories, spring came late to the Norman Wells and Mackenzie Valley areas but then erupted quickly. A rapid green-up gave way to subsequent cool and wet conditions.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Fifty Snow Geese at Norman Wells, NWT 6 May were the season's first (DW). A flock of 100 Brant, a rare late spring migrant in the Yukon's Southern Lakes area, was seen over Swan L. 30 May (HG). Swan migration peaked at M'Clintock Bay, s. Yukon 25 Apr with counts of 730 Trumpeters and 829 Tundras (JJ). An ad. Bewick's Swan at M'Clintock Bay, s. Yukon 10-11 May (ph. JJ, CE) established just the 2nd record for the territory. A flock of about 200 Canvasbacks was at Shallow Bay, s. Yukon 14 May (BS et al.). An unusually early trio of Redheads arrived at M'

Clintock Bay, s. Yukon 6 Apr (JJ). A movement of Long-tailed Ducks through Whitehorse, s. Yukon included counts of 170 at Schwatka L. 18 May and 100 at the Whitehorse sewage ponds 20 May (HG). Hooded Merganser has not yet been confirmed breeding in the Yukon, but observations of pairs in spring, such as a pair at Tagish 23 Apr (JD, PD) and another at Hidden Lakes 29 May (MW), indicate that birders should be on the lookout for nesting birds. Concern for Horned Grebe populations underscores the importance of recording counts of any significant migration

concentrations; a flock of 100 was at Shallow Bay, s. Yukon 12 May (CE). An Eared Grebe, casual in s. Yukon, was seen in Whitehorse 19 May (ph. PS). An imm. Double-crested Cormorant, rare but regular in s. Yukon, was at Nisutlin Bay 25 May (MG, TaH, ToH). A Great Blue Heron, a rare wanderer to the Region, was at Squanga L., s. Yukon 6 May (YS). A Turkey Vulture, casual anywhere in the Re-



The Yukon's long-awaited first documented Whooping Crane, a first-year bird, was seen at Ross River on about 17 May 2009. Photograph by Henry Nunok.

gion, was seen over Whitehorse, s. Yukon 5 May (KF). A check of a Gyrfalcon nest at Arctic Bay, NU found a pair there 6 May (ph. CK). Two Peregrine Falcons were noted as first-of-the-season arrivals at Norman Wells, NWT 9 May (DW).

There have been a few credible Whooping Crane reports in the Yukon over the years but none accompanied by a photograph. The territory's first documented Whooping Crane, a

yearling, was photographed at Ross River on about 17 May (FE, ph. HN). Sparse coverage of shorebird migration in se. Yukon means that any observations from the area are of interest; among the shorebirds seen at the Watson Lake airport 25-26 May were 2 Black-bellied Plovers, 4 Whimbrels, and single Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, and Upland Sandpiper (ph. JJ). An impressive 22 Solitary Sandpipers were noted at Shallow Bay, s. Yukon 12 May (CE). A White-rumped Sandpiper, rare in s. Yukon, was at Lewes Marsh 25 May (ph. JM). High counts for Long-billed Dowitchers in the Yukon Southern Lakes area included 200 at Shallow Bay 12 May, 250 at Judas Cr. 13 May, 300 at M'Clintock Bay 13 May, and 300 at Horse Cr. 18 May (CE).

## GULLS THROUGH FINCHES

Bonaparte's Gull migration in s. Yukon peaked in mid-May with counts of 350 at Judas Cr. and 600 at M'Clintock Bay 13 May (CE). In s. Yukon, Nares L. hosts the Region's highest numbers of migrant Mew Gulls; a flock totaling 570 was there 6 May (CE, JJ). Two of the 3 ad. Ring-billed Gulls seen at Quartz Rd. wetland in Whitehorse, s. Yukon 7 May remained through the spring and looked as though they might nest there, but in the end it seems they did not (ph. CE). A peak count of 950 Herring Gulls was recorded at M'Clintock Bay, s. Yukon 27 Apr (JJ). Small numbers of Glaucous-winged Gulls make it to the Yukon Southern Lakes each spring; 2 first-cycle birds were at Nares L. 3 May (CE). The first Glaucous Gulls of the season returned to Arctic Bay, NU 11 May (ph. CK). Glaucous Gull is an uncommon migrant through much of the Region's interior; single ads. were seen in Whitehorse, s. Yukon 22 Apr (CE), Norman Wells, NWT 13 May (DW), Yellowknife, NWT 21 May (ph. CM), Hay River, NWT 22 May (ph. GV), Watson Lake, se. Yukon 25 May (ph. JJ), and Ft. Simpson, NWT 30 May (ph. DT). Thayer's Gull is a very rare spring migrant in the Yukon and s. Northwest Territories; reports this season included 2 in Deline, NWT 24-25 May (ph. TiH); a migrant flock of about 15 at Watson Lake, se. Yukon 26 May (ph. JJ); and 2 at Ft. Simpson 30 May (ph. DT).

A Northern Hawk Owl first seen at Norman Wells, NWT 11 Apr was subsequently found nesting 3 May (RP). A Great Gray Owl was seen near Fox L., s. Yukon 5 Mar (GW, MW). Two Short-eared Owls were at Haines Junction, sw. Yukon 26 Apr (CE, PS). A spate of daytime sightings of Boreal Owls perched in the open around s. Yukon in early Mar was indicative of deep snow conditions in the woods that likely limited access to prey. Ru-





A second for the territory, this Western Kingbird was a nice find at the Watson Lake airport, Yukon 28-29 (here 29) May 2009. Photograph by Jukka Jantunen.



A dramatic fallout of Lapland Longspurs across southern Yukon in mid-May 2009 saw flocks such as this one in Whitehorse 13 May blanketing backyards and open fields. Photograph by Cameron Eckert.

fous Hummingbird is rare but regular in s. Yukon; singles were seen in Whitehorse 14 (JSt) & 19 May (KS). An Eastern Phoebe was seen near the edge of its range at Hay River, NWT 18 May (ph. GV). A Western Kingbird, the Yukon's 2nd, was at Watson Lake airport 28-29 May (ph. JJ, JB). Two Northern

Wheatears, the season's first, were at Arctic Bay, NU 28 May (ph. CK).

Migration monitoring at Albert Creek B.O., se. Yukon found that warblers dominated the totals for the 1582 individuals banded this season (TMK, JJ); leading the way were Yellow-rumped Warbler (505), Wilson's Warbler (274), Orange-crowned Warbler (170), Northern Waterthrush (113), Yellow Warbler (96), and Blackpoll Warbler (66). A Canada Warbler, an uncommon breeder in the extreme se. Yukon and unheard of anywhere else in the territory, was about 900 km nw. of its range at Beaver Creek, sw Yukon 21 May (PS). Swamp Sparrow is common in se. Yukon but rare elsewhere in the territory; one singing at McIntyre Cr wetlands 27 May-3 Jun provided the first Whitehorse area record (ph. PS; ph. CE). Harris's Sparrow is a rare migrant in the Region; 3 were at Hay River, NWT 22 & 24 May (GV), one was at Norman Wells, NWT 27 May (DW), and another was seen at Ft.

Simpson, NWT 29 May (DT). A sensational fallout of Lapland Longspurs across s. Yukon in mid-May delighted birders, as flocks in the hundreds descended on backyard birdfeeders. A small flock of 3 Smith's Longspurs, a first record for se. Yukon, visited the Watson Lake airport 26-27 May (ph. JJ). The first Snow

Bunting of spring was at Rankin Inlet, NU 25 Mar (BZ); 300 were at Yellowknife, NWT 19 Apr (MH). A Western Meadowlark, casual in the Region, was at Ft. Simpson, NWT 12 May (ph. DT). Declining populations of Rusty Blackbirds heighten interest in reports of migratory concentrations; a flock of 100 was at Norman Wells, NWT 6 May (DW). A Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch of the interior subspecies, an uncommon alpine breeder and rare lowland migrant, was seen near L. Laberge, s. Yukon 11 Apr (KO). Early spring saw the redpolls suffering from some kind of respiratory illness, with many sick and dead birds reported in s. and cen. Yukon. A Hoary Redpoll lingered at Hay River, NWT until 16 May (ph. GV). It seems that Evening Grosbeaks have become increasingly rare around Watson Lake, se. Yukon in the past decade; a male seen there 12 May was exciting (ph. JSk). A female Evening Grosbeak that wintered in Whitehorse, s. Yukon was last seen 31 Mar (RE).

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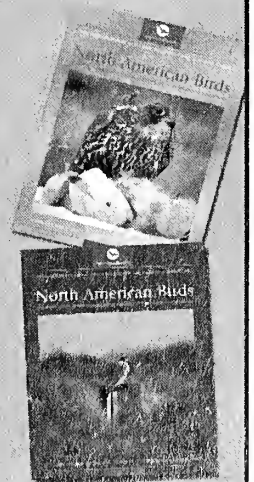
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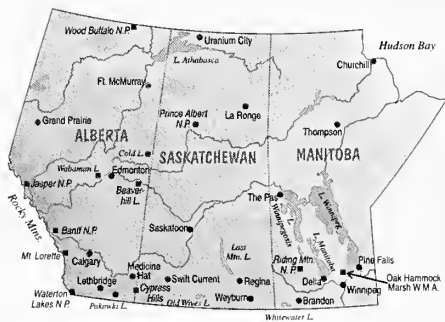
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# Prairie Provinces



Rudolf F. Koes  
Peter Taylor

One of the coolest springs in years, spring 2009 was characterized by persistently well-below-normal temperatures, late frosts, and locally heavy snow in May. In the north, it remained essentially winter through May. The late melt caused widespread flooding in southern Manitoba, but in southwestern Saskatchewan, the multi-year drought continued. Migrants were late in arriving, and many northern breeders lingered in the south. By the end of May, many shorebirds, flycatchers, vireos, and warblers were still in short supply in breeding areas. A brief mild spell 11-12 April resulted in a huge wave of new arrivals in southern Manitoba, while prolonged fallout conditions 15-26 May provided some excellent conditions for studying warblers and sparrows province-wide. A Baikal Teal in Alberta was the rarity of the season, but gulls and especially tanagers also made the news.

Abbreviations: B.F.I. (Browning-Ferris Industries Landfill, Calgary, AB); Wascana (Wascana Marsh and Lake, Regina, SK)

## WATERFOWL THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Oak Hammock Marsh harbored 250 Greater White-fronted Geese 2 May (GB, DDo, CA), a very high number for se. Manitoba. A party of 15 Trumpeter Swans at Pinawa 31 May (RS, JWh) was probably the largest ever for s. Manitoba. A male Gadwall × American Wigeon hybrid near Irricana, AB 17 May (TK) was highly unusual. Highest tallies of Northern Pintail were 7500 at Frank L., AB 5 Apr (ASL) and 4000+ at Oak Hammock Marsh 2 May (GB, DDo). A male Baikal Teal near Keoma, AB 30 Apr-1 May (AT, PC, MMu, m.ob.) would be a first for the Region, if accepted. A Long-tailed Duck at Shepard, AB 12 Apr (TK) was a spring rarity. Other notable ducks included a Common Goldeneye × Hooded Merganser hybrid at Wascana 18 Apr (DSa, BLb) and a Barrow's Goldeneye at Lumsden Beach,

SK 4 May (BLb). Red-necked Grebes peaked at 1000+ at Natalie L., MB 26 Apr (PT).

Stray Great Egrets were at Craven, SK 18 Apr (RM), Buffalo Pound, SK 23 Apr (B&LM), Tyrrell L., AB 4 May (E&AC), Cassils Res., AB 17 May (GR, SK), and near Sundre, AB 30 or 31 May (*fide* TP). A Snowy Egret photographed near Roche Percee 21 Apr was about the 25th for Saskatchewan (KH). A Green Heron was noted at Winnipeg, MB 20 May (AM, m.ob.). The total tally of 10,712 raptors at the Pembina Valley (Windygates), MB hawkwatch between 2 Mar and 18 Apr included a record 1540 Bald Eagles and 8324 Red-tailed Hawks (AS, DS et al.). A Red-shouldered Hawk at St. Adolphe, MB 22 Mar was rare (AC, AA, MQ, LV, ph.). A concentration of 275 Rough-legged Hawks, including 86 in one scan, in the Oak Hammock Marsh area 17 Apr, was staggering. The birds were attracted by concentrations of rodents forced to dry areas during the spring snow melt (RK). Elsewhere in s. Manitoba, 82 Rough-legged Hawks were noted in the Whitemouth-Allegria area 18 Apr (PT), while late individuals were near Boissevain, MB 26 May (RK, PT) and at Riding Mountain N.P., MB 31 May (JL). About 20,000 Sandhill Cranes passed over the Spruce Grove, AB area in a few hours on 28 Apr (CM, MM). Four Whooping Cranes flew over Spruce Woods, MB 14 Apr (D&LG). Shorebird numbers were generally low, although an estimated 5000 Black-bellied Plovers moving through the Brooks, AB area 21-25 May made a notable exception (RC), as did 8 locally rare Dunlins and 500 Stilt Sandpipers at Cheadle, AB 27 May (IH).

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## GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Forty Sabine's Gulls were at Weed L., near Langdon, AB 25 May (BSt, MH), a strong count. An apparent Ring-billed Gull × California Gull hybrid visited B.F.I. 28 Apr (TK, ph.). Thayer's Gulls were widely reported. Singles were at Saskatoon, SK 7 Apr (RD), Regina 17 May (BLb), and Winnipeg 16-17 Apr (TK), and 2 were seen near St. Ambrose, MB 25 Apr (RK, Nature Manitoba); at least 22, including 7 on 9 May, were tallied at B.F.I. 25 Apr-20 May (TK). Single Iceland Gulls

were at Winnipeg 17 Apr and at B.F.I. 20-29 Apr and 9 May (all TK). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were also widespread, with one at Taber L., AB 31 Mar (LB), one near Regina, SK 4 Apr (BLb), up to 2 at Wascana 7-18 Apr (TH, BLb, m.ob.), one at Winnipeg 17-19 Apr (AC, JW), 4 at B.F.I. between 12 Apr and 18 May (TK), and one at Brandon, MB 8 May (CC). A Slaty-backed Gull at Saskatoon 19-24 Apr was the first for the city and 3rd for the province (NS, m.ob., ph.). B.F.I. attracted a Glaucous-winged Gull 23 Apr-2 May (TK); another visited Glenmore Res., AB 5 May (BE, BSt). Great Black-backed Gull reports came from Headingley, MB 6 Apr (RF), while up to 2 at Wascana 6-12 Apr provided the first fully documented record for Saskatchewan (DSa,



Although there were Great Black-backed Gull records for Saskatchewan, these birds, seen here at Wascana Marsh in Regina on 7 April 2009, were the first to be photographed in the province. Photograph by Ryan Peterman.



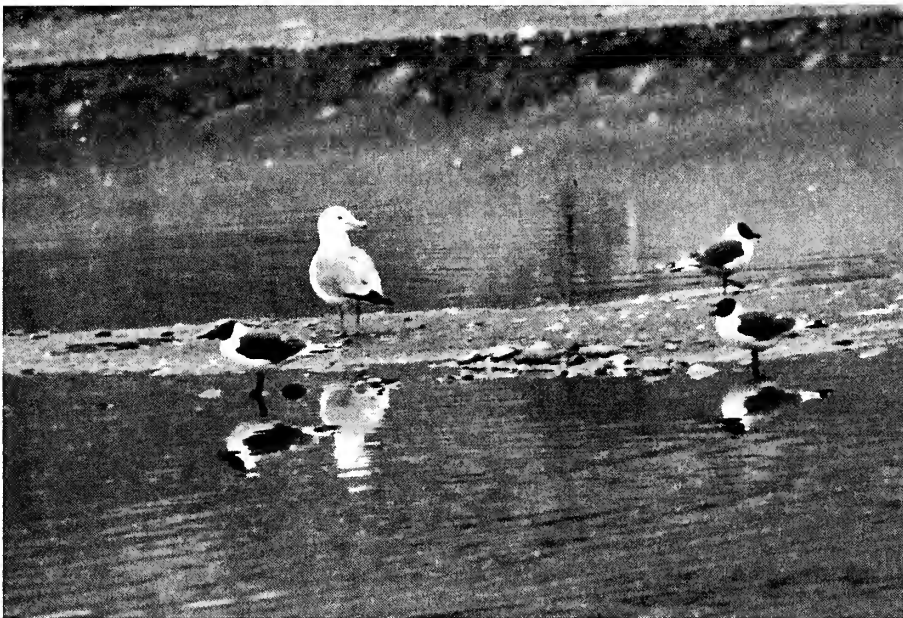
While sightings of Slaty-backed Gull have increased dramatically during the past decade, it remains one of the rarest gulls in the Prairie Provinces. This bird, at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan with other gulls on 19 April 2009, was the first for the city and the third for the province. Photograph by Nick Saunders.

m.ob., ph.).

The only notable owl tally was made in the Chisolm/Slave L., AB area 29 Mar, when 46 Northern Hawk Owls and 22 Great Gray Owls were seen (GR, RCr, MD, JMo); above-average numbers of the former species lingered to breed in cen. and w. Manitoba (m.ob.). A Lewis's Woodpecker near Calgary 30 May was locally rare (JP et al.). A Red-breasted Sapsucker near Balzac, AB 20 May was apparently well described and would be about the 7th for the province (PW).

**SA** It was an exceptional season for tanagers, especially in Manitoba. Summer Tanager has joined the "rare but regular" ranks in the last decade or so, but a total of 9 birds at well-separated locations in s. Manitoba between 18 May and 10 June was exceptional. They included females and both ad. and yearling males. Reports came from East Selkirk 18 May (*fide* GG), near St François Xavier 20 May (RB, DET, PF, m.ob., ph.), Winnipeg Beach 20 May (*fide* GG, ph.), Starbuck 25-30 May (CP, m.ob., ph.), St. Leon 30 May "present nearly a month" (*fide* CA, ph.), Morden 30 May (*fide* PG, AS), near Altona in late May (*fide* AS), Grand Beach 3 Jun (AC), and finally Grosse Isle 10 Jun (A&JH, ph., *fide* CA). Farther w., where the species is still more noteworthy, single male Summer Tanagers appeared at Kelvington, SK during the week of 9 May (*fide* NS, ph.) and at Elkwater, Cypress Hills, AB 19 May (JM, MM, CM, ph.).

Two Scarlet Tanager reports from Saskatchewan included a rarely reported orange-variant male at Esterhazy around 21 May (ET, ph.) and a normal male at Saskatoon 20 May (NS, ph.). Western Tanagers made a more normal showing in Manitoba, with single males at feeders near Balmoral 14-19 May (JR, m.ob., ph.), near Douglas 18-22 May (MB & family, ph.), and in Winnipeg 23-27 May (MJ, m.ob.).



This apparent Ring-billed Gull x California Gull hybrid (here 28 April 2009) at a landfill at Calgary, Alberta was one of several rare gulls found by the photographer at the site this spring. Photograph by Terry Korolyk.



Beautifully photographed was this American Dipper, well northwest of its usual range, at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on 19 April 2009. Photograph by Nick Saunders.

## PASSERINES

Flycatchers and vireos were still scarce at the end of May, reflecting the late spring (KG, m.ob.). At Oak Hammock Marsh, 105+ Common Ravens were hunting rodents in dry areas 7 Apr (KG). An American Dipper at Saskatoon 19-23 Apr was the 2nd for the city (NS, ph.). With only a handful of records in Alberta, a Wood Thrush at Brooks 17 May was an excellent find (SK, GR, m.ob.), while one at Moose L. MB 27 May (DD, IW) was closer to its normal range. Bohemian Waxwings were notably scarce, except

for a brief period late Mar-early Apr, when records included 3000 at the Elbow R. valley in Calgary (GY et al.). Rare warblers included a Northern Parula at Last Mountain, SK 22 May (JC), single Black-throated Blue Warblers near Pierson, MB 24-26 May (RW, m.ob.) and at Gimli, MB 28 May (BC), a Black-throated Gray Warbler, Manitoba's 2nd, at St. Ambrose 17 May (JG, GG, SG; the province's first was seen May 2008), and a Hooded Warbler at Winnipeg 16 May (PR).

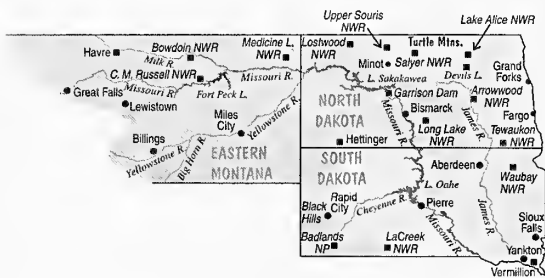
An Eastern Towhee was apparently photographed at Medicine Hat, AB in the 3rd week of May (RWp). A very early Lincoln's Sparrow reached Calgary 6 Apr (GY). Lapland Longspurs lingered longer than usual in s. Manitoba, with flocks of 130 at Old Pinawa 21 May (PT), 23 at Jessica L. 29 May (LdM), and 30 at Hecla P.P. 29 May (BS). Similarly tardy was a Snow Bunting at St. Ambrose 30 May (BL). An out-of-range Black-headed Grosbeak was at Estevan, SK 19 May (KH), while a male occupied a territory near Coulter, MB for the 4th year in a row (m.ob.). Common Redpolls lingered well into May in s. Alberta and s. Manitoba; a slightly injured bird, capable of flight, visited a feeder near Pierson until at least 28 May (RW, MW). Lingered Hoary Redpolls were at Grosse Isle, MB 29 Apr (KG) and St. Anne, MB 1 May (VR).

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# Northern Great Plains



## Ron Martin

March weather was a continuation of one of the most difficult winters in recent memory. Sub-zero temperatures in the first half of the month finally gave way to a warming trend and some movement of birds. However, more blizzards and cold temperatures at the end of the month brought the fledgling migration to a standstill. Bismarck, North Dakota had the second highest snowfall on record, with over 257 cm (101 inches!). Ice-out on some North Dakota lakes did not occur until late April. When the melting finally got underway in April, massive flooding covered much of the Dakotas. All but two North Dakota counties had flooding problems, with roads washed out and closed by high water nearly everywhere. The Red River at Fargo, North Dakota reached a new all-time crest, and the Missouri River at Bismarck flooded some areas for the first time since Garrison Dam was built in the 1950s.

Temperatures in April and May were also below average, and migration peaks were a full two weeks behind schedule during much of April. Leaf-out in much of the Region did not occur until late May. This, along with the cool temperatures, grounded large numbers of warblers late in the month. Despite the weather, there were some extremely early appearances by a number of species. Two Glossy Ibis reports in North Dakota are potentially the first records for the state, and a possible second record for Great Black-backed Gull was reported from South Dakota.

## GEESE THROUGH FALCONS

Six Greater White-fronted Geese were late in Pembina, ND 24 May (REM). A new high count for North Dakota, 658 Ross's Geese were in Burleigh 9 Apr (HCT). Canvasbacks made a strong showing, with peaks of 2000 in Yankton, SD 7 Mar (RD) and 2500 in Burleigh, ND 18 Apr (HCT). A potential first for Montana, a pair of Tufted Ducks was at Benton L., MT 6 May (p.a., SD). A Harlequin Duck in Brown, SD 20 Apr would, if accepted, furnish the 4th record for the state (p.a., CD). Casual in spring, a Surf Scoter was in Minnehaha, SD

25 Apr (DC). Very rare in spring, 4 Barrow's Goldeneyes were in Brookings, SD 2 Apr (KJ). A high number for spring, 75 Hooded Mergansers were in Yankton, SD 7 Mar (RD). Also notable was a peak of 60 Red-breasted Mergansers in Yankton 28 Mar (BH). A good peak of 1500 Horned Grebes was at the Grand Forks Lagoons, ND 29 Apr (EEF).

Unusually far w. was a Least Bittern in Adams, ND 27 May (p.a., DAG, CG). Nearly a month earlier than the previous early date, a Black-crowned Night-Heron was in Minnehaha, SD 1 Mar (p.a., TP). Two Glossy Ibis reports from North Dakota would, if accepted, furnish the first records for the state. A single was reported in Dickey 13 Apr (p.a., JWH), and another was photographed in McLean 26 May (p.a., CB, MB). A peak of 60 White-faced Ibis was noted 5 May at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R., ND (GAE). A possible 8th record for Montana, a Little Blue Heron was a Medicine Lake N.W.R. 29-30 May (p.a., BB, TN, JH). Also in Montana, a Green Heron 19 May w. of Glasgow would provide about the 15th record for the state (p.a., MH).

A potential 7th record for South Dakota, a Mississippi Kite was in Minnehaha 26 May (p.a., TJ). The only Red-shouldered Hawk report was a single 24 Mar in Fargo, ND (DWR). A Broad-winged Hawk was early in Brookings, SD 25 Mar (KJ), and a new high count of 200 was noted in early May n. of Bismarck, ND (BCo). A Ferruginous Hawk was unusually far e. in Cass, ND 18 May (KRC). Merlin pairs were noted in almost every small town and cemetery in the ne. quarter of North Dakota this spring, including two pairs in the same cemetery in Cando, Towner (REM, CDE).

## RAILS THROUGH GULLS

About the 7th report for North Dakota, a Common Moorhen was in Dickey 21 May (p.a., PMK). A new high count for North Dakota, 150 Black-bellied Plovers were in Cass 18 May (KRC). A Snowy Plover was at Long Lake N.W.R., ND 2-6 May but did not remain (p.a., MJR); this is the 4th consecutive year that the species has been seen in the area. A Snowy Plover was in Hughes, SD 19-21 May (p.a., KM, RDO): the 7th report for the state, this also represented the 3rd consecutive year for this species in South Dakota. A new high count for North Dakota, 2600 Lesser Yellowlegs were in Walsh 9 May (REM, CDE). Nearly a month earlier than the previous early date, a Whimbrel was in Grand Forks, ND 2 Apr (p.a., EEF); there were two additional reports from North Dakota, and a single was in Yankton, SD 20 May (RD). A no-

table flock of 50 Long-billed Curlews was in Custer, SD 9 Apr (MM). Rare in Montana, Ruddy Turnstones were at Westby in mid-May (TN) and at Freezeout L. 20 May (MS, JN). Casual in spring, Western Sandpipers were in Stark, ND 1 May (p.a., REM, SDL) and in Sully, SD 9 May (p.a., RDO). A Baird's Sandpiper was early at Freezeout L., MT 28 Mar (SDH). A Dunlin at Freezeout 11 Apr was 25 days early (MS). A new early record for South Dakota, a Dunlin was in Yankton 28 Mar (BH). Four Buff-breasted Sandpiper reports totaling 122 individuals was above average for North Dakota 20-27 May. American Woodcocks in McHenry 10 Apr (GAE) and Griggs 21 May (REM, CDE) provided first county records for North Dakota.

The 20th report for North Dakota, a Little Gull was in Burleigh 17 Apr (p.a., HCT). Accidental away from Garrison Dam in North Dakota and a first for Cass, an Iceland Gull was photographed at Fargo 18-20 Apr (p.a., KRC, DWR). Glaucous Gulls made a strong showing in South Dakota. The species was reported from three counties 1 Mar-17 Apr, with a peak of 6 on 9 Apr in Sully (RDO). A potential 2nd record for South Dakota, a Great Black-backed Gull was in Pierre 19 Mar-4 Apr (p.a., KM, RDO, TJ, DB).

## DOVES THROUGH WARBLERS

The 10th report for North Dakota, a White-winged Dove was photographed in Cass 1 May (p.a., JG, LG). A Barred Owl was unusual in West Fargo, ND 7-8 Mar (KRC, DWR): A Red-shafted Flicker was unusually far e. 15 May in Bismarck, ND (CDE). Least Flycatchers peaked at 131 in Eddy, ND 20 May (REM, CDE). About the 13th report for Montana, a Eastern Phoebe was at Westby 3 May (p.a., TN). Accidental in Burleigh, a Common Raven was migrating over Bismarck, ND 11 Apr (DNS). A Rock Wren was near Kenmare, Ward, ND 12 May, where a few pairs nest at the nw. edge of their range in the state (RR). Thirty-two American Dipper nests were counted in Lawrence, SD 30-31 May, no doubt representing almost the entire population of the Black Hills (DB). Casual in spring in South Dakota, a Varied Thrush was in Hughes 20 Apr (KM). A Sage Thrasher was e. of the species' normal range in Ziebach, SD 7 May (SS). Sprague's Pipits returned to the w. half of North Dakota in good numbers again this spring.

The 17th report for North Dakota, a Blue-winged Warbler was in Bismarck 12-16 May (p.a., MAG). A Brewster's Warbler in West Fargo, ND 17 May furnished the 3rd report of this hybrid for the state (p.a., DWR, KRC, CDE). There were numerous highlights in the warbler migration in North Dakota (see also

**SA** On 26 May, Lambeth observed an unprecedented fallout of late-migrating warblers in Grand Forks, ND. Often times on cold days in spring in North Dakota, migrating warblers in the e. part of the state will be on the streets foraging in American Elm flower litter. This usually occurs at a time when Yellow-rumped Warblers dominate warbler numbers. However, the late spring this year brought this phenomenon in late May, when the latest migrating species were present. Although the total number of warblers was not unusual for the day, the numbers of some species were unprecedented. New one-day highs were counted for Chestnut-sided (32, previous high 20), Blackburnian (23, previous high 7), and Bay-breasted (34, previous high 4). Other notable totals for the day were 250 Tennessee Warblers, 17 Magnolia Warblers, and 52 Blackpoll Warblers. Also present was a **Yellow-throated Warbler**, first seen on 24 May, the 7th report for the state (p.a., DOL).

the S.A.). Yellow Warblers peaked 20 May, with 345 in Eddy (REM, CDE). Black-throated Blue Warblers, very rare in spring, were in Fargo 17 May (DWR, CDE, KRC) and Minto 23 May (NDBS). The 13th report for North Dakota, a Townsend's Warbler was in Wells 18 May (p.a., DC). An Audubon's Warbler was unusual at Kenmare 25 May (RR). A nice peak of 100 American Redstarts was tallied in Fargo 26 May (DPW). Casual in North Dakota, a MacGillivray's Warbler was in Kenmare 23 May (RR). Now seemingly regular, Hooded Warblers were in Bismarck 14 May (p.a., TKE), and in West Fargo 16-19 May (p.a., PB). Canada Warblers also peaked 26 May, with 10 in Fargo (DPW). In contrast to North Dakota, the warbler migration in South Dakota was generally described as poor. A notable count of 20 Chestnut-sided Warblers was in Roberts, SD 26 May (GO). A Black-throated Gray Warbler in Hyde, SD was photographed 23 Apr (p.a., EB). This furnished the 7th report for the state. A probable 8th record for South Dakota, a Yellow-throated Warbler was in Walworth 16 May (p.a., DS, GO). Casual in spring in South Dakota, a Worm-eating Warbler was far w. in Harding 23-24 May (p.a., KM). A Chestnut-sided Warbler was far w. in Choteau, MT 22 May (p.a., JN, MS). An unprecedented 3 male Black-throated Blue Warblers were in Miles City, MT 19 May (p.a., JS). This provided about the 16th report for the state.

## TANAGERS THROUGH SISKINS

Tanagers made their strongest showing ever in North Dakota, with 5 Summer Tanagers reported from three counties 15-26 May. Four Western Tanagers were noted 9-23 May, with one present at a Grand Forks feeder 14-23

May (DOL). Summer Tanagers in South Dakota were singles 24 Apr in Pennington (CH) and in Stanley 27 May (DB, RDO). A Green-tailed Towhee 22 May in Harding, SD provided about the 13th report for the state (p.a., KM). Two Lark Sparrows were early 1 Apr in Minnehaha, SD (MZ). Tying the early date for South Dakota, a Lincoln's Sparrow was in Stanley 26 Mar (RDO). Le Conte's Sparrow numbers were low in North Dakota this spring. Conversely, for the 2nd consecutive year, Nelson's Sparrows were seen in good numbers. Extralimital McCown's Longspur reports are very unusual, so an individual in Grand Forks, ND 19-20 May was surprising (p.a., EEF). Weather conditions delayed Lapland Longspur migration in North Dakota. When favorable conditions occurred 14 Apr, 150,000 were noted passing the Minot Sewage Lagoons in a half-hour.

Breeding Northern Cardinals occur regularly only in Grand Forks and Fargo in North Dakota. A survey of the Fargo/West Fargo area this spring turned up about a dozen territories (KRC). Very few Red Crossbills were reported, but a flock of 40 White-winged Crossbills in Custer, SD was notable (S.D.O.U.). The species is irregular in the Black Hills. There were five White-winged Crossbill reports for North Dakota. Widespread nesting of Pine Siskins occurred across North Dakota, with birds present in every town visited.

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# Southern Great Plains



Joseph A. Grzybowski  
W. Ross Silcock

Spring 2009 will probably go down as a season most notable for its high numbers of some landbird groups. An abundance of sparrows was reported across the Region, particularly Lincoln's and Chipping Sparrows. There was also a greater general abundance of warblers, some birders having 18 to 20 warbler species per day, some of these perhaps brought westward by storm systems with strong easterly winds. Black-burnian, Chestnut-sided, and Hooded Warblers were recorded more frequently than usual in eastern and central parts of the Region; at least four Black-throated Blue Warblers made it "out west." However, missing from this mix was Cape May Warbler, and there were very few Bay-breasted Warblers.

The pattern in recent years has been for early arrivals, but this spring saw early arrivals mostly in March, exceptionally so for a few species, and into early April, ardeids excepted. However, from mid-April through May, arrival dates were more on target with the "old times." This was evident for Arctic-nesting shorebirds and boreal warblers, in particular, through May. This season will also go down as the year of Lazuli Buntings, especially in eastern and central Oklahoma, where observers frequently had more than one (up to 13) coming to their feeders. There was no eastward shift noted for other species—distribution of other western taxa seemed more normal. The trend toward northwestward range expansion continued for many southeastern species, from Barred Owl to Summer Tanager, likely associated with westward expansion of woody growth, a consequence of fire suppression.

Abbreviations: Cheyenne Bottoms (Cheyenne Bottoms W.M.A., Barton, KS); Hackberry

(Hackberry Flat W.M.A., Tillman, OK); Hefner (L. Hefner, Oklahoma, OK); McConaughy (L. McConaughy, Keith, NE); Quivira (Quivira N.W.R., Stafford, KS); Rainwater Basin (playas in s.-cen. and se. Nebraska); Red Slough (Red Slough W.M.A., McCurtain, OK); Salt Plains (Salt Plains N.W.R., Alfalfa, OK); Sooner L. (Sooner L., Pawnee/Noble, OK).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH IBISES

Now regular in extreme se. Oklahoma, 6 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks expanded a bit northwestward to Tillman, OK 16-26 May (L&MT et al.); 14 were in Major, OK 25 May (JV); and 3 were at Quivira 30 Apr (RL). Still rarities in the Region, 4 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks visited Red Slough 14 May (DA et al.). Lingering were single Greater White-fronted Geese in Cleveland, OK 3 May (JAG), at Hackberry 19 May (L&MT), and in Lancaster/Saunders, NE 29 May (LE), up to 70 Snow Geese in the e. Rainwater Basin 9 May (JGJ), and single Ross's Geese in York, NE 14-17 May (JGJ) and in Saunders, NE 10 May (LE). Always a surprise, a Brant was in Barton, KS 25 Apr-3 May (SS, m.ob.). Now wintering in small numbers s. to n. Oklahoma, Trumpeter Swans were present in Pawnee, OK through 1 Mar (PT) and at Sooner L. 7 Mar (JW et al.). Tundra Swan, now the rarer swan species in the Region, was reported at least six times: 5 near Logan, NE 3 Mar (TJW), 2 in Alfalfa, OK 4 Mar (fide RW), one in Garfield, OK 15 Mar (with patagial tag; MC), 2 in Texas, OK 18 Mar (DW), 3 at Cheyenne Bottoms 18 Mar (MA, JK), and up to 11 at Quivira 30 Mar (H&SG), with 3 still present there 13 Apr (GF). Ten unidentified swans were in Stafford, KS 9 Mar (SS, HA).

A species most frequently reported in Nebraska in the Region, a Eurasian Wigeon was photographed in Phelps 5-7 Mar (KS, PD). Among the species becoming rarer in the Region, American Black Ducks were noted in Lancaster, NE 6 Mar (JGJ) and at Red Slough 4-10 Mar (DA). Overlapping at Red Slough were up to 2 Mottled Ducks 4 Mar-28 Apr (DA, m.ob.). Cinnamon Teal were noted e. to Sarpy, NE 23 Apr (EB), Johnson, KS 8 Apr (TS), and Washington, OK 31 Mar (MP). Lingering were a Green-winged Teal 27 May in Texas, OK (LMA) and single Canvasbacks in Lancaster/Saunders, NE 29 May (LE) and York, NE 17-23 May (JGJ). Seventeen Greater Scaup were counted in Sedgwick, KS 12 Apr (PJ); a female Greater was late in Seward, NE

11 May (JGJ, ph.). The Region's scoters included 2 Surf Scoters at Sooner L. 16 Mar (L&MT) and one in Riley, KS 29 Apr (LJ); 3 White-winged Scoters at Sooner L. through 16 Mar (L&MT) and one in Johnson, NE 25 Mar (KC); and 3 Black Scoters at Sooner L. 16 Mar (L&MT). Long-tailed Ducks were found in Ellsworth, KS 6-12 Mar (MR), and 3 were at Sooner L. 16 Mar (L&MT), with one there 7 Apr (JWA). A juv. Hooded Merganser in Lincoln, NE 25 May (EO) provided a clear record of breeding. Red-breasted Mergansers lingered until 25 May in Tulsa (2; BC).

Information on Greater Prairie-Chicken is difficult to interpret; the species was widely observed in Nebraska this season (fide WRS). Northwesterly were single Northern Bobwhite in Custer, NE 10 Mar (TH) and 25 May (WF), in Loup, NE 24 Apr (SJD), with 2 in Logan/Lincoln, NE 27 May (LR, RH). Tenkiller L. in Cherokee/Sequoyah, OK produced its typical crop of loons, with single Red-throated, Pacific, and Yellow-billed 17 Mar (JWA); a Pacific was noted there through 1 Apr (SB). A Red-throated was also found at Hefner 8 Mar (JAG), and 2 Common Loons lingered through at least 27 May in Tulsa (TM). Among a small number of Western Grebes was a pair of Clark's Grebes at Cheyenne Bottoms 24 Apr (SS); one Clark's was at Quivira 9 May (SS, DKa, LH).

Brown Pelicans are being located more frequently in the Region; this season, singles were noted in Cherokee, OK 31 Mar-5 Apr



Still rare in the Southern Great Plains region, these Mottled Ducks found in March and April 2009 (here 7 April) at Red Slough Wildlife Management Area, Oklahoma are part of a pattern of more regular occurrences in extreme southeastern Oklahoma. Photograph by Dave Arbour.

(JWi, JM et al.), Woodward, OK 7 May (SM), Sumner, KS 12 May (MT, GY), and n. to Platt, NE 15-17 May (D&JP, LE). Also on the upswing in Oklahoma, Neotropic Cormorants were found at Red Slough by 3 Mar (DA) and at Hackberry 21 Mar (L&MT). Also quite early was an Anhinga at Red Slough 4 Mar (DA). Quite a count was the 45 American Bitterns at Red Slough 21 Apr (DA). Least Bitterns, always local, were found n. to Cherry, NE 24 May (GG). Surprisingly few ardeids arrived early this season; a Great Egret was in Hamil-



One of several Brown Pelicans noted in spring 2009 was this immature found 31 March through 14 April (here) at Fort Gibson Lake, Cherokee County, Oklahoma, part of an increasing trend of occurrences in the Southern Great Plains region. Photograph by Steve Metz.

ton, NE 19 Mar (JGJ), and a Cattle Egret arrived in Lancaster, NE 30 Mar (LE). A Little Blue Heron was northerly in Seward, NE 17 May (JG), as was a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron 11 May in Omaha (KCR). Vagrant Tricolored Herons wandered to Oklahoma 12 & 17 Apr (BD) and Cherokee, OK 1 May (SB). An ad. and imm. White Ibis made it w. to Hackberry beginning 9 May (L&MT). Glossy Ibis reports from Nebraska totaled 8 birds 23 Apr–17 May (PD, JGJ, CG, TJW), and 3 Glossies were in Kansas: 2 at Cheyenne Bottoms 24 Apr (SS) and one in Sedgwick 9 May (PJ). In Oklahoma, one Glossy and one *Plegadis* hybrid were seen 24 Apr+ at Hackberry (JWA, L&MT), up to 7 Glossies were in *Alfalfa* 17 May (fide RW), and one hybrid was at Red Slough 21 Apr (DA). Early were White-faced Ibis in Sequoyah 10 Mar (SB) and in the e. Rainwater Basin 11 Apr (JGJ).

## VULTURES THROUGH TERNS

Early arrivals included a Turkey Vulture in Douglas, NE 6 Mar (DB) and single Ospreys in Cheyenne, KS 4 Mar (RR) and Sarpy, NE 5 Mar (PSw). Quite a surprise were single White-tailed Kites in Pontotoc, OK 10 & 21 May (AC, WAC, DW et al.) and in Seward, NE 30 May (LS). Mississippi Kites were noted n. to Dawes, NE, where a subad. was seen 27 May (WF). A shad die-off concentrated 273 Bald Eagles in Loup/Garfield, NE 12 Mar (DS). An ad. Ferruginous Hawk was still present in Tulsa 10 Mar (JD). Red-shouldered Hawks are now breeding in Lancaster, NE (LE), a north-

westward extension. Broad-winged Hawks continued a trend of more westerly sightings, with singles in Perkins and Grant, NE 25 Apr (WF), Dawes, NE 29 Apr (RO), and Keith, NE 2 May (JGJ). Easterly Prairie Falcons were in Cedar, NE 25 Apr (DAI) and Fillmore, NE 16 May (MB), the latter also a late date. Resident Peregrine Falcons in Lincoln, NE produced 4 nestlings by 20 May (JGJ).

Yellow Rails, seldom seen, certainly migrate through the e. edge of the Region; a more westerly report was from the Salt Plains 6 Apr (JWA); another was noted in Johnson, KS 8 May (DM). A Black Rail was found 22 Apr at the traditional Quivira site (HH, RL), and 3 were seen 15 May in a recently discovered area in Beaver, OK (EBk). King Rails are dependable at Red Slough; others were at Hackberry beginning 19 Mar (L&MT, m.ob.). Up to 3 Common Moorhens at Hackberry beginning 9 May (L&MT) may have been nesting. Purple Gallinules arrived by 28 Apr at Red Slough (5 birds; DA). A pair of Sandhill Cranes bred again in Morrill, NE, producing 2 chicks by 23 May (KD). The Common Crane was photographed again in Garden, NE 18-21 Mar (GB); one was there in 2007 also. An early juv. Whooping Crane was in Hall, NE 16 Mar (JRe).

The Region saw both early and relatively high counts of shorebirds this season. Black-bellied Plover high counts included 320 at Quivira 9 May (SS, DKa, LHe) and 363 in the e. Rainwater Basin 14 May (JGJ), with 20 still in Johnston, OK 31 May (BA). Early were American Golden-Plovers at Sooner L. 4 Mar (JH) and in Seward, NE 6 Mar (JGJ). Snowy Plovers arrived 7 Mar at the Salt Plains (JH); others wandered northward to the e. Rainwater Basin 23 Apr–18 May (5 birds; PD, JGJ, JG), with singles in Antelope, NE 13 Apr (MB) and in Lincoln, NE 2 May (JGJ); high count for the Salt Plains was 2600 on 26 May (fide RW). Piping Plovers bred at scattered locations in Nebraska; migrants included singles at Quivira 26 Apr (SS) and Pawnee, KS 12 May (SS), Hackberry 12 May (L&MT), with 3 on 1 May in Tulsa (PS, JL). Two Mountain Plovers were found 5 May in Kimball, NE (RE).

A Black-necked Stilt arrived early at the Salt Plains 10 Mar (RS), as did 2 American Avocets at Hackberry 23 Mar (L&MT); easterly was a Black-necked Stilt in Sequoyah, OK 16 May

(SB). Also early were Greater Yellowlegs in Buffalo, NE 4 Mar (KS) and in Phelps, NE 6 Mar (PD). There were 23 Lesser Yellowlegs at Hackberry on 1 Mar (L&MT); the 4 on 9 Mar in Lancaster, NE (LE) were exceptional. Continuing the string of early arrivals were a Solitary Sandpiper 3 Mar (exceptional) at Red Slough (DA), 4 Upland Sandpipers 19 Mar at Hackberry (L&MT), and 2 Long-billed Curlews in Sheridan, NE 31 Mar (BP). Early Hudsonian Godwits, all 11 Apr, included 24 in Clay, NE (JGJ), 25 at Quivira (SS, DKa), and 106 at Hackberry (L&MT); some 550 Hudsonians were counted in cen. Kansas 12-15 May (MT, GY, MR, SS). Whimbrel has become more common in the Region in recent years; observations of 25-28 birds spanned from 24 Apr (York, NE; JGJ) through 19 May (Hackberry; L&MT). Two Long-billed Curlews at Hackberry through 28 May (L&MT et al.) and a Marbled Godwit 27 May in Lincoln, NE (TJW) were somewhat tardy; a Long-billed Curlew in Seward, NE 18 Apr (JGJ) was e. of usual areas. The 20+ Red Knots at Quivira 15 May (SS) made an outstanding find; knots are very rare during spring in the Region. Early arriving *Calidris* at Hackberry included 2, 8, & 5 Semipalmated Sandpipers 1, 19, & 20 Mar, respectively, single Western Sandpipers 1 & 19 Mar, 1-4 Dunlins begin-



A farm near Boise City, Cimarron County, Oklahoma, near the western end of the Panhandle, had several interesting eastern migrants in spring 2009, including this Black-throated Blue Warbler 9 May. Photograph by Steve Metz.

ning 1 Mar, and 3 Stilt Sandpipers 4 Apr (all L&MT). Early Nebraska arrivals were 6 White-rumped Sandpipers in the e. Rainwater Basin 26 Apr (JGJ), 2 Baird's Sandpipers in Saunders, NE 8 Mar (CNK) and one in Keith, NE 10 Mar (TJW), a Dunlin in the e. Rainwater Basin 21 Mar (JGJ), and 11 Stilt Sandpipers in York, NE 10 Apr (SMo). High counts of Baird's included 1700 in the e. Rainwater Basin 24 Apr (JGJ) and 3000 at the Salt Plains 6-7 Apr (JWA). Buff-breasted Sandpipers arrived in the e. Rainwater Basin 25 Apr (5

birds; JGJ); 25 were somewhat tardy in *Clay*, NE 23 May (JGJ), while up to 15 were westerly at *Hackberry 13 & 15 May* (L&MT); 535 in s.-cen. Kansas 9 May (GY) indicated the peak of movement. Short-billed Dowitcher reports were about normal in the e. third of the Region, 3-18 May (*vide* WRS, JWA). Extending its range westward was an American Woodcock heard in *Keith*, NE 28 Mar (WF). Six Red-necked Phalaropes were noted 1 May in *Lincoln*, NE (TJW), 10+ at *Quivira* 15 May (SS), singles 10 (PvE et al.) & 28 May in *Cimarron*, OK (L&MT, KM), and one easterly in *Sarpy*, NE 9 May (CNK); the highest count was 74 in the e. Rainwater Basin 14 May (JGJ).

Exceptional in spring was a Sabine's Gull in *Lancaster*, NE 28 Mar (†CNK). A Laughing Gull made it to *Sumner*, KS 12 May (MT, GY). An outstanding count was the 10,000 Ring-billed Gulls estimated over *Omaha* 18 Mar (JED). Limited numbers of California Gulls (away from *McConaughy*) included singles in *Jefferson*, KS 1 Mar (JK), *Hefner* 8 Mar (first-cycle; JAG), *Lancaster*, NE 8 Mar (JGJ), *Lincoln*, NE 26 Mar (TJW), *Buffalo*, NE 15 Apr (JGJ), *Quivira* 9 May (SS, DKa, LHe), and *Cheyenne Bottoms* 15 May (MR). The 2000 Herring Gulls in *Lancaster*, NE 1 Mar (JGJ) were joined by 2 Thayer's Gulls 6-9 Mar (JGJ, LE); other Thayer's included 2 in *Jefferson/Douglas*, KS 1-8 Mar (JK) and a single at *McConaughy* 2 May (JGJ). An Iceland Gull at *Cheyenne Bottoms* 18 Mar (MA, JK) followed a winter in which the species was widespread across the continent. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported only from Nebraska: one ad. in *Harlan*, NE 19 Mar (KS, DRo), one ad. at *McConaughy* 22 Mar (RLa) and 11 Apr (CG), with 2 imm. there 2 May (JGJ). Glaucous Gulls were noted at *McConaughy* and s. to *Jefferson*, KS 1-14 May (JK, MA); one lingered until 12 Apr in *Harlan*, NE (G&WH). A imm. Great Black-backed Gull was in *Harlan*, NE 6-8 Mar (†G&WH). Common Terns in *Harlan*, NE 9 May (KS) and *Madison*, NE 10 May (2 birds; MB) were somewhat early.

## DOVES THROUGH CROWS

White-winged Dove continues to establish local populations in w. and cen. portions of the Region n. to *Buffalo*, NE (WF). *Finney*, KS (T&SS) remains a local stronghold; several were in e. Oklahoma (*Tulsa*; *vide* JL). In contrast, 2 Common Ground-Doves in *Johnston*, OK 25 May (BA) were most exceptional. A pair of Barred Owls in *Ellsworth* 9 Mar (DK) indicated westward range extension in Kansas. An early Common Nighthawk was in *Kearney*, NE 26 Apr (LB), and a Common Poorwill was easterly in *Creek*, OK 11 May

(*vide* TO). The presence of 2 calling Chuck-will's-widows in *Gage*, NE 30 May (WRS) adds spotty evidence to the margin of the Nebraska range. A rare find was Whip-poor-will's nests with two eggs in *Dixon*, NE 16 May (*vide* D&JP). A White-throated Swift in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 13 Apr (CG) was the 2nd earliest on record. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was far w. in *Sioux*, NE 18 May (HKH). The 4 Black-chinned Hummingbirds at separate locations in *Comanche*, OK 23-25 Mar (E&BM, K&SM) were early, while another in *Cleveland*, OK 17 Apr (M&JF) was easterly. A Red-naped Sapsucker was seen in *Sioux*, NE 18 May (HKH; ph.).

An easterly Western Wood-Pewee was in *Hooker*, NE 30 May (SJD), while a westerly Eastern Wood-Pewee was in *Custer*, NE 19 May (TJW). Early was an Eastern in *Bryan*, OK 22 Apr (DW). Single Acadian Flycatchers beyond the edge of the species' typical Nebraska range were in *Lincoln* 23 & 28 May (DL, LE) and in *Cass* 24 May (D&JP). A Least Flycatcher in *Omaha* 24 Apr (JWH) was rather early. Not often detected in migration, a Cordilleran Flycatcher was in *Scotts Bluff* 23 May (AK). Quite unexpected was a Black Phoebe in *Cimarron*, OK 17-26 May (LY, KDa, M&MP et al.). Rather early for w. Nebraska was an Eastern Phoebe in *Scotts Bluff* 24 Mar (AK). Very much easterly was a Say's Phoebe in *McCurtain*, OK 16 Mar (DA), with other easterly Say's in *Canadian*, OK 8 Apr (DWe) and *Comanche*, OK 21 Apr (K&SM). An Ash-throated Flycatcher wandered northward to *Sioux*, NE 4 May (HKH). Early were Great Crested Flycatchers in *Washington*, NE 24 Apr (CNK) and *Sarpy*, NE 25 Apr (JR) and a Western Kingbird in *Garden*, NE 22 Apr (CG). Single Vermilion Flycatchers were in *Johnston*, OK 12 Mar (JRo) and *Payne*, OK 27 Apr (AG).

A southerly Northern Shrike was in *Riley*,

**SA** Among the Region's species slowly expanding westward in recent years is Fish Crow. Formerly confined to ne. Oklahoma (e.g., *Tulsa*), border counties of se. Oklahoma, and se. Kansas, it has now reached into s.-cen. Kansas and cen. and s.-cen. Oklahoma. Where formerly uncommon, it is now said to be "abundant" in extreme se. Kansas (MG, ML, NA), and several were reported w. to *Sedgwick* 25 Mar and 1 Apr (JC) and *Sumner* 25 Mar (GY), with several n. to *Johnson*, KS 4 Apr (MG). They are now routinely observed in *Seminole*, *Cleveland*, and *Oklahoma* in cen. Oklahoma (m.ob.). Four Fish Crows heard calling over *Omaha* 5 Mar (DL), and another on the lower *Platte R.* near the *Missouri R.* 29 May (JGJ), were well away from strongholds. The extent of movement up the *Red R.* in s. Oklahoma is currently uncertain, but the species is now common in the L. Texoma area.

*KS* 16 Mar (LJ). A northerly wandering White-eyed Vireo was in *Sarpy*, NE 2-9 May (PSw, m.ob.); very early was one in *Comanche*, OK 10 Mar (K&SM). Other early arrivals included 2 Bell's Vireos 11 Apr in *Butler*, NE (JG) and a Yellow-throated Vireo in *Chautauqua*, KS 4 Apr (JN). A Plumbeous Vireo in *Garden*, NE 14-15 May (CG) was easterly. A Philadelphia Vireo, more commonly reported in e. portions of the Region this season, was w. to *Cleveland*, OK 3-4 May (JAG, RG). An occasional wanderer eastward into Nebraska, a Steller's Jay was in *Sheridan* 10 May (BP).

## SWALLOWS THROUGH PIPITS

A female Purple Martin was a surprise nw. of the usual Nebraska range in *Garden* 31 May (SJD, CG). Tree Swallows reached Kansas in *Harvey* 5 Mar (CS) and *Lancaster*, NE 17 Mar (LE). A Violet-green Swallow in *Johnson*, KS arrived on the early date of 14 Mar (ML). Cliff Swallows appeared very early in *McCurtain*, OK 3 Mar (DA). While expansion of Cave Swallows has long been anticipated, it is still exceptional in the Region; 1-2 were observed in *Comanche*, OK 4 May (K&SM, L&MT). The Mountain Chickadee in a *Scotts Bluff*, NE yard from Dec 2008 was last reported 5 Mar (*vide* KD). Rarely leaving Ponderosa Pine stands, a Pygmy Nuthatch was in *Lincoln*, NE 24 Apr-6 May (LE). Easterly Rock Wrens often find suitable boulders at reservoir dams, such as one in *Cherokee* 2-4 Apr (JM et al.). Carolina Wrens fledged young by a very early 8 Apr in *Cleveland*, OK (JAG). A Nebraska rarity was a Bewick's Wren in *Lincoln* 13 Apr (LE). An early House Wren was in *Red Willow*, NE 3 Apr (DJ). Winter Wrens were widely reported. Two territorial Sedge Wrens with dummy nests in *Adams*, NE 23 May (PD) were ahead of the typical Jul-Aug breeding period in Nebraska; up to 10 were noted in *Platte*, NE 28 May (DH) and in *Douglas*, NE 29 May (JWH). In e.-cen. Nebraska, birds of both Marsh Wren types are known as migrants; a bird singing a typical "western" song type was in *York* 17 May (WF), where eastern songs are the norm (JGJ).

An early Ruby-crowned Kinglet was in *Lincoln*, NE 29 Mar (TJW). Seldom recorded in the Region, 2 Western Bluebirds were in *Cimarron*, OK 4 Mar (DR; ph.). Somewhat easterly were single Mountain Bluebirds in *Sedgwick*, KS 15 Mar (NO) and *Reno*, KS 20 Mar (H&SG). The 50-60 Swainson's Thrushes in *Sarpy*, NE 16 May in 8.5 hours of birding (JR) indicated peak migration. Almost unreported in Oklahoma in recent years, a Veery was located 10 May in *Carter* (BF), a w. location. Rare and seasonally late, a Varied Thrush visited a yard in *Buffalo*, NE 17 May (KS, ph.).



As observers learn where to look, more Sprague's Pipits are found; a count of 25 was obtained Lancaster, NE 7 May (LE).

## WARBLERS

Ten Blue-winged Warblers reported along the e. edge of the Region 27 Apr–11 May included 3 males at Nickel Preserve, Cherokee, OK (JW et al.). Nine Golden-winged Warblers were found in the e. third of the Region (*vide* WRS, LM, BH). Westerly Tennessee Warblers were in Garden 16 & 23 May (CG). Northern Parula, another species extending its range, was widely reported: 17 were in Sarpy, NE 23 Apr (JR), with others westerly in Garden, NE 30 Apr–24 May (CG) and in Tillman, OK 5 May (L&MT). Also westerly were a Chestnut-sided Warbler in Sioux, NE 29–31 May (HKH) and a Magnolia Warbler in Sheridan, NE 18 May (BP). A Chestnut-sided in Oklahoma, OK 23 Apr (MJ) was early. A surprising four reports of the rare Black-throated Blue Warbler included singles in Stafford, KS 25 Apr (ML, m.ob.), a bit westerly, and in Sedgwick, KS 30 Apr (PG) and 4 May (NO), with another to the w. in Cimarron, OK 9 May (DR, SM; ph.). A Black-throated Gray Warbler in Sioux, NE 5 May was a Regional rarity (†RE). Westerly were a Black-throated Green Warbler in Tillman, OK 5 May (L&MT), a male Blackburnian Warbler in Sioux 27 May (RE), and a male Hooded Warbler 8 May in Cimarron, OK (DR, SM). Blackburnian Warblers were generally more commonly reported in e. Oklahoma (*vide* JAG). Yellow-throated Warblers seemed more common at range-edge locations, with 10 in Sarpy, NE 23 Apr (RE), 6 in Cherokee, KS 7 Apr (MG, ML, NA), 6 in Johnston, OK 29 Mar (DW et al.), and one westerly in Cleveland, OK beginning 18 Apr (LMA, NK, m.ob.); more clearly extralimital were singles in Cimarron, OK 17 Apr (DR; ph.) and in Sheridan, NE 26 May (CG). Palm Warblers, uncommon migrants in the Region, were reported 15 Apr–12 May in Nebraska (8–11 birds; *vide* WRS) and in e. Oklahoma 18 Apr–9 May (8 birds; *vide* JL). A Bay-breasted Warbler in Carter, OK 10 May (BF) was westerly; another was reported in Sarpy, NE 14 May (JR). Blackpoll Warblers were numerous, including 14 at an Omaha, NE park 23 May (JWH, JS); another was early in Pontotoc, OK 22 Apr (WAC). Westerly was a Cerulean Warbler in Stafford, KS 25 Apr (ML, m.ob.); others were in Wagoner, OK 2 May (SR), and 3 in se. Nebraska 12–30 May (WRS, JR). The first Black-and-white Warbler for the season was in McClain, OK 15 Mar (PM). Prothonotary Warbler, also expanding northward, was reported this season in Sarpy, NE 24 Apr+ (JR, m.ob.) and in Washington, NE 9 May (L&BP); another

was westward in Sedgwick, KS 24 Apr (JC, SH). Also westerly was a Worm-eating Warbler in Sedgwick, KS 2 May (PG). Breaking another arrival record was a Louisiana Waterthrush 10 Mar in LeFlore, OK (JWa). One of the Region's rarest regular migrants, a Connecticut Warbler was in Sarpy, NE 21 May (JR), the only one reported. Far westerly were a Kentucky Warbler in Cimarron, OK 25 Apr (DR) and Hooded Warblers in Scotts Bluff, NE 30 Apr–3 May (KD, ph.) and Cimarron, OK 11 May (DR, ph.); 5 additional singles were w. to cen. Oklahoma 29 Apr–14 May (JW, NV, TM, MM, RG). Slightly early was Canada Warbler at Red Slough 28 Apr (DA). A Yellow-breasted Chat in Dixon, NE 21 May (JJ) is among few now reported in e. Nebraska.

## CARDINALS THROUGH FINCHES

An ad. male Summer Tanager made it to Garden, NE 15 May (CG) and another to Boone, NE 30 May (D&CN); numbers of this expanding species are clearly on the rise. An early Western Tanager was easterly in Omaha, NE 28–30 Apr (EM). A first for Oklahoma was a male Hepatic Tanager in a yard in Cimarron, OK 24 Apr (DR, ph.). An Eastern Towhee in Buffalo, NE 22 Mar (JSh) was early at that w. location. Cassin's Sparrows appeared in Oklahoma, OK 22 Apr (LMA); one in Payne, OK 27 Apr was found in town (TO), certainly a migrant. A Rufous-crowned Sparrow in Harper, OK 11 Apr (SM) was slightly beyond usual range. Extremely late was an American Tree Sparrow in Kearney, NE 20 May (KS), whereas 6 Clay-colored Sparrows in Comanche, OK 25 Mar (L&MT) were early. A Brewer's Sparrow was a little easterly in Dundy, NE 21 May (WM). Four Lark Buntings were as far e. as Fillmore, NE 10 May (JGJ). Singing Baird's Sparrows were located in Box Butte, NE 17 May (AB) but not subsequently, and 4 were in Sioux, NE 18 May (AB). An Oregon Junco (*mearnsi*) in a Scotts Bluff, NE yard 29 Apr (KD) was record late for this taxon in Nebraska; a rare Gray-headed Junco in Sioux 7 May (HKH, ph.) was the 8th documented record for Nebraska. A record-late Lapland Longspur in Madison, NE 10 May was in alternate plumage, although apparently in poor health (MB).

Two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks appeared at a Comanche, OK feeder 14 May (D&CS, L&MT). Black-headed Grosbeaks appeared more commonly in e.-cen. parts of all three states; 1–3 were in Cleveland, OK 7–11 May (M&JF, NR), one in Tulsa 7 May (KW), one in Johnson, KS 14 May (TS, ML, MG), one in Fillmore, NE 22 May (male; JRi). An Indigo Bunting in Keith, NE 16–19 Apr (JO, ph.) was 2nd earliest on record for the state. Dickcissels were notably westward in Nebraska, with re-

ports from Lincoln (TJW) and Logan (LR, RH) by the end of the period; a group of 350 on 6 May in McClain, OK was impressively noisy (JAG). This was also an outstanding season for Bobolinks moving through the Region, beginning in late Apr. Early was one in Dixon, NE by 2 May (JJ); good counts included 100 in Sedgwick, KS 9 May (NO, BG) and 125 in Sheridan, NE 18 May (BP). The Flint Hills of Kansas clearly host staging Brewer's Blackbirds: 38,500 were in Butler, Elk, and Greenwood 11 Apr (GY). A lone Cassin's Finch was reported from Cimarron, OK 16 Mar (AD). Red Crossbills kept a low profile, with only four reports totaling 19 birds from Nebraska (*vide* WRS) and Kansas (*vide* LM). White-winged Crossbills at feeders in Riley, KS 22 Mar (DRi) and Sedgwick, KS 22 Apr (CM, R&LM) were not unexpected, given the mass movement of the species through the continent during the previous winter. Pine Siskin was the only "winter finch" present in good numbers this spring, as indicated by the 400+ banded at a Cowley, KS residence (MT). Lesser Goldfinch is appearing well e. in the Region, including a black-backed male in Douglas, NE 20 May (DSt) and a single bird in Wyandotte, KS 3 Mar (BY). Other Lessers were in Sedgwick, KS 2 Mar (PG) and Stephens, OK 4 May (LA).

**SA** While a few Lazuli Buntings normally appear in cen. and e. locations in the Region in most spring seasons, this year saw a virtual invasion, most prominent in Oklahoma. More than 25 were reported in cen. regions, including one feeder in Cleveland, OK that hosted 13—9 males and 4 females—11 May (DKs); 19 more were reported in ne. Oklahoma (*vide* JL); seven reports came from e. Nebraska (*vide* WRS); and 9 were reported from e. Kansas (*vide* LM). A territorial Lazuli Bunting was located in the Wichita Mts., OK 27 May (JAG), and a Lazuli Bunting × Indigo Bunting hybrid was found mated with an apparent Indigo there 21 May (JAG).

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## Texas



**Mark W. Lockwood**  
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**D**rought conditions continued for much of the eastern two-thirds of Texas, with the National Weather Service labeling many counties on the Edwards Plateau and South Texas Plains as being in an "exceptional" drought, the worst category. These conditions severely impact habitats for both migrants and breeding birds. On the Upper Texas Coast, the dry conditions were only moderated by two rainfall events in the latter half of April. In that region of the state, the drought conditions combined with the effects of Hurricane *Ike* to make many areas of the coastal plain in Chambers County and Jefferson County inhospitable to birds, where habitats were impacted by dry conditions while still trying to recover from saltwater inundation and salt-burn. In north-central Texas, the dry conditions contributed to numerous grass

fires that burned tens of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat in the counties of Archer, Clay, Jack, Montague, and Young.

There were two separate phenomena noted by many observers when characterizing the spring migration. The first was a clear push of western birds eastward that was highlighted by much larger-than-average numbers for species such as Lark Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, and Western Tanager into the eastern half of the state. This was countered by the opposite situation among a few eastern species, including Nashville Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting, which were in near-record numbers in the west, particularly on the South Plains.

### WATERFOWL THROUGH ANHINGA

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continued their push into ne. Texas, with good numbers noted at several locations; 3 near Nazareth, *Castro* 9 May (BP) were quite unexpected for the Panhandle. A Fulvous Whistling-Duck near Seagoville, *Kaufman* 26 Apr (GC, RRa) and another at the Ft. Bliss sewage ponds, *El Paso* 23 May (ph. JPa) were both a considerable distance from known populations. Annual in recent years in *El Paso*, a male Eurasian Wigeon stopped over at Tornillo Res. 21 Mar (ph., †JPa). Up to 6 Greater Scaup lingered in *Kleberg* until 17 May (AT). Few reports of scoters were received during the period. A White-winged Scoter was at Drum Pt., *Kleberg* 16-28 Mar

(AT, SB), while one in Ayres Bay, *Aransas* 22 May was exceptionally late (JHu, PN et al.). The 4 Long-tailed Ducks at Kaufer-Hubert Park, *Kleberg* lingered until 20 Mar (m.ob.). Hooded Mergansers nested again at the Heard Natural Science Museum, *Collin*, where a female with 4 young was noted 27 May (GG). Late Red-breasted Mergansers were on the move in cen. Texas 26 Apr, with 2 at Stillhouse Hollow Res., *Bell* (RP) and 3 at Hornsby Bend, *Travis* (BLy, VE). A Masked Duck was discovered at Laguna Atascosa N.W.R., *Cameron* 16 Mar (RSa), where it was joined by another individual 10 Apr, with both birds remaining through 30 May (ph., †m.ob.). Providing a rare breeding record for n.-cen. Texas, 4 ad. and 13 young Ruddy Ducks were observed near Seagoville, *Kaufman* 31 May (GC, RRa).

A Red-throated Loon and a Pacific Loon were on L. Tawakoni, *Van Zandt* 15 Mar (GC, BIC). Another Pacific Loon was on L. Buchanan, *Llano* 15-16 Mar (ph. TFe, SWI).



An unexpected lingering coastal visitor was this White-winged Scoter at Ayres Bay near Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Aransas County, Texas on 22 May 2009. Photograph by Patty Nelson.

Least Grebes continued to maintain a presence on the Upper Texas Coast (hereafter, U.T.C.) and in cen. Texas. New locations for this species include one just s. of Kerrville, Kerr 16 May (ph. TC, SCo) and one in Round Rock 2-21 Mar (ph. TFe), possibly a Williamson first. An alternate-plumaged Red-necked Grebe on L. Buchanan, Llano/Burnet 15-24 Mar provided the 2nd documented record for the Edwards Plateau (ph. †TFe, SWi, m.ob.). A Western Grebe put in an appearance at Richard Simpson Park, Tarrant 21 Apr (JSi); 34 on L. Buchanan, Llano 15 Mar (ph. TFe, SWi) was a great number along the e. edge of expected range. The banded American Flamingo that has traversed the lower Gulf coast since the fall of 2005 departed Louisiana in mid-May and spent 16-17 May at Freeport, Brazoria (ph. †DSa, TFr et al.). Brown Pelicans continued in a few inland locations in e. and n.-cen. Texas, presumably holdouts from last year's hurricanes; one in Lubbock, Lubbock lingered there through 4 Mar (AH, BSc). Other notable wandering Brown Pelicans included one in Presidio, Presidio 4-31 Mar (JKa, PSi), one at Greenbelt L., Donley 7-17 May (HO), and another in Kerrville, Kerr 6 May (ph. TG). Lone Neotropic Cormorants showed up at two unexpected w. Texas locations: at the Independence Creek Preserve, Terrell 4 Apr (BSu) and the Presidio sewage ponds, Presidio 30 Apr (ML). An Anhinga wandered well nw. of its range to L. Fort Phantom, Jones 27 Mar (ph. LBl).

## HERONS THROUGH RAPTORS

An American Bittern in Dimmitt, Castro 19 Apr (AH) was a nice find in the Panhandle, where the species is rare. A Least Bittern at Cook's Slough, Uvalde 19 Apr was a good find (ph. DLo, MLo); 6 birds in a wetland near Seagoville, Kaufman 10 May (GC) made a nice inland count. Big Bend's Rio Grande Village, Brewster held a Little Blue Heron 29 Mar (JJo) as well as 3 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons 4 May (MBu, EC). A White Ibis in Lubbock, Lubbock 1 Apr (NM, m.ob.) furnished one of very few records for the area. White Ibis made a strong showing in cen. Texas, perhaps being forced inland by drought conditions on the coast. Small numbers of both imms. and ads. appeared in Travis, Bastrop, Williamson, and Caldwell starting in early Apr, with a few lingering through the end of the period (m.ob.). A high count of 25 came from Shipp L., Bastrop 17 May (PR). Individual birds were noted at egret rookeries near Webberville, Travis (BFR) and near Lockhart, Caldwell (CHa), though no evidence of nesting was found. A Glossy Ibis made its way to Lubbock, Lubbock 5 May

(BGi) for a regional first. Other inland Glossies include singles at Hornsby Bend, Travis 24 Apr (ph. EC), at Richland W.M.A., Navarro/Freestone 8-16 May (TFe, DDC, DLi), and at Village Creek Drying Beds, Tarrant 14 (JoC) & 25 Apr (GC, EdW, m.ob.). Roseate Spoonbills made an early appearance at Richland Creek W.M.A., Navarro, with up to 6 present 8-21 May (TFe, PB); another was at Alazan Bayou, Nacogdoches 17 May (DW). Quite unexpected was one at L. Meredith, Moore 31 May (BP).

A Black Vulture at Independence Creek Preserve, Terrell 4 Apr (BSu) was on the edge of where they can be expected. A Hook-billed Kite n. of San Ygnacio, Zapata 20 May (RRo) was a bit farther up the Rio Grande than usual. Continuing signs of expanding Swallow-tailed Kite activity were 2 birds over Jonestown, Travis 28 Apr (BiC, BrC) and another sw. of Austin, Travis 5 May (JGi); one noted several times in the Tomball/Cypress area, Harris in late Mar and early Apr hinted at local breeding (KM et al.). The White-tailed Kite nest effort at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, El Paso that began in Feb failed, but nesting had begun again by 1 May (JSp), though this also was unsuccessful. Birds continued there through the period, with a high of 5 on 24 May and another 3 about 3 km away 27 May (JSp). More unexpected was an individual near Alpine, Brewster 23 Apr (ML). A pair of Cooper's Hawks at the Houston Arboretum, Harris were found nest building 4 Mar (BE). Three other pairs were located in Houston, Harris during the period, indicating this species is now a regular breeder there (JKe). A Red-shouldered Hawk at the Independence Creek Preserve, Terrell 4 Apr (BSu) was slightly w. of its range. A Zone-tailed Hawk frequented w. El Paso, El Paso 25-29 May, where the species is very rare (MLA, JeC). A pair of Crested Caracaras bred at the Stelzer Ranch, Kent 16 Mar+ (DSt, ph.) for perhaps the 3rd year in a row. A Prairie Falcon passed over Bentsen S.P., Hidalgo 29 Mar (*vide* JR).

## RAILS THROUGH JAEGERS

Four King Rails in wetlands near Seagoville, Kaufman 22-23 May (GC et al.) made a good inland count. Purple Gallinules showed a strong presence along the w. edge of their range, including singles in Collin, Kaufman, and Tarrant late Apr+ (m.ob.). Westerly American Golden-Plovers include 2 near Dimmitt, Castro 19 Apr (AH) and one at the Uvalde Fish Hatchery, Uvalde 17 Apr (BoB). A possible state-second Pacific Golden-Plover



Among the many vagrants to the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas from the winter that lingered into the spring was this immature male Rose-throated Becard. This generally cooperative bird was at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Hidalgo County from the fall until mid-April 2009 (here 28 February). Photograph by David McDonald.

was near Progresso, Hidalgo 26 Mar (ph., †RSt); details are under review. A Snowy Plover nest containing three eggs at Bryan Beach, Brazoria 7 May (JKe) was the first discovered on the U.T.C. in many years. Two Whimbrels at Richland Creek W.M.A., Navarro 14 May (CSh, HH, MSy) provided a rare area record. A stunning Surf-bird was at the Port Aransas jetties, Nueces 1-9 May (ph., †CRI, MGr, CJ). Fourteen White-rumped Sandpipers se. of Midland, Midland 30-31 May (ph. RMS) was a good number for that w. location, and 56+ at Imperial Res., Pecos 24 May (ByS) was an even more impressive total for that region. The wintering Purple Sandpiper on the S. Padre Island jetty, Cameron lingered until at least 26 May (ph. BHe). Early Buff-breasted Sandpipers were at the Progresso sod farm, Hidalgo 22 Mar (RSt) and at Stillhouse Hollow Res., Bell 29 Mar (RP). An amazing 1100 individuals were present near Calallen, Nueces 1-2 May (WS, SC, MaR). Likely representing a regional record total, 540 Long-billed Dowitchers stopped at Fort Hancock Res., Hudspeeth 21 Mar (JPa). A lone Red-necked Phalarope present intermittently 17-28 May at Southside W.T.P., Dallas (RRa, BoS) represented the only report from the e. half of the state at this season.

A Black-legged Kittiwake was at South Padre I., Cameron 27 Mar-13 Apr (ph., †DR, AD et al.). A first-cycle kittiwake at Rollover Pass and an ad. at Bolivar Flats, Galveston 13-15 Apr furnished very rare spring records for the U.T.C. (ph. MiR, CC). Glaucous Gulls



Certainly one of the most unexpected finds of the season in Texas was this Red-faced Warbler near downtown Austin, Travis County 23 April 2009. Although there had been a few other sightings of this species in the Hill Country, this is the first full documented record for this region. Photograph by David Heymann.

were reported from Van Zandt 1 Mar (RK), Mustang I., Nueces 1-7 Mar (MC), and McGee L., Potter 22 Mar (BP). Two Black Skimmers were inland at Choke Canyon Res., McMullen 26 Apr (WS). Least Terns at unexpected locations included singles at Boquillas Canyon, Brewster 8 Apr (LAc, SD, PD, JD) and Uvalde, Uvalde 24 Apr (MO, ph. RSp). Eight Least Terns, including 2 confirmed as nesting, were at Richland Creek W.M.A., Navarro 28 May (DDC, DLi). A nesting pair was also found at E. V. Spence Res., Coke 29 May (AB). Ad. Pomarine Jaegers were noted at Sea Rim S.P., Jefferson 2 May (LBa, DSa) and at the Port Aransas jetties, Nueces 9 May (JM). A Parasitic Jaeger was seen from High I., Galveston 19 Apr (CC).

## PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The Ruddy Ground-Dove near San Angelo, Tom Green continued from the winter through 29 Mar (DBu, ph. JaP, m.ob.). Scarce in n.-cen. Texas, single Black-billed Cuckoos were at Connemara Meadow Preserve, Collin 2 May (GBr), Prairie Creek Park, Dallas 14 May (GS), and Catherine Rose Park, Tarrant 25 May (JaF). A male Long-eared Owl was found roosting in the Davis Mts. Preserve, Jeff Davis 12 Apr-1 May (ML). No Lesser Nighthawk nests were found this spring at Bentsen S.P., Hidalgo (MGu). A Chuck-will's-widow was seen near Turkey, Hall 23 May (AH). A Whip-poor-will at Edith Moore Sanctuary, Harris 31 Mar (TW) and a heard bird on the Katy Prairie, Harris 4 Apr (RW) provided rare

records of seldom-detected migrants for the U.T.C.

A potential Vaux's Swift in El Paso, El Paso 16 Apr (ph., †JoK) was observed at close range, but conclusive documentation could not be obtained. There are no confirmed records for the state. Green Violetears made a splash this season, with single birds at the following locations: Corpus Christi, N. Padre I., Nueces 17 Apr (ph., †LAD); Bentsen S.P., Hidalgo 20 May (†MGU); Eaton Hills Wildlife Sanctuary, Sutton 26-27 May (ph., †DJa); and Ingram, Kerr 21 May+ (MI et al.). Broad-billed Hummingbird is a very rare find outside the Trans-Pecos, with only a handful of documented records on the Edwards Plateau. Two different birds were documented this spring: one near Kandalia, Kendall 10-17 Mar (ph. SuH, SaH, EC) and another at Lost Maples State Natural Area, Bandera 10 Apr (ph. DaS). An ad. male White-eared Hummingbird appeared in the

Davis Mts. Resort, Jeff Davis 6 Apr+ with a total of 6 present by the end of the period (ph., †ML). The continued seasonal presence of this species has led to speculation about possible nesting in the Davis Mts. Bryan banded a gravid female 29 May, thus providing the first strong evidence of nesting for the state. A presumed Magnificent Hummingbird × White-eared Hummingbird hybrid was a remarkable discovery in the Davis Mts. Resort, Jeff Davis 29 Apr-11 May (ph. M&ME). A male Lucifer Hummingbird was banded in extreme n. Terrell 27 Apr (ph. BSa). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird in Canyon, Randall 26 Apr (MSc) and an Anna's Hummingbird at L. Tanglewood, Randall 9 May (MHi) provided rare spring records for the Panhandle. A late Anna's Hummingbird was in an El Paso, El Paso yard 19 Apr (BZ). There were at least 8 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in the Davis Mts., Jeff Davis 12 Apr-1 May (m.ob.). Ringed Kingfishers continue to be reported at various Central Texas locations, including one along the San Saba R., Menard 12 Mar (RRe). An unexpected Red-headed Woodpecker was found in Young 24 May (DDC, DLi). The female Red-bellied Woodpecker from the fall and winter near Mason, Mason continued until 19 Apr (DF). At least one Hairy Woodpecker was present at Edith Moore Sanctuary, Harris 30 Apr-4 May (RW, JHi); another was seen along Pine Island Bayou, n. Jefferson 9 May (fide JW). A Pileated Woodpecker at Mineral Wells S.P., Parker 28 May (DOw) was an excellent find.

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Western Wood-Pewees may be overlooked on the Edwards Plateau. Two were studied at Lost Maples State Natural Area, Bandera 29 Mar (MHe), while another suspected bird was seen but only briefly heard at Hornsby Bend, Travis 29 Apr (RW, AJJ). The wintering Gray Flycatcher 24 km n. of Uvalde, Uvalde continued through 11 Mar (ph. TD). Surveys in the Davis Mts. Preserve, Jeff Davis 12 Apr+ produced up to 3 territorial male Buff-breasted Flycatchers (ph., †ML, m.ob.). Notable breeding records for Black Phoebe were documented this spring. Two nests were discovered near Mason, Mason 29 Apr (DF, BoF). The nests were washed away by high water, but at least one pair rebuilt their nest and successfully fledged 3 young. Another pair of Black Phoebes present all season at Guadalupe River S.P., Kendall/Comal also nested, though it is unclear if the nest was successful (m.ob.). Unusual was an Eastern Phoebe staking out a bridge s. of Marfa, Presidio on the late date of 23 May (COJ, ByS); one at High I., Galveston 20 Apr was late (DMc). Very rare for n.-cen. Texas were single Say's Phoebes at Village Creek Drying Beds, Tarrant 21 Apr (GC, EdW, KN) and Hagerman N.W.R., Grayson 21 Apr (JaC, m.ob.). Vermilion Flycatchers n. of the expected range included singles at Palo Duro Canyon S.P., Randall 11 Mar (MHa), Buffalo Lake N.W.R., Randall 25 Mar (RM), and Lake Wichita Park, Wichita 13 Apr (ScL). Dusky-capped Flycatchers were again reported in the Davis and Chisos Mts. Four territorial pairs were found in the Davis Mts. Preserve, Jeff Davis 1 May+ (ph., †ML), while a calling bird was along the Upper Pinnacles Trail, Brewster 3 May (MBu, †EC). The wintering bird at Sabal Palm, Cameron lingered until 4 Mar (JiP). An Ash-throated Flycatcher at Attwater Prairie-Chicken N.W.R., Colorado 26 Apr certainly was at an odd location for the date (ph. MBS). A Great Kiskadee wandered northward to n. Terrell 27-28 Apr (BSa). Other Great Kiskadees of note were singles near Ingram, Kerr 1 May (TG), w. Austin, Travis 16 Apr (ph. DBI), and maybe the same bird at McKinney S.P., Travis 6-11 May (SS, CHa). Tropical Kingbirds nested again at Cottonwood Campground, Brewster (m.ob.), while a Couch's Kingbird frequented the same location 4 May+ (MBu, EC et al.). An Eastern Kingbird near Lobo, Culberson 13 May (ML) provided a rare county record. White-eyed Vireos wandered to two Brewster locations, with singles at Rio Grande Village 4 Mar (MF) and Alpine 2 Apr (ML). A pair of Bell's Vireo at a nest near Jayton, Kent 26 Apr-10 May and two pairs at nests near Turkey, Hall 23 May (AH) provided first breeding records for these two counties. A

Black-capped Vireo present at Weslaco, *Hidalgo* 11-12 Apr (JuK, VH, ph. DJe, JoP) was a very good record away from the Edwards Plateau. A Yellow-throated Vireo at Palo Duro Canyon S.P., *Randall* 3 May (CP) and one at L. Tanglewood, *Randall* 4 May (TJ) were rare Panhandle migrants. One in Midland, *Midland* 28 May was farther nw. than expected (DMe, JMe). The wintering Plumbeous Vireo at Corpus Christi, *Nueces* was detected again 16-21 Mar (MC). Very rare and far w. was a Blue-headed Vireo at the Ft. Bliss sewage ponds in El Paso, *El Paso* 3 May (ph. JPa). A Warbling Vireo at High I., *Galveston* 1 Apr was on the early side, as was a Philadelphia Vireo there 10 Apr (*vide* SWo). An excellent spring Trans-Pecos record was of a Philadelphia Vireo at Juniper Flat in the Chisos Mts., *Brewster* 29 Apr (MF), while one at South Llano River S.P., *Kimble* 15 May may have been a county first (RH). An estimated 100+ Red-eyed Vireos at High I., *Galveston* 25 May demonstrated the lateness of the migration window of these northerly breeders (DeS). Yellow-green Vireos wandered northward up the coast to Port Aransas Birding Center, *Nueces* 10 May (MaR, SC), Quintana, *Brazoria* 17-22 May (JoF, DeS et al.), and Dos Vacas Muertes, *Galveston* 28 May (MW). There was bumper crop of Black-whiskered Vireos this spring on the U.T.C., with singles at Sea Rim S.P., *Jefferson* 16-17 Apr (ph., †LBa), one or 2 birds 30 Apr–3 May at High I., *Galveston* (JE, ph. GLa et al.), and a most surprising inland bird at Houston's Russ Pitman Park, *Harris* (†DV, JSc). Farther down the coast, a Black-whiskered Vireo was at Paradise Pond, *Nueces* 12 May (†LBr).

Three Green Jays were at Dagger Point on Aransas N.W.R., *Aransas* 3 Apr (BFR). A male Purple Martin wandered westward to Ft. Stockton, *Pecos* 24 May (ByS). New county records were established for Cave Swallow, with 8 near Tahoka, *Lynn* 29 May (AH) and 2 in *Anderson* 7 Mar (PB, MD). More noteworthy was the range expansion of the species into the Pineywoods: at least 2 were at the L. Livingston spillway, *San Jacinto* 16 Mar (DW, RTr); at least 2 were at the TX 7 bridge over the Neches R., *Angelina/Houston* 15 Apr (CM, LS); 2 were at Alazan Bayou W.M.A., *Nacogdoches* 3-7 May (DW); and one was near Kennard, *Houston* 8 May (DW, MHW). A pair of Tree Swallows was found at Brazos Bend S.P., *Fort Bend* 16 May+ (KeH, RW, BGo et al.), and two pairs were at Bay Area Park, *Galveston* 24 May (HT, CG). If nest-

ing can be confirmed, this would be a first for the U.T.C.

## NUTHATCHES THROUGH WARBLERS

A White-breasted Nuthatch at Tomball, *Harris* 23 May (JB) was a rare find for the U.T.C. Lingering Red-breasted Nuthatches included singles along the Pinnacles Trail, Big Bend N.P., *Brewster* 29 Apr (MF) and at Sargent, *Matagorda* 28 Mar–2 Apr (BFR). Two Verdins in *Young* 24 May (DDC, DLi) were on the edge of the species' range. A Carolina Wren in Big Bend's Pine Canyon, *Brewster* 4 May (MBu, EC) was away from expected areas along the Rio Grande. Carolina Wrens were in two locations at Midland, *Midland* 22 Mar (ph. BLu) and 20 Apr (AW). The flock of 12 Western Bluebirds that spent much of the winter at Canyon L., *Comal* remained until 2 Mar (m.ob.). Two Golden-crowned Kinglets at San Bernard N.W.R., *Brazoria* 3 Apr (GBu) were part of a late push of this species along the coast. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at High I., *Galveston* 24 May (DV) was extremely late for a migrant. A window-killed Veery in Houston, *Harris* 18 May (CG) was late. A Swainson's Thrush of the *ustulatus* subspecies group ("Russet-backed" type) was in El Paso, *El Paso* 10 May (JPa), where such birds are rare migrants. A Wood Thrush at Port Aransas, *Nueces* 21 Mar (MC) may have been the same bird that was present in Feb. Wood Thrushes

farther w. than expected included singles at Big Springs Ranch, *Real* 25 Apr (TG, MHe) and Dalhart, *Dallam* 19 May (JMc). An out-of-place American Robin was in Port O'Connor, *Calhoun* 25 May (BFR). An American Pipit at Paul Rushing Park, *Harris* 3 May (DD) was late for the U.T.C. A Sprague's Pipit in Temple, *Bell* 3 May (RP) was a late migrant. A male Phainopepla was near Robertson, *Crosby* 2-3 May (RL, ShL).

An early Golden-winged Warbler was near Sargent, *Matagorda* 2 Apr (BFR). Migrating Nashville Warblers were noted in above-average numbers on the South Plains (m.ob.). A Virginia's Warbler in Canyon, *Randall* 24 Apr (MS) was a nice find. A Tropical Parula at Guadalupe Delta, *Refugio* 26 Mar (BFR) was on the n. edge of the species' range. Tropical Parulas continue to increase in the Hill Country, with a male studied on the Bamberger Ranch, *Blanco* 10 May (ByS) and a pair found nesting near Ingram, *Kerr* 17 May (TG). Both of the *Kerr* pair showed some white flecking around the eye, suggesting some possible introgression of Northern Parula genes. More unexpected was a male Tropical Parula at Davis Mountains S.P., *Jeff Davis* 28 May (ML). A Magnolia Warbler at High I., *Galveston* 12 Apr (*vide* SWo) was early. Cape May and Black-throated Blue Warblers were noted in above-average numbers along the U.T.C. and the cen. coast during late Apr and early May (m.ob.). A male Black-throated Blue Warbler was near Uteley, *Bastrop* 12 May (ph. BFR). A late Audubon's Warbler was at High I., *Galveston* 2 May (SWo, JE). A Black-throated Gray Warbler was a little farther e. than expected at Kress, *Swisher* 5 May (MA). Townsend's Warblers were detected at High I., *Galveston* 11, 17, 21, & 22 Apr, with 2 birds on the last date (*vide* CB, SWo). More expected was one at Lubbock, *Lubbock* 27 Apr (BGI, AH). A great find was a territorial male Prairie Warbler in se. *Van Zandt* 31 May (GC). A Palm Warbler at Richland Creek W.M.A. 19 Apr (PB, DOH, JJa, LJ) provided a first for *Freestone*. Blackpoll Warblers were found in above-average numbers away from the coast, particularly in the Austin area. A Prothonotary Warbler was at L. Waco, *McLennan* 17 May (EH), while one at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 17 May (RW et al.) was late for that coastal location. A Worm-eating Warbler at the Fort Worth Nature Center, *Tarrant* 2 May (JoC) provided a rare local record. An unsuccessful nesting attempt of Swainson's Warbler was

**Table 1.** Eastern warblers found in the western half of Texas during spring 2009.

Species	Date	Location and observer(s)
Chestnut-sided	1 May	Canyon, <i>Randall</i> (CSc)
Black-throated Blue	3 May	Davis Mountains Resort, <i>Jeff Davis</i> (ph. M&ME)
Yellow-throated	22 Apr	L. Tanglewood, <i>Randall</i> (MHi)
	27 Apr	Lubbock, <i>Lubbock</i> (BGI)
Palm	23 Apr	Ft. Bliss ponds, <i>El Paso</i> (BZ)
	3 May	Lubbock, <i>Lubbock</i> (BGI)
Blackpoll	1 May	Lubbock, <i>Lubbock</i> (TSO)
Cerulean	27 Apr	Lubbock, <i>Lubbock</i> (AH)
	28 Apr	San Antonio, <i>Bexar</i> (ph. KBa)
	21 May	Uvalde, <i>Uvalde</i> (JA)
Black-and-white	26 Apr	El Paso, <i>El Paso</i> (JSp)
Prothonotary	17/25 Apr	Rio Grande Village, 17 Apr (JSt) and 25 Apr (DE)
	1 May	Midland, <i>Midland</i> (DMe, JMe)
	6 May	Hueco Tanks S.H.P., <i>El Paso</i> (JSp)
Worm-eating	27 Apr–3 May	Palo Duro Canyon S.P., <i>Randall</i> (RM, CP)
	28 Apr	Christmas Mountains, <i>Brewster</i> (ph. COJ)
Ovenbird	4 May	near Fort Davis, <i>Jeff Davis</i> (JT)
Kentucky	21 Apr	L. Tanglewood, <i>Randall</i> (MHi)
Mourning	23 May	near Matador, <i>Motley</i> (AH)
Hooded	2-3 May	Lubbock, <i>Lubbock</i> (BGI)
	10 May	near Jayton, <i>Kent</i> (AH)
	11 May	Balmorea, <i>Reeves</i> (ph. ElW)

observed in *Austin* 3-5 May (SR, BiB). Swainson's Warblers were also noted at White Rock L., *Dallas* 13 Apr (CRu) and Peaceful Springs Nature Preserve, *Burnet* 25 Apr (*vide* CSe). A Hooded Warbler at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 17 May (RW et al.) was late, as was a Wilson's Warbler lingering at High I., *Galveston* until 1 May (SWo et al.). One of the most unexpected finds of the season was a Red-faced Warbler at Austin, *Travis* 23 Apr (ph. DH), providing a first documented record for the Edwards Plateau. Painted Redstarts were noted in the Davis Mts., *Jeff Davis* 30 Apr (PSz) and 16 May (ML, SWi), but that was overshadowed by the discovery of a pair carrying nesting material in Pine Springs Canyon, *Guadalupe Mountains N.P.*, *Culberson* 13 May (SWi).

## TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Scarlet Tanagers of note included singles near Utopia, *Uvalde* 18 Apr (MHe) and at L. Lewisville, *Denton* 2 May (KL). Western Tanagers were well represented at migrant traps on the upper and cen. coasts, with at least 13 different individuals noted between 1 Mar and 20 May (m.ob.). A lingering Eastern Towhee was discovered at Lake Wichita Park, *Wichita* 17 May (ScL), while a wintering bird in Corpus Christi, *Nueces* remained until at least 17 May (WS, DMu). Rather unexpected was a singing Spotted Towhee in *Nacogdoches* 17 Mar (RTr). A Canyon Towhee in *Somervell* 13 Apr (GLE) was e. of the normal range. A Cassin's Sparrow in *Austin* 1 May (TrH) was e. of the expected summer range. Twelve Chipping Sparrows at San Bernard N.W.R., *Brazoria* 14 Apr (JKe) were apparently late migrants. The migration of Clay-colored Sparrow had a noticeable eastward shift this season; a notable high count of 8 came from Alazan Bayou, *Nacogdoches* 28 Apr (DW). A lingering Field Sparrow was at Paul Rushing Park, *Harris* 19 Apr (JKe). A Sage Sparrow near Lehman, *Cochran* 21 Mar (AH) provided a rare spring record for the South Plains. The Fox Sparrow found at Weslaco, *Hidalgo* during the winter was last seen 12 Mar (MH). A lingering White-throated Sparrow was at High I., *Galveston* until 21 Apr (SWo), while Harris's Sparrows at Houston, *Harris* 20 Mar (BE) and w. *Milam* 14 Apr (ByS) were also late. A White-crowned Sparrow in *Waller* 4-5 May (BHo) was just beyond the normal depart date of lingering individuals. A very late Dark-eyed Junco was in the Davy Crockett N.E., *Trinity* 13 Apr (RSce).

The wintering female Crimson-collared Grosbeak in Weslaco, *Hidalgo* was last seen 7 May (*vide* MGu). Black-headed Grosbeaks were noted in above-average numbers throughout the state, from the South Plains e. to the U.T.C.; most notable was a first county

record for *Austin* 17 Apr (ph. SR, BiB). The pair of Blue Buntings present from the winter at Laguna Atascosa, *Cameron* was last seen 19 Apr (m.ob.), while the female at Bentsen S.P., *Hidalgo* stayed until 24 Mar and one at Weslaco, *Hidalgo* until 1 May (*vide* MGu). An early Blue Grosbeak was in Dalhart, *Dallam* 9 Mar (JMc). There was also an obvious eastward shift in the migration of Lazuli Bunting, with numbers well above average through the cen. portion of the state; most notable was one in *Smith* 29 Apr (MBI). A singing Varied Bunting at Hueco Tanks S.P. 3-6 May (JGr, JSp) was noteworthy, as they are not known to breed in *El Paso*. A male Varied Bunting in Rio Medina, *Medina* 23 Apr+ (ph. JaM) was away from known breeding areas.

Bobolinks were found in large numbers throughout the e. two-thirds of the state. Of particular interest were concentrations of 250 at Port Bolivar, *Galveston* 29 Apr (SWo, ph. CHe), 200 singing males in *Kaufman* 10 May (GC, BoS), and up to 60 in s. *Brazos* 4-10 May (ph. ToH, m.ob.). Also of interest were 2 Bobolinks near Pantex, *Carson* 12 May (MS). A rare migrant for East Texas, a Yellow-headed Blackbird was at Camp Tyler, *Smith* 30 Apr (PB). A concentration of 70 Rusty Blackbirds at Tyler, *Smith* 12 Mar (PB) made a good count, as did 10 lingering birds at Richland Creek W.M.A., *Freestone* 19 Apr (PB, DOh, JJa, LJ). Out-of-range Hooded Orioles included a male at Abilene, *Taylor* 24-29 Mar (ph. KaH, LP) and another at High I., *Galveston* 9-12 Apr (RTE, JGa et al.). A very early Bullock's Oriole was at High I., *Galveston* 9 Apr (*vide* CB), while 3 at River Legacy Park, *Tarrant* 30 Apr (GC, EdW, BuB) provided a rare county record. For the 2nd year in a row, a female Scott's Oriole visited a feeder in n. *Tarrant* 15 Mar (DSm). Out-of-place Red Crossbills included 3 in Lubbock, *Lubbock* 5 Apr (BGi) and 2 near Ingram, *Kerr* 28 May (TG). A single Lesser Goldfinch was an unexpected find in *Young* 24 May (DDC, DLi). A male Black-headed Siskin (*Spinus notatus*) was documented at South Padre I., *Cameron* 4 Mar (ph., †TSe, BK et al.). Although this individual was in immaculate plumage, the species is common in the bird trade in Mexico, and the possibility that it was an escapee from captivity was considered to be high.

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## Colorado & Wyoming



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Colorado and Wyoming enjoyed a season of above-normal and near-normal overall temperatures, respectively. Precipitation in March was below normal in Colorado and near normal in Wyoming, reached above normal in April for both states, and dried to near normal in Colorado, while Wyoming had below-normal precipitation for May. The spring season's overall precipitation ranked near normal for Colorado and below normal for Wyoming. Drought rankings eased gradually, with the large swaths of abnormally dry territories in both states shrinking substantially as the spring progressed. The end of May featured only small areas of abnormally dry conditions in far southeastern Colorado and far southwestern Wyoming. By the end of May, a very small core of Wyoming's dry southwestern corner merited "moderate drought" ranking. The remainders

of both states were free of drought categorization as June began. Coloradoans have to look back as far as 2001 to find the end of a spring season this free of drought, while those in Wyoming haven't begun a summer season this drought-free since 2000. Two potential state firsts were recorded in Colorado (Vaux's Swift, Acadian Flycatcher), and several other rare species came through the Region in very strong (if not record) numbers, including Vermilion Flycatcher, White-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos, Northern Parula, and Blackpoll Warbler.

**Abbreviations:** Bonny (Bonny Res., S.P., and S.W.A.; Yuma); Chico (Chico Basin Ranch, El Paso/Pueblo); L.C.C. (Lamar Community College, Lamar, Prowers); Pastorius (Pastorius Res. and State Wildlife Area, La Plata). "West Slope" denotes locations w. of the Rockies. Due to reporting biases, all locations can be assumed to be in Colorado except that each Wyoming location is noted as such the first time it appears in the text. Because most rarities are seen by multiple observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are credited here. Undocumented reports from Colorado of Colorado Bird Records Committee (C.B.R.C.) review species (<www.cfo-link.org>) are summarized at the end of this report.

### WATERFOWL THROUGH IBIS

A single Greater White-fronted Goose was both late and westerly at Chico, Pueblo 9 May (BKP). The recent spate of Mute Swan records of questionable but undetermined source continued this spring, with 3 at Greeley 28 Mar (*vide* BS) and 2 (some of the same?) not far away at Lower Latham Res., Weld 30 Apr (R. Hopper). We received three reports of

Trumpeter Swan (Garfield, Huerfano, Moffat) and five records of Tundra Swan, from Weld, Delta, Garfield, and Moffat, as well as from Pastorius 28-29 Mar (SA). A male Eurasian Wigeon was a nice find at Swede L., Larimer 4-7 Mar (CW). A male Mexican Duck at Lower Latham Res. 15 Apr (D. Lane) continued the recent spate of records of this taxon. The returning male Blue-winged Teal × Cinnamon Teal hybrid arrived 13 Mar at Boulder, Boulder (I. Sanders) for its 8th spring.

Five reports totaling 9 Greater Scaup was a relatively high number for spring and spanned the state from Moffat to Adams. Three imm. White-winged Scoters at Baseline Res., Boulder 11-19 Apr (C. Nunes) were the only identified scoters this spring; a 4th bird at Fossil Creek Res., Larimer 3 Mar (J. Brauch) was left unidentified, though was not a Black Scoter. A female Common Goldeneye at Barr L., Adams 9 May (RA, C. Chase) was late. Up to 5 Red-breasted Mergansers at Elkhead Res., Moffat/Routt 18-30 Apr (TL, FL) were preceded by a single Horned Grebe there in Moffat 17-18 Apr (TL); both species are locally unusual. Only 42 Common Loons were reported, but that total included a nice spring count of as many as 20 at Harvey Gap Res., Garfield 11 Apr-2 May (A. Dahl). An ad. Brown Pelican that visited Totten Res., Montezuma 25 Apr (J. & D. Garrison) was a surprise not only for the location but for the bird's age, as most Colorado records are of younger birds. More in line with usual occurrence patterns, the Brown Pelican at L. Meredith, Crowley (BM) 25 Apr was a young bird and in a part of the state of somewhat frequent occurrence.

Up to 2 American Bitterns graced Chico, Pueblo 26 Apr-9 May (K. Lewantowicz, BKP), relatively rare records for the county. Single

Great Egrets in *Delta*, *Routt*, and *La Plata* 24-27 Apr were all on the West Slope, where unusual, while 13 Snowy Egrets 20 Apr-4 May among six West Slope sites (*Eagle*, *Garfield*, *Moffat*, and *La Plata*) and single Cattle Egrets in *Delta* and *La Plata* 23 Apr-5 May were not quite so unusual but helped to illustrate the tight window of the seasonal migration of white ardeids there. Five Little Blue Herons (2 ads., one imm., 2 of unreported age), the most in some years, were scattered singly over four e. counties 23 Apr-12 May. Only five of the 12 reports of Glossy Ibis were documented; a report of 3 hybrid ibis was undocumented. A documented Glossy in *Alamosa* 23 May (N. Pieplow) provided the 4th or 5th report from the San Luis Valley, which hosts most of the state's breeding White-faced Ibis. The 300+ White-faced Ibis at Elkhead Res., *Moffat* 25 Apr (FL) was a very large number locally.

## RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

An Osprey reported from Longmont, *Boulder* 11 Mar (TD) was a bit early, as was the Mississippi Kite 27 Apr at Lamar, *Prowers* (CW). Not far from Kansas were 2 ad. Northern Goshawks at Burlington, *Kit Carson* 8 Mar (MP) and a juv. at Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa* 14 Apr (BKP). We received 22 reports of Broad-winged Hawks, with all but the report of 4 at Chatfield S.P., *Douglas* 28 Apr (JK, GW) being of singles; we did not receive data from the Dinosaur Ridge hawkwatch this spring. The latest Rough-legged Hawk was in *Jackson* 30 Apr (MP). Quite out of the ordinary was a Sandhill Crane on the ground at Harvard Gulch Park, *Denver* 17 Apr (RA), perhaps the first such in living memory in the city/county. The 30 Black-bellied Plovers in alternate plumage at Walden Ponds, *Boulder* 13 May (P. Heller) made for an incredible number in spring, much less at the foothill edge. Piping Plovers were not so rare but were still out of place at Jackson Res., *Morgan* 2 May (TD et al.) and Chatfield S.P., *Douglas* 22 May (P. Diferding, SS). A Black-necked Stilt in *Custer* 18 May (RM) was in the mts., where rare, and 2 Long-billed Curlews at Brush Hollow Res. 27 Apr (RM) were rare for *Fremont*. We received four reports totaling 5 Ruddy Turnstones 3-11

May, two of these from Adobe Creek Res., *Bent*. Two Sanderlings at San Luis Lakes, *Alamosa* 4 May (JB) were locally rare, and single Least Sandpipers were very early 7 Mar at two sites in and near Rye, *Pueblo* (DS). The only Dunlin reported this season was a bird in breeding plumage 24 Apr-6 May at Lower Latham Res. (JK). Though nothing like last spring's bonanza, the 400 Red-necked Phalaropes at Arapaho N.W.R., *Jackson* 9 May (LS, ML) was still a splendid sight.

Two ad. Bonaparte's Gulls were somewhat late 11 May and at high elevation at Hinman Res., *Grand* (LS, ML). Iceland Gull has become amazingly regular in Colorado in spring, considering the state's first was found only in 1999. This spring's bird, a first-cycle, was at Jumbo Res., *Logan* 29 Mar (CLW et al.). Lesser Black-backed Gull put in a poor showing, with only four reports of 7 birds. A first-cycle Glaucous Gull provided a *Rio Blanco* first by being found at Kenney Res. 1 Mar (A. Spencer). Incredibly rare in spring, a first-cycle Black-legged Kittiwake at Jumbo Res., *Sedgwick* 21-23 Mar (MM) was a remarkable find. One wonders if the out-of-place ad. Least Tern at Chafield S.P., *Douglas* 21 May (ph. GW) also accounts for the report of one nearby at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe* 24-29 May (SS). Another such bird graced Smith Res., *Costilla* 23-24 May (TD), furnishing a very rare San Luis Valley record. The five reports of Caspian Tern included singles from the West Slope in *Mesa* and *Moffat*. Observers chasing the Least Tern at Smith Res. found a Common Tern there 24 May (S. Shaum), a species nearly as rare in the county and the San Luis Valley; another was at Russell Lakes, *Saguache* the next day (TF).

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

White-winged Doves continue the colonization of Colorado, and they were described this season as "all over se. Colorado." Interestingly, though, we received no West Slope reports. Incredibly early for a species that is usually regular in its arrival in Colorado in the mid- to late 20s of May, 10 Black Swifts were noted at Zapata Falls, *Alamosa* 19 May (J. Rawinski, JS). In fact, at the best-studied

colony in the state, and a low-elevation colony at that, the 6 noted at Box Canyon, *Ouray* 27 May were described as record early by one day (S. Hirshman). A potential first for Colorado, a Vaux's Swift was described from Prince Lake #2, *Boulder* 1 May (TF). After decades of decline and disappearance from ne. Colorado, Lewis's Woodpecker was reported from two sites in *Weld* and one in *Boulder*, perhaps providing a bit of hope. A Red-headed Woodpecker was a bit westerly at Masonville, *Larimer* 27 May (P. & J. Hayward), and a Red-naped Sapsucker was a bit easterly for spring at Cheraw, *Otero* 27 Apr (B. Steger). Interesting was a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers in which the male was of the e. subspecies, the female of the mountain subspecies, at Barr L., *Adams* 5 May (RA).

Quite early was the Olive-sided Flycatcher at Rocky Ford, *Otero* 17 Apr (MP, BKP). The highlight of the season, however, was the long-overdue first Colorado record (p.a.) of Acadian Flycatcher. This one-day wonder found at a small woodlot vagrant trap (Van's Grove) near John Martin Res., *Bent* 12 May (ph. BKP) was wonderfully photographed. A Black Phoebe established a first county record for *Boulder* at Walden Ponds 8 Apr (M. Boswell). A relative flood of Vermilion Flycatchers came this spring, as no fewer than 4 were documented. Single males were early and a first for *Adams* at Barr L. 25-26 Mar (J. Schmoker, BS) and appreciated at Florence, *Fremont* 19 Apr (MP, CW, BKP), while females were at Crow Valley campground, Pawnee National Grassland, *Weld* 15 Apr (C. Kogler, L. Burke) and Walden Ponds 18-19 Apr (WS). Locally rare, a Cassin's Kingbird was photographed in the Larimer River Valley of nw. *Larimer* 10 Apr (LS); the species is not known to breed in the vicinity. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher visited Pawnee Buttes, *Weld* 14 May (E. Spencer).

After coming off the Colorado review list in 2002, White-eyed Vireo had become a rarer bird in recent years; however, this spring, no fewer than 17 were reported from across the e. plains, by far the most reports for one year, let alone a single season. Also found in high numbers, 7 Yellow-throated Vireos made appearances in e. Colorado. A Blue-headed Vireo was banded at Chico, *El Paso* 7 May (N. Gobris), while another was at Fox Ranch, *Yuma* 16-19 May (TF); there are only 21 accepted records of the species since its status was elevated in 1997. Quite away from its normal habitat and far e., a lone Pinyon Jay was at L.C.C., *Prowers* 22 Apr (D. Russell). Very rare on the e. plains, 2 Purple Martins were reported during the season, neither of them ad. males: one was in Lamar 16 May (D. Leatherman), the other farther w. at Chico, *Pueblo* 21

**SA** With more and more active birders on Colorado's West Slope, our knowledge of shorebird distribution and abundance is growing exponentially. As only 14 of the 41 shorebird species that have occurred in the state are of regular occurrence on the West Slope, this season's shorebirding effort there was exciting. Among the occurrences of interest, we highlight the following: Single Snowy Plovers, very rare in the sw. portion of the state, at McPhee Res., *Montezuma* 25 Apr (HM) and at Pastorius 9 May (JB); single Black-necked Stilts in *Moffat*, *La Plata*, *Montezuma*, and *Rio Blanco*; 25 Long-billed Curlews at Pastorius 10 Apr (A. Dobbins), a high number; and single Semipalmated Sandpipers at Highline Res., *Mesa* 26 Apr (L. Stigen) and Rio Blanco Res., *Rio Blanco* 3 May (D. Hilkey). Nearly on the West Slope, a single Stilt Sandpiper at La Jara Res., *Conejos* 22 May (JB) was in the mts., where rare, and also provided a county first.



May (B. Gibbons). Quite early were the 3 Cliff Swallows at Pueblo's Valco Ponds, *Pueblo* 14 Mar (D. Chartier). The 8 Winter Wrens reported this season, mostly from foothill locations along the e. edge of the Rockies, made an above-average number. One Gray-cheeked Thrush was documented, a bird at Greenlee Preserve, *Boulder* 11 May (TF). Northeast of usual haunts, a Curve-billed Thrasher was at Thompson Ranch, *Lincoln* 15 May (GW et al.). Bohemian Waxwings put on a pitiful performance in Colorado during winter and spring 2009. The only report we received was of a flock of at least 150 birds at L. Catamount, *Routt* 15-16 Mar (TL, C. Dodson).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Colorado birders look forward to finding stray e. warblers in spring and fall. Unfortunately, the spring of 2009 was somewhat lackluster in the diversity of such, but numbers of some species were greater than typical. A single Blue-winged Warbler was on the West Slope at Hotchkiss 16 May (A. Robinsong) and established a first for *Delta*. A male Golden-winged Warbler was at L.C.C. 6-7 May (B. Shade). The most notable parulid, however, was a Brewster's Warbler documented from Colorado Springs, *El Paso* 13 May (M. C. Lee), only the 2nd accepted record for the state. The 9 Nashville Warblers reported was about average. Lucy's Warblers continue to breed at Yellowjacket Canyon, *Montezuma*, where 4 were noted 25 Apr (JB, TD, T. Wilberding); this small population, the only known in the state, was first discovered in 2004. Thirty Northern Parulas reported made for an outstanding influx, with the most notable report being of one in the San Luis Valley at the Medano-Zapata Ranch, *Alamosa* 22 May (m.ob.). Nine Chestnut-sided Warblers were seen in e. Colorado, an average showing, while the 13 Magnolia Warblers in the same area was a bit high. The 5 Black-throated Blue Warblers reported were nice finds; one wonders where these birds end up in the summer, considering their Caribbean wintering grounds and relatively northeasterly breeding range. A Black-throated Green Warbler was at Twin Lakes, *Boulder* 10 May (WS) and provided the sole report of the species this spring. A male Blackburnian Warbler sang at Chico, *Pueblo* 23 May (BM), while a Yellow-throated Warbler brightened Bonny 11 Apr (CLW et al.). Away from its nor-

mal sw. Colorado range, a male Grace's Warbler was far n. at Estes Park, *Larimer* 5-7 May (B. Chase, GM).

The 36 Blackpoll Warblers seen across the state made for an excellent count, though minuscule compared to last spring's record showing. Two Prothonotary Warblers were seen, one at Thompson Ranch, *Lincoln* 1 May (KM-D), the other at Belmar Park in Lakewood, *Jefferson* 7 May (M. Chavez). Eastern Colorado birders reported 7 Worm-eating Warblers in Colorado and one in Wyoming, at a ranch in *Cheyenne* 7 May (J. Roller, LK). Although Ovenbirds are regular migrants in e. Colorado and localized breeders along the Front Range foothills, records for w. Colorado are few. Establishing a first for *La Plata* was one at Pastorius 30-31 May (HM). A first for Chico, a Kentucky Warbler was on the *Pueblo* side of the ranch 1 May (BM). An amazing 24 Hooded Warblers were reported in e. Colorado.

At least 19 Summer Tanagers were seen in the state, all but 3 from the e. side. Record early for the West Slope was one at Highline Res. 24 Apr (J. Cooper). Just a day later, an apparent returning bird was found at Yellowjacket Canyon (JB, TD), where the species has lately been present all summer and is suspected of breeding. Finally, a male was reported from *Conejos* 9 May (JS). The territorial male Scarlet Tanager at Gregory Canyon, *Boulder* returned for its 3rd year, first seen 28 May (KM-D). The wintering female Eastern Towhee at Fort Lyon State Wildlife Area, *Bent* remained through at least 8 Mar (MM). Very rare in sw. Colorado, a Clay-colored Sparrow was at Navajo State Wildlife Area, *Archuleta* 4 May (SA), and a Black-throated Sparrow was northerly at Chatfield S.P., *Douglas* 17 Apr (GW, LK). Out-of-range Sage Sparrows included one in *Salida*, *Chaffee* 1 Mar (RM), one at Walden Ponds 8 Apr (WS), and another at Estes Park 22 Apr (GM, S. Rashid). The wintering *Fremont* Golden-crowned Sparrow remained at that location until at least 31 Mar, although no details on the spring sighting were provided. Four Rusty Blackbirds were seen across e. Colorado. Away from its montane habitat, a female-plumaged Pine Grosbeak was reported without details on the e. plains at Bonny, where seen 8 Mar (MP et al.). Finally, White-winged Crossbills remain in mountainous areas of Colorado, with small groups being observed in *Conejos* (S.

Fullingim), *Mesa* (CD), *Delta* (CD), and *Hinsdale* (MP et al.).

**Undocumented rarities:** We do not include undocumented Colorado reports of C.B.R.C. review species in the main text; such reports this season included: Red-throated Loon in *Fremont*; Neotropical Cormorant in *Weld*; Least Bittern in *Jefferson*; Tricolored Heron in *Logan*; Glossy Ibis in *Arapahoe*, *Bent*, *Boulder*, *Douglas* (two reports), *La Plata*, and *Weld*; Glossy Ibis × White-faced Ibis hybrid in *Boulder*; Swallow-tailed Kite in *Douglas*; Hudsonian Godwit in *Weld*; Short-billed Dowitcher in *Arapahoe*, *Bent*, and *Lincoln*; Laughing Gull in *Douglas*; Mew Gull in *Boulder*; Glaucous-winged Gull in *Mesa*; Lesser Nighthawk in *Montrose*; Ruby-throated Hummingbird in *Prowers*; Eastern Wood-Pewee in *Pueblo*; Alder Flycatcher in *El Paso* and *Weld*; Vermilion Flycatcher in *Fremont* and *Pueblo*; Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in *Las Animas*; Blue-headed Vireo in *Prowers* (two reports) and *Weld*; Philadelphia Vireo in *Arapahoe*; Gray-cheeked Thrush in *Broomfield*; Wood Thrush in *Bent*; Varied Thrush in *Arapahoe*; Lucy's Warbler in *Mesa*; Blackburnian Warbler in *Jefferson*; Pine Warbler in *Boulder* and *Prowers*; Kentucky Warbler in *Custer*; Mourning Warbler in *Larimer*; Hepatic Tanager in *Huerfano*; Baird's Sparrow in *Bent*; Red Fox Sparrow in *Delta*.

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**SA** A male Bay-breasted Warbler was at L. Beckwith, *Pueblo* 22 May (DS). Colorado has 40 accepted records of the species, with 21 of those garnered during the spruce budworm outbreak in e. Canada in the 1970s. Only one record was obtained during the 1980s, but a moderate rebound of vagrant reports came during the 1990s, when 8 were seen. As we near the end of the first decade of this millennium, the C.B.R.C. has accepted 10 records of the species for that period. One wonders if populations are increasing or if the increased number of records is a result of increased birding effort and/or acumen.

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# Idaho & Western Montana



## David Trochlell

It was a spring season of unusually inconsistent weather across the Region, with several observers reporting slightly cooler and wetter than normal conditions overall. A Bozeman, Montana weather station recorded an amazing 127 cm of snowfall in April, the most ever reported there in any month! At some locations, unseasonably cool temperatures in late April and early May were thought to have delayed northbound passerine migration and plant phenology by about two weeks. But the season will probably be best remembered for the many rarities found in both states and the continuing presence of Pine Grosbeaks and White-winged Crossbills at many locations.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH GULLS

Single extralimital Greater White-fronted Geese made news in Flathead, MT 21 Mar (DC) and Warm Springs, MT 23 Mar-3 Apr (NK). Reports of Cackling Geese were relatively numerous, with up to 3 in Flathead, MT 21 Mar-8 Apr (DC), up to 5 *taverneri* in Moscow, ID 22 Mar-5 Apr (CS), and a *minima* photographed in Jefferson, ID 8 May (SB). A Whooper Swan that wintered near Hagerman, ID was last reported 12 Mar. The season's tally of Eurasian Wigeons was just under

last year's record count, with at least 7 reported in Idaho and 10 in w. Montana. A wayward pair of Harlequin Ducks was a notable find in Nez Perce, ID 4 May (KCI). Three Long-tailed Ducks represented an average spring season total. Providing a first for Latilong 39, an out-of-range Snowy Egret was seen n. of Livingston, MT 25 May (MD). Especially rare in spring was a Broad-winged Hawk in Fremont, ID 24 Apr (†CW).

A flock of 7 Whimbrels in Flathead, MT 22 May (DC) was unusual, as the species is only expected as a rare fall migrant. Long-billed Curlews are scarce in n. Idaho, so 2 near Moscow 5 Apr (WG) were noteworthy. Two Mew Gulls, rare but regular, were identified in Canyon, ID 3-5 Mar. Up to 3 other Mews in Somers, MT 6-12 May (DC) represented the Region's latest spring report ever. Always unusual, Thayer's Gulls had a great showing: 6 were in Canyon, Idaho 3 Mar-11 Apr (JC), one was in Flathead, MT 17 Mar (DC), and 2 were at American Falls, ID 26 Mar (JC). Two rare Glaucous-winged Gulls were documented in Canyon, ID 3-5 Mar (†JC). Glaucous Gull numbers were also relatively high, with 2 in Canyon, ID 3 Mar (JC), one in the Helena Valley, MT 11 Mar-8 Apr (BM), one in Twin Falls, ID 5 Apr (ZW), and 2 in Flathead, MT 8-14 Apr (DC). Idaho's 4th Iceland Gull, an ad., was in Canyon 3-5 Mar (†JC). Montana's celebrated wintering first-cycle Iceland Gull was last reported in Flathead 8 Apr (DC). Although Lesser Black-backed Gull is now nearly annual in Idaho, 2 reported in Ada and Canyon 5 Mar-11 Apr (†JC) were still sensational news.

## DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

Montana's 13th White-winged Dove stopped in Gardiner 3-8 May (ph. MD). A lost Vaux's Swift in Gardner, MT 4 May (MD, JP) provided Montana's easternmost report. A flock of 5 White-throated Swifts in Bonner, ID 10 Apr (TG) made only the 3rd local record. Rare Northern Mockingbirds visited Gem, ID 1 Mar-5 Apr (JL), Bozeman, MT 1-5 May (DG),

and near Somers, MT 22-23 May (DC). A Brown Thrasher, less than annual in the Region, was photographed at Boise, ID 30 May (WC). The tally of rare "eastern" warblers at Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID was impressive and included 2 Tennessee Warblers 18 & 22 May, single Northern Parulas 23 & 26 May, a Black-and-white Warbler 23 May, and 2 Ovenbirds 22 May (CW). Elsewhere in Idaho, a casual Chestnut-sided Warbler was big news in Blaine 27 May (JC). If accepted, a male Hermit Warbler discovered in Owyhee 8 May (†JH) would establish Idaho's 2nd record. With only five accepted precedents in Idaho, a pair of Clay-colored Sparrows defending territory in Latah 25 May (CS) was significant. Idaho's 2nd Chestnut-collared Longspur was a sensational discovery in Canyon 25 Apr (ph. JC). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, rare but regular in both states, were detected at Red Lodge, MT 20 May (SH), in Blaine, ID 23 May (JC), and at Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID 26 May (CW). A lost Dickcissel e. of Bozeman 18 May (JPe) provided a local first record. Unexpected but not unprecedented was a pair of Common Grackles in Blaine, ID 4 May (PWP). Single Idaho Great-tailed Grackles were notable in Elmore 15 May (HK) and Jefferson 28 May (RD). Adding to only a few previous reports of Lesser Goldfinch in Montana was one in Livingston 19 May (†SHu).

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## Sartor O. Williams III

Dry conditions, exacerbated by strong winds, continued into spring 2009, but an early onset of summer rains in late May hinted that some relief may be in store. A remarkable season for eastern and Mexican vagrants brought at least one new species to the state, a Fan-tailed Warbler that found its way to the high plains of eastern New Mexico.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); E.B.L. (Elephant Butte L.); N.R.T. (n. Roosevelt migrant trap w. of Melrose); R.G.N.C. (Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque); R.G.V. (Rio Grande Valley); R.S. (Rattlesnake Springs and vicinity, Eddy).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

Providing a breeding first for the lower Gila R., a Canada Goose was tending young at Hedrock 22 May (K. Little, *vide* RS). A male Eurasian Wigeon at Holloman L. 26 May (ph. BZ) was the latest ever for New Mexico. West and late was a male Greater Scaup at Zuni's Nutria L. 26-27 Apr (JT). The wintering Long-tailed Duck at Bosque was last seen 19 Mar (ph. C. Lee). Far s. of known range, an apparent Dusky Grouse was in the Pinos Altos Mts. 26 Apr (JD). Unusual was a Horned Grebe w. to Lordsburg 20-26 Mar (LM, SW). A busy Brown Pelican season found one at Morgan L. 21 May+ (ph. TR), one downed by a snowstorm near Cuba 11 Apr (C. Henderson), and at least 4 at Brantley L. 11 May (JP, LM). A Neotropic Cormorant was far n. to Morgan L. 21 May+ (ph. TR), and another was w. to Lordsburg 8 May (CR); noteworthy for the lower Pecos Valley were 2 ads. at Brantley L. 7 May (RD). A male Anhinga sunning at Holloman L. 1 Apr (C. Fredricks)

could not be relocated; there are but five previous New Mexico records. A high count of 6 American Bitterns came from B.L.N.W.R. 8 Apr (JIS). Least Bitterns were vocal in May at Bosque Redondo (JP, JMB, DK), Bosque (BZ), and Six Mile Dam (BF, JP, SW). Great Blue Heron breeding reports included seven nests at Morgan L. in May (ph. TR), five nests below Ute Dam 30 May (DS), and four nests near San Marcial 5 May (RD). Some 55 Great Egret nests were near San Marcial 5 May (RD), a large number; the same colony had just four Snowy Egret nests (RD). A Tricolored Heron at B.L.N.W.R. 1-2 May (JP, vt. JO) furnished the only report. Early Cattle Egrets were 3 at Bosque 20 Mar (SW) and one at Belen 22 Mar (JP); lingering in the w. were 3 at Columbus 28 May (SOW). An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was at Six Mile Dam 4 May (BF). Glossy Ibis continues as an increasingly regular spring migrant, with single ads. at Zuni 26 Apr (JT), at Socorro 21 Apr (ph. JO), at Fort Sumner 8 May (JP, MB), and at B.L.N.W.R. 12-14 Apr (ph. WH, JMB) and 2 (ph. JO), 11 (MH), & 16 May (ph. JO). Elsewhere, up to 2 ads. were at Bosque 16-21 Apr (ph. JO, JP) and at least one at L. Avalon 27 Apr (SW).

Eighteen Osprey pairs were in n. Rio Arriba, where at least 16 had nests (DS); a nest was found below Navajo Dam (DS, ph. TR); and two nests were in McKinley, including a newly discovered one at McGaffey L. (DS). One to 2 White-tailed Kites were present in the Animas Valley 9 May (AC), at three sites in the Hachita Valley Mar-May (L. Neely, J. Groves, SOW), near Hermanas Mar-Apr (HW, CH, M. Rogers), and in the Mesilla Valley 3 & 16 May (C. Goin). A Mississippi Kite was far n. to Aztec 13 May (ph. S. Landon), and 3 were w. to Cliff 26 May (*vide* RS); on the Pecos R., 3 were n. to Santa Rosa 8 May (JN-M). At least four Bald Eagle nests were active in n. New Mexico, two each in Rio Arriba and Colfax (DS). A Northern Harrier pair was courting at B.L.N.W.R. 2 May (JO); one w. of Columbus 28 May (SOW) was in likely nesting habitat. Migrant Common Black-Hawks in nonbreeding areas were one at Lordsburg 26 Mar (SW) and singles at two Animas Valley sites 27 Mar (B. Carlson) and 10 Apr (MB, NP); one to 2 were n. to two Santa Rosa sites Apr-May (CR, WW, JP, JN-M) and one was e. to Trigg Ranch, e. San Miguel 10 Apr (MM). One to 2 Broad-winged Hawks were at five sites in Guadalupe, Curry, Roosevelt, and Eddy 20 Apr-13 May

(m.ob.); farther w., one was in Water Canyon 2 May (CB, NH, CR). A pair of Gray Hawks returned to the Black R. area, Eddy by 22 Mar (CB), with nest-building observed 28 Mar (CW); in Guadalupe Canyon, ads. were noted 11 & 17 Apr (JP, WW, ph. DC), and two pairs were present 8-9 May (SOW, NM-C, CR). A migrating *Buteo* on the prairie some 80 km n. of Roswell 25 Apr (D. Bruce, M. Bruce) was described as a Gray Hawk, not the expected Broad-winged. Zone-tailed Hawk was widely reported, including a pair in the Capitan Mts. 15 Apr (JMB) and one at Playas 1-6 Apr (WC). Considered late for the se., single Ferruginous Hawks were in s. Roosevelt 19 Apr (CR) and L. Avalon 9 May (SW); nests of note were s. of Datil 30 May (ph. BZ), near Encino Apr-May (JO), near Sumner L. 20 May (ph. JPB), and near Elida, Roosevelt 22 Apr (CH). Aerial surveys for Golden Eagles in ne. New Mexico in Mar found nest attempts considerably reduced, and the number of fledglings counted 30-31 May was only half of recent annual averages (DS); reduced prey owing to drought may be involved. An unbanded Aplomado Falcon s. of Deming Mar-Apr (m.ob.) was believed by some to be a genuine wild bird, but given the massive release program in s. New Mexico since 2006, its true provenance is not known; a banded subad. Aplo-



Rare in New Mexico, and especially so in spring, these two Ruddy Turnstones were at Sumner Lake, De Baca County 6 May 2009. Photograph by Bonnie Long.

mado was s. of Deming on various dates 20 Mar-28 Apr (ph. HW, ph. CH).

## RAILS THROUGH TERNS

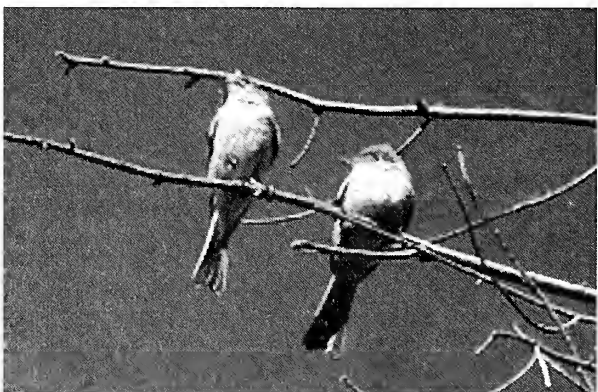
A large rail at Bosque 10-12 May (C. West, m.ob., v.r. JO, v.r. NH, v.r. JPB, ph. CW, ph. NP) was initially thought to be a King Rail, based largely on vocalizations, but later believed to be a typical Gulf Coast Clapper Rail, a species previously unreported in New Mexico. Notably late Sandhill Cranes were over 200 near Dexter 28 Mar (CW, RV, CR), 70 at Tome 1 Apr (CB), and 30 at R.G.N.C. 3 Apr (D. Paez); last was one or more heard at Luis Lopez 16 & 18 Apr (JO). A Black-bellied Plover was at Holloman L. 26 May (ph. BZ, MS, ph. JZ). A strong American Golden-



Casual in New Mexico in spring, this alternate-plumaged Red Knot lingered at Holloman Lake, Otero County 23 (here 26) April through 13 May 2009. Photograph by James E. Zabriskie.



Costa's Hummingbird is irregular in New Mexico, where last reported in 2007, so notable were up to three in Guadalupe Canyon, Hidalgo County, in April 2009, including this male photographed 17 April. Photograph by David J. Cleary.



Buff-breasted Flycatchers returned to nest in the Animas Mountains, Hidalgo County, New Mexico for the second consecutive year, including this pair photographed at Aspen Spring 8 May 2009. Photograph by Nicholas D. Pederson.

Plover season produced at least one at B.L.N.W.R. 28 Mar–2 May (m.ob., ph. JPB) and 2 there 11 & 14 Apr (ph. WH, JMB), plus singles at Brantley L. 28–29 Mar (ph. CW, RV, CR, ph. JPB) and Bosque 2–3 May (CB, NH, CR, MB, NP). One to 2 Snowy Plovers were n. to Morgan L. 14–23 May (ph. TR). Two Mountain Plovers were among prairie-dogs e.

of Roswell 29 Mar (RH). Black-necked Stilts where seldom seen were one at Nutria L. 21 Apr (WW) and 2 at Acomita L., Cibola 29 May (WW). The earliest Solitary Sandpiper reported was one at Luis Lopez 9 Apr (JO). A remarkable Whimbrel season found a high 10 at Brantley L. 5 & 10 May (WW, JP) and one to 2 at Bosque 30 Apr–17 May (m.ob., ph.), plus singles at Zuni 26 Apr (JT) and L. Avalon 27 Apr (SW). Some 580 Long-billed Curlews were in a field near Dexter 28 Mar (CW, RV, CR); late but in suitable breeding habitat were 2 near Encino and 24 near Hobbs 31 May (DH). Surprising were 2 Ruddy Turnstones at Sumner L. 6 May (ph. B. Long). Casual in spring, a bright Red Knot lingered at Holloman L. 23 Apr–13 May (ph. DG, MS, ph. JZ, WW, ph. JO, ph. MB). Rare in w. New Mexico, at least 3 Semipalmated Sandpipers were at Morgan L. 14 May (ph. TR); others with details w. of the plains were singles at Bosque 10 May (MH) and Holloman L. 26 May (BZ, MS, JZ). Earliest credible Western Sandpipers were 2 at Bosque 5 Apr (DH); undetailed "flocks" at Bosque and B.L.N.W.R. in Mar require verification. The earliest White-rumped Sandpipers were 2 at B.L.N.W.R. 15 May (DK); others continued in evidence in e. New Mexico through 31 May, including singles at Ruby Ranch, San Miguel 19 May (W. West) and Portales 22–23 May (JP, JO), 9 at Clovis 21 May (ph. JPB), and a high 29 at Brantley L. 23 May (CW, JPB) where up to 19 were still present 28 May (RD, MH). Scarce in spring, a Pectoral Sandpiper was at Socorro 5 Apr (ph. JWS). Very late was a bright Dunlin at Holloman L. 26 May (ph. BZ, MS, ph. JZ); one found at Morgan L. in Feb was last seen 7 Mar (ph. TR), while one was at Bosque 14 Mar (DH). Casual in spring, an ad. Short-billed Dowitcher was at Las Palomas 29 May (ph. DC). Late Red-necked Phalaropes were one at B.L.N.W.R. 25 May (JP) and 3 at Hol-

loman L. 26 May (BZ). A subad. Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Brantley L. 3 May (ph. MH, RV, BF), a late date for this recently arrived species. The imm. Glaucous Gull at Brantley L. in Feb was seen again 14 Mar (JP, WW). Least Terns continued to appear away from the lower Pecos Valley, with a very early one at E.B.L. 3 Apr (LM), one at Morgan L. 14–31 May (ph. TR) and 2 there 26 May (TR); singles were at Española 24 May (ph. JPB) and Ned Houk Park n. of Clovis 12 May (JP); and 2 were at Holloman L. 13 May (ph. MB).

## PIGEONS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

Very early or wintering were 15 Band-tailed Pigeons in Bear Trap Canyon, San Mateo Mts. 16 Mar (SOW). Far n. were 2 White-winged Doves near Cedar Hill, San Juan 1 May (TR). Still rare, and with no recent proof of nesting, Common Ground-Doves were in evidence across the s., with singles at Redrock 29 May (BZ), the Animas Valley 9 May (RW), Percha 4 May (DG), R.S. 9 May (SW), and Eunice until 12 Apr (PM), plus 3 at Rodeo 24 May (RW). A male Ruddy Ground-Dove was at Percha 28 Mar (RH, ph. MC, ph. NH). Early were single Yellow-billed Cuckoos at Waldrop Park 9 May (R. Larsen) and N.R.T. 11 May (MH); others did not arrive until 24 May or later. A Long-eared Owl nest near Hermanas contained 3 nestlings 19 Apr (HW). A silent Lesser Nighthawk was reported n. to N.R.T. 26 Apr (CR, MH). A Common Poorwill was vocal in the Sandia Mts. 18 Mar (RV). Earliest Chimney Swifts were 3 at Clovis 28 Apr (JMB); May brought reports of one to 3 at Clayton (CR), Melrose (DH), Roswell (JP), Carlsbad (SW), and R.S. (SW). The Broad-billed Hummingbird that wintered near Radium Springs was last seen 7 Apr (MS, JZ); also in the R.G.V. was a male at Elephant Butte 18 Apr (WW). Magnificent Hummingbirds were restricted to the Pinos Altos (LM), Peloncillo (CDL), and Animas (AC) ranges. Right on schedule, the first Lucifer Hummingbird returned to Post Office Canyon 21 Mar (CDL); single Anna's reached Post Office Canyon 11 Apr and 20 May (CDL). Two ad. male Costa's Hummingbirds were in Guadalupe Canyon 17 Apr (ph. DC), where there was a female 16 Apr (DC), and another ad. male was at Las Cruces 26 Mar (DG, MS, ph. JZ). Additional credible reports of Calliope and Rufous suggest these hummingbirds may now be expected in spring. A male Calliope was at Radium Springs 2 Apr (MS, JZ), and single females were at Socorro 2 May (CR) and Albuquerque 3 May (CR). Rufous reports included a male at Carlsbad 29 Mar (SW), a male at Radium Springs 5–6 Apr and a female there 9–10 Apr (MS, JZ), and 3 males at L. Roberts 12 Apr

(*vide* DB); in Post Office Canyon, males began arriving 21 Mar, females peaked at 4 on 4 Apr, and the last was seen 22 Apr (CDL). An Elegant Trogon was vocal in upper Owl Canyon 9 May (CDL), a new Peloncillo Mts. locale for the species. Noteworthy was a Red-headed Woodpecker in the Gallinas Mts. near Corona 19 May (*vide* H. Schwarz). A Williamson's Sapsucker was e. to Ramon 3 May (JP).

A Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet was in Guadalupe Canyon by 14 Mar (ph. CM), where a pair was building a nest and 2 singles were detected 9 May (ph. SOW, NM-C, CR); one singing at a water pool in the middle Animas Valley 9 May (RW) provided a new locality. A Greater Pewee on the e. slope of the Black Range at Poverty Cr. 30 May (ph. DC) furnished a new locale; one was in the Animas Mts. 9 May (NP). Least Flycatcher is a rare but regular spring migrant in the east; singles with details were at Sumner Dam 16 May (DK), Ramon 15 May (SW), N.R.T. 8-9 & 13-14 May (JP, JO, MB), and Boone's Draw 9 May (DK). A Dusky Flycatcher was at Percha 26 Mar (CW), where at least one wintered. For the 2nd consecutive year, Buff-breasted Flycatcher nested in the Animas Mts., with a nest at Aspen Spring 8 May (ph. NP) and singles in Indian Cr. Canyon 8 May (ph. NP) and Cistern Saddle 9 May (ph. NP). Black Phoebe has become regular across the n. tier of counties; this season found 2 near Heron L. 9 May (WH) and others at Taos 15 May (HW). Eastern Phoebes lingered in the lower R.G.V. until 6 Apr at E.B.L. (ph. DC) and 15 May at Las Palomas (DC); a pair was nest-building at Trigg Ranch, e. San Miguel 8-9 May (MM). At least one Dusky-capped Flycatcher returned to Cherry Creek Canyon, Pinos Altos Mts. 28 May (ph. BZ). Casual in spring, a Great Crested Flycatcher was at N.R.T. 19 May (DK). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were conspicuous w. to U.S. 285 n. of Roswell, including one or 2 at Ramon 4-31 May (JO, WW, DH) and a pair at the Mesa Rest Area 18 May (JO).

## VIREOS THROUGH WAXWINGS

White-eyed Vireo had yet another strong showing, with one at N.R.T. 27-28 Apr (JMB) and one to 2 there 16-22 May (m.ob., ph. JZ, ph. NH, ph. JO) and singles at Boone's Draw 1 May (ph. MH), Socorro 4 & 12 May (JO, NP), and Bosque 13 May (RV). Two Bell's Vireos were singing in Guadalupe Canyon by 14 Mar (CM); pushing northward were singles at Sumner Dam 3-18 May (JP, JO, NP, DK), N.R.T. 3 & 19 May (NP, DK), and B.L.N.W.R. 24 Apr (JP), and another was e. to Eunice 9 May (PM). The vireo of the season was a young male Black-capped Vireo found in Slaughter Canyon, Carlsbad Caverns N.P.

20 May (JL) and re-found 23 May (ph. CW), where it continued to be seen singing through the period (m.ob., ph.), providing the 2nd verified and 3rd overall record for New Mexico. Surveys for Gray Vireos continued to locate impressive numbers in new locales, e.g., in the San Andres Mts., where work through 31 May found 83 individuals in 62 territories in eight canyons (D. Burkett et al.); of interest elsewhere were singles near Encinal, Cibola 23 May (CR), in the s. Manzano Mts. in Priest Canyon, e. Valencia 31 May (CR), and on the outskirts of Socorro 9 May (ph. JWS). Yellow-throated Vireo was in the news, with singles at Cerrillos 2 May (ph. JPB), Boone's Draw 2 May (m.ob., ph. JO), and Carrizozo 3 May (ph. JO, MB, NP); one was at R.S. 23-25 May (ph. CW, ph. JPB, SW, DH, JP), and 2 or more were there 28 May (ph. JO). Among the few Red-eyed Vireos was one w. to Gila 2 May (LM). East were 2 male Purple Martins at Clovis 28 Apr (JMB); martins returned to the Datil Mts. by 23 Apr (JH), and a pair was at Datil 30 May (BZ). Some 63 Cave Swallows were at three Doña Ana sites 9 May (J. Paton, MS, JZ). Encouraging were 2 Mexican Chickadees in the Animas Mts. 9 May (ph. NP), the first reported there since the 2006 fire.

One to 2 Cactus Wrens plus a fresh nest near Cabezon Peak 16 May (ph. WH) extended the breeding range some 80 km northwestward; also n. of usual haunts were 3 s. of Duran, Torrance 25 May (JO). A Carolina Wren was singing at Luis Lopez 8 Apr (JO). Black-capped Gnatcatcher continued in residence in Guadalupe Canyon, with a pair at a down-canyon locale 14 Mar (ph. CM), 16 Mar (CGL), and 9 May (CR, NM-C, SOW) and another pair farther up canyon 5 Mar (ph. DC) and 16 Apr (ph. DC); both Black-taileds and Blue-grays were also there 14 Mar (CM). An Eastern Bluebird pair was nesting in a willow at Playas 5 Apr (WC), where photographs 10 Apr (ph. J. R. Morgan, SOW, WC) indicated the birds were of the nominate subspecies, now established as a breeder in the R.G.V. from Santa Fe s. to Doña Ana; the nest site is in view of the Chiricahua Mts., where the sw. subspecies *fulva* is the local breeder. Rarely encountered in migration, a Veery was at N.R.T. 19 (MS) & 23 May (JP, ph. JO). A possible Gray-cheeked Thrush was



Providing the second confirmed New Mexico record, this Black-capped Vireo was in Slaughter Canyon, Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Eddy County from 20 (here 24) May into June 2009. Photograph by Jerry R. Oldenettel.

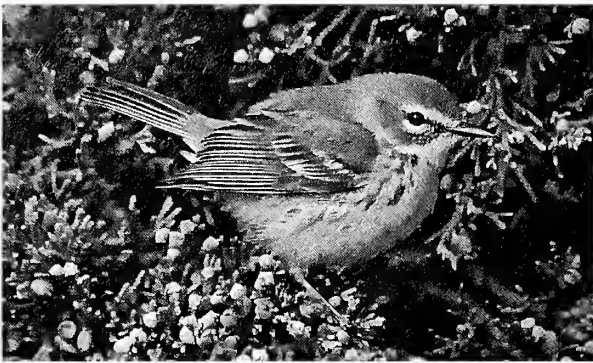


Two pairs of Black-capped Gnatcatchers continued in residence in Guadalupe Canyon, Hidalgo County, New Mexico, where this male was photographed 16 April 2009. Photograph by David J. Cleary.

seen at Ramon 15 May (SW). A Wood Thrush was at Boone's Draw 1-2 May (ph. MH, ph. JO, m.ob.). A surprising Varied Thrush season found a female in Cienega Canyon, Sandia Mts. 8 Mar (CB, JP, WW) and a male in upper Water Canyon, Magdalena Mts. 2 May (CB, NH). Brown Thrashers lingering in the lower R.G.V. were singles in Selden Canyon 28 Apr (HW) and Mesilla Valley S.P. 9 May (JD); up to 5 were at R.S. 28 Mar (CW, CR, RV). A Bendire's Thrasher was near Zuni's Tekapo 27 Apr (JT), a Curve-billed Thrasher was far n. to Aztec 10 May (TR), and a Crissal Thrasher was banded e. to B.L.N.W.R. 14 May (JIS). An active Cedar Waxwing nest was below Navajo Dam 23 May+ (TR).

## WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS

A memorable warbler season produced reports of 38 species, including often multiple



Providing only the thirteenth acceptable New Mexico record, this Prairie Warbler made a brief stop at the Mesa Rest Area, Chaves County 2 May 2009. Photograph by Jerry R. Oldenettel.



With fewer than 20 credible records, Louisiana Waterthrush is one of New Mexico's rarest warblers; this one along Las Animas Creek on the Ladder Ranch, Sierra County 12 May 2009 provided a notably late spring record. Photograph by Nancy E. Hetrick.



A surprise on the Great Plains, New Mexico's first Fan-tailed Warbler entertained many at the Melrose Trap in northern Roosevelt County 18-19 (here 19) May 2009. Photograph by David J. Krueper.

reports of several species once considered quite rare. A male Olive Warbler was n. to Slaughter Mesa near Quemado L. 20 Mar (*vide* DB). Single Blue-winged Warblers were at Bosque 30 Apr (CB, NH) and N.R.T. 1 May (JP, ph. MH). A Golden-winged Warbler was at Santa Rosa 26 Apr (ph. JO, ph. MH, CR). Other noteworthy *Vermivora* were single Tennessee Warblers at Cedar Crest 4 May (DL) and N.R.T. 9 May (DK) and a likely wintering Orange-crowned Warbler at Bosque 14 Mar (CR). One to 2 Northern Parulas were at 11 locales from the R.G.V. eastward 26 Apr–25 May; noteworthy was an early one in Selden Canyon 13 Mar (MS), and singles where rarely seen were at Santa Rosa 26 Apr (CR) and Eunice 27 Apr (ph. PM); in the w., singles were in the Datil Mts. 24–29 Apr (ph. JH), Kingston 9 May (ph. DC), and the Cliff-Gila Valley 26 May (RS). A male Chestnut-sided Warbler was at the Anton Chico Rest Area, w. *Guadalupe* 7 May (CB, ph. NH). One to 2 Magnolia Warblers were at N.R.T. on multiple dates 9–23 May (m.ob., ph.); at least 3 and possibly more were involved. Single male Black-throated Blue Warblers were at Sumner Dam 17 May (WW) and at R.S. 11 May (LM). Single Black-throated Gray Warblers in Post Office Canyon 4 Mar (CDL) and in *Guadalupe* Canyon 14 Mar (CM) probably wintered locally. An impressive 3 Blackburnian Warblers were found: singles at Cedar Crest 28–30 Apr (ph. DL), N.R.T. 19 May (m.ob., ph. JO, ph. CW, ph. NH, ph. DK, ph. JZ), and B.L.N.W.R. 15–17 May (DK, RV). A Prairie Warbler stopped at the Mesa Rest Area 2 May (CW et al., ph. JO, ph. MB, ph. MH), providing a *Chaves* first and about the 13th credible state record. The Yellow Palm Warbler wintering at Percha continued through 12 Apr (ph. MH); single Western

Palm Warblers were at Socorro 13 May (RV) and Tyrone 28 Apr (JL). Single Blackpoll Warblers were at N.R.T. 13–14 May (JMB, JP, ph. JO) and Socorro 5–9 May (ph. JO, CW, DH, ph. JWS). Black-and-white Warblers were at 11 sites in eight counties from the R.G.V. eastward 25 Apr–25 May; noteworthy for *Guadalupe* were one to 2 at Santa Rosa 26–27 Apr (MH, CR, ph. JO, WW). Single Prothonotary Warblers graced N.R.T. 29–30 May (JP, DH) and Milnesand 28 Apr (W. Kuehn). A Worm-eating Warbler w. to The Catwalk 15 May (ph. D. Muschalek) may represent the first for *Catron*; other singles were at Cerrillos 2 May (ph. JPB), Socorro 3 (GF) & 9–10 May (ph. RD, ph. JO), E.B.L. 14 Apr (ph. DC), and B.L.N.W.R. 2 May (CW et al., ph. JO). Late for the species in New Mexico, a Louisiana Waterthrush was at the Ladder Ranch, *Sierra* 12 May (ph. NH); there are fewer than 20 credible reports for the state. A strong Kentucky Warbler season produced singles at Sumner Dam 2–3 May (MB, NP, JP, ph. JO, ph. JPB), N.R.T. 9 (DK, JP) & 29 May (ph. JO), Socorro 7–9 May (NP, ph. CW, DH, ph. JWS), Water Canyon 2 May (CR), and Silver City 15–16 May (*vide* RS); there are now some 70 state records. Very rare in New Mexico, a male Mourning Warbler was at R.G.N.C. 12 May (CR). Regular in spring, Hooded Warblers appeared in 10 counties 15 Apr–31 May; local firsts were singles in the Datil Mts. 12–13 May (ph. JH), Rio Puerco near Cabezon 16 May (ph. WH), Santa Fe Canyon 31 May (ph. JPB), and Eunice 30 Apr (ph. PM). Overshooting Painted Redstarts were conspicuous at lowland sites, with singles at N.R.T. 17–19 Apr (ph. M. Watson, CR, DH, ph. JO), Socorro 12–19 Apr (J. Bair, ph. JO, ph. NH), San Antonio 9 Apr (*vide* WH), E.B.L. 24 Mar (ph. DC), Las Palomas 12 Apr (ph. MH, RV), and Selden Canyon 9 May (MS). A Red-faced Warbler was a surprise at Percha 14 May (ph. MB). Unexpected on the high plains, but nevertheless providing a welcome state first, a Fan-tailed Warbler entertained dozens at N.R.T. 18–19 May (ph. GF m.ob., ph.). Another e. species making a good showing this spring was Scarlet Tanager, with an ad. female at N.R.T. 1 May (MH), an ad. male there 9 May (JO, DK), and another ad. female there 19 May (WH, DH); elsewhere, an ad. male was at Cedar Crest 4 May (ph. DL).

## SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

For the 2nd consecutive year, Chipping Sparrows seemed determined to breed in the Corrales bosque, where 8 males were singing 30 Apr and a pair was nest-building 3 May (DK). Single Field Sparrows were at Line Tank, Otero Mesa 21 Mar (SW), B.L.N.W.R. 28 Mar (CW,

RV), and Eunice 24-26 Apr (ph. PM); late was one at Boone's Draw 9 May (JP, JO). A singing Black-chinned Sparrow in the Dail Mts. 25 May (JH) provided a local first. Nicely documented was a Baird's Sparrow near Hermanas 14 Mar (ph. CGL). Single red Fox Sparrows were in Cienega Canyon, Sandia Mts. 8 Mar (JP) and Corrales 5 Apr (DK). West and late were single Swamp Sparrows in Guadalupe Canyon 9 May (CR, NM-C, SOW) and Zuni's Blackrock L. 12 May (JT). A Harris's Sparrow at Farmington in Mar was last seen 2 May (ph. TR), and one at Eunice was last seen 24 Apr (ph. PM); a Golden-crowned at La Cieneguilla, Santa Fe 25 Apr (JPB) was the lone report.

Unprecedented numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks flooded the state 24 Apr-29 May, with often multiple reports from some three dozen sites, including w. to McKinley, Cibola, Catron, Grant, and Hidalgo; remarkably early was an imm. male at Waldrop Park 28-29 Mar (RH, ph. MC). A male Northern Cardinal and a male Pyrrhuloxia were singing at a tank in the Little Hatchet Mts. 29 May (SOW); both were historically absent from that range. Very early was a male Lazuli Bunting at Silver City 30 Mar (E. Halbedel, *vide* DB); both Lazuli and Indigo were widespread and numerous from late Apr through May. Four Varied Buntings were in Guadalupe Canyon 9 May (CR, NM-C, SOW),

and at least 2 were in Slaughter Canyon, Carlsbad Caverns N.P. 23-29 May (m.ob.). A male Painted Bunting was n. to Los Alamos 4-5 May (J. Pyle). The only Dickcissels were early singles at Oasis S.P. 9 May (DK) and N.R.T. 15 May (DK). Migrant Bobolinks are irregular in New Mexico, so noteworthy this season were 5 males, one each at Ramah 11 May (JT), La Cieneguilla 7 May (JPB), Manzano 10 May (ph. CW et al.), Santa Rosa 8 May (DK), and N.R.T. 14 May (JP, ph. JO). Two Common Grackles were w. to the Dail Mts. 4 & 10 May (JH). Bronzed Cowbirds were found at multiple locales n. to Buckhorn, Albuquerque, Fort Sumner, and Portales; females identifiable to the e. subspecies were at Albuquerque 30-31 May (ph. J. Joseph, WH), Carrizozo 19 May (ph. JO), and B.L.N.W.R. 21 May (ph. JIS). Early was an ad. male Hooded Oriole at Silver City 19 Mar (ph. C. Adler); noteworthy for *Torrance* was one near Mountainair 8-10 May (ph. D. Jones), and another was n. to Bosque 24 Apr (DL). An early Bullock's Oriole was visiting hummingbird feeders at Carlsbad 29 Mar (SW). Also early was a male Baltimore Oriole singing at Radium Springs 22 Mar (MS, JZ); another male was singing at R.S. 25 May (JP, WW), while undetailed was a male near Cliff 16 May (*vide* RS). Purple Finch is casual in New Mexico, so noteworthy were a young male

singing at Glorieta 9 Mar (ph. JPB) and an ad. male singing at Waldrop Park 28 Mar (RH).

**Initialed observers:** Jonathan P. Batkin, Matt Baumann, David Beatty, James M. Black, Celestyn Brozek, William Cavaliere, David Cleary, Mitch Coker, Alan Craig, Robert Doster, John Douglas, Bernard Foy, Gary Froehlich, David Griffin, Joan Hardie, David Hawksworth, Charles Hayes, Nancy Hetrick, Michael Hilchey, William Howe, Richard Hoyer, David Krueper, Julian Lee, David Ligon, Carroll D. Littlefield, Carl G. Lundblad, Martin MacRoberts, Larry Malone, Curtis Marantz, Pat McCasland, Narca Moore-Craig, James Nelson-Moore, Jerry Oldenettel, John Parmeter, Nicholas Pederson, Timothy Reeves, Christopher Rustay, Jeffrey I. Sanchez, Marcy Scott, John W. Shipman, Roland Shook, Dale Stahlecker, John Trochet, Raymond VanBuskirk, Hira Walker, Richard Webster, Steve West, S. O. Williams, William Wittman, Cole Wolf, James Zabriskie, Barry Zimmer. ☉

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## Arizona



**Mark M. Stevenson** (Non-passerines)  
**Gary H. Rosenberg** (Passerines)

**W**arm and dry were again the watchwords for Arizona, with the southeastern section returning to short-term drought status and much of the rest of the state dry. An unusually strong storm 21-22 May gave an indication of what shorebirds may be passing over undetected, as they were forced down at Willcox. Least Tern appeared destined to be added as a nesting species in the state. Among rarities, a second Sinaloa Wren was found, while the first individual built nests, a Blue Mockingbird lingered, and Rufous-capped Warblers nested.

**Abbreviations:** A.B.C. (Arizona Bird Committee), B.T.A. (Boyce Thompson Arboretum), B.W.D. (Bill Williams Delta, L. Havasu), G.W.R. (Gilbert Water Ranch), H.R.P. (Hassayampa River Preserve), L.C.R.V. (lower Colorado R. valley), Sweetwater (Sweetwater Wetlands, Tucson), Whitewater (Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

During the breeding bird atlas work, Canada Geese were found nesting at a few locations away from the White Mts. For the 2nd consecutive year, Canada Geese nested in the Prescott area, with ads. and downy young seen 13 Apr at Willow L. (MN). Four or five pairs with numerous young were at Many Farms L. 28 May (DS). A Canada Goose was late at Gila Bend 24-31 May (PEL, BC). A drake Eurasian Wigeon at n. L. Havasu 22 May (PEL, BC) was quite late for Arizona. Cinnamon Teal nest in small numbers in Yuma, so a pair with young at Aztec 17 May+ (HD, PEL, BC) was notable. Casual in the L.C.R.V. after mid-Apr, 4 Ring-necked Ducks were at Cibola 21 May (PEL). On the late side, 5 Greater Scaup were at Buenos Aires N.W.R. 23 Apr (R. Palmer, R. Freeman), and 3 were at B.W.D. 25 Apr (JY et al.). A Surf Scoter at B.W.D. 24-26 Apr (JY et al.) was a month late there. A Common Goldeneye at Becker L. 16 Apr (EH) and a Hooded Merganser at Pinetop 8 May (A. & P. Martin) were equally late. Red-breasted Merganser is a ca-



There has been an increase in records of Yellow-throated Warbler in Arizona over the past few years, and spring 2009 produced two records. This individual was along the San Pedro River near Sierra Vista 30 March through 9 (here 3) April. Photograph by Tom Martin.

sual transient away from the Colorado R.; among scattered reports, groups of 9 at Willcox 10 Apr (J&MH), 7 at Prescott 11 Apr (ph. S. Burk), and 4 at Granite Reef 11 Apr (M. Hartley) coincided and stood out.

Decades ago, White-winged Pheasants were released along the upper Gila R. near Duncan and Thatcher-Safford. During the Atlas, pheasants were found near Duncan but not downstream from there. In late May, pheasants were "all over the place" along the Gila R. in the Eden-Fort Thomas area (R. Hunt). Wild Turkeys again appeared out of habitat in se. Arizona, with 11 reported from eight locations in May (m.ob.). Common Loon is a rare transient away from the Colorado R., mostly before mid-Apr. A sick individual was at Gila Bend 9 May (DP), one was found freshly dead on a road at Tacna 23 May (PEL, BC), and one was at Willcox 26 May (N. Hetrick et al.). As last spring, an unexpected large number of Eared Grebes was on L. Havasu in late May, with 310 present 22 May (PEL, BC). Following the rare winter Brown Pelican influx, there were more reports. One continued at Tempe Town L. though 6 Mar (m.ob.), and singles were at Roosevelt L. 12 Mar (J. Wike), above the Rim at Cholla L. 27 Mar (EH), and at San Carlos L. 19 May, where 2 were seen 22 May (PN). Neotropical Cormorants continue to expand their range beyond Patagonia L. and greater Phoenix, though mostly in small numbers. More than 100 were at Gillespie Dam 4 Mar (R. Hoyer), up to 3 wandered around Tucson all season (m.ob.), up to 3 were in Prescott, where accidental, 28-30 Mar (ph. S. & D. Rasmussen), 2 were at B.W.D. 25 Apr (*vide* JY), and singles were e. to Willcox 30 Apr+ (SH) and Benson S.T.P. 14 May+ (DS).

A Little Blue Heron was a good find at G.W.R. 15-18 May (ph. B. Grice, MMO). Cattle Egrets nested again in the Parker Valley,

with an estimated 400 pairs active at the heronry 25 Apr (*vide* JY) and 200 on 21 May (PEL, BC). Still very scarce in the state, a Glossy Ibis was at Avondale 12 Apr (ph., †TC), another ad. was in the Parker Valley 21 May (vt., †PEL; BC), and the same ad. (vt. PEL) plus a first-spring individual and an apparent hybrid *Plegadis* were in the Parker Valley 31 May (†PEL). White-faced Ibis also nested again in the Parker Valley, with a peak nest count of 75 on 31 May (PEL). A Black Vulture was out of range at Agua Caliente, *Mari-copa* 31 May (PEL). A White-tailed Kite reported near Dolan Springs, *Mohave* 11 May (H. Howard, *vide* DD) was far nw. of the species' known range. With only one prior report from *Greenlee*, a pair of Mississippi Kites at Duncan 9 May (PN) was intriguing. They are seldom found away from the San Pedro R. in Arizona. A sparse spring migrant, a Broad-winged Hawk report came from Patagonia 24 May (†J&MH). A pair of Gray Hawks was found again at the species n. extreme in the state, H.R.P. 21 Mar+ (MH), and 2 ads. and a yearling were noted upstream in Wickenburg 9-31 May (TC). An ad. Short-tailed Hawk returned to Barfoot Park, Chiricahua Mts. 14 Apr+ (N. Moore-Craig et al.). In Madera Canyon, where the species was first documented last year, one was seen 14 May (†CC). A Crested Caracara wandered to the Tubac-Carmen area 12-20 Mar (LH, JM, JY), and 2 were in the Santa Cruz Flats 9 May (D. Jenness). A flock of 22 Sandhill Cranes was an unusual sight near Kingman 2 Mar (ph. J. Porter). The lone summering crane was at Luna L. again 26 May (D. Touret).

## SHOREBIRDS THOUGH WOODPECKERS

There was a good showing by Black-bellied Plovers, with individuals at Yuma 16 Apr (HD), Vicksburg 24-26 Apr (ph. AC et al.), and Arlington 30-31 May (CB). Even more notable, single American Golden-Plovers were at Whitewater 4 May (J. Fagan, ph. DS), a different bird there 8 May (ph., †DS), and at Roosevelt L. 16 May (ph. S. Tjotta). A few Snowy Plovers were found setting up territories at Paloma 27 Mar (B. Grossi), the only place in the state that they have nested in recent years. The only migrant Snowy Plovers reported were one at San Carlos L. 24 Apr (PN) and 2 at Prescott 7-9 May (N. Houghton, S. Drown, ph. S. Burk). Nine Semipalmated Plovers were

at Yuma on the locally early date of 15 Apr (HD). Rare n. of the Mogollon Rim, a pair of American Avocets was at Holbrook 10 Apr-2 May (EH), and one behaving territorially at Chinle S.T.P. 28 May (DS) suggested nesting. Whimbrels are rare in most of the state but are known to pass through Yuma in numbers. The highest reported count there this spring was 230 on 16 Apr (HD). Elsewhere, one was at Paloma 26 Apr (K. & C. Radamaker), 3 were at Chandler 9 May (ph. S. Frye), another was at Paloma 9 May (DP), one was at Pintail Slough 15 May (DD), and one was at Paloma 30 May (CB). A Marbled Godwit was late at Aztec 23 May (PEL, BC). A Sanderling along the Agua Fria R., Phoenix 8 May and 2 at Willcox 14-20 May (DS et al.) were good finds, but a strong rain storm on 21 May brought down an impressive 21 at Willcox (T. Godfrey, T. Lenz, C. Wiley). A few reports of Semipalmated Sandpipers were received with details: singles near Arlington 15 Apr (TC), at G.W.R. 9 May (D. Pearson, ph. MMO), and at Gila Bend 23 May (vt. PEL, BC). A Baird's Sandpiper in Marana 23 Mar (ph. AC) was early in se. Arizona. Though generally rare in spring, 6 Baird's were at Paloma 26 Apr (K. & C. Radamaker), and 7 were at Willcox 10 May (DS), along with a scattering at other locations. At Yuma, 2 Dunlins were early migrants 16 Apr (HD). Stilt Sandpiper is a casual spring migrant in the state; 2 at Prescott 7 May (ph. S. Burk) and one at Willcox 13-19 May (R. Wilt, DS) were good finds, but numbers on 21 May at Willcox were off the charts: first 31 were reported (DS), then, as the storm progressed, 120 (T. Godfrey) and finally 310 (T. Lenz, C. Wiley), with 30 remaining the next day (AS). With no prior spring se. Arizona records, a Ruff among the Stilt Sandpipers 21 May was surprising (C. Wiley, ph. T. Lenz). Also impressive in spring, the storm brought down 50 Red-necked Phalaropes 21 May (DS et al.). At Tucson, a Red Phalarope was a good find 23 May (ph. J. McCabe).

At L. Havasu, California Gulls outnumbered Ring-billed 5 to 2 on 22 May (PEL, BC), contrary to published reports. Terns were more numerous than usual this spring. At least 14 Least Terns were reported 5-26 May (m.ob.). At Glendale, two pairs were present and exhibiting courtship behavior 22 May+ (MH; ph. M. Weber, T. Loomis), with one nest confirmed by 30 May (MH). Even with numbers of migrants rising substantially over the past decade, this first Arizona nesting of Least Terns was astounding. Details will be published elsewhere. A Caspian Tern at Imperial Dam 30 May (PEL) was late. Away from the L.C.R.V., 6 other Caspians were reported. Black Terns were seen at Willcox again in



good numbers for spring, with up to 20 reported there 19-20 May and a remarkable 44 there 21 May (DS), with 23 remaining 22 May (AS). Elsewhere, small numbers were seen at multiple locations statewide.

At Slaughter Ranch, 2 Ruddy Ground-Doves continued through 18 Apr (m.ob.). In Avondale, where large numbers have been found in recent years, 11 were seen 13 Mar (TC), with only one found 18 Apr (TC). Rarely reported, a Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl was at Organ Pipe Cactus N.M. 17 Apr (CB). Seldom seen in migration, a Short-eared Owl was high overhead at Sweetwater 28 Mar (ph. S. Pipkin); another was in the White Mts. 27 May (PN), a rather late date. A surprising 8 Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported on Mt. Lemmon 27 May (K. Kamper, *vide* AS). At the Oro Blanco Mine site near California Gulch, a Buff-collared Nightjar was reported 10 May+ (M. Ali et al.). Surprising away from the mts., a Whip-poor-will was seen in daylight at Whitewater 16 May (ph. B. Zimmer). Broad-billed Hummingbirds at the margins of the species' range were along the lower Verde R. 29 Apr (TC), at H.R.P. 9 May (TC), and well n. to Tuzigoot N.M. 21 May (M. Ali). White-eared Hummingbirds returned to Miller Canyon by 18 Apr (K. Krebs), and up to 3 were in Madera Canyon 3 May+ (C. Blouin, G. Bieber, LH). A Berylline Hummingbird in lower Florida Canyon 23 Apr (D. Danforth, †R. Wright) may be the first documented in Pima. In Madera Canyon, a Berylline was present 17 May+ (B. Postmus, ph. G. West), and one arrived in Miller Canyon 27 May+ (D. Pearson, ph. G. Brousard, S. Heini). Lucifer Hummingbirds returned to Ash Canyon 26 Mar+ (M. J. Ballator), and singles were in lower Ramsey Canyon 1-14 Apr (J&MH), at Miller Canyon 7 Apr and 5-20 May (T. Beatty), at Portal 9 Apr (M. Decker), and in Stump Canyon 13 Apr (PS). A Costa's Hummingbird was casual at Prescott 2-22 May (S. Drown, *vide* CST, ph. A. & N. Silacci). Typically elusive, an Eared Quetzal was reported from Echo Canyon, Chiricahua N.M. 31 May (D. LeClair, †A. Demko). A Red-naped Sapsucker was late at Cameron 16-18 May (CL), as was one at Las Cienegas N.C.A. 31 May-1 Jun (K. Kamper).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH PIPITS

A Pacific-slope/Cordilleran Flycatcher along the Santa Cruz R. near Tubac 18 Mar (PC) was very early for a migrant and may have wintered locally. An early Cordilleran Flycatcher was in Marshall Gulch, Santa Catalina Mts. 29 Apr (AS). Buff-breasted Flycatchers have continued to establish themselves in both the Santa Rita and Chiricahua Mts., with several reports from both ranges this spring.

Reports away from normal breeding areas included one in the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve 12 Apr (M. Patten), which represented one of the only reports ever away from the mts. in Arizona, one in Bear Canyon 1-9 May (CC), then Willow Canyon 10 May+ (B. Bickel), establishing only a 2nd recent record from the Santa Catalina Mts., and one out of habitat along Proctor Rd. below Madera Canyon 24 May (R. Palmer). Casual to rare in the state in spring (possibly holdovers from winter), Eastern Phoebe was reported at Muleshoe Ranch 24 Mar (H. Flores, ph. A. Cockman) and at Granite Basin 5-13 Apr (F. Guerrero). Dusky-capped Flycatcher is casual anywhere n. of se. Arizona, so one along Webber Cr., Gila 18 Apr (B. Ison, *vide* J. Estis) and one seen carrying nesting material to a cavity at Aspen Springs, Yavapai 25-31 May (CST, S. & S. Burk) were of interest. Tropical Kingbird is casual in w. Arizona, so one at Ahakhav Tribal Preserve s. of Parker 31 May-1 Jun (vt. PEL) was notable. Thick-billed Kingbirds were found nw. of their breeding areas in the state along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 10-11 May (JY, J. McCabe) and at Catalina S.P. 16 May (D. Smyth, J. Harned). Casual in the state during spring, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at Hereford 29 Apr (ph. J. Woodley). Again this spring, there were no reports of Rose-throated Becard; this species has become very irregular in Arizona.

A singing White-eyed Vireo, casual in the state, was near Sierra Vista 18-19 May (v.r. M. Pretti). Found at a higher elevation than usual, and out of habitat, a Bell's Vireo was at Willow L. 13 Apr (CST). A pair of Gray Vireos nested for the 2nd consecutive year at Molino Basin, Santa Catalina Mts. 23 Apr + (MP, MMS). In recent years, reports of Yellow-throated Vireo have increased, with no fewer than 5 reported this spring: one along South Fork of Cave Cr. Canyon 12 May (†S. Shadick), one at Montezuma Well 19 May-6 Jun (MA; ph. D. Rasmussen), one at Tumacacori 26 May (MA, M. Brooks), one along the San Pedro R. s. of Hwy 90 on 29 May (ph. D. Beaudette), and one at Las Cienegas National Conservation Area 31 May+ (KK, JM; ph., †DS). A late migrant Plumbeous Vireo was at Quigley Wildlife Area near Tacna 31 May (PEL). Early Warbling Vireos were at Mesa 6 Mar (R. Hunt), Patagonia L. 8-9 Mar (RH), at Yuma 9 Mar (A. & H. Borgart), and at Tucson



Though the species has nested several times in Arizona, Streak-backed Oriole appears less than annually in the state. This male visited a feeder in Stump Canyon, Huachuca Mountains 1 May 2009. Photograph by Pete Sockness.

10 Mar (MMS, MP). Red-eyed Vireo is a species that is rare to casual in the state; this spring, one was at Cameron 16-18 May (J. Logan, T. Linda, †CL), and another was near Wellton 22 May (†PEL, †BC).

At least 2 Tree Swallows were at Crescent L., Apache 26 May (DS), and another 8 were at nearby Sunrise L., also 26 May (DS); this species has been confirmed as a scarce breeder at the higher elevations across n. Arizona. The Sinaloa Wren that was discovered in the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve in Aug 2008 remained there throughout the spring and built two nests in May (MB, RB). Astounding was the discovery of another Sinaloa Wren in lower Huachuca Canyon on Fort Huachuca 14-18 Apr (†DT; vt. R&RT; ph. LH); this will likely represent a 2nd record for Arizona and the United States, remarkably soon after the first! At least 7 Winter Wrens were reported during Mar and Apr, all apparently "western" birds. Two Marsh Wrens at the Cameron seep 18 May (CL) were late for Arizona away from confirmed breeding areas in the state along the L.C.R.V. Black-capped Gnatcatchers are (for now) well established at a number of locations in canyons in se. Arizona, including Proctor Rd., Montosa Canyon, lower Florida Canyon, Sonoita Cr., California Gulch, and Guadalupe Canyon. Two pairs found this spring in Chino Canyon 29 Apr (ph., †DS; MP) and a single in Sycamore Canyon 25 May (ph., †JY, JM) were all at locations where this species had nested in the past but not recently.

Eastern Bluebird has a limited breeding range in Arizona, mainly in the Huachuca Mts, and near Patagonia, but the species has occasionally been found elsewhere, such as in the Chiricahua and Santa Catalina Mts. This

spring, there appeared to be a small incursion into se. Arizona, with 2 continuing at Slaughter Ranch 1-13 Mar (RH), at least one in Box Canyon 4 Mar (DT), 5 in Gardner Canyon 28 Mar (AS), and one along Proctor Rd. below Madera Canyon 30 Mar (CC), with 2 there 21 Apr (DS). Quite interesting was a Townsend's Solitaire in Madera Canyon 28 May (ph. PK); this species does not breed in se. Arizona and rarely lingers this late into spring anywhere below the Mogollon Rim. Swainson's Thrush is a regular spring migrant in se. Arizona, but an estimate of at least 100 (based on netted and calling birds) in and around Florida Canyon 5 May (WR) suggests this species is sometimes quite common. A Rufous-backed Robin was discovered at Muleshoe Ranch 19 Mar-14 Apr (PS), while another was reported in Catalina 27 Apr (M. Weinhold); although this species has proven to be a rare to casual fall and winter visitor, there have been very few spring reports. A very late American Robin was at Agua Caliente, e. Yuma 31 May-3 Jun (vt. PEL). The Varied Thrush discovered during the winter season at Granite Basin was present through at least 9 Apr (F. Guerrero), while another was found at Mingus Mt., Yavapai 7 Apr (D. Moll).

A Gray Catbird at San Bernardino N.W.R. 25 Mar (REW) was away from known breeding areas in the state. The Brown Thrasher discovered in Prescott in Nov was present until 23 Apr (ph. D. & A. Manburg), while the B.T.A. individual was last seen 19 Apr (CST). Elsewhere, Brown Thrashers were in Montosa Canyon 25 Apr (R. Wright), in Flagstaff 13 May (J. Logan), and in Phoenix 17 May (CB). The Blue Mockingbird found at Slaughter Ranch in Feb, which established the 3rd accepted Arizona record, was reported until 2 May (m.ob.) Reports of another individual during Apr were unsubstantiated. An American Pipit at G.W.R. 9 May was very late (MMo).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

An Olive Warbler reported in the Hualapai Mts. outside Kingman 14 May (P. Mackesey) represented the first report from this mountain range; confirmation would be useful. A Blue-winged Warbler, casual in Arizona, was reported from Whitewater 20 May (†T. Lenz; C. Wiley). Also casual in the state in spring, a Golden-winged Warbler was reported from Patagonia 18 May (RB). A singing Tennessee Warbler was at Granite Cr. 16 May (CST). A Virginia's Warbler at Sweetwater 16 Mar was very early (JBo). Further evidence that Lucy's Warbler has been expanding its range into ne. Arizona was provided by reports of one from Holbrook 16 Apr (EH) and at least three pairs

at Chinle 28 May (DS). An outstanding discovery was a Crescent-chested Warbler in Pinery Canyon, Chiricahua Mts. 13-16 May (S. Shadick et al.; ph. REW; †CW); there are 10 previously accepted Arizona records. Single Yellow Warblers at Sweetwater 6 Mar (JBo) and along the Santa Cruz R. in Tucson 10 Mar (MMS) were early migrants. An ad. female Chestnut-sided Warbler in Scottsdale 23 May (H. Bond) marked the first spring report for *Maricopa*. Casual in the state, and even less frequently reported in spring, Magnolia Warblers were at Wenima W.A. 16 May (D. Roten) and at San Simon Cienega 20 May (†REW). Seldom reported in spring, a male Black-throated Blue Warbler was at Granite Dells 21 Apr (ph. S. & S. Burk). The Black-throated Green Warbler that was in Garden Canyon in Jan was reported again 24-25 Mar (RH et al.; ph M. Skinner, M. Tingley). A migrant Hermit Warbler at Yuma 15 Apr (M. Marsden) was considered early there. Two different Yellow-throated Warblers were well documented this spring, one in Portal 23 Mar-1 May (D. Jasper; †O. Harbor; ph., †JY; RAR) and another along the San Pedro R. near Hwy. 90 between 30 Mar and 9 Apr (T. Paprocki; vt. R&RT; ph. T. Martin); this species is still considered casual in the state. The Grace's Warbler × Yellow-rumped Warbler hybrid that was discovered in Prescott last spring returned 4-25 May (CST). A Pine Warbler was reported in Madera Canyon 6 Mar (†J. Kellerman), and a Palm Warbler was at Slaughter Ranch 26 Apr (†V. Dern, C. Crowley); both species are casual to rare in Arizona. In the rare-but-regular category, the following warblers were seen: 6 Northern Parulas, 6 Black-and-whites, 5 American Redstarts, one Prothonotary, 3 Worm-eatings, 6 Ovenbirds, 19 Northern Waterthrushes, 2 Kentuckies, and at least 8 Hoodeds. The pair of Rufous-capped Warblers found in Florida Canyon in Dec were present all season; the pair was seen gathering nesting material by 16 Mar (ph. S. Hagen), and an occupied nest was discovered 15-25 May (ph. W. Cady, B. Woodruff; ph. J. Hully).

Casual in the spring, a female Scarlet Tanager was near Wellton 30 May (†PEL), but even more astounding was a male tanager, apparently a Scarlet Tanager × Summer Tanager hybrid, along the San Pedro R. at San Manuel 14-16 May (ph. J. Doschka), a virtually unknown cross. The Madera Canyon male Flame-colored Tanager returned for another year 30 Apr+ (C. Lansky; ph. G. Hallgren). Another male Flame-colored Tanager was located in Miller Canyon 27-28 May (ph. C. Robson; ph., †S. Heintl); apart from the long-returning Madera male, this species remains a casual visitor from Mexico.

A responsive Botteri's Sparrow near Patagonia L. 18 Apr (JY, ph. A. Cunniffe) made one of the earliest spring reports for the state. One of the more remarkable reports of the spring was a Five-striped Sparrow found in an Ash Canyon yard 16 May (ph. T. Mouras); we believe this is perhaps the 2nd "migrant" Five-striped ever seen in the state away from known or potential nesting areas and a first for *Cochise*. Single Clay-colored Sparrows, rare in the state, particularly in spring, were at San Bernardino N.W.R. 7 May (REW) and near Poston 22 May (PEL, BC). A Swamp Sparrow lingered late at San Bernardino N.W.R. 30 Apr (REW). No fewer than 12 different White-throated Sparrows were reported, a greater-than-usual number for spring. The change in the Arizona status of Rose-breasted Grosbeak over the past decade has been very noticeable, seemingly increasing each spring; this season, nearly 40 were reported statewide. Similarly, the number of Indigo Buntings reported this spring was impressive, with more than 40 from across the state, a much larger number than usual. A Brewer's Blackbird at Imperial Dam 24 May (vt. PEL; BC) was late for s. Arizona. The Orchard Oriole that was found at Sweetwater during the winter was seen sporadically through 14 Apr (WR). Casual in the state, a male Streak-backed Oriole was in Stump Canyon, Huachuca Mts. 1 May (PS, ph. L. Sockness). We received a few reports of Red Crossbills from Slate Creek Divide and the Pinal Mts. this spring, outside areas of usual occurrence. Small numbers of Pine Siskins lingered at scattered lowland locations into late May.

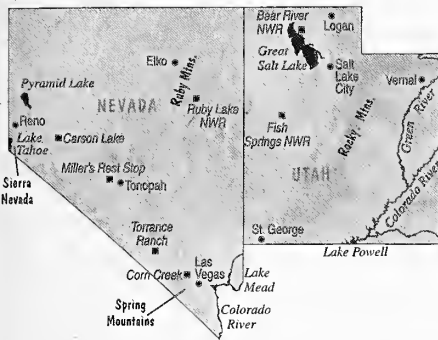
Cited observers: Moez Ali, Charles Babbitt, Robin Baxter, Jerry Bock (JBo), Matt Brown, Barbara Carlson, Cliff Cathers, Andrew Core, Troy Corman, Dee Dee DeLorenzo, Henry Dettwiler, Laurens Halsey, Stuart Healy, Melanie Herring, John & Marty Hirth, Eric Hough, Rich Hoyer, Keith Kamper, Philip Kline, Chuck LaRue, Paul E. Lehman, Jake Mohlmann, Michael Moore (MMo), Michael Nicosia, Phil Norton, Molly Pollock, Dave Powell, Rose Ann Rowlett (RAR), Will Russell, Adam Sabatine, Pete Sockness, Dave Stejskal, Mark M. Stevenson, Rick & Ricki Thompson, Carl S. Tomoff (Prescott), Diane Touret, Richard E. Webster, Chris West, Janet Weitzman (Maricopa), John Yerger (Tucson). ☺

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## Rick Fridell

It was an exceptional spring in the Great Basin, with mild temperatures and well-timed rainfall throughout most of the Region. The White-winged Crossbill irruption observed during the winter season continued through the spring, with large crossbill flocks remaining in northern Utah. Large flocks of other mountain finch species, including Cassin's Finch, Pine Siskin, and Red Crossbill, were observed at low-elevation areas. Late spring brought Nevada's first documented Glossy Ibis. Additional Nevada highlights included Harris's Hawk, Canada Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Orchard Oriole. Utah highlights were led by a striking Yellow-billed Loon and the state's third documented record of Neotropic Cormorant.

Abbreviations: Antelope Island (Antelope Island S.P. and Causeway, Davis, UT); Ash Meadows (Ash Meadows N.W.R., Nye, NV); Bear R. (Bear R. Migratory Bird Refuge, Box Elder, UT); Corn Cr. (Corn Creek Unit, Desert N.W.R., Clark, NV); Farmington Bay (Farmington Bay W.M.A., Davis, UT); H.B.V.P. (Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, Clark, NV); L. Mead (Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Clark, NV); Lytle (Lytle Ranch Preserve, Washington, UT); Miller's R.A. (Miller's Rest Area, Esmeralda, NV); Ouray (Ouray N.W.R., Uintah, UT); Pahrnagat (Pahrnagat N.W.R., Lincoln, NV); Red Hills (Red Hills G.C., St. George, Washington, UT); Zion (Zion N.P., Washington, UT).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH VULTURES

A Greater White-fronted Goose was reported from seldom-birded Torrey, Piute, UT 21 Mar (BO). Several Eurasian Wigeons were found in the Region, including drakes remaining from the winter at Hurricane, Washington, UT through 15 Mar (ph. RF et al.) and at Lemmon Valley, Washoe, NV through 11 Mar (AQ et al.). Additional drakes were found at Farmington Bay 14-25 Mar (PF et al.) and 25 Apr (J&KB), H.B.V.P. 24-30 May (ph. GV, JBr, ph.

MM), and Desert Ranch, Rich, UT 30 May (MS et al.). A male duck, apparently a Mexican Duck × Mallard intergrade, was photographed paired with a typical female Mallard in the Washington Fields, Washington, UT 21 Apr (†RF). A late male Greater Scaup and a late Common Goldeneye were at H.B.V.P. 25 May (MM, RM). Two White-winged Scoters were an unexpected find 25 May-14 Jun at Walker L., Mineral, NV (GS, RS, DG). Long-tailed Ducks were reported from H.B.V.P. 29 Mar-23 Apr (GV, JBr, ph. JH) and Walker L., Mineral, NV 25 May (ph. GS).

A juv. Yellow-billed Loon, first discovered 27 Dec, remained at Sparks Marina, Washoe, NV through 6 Mar (FP), and a breeding-plumaged Yellow-billed was photographed at Rockport S.P., Summit, UT 17-18 May (ph. TA; ph., †MMo, ph. KV). A Horned Grebe made a rare Esmeralda, NV appearance 3-4 May (GS). Red-necked Grebes were observed at Bear R. 7-12 May (†BOL, ph. BB, JC) and at South Fork Res., Elko, NV 10 May (†MM). Two Neotropic Cormorants photographed at Ivins Res., Washington, UT 29 May+ (ph., †RF) furnished Utah's 3rd documented record of this species. Green Herons were found n. of expected range at Pineview Res., Weber, UT 18 May (KP et al.) and Logan Riv., Cache, UT 25 May (ph. CF). Glossy Ibis reports continue to increase in Utah, with 5 reported this spring. The first for Washington was photographed in the Washington Fields 20-21 Apr (ph., †RF et al.). Two were also observed at Bear R. 24 Apr (ph., †JBi et al.), and singles were found at Farmington Bay 24-25 Apr (ph. JBi, ph. TF) and Lincoln Beach, Utah L., Utah 27 Apr (BS). Nevada's first documented Glossy Ibis was also found this spring at Pahrnagat 24 May-7 Jun (ph. GS, ph. CL, SSk, DG, RS, m.ob.). White-faced Ibis × Glossy Ibis hybrids were photographed in the Washington Fields, Washington, UT 21 Apr (RF) and at Bear R. 27 Apr (PH).

## HAWKS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Up to 3 White-tailed Kites continued at Pahrnagat 29 Mar+ (SC, CL et al.). A Red-

shouldered Hawk, found 16 Dec, lingered at St. George, Washington, UT through 15 Mar (TA, RF), and the season's only Broad-winged Hawk was reported from Moapa, Clark, NV 26 May (DW). A Zone-tailed Hawk was photographed at Overton W.M.A., Clark, NV 27 Mar (ph. CL). The raptor of the season was a Harris's Hawk photographed near Rachel, Lincoln, NV 24 May (ph. GS, MM). Yuma Clapper Rails were found at Overton W.M.A., Clark, NV 12-18 Apr (GS, CL), and up to 7 Clappers were documented at various Ash Meadow locations between 22 Apr and 21 May (†CL). A pair of Sandhill Cranes made a rare Iron, UT appearance in Cedar Valley 25 Apr (S&VH).



Glossy Ibis sightings have continued to increase in Utah, following the first confirmed record in summer 2006. In spring 2009, there were five reports between 20 and 27 April, including this individual photographed 22 April in the Washington Fields, Washington County. Photograph by Rick Fridell.



A first for southern Nevada, and third overall in the state, this third-cycle Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Boulder Beach, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Clark County from 28 February (here) through 5 March 2009. Photograph by Carolyn Titus.

It was a below-average spring for rare shorebird sightings in the Great Basin, but there were a few noteworthy reports. Whimbrels were reported from Fallon, Churchill, NV 19 Apr (GS), the Great Salt L., Salt Lake, UT 14-15 May (AN, PF), Pelican L., Uintah, UT 18 May (BM), Arlemont Ranch, Esmeral-



This first-cycle dark-backed gull was observed at Sand Hollow State Park, Washington County, Utah on 22 May 2009. Although the gull possessed several characters consistent with Kelp Gull, most experts leaned toward the Lesser Black-backed Gull group, possibly a bird of the Asian taxon *heuglimi*. Photographs by Rick Fridell.

da, NV 23 May (MM, GS), and Pahrnagat 24 May (JC, RSc et al.). A Ruddy Turnstone was a nice find at Antelope I. 14-17 May (MS et al.), and 20+ Red Knots were present there 1-14 May (ph. JBi, MS, et al.). A somewhat early Semipalmated Sandpiper was photographed at Antelope I. 26 Apr (ph. PH).



This stunning male Scarlet Tanager visited Miller's Rest Area in Esmeralda County, Nevada from 22-26 (here 25) May 2009. Miller's Rest Area, located along Highway 6/95, west of Tonopah, is famous for producing large numbers of migrants and some exceptional vagrants. Photograph by Greg Scyphers.

Two White-rumped Sandpipers were reported from Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT 31 May (MS et al.). Stilt Sandpipers were observed at Delta, Millard, UT 25 Apr (LG et al.), Arlemont Ranch, Esmeralda, NV 16 May (ph. GS, MM), and Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT 25 May (MS et al.).

An ad. Heermann's Gull was photographed at Virginia L., Reno, Washoe, NV 26 Apr (ph. FP), and a first-cycle Mew Gull lingered there

26 Apr-2 May (ph. GS, ph. FP, ph. MM). A Lesser Black-backed Gull, found 28 Feb, remained through 5 Mar at Boulder Beach, L. Mead (JCl, ph. CT, TK, RSc). Another ad. Lesser Black-backed was at Ash Meadows 13 Mar (ph. CL), and a first-cycle bird was at Sand Hollow S.P., Washington, UT 22 May (ph. RF, RD, KC). Glaucous-winged Gulls in Washoe, NV lingered at Virginia L. 5-26 Apr (FP, MM) and at Sparks Marina 16-24 Apr (MM, FP). Least Terns were reported from Carson L., Churchill, NV 10 May (DM) and Duck Creek Wetlands, Clark, NV 29 May (†TAI). Vagrant White-winged Doves were found n. of their expected Utah range near Lynndyl, Millard 24 Apr (DA), Dugway, Juab 26 Apr (CZ), Provo, Utah 23 May (BMA), and at Fish Springs N.W.R., Juab 30-31 May (C&TN). An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was photographed at Lytle 14 Mar (ph. TA).

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

The only Least Flycatcher reported in the Region was at Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT 31 May (MS et al.). Eastern Phoebes were photographed at Ash Meadows 2 Apr (CL) and Corn Cr. 25 Apr (NS). Vagrant Eastern Kingbirds were found at Miller's R.A. 23-30 May (GS et al.) and Ivins Res., Washington, UT 29 May (RF). Singing Red-eyed Vireos were at Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT 28 May (MS) and Lytle 30 May (LT). A Purple Martin was seen flying over Overton W.M.A., Clark, NV 8 May (CL). A cooperative female Varied Thrush lingered at Garr Ranch, Antelope I. throughout Mar (J&KB et al.). A Brown Thrasher was found 23 May at Pahrnagat (GS, CL, DG, SSk, RS).

Northern Parula reports included males at Burrison Ponds, Utah, UT 18 May (DH, ph. AJ), near Beatty, Nye, NV 21 May (ph. LC), and at Floyd Lamb Park, Las Vegas, Clark, NV 23 May (JS), and a female at Dyer, Esmeralda,

NV 25 May (GS). The only Chestnut-sided Warbler report this season was from Calf Creek Recreation Area, Garfield, UT 22 May (†MMo, M&JL). Magnolia Warblers were found at Dyer, Esmeralda, NV 23 May (GS), Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT 24-29 May (ph. MS, HW), and Fish Springs N.W.R., Juab, UT 31 May (ph., †C&TN). Unexpectedly high numbers of Myrtle Warblers were reported this spring, particularly at lowland Nevada locations. Blackpoll Warblers were found at Fallon, Churchill, NV 23 May (ph. KF) and Pahrnagat 31 May (GS). Female Black-and-white Warblers were seen at Arlemont Ranch, Esmeralda, NV 16 May (GS, MM) and at Pahrnagat 31 May (GS). American Redstarts were reported between 12 and 30 May in Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye, and Pershing, NV (CL, MM, GS) and Box Elder, Iron, and Washington, UT (SH, LT, C&TN). A Worm-eating Warbler visited Arlemont Ranch, Esmeralda, NV 3-4 May (ph. GS, ph. MM). The only Ovenbird of the season was found 9 May at the Circle L Ranch, Esmeralda, NV (GS). Twelve Northern Waterthrushes were observed between 2 and 25 May in Esmeralda, NV (FP, GS, MM) and Rich, Utah, and Washington, UT (BS, TA, JBi, MS). Surprisingly, 2 Kentucky Warblers were found on 30 May in Esmeralda, NV, the first was photographed at Sage Hen Rd., Dyer (GS) and the other a short time later at Dyer Pond (GS). Hooded Warblers sightings included a female 23 May at Arlemont Ranch, Esmeralda, NV (MM, GS, DG) and a male 25 May at Ash Meadows (ph. CL). A cooperative Canada Warbler was photographed at Parker Ranch, Nye, NV 30 May (ph. LC). Painted Redstart observations included singing males in Snow Canyon S.P., Washington, UT 20 Mar (K&HR), at Floyd Lamb Park, Las Vegas, Clark, NV 5-9 Apr (ph., †CL, et al.), and at Corn Cr. 25-28 Apr (NS, ph. BG). Painted Redstarts were also



One of two adult male Orchard Orioles observed in Nevada, this bird visited Miller's Rest Area in Esmeralda County 22 (here) and 23 May 2009. There are two previous records accepted by the Nevada Bird Records Committee. Photograph by Martin Meyers.

found again this spring along the Virgin R. in Zion N.P., Washington, UT (RF, KC).

Summer Tanagers were found outside of expected areas at Elko, Elko, NV 29 Apr (CD), Fish Springs N.W.R., Juab, UT 23 May (JB), Ogden, Weber, UT 30 May (KP), and Dyer Pond, Esmeralda, NV 30 May (GS). One of the highlights of the season was a striking male Scarlet Tanager at Miller's R.A. 22-26 May (ph. CL, SSk, ph. MM et al.).

### SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

A female Lark Bunting was found 23 May at the Arlemont Ranch, Esmeralda, NV (MM, CL et al.). Grasshopper Sparrows turned up at some surprising Utah locations this spring, including the Provo Airport Dike, Utah 21 Apr (JK), Red Butte Gardens, Salt Lake 28 Apr (PHi), and Amalga Barrens, Cache 1 May (CF). A Swamp Sparrow was a nice find at Dyer, Esmeralda, NV 9 May (ph. GS). White-throated Sparrows were observed at the Provo Airport Dike, Utah, UT 19 Apr (KM) and Dyer, Esmeralda, NV 9 May (GS), and Harris' Sparrows were found at the Jordan River Parkway, Salt Lake, UT 11-19 Apr (ph. AR et al.) and Draper, Salt Lake, UT 12 Apr-3 May (ph. CM). It was an exceptional spring for Rose-breasted Grosbeaks with sightings throughout the Great Basin. Eighteen grosbeaks were documented between 2 and 31 May, with observations from Churchill, Clark, Esmeralda, and Lincoln, NV and Kane, Millard, Salt Lake, Washington, and Weber, UT. A male Painted Bunting visited a Salt L., Salt Lake, UT feeder 30 Apr-2 May (ph. JM, JBi et al.). Male Bobolinks were observed at Miller's R.A. 22 May (MM) and Highland Park, Tonopah, Nye, NV 23 May (MM, GS). Common Grackles continued from the winter season at Floyd Lamb Park, Las Vegas, Clark, NV through 8 Apr (MM). A vagrant Common

Grackle was also observed at Oak City, Millard, UT 10 May (DA). Male Orchard Orioles were documented at Fallon, Churchill, NV 21-22 May (ph. CA, MM et al.) and at Miller's R.A. 22-23 May (ph. CL, SSk, MM et al.). The incredible winter White-winged Crossbill irruption continued into the spring, with large flocks of crossbills remaining through late May in the n. Utah mts., primarily in Cache, Davis, Morgan, Salt Lake, Summit, Utah, Wasatch, and Weber. The 3 White-winged Crossbills found during the winter remained at the Elko Cemetery,

Elko, NV 31 May+ (L&MP, JBr et al.).

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## A Birder's Guide to the Texas Coast



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## The Tobish

More than most years, spring 2008 was clearly a tale of two different seasons, punctuated at each end by weather extremes. The season started with cool and inclement conditions and a slow-melting, heavy winter snowpack that persisted well into early May, at which time the weather abruptly turned mild and unseasonably warm through the period. The suite of typical early season migrants were late across the board, especially throughout the North Gulf, while species that typically arrive in May were right on time. Interior migrants were mostly on average schedules. Coverage of the Bering Sea periphery and island outposts was subpar this year, as were the resultant finds from those sites where high-pressure systems or a northerly flow may have impeded Asian migrants and vagrants. Exciting results came in from a series of late winter Bering Sea pelagic transects, which always produce fascinating reports, this year highlighted by rare alcids.

This season continues what I consider a negative trend in field ornithological reporting, with many observers content to assume that listserve postings constitute formal submissions of records. Unless there are web links to photographs or substantiating details of rarities noted from these sites, I tend not to include such records. Observers should always submit reports to regional editor or subregional editors or the Alaska Checklist Committee. The ideal report format is in Microsoft Word.

Abbreviations: A.B.O. (Alaska B.O., Fairbanks); North Gulf (North Gulf of Alaska); Referenced details, specimens, photographs, videotape, and audiotape are on file at the University of Alaska Museum.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH LOONS

A single Tundra Bean-Goose on the runway apron on Adak 6 May (IH) established a new

record-early arrival date. Two other fly-by Tundras were noted in the same area on 21 May (IH). Another goose on Adak 18 May appeared to be a Taiga Bean-Goose (IH) and follows a recent fall report from Shemya. Mid-Apr produced a strong goose passage through Alaska's Southeast, highlighted by above-average concentrations of Greater White-fronted Geese and Cackling Geese from

Ketchikan to Sitka and other sites farther north. Five thousand Greater-White-fronteds were counted in 2.5 hours, and a constant passage of flocks was noted all day, at Ketchikan 21 Apr (AWP, SCH), while 1000+ Cackling Geese (mostly *minima*) made a great showing for that subspecies, also at Ketchikan 25 Apr (AWP, SCH, JHL, ph.). A flight of mixed goose flocks in Ketchikan 25 Apr (SCH, †AWP) included a Ross's Goose, which is casual in the Region, with four prior Southeast records. A family group of 5 Trumpeter Swans was seen offshore at Kodiak 3 & 22 Mar (RAM, RLS), where the species has become increasingly regular in recent years. Another family group of swans, this time Whooper Swans from Asia, arrived at Adak's L. Andrew 27 Feb and remained there through 6 Mar,

past decade, where it is now annual in fall, winter, or spring. A pair of Falcated Ducks visited Adak 27 May–3 Jun (IH), typical of their intermittent showings in the cen. and w. Aleutians, mostly in late May. Of the usual scattering of Eurasian Wigeon reports away from the regular Bering Sea periphery, the season's peak count was a group of 8 in Homer's Beluga Slough 17 Apr (AL). A Cinnamon Teal pair that arrived after the push of regular Interior dabbling ducks at an Alaska Hwy. pond (MP 1330) 14-15 May (JR, NH, LD, ph.) was casual for the e. Interior, where there are few records. Cinnamon Teal made a good showing in Southeast, where spring overshoots are now expected, with 2 males in Juneau 29 Apr–30 May (m.ob.), a pair in Kake 23-23 May (CS), and a male in Gustavus 26 May (NKD). A male Eurasian Teal was at Sitka 25 Apr (JB-P). *Aythya* ducks were widely reported in Southeast, where they generally occur in low numbers, highlighted by 7 Canvasbacks in Juneau 29 Apr (MW), a Redhead at Juneau 26 Apr (DWS) and 2 at Gustavus 7-21 May (NKD), and up to 17 Ring-necked Ducks at Gustavus 7 May (NKD). A drake Ring-necked Duck at Kodiak 17 Apr (RAM) was considered that site's first spring migrant ever but could have wintered there. Two pairs of Common Pochards on Attu 13 May (DWS, JW) and another pair to the e. at Adak 6-13 May (ph. IH) were the season's lone reports. Tufted Ducks



Now annual in Alaska's Southeast, this drake Wood Duck lingered on Ketchikan's Ward Lake 11-24 (here 14) April 2009. Photograph by James H. Lewis.

while another group of 3 ads. and 3 imms. was at the same lake 12 Apr (ph. IH); in Alaska, the species is known in winter mostly from the cen. Aleutians.

Single drake Wood Ducks appeared at Ketchikan's Ward L. 11-24 Apr (JFK, TLG, JHL, ph.) and n. at Wrangell 30 Apr (RC). This formerly casual visitor is occurring with increasing frequency in Southeast over the

were nicely spread in average numbers in the Aleutians early in the season, highlighted by a pair at Unalaska I. in the e. Aleutians 23 Apr (AL), where they are occasional. A male Tufted Duck in Kodiak's Womens Bay 15-16 May (RAM) was likely a westbound migrant or holdover from some North Gulf coastal wintering site. Lesser Scaup reached Bering Sea islands in decent numbers, with highlights in-



In Alaska, many of the gulls resembling Western Gulls that are found in the Southeast exhibit signs of hybridization with Glaucous-winged Gull, but this bird at Sitka 31 March 2009 (and later) had a chrome-yellow bill, very dark mantle, and solid black outer primaries. Photograph by Matt R. Goff.

cluding a male at Dutch Harbor, Unalaska I. 4 May (ph. AL), 2 at Adak 18 May (Wilderness Birding), and a female on St. Paul I. 22 May (Wilderness Birding). Attesting to the late season were aggregations of thousands of Long-tailed Ducks inshore at Glacier Bay N.M. 11-18 (NKD), where most typically depart winter sites by the third week of Apr. On Attu, 4 Smews were noted 13 May, with at least one lingering through the 19th (DWS, JW).

Aleutian Arctic Loon reports included one at Attu 14-17 May (DWS, JW), 2 at Adak 17 May (Wilderness Birding), and a very few for the season from the Point at Gambell. Although annual mainly in migration and winter in small numbers, up to 9 Yellow-billed Loons in Glacier Bay 13-22 May (NKD) was considered exceptional for Southeast. A lone Western Grebe n. of Juneau in Berner's Bay 2 May (RJG) was late and n. of the normal Alaska distribution of wintering birds, in Southeast s. of Sumner Strait.

## ALBATROSS THROUGH ALCIDS

Early Laysan Albatross reports were widespread and in strong numbers, highlighted by 2 on the Fairweather Grounds in the e. Gulf 27 May+ (ph. JB-P), where they are rare in very small numbers, and a concentration of 100+ birds from Amutka Pass in the e. Aleutians 25 Apr (AL). Laysans have shown a dramatic increase in the past 25 years in Alaska waters. Unprecedented were several Mottled Petrels in Apr, with 2 in Amutka Pass on 25 Apr (AL) and another farther n. in the s. Bering Sea at 55° N two days later (AL). These are apparently the Region's earliest records for this uncommon summer visitor, perhaps by up to three weeks; most begin to arrive in late May, coincident with warming sea surface temperatures in the North Pacific. Details supported another sighting of 2 Manx Shearwaters at the Fairweather Grounds 31 May (†JB-

P). This species is now nearly annual somewhere in North Gulf waters. Single Leach's Storm-Petrels were notably early in the s. Bering Sea in the vicinity of Bering Canyon 26 & 27 Apr (AL).

Up to 10 Great Blue Herons at Kodiak into early May (DH, RAM) was the archipelago's largest assemblage of local wintering birds; they were likely headed eastward to Alaskan breeding areas. Great Blues reach their extreme w. winter limits each year at Kodiak. A Great Blue in the e. Interior at Quartz L. near Delta Junction

19-20 May (SG, ph. LD, *vide* ND), one of very few Interior records, was probably an overshooting migrant. It was a quiet raptor season, with few concentrations or highlights, although consistent coverage at the now popular Sheep Mt. hawkwatch up the Glenn Hwy. from Palmer produced fine counts. Notable otherwise was a lone female Northern Harrier headed northward into headwinds over pelagic waters 141 km w. of Unimak I. 3 May (ph. AL). Gibson and Byrd (2007. *Birds of the Aleutian Islands, Alaska*) describe harriers as "probably casual or intermittent" in the e. Aleutians. Single dark-morph Harlan's Hawks were located at Juneau 14 Apr (ph. GVV) and in Ketchikan 22 Apr (AWP, SCH); the subspecies is very rare in Southeast, and there is only one previous Ketchikan area report. A Golden Eagle was rare offshore in Southeast at Sitka 29 Apr-9 May (MH, MLW, MET).

A Sora was at Juneau's Pioneer Marsh 7 May (ph. GVV), and up to 3 could be found later through the period, in the same site where locals documented nesting in 2007. Sora is a rare migrant, local summer visitant, and occasional breeder in mainland Southeast. Probably mostly related to weather systems, the season produced a fairly average shorebird migration, with just a scattering of rarities. Normal small numbers of Pacific Golden-Plovers were noted in Southeast late Apr-mid-May at Gustavus, Juneau, and Ketchikan, with peaks of 5 at Juneau 26 Apr (ph. MWS) and 6 in Gustavus 10 May (ph. NKD). One near Tok 9 May (ph. PK) marked the Interior's first spring record and one of few ever for this subregion. Reports of Asian shorebirds were average and mostly confined to the 3rd week in May: a Common Sandpiper at St. Paul I. 21-22 May (St. Paul Tours, AL); a Green Sandpiper at Gambell 22-

23 May (High Lonsome Tours, ph. DM); multiple Common Greenshank reports, including up to 4 on St. Paul I. 20 May+ (St. Paul Tour, ph. AL); decent Wood Sandpiper numbers, mostly from one storm system in the Aleutians, with peak counts of 5 at Adak 20-21 May (AL) and 15 on Attu 18 May (DWS, JW), plus one on the Mainland, where there few records, near Pilgrim Hot Springs, inland from Nome 29 May (ph. GV); 2, then 3 Black-tailed Godwits on Adak 21-29 May (ph. AL, IH) and another on St. Paul I. 21 May+ (St. Paul Tours, ph. AL); a casual Long-toed Stint on Adak 19-20 May (†AL); and up to 7 Common Snipe for the season at St. Paul 22-28 May (St. Paul Tours) and one on Adak 15 May (Wilderness Birding, ph. AL), where rare.

Gambell birders found a Spotted Sandpiper 5 Jun (WINGS, †CC), a St. Lawrence I. first and one of few from the Bering Sea islands. Also noteworthy out in the Bering Sea was a Greater Yellowlegs on St. Paul I. 22-23 May (AL). In the same vein and essentially unknown w. of the e. Aleutians was a lone Least Sandpiper documented on Adak 19 May (Wilderness Birding, ph. AL). Five Bristle-thighed Curlews counted at St. Paul I. was a good count in the typical migrant window there 17 May (St. Paul Tours). The spring season's biggest concentrations of shorebirds that favor rocky habitats typically materialize in s.



This Black-backed Woodpecker at the end of the North Douglas Highway near Juneau 13 April 2009 was the first to be documented in Alaska's Southeast since 1920. Photograph by Paul M. Suchanek.

Prince William Sound and a few other outer coastal sites. This year's flock of 800 Black Turnstones at Ketchikan 3 May (SCH) was unusual and furnished that locale's new record high tally; the 3500 Surfbirds at Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands 8 May (RJG) was equally impressive. Six Semipalmated Sandpipers at the Ketchikan airport's shorebird draw 17 May (SCH) provided a new local spring maximum where this species is rare, with most spring records coming from the n. end of Southeast. The regular spring sandpiper flocks seemed



Prior to 1995, there were three Black-headed Grosbeak records for Alaska. This individual, photographed at Wrangell on 31 May, where it remained through 2 June, was one of two reported in spring 2009. Photograph by John Morse.

late, with the best indicator report being the Juneau area's peak of 1200 Western Sandpipers, which was up to two weeks later than usual (RJG). Rare for the North Gulf, a Ruff was located on a Moose R. sandbar near Sterling on the w. Kenai Pen. 22 May (*vide* TE, ph.). This species is rare as a fall migrant e. of the cen. Aleutians, but spring records are few. Three Wilson's Snipe displayed around Adak wetlands 15-21 May (Wilderness Birding) and continue the occasional reports from that cen. Aleutian I. since about 2004.

A single ad. Sabine's Gull in Bristol Bay 50 km n. of Port Moller 28 Apr was possibly record early for the s. Bering Sea (AL) and amazing given the pelagic ice conditions n. of there at that time. Also atypical was a flock of 25 inshore in Southeast at Nichols Passage near Ketchikan 27 May (JL); most migrants traverse pelagic waters well off the outer coast of Southeast. Van Vliet provided details of an ad. Laughing Gull from Auke Bay near Juneau 30 May (+GVV). Yet to be substantiated in Alaska, this report marks the earliest of the Region's four, all of which are sight records between late May and late Aug. Because none of the reports are substantiated by photograph or specimen, the species remains on Alaska's Unsubstantiated List. St. Paul birders reported 2 Kamchatka Mew Gulls for the spring season seen between 27 and 31 May (St. Paul Tours); this Asian subspecies is a rare spring migrant in the w. Aleutians but casual n. of there. For the 2nd spring in a row, an ad. Western Gull was found at Sitka 31 Mar+ (ph. MRG). This species remains casual in Alaska, mostly recorded in autumn in s. Southeast. MacIntosh had 2 Iceland Gulls around Kodiak, an imm. near town 18 Mar (ph. RAM) and an apparent ad. *glaucoides* nearby 29 Mar (ph. RAM); the species is sporadically found in the Region, mostly in fall and winter, although reports of the nominate subspecies are very few in North America and

deserve further scrutiny. We received several observations of a Lesser Black-backed Gull near Juneau 13 Apr-19 May (PMS, ph. RHA, ph. RBB). This is almost certainly the same individual that was first located there in 1991 as an ad. and found paired with a Herring Gull at an active nest in a nearby colony in 1993. Of the usual scattering of Slaty-backed Gull reports away from the Aleutian and Bering Sea sites, an ad. at Sitka 11 Apr (ph. JB-P) was the most interesting. A lone Caspian Tern in

Ketchikan 23 Apr (SCH) was the season's first report, followed by small numbers across Southeast through the period. Approximately 190 Caspians were at the Gull I. nesting colony in Icy Bay by late May (MK). Northbound jaegers are not typically noted in any numbers in Southeast's inside waters, so a Pomarine and 45 Parasitics seen from the state ferry near the confluence of Chatham and Icy Straits 26 May (MWS) was unusual. Elsewhere, a lone Pomarine Jaeger in Amutka Pass in the e. Aleutians 25 Apr (AL) provided a new Aleutian early spring record.

## DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

The first arriving Band-tailed Pigeons from regular Ketchikan haunts were very late on 18 Apr (KLW), and singles were also noted late at Wrangell feeders on 29 Apr and 2 May (JP, JM). Single Eurasian Collared-Doves at Ketchikan 3 & 18 May+ (CAF, PSD) and at Sitka 16-18 May (MLW, MET, ph. MRG) initiated what would become an onslaught of re-

**SA** While still mired in winter conditions, shipboard observers conducted Mar transects in the Bering Sea pack ice at sites e. of the Pribilofs and s. of St. Lawrence I. 11-27 Mar (*vide* KK, TVP). The surveys produced fascinating data on rarer alcids along with the more regular species that manage to winter in such extreme conditions (e.g., small groups of Spectacled Eiders in open leads). Up to 23 Kittlitz's Murrelets, with some groups of 5-6 individuals, were identified primarily along the e. edge of a large polynya s. of St. Lawrence I. on transects run 20-27 Mar. These were considered actually low counts because observation periods were often limited by available daylight. Black Guillemots were also noted often loosely associated with Kittlitz's in similar open ice conditions in the same period, with a total of 38 tallied on transects. There are few previous data to suggest that Kittlitz's Murrelets was ever associated with, or made a living in winter, in the Bering Sea.

ports later in summer. These mark the 4th consecutive year that collared-doves have been found in Southeast. A Morning Dove at Ketchikan 6-8 May (ph. JE) was the season's sole report of this normally rare fall visitant, which is casual at other seasons in Southeast. Two calling Northern Pygmy-Owls at Sitka on 11 Apr (JB-P) add to a very few outer coastal reports from the breeding season of this otherwise rare and local summer visitor, which is typically more regular on the Southeast mainland at other seasons.

Four Black Swifts over the Hyder flats 31 May (JDL) were early; the species is usually not detected at its Southeast Mainland sites until the first week of Jun or later. The Region's earliest ever was noted 27 May on the Chickamin River. Rufous Hummingbirds arrived very late: first noted 3 Apr in Juneau (RHA) and 5 Apr in Ketchikan (JFK), the species was still missing at some Southeast sites until even later in Apr (m ob.). A patch of insect-riddled forest on N. Douglas I. across from Juneau produced a nice mix of woodpeckers, including 3 American Three-toed Woodpeckers 3 & 13 Apr (PMS) and a Black-backed Woodpecker on the 13th (ph. PMS). The former is a rare and local resident in Southeast forests, while the latter is more so: there are maybe a dozen total Black-backed records for Southeast, and this is the first to be documented since Bailey collected 2 on Mt. Juneau in Apr 1920.

Noteworthy at an offshore location was a Western Wood-Pewee found at Sitka 28 May (VV) at the same site as last fall's first local record; this flycatcher is an uncommon migrant and breeder mainly on the Southeast mainland, but it is probably casual on the outer islands. Extralimital Hammond's Flycatcher reports again included birds venturing to the n. end of South-coastal Alaska, with singles from Mud L. in Palmer 16 May (BM), where one has been reported in the past few years, and another to the s. of there on Elmendorf A.E.B. just n. of Anchorage 27-29 May (ph., v.r. LD), adding to the few previous Anchorage area records, all from the late May window. Although the first Pacific-slope Flycatcher was on the early side of normal at Ketchikan 3 May (AWP), the species was otherwise detected late, with numbers not around until the 3rd week of May. A Cassin's Vireo was in Juneau 16 May+ (DR, DM, ph. GVV), while 2 more were located in Juneau 30 May (BAP, MWS, PMS), the season's only reports of this casual spring and summer visitor, which has now occurred nearly annually over the past decade. Juneau remains the focus of most of the Region's records in that time frame, with reports in eight of the past 11 years.



Precisely within the pattern of the previous few spring reports, another Purple Martin was at Tanana Lakes in Fairbanks 30 May (ph. NH, JD, ND), where most of the handful of Interior reports have originated. Martins remain casual in the Region, mainly as spring overshoots. The season's only Northern Rough-winged Swallows included migrant pairs at two Ketchikan area sites 3 & 11 May (AWP) and 9 May (AWP, SCH). This rare spring migrant and very local breeder reaches a few mainland sites and adjacent islands near river mouths in s. Southeast. It was otherwise a quiet season for extralimital swallows. Others included a Bank Swallow at Attu 23 May (DWS, JW), where the species is occasional, and a Cliff Swallow that drifted into the Aleutians, where casual, on Adak 16-20 May (Wilderness Birding, ph. AL). The lone Black-capped Chickadee that wandered beyond the boreal forest to the Bering Sea coast at Shishmaref 4 May (ph. NA) was not without precedent for this part of w. Alaska. The closest regular breeding sites are e. of here in the w. foothill thickets approaching Kotzebue Sound and the Nulato Hills, although Black-capped are occasional in Nome, and there is one previous Shishmaref record from six years prior.

A Taiga Flycatcher on St. Paul I. 29 May (St. Paul Tour; †SL) was only the 2nd ever for the Pribilofs and the season's lone report. The usual small numbers of Mountain Bluebirds reached most favored spring sites in Southeast, with 2 in Juneau 18 Apr (GP), one in Gustavus 3 May (ph. NKD), and 2 near Skagway 16 Apr (CAF). Following recent years' poor showings in the Interior, Mountain Bluebirds fared well there, with single males up the Taylor Hwy. 18 Apr (SU), near Delta Junction 18 May (A.B.O.), where they occasionally nest, and farther w. at Fairbanks 23 May (A.B.O.). A female was exceptionally late in Hyder 28-30 May (JDL), where the species has attempted to nest. Elusive as always in Southeast, where the species is a rare migrant and often undetected, Townsend's Solitaires were widely reported this season. Singles were at Gustavus 3 May (NKD), at Wrangell 23 May (BHD, CLR), and at Hyder 29 & 31 May (JDL). Another Swainson's Thrush pushed offshore into the Bering Sea, where casual, to the Gambell middens 6 Jun (WINGS, †CC), about the 4th in spring there. A few Eyebrowed Thrushes were detected in what was otherwise a below-average season for Asian passerines, including a single on Attu 25 May (DWS, JW) and up to 4 on St. Paul I. 20 May+ (St. Paul Tour, ph. SS), where casual. A handsome Dusky Thrush was documented as it skulked around St. Paul village 22 May (St. Paul Tour, ph. SS, Wilderness Birding, ph. AL), a 3rd record for the Pribilofs.

## WARBLERS THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

Because so many of the regular warbler species were late to materialize across the Region, there is little to report on most of them, other than a few early-ish reports for some species and locations. Orange-crowned Warblers were generally delayed and slow to occupy breeding sites, at least in the North Gulf perimeter. One of the Kodiak winter birds remained at its favored site through 8 Mar (RAM). This is a typical pattern for rare passerines that manage to survive a winter, usually at a coastal feeder, in that they all end up departing their food source well ahead of what is the otherwise normal arrival period for that species—i.e., they nearly always leave a winter site between early Mar and early Apr, to go who knows where. A Yellow Warbler that arrived 10 May at Ketchikan (AWP, SCH) was considered that site's 3rd earliest on record. Several sites mentioned extremely late arrival dates for Townsend's Warblers, especially Ketchikan, where the species was first noted 27 Apr (AWP), nearly two weeks tardy. It wasn't until early May that Townsend's were singing on the Anchorage hillside.

A suite of wintering sparrows remained at Southeast feeders variously into Apr, including: an American Tree Sparrow through 28 Apr in Ketchikan (JFK), which constituted a new late date; single White-throated Sparrows at Ketchikan through 23 Apr (SCH), in Douglas near Juneau through 23 Apr (PMS) and another there through 14 Apr (JC); and a Harris's Sparrow through 4 Apr in Ketchikan (JHL). A wintering Savannah Sparrow in Kodiak, remained at its grassy patch at Narrow Cape through 7 Mar (RAM, RLS), while another Savannah located at Kalsin Bay on the Kodiak road network 9 Apr (RAM.) was also considered a wintering individual. Three American Tree Sparrows that reached the Bering Sea coast at Shishmaref 17 May (KS) overshot their Seward Pen. breeding sites, which do not include coastal lowlands or Shishmaref Inlet. A Chipping Sparrow furnished a first spring report at Ketchikan 19 Apr (ph. KMR), where there are only five total previous records. Chipping Sparrow is very rare away from the Southeast mainland, and because most migrate into the Region in early May, the date of this Ketchikan record suggests that this bird wintered in the vicinity. Two *zaboria* Fox Sparrows were pioneering coastal thickets at the Bering Sea village of Shishmaref 17 May (KS), where overshoots from more upland breeding sites are occasional in spring. White-crowned Sparrows made a strong showing in s. Southeast at



Far from its favored arboreal habitats, this Hawfinch frequented tundra thickets outside Nome, Alaska on 4 and (here) 5 June 2009. There are now three Alaskan Mainland records of this casual spring migrant, typically recorded in the western Aleutians. Photograph by Aaron Lang.

Ketchikan and Wrangell, e.g. up to 7 at one Ketchikan feeder, where they are typically "far outnumbered" by Golden-crowns. Amongst the Ketchikan White-crowns was a Golden-crowned Sparrow × White-crowned Sparrow hybrid 9 May (ph. SCH) and a black-lored White-crowned 6 May (SCH, ph. AWP). A group of 8 White-crowned Sparrows at Kodiak 7 Mar (RAM, RLS) punctuated the fine winter season there and constituted the highest one-day total ever for this North Gulf island group, where the species does not nest. Joining the other Shishmaref overshoots on the Bering Sea coast was a single Golden-crowned Sparrow 17 May (KS). This species, along with Dark-eyed Junco and White-crowned Sparrow, are often the most regular boreal forest or inland passerines to turn up at Seward Pen. village sites on the coast. Given that Rustic Buntings seem to have become less common since they appeared annually in the 1980s and 1990s, the species made a good showing this year. There were reports of singles on Attu 17, 20, & 21 May (DWS, JW), of one on St. Paul I. 28 May+ (St. Paul Tour, ph. SS), where casual, and of 2 at Gambell 26-28 May (DM).

A male Black-headed Grosbeak turned up at a Stikine R. mouth home 19-21 May (BN), and another visited a Wrangell feeder 31 May-2 Jun (ph. BHD) a few miles s. of there. The species breeds regularly n. to at least s. British Columbia, and its range has steadily expanded there over the past 50 years. There were only three total Alaska records prior to 1995, but since then it has become a rare, probably annual late spring and early summer visitant in Southeast. A female or imm. male Yellow-headed Blackbird was a great find at Hyder 31 May (†JDL), the 2nd report from that Southeast hotspot on the Salmon River. This species remains casual in spring, summer, and early fall in Alaska and breeds as close as s. and ne. British Columbia. Spring

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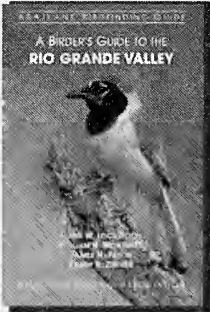
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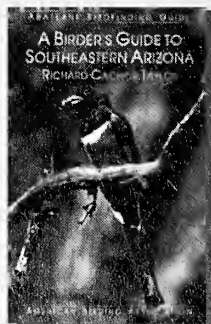
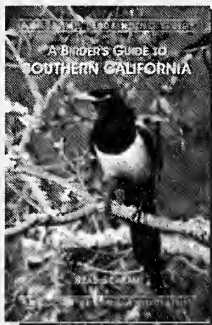
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Brown-headed Cowbirds are annual in very small numbers, primarily after mid-May in Southeast. This year's spread included one offshore at Saltry Cove on Prince of Wales I. 1 May (JL) and singles elsewhere at Ketchikan (ME) and at Gustavus (LR), both 19 May.

Only 2 Bramblings on Attu, 17 & 22 May, made a poor showing there (DWS, JW), while 4 on St. Paul 25-29 May (St. Paul Tour) was about average for the Pribilofs in spring. Single male Purple Finches visited Ketchikan feeders 22 Mar–10 Apr (JFK) and 7 Apr (CAF), following an excellent fall and winter showing for that locality, where the species is a very rare fall migrant and winter visitor and casual in spring. The Seward area's long-staying female or imm. male Cassin's Finch from winter was joined amazingly at the same feeder by a bright ad. male 31 Mar, photographed 8 Apr (ph. CG). Both remained sporadic at the feeder through approximately 15 Apr. Red Crossbills were typically sporadic, in variable numbers, and most abundant in Southeast, where they visited Ketchikan feeders in Apr and May for only the 2nd time since 1990. Reds were described as common about the Kodiak area, where young of the year were first detected 16 Apr (SB) and were visiting feeders thereafter. It was clearly a Common Redpoll invasion year in Southeast, where numbers quickly accelerated in the 2nd week of Mar, with some birds remaining into the 3rd week of Apr. Flocks of 50+ were reported from Wrangell (BHD) and Ketchikan in this period, including 100 at one feeder in Ketchikan 31 Mar (ED). These were the highest redpoll numbers that Heinl and Piston have experienced in Ketchikan since 1990 and the strongest redpoll showing in Southeast since the 1980 irruption (*American Birds* 39: 92). Decent numbers also ventured offshore to Sitka from early Apr through 25 Apr, with a maximum count of 50 (GS, MLW, MET). At least one Hoary Redpoll was documented in the throngs of redpolls in the Juneau area 12-13 Apr (ph. PMS). Hoaries are casual in Southeast, and nearly all the documented records come from Juneau during larger Common Redpoll incursions. Still casual in the Region, mainly in Southeast, a female Evening Grosbeak visited a Petersburg feeder 22-24 May (ph. BH). This spring's Hawfinch reports were curious, with none noted from the usual Aleutian and Bering Sea outposts. Instead, singles appeared at Nikolski Village on Umnak I. in the e. Aleutians 22-23 May (SEH, *fide* DDG) and well n. on the Mainland at Wooly Lagoon n. of Nome 4-5 Jun (Wilderness Birding, ph. AL, LD). Hawfinches are casual in the cen. Aleutians but previously unrecorded e. of

there, and we have but two prior Mainland records, one in Jun from n. of Kotzebue and a winter bird in Dillingham. A female and 2 male House Sparrows that had wintered in Ketchikan remained into the spring and nested in the eaves of a building on the waterfront (SCH, ph. AWP). The nest was first located 6 May, when the female was seen taking grasses to the site. Two males were singing in the area and remained throughout the nesting sequence, while the female removed a fecal sac, and the pair was carrying food to the nest 1 Jun. Further brood rearing and feeding was observed at this site through 16 Jun, but no young were detected after the 15th. This constitutes Alaska's first House Sparrow nest. See Heinl and Piston, *Birds of the Ketchikan area, Southeast Alaska* (2009. *Western Birds* 40: 54-144) for details of House Sparrow reports here.

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AUGUST 2008 THROUGH FEBRUARY 2009

Chris Charlesworth

The fall of 2008 brought slightly above-average rainfall levels and normal temperatures to much of the province. The unsettled weather may have assisted in the arrival of a number of southern rarities that graced the province in the fall. The Northern Coast saw numerous storms roll through in October. Winter arrived in early November in areas east of the Rocky Mountains but held off until the last week of the month in remaining areas of the interior. Coastal areas remained quite rainy through November. Winter finally arrived in mid-December for the entire Region with a monumental blast of icy Arctic air. Snowfall levels throughout the province were fairly high, with a whopping 41 cm measured on the ground in Vancouver on Christmas Day. January remained cold, with much of the province recording lower temperatures than normal. Winter finally loosened its grip in early February, as a series of storms were steered northward toward Alaska and temperatures hovered around seasonal averages. The unseasonably cold and snowy weather probably pushed a few northern owls into southern British Columbia, where redpolls were also found, but interior Christmas Bird Counts were less interesting than usual due to lack of open water and extreme cold.

Abbreviations: R.P.B.O. (Rocky Point B.O.); V.L.B.O. (Vaseux Lake B.O.).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

A flock of 7 Greater White-fronted Geese, rare in the interior, was seen at Munson's Pond in Kelowna 13 Oct (RyT, m.ob.). Snow Goose is also an uncommon visitor to interior, where

one was reported in Kelowna 27 Nov (HB et al.). Three Tundra Swans were over a month early in Salmon Arm 20 Aug (DC). An eclipse-plumaged male Eurasian Wigeon at Salmon Arm 20 Aug probably represented a summering bird (DC), while a male in Osoyoos 30 Dec was a first for the Oliver-Osoyoos C.B.C. Near Tofino, 2 Redheads were seen at Grice Bay 12 Oct (AD). Long-tailed Ducks are a rarity in the interior. Four records of Long-tailed Duck came from the Okanagan alone between 25 Oct and 11 Jan.

Wild Turkeys continue their westward march through s. British Columbia, where a flock of 22 was seen near Rock Cr. 5 Dec (DT). A Pacific Loon, rare in the interior on larger lakes, was at the n. end of Wood L. in Lake Country 6 Oct (PL); another was in Penitction on the C.B.C. 14 Dec (RuC). Perhaps the same bird was seen on Okanagan L. at Naramata 12 Jan (RCa). Single Yellow-billed Loons were at the Oak Bay Marina near Victoria 6 Dec (AL) and at the s. end of Wood L. in Lake Country 6 Oct (LR). An Eared Grebe was seen near Deep Bay on cen. Vancouver I. 11 Oct 11 (RM). Rare on the Lower Mainland, a Clark's Grebe was in Richmond 5-14 Feb (ST, MT, m.ob.).

A Laysan Albatross, always an exciting find in British Columbia, was observed 40 km sw. of Ucluelet 15 Aug 15 (MTy, MD). A remarkable shore-based count of 12 Short-tailed Shearwaters came from Pt. No Point, Vancouver I. 24 Aug (N.R.B.A.). One was picked out of hundreds of Sooty Shearwaters in Hecate Strait from a ferry 23 Aug (CCo). As is true in U.S. Pacific waters, Manx Shearwaters continue to be seen with increasing frequency in British Columbian waters. One was seen from Botanical Beach at the s. end of Vancouver I. 16 Aug 16 (N.R.B.A.). Two were seen from Pt. No Point 24 Sep (N.R.B.A.) and another from Tower Pt. in Metchosin 30 Aug (DA). Numbers of Brown Pelicans continue to increase along the s. coast. Thirteen birds seen from Port Renfrew 17 Oct was a high count for the period (N.R.B.A.). Cattle Egrets were few and far between in British Columbia this fall; one was observed in sheep fields in Delta 5 Nov (CG); possibly the same bird was seen 10 Nov at the Vancouver Landfill (CE); and 2 in Duncan 4 Nov (DM) were the only ones reported on Vancouver Island.

A remarkable find was a Black Vulture at the mouth of the Nass R. near Kinconlith. The bird was first discovered and photographed 1 Oct (DD) and remained until at least mid-Jan. Broad-winged Hawks were seen in Castlegar, where 2 were seen 13 Sep (MM); on the same day, 2 ads. were seen over Victoria (DA). In the Prince George area, Broad-winged Hawks were

suspected of nesting near Giscome, where a juv. was seen 24 Aug (CA). Four more juv. Broad-winged were seen on the same day at Tabor Mt. near Prince George (SK, LL). A light-morph imm. Swainson's Hawk was seen over Victoria 13 Sep (DA). Rare along the coast of British Columbia, Golden Eagles were reported at several locations, including an ad. in Delta 13 Jan (V.R.B.A.). Four were counted with other raptors over Nanoose Hill, cen. Vancouver I. 20 Sep (GM et al.). The province's 2nd Crested Caracara was photographed in a field following a tractor in at Fort Fraser, cen. British Columbia, on 18 (Wayne Ray et al., *vide* JB; ph. in *North American Birds* 63: 26). Single gray-morph Gyrfalcons were seen at a host of locations, including at Kelowna's Munson's Pond 6 Dec (CC, RT); along Boundary Bay near Vancouver through the winter, first noted 21 Oct (DD); and over downtown Dawson Creek 29 Aug (BS). A white-morph Gyrfalcons, very rare in the province, was seen 17 Oct in Agassiz (MB, TM).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS

Rare in the interior, 2 Pacific Golden-Plovers were seen at Alki L., Kelowna 18 Sep (GW, m.ob.). Up to 4 Pacific Golden-Plovers were seen at Boundary Bay, near Vancouver, 23 Sep (MT). A Lesser Yellowlegs seen 14 Dec at Maplewood Flats in n. Vancouver provided an excellent record for the C.B.C. there (V.R.B.A.). A Willet has wintered at the Tsawwassen Jetty s. of Vancouver for many years; it was again present this year, being seen first on 11 Dec (JM). A juv. Sanderling was seen at Tugboat Bay in Kelowna 3 Sep (GW). Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were reported from a smattering of coastal locations this fall, all juvs., as usual. The first appeared 8 Oct at the Iona Sewage Ponds in Vancouver (V.R.B.A.); 2 were seen on the Tofino Mudflats 12 Oct (AD); and singles were at Boundary Bay 14 Oct (MT) and the Tofino Airport 25 Oct (AD). Stilt Sandpipers came through in small numbers this fall, including 2 juvs. at Salmon Arm 30 Aug (DC) and a juv. at Farm Slough in Surrey 16 Sep (CGi). Juv. Buff-breasted Sandpipers were quite scarce this fall; one was on a turf farm in Delta 20 Sep 20 (V.R.B.A.), and one was on Sidney Spit, s. Vancouver I. 26 Aug (BMc, MMc).

Two South Polar Skuas were seen from shore at Botanical Beach, s. Vancouver I. 18 Aug (RTa). Rare in the interior, a light-morph ad. Parasitic Jaeger was on Tachick L. w. of Prince George 6 Sep (CCo). A Long-tailed Jaeger was spotted from the tip of the Iona Jetty, Vancouver 2 Sep (MM, SN). Franklin's Gulls showed up a few locations around the province: an imm. was seen at Sutherland Bay, Kelowna 30 Aug (CC, DW, AG); another imm.

was at Tachick L. near Prince George 2 Sep (NH); and one was seen on Vancouver I. at Swan L. in Victoria 18 Oct (Victoria R.B.A.). Extremely rare anywhere in the interior, an ad. Little Gull was seen at Tachick L. near Prince George 2 Sep (NH). Possibly the same bird was seen at the same place 11 Oct (NH, m.ob.). On Vancouver I., a Little Gull was found at the Little Qualicum R. 11-15 Nov (GM, m.ob.). Iceland Gulls have become regular winter visitors to the Okanagan Valley in recent years. A classic ad. Kumlien's Iceland Gull was seen at the mouth of Mission Cr. in Kelowna 5 Dec (RuC); perhaps the same bird was seen at the Kelowna Landfill 20 Dec on the local C.B.C. (DC). On Vancouver I., a third-cycle Kumlien's was studied at the mouth of the Little Qualicum R. 16 Nov (GM). An ad. Black-tailed Gull at the Courtenay Air Park 18 Nov (JJ) was a remarkable find. The bird remained in the general area, moving between two main locations. Lesser Black-backed Gulls have become annual in the Okanagan Valley. An ad. was seen at the Kelowna Landfill on that city's C.B.C. 20 Dec (DC); probably the same bird reappeared at the Maude Roxby Bird Sanctuary in Kelowna 12 Jan (GW). An ad. Slaty-backed Gull was discovered on Abbotsford's C.B.C. 3 Jan and remained until at least 8 Feb (JV). Kelowna continues to be the Glaucous Gull capital of the province: 4 were tallied on the C.B.C. at the landfill 20 Dec (DC). Juv. Sabine's Gulls were reported from many locations in the interior in autumn: one at the Kelowna Landfill 23 Aug was somewhat earlier than expected (RT, CC, m.ob.); 2 were seen near Quilchena 26 Aug (CS); one was at Tachick L. w. of Prince George 2 Sep (NH), with another in the same location 11 Oct (NH); one was at Penticton 2 Oct (LN); and 2 more were seen in the W. Kootenay area at Burton 27 Sep (GD, PL). The only ad. of the period was reported from the Nechako R. at Vanderhoof 11 Oct (NH). Four Arctic Terns were seen at Tachick L. w. of Prince George 2 Sep (NH). Rare in interior on large lakes, an Ancient Murrelet was seen on Okanagan L. at the w. end of the Bennett Bridge in Kelowna 1 Oct (EF).

## DOVES THROUGH GRACKLES

Eurasian Collared-Doves continue to spread across British Columbia. Okanagan Valley C.B.C.s recorded record high numbers, including 23 seen in Oliver-Osoyoos 30 Dec and 64 seen in Cawston 27 Dec (*vide* DB). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo photographed near Courtenay on Vancouver I. 25 Oct was a great find and provided only the 3rd record for the island (KVS). Northern owls wandered into s. British Columbia in small numbers this season. There was an imm. Snowy Owl on a

beach in Kelowna 21 Oct (CC) and another seen just s. of Golden 10 Nov (DP). Very cooperative Northern Hawk Owls were seen in Nanaimo from 24 Jan through 14 Feb (N.R.B.A.) and in Abbotsford from 26 Nov through 3 Dec (TM). In the interior, one was at Tranquille near Kamloops 22 Nov (CC et al.), and 2 were w. of Williams L. near Alexis Cr. 2 Jan (SO). In Kelowna, a Northern Hawk Owl was a great find on the C.B.C. 20 Dec (JF et al.). In w. Vancouver, a Great Gray Owl was seen at Lighthouse Park 19 Jan (AG). A record-high 49 Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded at R.P.B.O. near Victoria 6 Oct (RS).

An imm. Ruby-throated Hummingbird patronized a feeder at Black Creek on Vancouver I. 26-30 Aug (TZ), the island's first. A first-year male Costa's Hummingbird was in Wynndel from 17 Nov-1 Dec, the first record for the interior of the province (LVD). A tardy Rufous Hummingbird was at Johnson's Landing in the Kootenays 12 Oct (GS). Rare on the coast, Lewis's Woodpeckers were reported from Blackie Spit in White Rock 10 Sep (V.R.B.A.) and at the R.P.B.O. near Victoria on the same date. Another was in Colwood near Victoria 20 Sep (DA), and 2 wintered in the Okanagan Valley, at traditional locations: Trout Creek Pt. in Summerland 5 Dec (RuC) and Black Sage Rd. in Oliver 19 Jan (BM). A Red-naped Sapsucker was in Cecil Green Park in Vancouver 26 Sep (IP). Three American Three-toed Woodpeckers were a new addition to the Merritt C.B.C. 3 Jan (CC, RT). This and other woodpecker species have benefited from forest fires and bark beetle proliferation in recent years.

A Western Wood-Pewee at the Englishman River estuary, Vancouver I. 6 Oct was a bit late (GM, m.ob.). Also on the island, a Say's Phoebe was seen in Duncan 21 Dec (N.R.B.A.). An Ash-throated Flycatcher at the tip of the Iona Jetty near Vancouver 19 Sep (V.R.B.A.) was locally rare, but one banded at the Mackenzie Banding Station 26 Aug (KB; ph. in *North American Birds* 63: 186) represented a first record for the n. part of the province. Single Tropical Kingbirds were at two coastal locations, Cheewat Beach near Carmanah Pt. 23 Nov (JE) and Boundary Bay near Vancouver from 30 Oct-26 Nov (m.ob.). The most stunning record for the period was a male Black-capped Vireo banded at the V.L.B.O. 27 Sep (DB, RCa, m.ob.; ph. in *North American Birds* 63: 30). This represents the first record of this species for British Columbia and just the 2nd for Canada. Both Canadian birds were banded. After being banded, photographed, and released, the bird was never seen again.

A single Blue Jay present in Delta 28 Sep (V.R.B.A.) was the only one reported. Rare on

Vancouver I., 2 Clark's Nutcrackers were seen on Mt. Douglas in Victoria 22 Oct (BB). Two Cliff Swallows at the Reifel Refuge near Vancouver 24 Nov (MB) were very late. A few Barn Swallows may have wintered in the Vancouver area, with 4 reported 18 Jan alone (PC, CG), but these birds could have been part of the unusual mid-winter appearance of these birds along the Pacific coast. Very rare in the Okanagan, a Bushtit was seen on the Osoyoos C.B.C. 30 Dec (*vide* DB). Single White-breasted Nuthatches appeared in Beach Grove Park, Tsawwassen 11-20 Feb (BS, m.ob.) and on Vancouver I. along Stevenson Point Rd. in Nanaimo 4 Oct (N.R.B.A.). In the cen. Interior, a White-breasted Nuthatch visited a feeder in Giscome near Prince George, where the species has become almost annual, 11 Oct (*vide* CA).

A Canyon Wren seen at Rattlesnake Bluffs near Kamloops 19 Feb was at the extreme n. edge of the species' range (RR, m.ob.). Bewick's Wrens continue to move into the Okanagan Valley slowly. One was at River Rd. in Oliver 27 Aug (CC), and another was banded at the V.L.B.O. and seen 18-21 Sep (DB, m.ob.). This bird was a fledgling, which confirms local breeding. In Victoria, a dozen Western Bluebirds frequented the Franklin Terrace area 23 Dec (JM). A female Mountain Bluebird near Little River, cen. Vancouver I. 8-12 Dec entertained many birders. A Northern Mockingbird had a significant stay at Boundary Bay near Vancouver 2-24 Dec (*vide* MT, m.ob.). Sage Thrashers are rare breeders in the Okanagan Valley, and this year they returned to the White L. area, where 4 were seen, including a fledgling 9 Aug (CC, RT).

Two Blue-winged Warblers were recorded during the period, both on Vancouver I., one at French Beach 20 Sep, the other at Little Beach near Ucluelet 16 Aug (N.R.B.A.). A Nashville Warbler banded at R.P.B.O. 8 Oct was a surprise (DA), as was a male Black-throated Blue Warbler in East Sooke Park 29 Sep (CSa). Yellow-rumped Warblers are wintering more frequently in the s. interior of the province, where 5 were seen at the Kelowna Sewage Plant 6 Dec (JL) and 10 were present at the Penticton Marina on their C.B.C. 14 Dec (RuC). Always a nice find in British Columbia, a stunning male Blackburnian Warbler was seen in Beatton P.P. in Fort St. John 1 Sep (JHD). A male Prairie Warbler was found near Tranquille in the Kamloops area and remained 16-19 Nov (JBr, m.ob.); another was at a public beach in Parksville 19 Nov (N.R.B.A.). Several Palm Warblers were reported along the coast: one was at Burnaby L., Vancouver 12 Sep (DP); one was at the Iona Sewage Ponds, Vancouver 19 Sep (V.R.B.A.); one was at Martindale Flats in Victoria 5 Oct 5 (Victoria R.B.A.); and one was

at Swan L., Victoria 3 Nov (CSa). An imm. Blackpoll Warbler was a nice find at Burnaby L. 2 Sep (DP). Black-and-white Warblers showed up in Nanaimo 4 Aug (N.R.B.A.) and at Grant Narrows in Vancouver 3 Aug (MN, SN). A female-type American Redstart remained at the Englishman River estuary, Vancouver I. 2 Sep–4 Oct (GM, RM). An ad. male Prothonotary Warbler banded at the V.L.B.O. 28 Aug was a first for the Okanagan Valley (DB, m.ob.). A Northern Waterthrush was banded at the R.P.B.O. 11 Aug (*vide* RS).

At Boundary Bay, near Vancouver, a Clay-colored Sparrow was seen 9–10 Sep (V.R.B.A.). A great find on Vancouver I., a Lark Sparrow was at the Englishman River estuary 17 Sep (CSt). Rare in winter in the interior, a Savannah Sparrow visited a Kelowna feeder 4 Jan (CC, RT). A Grasshopper Sparrow frequented a feeder in Victoria 6–9 Nov (BMc, MMC, m.ob.). The Okanagan's 2nd Le Conte's Sparrow was found in an overgrown apple orchard in Kelowna 12 Oct (CC et al.). Three subspecies of Fox Sparrow—Red, Slate-colored, and Sooty—were noted in a single Duncan yard 3 Nov (DM). In Kelowna, a Red Fox Sparrow was at Sutherland Hills Park 26 Oct (CC, RT). A Swamp Sparrow seen at Somenos Marsh in Duncan 16 Nov (DM) was a nice find, as was another at the Reifel Refuge in Ladner 10 Nov (CCI). Harris's Sparrows also had a good winter in British Columbia, with singles at Burtch Rd. in Kelowna 27 Nov (GW, m.ob.), in Lantzville 14 Dec (N.R.B.A.), in Vernon 28 Dec (CG), at the Reifel Refuge,

Ladner 10 Nov (CCI), in Abbotsford 27 Dec (EK), and at Cowichan Dock Rd. in Duncan 21 Oct (DM). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a feeder in Broadmeade area of Victoria 16–19 Sep (Victoria R.B.A.), and another was at Port Renfrew 9 Aug (N.R.B.A.). In the interior, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited feeders at Christina L. 19 Feb (OS).

A female-type Bobolink at the Port Alberni Airport 12 Aug made a nice find for the island (NJ). In the interior, a wintering Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen on Kelowna's C.B.C. 20 Dec (DK). Rusty Blackbirds appeared at a scattering of locations in s. coastal areas, including one at Maplewood Flats, n. Vancouver 8 Jan (RL), one at Whiffen Spit, Sooke 1 Nov (N.R.B.A.), and one in cattle fields in Delta 1 Nov (MT, ST). A Common Grackle appeared at a feeder in Kaslo 14–18 Oct (*vide* AB), while an early Common Redpoll was seen in Penticton 24 Sep (LN). The winter proved to be a fair one for Common Redpolls, which were reported throughout s. portion of the province. A Lesser Goldfinch patronized a feeder in Abbotsford from Jun through at least 21 Aug, providing one of a very few provincial records (V.R.B.A.).

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## Oregon & Washington

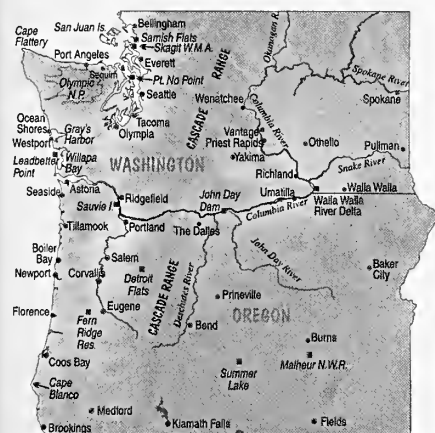
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Following back-to-back seasons colored by mega-rarities and crazy weather, this season seemed uneventful. There were no Regional firsts, no flooding, no record snows, and no weather that produced epic fallouts, yet many seasonal records were rewritten. With all-time high counts in seemingly every paragraph, we are left to wonder: Why? Are we simply finding more birds? Are we getting better at collecting reports? Are there more birds than there used to be? The simple answer to these questions is surely yes.

The pool of talented observers has never been deeper, and the Internet now allows us to share sightings and, more importantly, new and exciting places go birding—instant-

ly. Indeed, many birds' ranges are expanding in the Region, notably Glossy and White-faced Ibises, Red-shouldered Hawk, Black Phoebe, Western Scrub-Jay, Bewick's Wren, and Lesser Goldfinch. For other species, such as Snow Goose, Baikal Teal, and both American White and Brown Pelicans, increasing global populations seem to correlate with greater numbers and more widespread distribution in our states.

Collectively, these factors make our Region a challenge and a joy to chronicle as we face the daunting task of explaining why. Our commentary is occasionally speculative, and one might argue that the sample size of a single season's data is too small to yield firm conclusions. However, the accretion of our individual observations over several years and even decades allows us to identify and discuss the real changes that are happening before





After first appearing about 32 kilometers to the north at Neskowin, Tillamook County, Oregon in November 2008, this immature Little Blue Heron took up residence at Siletz Bay, Lincoln County, where it remained through the spring season. In this photograph, taken 4 April 2009, it is beginning to show some dark feathering on the head. Photograph by Bill Medlen.

our eyes. In this regard, we believe that this journal has no peer.

Because this is a human endeavor, we are occasionally inspired to acknowledge the invaluable contributions and, unfortunately, the departures of those who make these seasonal summaries possible. It is with great sadness that we report the unexpected passing of Laura Dowlan, the wife of long-time Oregon contributor Steve Dowlan. With an understandably heavy heart, Steve has chosen to return "home" to Pennsylvania to be nearer extended family. During his years in Oregon, he was tireless in exploring and then reporting on his home patches, first in eastern Marion County and then northern Harney County. His discoveries taught us much about these areas. Steve's contributions to this journal and his companionship in the field will be greatly missed.

Additionally, this season marks the one-year anniversary of Steve Mlodinow's retirement as our senior Regional Editor. A year ago, we were scrambling to cobble together our first report. Today, the high standards that Steve created during a ten-year run at this Region's helm continue to shape the way we craft our reports. Though his name no longer appears in the byline, his ongoing input and editorial suggestions invariably help to improve our final report. We were remiss in not giving him a proper send-off a year ago, perhaps because as the torch was being passed he never stopped supporting us with his encyclopedic knowledge of the Region's birdlife and critical eye for details. For these contributions and his enduring friendship, we are most grateful.

Abbreviations: Ankeny (Ankeny N.W.R., Marion); Baskett Slough (Baskett Slough N.W.R., Polk); E.E.W. (E. E. Wilson W.M.A., Benton); Finley (William L. Finley N.W.R., Benton); F.R.R. (Fern Ridge Res., Lane); N.S.C.B. (N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos); O.S. (Ocean Shores,

Grays Harbor); P.N.P. (Pt. No Point, Kitsap); P.S.B. (Port Susan Bay, Snohomish); P.T. (Puget Trough); Ridgefield (Ridgefield N.W.R., Clark); W.W.R.D. (Walla Walla River Delta, Walla Walla). "Eastside" and "westside" indicate locations e. and w. of the Cascade Crest, respectively.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

The 10,000 Greater White-fronted Geese resting on Tillamook Bay 28 Apr (TJ, OS, JW) made a westside spring record; 9690 passed Cape Flattery 26 Apr 1996. Once scarce away from the Klamath Basin, increasing numbers of Greater White-fronteds are now being detected elsewhere on the eastside. The 2000 at McNary N.W.R. 8 Mar (BD) was e. Washington's 2nd highest tally ever. A Tule Greater White-fronted Goose (subspecies *gambeli*) at Othello 2 Mar (RH) was noteworthy, as this taxon is rarely identified (though likely regular) in Washington. An apparent Greater White-fronted Goose × Cackling Goose hybrid inhabited Baskett Slough 24 Apr (WH). The Emperor Goose that wintered at Bandon remained through 4 Apr (H. Schubothe). A blue-morph Snow Goose at County Line Ponds, Grant 21 Mar (M&MLD) and 2 at Sprague L., Lincoln 21 Mar–3 Apr (CC, KK) adds to about 12 prior records from e. Washington. This morph has become regular in Washington since it began breeding at Wrangel I., Russia in 1995. The only westside Blue was a modestly late bird at Samish Flats, Skagit 19 Apr (J. Meyer). Large flocks of Snow Geese are now annual at McNary N.W.R.; 1800 gathered there 8 Mar (BD). Singles at Slavin Ranch, Spokane 14 May (J. Isacoff) and Wannapum S.P., Kittitas 16 May (M&MLD) were nearly a month late. Two Snows appeared along the s. Oregon coast, where less than annual; singles visited N.S.C.B. 22 Apr–1 May (J. Metzler, DL) and Cape Blanco 25 Apr (TJW). Four westside Ross's Geese, 14 Mar–1 May, approximated recent spring averages; another single, present continually at Poulsbo, Kitsap since Dec. 2000, finally disappeared 8 Mar (*vide* BW). Outstanding numbers of Ross's graced e. Washington, where no fewer than 67 were reported 1 Mar–15 May. On 30 Apr, the 2nd and 3rd largest flocks ever reported from e. Washington—36 and 24 birds, respectively—visited Philleo L., Spokane (MW) and Rock L., Whitman (*vide* F. Haywood). Two late Ross's were still on Beulah Res., Malheur 31 May

(RN). Now annual during spring in Harney, 4+ blue-morph Ross's frequented the Burns area 14 Mar–10 Apr (SD. R. Vetter). A Red-breasted Goose of unknown provenance consorted with Cackling Geese at Finley 11 Apr+ (R. Armstrong, m.ob.). Single "Gray-bellied" Brant at Long Beach, Pacific 12 Apr (JG), Ten-mile Cr., Coos 19 May (HH), and Yaquina Head, Lincoln 30 May (WH), were rare strays from their expected haunts in the P.T. Single Trumpeter Swans tarried at Horn Rapids S.P. 1-20 May (B&NL), P.S.B. 17 May (SM), and Crocker L., Jefferson 22 May (MB, KK); this species normally departs by mid-Apr. Tundra Swans also dawdled, the latest being 3 at Midway Beach, Pacific 21 May (E. Huston). A Bewick's Swan, first detected at Brady, Grays Harbor in Jan, remained through 24 Mar (KB); this subspecies has occurred in Washington in five of the past six years.

Forty-nine Eurasian Wigeons in e. Washington 8 Mar–8 May obliterates the previous seasonal record (34 in 2006). Twelve at Tyson Ponds, Walla Walla 13 Apr (M&MLD) is the largest flock ever recorded in that subregion. Yet another Mallard × American Wigeon hybrid appeared in Washington; this one, near Port Townsend, Jefferson 14-19 Apr, was just the 3rd for the Region, all since Dec 2008. The Mallard × Gadwall hybrid ("Brewer's Duck") that enlivened Randall Park, Yakima 8 Mar was nearly as rare (ph. DG). The Mallard × Northern Pintail near Kent, King 1 Mar (EH) and a Cinnamon Teal × Blue-winged Teal hybrid at Burns, Harney 3 Apr (CM) were more expected; these crosses are detected annually in the Region. Washington's 4th Baikal Teal, at L. Terrell, Whatcom 17 Mar (ph. P. Woodcock), was the 3rd in the past 11 months; seven of the Region's eight records have come since 2004. Eurasian Teal showed well with 14 on the westside (7 per state) and 3 on the eastside 1 Mar–21 Apr. All 8 Eurasian Teal × Green-winged Teal intergrades were on the westside, 7 of these in Washington. Four Tufted Ducks was about average, with one making its 4th consecutive spring appearance at F.R.R. 11-26 Apr (A. Heyerly, m.ob.). All three scoter species appeared inland, where very rare in spring; Portland hosted a Surf Scoter 3 Apr (AF), and a White-winged Scoter was on L. Chelan, Chelan 14 Mar (W. Weber), only the 10th in spring for e. Washington. Three White-wingeds flew up the Columbia R. past Ridgefield 25 Apr (BF). A Black Scoter at Wandermere L., Spokane 8 Mar (†TL) furnished just the 2nd spring record and 12th overall for e. Washington. Though annual in spring on the eastside, 8 Long-tailed Ducks was a seasonal record; these included 6 at Wannapum Dam 1

Mar (J. Higbee), plus late singles at Klamath Falls 29 Apr (JVM, D. Stein) and Liberty L., *Spokane* 2 May (MW et al.). An assemblage of 400 migrant Ruddy Ducks on Siltcoos L., *Lane* (AC, DF) was among the highest counts ever along the Oregon coast. Two Red-throated Loons were at Sacajawea S.P., *Franklin* 27-28 Mar (R. Taylor, NL); prior to 2000, there were just four Mar-May records for e. Washington, where now annual in spring. A spectacular loon flight at Boiler 24 Apr produced the best spring tallies since 2002; 4000 Red-throated Loons more than doubled recent high counts, and the passage of 65,000 Pacific Loons included peak pulses of 2000 per minute (PP). Four Pacifics were detected in e. Washington 14 Mar-18 Apr; the earliest remained at Wannapum Dam, *Kittitas/Grant* through 16 May (SDo, AS). All 4 Yellow-billed Loons were in Washington; a long-staying east-side bird at Chief Joseph Res., *Douglas* was last seen 10 Apr (MS), and the latest remained at Sekiu, *Clallam* through 13 Apr (*vide* CW). Westside reports of Clark's Grebes were pedestrian away from F.R.R.; 6 were in Oregon (5 along the coast) 19 Apr-25 May, and 3 were in Washington 4-25 Apr.

Good offshore coverage produced 7 Laysan Albatross reports in Oregon waters; an 18 Apr pelagic trip to Perpetua Banks, *Lincoln* encountered 2 (GG), and 5 were seen from cruise ship 8 May (DI, JW et al.). The 18 Apr pelagic also found 250 Black-footed Albatrosses (GG). The high count of Northern Fulmars, 300, came from Boiler Bay 12 May (PP), while offshore numbers were paltry. Though now expected during spring, the 35+ Murphy's Petrels seen 80 km offshore during the 8 May cruise (DI, JW et al.) constituted a record for the Region; 3+ were encountered in each of Oregon's seven coastal counties, including 12 in *Coos*. Two more Murphy's were off *Pacific* 8 May (DI, JW et al.). Some aboard the cruise ship had scope views of a bird believed to be a Solander's Petrel off *Lane*, OR 8 May (†DI, †SM, B. Hinrichs et al.); though well known from the n. Pacific, there are no accepted records from U.S. waters. Eight Mottled Petrels were tallied over the Nitinat Canyon and Juan de Fuca Canyon 48-71 km off *Clallam*, and an unidentified white-bellied gadfly petrel was also over Juan de Fuca Canyon 24 Mar (RM). Pink-



Formerly extremely rare in the Pacific Northwest, White-winged Doves are now detected annually. This individual, photographed on 30 May 2009, spent several days at Frenchglen, Harney County, Oregon. Photograph by Johnny Powell.



This first-year male Dickcissel that appeared near Grants Pass, Josephine County, Washington 27 May 2009 provided the first spring record in the Oregon & Washington region since 1995. Photograph by Phil Hicks.

footed Shearwaters were seen from shore in both states, with 21 reported 6-12 May (RM, PP); nearshore reports are rare in spring. The 10,000+ Sooty Shearwaters seen from Boiler Bay 12 May (PP) was the season's high count. Sixteen Manx Shearwaters, 6 Mar-21 May, was a seasonal record; all but one of 7 in Washington were offshore, while 6 of 9 Oregon birds were seen from land. Offshore numbers of Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were low, with only 88 off Oregon during 8 May (JW); singles were noted from Cape Disappointment, *Pacific* 20 Mar (MW, CW) and Boiler Bay 7 May (PP).

Nearly 100 American White Pelicans wandered to the westside, mostly during May. Twelve at Aberdeen, *Grays Harbor* 27 May (D. Moore) were among 21 that reached the outer coast, where they were once mega-rare but are now nearly annual. A Brown Pelican at Winchester Bay, *Douglas* 6 Mar (RN) preceded the first northbound flocks by 6 weeks. May-Jun Brown Pelican records have been increasing

since 2006 in the P.T., where formerly rare before mid-Aug. This season's reports included one at Blaine, *Whatcom* 30 Apr-4 May, one at Point Defiance, *Pierce* 7-18 May (B. Owens), and an impressive 22 near Seattle 15 May (M. Bond). The Little Blue Heron discovered at Siletz Bay, *Lincoln* Dec 2008 remained through 7 Apr (RL, ph. B. Medlen). Single Cattle Egrets at Boiler Bay 17 May (WH) and Diamond, *Harney* 23-25 May (RH, m.ob.) were the Region's first spring birds since 2005. Two Black-crowned Night-Herons at Newport 2 Apr (T. Snetsinger) were likely migrants, but to where? By pure chance, Oregon's 4th Glossy Ibis was documented when the photographer tried out his new camera on a flock of ibis at Malheur 23 May (ph. D. Baccus); this species has appeared annually since 2006 in se. Oregon. White-faced Ibis again showed well away from breeding sites in se. Oregon; 31 were reported from four w. Washington locales 12-18 May, and nearly 100 visited w. Oregon 9 May+, including flocks of 35+ at Sauvie I. 22 May (JW) and 40 at F.R.R. 24 May (D. Brown). Eastern Washington, where ibis are now annual, saw a modest incursion, with 19 birds at four locations 20-30 May.

A Broad-winged Hawk was w. of Thorp, *Kittitas* 3 May (†TB), and another soared over Bandon 8 May (TJW); the former was Washington's 16th, while Oregon has 25+ reports. A record 7 Swainson's Hawks passed through w. Washington 1-17 May, including 3 over Skagit W.M.A. 2 May (GB, B. Kuntz); this species is still not annual in w. Washington. Single Rough-legged Hawks near Brownsville, *Linn* 2 May (J. Harding) and Pendelton, *Umatilla* 9 May were a month tardy. A Golden Eagle just e. of Reedsport, *Douglas* 16 May (JB) was in the coastal lowlands, where less than annual. This season's "Prairie" Merlins (subspecies *richardsoni*) were near Edison, *Skagit* 1 Mar-15 Apr (ph. RM, TA) and Othello 1 Mar (†TO); this taxon is now reported annually in the Region. All 3 Gyrfalcons were in e. Washington 1-23 Mar.

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The Klamath Basin is proving to be an important stopover for northbound Black-bellied Plovers; 500 near Bonanza, *Klamath* 26 Apr (JVM) replaced the previous eastside record

(358) set just last spring at nearby White Lake. Black-bellieds remain a novelty elsewhere e. of the Cascades, with 8 reported from four Washington locations 8-25 May providing the only other reports. Golden-plovers were again scarce; unidentified singles flew past Boiler Bay 22 Apr and 9 & 10 May (PP), while 2 Pacifics at O.S. 25 Apr (K. Carlson) constituted the lone Washington report. A Snowy Plover at Crockett L., *Island* 27 May (RM) was just the 5th for the P.T. but the 4th there since 2003; aside from one Sep record, all have been in May. Rare, but now annual in w. Washington, 7 Black-necked Stilts were tallied 25 Apr–11 May; 3 near Edison 9 May (H. Armstrong, T. Armstrong, M. S. Dallas) were *Skagit's* first. Six American Avocets strayed to w. Oregon, including 3 at F.R.R. 24 May+ (S. Maulding, m.ob.). The spring record 55 Solitary Sandpipers (19 Apr–19 May) were almost evenly split between the two states; all but 3 of 14 eastside birds were in Washington, while 25 of the 41 westside birds were in Oregon, including a maximum of 8 at E.E.W. 27 Apr (JGe). Single Willets at Crab Cr., *Lincoln* 10 May (J. Acton) and W.W.R.D. 27 May (M&MLD) were in e. Washington, where they are rare-but-regular spring transients. Whimbrel again showed well inland, with 15 visiting four W.V. locations 22 Apr–31 May and 4 eastside birds 13 Apr–22 May; one at Sydney L., *Okanogan* 21 May (ph. K. Tran et al.) marked just the 4th spring record for e. Washington. As has become the norm, the W.V. hosted 3 Long-billed Curlews 10-26 Apr. A Hudsonian Godwit at Deer Lagoon, *Island* 27 May was the Region's 13th northbound bird but the first in spring for the P.T. (RM). Ten Marbled Godwits at six locations in the P.T. 10 Apr–27 May was supranormal; this species is rare away from the outer coast on the westside. Two Ruddy Turnstones at Lower Klamath N.W.R. 4 May (C. Kisling) were the eastside's first spring birds since 2000. A gathering of 350 Surf-birds at O.S. 24 Apr represents Washington's 2nd highest tally ever (BS). Red Knots, which typically overfly Oregon in spring, showed well along that state's outer coast, with 230+ reported 18 Apr–25 May; tallies on 9 May of 82 knots at Boiler Bay (PP) and 61 at Florence, *Lane* (M) were exceptional. Two knots enlivened Finley 6 May (WDR), while another at Soap L., *Grant* 20 May (R. Friesz) was e. Washington's first at any season since 2005; inland birds are rare in the Region. Seven knots at Dungeness Bay, *Clallam* 22 May (MB, KK) were in the P.T., where not annual during spring. A Sanderling at Soap L. 15 May (TL) was a less-than-annual spring migrant for e. Washington. Seven Semipalmated Sandpipers marked a return to normal following last

spring's record 13. Four were in the P.T., where expected, while 3 were along outer coast, where they are surprisingly rare in spring; singles graced Bay City, *Tillamook* 2 May (DS, TS), Bottle Beach, *Grays Harbor* 9 May (J. Puschock), and Florence 10 May (M). The lone eastside Semipalmated was at Borax L., *Harney* 15 May (OS). Baird's Sandpipers are rare-but-annual in e. Washington; 8 this season, 19 Apr–22 May, was nearly twice the norm. Four Baird's, all in Oregon 22-29 Apr, was a typical westside showing. Pectoral Sandpipers invaded for the 4th time since 2000, with 80 reported 2 May+; this is the 2nd highest seasonal tally for the Region (102 in 2004), which averages about 4 per spring. Most were in Washington, including all 10 eastside reports and 55 of 70 westside birds; groups of 12 at Dungeness Bay 22 May (MB, KK) and N.S.C.B. 24 May (TR) were the maxima. A Rock Sandpiper at Hug Point S.P., *Clatsop* 24 May (L. Cain) was record late for Oregon by 10 days and some five weeks after the typical spring departures. For the 5th consecutive spring, a Ruff appeared in the Region; this season's bird, a male, brightened the Astoria airport 25 May (B. Andry). Flights of Red-necked Phalaropes peaked about mid-May, as evidenced by the 40,000 that winged northward past Boiler Bay 12 May (PP). An unexpected 6 Red Phalaropes stopped at Midway Beach, *Pacific* 21 May (E. Huston), and one remained until 24 May (D. Gluckman).

Following a mini-invasion in spring 2008, a Franklin's Gull, at Floras L., *Curry* 22 May (KC, DL), was the only one westside. For only the 2nd spring in 20 years, the Region had no Little Gulls. They are found near annually with the Bonaparte's Gull flocks at P.N.P. Given that this season's high count of Bonaparte's at P.N.P. was nearly double the norm—5500 on 10 Apr (BW, VN)—the absence of Little Gulls was, perhaps, even more confounding. The 2500 Bonaparte's at Port Orford, *Curry* 21 Apr (KA) was an exceptional tally for the Oregon coast. A Heermann's Gull near Port Townsend, *Jefferson* 4 Mar–10 Apr (G. Thompson) likely wintered locally, as this species rarely reaches the P.T. before Jun; northbound flocks arrived along the Oregon coast 21 May+ (PP). A *kumlieni* Iceland Gull graced W.W.R.D. 8 Mar. (ph., †M&MLD) and will be Washington's 13th if accepted. The third-cycle Slaty-backed Gull found in Portland during Jan was last seen 3 Apr (SN). Though Western Gulls regularly wander upriver along the Columbia R. e. to W.W.R.D. in early spring, one at Vantage, *Kittitas* 29 May (TA) was both late and about 130 km farther upriver than usual. A Glaucous-winged Gull x Herring Gull hybrid at Everett 10 May consti-

tutes the Region's latest spring record of this cross (SM). Forty Glaucous Gulls, 1 Mar–24 May, established a new Regional benchmark for spring; one at Hood River 22 Mar (JW, DM) was the only one of 9 eastside birds not found in Washington. Excluding last spring's inexplicable invasion into e. Washington, the single ad. Sabine's Gull near Vantage, *Kittitas* 29 May (TA) would have been the Region's first eastside spring record since 1971! Northbound movements of Common and Arctic Terns went all but unnoticed; high counts of 92 Commons and 163 Arctics came from the 8 May cruise off Oregon (JW). A Forster's Tern at F.R.R. 17 May (S. Maulding) was at the only westside site where they are somewhat regular in spring. Though Tufted Puffins nest on Protection I., *Jefferson* they are quite rare e. of Port Townsend in the inner Puget Sound; thus one at Bellingham Bay, *Whatcom* 24 May was noteworthy (M. Tove).

Eight Band-tailed Pigeons visited feeders in White Salmon 12 Apr–4 May, providing further evidence that this species is now firmly established in *Klickitat* (*vide* SJ); following several years of spring and summer reports, breeding was documented in this eastside county during 2008. Single Band-taileds at Northrup Canyon, *Grant* 19 Mar (RM, M. DuFort), Bend 3 Apr (P. Meehan), and Yakima 26 Apr (*vide* DG) were well e. of areas where they are expected. Though now annual in the Region, the White-winged Dove at Frenchglen, *Harney* 30 May+ (P. & P. Newman, ph. J. Powell) was just the 5th in spring; most records have come Jul–Oct. This season's Yellow-billed Cuckoo was Malheur 30 May (SF, F. Rowland); they are annual at se. Oregon oases. A migrant Flammulated Owl, discovered in an isolated stand of deciduous trees at Palouse Falls S.P., *Franklin* 24 May (RS, MW et al.), was quite a surprise, as this is just the 2nd Washington record away from suitable nesting habitat; similarly, another migrant was one heard s. of Fields, *Harney* 25 May (AS, ES). A Short-eared Owl flying over heavily forested Mount Tabor Park in e. Portland 25 Apr must have been a bizarre sight (A&CH, T. McNamara). Ten Snowy Owls, all in Washington 1-17 Mar, was goodly total for a non-invasion year. The Northern Hawk Owl that wintered at Mansfield, *Douglas* was found dead of an apparent vehicle strike 7 Mar (J. Ellis). The now-expected flight of Black Swifts passed along the Oregon coast 17-25 May, with a high count of 103 at New River, *Coos* 25 May (TR). One at McMinnville, *Yanhill* 22 May (P. Johnston) was in the W.V., where this species is a rare-but-annual migrant. Weeks after the last of several wintering Anna's Hummingbird disappeared from



**SA** Yet another Acorn Woodpecker, this one at Bend 21 May (D. Fagan), wandered e. of the Cascades. This is just the 2nd spring bird away from the Region's known colonies; most extralimital reports have come Sep–Nov. Prior to 2003, there were about 12 records from e. Oregon (*Birds of Oregon: A General Reference*) and just one Washington record away from the isolated outpost at Lyle, *Klickitat*. Since then, 8 more Acorns have been detected e. of the Cascades, 2 in Washington and 6 in Oregon (includes one from Jun 2009), and there have been 3 in w. Washington, where none had occurred prior to 2005. By most accounts, Acorn Woodpeckers are declining across much of their range, particularly in California where fungal disease ("Sudden Oak Death") is taking a heavy toll on several oak species and other mature stands are failing to regenerate (Eric Walters, pers. comm.). One must wonder if these strays are prospectors from local populations or, perhaps, refugees from farther afield.

the Yakima area, one appeared there 1 Mar (*fide* Denny Grandstrand); this species is still rare away from *Klickitat* on Washington's eastside. Washington's 8th Costa's Hummingbird enlivened Mt. Vernon, *Skagit* 16 May (ph. T. Derrer); all but two records have been from spring, with most occurring in May. Another male Costa's was at Bend, where annual, 27 May (LM). Approximately 35 Calliope Hummingbirds were noted from the westside, including a record-high 8 in w. Washington 5–29 Apr; increased observer effort and awareness likely explains the fairly dramatic increase of such reports over the past decade. Western Washington observers enjoyed Lewis's Woodpeckers for the 6th consecutive spring, with singles at Snoqualmie, *King* 10–17 May (J. Tubbs) and Corkingdale, *Skagit* 15 May (RM); one at Helmick S.P., *Polk* 3 May was the only w. Oregon report (J. Plissner). No Red-naped Sapsuckers were reported on the westside, but single Red-naped Sapsucker × Red-breasted Sapsucker hybrids were detected at Juanita Park, *King* 26 Apr–21 May (RM) and County Line Ponds, *Skagit* 15 May (RM); in many cases, apparent Red-naped Sapsuckers w. of the Cascades have proven to be this cross.

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

Most of the spring record 11 Least Flycatchers were found at presumed breeding sites in e. Washington 13–29 May; singles at Barnaby Slough, *Skagit* 14 May (JA) and South Prairie, *Pierce* 27 May (CW) were in w. Washington, which had but two antecedent spring records. A Hammond's Flycatcher at *Skagit* W.M.A. 8 Apr (JB-P) and another at Marymoor Park, *King* 9 Apr (MH) were the two earliest on

record for Washington; this species typically arrives there in late Apr. Ten Dusky Flycatchers in w. Oregon 25 Apr–1 May was about average following last spring's record 19, while 7 Dusky in the w. Washington lowlands 8–30 May was unprecedented. Washington's 12th Black Phoebe appeared at North Cove, *Pacific* 7 May (†TA, TB, R. Fleming); this northward-expanding species has been recorded in eight of the past nine years in Washington. Twenty-eight Say's Phoebes reached the westside 1 Mar–5 Apr, including maxima of 3 at Eugene 1 Mar (V. Thompson) and at the Sandy R. mouth 21 Mar (DM); 10 in Washington was down from last year's record 24 but still well above that state's historic average—about 2 per spring prior to 2004. A spring record 6 Ash-throated Flycatchers were n. and w. of normal 9–31 May; 4 were in the W.V., where less than annual, while one at Marblemount, *Skagit* 9 May (JA, M. Slovin) adds to about 20 prior w. Washington records. The lone coastal bird inhabited Langlois, *Curry* 20–26 May (LM, KA). A Western Kingbird near Pateros, *Chelan* 28 Mar (V. Blitz) was about four weeks early. Westerns flooded into Oregon 20 Apr+, as evidenced by 20 near Glide, *Douglas* 21 Apr (JH) and 7 in the Langlois–Cape Blanco area 29 Apr (KA, LM). Although they do not nest locally, 20 or more northbound kingbirds visit the outer coastal pasturelands near Cape Blanco in most years; this season, nearly 30 were tallied 9 Apr+ (TR, TJW et al.). Seven westside Loggerhead Shrikes was more than double the seasonal norm; all but 2 occurred 4–29 Mar. A late bird, at New L. in mid-May (D. Pitkin, R. McKenzie), provided just the 2nd spring record for heavily birded *Coos*.

Washington 3rd Bell's Vireo (all since 2005) was discovered at Sun Lakes/Dry Falls S.P., *Grant* 21 May (†DS, BS); the bird's coloration was consistent with the nominate (eastern) subspecies. The season's only Blue Jays were on the eastside; one was at Walla Walla 18 Apr (P. Fisher), and another, discovered at Burns 21 May (LM), had apparently been present for months. A modest population of Western Scrub-Jays persists in the Yakima Valley between Prosser, *Benton* and Yakima, with 4 reported from this area 27 Mar–30 May (*fide* DG). Multiple flocks of Clark's Nutcrackers, which first irrupted into the e. Washington lowland during the winter months, remained in *Yakima* well into Apr; 17 were still in Wenas Valley 8 Apr, and 30 inhabited the lower Nile Valley 13 Apr (J. Kozma). Two Sky Larks, likely wanderers from the remnant introduced population on s. Vancouver I., B.C., were at American Camp, San Juan I., *Island* 21 May (*fide* CW); this is the

first reliable report in the Region in more than a decade. The former population at American Camp, estimated to be 12–60 pairs during the 1970s and 1980s, was apparently extirpated in the late 1990s (Wahl et al. 2005. *Birds of Washington*). A Bank Swallow at Astoria 31 Mar (MP) was nearly a month early for the westside. The presence of 100 Banks at Hopewell, *Whatcom* 25 May (*fide* CW) likely signifies yet another colony in w. Washington, where there are now at least six active; in 1991, there was just one westside Bank Swallow colony in the Region. Five Mountain Chickadees, remnants from a modest winter irruption, lingered in the lowlands of w. Washington; the latest was at Marymoor Park 16 Apr (B. Bell).

Single Rock Wrens s. of Florence 19 May (DF, HH), at Finley 20–22 May (MM, WDR), and near Lebanon, *Linn* 21 May (J. Harding) were in the w. Oregon lowlands, where not annual. An additional stray was at the summit of Mary's Peak, *Benton* 20 May (RHo); while highly unusual, these sightings mirror a similar incursion during spring 2007. Several veteran observers noticed a dearth of Canyon Wrens across much of e. Washington; resident populations may well have been depleted during the prolonged period of snow cover and sub-freezing temperatures that hit the Region during late Dec 2008. A rare westside Canyon Wren was near Home Valley, *Skamania* 19 Apr–5 May (SJ, C. Flick); a spate of recent records suggests that this species may be regular in e. *Skamania*. Less than annual in

**SA** The discovery of 4 gray-capped Bushtits (subspecies *plumbeus*) sw. of Moses L., *Grant* 4 Apr (DS) temporarily ends speculation about the demise of a tiny disjunct population that was last reported 10 km n. of this site in 2004. Although gray-capped birds (*plumbeus* group) inhabit much of the interior of the w. United States, the n. edge of their range, which reaches s.-cen. Oregon and se. Idaho, is at least 400 km s. of this locale. Most of the Region's Bushtits are brown-capped (*minimus* group) and reside w. of the Cascade Crest. Generally speaking, major mountain ranges isolate these subspecies groups from one another, thus their ranges typically do not overlap. However, brown-capped birds currently reside e. of the Cascades in the upper Yakima Valley, and specimens (housed in the Slater Museum of Natural History in Tacoma) of both the *plumbeus* and *californicus* (brown-capped) subspecies were collected during the 1950s near Mabton, *Yakima* (DP, pers. comm.). Since Bushtits are sedentary, the source of the current *plumbeus* population in *Grant* is unknown, and it is unclear how long it has been present.

the W.V., *Benton's* 2nd Blue-gray Gnatcatcher enlivened Corvallis 15 May (RH). Single gnatcatchers stopped at Fields 4 May (M) and Malheur 24 May (AC); this species is a very uncommon breeder in some of the juniper-filled canyons of *Harney*, but gnatcatchers rarely appear in that county's migrant traps. After consecutive record springs, Mountain Bluebirds again showed well in w. Washington, with 21 between 16 Mar and 7 May; 5 at Marymoor Park 9 Apr was the maximum (MH). Oregon again lagged far behind, equaling last year's meager showing with just five reports 20 Mar–10 Apr. Seven Townsend's Solitaires were encountered in the lowlands of w. Oregon, including a maximum of 3 at Portland's Mount Tabor Park 22 Apr (G. Lillie). An olive-backed Swainson's Thrush (*swainsoni* group) was an unexpected find on Euchre Mt., *Lincoln* 26 May (†DB); local breeders are of the russet-backed type (*ustulatus* subspecies group). This bird, a presumed migrant, was likely still northbound, as *swainsoni* make up much of breeding population in British Columbia. Three migrant Gray Catbirds were noted from *Harney* oases 24–30 May, including 2 together at Malheur 26 May (AC). A paltry 6 Northern Mockingbirds 24 Mar–25 May were all in Oregon. American Pipits at N.S.C.B. 28 May (KC, DL) and Eugene 29 May (H. Reinhard) were at least two weeks tardy. Thirty Bohemian Waxwings at Summer L., *Lake* 17 Mar (PL) was an exceptional tally so far removed from their expected haunts in ne. Oregon.

A male Tennessee Warbler at Portland 28 Apr (†J. Hayes) was about a month earlier than the normal vagrant window and may have wintered in the w. United States; another, at Malheur 25 May (TS), fell within the expected pattern of occurrence. A Virginia's Warbler at Twin Buttes, *Malheur* 24 May (AS, ES) was in an area that has produced about one third of Oregon's 14 antecedent records; it is believed that this species is a rare-but-regular breeder in *Malheur*, but remote patches of suitable habitat are extremely difficult to access. This season's Chestnut-sided Warbler graced Frenchglen, *Harney* 24 (HN). A male Magnolia Warbler, not quite annual in the Region in spring, visited Hagelstein Park, *Klamath* (KS); this is about the 30th record for Oregon, half of which have fallen 20 May–15 Jun. This spring's lone Black-throated Blue Warbler brightened Fields 20 May (M). A Hermit Warbler at Eugene 14 Mar (B. Green) had surely wintered locally, while one at Davenport, *Lincoln* 18 May (†M. Mathis et al.) continues a string of eastside reports far from expected breeding habitat. Seven Palm Warblers constituted a typical spring showing; 6 were

on the coast, where expected, while one at Malheur 25 May (TS) was on the eastside, where less than annual at any season. Primarily a fall vagrant in the Region, a singing Blackpoll Warbler at Sun Lakes/Dry Falls S.P. 24 May (ph., †DS, BS) provides just the 2nd spring record for Washington; surprisingly, this marks the 3rd consecutive year that a northbound Blackpoll has visited the eastside. The season's only Black-and-white Warbler, the first in w. Washington since May 2003, graced Kent Ponds, *King* 24 May (ph. O. Oliver, M. & L. Crawford); Washington averages about one per year, with records widely scattered throughout the seasons. Single migrant American Redstarts at Ginko S.P., *Kittitas* 13 May (CW) and s. of Fields 24 May (TS) were about two or three weeks early; most reports of northbound birds come in early Jun. Northern Waterthrushes are extremely rare spring vagrants in w. Washington, so one at Fir I., *Skagit* 9 May was noteworthy (D. Abbott). A waterthrush found in suitable breeding habitat n. of Sisters 22 May (RHo) was in area with no documented nestings; one at Fields 31 May (TR) was the only report from the *Harney* migrant traps. A male Hooded Warbler found singing at Coast Range at Elliot S.F. in e. Coos 29–31 May (JB) was the 4th May–Jun bird during the past three years in Oregon, which had just nine records prior to 2007. Five Yellow-breasted Chats in w. Washington 2 May+ bespeak this species' continuing comeback in that subregion. The flight of 175 Western Tangers that passed P.N.P. 9 May (BW, G. Gerdt, J. Acker) was the seasonal maximum but pales in comparison to the Regional record 1450 tallied there 16 May 2008.

A gathering of 250 Chipping Sparrows at Liberty, *Kittitas* 12 May (CW) far surpasses any previous Regional tally; 150 along Gray Rock Trail, *Yakima* 23 May 2005 is the only other published triple-digit tally. A Clay-colored Sparrow visiting Bainbridge I., *Kitsap* 4 May is just the 4th spring season bird from w. Washington (BW). We've come to expect Brewer's Sparrows on the westside in recent years, but they remain quite rare in the P.T.; *Snohomish's* first was near Brier 25 May (TB). The declining P.T. breeding population of Vesper Sparrows is almost entirely confined to *Pierce* and *Thurston*, so singles at Seattle 5 Apr (C. Sidles) and Van Horn, *Skagit* 9 May (GB) were unexpected. A Vesper at Toledo, *Lincoln* 16 Apr (C. Philo) was surprising, as they are rare on the coastal slope n. of Coos. Two territorial Vespers along Bethel Mountain Rd. e. of New River, Coos 18 Apr–25 May were at the northernmost coastal site with suspected breeders. Though there are no recent Umpqua Valley breeding records, a Lark Sparrow near

Glide, *Douglas* 21 Apr (JH) was in an area where they nested somewhat regularly 25 years ago. Three Black-throated Sparrows at Mickey Hot Springs, *Harney* 23 Apr (SD) were five days earlier than the record arrival date for the Region. Another Black-throated that visited a Selah, *Yakima* feeder 27 Apr was both early and far from known breeding sites (*vide* DG), while one at Hanford, *Benton* 20 May was simply out of place (J. Abel, NL). Now annual in both states, single Red Fox Sparrows (*iliaca* subspecies group) enlivened Bainbridge I. 5–6 Apr (BW) and Florence, *Lane* 28 May (DPe). Harris's Sparrow, which averages about 5 per spring in the Region, was a near no-show; one at Cape Meares, *Tillamook* 17 Apr–1 May (M. Tweelinckx) furnished the only report. White-crowned Sparrows of the subspecies *oriantha* are rarely reported away from montane breeding sites on the eastside; thus 2 banded near Finley, *Benton* 29 Apr (J. Lucas, NL) and another at Richland 2 May (BL, NL) were of interest. The 100+ Lapland Longspurs noted along Oregon's coast 2 Mar–9 May likely makes a seasonal record for that state, where single-digit spring tallies are the norm. Most of these reports involved small flocks of fewer than 10 birds, with 35+ at Cape Blanco 7 Apr representing the daily maximum (KA, LM). The Region's 4th spring, and Washington's 6th, Chestnut-collared Longspur was near Tacoma 15 May (†R. Moore, V. Elliot, J. Wherry, M. Heckert). A Snow Bunting on Destruction I., *Jefferson* 20–22 May fell one day shy of tying the latest spring record for Washington (P. Hodum).

The Northern Cardinal saga continued, with three more appearances by this species along the P.T./W.V. corridor. Females visited feeders in Salem 3 Mar (*vide* HN), and Vancouver, *Clark* 28 Apr (D. Goddu), while a male reported from Aurora, *Marion* 25 Mar had apparently been present since 31 Jan 2009 (*vide* OS). Despite obvious questions of provenance, the recent string of sightings is beginning to fuel serious speculations about natural occurrence, as it is difficult for some to imagine that so many cardinals (particularly females) are being transported into the Region. Five Rose-breasted Grosbeaks 30 Apr–31 May was about half the recent seasonal norm; another, found during late Feb at Suncrest, *Stevens*, was present through 13 Mar (TL, G. Sheridan, MW). Three Indigo Buntings 1–26 May were all on the eastside, where annual in spring; the earliest, at Kennewick, *Benton* 1–2 May (S. Peterson, R. Weeks, T. Greagor), was about the 25th for Washington. A male Dickcissel at Grants Pass, *Josephine* 27 May (ph. P. Hicks) was the Region's first spring record since 1995; Ore-

gon has 12 prior records from widely scattered dates.

A wintering flock of 50 Tricolored Blackbirds remained at Othello through about 10 Apr (DS), and breeding colonies in *Whitman* and *Grant* were active 15 Apr+; this species first appeared in s.-cen. Washington in 2003. Two newly discovered colonies nw. of Prineville, *Crook* both contained about 150 Tricoloreds 1 May (CG), while the historic colony at nearby O'Neil was down to about 20 ads. this season (CG). The Region's largest colony, at Malin, *Klamath*, held about 350 individuals 16 Apr (D. Stein). Both of the season's Common Grackles were in *Harney*: one at Malheur 26 May (AC), the other was near Borax L., n. of Fields 30 May (TR). All but 2 of the 13 Great-tailed Grackles were in Oregon, where this species is increasingly expected May-Jul; these included a maximum of 3 in Burns 23 May+ (RHo, m.ob.). In e. Washington, a seven-year returnee was back at Liberty L., *Spokane* 7 Apr (TO), while another Great-tailed at Sprague L., *Lincoln* 17 May was just 7th of this species to reach Washington (ph. O. Oliver, G. Oliver). A regionally rare Bullock's Oriole × Baltimore Oriole hybrid brightened Lyon Ferry Park, *Franklin* 24 May (†SM, RM, CW, TB).

Two Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches on Saddle Mt., *Clatsop* 17 May (A&CH) and one on Marys Peak 31 May (J. Fairchild) were in the Coast Range, where they do not breed. A few Pine Grosbeaks from last winter's irruption lingered in the westside lowlands, including 3 at Wedekind, *Grays Harbor* 1 Mar (BT) and 3 at Nisqually 11 Mar (BS). On the eastside,

they continued at several non-traditional sites into Apr. High numbers persisted at upslope locales throughout the period, with flocks of 20-50 reported from several areas. Two Cassin's Finches strayed to w. Oregon, where they are rare but annual; singles inhabited Detroit, *Marion* 20 Mar (P. Sullivan) and Portland 20 Apr (SF). White-winged Crossbills appeared at multiple sites in the lowlands of w. Washington; a maximum of 5 was counted near Olympia 14 Mar (R. Sullivan), and 2 reached the outer coast at Ocean City, *Grays Harbor* 2 Apr (R. Hill). Scattered White-winged Crossbills remained at lowland sites in e. Washington through the period. One at Joseph, *Walla* 12 May was the only bird found in ne. Oregon during late spring. A pair of Pine Siskins building a nest at Washtucna, *Adams* 24 May (SM, DS) was entirely unexpected; this small town is surrounded on all sides by miles of treeless wheat fields. Expanding Lesser Goldfinches continued to move in a northeasterly direction; singles explored Yakima 21 Mar (DG) and Bridgeport, *Douglas* 4 May (MS). Five Lesser Goldfinches in *Clark* suggests that they are recolonizing that county after disappearing in 1991. Additional evidence of Lessers expanding northward was highlighted by one near Olympia 16-18 Apr (D. Catterson, ph. KB), a female at P.N.P. 7 May (VN) and a male there on 17 May (VN), and one near Snoqualmie, *King* 25 May (E. Hunn).

Initialed observers (subregional editors in boldface): Jim Alt, Knute Andersson, Tom Aversa (Washington), David Bailey, Gary

Bletsch, Justin Bosler, Keith Brady, Joel Brady-Power, Marv Breece, Tayler Brooks, Kathy Castelein, Alan Contreras, Craig Corder (*Spokane*), Bob Derting, Steve Dowlan, Scott Downes, Daniel Farrar, Shawneen Finnegan, Andy Frank, Bob Flores, Chuck Gates (*Crook*), Joel Geier, Jeff Gilligan, Greg Gillson (*Washington*, The Bird Guide Pelagics), Denny Grandstrand (Yakima), Jim Hein, Hendrik Herlyn, Randy Hill, Adrian & Christopher Hinkle, Michael Hobbs, Wayne Hoffman, Rich Hoyer, Tim Janzen, Stuart Johnston (*Hood River*, *Klickitat*), Ken Knittle, Bill & Nancy LaFramboise (Lower Columbia Basin), Dave Lauten, Terry Little, Peter Low, Maitreya, Larry McQueen, Ryan Merrill, Craig & Marilyn Miller (*Deschutes*, *Jefferson*), Steve Mlodinow, Russ Namitz, Harry Nehls (Oregon), Steve Nord, Tim O'Brien, Mike Patterson (*Clatsop*), Dennis Paulson, Diane Pettey, Roger Robb, W. Douglas Robinson (*Benton*, *Polk*), Tim Rodenkirk (*Coos*, *Curry*), Em Scattaregia, Owen Schmidt, Bill Shelmerdine, Tim Shelmerdine, David Smith, Kevin Spencer (*Klamath*), Meredith Spencer, Andy Stepniewski, Ellen Stepniewski, Noah Strycker, Julie Van Moorhem, Terry J. Wahl, Jay Withgott, Michael Woodruff, Charlie Wright. 🐦

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## Northern California

**Stephen C. Rottenborn**  
**Michael M. Rogers**  
**Jeff N. Davis**  
**Ed Pandolfino**

Along the coast, conditions were cool and dry from March into May. Strong winds generated considerable upwelling and cold sea surface temperatures, conditions accompanied by high marine productivity and krill abundance. However, some seabirds suffered from a severe food shortage, highlighted by high mortality and breeding failure of Brandt's Cormorants. Coastal winds died down in mid-May, and the second half of May was calm and hot, resulting in unproductive ocean conditions that

affected the breeding success of gulls and Common Murres. Conditions were unusually hot inland, with early "summer" thunderstorms east of the Sierra Nevada in late May. Significant finds this season included three species of *Pterodroma*, a Zone-tailed Hawk, the Region's first confirmed Gull-billed Tern, the first Magnificent Hummingbird × Anna's Hummingbird hybrid reported anywhere, and a very late Snow Bunting.

With very heavy hearts, we report the recent death of Luke Cole, killed in an automobile accident in Uganda on 6 June 2009 at just 46 years of age. Luke was a Regional Editor for 15 seasons and a subregional editor for Kings County for over a decade. Luke achieved a great deal in the field of environ-





Yellow-billed Loons have become regular winter visitors to Northern California, but few have been as closely photographed as this bird, which lingered on Tomales Bay in Marin County until 18 May 2009 (here). Photograph by Galen Leeds.

mental justice in his short life, but it will be his wit, compassion, and giant smile that we remember most. Also, after 38 seasons serving as a Regional Editor, Steve Glover will be stepping down. California's loss will be Texas's gain, as Steve leaves for the Lone Star state. We will miss not only Steve's contributions to this report but more broadly his contributions to California ornithology as a whole, as Steve has been one of the more wide-ranging birders in the state in recent years. As we wish Steve the best, we welcome the experience of Jeff Davis, who will now be summarizing records for Doves through Wrentit.

Abbreviations: C.B.R.C. (California B.R.C.); C.R.P. (Cosumnes River Preserve, *Sacramento*); C.V. (Central Valley); Fl. (Southeast Farallon I., *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 C.B.R.C. review species will be forwarded to Guy McCaskie, Secretary, P. O. Box 275, Imperial Beach, California 91933.

## WATERFOWL

A notable 6 blue-morph Ross's Geese, the only ones reported this season, were found at Merced N.W.R., *Merced* 14 Mar (PJM). Inland Brant included one at Shasta Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 17 Mar (Bob Smith, Mike McVey) and two records inside S.F. Bay: one

at H.R.S. 29 Apr (RJR) and 15 in South S.F., *San Mateo* 9-11 May (DMo). A Canada Goose with goslings at Pillar Pt. marsh 10 May (RSTh) represented the first confirmed breeding for coastal *San Mateo*. A Trumpeter Swan at Auburn R.P., *Placer* 6-9 Apr (ph. Roger Perkins, EP, ph. Ron Pozzi, ph. Steve Rose) was relatively tame, raising concerns about its provenance. A Bewick's Swan was at L. Almanor, *Plumas* 21 Mar (RAR, Peter Colasanti). Notable Eurasian Wigeon reports included one in Indian Valley, *Plumas* 11 Mar (BBg) and *San Mateo's* 2nd May record at Redwood Shores 1 May (RSTh). Thirty-one Blue-winged Teal in a single pond along Gun Club Rd. near Gustine, *Merced* 20 Mar was a high count for anywhere in the Region (PJM). Northern Shoveler hybrids continued, with *San Mateo's* Northern Shoveler × Gadwall hybrid at Belmont Slough through 28 Mar (Al Duerson, *fide* RSTh) and apparently different Northern Shoveler × Blue-winged Teal hybrids at Palo Alto, *Santa Clara* 22 Mar (ph. Steve Zamek) and 18-22 Apr (MMR, ph. Sonny Mencher et al.), perhaps involving the same bird seen here 11-27 Jan. Five Eurasian Teal from four counties included inland birds at Shasta Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 5 Apr (RE) and at the Llano Seco Unit of the Sacramento N.W.R., *Butte* 23 Mar-4 Apr (JHS). Inland Long-tailed Ducks included one at Shasta Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 4 Apr (RE) and the continuing female at Beale A.F.B., *Yuba* through 8 Apr (JLa); 4 lingered inside S.F. Bay as late as 19 Apr. Common Goldeneyes lingered late in *Santa Clara*

(4 May; MJM), *Mendocino* (7 May; CEV), and *Santa Cruz* (29 May; DLSu et al.). A Common Merganser family at the Napa River Ecological Reserve 14 May (C. Harris) provided the first breeding record for the Napa R. and only about the 3rd for Napa. A Red-breasted Merganser at Crowley L., *Mono* 19 Mar (KNN) was notably far inland.

## LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS

Both of *Marin's* wintering Yellow-billed Loons lingered on Tomales Bay n. of Marshall through 15 Apr, with one present until 18 May (DDeS, ADem, JMR, RS, BBU, ph. Galen Leeds). Another was at the Elk R. mouth, *Humboldt* 17-28 Apr (RbF, Russ Namitz, ScC). A Red-necked Grebe at Dorris Res. 14 Apr (SCR) provided an overdue first record for *Modoc*. Others away from tidal water included singles at Crystal Springs Res., *San Mateo* 17 Mar (V. Marshall, E. Koster) and Shasta Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 29 Apr (RE). With the exception of the Pt. Arena Cove, *Mendocino* bird, last reported 25 Mar (Jeanne Jackson, Tom Reid, GS), Laysan Albatrosses are rarely seen from shore, so one seen from Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 22 Mar (BLS) was significant. Among 4 Laysans on Monterey Bay, *Monterey/Santa Cruz* 23 May (RgW, ph. JPo, TAm) was one from the Guadalupe I. colony with a radio transmitter; this ad. had a chick in the colony at the time, so its visit to Monterey Bay was a foraging trip for provisioning of its young (*fide* RgW, JPo). Murphy's Petrels were recorded in good numbers and unusually close to shore. During a NOAA research cruise, one or 2 were recorded daily during the period 20-25 May, with individuals 11-56 km offshore in *Monterey*, *Santa Cruz*, *San Mateo*, *San Francisco*, and *Marin* waters (MFO). One of these birds, 11 km sw. of Punta Santa Cruz, *Santa Cruz* 20 May, provided the first record inside well-birded Monterey Bay but was quickly followed by 2 near the middle of Monterey Bay, one each in *Monterey* and *Santa Cruz*, 23 May (RgW, ph. JPo, TAm, RT). The NOAA cruise produced single Hawaiian Petrels 30 km s. of Fl. 24 May and 45 km and 109 km wnw. of Bodega Head, *Sonoma* 26 May (MFO). Rounding out the *Pterodroma* reports, 2 Mottled Petrels were 56 km off n. *Del Norte* 8 May (†Steve Mlodinow, Ryan Shaw). A Flesh-footed Shearwater off *Santa Cruz* 20 May and 2 Short-tailed Shearwaters off *Marin* 25 May were the only ones reported (both MFO). Single Manx Shearwaters were off Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 15 Mar (†Jon Feenstra, TMcG) and 23 May (†TAm, RgW), and one was seen from Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo* 4 Apr (RSTh, †DSg, MWE, Ed DeBellevue). A new Double-crested Cormorant colony was estab-

lished in a eucalyptus grove at Moonglow Dairy, *Monterey*, with up to 34 nests in late May (RF).

## HERONS THROUGH FALCONS

Snowy Egrets e. of Truckee 20 Apr (2 birds; ph. ECB, Barney Kroeger) and 3 May (ph. MMy) were apparently the first for the e. slope of *Nevada*. A pair of Snowy Egrets and three pairs of Black-crowned Night-Herons nesting at Grizzly I., *Solano* 20 May (John Kelly, Emiko Condenso, Bob Baez, RLCL) constituted the first nesting records of both species for Suisun Marsh. Both species nested in very low numbers or not at all at the heronries at H.R.S. and Palo Alto Baylands, *Santa Clara*. Inland Cattle Egrets of note included *Modoc's* 3rd at *Modoc* N.W.R. 13-18 Apr (SCR, JLx, JSL, JCS) and 3 at Long Valley, *Mono* 13 May (KNN). Coastal reports included 6 at Pier 5, S.F. 14 Apr (PSar) and singles at Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* 14 Apr+ (Tom Goodier, PJM, m.ob.), Moonglow Dairy, *Monterey* 22 Apr (DR), and Palo Alto Baylands, *Santa Clara* 22 May+ (MDo, m.ob.). High numbers of White-faced Ibis were reported from nine coastal counties throughout the period, with up to 56 at Arcata Marsh, *Humboldt* 16 May (Pat Bitton, RbF, ScC) and 71 at the Salinas W.T.P., *Monterey* 19 May (ph. DR, RC).

Breeding bird atlas field work continues to document an increasing number of nesting Ospreys in sw. *Solano* (*fide* RLCL). A pair nesting near Hwy. 41 along the San Joaquin R. 19 Mar+ (JND) was the first nesting record on the C.V. floor in *Madera*, but the nest had apparently been used previously. Reports of Bald Eagles, including both nesting ads. and wandering immes., continue to increase from across the Region. The only Broad-winged Hawk reported was one over Battery Godfrey, S.F. 16 May (HuC). Swainson's Hawks were well reported away from known breeding areas throughout the period, with birds along the immediate coast at Harkins Slough, *Santa Cruz* 18 Apr (MST, WSS et al.), Mt. Davidson, S.F. 20 Apr (BFi), Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 21 Apr (RS, DWm), and Pescadero, *San Mateo* 12 May (DLSu). A pair nesting se. of Hensley L., *Madera* 24 May (JND) represented a rare foothill breeding record. The detection of many nesting pairs in *Solano* is completely redefining the species' status in that county (*fide* RLCL). An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk over Cole Valley 17 May (†PSar) was the first for S.F. and the 9th for the Region (the 4th in spring, with records now spanning 11 Apr–17 May). A Ferruginous Hawk near Ft. Bidwell, *Modoc* 17 May (SCR) was unseasonable, although breeding has been previously suspect-

ed in *Modoc* and has been documented in neighboring *Lassen* and *Siskiyou*. The *Del Norte* Crested Caracara continued through the season in the Smith R. bottoms (Cannin Cowles, Nick Methany).

Two Yellow Rails were captured during Black Rail banding efforts s. of Fairfield, *Solano* 30 Mar (ph. Kyle Spragens, Matt Ferner, Brian Spirou); these were the first found in Suisun Marsh since 2005, but the species was reported annually there for four consecutive winters up to that point. A pair of Common Moorhens remained in Ukiah through the period (GEC, m.ob.), arousing suspicions that *Mendocino's* first breeding record was underway. Surprising May Sandhill Cranes included 6 over Novato, *Marin* 6 May (Lang Stevenson) and the first May record for *San Joaquin*, at Terminous 31 May (DaW); a pair returned to Bridgeport, *Mono* for a 3rd consecutive summer 1 May+ (Barbara Kelly, m.ob.).

## SHOREBIRDS

Up to 14 Black-bellied Plovers at McArthur 18-29 Apr (B&CY, KAb, Don Marsh) provided only the 6th *Shasta* record. A mostly alternate-plumaged Pacific Golden-Plover on an Alviso salt pond 25 Apr (MMR, ph. MJM) was only the 2nd Apr golden-plover for *Santa Clara* and the first identified to species. The only Mountain Plovers reported this season were up to 24 w. of Madera, *Madera* 9-12 Mar (GaW). Two Black Oystercatchers at H.R.S. 21 Apr and 26 May were the first there since 28 Nov 2004 and included the latest spring record for that location (RJR). A high count of 9 American Avocets at *Shasta* Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 10-20 May included a pair on a nest 19-20 May that was found destroyed and abandoned 25 May (RE); this is the first known nesting attempt in the *Shasta* Valley. An "Avostilt," or American Avocet × Black-necked Stilt hybrid, was found se. of *Mendocino*, *Fresno* 4 May (JND); previous instances of this very rare hybrid combination are detailed in *Western Birds* 35: 57-59 (2004).

Twenty-one Solitary Sandpipers in 11 counties 19 Apr–14 May included *Trinity's* 3rd at the Hayfork W.T.P. 3 May (JEH, Lowell Young). Migrant Willets inland included 14 in *Placer* 18 Apr (12 at Northstar and 2 at Tahoe Vista; BWb), *Sutter's* 2nd s. of *Tudor* 4 May (BED, JCS, JLx), and up to 2 at *Madera* W.T.P., *Madera* 16-25 May (GaW). Eight Lesser Yellowlegs on a single Alviso, *Santa Clara* salt pond 25 Apr (MMR, MJM) was a large number for spring. Up to 46 Whimbrels at



Northern California had two previous reports of Gull-billed Tern from the 1960s but no photographically documented records until spring 2009. This bird, initially found in Palo Alto, Santa Clara County on 3 May, reappeared in Redwood City, San Mateo County, where this photograph was taken on the second day of its 17-19 May stay. Photograph by Joseph Morlan.

McArthur 17-27 Apr (KAb, B&CY, Don Marsh) provided the 4th record for *Shasta*; up to 57 Long-billed Curlews there 8-21 Apr (KAb) tripled the previous *Shasta* high count for this species. A Marbled Godwit with the curlews 18 Apr (B&CY) was *Shasta's* 4th record, all in spring. Sixty-three Marbled Godwits at *Merced* N.W.R., *Merced* 20 Apr (PJM) provided a high inland count, and one s. of East Nicolaus 2 May provided one of few *Sutter* records (JLa, Dan Skalos). Migrating Ruddy Turnstones were noted through 10 May, with 90 in three adjacent salt ponds at the e. end of Dumbarton Bridge, *Alameda* 8 May being the highest count in our notebooks since May 1991 (MJM). One at Vic Fazio W.A. 14-16 Apr (WEH, ph. JCS) provided the first *Yolo* record in several years.

Inland Red Knots included 3 at *Goose L.* 16 Apr (high count for *Modoc*; SCR), at least 11 in *Kings* 3-20 May (SDS, JSy, Mark Stacy, RH), and 5 at Lower *Klamath* N.W.R., *Siskiyou* 6 May (C. Kisling). *Santa Cruz* saw its 5th and 6th spring records 5 Apr (3 birds; SGe) and 9 May (Eric Miller), the latter consisting of a "wreck" of 7 disheveled and injured birds found alive in residential yards two blocks apart in *Santa Cruz*, 2 km from the coast; all eventually died. High Sanderling counts inside S.F. Bay included 83 at the e. end of the Dumbarton Bridge, *Alameda* 21 Apr (MJM) and 70 at H.R.S. 17 May (nearly five times the previous May high count for this location; RJR). The only truly inland report was of a continuing bird at *Lemoore*, *Kings* 18 Apr (Mark Stacy). Most Semipalmated Sandpipers were inland, with one at *Goose L.*, *Modoc* 16 Apr (SCR) and 2-3 in *Kings* 28 Apr–8 May (SBT, SDS, JSy); the others were at *Alexandre* Dairy, *Del Norte* 21-22 May (ph. LuB) and H.R.S. 28 May (RJR). Incredibly large flocks of small shorebirds, mostly Western Sand-

pipers with smaller numbers of Dunlin, were tallied in Alviso, *Santa Clara* and adjacent South S.F. Bay 25 Apr (250,000 birds; MMR, MJM) and on n. Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt* 27 Apr (225,000 birds; DFX), suggesting a very concentrated northward migration this season. A White-rumped Sandpiper 3 km n. of Stratford, *Kings* 15 May (†DCR, †HG) awaits C.B.R.C. review. Six Baird's Sandpipers in four counties 28 Apr–31 May were preceded by 2 early birds 10 km se. of Kettleman City, *Kings* 13 Mar (ph. JSy). A high count of 22 Pectoral Sandpipers was reported from Alexandre Dairy, *Del Norte* 21 May (LuB); the only other report was of a single bird at the Salinas W.T.P., *Monterey* 4 Apr (DR, ph. BLS). *Santa Cruz's* Rock Sandpiper was last seen 6 Apr (PDB). Single Stilt Sandpipers were found 3 km n. of Stratford, *Kings* 25 Apr and 4-8 May (both Mark Stacy), at Vic Fazio W.A., *Yolo* 13-14 Apr (WEH, ph. JCS), and in Alviso, *Santa Clara* 30 May (ph. MMR, MJM, RGJ).

Up to 3 Ruffs were in *Merced*: one at *Merced N.W.R.* 20 Mar (wintering?; PJM), one at *San Luis N.W.R.* 20 Apr (PJM), and a female along Henry Miller Rd. 26 Apr (KVV); others included an ad. male in Alviso, *Santa Clara* 25 Apr (MMR, ph. MJM) and *Madera's* 2nd at the *Madera W.T.P.* 16-23 May (ph. GaW, KER). A Wilson's Snipe winnowing nw. of Sebastopol, *Sonoma* 15-16 May (Gay Bishop) suggests possible nesting well away from known breeding areas. Up to 11 Red-necked Phalaropes at the Hayfork W.T.P. 3-5 May (JEH, B&CY et al.) and 25 at Ruth L. 6 May (SAG) provided the 3rd and 4th spring records for *Trinity*; 23 at Wilson L., *Tehama* 2 May (SAG) were at an unusual mountain location at 1610 m elevation. Reports of Red Phalaropes were virtually non-existent; only single birds off *Mendocino* 17 May (RLeV, KGR et al.) and on *Monterey Bay, Santa Cruz* 23 May (RgW et al.) were reported.

## GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS

High counts of Black-legged Kittiwakes included 7500 during a three-hour seawatch from Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 22 Mar (BLS, DR) and 2133 at Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo* 27 Mar (RSTh). A Laughing Gull was at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 12-13 May (JuH, RS). Away from *Modoc*, where regular, Franklin's Gulls included 17 coastal birds in five counties and 19 in *Mono*, where the high count was of 12 at Big Alkali Pond 18 Apr (Bob Hogan). Rare inland Mew Gulls included ads. at the Gustine S.T.P., *Merced* 20 Mar (PJM) and in Redding, *Shasta* 24 Mar (BED) and *Modoc's* 3rd, a very late first-cycle bird, at Goose L. 16 May (ph. SCR). The Ostrom Road Landfill, *Yuba* hosted 2 Thayer's and 2 Glaucous-winged Gulls 5 Mar

(JSL); both species are rare in the county. Another Glaucous-winged far inland was at Fresno Slough, *Fresno* 11 Mar (Frank Gibson et al.). Rare wintering gulls at the Davis W.T.P., *Yolo* lingered into spring, with the ad. Slaty-backed Gull present to 10 Mar; ad. and second-cycle Lesser Black-backed Gulls through 5 & 23 Mar, respectively; and the potential nominate Iceland Gull through 23 Mar (TEa, ph. JCS, m.ob.). A first-cycle gull at Moss Landing, *Monterey* 1-7 Mar (ph. BLS, DR, ph. DSg, RF, RC) showed all the desired characters of a Slaty-backed, but definitive identification is confounded by the various gull hybrids that occur regularly in the Region; this record awaits C.B.R.C. review. After a record winter, a total of 50 Glaucous Gulls smashed the previous spring record of 34 in 1999; the latest was at the s. spit of Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt* 22 May (KGR).

The season's waterbird highlight was the Region's first confirmed Gull-billed Tern. The bird was seen briefly at the Palo Alto Baylands, *Santa Clara* 3 May (ph. JMD, Lee Hung) before disappearing, only to be rediscovered at the Radio Road ponds in Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* 17-19 May (LHg, ph. JMo, ph. KrO, ph. Michael Scott, m.ob.). Previous multiple-observer reports are from the Woodland Sugar Ponds, *Yolo* 2 Oct 1960 and American River Parkway South, *Sacramento* 17 May 1964, but neither was photographed. A Least Tern at the *Madera S.T.P.* 25 May (ph. GaW) provided *Madera's* 2nd record. Among the few migrant Black Terns reported, one at the Red Bluff R.A. 2 May (BED et al.) provided a rare *Tehama* record. A Forster's Tern at *Trinity* L. 4 May (SAG) was only the 3rd for *Trinity* and the first in spring. Elegant Terns appeared early, the first being 6 at the Salinas R. mouth, *Monterey* 21 Apr (RF). A Black Skimmer at Ocean Beach 16 May (HuC, PSar) was only the 2nd for S.F. About 20 others were in *Alameda, Monterey, San Mateo* (both bayside and coastal), *Santa Cruz*, and *Santa Clara*, the latter county providing the high count of 10 in Mountain View 10 Apr (RCP). The lone South Polar Skua was off Bodega Head, *Sonoma* 26 May (MFO). Long-tailed Jaegers are much less frequently observed in spring than fall. Four were observed off *Mendocino, Sonoma*, and *Marin* during a NOAA research cruise 18-26 May (MFO), and one on *Monterey Bay* 31 May (ph. DSg, ph. JPo, DR et al.) provided the first spring record for *Monterey*.

A count of 189 Pigeon Guillemots at Light-house Pt. 8 Apr (OsJ) was high for *Santa Cruz*. Xantus's Murrelets, all *scrippsi*, included 2 off *Monterey* 21 May (MFO), one in *Santa Cruz* waters of *Monterey Bay* 22 May (MFO), and 2 there 31 May (ph. DR, ph. JPo, ph. DSg,

RgW). The lone Horned Puffins reported were singles sw. of Fl. 24 May and w. of the Russian R., *Sonoma* 24 May (both MFO).

## DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

Single out-of-place Band-tailed Pigeons were in *Sacramento* at Rancho Cordova 1 Mar (Paul Buchanan) and near California State University Sacramento 1 May (DES). No place in the Region is immune to the incredible expansion of range and increase in numbers of Eurasian Collared-Dove. The species is being reported from high-elevation mts., including a bird in Truckee 31 Mar (MMY) thought to be the first for *Nevada*, to the open ocean, including 2 birds 55 km nw. of Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 21 May (MFO). It was said to be "plentiful" at Paskenta, *Tehama* 3 May (SAG) and "everywhere" at Ferndale Bottoms, *Humboldt* 11 May (RbF, MWa), with 60+ birds estimated at the latter site. White-winged Doves are exceptional anywhere in the Region away from the coast; one at Orland 23 Mar (KPa) was a first not only for *Glenn* but for the Sacramento Valley. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Fl. 31 May (PRBO) was likely a vagrant from the e. population rather than a wayward w. migrant, given how few breed in the Region at or n. of the latitude of Fl. A Barred Owl on Goat Mt. 25 Apr (Gerry Mugele) was the first for *Colusa* and the southernmost for the interior coast range. A Burrowing Owl at Swanton, *Santa Cruz* 10 Mar (JHW, JLL, m.ob.) was a good find. Two owls at the same burrow 14-22 Mar spawned speculation of possible breeding, which has not occurred in *Santa Cruz* in more than 20 years. Alas, no courtship activity was observed, and the birds were not found after 22 Mar (DLSu, JLL, m.ob.). A weakened Northern Saw-whet Owl picked up near Byron, *Contra Costa* 1 Apr provided a rare C.V. record; it died the next day (*vide* Sherrill Cook). The Whip-poor-will at Willow Creek, *Humboldt* returned for its 3rd summer 25 Apr (Russ Namitz et al.). A male Magnificent Hummingbird × Anna's Hummingbird hybrid, sporting a lemon gorget, visited a feeder near Eureka, *Humboldt* 2-5 Apr (ph. Jerry Mahlberg, ph. Kathryn Krupnick, SWH, DFX, RbF, m.ob.). This bird presumably is the offspring of the female Magnificent Hummingbird that visited feeders in the same area in spring and summer 2004 and represents the first record anywhere of this hybrid combination. A typical smattering of Calliope Hummingbirds was noted beginning in mid-Apr, including a first for *Sutter* near Live Oak 2-6 May (male; JLa, JCS, BED, JLx, KPa). Observations from surveys conducted 17-21 May at Big Basin Redwoods S.P., *Santa Cruz* (DLSu) illustrate the distinct separation of breeding

habitats used by male and female Allen's Hummingbirds, with females confined largely to forested sites (23 females; 0 males) and males restricted to chaparral and other open areas (58 males; 2 females; 3 sex unknown).

Our only Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was an ad. male at Woodside, *San Mateo* 17-19 Mar (ADeM et al.). A Red-naped Sapsucker along Lime Kiln Rd. 25 Mar (KPa) was one of few ever reported for *Tuolumne*. A Pileated Woodpecker at Lafayette Park 6 Apr (Richard Bradus) provided the 3rd record for *S.F.*, whereas another in the Warner Mts., *Modoc* 24 May (DVP) was the 2nd for the California portion of this range. An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Pacific Grove, *Monterey* sang vigorously just outside the species' normal breeding range 25 Apr+ (DR, RC). A Least Flycatcher singing at Carson R. 24 May+ (TEa, m.ob.) provided a first record for *Alpine*. A good number of Hammond's Flycatchers away from breeding sites included a very early migrant at San Joaquin Experimental Range, *Madera* 30 Mar (JTz). A Dusky Flycatcher returned to Big Basin S.P., *Santa Cruz* 6 May+ for its 4th summer (DLSu). Say's Phoebe are not known to breed on the C.V. floor, so a singing bird in Fresno, *Fresno* 25-27 May (JND) was unexpected. The apparent Black Phoebe × Say's Phoebe hybrid discovered last season at Ferndale Bottoms, *Humboldt* was captured 10 Mar; feathers and blood were collected for genetic analysis to confirm parentage (*vide* RbF). A Cassin's Kingbird at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 2 May (RS) was notably far north. Eastern Kingbirds included a very early bird, the earliest in the Region by six days, at Big Lagoon, *Humboldt* 18 Apr (†Marna Powell), another at Venice S.B., *San Mateo* 16 May (DaW), and 2 near Grenada, *Siskiyou* 22 May (RE). Single Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were on FI. 2-13 & 30-31 May (PRBO).

A Loggerhead Shrike near Truckee 8 May (MMY) was thought to be the first ever found on the e. slope of *Nevada*. Northern Shrikes included one lingering at Huichica Creek W.A., *Napa* and *Sonoma* until 4 Mar (MBe) and another at Humboldt Bay N.W.R., *Humboldt* 1-16 Mar (Leslie Tucci, TKZ, Justin Schneider). A Least Bell's Vireo was well studied at O'Neill Forebay W.A., *Merced* 21 May (PJM). A Yellow-throated Vireo at Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* 31 May+ (†MiT, Bill Adams) was at a locality where this species has previously summered. Single Red-eyed Vireos were at Pescadero, *San Mateo* 17 May (GrH) and Big Basin Redwoods S.P., *Santa Cruz* 19 May (DLSu). Common Ravens continue to push into new territory. Two birds were attending an active nest on the C.V. floor near C.R.P. 3 Mar (JTr), and 2 were at FI. 15 Apr+ (PRBO),

where they have been observed excavating Cassin's Auklet burrows (*vide* Russ Bradley). A colony of 17-20 pairs of Bank Swallows at a gravel and sand mine e. of Lodi, *San Joaquin* near the Mokelumne R. 18 Apr (JRow) represents the southernmost breeding locality in the C.V. A Varied Thrush at C.R.P. 16 May (JTr) was very late.

## THRASHERS THROUGH FINCHES

Three Brown Thrashers included continuing birds in Arcata, *Humboldt* through 5 May (SWH) and at Coyote Hills R.P., *Alameda* though 15 Mar (Eric Goodill, MDo, MiF), plus a new find in Bodega Bay, *Sonoma* 17 Apr (NTC, Steve Huckabone). Our only Tennessee Warbler was at Año Nuevo S.R., *San Mateo* 24 May (L. Graham, V. Marshall). Fourteen Northern Parulas was a good total for the Region. Chestnut-sided Warblers were in Redding, *Shasta* 11 Apr (ph. Hugh Harvey) and at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 31 May (RAR, Bob Speckels). A Magnolia Warbler was along Tunitas Cr., *San Mateo* 3-5 May (ph. George Chrisman et al.), and another visited Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 30 May (OsJ, LLu, CLu). A Cape May Warbler at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 30-31 May (Ed DeBellevue, OsJ, RAR, LLu, CLu) was an excellent find. A Yellow-throated Warbler was at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 17 May (DMo, AKI, ph. †MWE). Our only Prairie Warbler was banded at Palomarin Field Station, *Marin* 31 May (PRBO). Eleven Palm Warblers were all coastal, as were all but one of our 11 Black-and-white Warblers, the exception being one in Modesto, *Stanislaus* 25 May (Eric Caine, HMR). American Redstarts were at Crowley L., *Mono* 22 May (Bonnie Fanti), along Tunitas Cr., *San Mateo* 25 May (KrO), at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 29 May (RS), and at Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt* 30 May (Chris Murray). The Ferry Park, *S.F.* Worm-eating Warbler continued through 14 Mar (m.ob.). The only Ovenbird report came from Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 30-31 May (OsJ, LLu, CLu, RAR, Bob Speckels). Northern Waterthrushes were at Arcata Marsh, *Humboldt* 9-18 Apr (RbF, m.ob.) and Monterey Dunes, *Monterey* 16 May (Kris Neuman). Both our Hooded Warblers were found 28 May, one in Pacific Grove, *Monterey* (RC, ph. DR) and the other at Portola S.P., *San Mateo* (DLSu).

Summer Tanagers included a male returning for a 4th year e. of Colfax, *Placer* 21 May+ (Pam & Larry Risser), a singing male at Elk Head, *Humboldt* 25-27 May (KI), a singing second-year male in Davis, *Yolo* 17 May (SCH, ph. JCS), a female in Modesto, *Stanislaus* 31 May (2nd county record; ERC, HMR), and singles at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 29 May (ASH), on FI. 30-31 May (PRBO), and at Mono Lake C.P., *Mono* 31 May (JuH, CMc). Most interesting was a pair of Summer Tanagers (female

with a singing male) at Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* 31 May-1 Jun (SBT, OsJ, m.ob.). Continuing the tanager pair theme, a male and female Scarlet Tanager were on FI. 18 May (PRBO). A wintering Clay-colored Sparrow in San Jose, *Santa Clara* continued until 17 Mar (JPa). A Brewer's Sparrow n. of Stratford 4 May (Mark Stacy) was a good find for *Kings*. Notable Black-throated Sparrows were on Fairmont Ridge, *Alameda* 1 May (Gerry McChesney), at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 17 May (MWE, ASH), on FI. 21 May (PRBO), along Cherry Lake Rd., *Tuolumne* 27 May+ (3 birds; JTz, m.ob.), and near Auburn, *Placer* 30 May-6 Jun (ph. Ron Pozzi, ph. DeR). A Swamp Sparrow was at Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* 12 Mar (RSTh). Sixty-two White-throated Sparrows was a robust total for spring. Wintering Harris's Sparrows continued in Livermore, *Alameda* through 21 Apr (Dennis Rashe) and at Fay Slough W.A., *Humboldt* through 8 May (RbF, ScC, JCP). *Shasta's* 4th spring record of Harris's Sparrow was in Redding 24-30 Apr (*vide* BY).

*Monterey's* 3rd Snow Bunting was at Pt. Pinos 23-26 May (Dan Gilman, ph. DR, m.ob.). This is the latest spring date for this species in California. Previously, the latest California Snow Bunting was a Cape Mendocino, *Humboldt* bird 11 May 1978. That was the state's only May record prior to the bird that visited San Diego, *San Diego* this spring (30 Apr-7 May). Photographs of the *San Diego* and *Monterey* buntings confirmed that they were different individuals (*vide* DR). The Rose-breasted Grosbeak total of 26 was the highest in at least the past 18 years and more than double our spring average. A wintering Black-headed Grosbeak in Ukiah, *Mendocino* was present until 8 Mar (BD), and an apparent Black-headed Grosbeak × Rose-breasted Grosbeak was on Gazos Creek Rd., *San Mateo* 8 May-1 Jun (AME, Mark Kudrav, ph. KrO, Leonie Batkin, m.ob.). Blue Grosbeaks rarely breed in the Sierra foothills, so five pairs se. of Hensley L., *Madera* 24 May (JND) was an unexpected tally. Six of our 9 Indigo Buntings were in *Marin*, and singles were in *Mono*, *Santa Clara*, and *Santa Cruz*. A male Tricolored Blackbird near Ft. Bidwell, *Modoc* 19 Apr (JCS) might be a first for the Surprise Valley. Great-tailed Grackles are now appearing at high-elevation Sierra locations such as Mammoth Lakes, *Mono* (elevation 2500 m), where 2 birds were present 10 & 19 May (Bob Hogan), near Truckee, *Nevada* (at 1800 m) 14 May (ECB, Rudy Darling, Brian O'Connor, Barney Kroeger), and near Quincy Junction, *Phumas* (1100 m) 14-15 May (Scott & Amber Edwards et al.). An Orchard Oriole was in *S.F.* 1 Mar (Roberta Guise). A Common Redpoll

in Fresno, *Fresno* 12 Mar (ph. Sue Thorson) provided the southernmost record for the state. This bird was 120 km s. of last spring's Fl. redpoll, which was 200 km s. of the previous southernmost record.

Cited observers (county coordinators in boldface): Ken Able, Tim Amaral, Bob Battagin, Edward C. Beedy, Murray Berner (*Napa*), William G. Bousman (*Santa Clara*), Phil D. Brown, Lucas Brug, Betty Burrige, Eric R. Caine, Scott Carey, Rita Carratello, George E. Chaniot, **Chris Conard** (*Sacramento*), Nancy T. Conzett, Hugh Cotter, J. Michael Danzenbaker, Rudy Darling (*Nevada*), Jeff N. Davis (*Madera*), Al DeMartini, David DeSante, Bruce E. Deuel (*n. C.V. counties*), Barbara Dolan, Matthew Dodder, Todd Easterla, Mark W. Eaton (*San Francisco*), Alan M. Eisner, Ray Ekstrom (*Siskiyou*), Kevin Enns-Rempel, Mike Feighner, Brian Fitch, David Fix, Michael Force, Rick Fournier (RF), Rob Fowler (RbF; *Humboldt*), Steve Gerow (*Santa Cruz*), Steve A. Glover (*Contra Costa*), Helen Green, Steve C. Hampton, Rob Hansen, W. Edward Harper, Stanley W. Harris, Garth Harwood, Laird Henkel, Justin Hiite, Alan S. Hopkins, Lisa Hug, John E. Hunter (*Trinity*), Ken

Irwin, Richard G. Jeffers, Oscar Johnson, Robert J. Keiffer (*Mendocino*), Andy Kleinhesselink, Tony Kurz, Laura Langham, Jim Laughlin, Robin L. C. Leong (*Solano*), Ron LeValley, Cindy Lieurance, Leslie Lieurance, Janet L. Linthicum, Jim Lomax, John S. Luther, Michael J. Mammoser, J. Mac McCormick (*Plumas and Sierra*), Chris McCreedy, Todd McGrath, Peter J. Metropulos (*San Mateo*), Martin Meyers, Dominik Mosur, Kristie N. Nelson (*Mono*), Frances Oliver (*San Joaquin*), Kris Olson, Ed Pandolfino (*Placer*), Kathy Parker, Janna Pauser, Jeff Poklen, Gary W. Potter (*Fresno*), Jude C. Power, Robert C. Power, Harold M. Reeve (*Stanislaus*), David C. Rice, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond (*Alameda*), Don Roberson (*Monterey*), Michael M. Rogers, Deren Ross, Kerry G. Ross, Stephen C. Rottenborn, James Rowth, Ruth A. Rudesill (*Sonoma*), Paul Saraceni, Donald E. Schmoldt, Jeff Seay (*Kings*), Daniel Singer, W. Scott Smithson, Jim H. Snowden, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling (*Modoc, Alpine, and Calaveras*), Grace Steurer, Matthew Strus-Timmer, David L. Suddjian (*Santa Cruz*), Brian L. Sullivan, Steven D. Summers (*Tulare*), Richard Ternullo, Ryan Terrill (*Marin*), Scott

B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Jim Tietz (Fl.), John Trochet, Mike Tyner, Steve Umland (*Tuolumne*), Kent Van Vuren (*Merced and San Benito*), David Vander Pluym, Chuck E. Vaughn, Matt Wachs, Jeff H. Wall, Bruce Webb, Jerry R. White (*Lake*), Dan Williams, David Wimpfheimer, Roger Wolfe, Gary Woods, Bob & Carol Yutzy (*Shasta*). Many more observers are not specifically cited; all are appreciated. ☺

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## Southern California



### Guy McCaskie Kimball L. Garrett

The season was highlighted by California's first spring Great Crested Flycatcher and a late Snow Bunting exceptionally far south in San Diego County. There was an impressive number and variety of vagrant passerines from the east in eastern Kern County and elsewhere; these included a greater-than-average showing of "southeastern" warblers and vireos, in a minor echo of

the phenomenon noted in the Region in 1992 (see Patten and Marantz, *Auk* 113: 911-923, 1996). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks also appeared in exceptional numbers.

We long ago ceased presenting "arrival dates" for spring migrants because of the Region's geographical complexity and the difficulty of teasing apart truly early spring arrivals from birds that wintered locally but went undetected during the winter. A Pacific-slope Flycatcher at Lake Perris, Riverside County 1 Mar (HBK) was felt to be a spring arrival, though at least 10 birds of this species wintered on the coastal slope. But were adult male Black-headed Grosbeaks near San Diego 11 Mar (ChH) and near San Luis Obispo 19 Mar (SB) record-early spring arrivals for their counties or birds that wintered locally? A very early 4 April Swainson's Thrush near El Centro, Imperial County (KZK) can more confidently be called a spring arrival, as the species has never wintered in California. But what about the many April Plumbeous Vireos; were they true migrants or previously undetected lingering winterers? Was a 16 April Tennessee Warbler at a well-covered site in *Los Angeles* a

very early migrant (though not normally expected until May)? Did it perhaps winter nearby, or at least somewhere well to the northwest of its "expected" winter range? Such issues are hard to resolve. Another recurring problem with our spring report is a clerical issue regarding late spring vagrants; this year, as is typically the case, there was a continuous trickle of vagrants from mid- and late May through early June and onward (even into July!). We don't always receive reports after the 31 May cut-off date, so a true picture of the numbers of "spring" vagrants cannot be complete until additional records mentioned in the summer season report are taken into account.

Abbreviations: B.S. (Butterbredt Spring at the s. end of the Sierra Nevada above Cantil, e. Kern); C.L. (China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme ne. Kern); F.C.R. (Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley N.P., Inyo); G.H.P. (Galileo Hill Park, extreme e. Kern); N.E.S.S. (n. end of the Salton Sea, Riverside); P.P. (Piute Ponds on Edwards A.F.B., ne. Los Angeles); S.E.S.S. (s. end of the Salton Sea, Imperial).





This inquisitive adult Blue-footed Booby made multiple laps around a boat load of birders on a 5 March 2009 San Diego Bird Festival field trip 8 kilometers off San Diego, San Diego County, California. Photograph by Thomas A. Blackman.



This adult Little Gull, photographed on the day of its discovery, remained with Bonaparte's Gulls on Lake Perris, Riverside County, California 1-29 March 2009. Photograph by Thomas A. Benson.

Because most rarities in s. California are seen by multiple observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and/or identifying the bird are included. Documentation for species on the California Bird Records Committee (C.B.R.C.) review list (see <[www.californiabirds.org](http://www.californiabirds.org)>) is forwarded to the C.B.R.C. and archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH CARACARAS

Migrant Brant moved through the se. portion of the Region in Apr and early May, with one at Owens Lake 1-31 May (AT). A Eurasian Teal on Upper Newport Bay, Orange 3-7 Mar (RAH) was probably the same bird present off and on here during the winter seasons since 2001-2002. At least one Harlequin Duck was present along the coast between Cayucos and

Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo 17 Mar-9 May (MLS, JSR, MO). Only 4 Surf Scoters were reported inland, with one at Borrego Springs, San Diego 29 Mar (JK) and the other 3 at the Salton Sea in Apr and May. A Black Scoter, rare anywhere in s. California, was inland at N.E.S.S. 30 May (JFG). Single Long-tailed Ducks at Bolsa Chica, Orange 11 Apr (MM), in Coronado, San Diego 15 Mar-18 Apr (JM), and at Imperial Beach, San Diego 2-3 May (EAC) were quite far s., and single birds around S.E.S.S. 15 Mar (BK) and 1 Apr (RC) were inland, where rare.

A Red-throated Loon near Imperial, Imperial 1 May (PEL) was the only one found well inland. Five Pacific Loons were found in the e. half of the Region, with single birds at Owens L. 25 May (KH-L), N.E.S.S. 14 Mar (CMcG), near Agua Caliente, San Diego 2 Apr (SES), Borrego Springs, San Diego 15 May (JH), and near Seeley, Imperial 23 May (GMcC), and another was closer to the coast on Puddingstone Res., Los Angeles 27 Apr (AKL). A Horned Grebe at N.E.S.S. 14 Mar (CMcG) was unexpected. A Red-necked Grebe on Klondike L. near Big Pine 29 Apr-2 May (T&JH) was the 5th in Inyo, and single birds at Cardiff, San Diego 4 Mar (DWA) and in Oceanside San Diego 24 Mar-15 Apr (PG) were unusually far south.

A two-day pelagic trip to the waters off extreme sw. California produced among other birds a respectable 14 Laysan Albatrosses 9-10 May, all 96 km or more off the coast and most s. and w. of San Clemente I., along with 3 Cook's Petrels 160 km ssw. of San Clemente I. 10 May (WTH). An imm. Red-billed Tropicbird eluding a Peregrine Falcon over Pt. Piedras Blancas, San Luis Obispo 23 Apr (RAR) was on the coast, where virtually unrecorded; one 40 km se. of San Clemente I. 9 May (WTH) was the only other one reported. An ad. Blue-footed Booby, now considered casual in California, was well photographed 8 km w. of Pt. Loma 5 Mar (TABL).

The only Little Blue Heron away from costal San Diego was an ad. at Playa del Rey/Marina del Rey, Los Angeles 31 May+ (RS, BJ). A Tricolored Heron near Oxnard, Ventura 7-21 May (CH, WF) was the only one reported. A pair of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons remained in Imperial Beach, San Diego through the period (GMcC), and an ad. at Famosa Slough in Ocean Beach, San Diego 10 May-6 Jun+ (KS, JP) could be the same bird

seen here off and on since May 2001. A Glossy Ibis near Bishop 19 Apr (JLD) was new for Inyo. A Mississippi Kite at Mesquite Springs in Death Valley N.P. 23 May (VH, BSt) was in the area where most spring vagrants of this species have been found. Single Zonetailed Hawks at Borrego Springs 31 Mar (HC) and on Pt. Loma 21 Apr (TM) were presumed migrants, while an imm. near Ramona, San Diego 18 May (BCa) may have been summering locally. A Rough-legged Hawk lingered through 1 Apr (K&TK) at the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo. The Crested Caracara present in the Tijuana R. valley since Sep 2006 was still present 7 Jun (TRS).

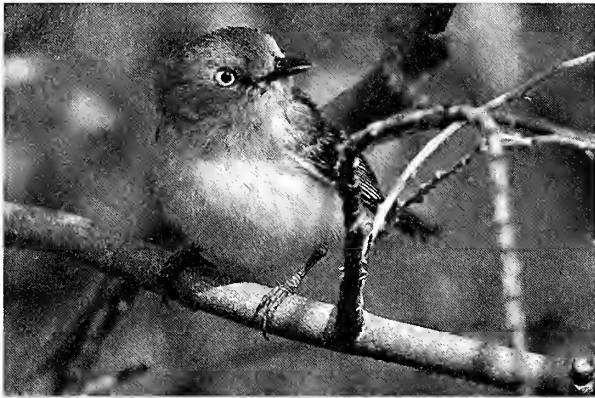
## PLOVERS THROUGH PUFFINS

The only American Golden-Plover was one on s. San Diego Bay 22 Apr (PU, PEL). The last of the wintering Pacific Golden-Plovers was on San Clemente I. through 25 Apr (MDG), at Bolsa Chica through 6 Apr (PK), and near Imperial Beach through 1 May (RTP). An American Oystercatcher was on the beach near Imperial Beach 27 Apr (BCo). A somewhat late Solitary Sandpiper on San Clemente I. 11-13 May (JTS) was the only one on the coast; one near New Cuyama, Santa Barbara 19 Apr (MTV) was e. of the Coast Range, and 4 reported in the e. part of the Region between 31 Mar and 22 Apr were fewer than expected. A late Upland Sandpiper w. of Lancaster, Los Angeles 3 Jun (JSF) was the 9th to be found in spring in s. California. Twenty-three Whim-



The nominate subspecies of Xantus's Murrelet, having the white of the face extending upward to above the eyes, is a scarce late-summer visitor from the south to the waters off Southern California, with these two photographed 160 kilometers south-southwest of San Clemente Island on 10 May 2009 establishing by far the earliest date for this subspecies in California waters. Photograph by Monte Taylor.

blers at Owens L. 2 May (JLD) was an impressive number for this area of California. A Ruddy Turnstone and 4 Sanderlings at Owens L. 2 May (JLD, MSanM) were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. A Black Turnstone, always rare inland, was at S.E.S.S. 1 May (PEL). A Surfbird, even rarer inland, was at P.P. 25 Apr (JG). A Red Knot near Newberry Springs, San Bernardino 15 Apr (GCH) and an-



Four White-eyed Vireos in a spring made an above-average count in Southern California and included this singing male 31 May 2009 in Aspendell, Inyo County on the east slope of the Sierra Nevada, where the elevation is. Photograph by Bob Steele.



This Yellow-throated Vireo, one of six found in Southern California in spring 2009, was at Galileo Hill, Kern County on 2 June. Photograph by Brad Singer.



Red-eyed Vireos were more numerous than expected in Southern California in spring 2009, with ten reported, including this one caught and banded on Point Loma, San Diego County 16 May 2009. Photograph by John Martin.

other at Owens L. 2 May (MSanM) were inland and away from the Salton Sea. A White-rumped Sandpiper at C.L. 24-25 May (TEW, LLA) brings the total found in California in spring to over a dozen. Five Baird's Sandpipers, scarce in spring, were seen at Owens L. between 8 Mar and 2 May (SLS, JLD), another was at C.L. 9 Apr (SLS), and on the coast one was at the Santa Ynez R. estuary 25 Apr (PAG).

(GMcC) were followed by 10 there 28 Apr (GMcC, MS) and another at S.E.S.S. 12 May (GMcC). Single South Polar Skuas 21 km off Pt. Loma, San Diego 9 May (WTH), between San Miguel I. and Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara 16 May (TMcG), and 48 km off Pt. Loma 21 May (DWP) were the only three reported. Three Long-tailed Jaegers were found far off San Clemente I. 9-10 May (WTH), and an-

The only Semipalmated Sandpipers were somewhat early migrants at Edwards A.F.B., Kern 25 Apr (JSF) and P.P. 29 Apr (JSF). A Ruff was near Cantil, Kern 5 May (MSanM). An impressive 7600 Red Phalaropes were at Pt. Piedras Blancas 16 May (RAR).

An ad. Little Gull on L. Peris, Riverside 1-29 Mar (TAbE) was the only one found. A Laughing Gull at Hermosa Beach, Los Angeles 19 May (RM) was on the coast, where rare. Six Franklin's Gulls along the coast between 14 Apr and 24 May, along with 45 in the e. part of the Region between 3 Apr and 31 May, were far fewer than in recent years. A Heermann's Gull was far inland on Klondike L. near Big Pine 6 Apr (T&JH), and at least 5 were at S.E.S.S. during period (GMcC). Wintering Glaucous Gulls lingered into Mar, with late individuals at Dockweiler Beach, Los Angeles 2 Apr (DSC) and Santa Barbara 1 May (D&DR), and with about 20 seen moving northward past Pt. Piedras Blancas 10 Apr through 10 May (RAR). Single Least Terns at Klondike L. near Big Pine 1 May (DJH), Tinemaha Res. near Big Pine 25 May (SLS), Grimshaw L. near Tecopa, Inyo 25 May (SG) and at Zzyzx, San Bernardino 23-24 May (TK), along with up to 5 at S.E.S.S. 12 May+ (GMcC), were inland. An Arctic Tern at L. Havasu, San Bernardino 1 Jun (PEL) and another at Owens L. 30 May-1 Jun (DSh) were inland, where casual at best. A Sandwich Tern at the San Diego R. mouth 11 May (CB) was only the 5th found in California. Two Elegant Terns inland near Seeley 15 Apr

other was sw. of San Miguel I. 16 May (TMcG).

Two Pigeon Guillemots at West Cove Pt. on San Clemente I. 25 May (JTS) and another at Laguna Beach, Orange 10 May (RMcN) were unusually far south. Two Xantus's Murrelets of the s. subspecies *hypoleucus* 160 km ssw. of San Clemente I. 10 May (JSF) establish the earliest date for this taxon in U.S. waters. A Horned Puffin was 25 km w. of San Miguel I. 16 May (TMcG), and another was 6.4 km w. of Santa Cruz I. 30 May (BA).

## PIGEONS THROUGH VIREOS

Three Band-tailed Pigeons in e. Kern between 26 Apr and 21 May were in the desert, where rare. Six White-winged Doves were found along the coast, where rare, with one in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo 20 May (PAG) being the northernmost. A Northern Pygmy-Owl in Bakersfield, Kern 28 Apr (MMcQ) was at an unexpected location. A Lesser Nighthawk on San Clemente I. 18 May (DMG) was the first to be documented on the island. A Common Nighthawk in Bishop 23 May (SLS) was the earliest this spring. A Broad-billed Hummingbird was in Borrego Springs 27 May+ (RT). Twelve Calliope Hummingbirds at feeders in coastal San Luis Obispo between 22 Mar and 1 May were far more than previously recorded, but numbers elsewhere appeared normal. Up to 2 Acorn Woodpeckers at B.S. 25-29 Apr (KH-L), one near Cantil 1-5 May (MSanM), and another at Galileo Hill 23-31 May (TEW, LLA) were outside the species' normal range. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Zzyzx 28 May (MJSanM) establishes the latest date by far for this species in California.

An *Empidonax* photographed at Zzyzx 30 May (TAbE, BSi) was thought to be an "eastern" Willow Flycatcher (*campestris/traillii*) by the observers and some experts who reviewed photographs; there are no specimens of these easterly subspecies from California. The only Least Flycatcher reported was at G.H.P. 28 May (TEW, LLA). An Eastern Phoebe near Cantil 16 Mar (MSanM) had likely wintered locally. A Great Crested Flycatcher on Pt. Loma 20 May (PEL) was completely unexpected, as the previous 49 California records are all from fall. Up to four pairs of Brown-crested Flycatchers were in Borrego Springs, San Diego 12 May+ (BKS, SES); 2 at Scotty's Castle, Inyo 23 May (SLS) were n. of previous breeding sites in California. A Tropical Kingbird, casual as a spring vagrant, was at Pt. Mugu, Ventura 29 May (RMcM). The only Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at Death Valley Junction, Inyo 25 May (SG).

A Northern Shrike was near Bishop 17-20 Mar (DAP). Purple Martins returned by 21

Mar to two breeding locations in *San Luis Obispo*, in Atascadero and e. of Santa Margarita (MLS). Four White-eyed Vireos during the period were more than expected, with birds at G.H.P. 25-28 May (AH), Huntington Beach 31 May (BED), Mission Dam near Santee, *San Diego* 1 Jun (ChH), and in the Sierra Nevada at Aspendell, *Inyo* 31 May (SLS). Bell's Vireos were on territory in *Inyo* as far n. as Big Pine 31 Mar+ (T&JH) and Wyman Canyon in the White Mts. 22 May-3 Jun (TK); one at Wind Wolves Preserve in San Joaquin Valley portion of *Kern* 25 Apr (GP) was in an area where not recently recorded. Yellow-throated Vireos made a better-than-average showing, with birds at Huntington Beach 23-27 May (BED), Pt. Loma 27 May (SBM), Laguna Niguel, *Orange* 7-8 Jun (RMcN, AL), and on the deserts at Zzyzx 23-24 May (TK), G.H.P. 30 May-3 Jun (LLA), and B.S. 2 Jun (JMCM). The status of Plumbeous Vireo as a spring migrant is still unclear; most, especially on the deserts, have been assumed to be misidentified dull Cassin's, but the number of well-supported records grows every spring, in pace with increasing wintering population. For example, 8 in *Los Angeles* 7 Mar-26 Apr were in areas where the species was not known to have wintered, though most or all of these probably did winter somewhere in the area; birds presumed to be migrants included singles at Lake Forest, *Orange* 20 Apr (JSF), B.S. 18 Apr (TEW), and Ridgecrest 19-25 May (SLS). Seven Red-eyed Vireos on the coastal slope 14 May-10 Jun were more than expected in recent years; on the deserts, 2 were in Ridgecrest 21 May (SLS), and one was at G.H.P. 30 May (KH-L).

## SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS

A Bank Swallow on San Clemente I. 21 May (JST) was a rare migrant there. Two *tenuissima* White-breasted Nuthatches on Clark Mt., *San Bernardino* 16 May (CC) suggests possible nesting on that small desert "sky island." A Townsend's Solitaire at Fig Lagoon near Seeley 19 Apr (BK) was one of the few ever found in spring in the se. part of the Region. Two Gray Catbirds were found, at G.H.P. 24 May (FO) and on San Clemente I. 13 Jun (JST). A Brown Thrasher at Wiest L., s. of Calipatria, *Imperial* 1-15 Apr (SL, JL), was only the 4th for the Salton Sink and the first photographed there; another was in Ridgecrest 17 May (SLS). Bendire's Thrashers are of conservation concern in the Region, so 3 in the Wild Horse Canyon area of the Mojave National Preserve, *San Bernardino* 4 Apr (SSo) were of note. Cedar Waxwings are routinely common late into the spring, e.g., 700 at Whittier Narrows, *Los Angeles* 13 May (SJM),

but one on San Clemente I. 14 Jun (JLP) established the latest spring date for the island.

Blue-winged Warblers are less than annual in the Region; one at B.S. 25 May (SBT) was first for *Kern* in six years. A Tennessee Warbler at Hansen Dam, *Los Angeles* 16 Apr (KLG) was exceptionally early for a spring vagrant but did not winter in the area; additional Tennessees were at Pt. Loma 13 May (ChH), Bishop 16 May (C&RH), B.S. 25 May (SBT), and Long Beach 13 Jun (SSt, BED). Two very late Nashville Warblers in *Inyo*, at Tollhouse Spring 24 May (KH-L) and Deep Springs 30 May (SLS) could possibly have been vagrant nominate birds based on song (former bird) and date. Northern Parulas staged a strong movement into the area, with at least 14 on the coast 3 May-6 Jun and 11 more on the deserts 28 Apr-31 May. A male Chestnut-sided Warbler on San Clemente I. 16 Jun (MDG) was the first in spring for the island; another male was in Del Mar 1 Jun (JK). Magnolia Warblers were on San Clemente I. 27 May and 2 Jun (JTS) and inland at B.S. 25 May (TEW, LLA) and G.H.P. 30 May (RMcN). Black-throated Blue Warblers are casual in spring, so 4 this year, all in *Kern*, were exceptional: G.H.P. 26-28 May and 2 Jun (TE, K&BK) and California City 30 May (male; JCW) and 31 May (female; KK). A very late Yellow-rumped Warbler (subspecies not reported) was on San Clemente I. 16 Jun (DMG); a Townsend's Warbler in South Gate, *Los Angeles* 9 Jun (RB) was also exceptionally late. Blackburnian Warblers were on San Clemente I. 23 May (JPG), at B.S. 24 May (TK), and in the Morongo Valley, *San Bernardino* 30 May (DB). A Yellow-throated Warbler was in Bishop 30 Apr (J&DP), an unprecedented early date by 24 days for *Inyo*; more typical was one on Pt. Loma 31 May-1 Jun (PU). A migrant Palm Warbler was in Long Beach 23 Apr (KSG); one at Finney L. 28 Mar (BMi) likely wintered there. Blackpoll Warblers, casual in spring, were at B.S. 25 May (TEW, LLA) and G.H.P. 3 Jun (JMCM).

Seven Black-and-white Warblers on the coastal slope 14 Apr-18 Jun complemented 19 on the deserts 13-31 May. American Redstarts included 8 on the coast 15 May-3 Jun and 11 on the deserts 15-31 May. The only Prothonotary Warbler was in Birchim Canyon n. of



This Brown Thrasher at Wiest Lake in the Imperial Valley, Imperial County, California 1-15 (here 3) April 2009 was only the fourth to be found in the Salton Sink and the first photographed. Photograph by Kenneth Z. Kurland.



Northern Parulas made a better-than-average showing, with 25 found after 28 April 2009 in Southern California, including this singing male on Point Loma, San Diego County, photographed on the second day of its 30-31 May 2009 stay. Photograph by Eric G. Kallen.

Bishop 25 May (J&DP); inadvertently omitted from last year's reports was a significant coastal record at Playa del Rey, *Los Angeles* 6 Jun 2008 (DS). Coastal Ovenbirds at Huntington Beach 15 May (DC) and Pt. Loma 29 May (ML) augmented the 6 in e. *Kern* 15-31 May. A Northern Waterthrush in the Prado Basin, *Riverside* 19 Mar (JEP) must have wintered locally; 6 more were on the n. deserts 30 Apr-27 May. Kentucky Warblers were found only on the n. deserts, with singles at G.H.P. 24-28 May (TK), B.S. 2 (JMCM) & 6 Jun (RMcN), and in *San Bernardino* at Nipton 27 May (DH) and Baker 30 May (TAB, BSi). Hooded Warblers made a strong showing late in the period; 8 were on the coast 28 May-14 Jun, with 5 more on the deserts 9-29 May, plus one near Imperial Dam 19 May (DRW) that was only the 3rd for *Imperial*. Canada Warblers, casual



This totally unexpected Snow Bunting at a baseball field in Pacific Beach on the exceptional dates of 30 April through 7 (here 4) May 2009 was the 500th species recorded in San Diego County. Photograph by Stephen J. Myers.



Two or three green Scarlet Tanagers are now found every fall, but brightly colored spring males are few and far between, so this one photographed on the second day of its 19-29 May 2009 stay on Point Loma, California drew much attention. The contrast between the fresh black coverts and the older, slightly paler remiges, along with the pale area on the flanks, show that this male is less than one year old. Photograph by Trent R. Stanley.

in spring, were at B.S. 25 May (JSF) and G.H.P. 28 May (SLS). A Red-faced Warbler at a ranch 16 km ne. of Lancaster, *Los Angeles* 29 May (JD) was one of the few ever found in the Region's desert lowlands. A Painted Redstart at B.S. 28 Mar (KH-L) was extremely early but certainly did not winter locally; others were there 4 (RK) & 30 May (KH-L), and additional birds were at Tamarisk Grove, *San Diego* 25-26 Apr (SES) and G.H.P. 2 Jun (K&BK); one in the Santa Rosa Mts. 28 Apr (PU) was in breeding habitat.

## TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A pair of Summer Tanagers nesting near Bishop 2 May+ (J&DP) established the northernmost breeding record in the Owens Valley; this species was more widespread than normal away from its limited nesting areas this spring. A second-year male Scarlet Tanager, casual in spring, was on Pt. Loma 20-21 May (JS). At least 7 migrant Green-tailed Towhees were along the coast 20 Apr-15 May; one in the n. Antelope Valley 31 Mar (JSF) was

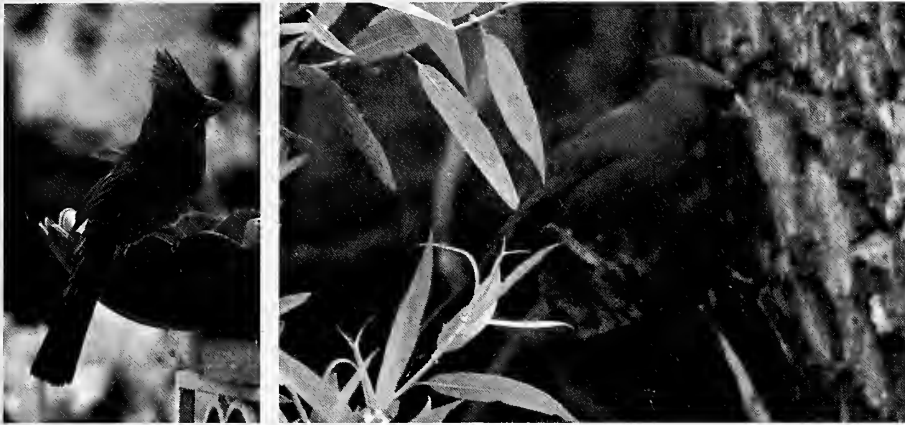
record early for e. *Kern*. Two Clay-colored Sparrows were in Torrance, *Los Angeles* 18 Apr (TD). An early coastal slope vagrant Black-throated Sparrow was in Sunland, *Los Angeles* 12 Mar (KLG); one at Salton Sea N.W.R. headquarters 7 Apr (BMi) was the first to be found in spring at S.E.S.S. Single Lark Buntings were on the Carrizo Plain, *San Luis Obispo* 25 Mar (DMC) and at G.H.P. 30 May (JCW). Singing Grasshopper Sparrows were noted 25 Mar+ at several localities in *San Luis Obispo*, from the Carrizo Plain w. to the Chorro Valley near *San Luis Obispo*; up to 24 birds were in the latter area 5-7 May (AFS). A Red Fox Sparrow (*iliaca* subspecies group) in the Santa Ana Mts., *Orange* 21 Mar (JLD) was undoubtedly wintering locally, as was a Swamp Sparrow photographed in the Puente Hills, *Los Angeles* 16 Apr (CMcG). The latest White-throated Sparrow reported was in the Chorro Valley 2 May (AFS). Coastal *oriantha* White-crowned Sparrows were in the Baldwin Hills, *Los Angeles* 18 Apr (KLG) and in Carpinteria, *Santa Barbara* 28 Apr (LRB); a black-lored bird at F.C.R. 15 Mar (C&RH) was exceptionally early for a n. interior *oriantha*, but nominate *leucophrys* was not ruled out. Two very late Lapland Longspurs were at Owens L., *Inyo* 18 Apr (SLS). Quite a shock was the discovery of a Snow Bunting in Ocean Beach, *San Diego* 30 Apr-7 May (JP)—the farthest s. this species has ever been found on the Pacific coast of North America and an odd spring date; the record put the *San Diego* species list at 500.

A male Northern Cardinal was photographed in Blythe, *Riverside* 1-3 May (RH); birds of the sunspecies *superbus* are very rare visitors to the Colorado R. portion of the Region. In addition to the population of eastern (nominated?) birds established since the 1920s near El Monte, *Los Angeles*, escapees of e. cardinal subspecies are noted widely on the coastal slope; this year, at least one pair bred in the Sepulveda Basin, *Los Angeles* (AD) and one or 2 males were at nearby Hansen Dam (BED, KLG). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were remarkably numerous in the Region, with at

least 46 on the coastal slope 11 May-16 Jun and 24 on the deserts 14 May-7 Jun, dominated by second-year birds; one in Poway, *San Diego* 9 Apr (CV) and perhaps the 2 in Ojai, *Ventura* 17 Apr (MA) were probably wintering locally. Indigo Buntings were found widely after 3 May, with at least 10 on the coastal slope and 20 in the interior; at least two breeding pairs were n. of Bishop 16 May+ (J&DP). An ad. male Painted Bunting in Moreno Valley, *Riverside* 7 Feb-17 Mar would best be considered an escapee (DM). The only Dickcissel reported was at Mesquite Springs, Death Valley N.P., *Inyo* 26 May (PC).

An ad. male Bobolink was at Death Valley Junction, *Inyo* 28 May (PC). A Common Grackle near Inyokern 22 Apr (BSt) was the 3rd ever for *Kern*. Bronzed Cowbirds were found n. of their normal range at Chino Canyon near Palm Springs, *Riverside* 22 May (BMA) and China Ranch, *Inyo* 31 May (JEP). A Hooded Oriole in Inyokern 2 Mar (LB) was record early for e. *Kern*. Vagrant Baltimore Orioles were at Yucaipa, *San Bernardino* 4 May (TC), the Tijuana River Valley, *San Diego* 10 May (EGK), and Pt Loma 21 May (PEL). A female Cassin's Finch in Atascadero 6 Apr (KJZ) was the only one recorded in *San Luis Obispo* this year. A male Evening Grosbeak was in Silverado Canyon, *Orange* 10 May (MO), despite the lack of a flight this past winter.

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Northern Cardinals of the southwestern subspecies *superbus* are rare visitors to the Colorado River portion of the Southern California region; the male on the left was in Blythe, Riverside County 1-3 (here 2) May 2009. Escapees and small local breeding populations on the coastal slope are usually of one of the eastern North American subspecies and show more black across the forehead such as this bird (right) at Hansen Dam, Los Angeles County, photographed on 1 May 2009. Photographs by Roger Higson (left) and Kimball L. Garrett (right).

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## Baja California Peninsula



**Richard A. Erickson**  
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Coverage was light, and highlights were few. Fourteen Long-tailed Jaegers were in the southern Gulf of California in mid-April. There were more reports than usual from Pacific islands, including high counts of Red-breasted Nuthatch and

Oregon Junco on Guadalupe and thought-provoking records of Common Raven and House Finch on San Benito. The Region's first Brown Thrasher reappeared, and there was an enigmatic Magnolia Warbler in the Mexicali Valley.

### WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

Migrant Brant were reported throughout the season across the n. tier of the Region, from Nine Mile Bank (3 on 8 Mar, WTH et al.) and Laguna El Ciprés (one on 14 May, ph. EDZH) to the Cerro Prieto geothermal ponds (3 on 29 May, ESM). Seven at Laguna Hanson 3 Apr (ph. GR-C) and one at Rancho Japá 16 Apr (ph. RAE) were the first to be reported from the Region's mountainous n. interior. Freshwater Surf Scoters were at Laguna Hanson (one on 3 Apr, ph. GR-C) and Laguna El Ciprés (one on 14-15 May, ph. EDZH). Least Grebes were seen at five locations from La Paz s. in Mar, including one new one: 2 were at a small pond near the biosphere reserve gate on the road to San Antonio de la Sierra 23 Mar (MSM et al.). Early Pied-billed Grebe broods were noted at Estero San José 11 Jan and 18 Mar (SGM), but this species is known for its long nesting period.

At the s. end of the Region, a Black-footed

Albatross and a lingering Northern Fulmar were near Gorda Banks, and a worn Cook's Petrel was 16 km off Cabo San Lucas, all 14 Apr (PAG). In the foothills s. of La Paz, the small pond at El Oro has received attention from birders since 2007. A Neotropical Cormorant there 16 Mar (ph. SGM) represented one of the latest additions to pond's bird list. Conventional wisdom is that very few migrants pass through Baja California Sur in spring (e.g., *Monographs in Field Ornithology* 3:153-154, *Wader Study Group Bulletin* 105: 65-70). Two "South American" species that have developed spring patterns of occurrence in Baja California Sur, albeit in tiny numbers, are American Golden-Plover and Baird's Sandpiper. This year, an American Golden-Plover, mostly in basic plumage, was at El Centenario 13-15 Mar (ph. SGM), and a Baird's Sandpiper was at Estero San José 6 May (DGE). Two other species wintering primarily in South America may be establishing the same pattern in the Cape District: a Stilt Sandpiper at Chametla/El Centenario 2-15 Mar (LM, ph. SGM) established the 2nd Mar record in the area this decade, and up to 2 Wilson's Phalaropes at Chametla/El Centenario 2-15 Mar (LM, ph. SGM) and one at Estero San José 9 Mar (LM) were preceded by



Fourteen Long-tailed Jaegers were found 8 kilometers south of Isla Monserrat, Baja California Sur on 16 April 2009, among them these four. Although the date might suggest these birds were spring migrants, they represent the ninth report since 2001 by Peter Gaede and others from the southern Gulf of California during the period 18 February through 16 April. Most reports have been of multiple birds, ranging up to 30 and probably many more, and none have shown any sign of migratory restlessness. The winter range of this species remains poorly known. Photograph by Peter A. Gaede.

13 individuals in Mar/Apr this decade. Neither species has been found in the area from Dec through Feb. Although the species is quite comfortable at sea, a Red Phalarope at Estero San José 29 Mar was said to appear fatigued (RST).

One hundred fifty Sabine's Gulls offshore s. of Bahía Magdalena 13 Apr were in large groups migrating northward (PAG). The season's only Franklin's Gulls were ads. in the far n., at the new Las Arenitas sewage ponds, near Cerro Prieto, 16 Apr (2; RAE) and at Laguna El Ciprés 15 May (†EDZH). Also at Las Arenitas 16 Apr were 100 Gull-billed Terns, including courting birds and birds foraging over the adjacent desert (RAE). Long-tailed Jaegers were found again in the s. Gulf of California: 14 were 8 km s. of I. Monserrat 16 Apr (PAG). Although both subspecies of Xantus's Murrelet nest on the Islas San Benito, and *S. h. hypoleucus* has been reported nesting on Isla Asunción, a pair of *scrippsi* Xantus's Murrelets just outside the entrance to Laguna San Ignacio 12 Apr (PAG) provided only the 2nd Baja California Sur report of the species that we have received.

## HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH THRASHERS

In the Colorado Desert, a Costa's Hummingbird nest with young at Campo Mosqueda 17 Feb (ACF) was early. Downy Woodpeckers have been seen regularly near Tecate since Mar 2007, but only once has more than one been seen. It was more of the same with a lone female seen repeatedly from 14 Dec through 1 Jun (JS, RAE, PP). Single migrant Hammond's and Dusky Flycatchers were seen in Mexicali 16 Apr (RAE), but Willow Flycatcher was unrecorded. We have received a number of reports of Loggerhead Shrikes from I. Santa Catalina; on 15 Apr, 2 ads. were feeding 2

fledglings there (PAG). A Plumbeous Vireo and a Cassin's Vireo at Cataviña 24 Mar (RST) were presumably migrants. Thirty-five Common Ravens on Isla San Benito Oeste 10 Apr included one feeding on an Osprey nestling out of the nest (PAG). It is likely that the Region's raven population has increased along with the human population, as has been the case throughout much of the continent. At Islas Coronado, a Horned Lark 7 Mar (JSF, WTH et al.) was unusual.

First dates for migrant swallows in Baja California were 5

Feb (Violet-green and Northern Rough-winged; Bahía de los Angeles; GF, MF), 18 Feb (Tree; El Rosario; RAE), 27 Feb (Cliff; Lagunita El Ciprés; MJB, MSB), and 6 Mar (Barn; Laguna El Ciprés; EDZH). Another early nesting was shown by a Verdin nest with young at Bahía de los Angeles in late Jan (GF, MF). Eight Bushtits were seen in the foothills on the road to San Antonio de la Sierra 23 Mar (JSF et al.). All previous Cape District reports to us have been from locations that required hiking. A report of 6 Red-breasted Nuthatches in the pines on Isla Guadalupe 19 Mar (ELP) was extraordinary. One at the same location on 1 Feb 2003 (ph. RWH) is the only other record we know of since the resident population was last reported in 1971. After going unseen for nearly four months, the Tecate Brown Thrasher made an encore appearance 17 Apr–3 May (ph. JS). The Flickers documented Bahía de los Angeles Gray Thrashers fledging in Feb again. Little has been published on the nesting habits of this Regional endemic.

## WARBLERS THROUGH EXOTICS

One of the perils of inadequate birder coverage was demonstrated by a bright second-year male Magnolia Warbler noted 16 Apr at the Mexicali zoo (RAE), where no birder had visited since mid-Nov. Did the bird winter there, or was it a very early spring migrant, perhaps from a wintering site in w. Mexico? Either way, it was unprecedented in Baja California, although at least 6 have been found wintering in Baja California Sur since 2003. This season's Belding's Yellowthroat update: one in a marsh just s. of La Ribera 8 Mar (LM) was at a new location, and one in mangroves on the edge of La Paz 13 Mar and 4 in a wet agricultural area near Santiago 16 Mar (all SGM) further demonstrated the species' ability to frequent atypical habitats, at least occasionally.

Two Clay-colored Sparrows at Todos Santos 22 Apr (PAG) were late, although, as with so many species, this sparrow's springtime movements in Baja California Sur are poorly known. Far to the n., a Lincoln's Sparrow that landed on a boat ca. 32 km s. of Islas Todos Santos 27 Mar (DW) was certainly on the move. Five Oregon Juncos at the n. end of Isla Guadalupe 19 Mar (ELP) echoed the 18 Mar 2007 record of 8 from the same location. One wonders how often mainland birds remain in the island's coniferous forests and whether they are able to contribute to the endemic junco gene pool. Although the A.O.U. currently recognizes the Guadalupe birds as one of many subspecies of Dark-eyed Junco, it was not always so. Continuing with the hybrid theme, an apparent Northern Cardinal × Pyrrhuloxia was near San José del Cabo 20 Mar (ph. SGM). This hybrid combination has rarely been reported in the literature.

At least 3 Western Meadowlarks were still singing at Chametla 14 Mar (ph. SGM). Great-tailed Grackles were first seen in the mountains last spring; this year, 2 males were at the same location, Rancho Japá, on 16 Apr (RAE). The earliest transient Hooded Oriole at Bahía de los Angeles was seen 21 Jan (MF, GF); birds were at El Rosario and Cataviña by 18–19 Feb (RAE). House Finches may be established again on Islas San Benito, as they were noted in 2006 and again on 9 Feb (PJ) and 10 Apr (15, PAG), but clarification is desired. The situation is similar to the Northern Flickers on Isla Guadalupe, where the mainland subspecies has recolonized the range of an extinct endemic subspecies (Sweet et al., *Western Birds* 32: 71–80, 2001). Forty Lawrence's Goldfinches at Santo Tomás 24 Mar (RST) represents the largest concentration ever reported to us.

Exotic species were again seen in Ensenada: a Spotted Dove 13 Apr and 2 *Aratinga* parakeets through 8 Jun (ph. EDZH). The parakeets appeared close to—but did not match perfectly—Mitre and Scarlet-fronted, so some degree of hybridization was suspected (KLG).

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## Mexico

Héctor Gómez de Silva

### NORTHERN MEXICO



### DUCKS THROUGH TROGONS

At least 4000 Brant were in the estuary at Yávaros, Son. in early Apr (BW). The Brant discovered in Aticama, Nay. in Feb was still there 10 Mar (HGdS). A female Wood Duck and 12 ducklings were seen in the Cañón de Fernández S.P. on the Nazas R., Dgo. 17 May, confirming the presence of a breeding population (AVJ). Nine Buffleheads near Gómez Farias, Chih. 21 May were late (MC). A flock of 16 American White Pelicans was at Laguna Los Boquillos near Anáhuac, Chih. 24 May (MC). A Magnificent Frigatebird at Puerto Peñasco, Son. 12 Apr seemed early (MP). A Neotropical Cormorant was reported from a farm pond near Cuauhtémoc, Chih. 23 May (BG, JL). An imm. White Ibis was inland at Ejido El Azteca, Tamps. 31 May (T&JB). A Snail Kite was near La Tovar near San Blas, Nay. 9 Mar, where the species has become regular, and another was on the Manzanillo airport road 15 Mar (HGdS). A Northern Goshawk was near Madera, Chih. 22 May (MC). A juv. Broad-winged Hawk was spotted eating a White-winged Dove in Bosque Venustiano Carranza, Torreón, Coah. 4 Apr (MRL, FVP), where this species has been recorded

occasionally in the past. Northern Jacana continues to disperse northward along the Pacific coast: an ad. was in n. Mazatlán, Sin. 24 Feb, and an imm. was near the Mazatlán airport on the same date (MC). Two Limpkins were near La Tovar 9 Mar, and around 12 ads. with 3-5 small chicks were on the cocodrilaro road near Aticama 10 Mar (HGdS). A Limpkin was heard on the Manzanillo airport road 15 Mar (HGdS). A Willet was seen in the company of Black-necked Stilts in the wastewater treatment facility in Gómez Palacio, Dgo. 29 Mar (MRL, ph. FVP). A Black Turnstone was at San Blas, Nay. 3 Mar (MC). A first-year Glaucous Gull and 10 ad. Franklin's Gulls were at the sewage ponds at Puerto Peñasco, Son. 13 Apr (MP). A Ring-billed Gull was at Laguna Los Boquillos 24 May (MC). A Mangrove Cuckoo was in dry forest near Nuevo Morelos, Tamps., near the border with S.L.P. 28 May (MC). A Eurasian or African Collared-Dove was at Las Varas, Nay. 8 Mar

(HGdS). Eurasian Collared-Doves have been seen with increasing frequency by resident birders in Torreón during this period.

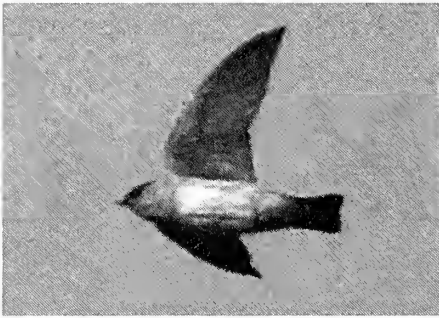
A pair of Red-crowned Parrots was seen near Ejido El Azteca 31 May (T&JB). Two Eared Poorwills responded to tape playback at La Noria, Nay. 1 Mar (MC); 3 answered playback on the Providencia road near El Tuito, Jal. 13 Mar (HGdS); and one sang spontaneously at noon from the oak canyons on the road up Volcán de Fuego, Jal. 18 Mar (HGdS). At least three pairs of Tawny-collared Nightjars responded to playback near Linares, N.L. 25 May (MC). A female Green-breasted Mango was seen at Bocatoma II, Tamps. 28 May (MC). A Berylline Hummingbird was on the Singayta road near San Blas 9 Mar (HGdS). Three Mountain Trogon territories were on Mesa de Arturo on the road from Cerocahui to Urique, Chih. in late Mar (BW). Two Violaceous Trogons responded to playback near El Naranjo, S.L.P. 29-30 May (MC).

### WOODPECKERS THROUGH FINCHES

An ad. male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and an imm. Red-naped Sapsucker were within 50 m of one another at El Palmito, Sin. 26 Feb (MC). Silent Olive-sided Flycatchers were at Linares N.L. 25 May, Gómez Farias, Tamps.



Willetts are very rare in Mexico away from the coastal lowlands. This one in Gómez Palacio in the state of Durango on 29 March 2009 probably represents only the second record from Durango. Photograph by Francisco Valdés Perezgasga.



There have been a very few sight records of Cave Swallows from Oaxaca's coastal lowlands in recent years, filling in gaps in the mystery of their passage, but several were seen and photographed in April 2009 near Unión Hidalgo, Oaxaca (here 12 April). Photograph by Amy McAndrews.

28 May, and El Naranjo 30 May, late dates even for this late migrant (MC). A calling Eastern Wood-Pewee was near Hacienda Santa Engracia, Tamps. 28 May (T&JB). A Say's Phoebe was at La Noria 1 Mar as in the past several years (MC), and there was an Eastern Phoebe on the Singayta road near San Blas 9 Mar (HGdS). A Streaked Flycatcher was at the n. end of its range at El Tigre, Tamps. 29 May (T&JB). A pair of Western Kingbirds were on territory at a farm s. of Chihuahua City, Chih. 24 May, farther s. than usual for nesting behavior (MC). A Nutting's Flycatcher was at Papagayo, S.L.P. 29 May (MC). A Couch's Kingbird was heard at Rancho Primavera near El Tuito 14 Mar (HGdS). A pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers was at a nest on a power-line support structure 30 km s. of Linares 26 May, farther s. than usual for confirmed nesting (MC). A Green Jay was seen in Cañón de Fernández S.P. 17 May (AVJ), where regular.

An ad. male Black-capped Vireo was in arid thorn brush on Hwy 80 about 8 km nw of Ciudad de Maíz, S.L.P. 28 Mar 2008 (CS). A Golden Vireo was in Arroyo Hacienda, just w of Guapalaina, Chih., where previously seen in Dec 2008 through late Mar 2009 (BW). At least 4-6 Sinaloa Martins returned to the nesting cliffs near El Palmito 26 Feb but they were not seen there 25 or 27 Feb, 6 individuals were roosting at the base of the cliff and feeding overhead 23 Mar, but they still appeared not to be nesting (MC). A Juniper Titmouse was in the Sierra de San Luis, Son. 11 Apr (MP, BS-P, KR). Few Cedar Waxwings were seen in La Laguna region near Torreón this season: groups of no more than 15 were seen in the campus of the Instituto Tecnológico de La Laguna in Torreón 3-15 Mar, and after an absence of two weeks were seen again in the same place 30 Mar-5 Apr (FVP). A rare sighting of waxwings outside an urban setting was made in La Isla on the Nazas R., Dgo., where more than 30 birds were perching in cottonwoods 8 Mar (MRL, WB, FVP).

A singing male Northern Parula was recorded in Bosque Venustiano Carranza 16 Apr (ph. FVP), only the 2nd record in this subregion. Two Black-throated Green Warblers were at Laguna La María, Col. 17 Mar (HGdS). Ten Baird's Sparrows were in Valle de Ánimas, Son. 11 Apr (MP, BS-P, KR). An ad. female Swamp Sparrow was near the Mazatlán airport 24 Feb and was seen again 20 Mar but could not be relocated 30 Mar (MC). Another Swamp Sparrow was in cattails by a pond just outside El Fuerte, Sin. in late Apr (BW). A Red-headed Tanager was in oaks on the descent into Barranca de Urique in late Mar (BW). A Flame-colored Tanager was in Arroyo Hacienda in late Mar (BW). A Pyrrhuloxia was unexpected at the moist area near Ejido El Azteca 31 May (T&JB). A late female Lazuli Bunting was in Madera Chihuahua 22 May (MC). Two Lesser Goldfinches were near the Nacimiento, Tamps. canal 29 May (T&JB); this species is not mapped in the lowlands of s. Tamps. in the breeding season.

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## CENTRAL MEXICO



A male Wood Duck was in the lagoon at Magdalena, Jal. 4 Mar (MC). Five female Ring-necked Ducks were in the artificial lake at Parque Ecológico Xochitla, Méx. 21 Mar (HGdS, MPV). A covey of 11 *graysoni* Northern Bobwhites was at Magdalena 4 Mar (MC). Three imm. Brown Pelicans were at Almoloya del Río, Méx. at 2700 m elevation 2 May (MC). A Turkey Vulture was in downtown Mexico City 20 Apr, the latest date so far recorded from the D.F. (HGdS, MPV). A Hook-billed Kite glided over Facultad de Ciencias, UNAM, D.F. 2 Mar (HGdS, MPV). There was a juv. Roadside Hawk at Parque

Ecológico Xochitla, D.F. 24 May (MPV, HGdS). A pale male (*tropicalis*?) American Kestrel was above Conejos, Ver. 26 May (AM, JM), well above normal elevation. Two Upland Sandpipers were near Riachuelos, Ver. 19 Apr (RH). A Royal Tern was on Presa Rodríguez near Cerro del Muerto, Ags. 9 Apr (JB). A Eurasian Collared-Dove was reported 11 km nw. of Lerdo de Tejada (or 21 km s. of Alvarado) on Hwy 180 on 15 Mar (KT). A White-bellied Emerald was near Tecolutla, Ver. on the road that goes through Riachuelos to the s. side of the river mouth 19 Apr (RH).

Two Great Crested Flycatchers were at Parque El Haya, Xalapa, Ver. 22 May, and single birds were encountered here through 30 May (ph. AM, JM). Three Sedge Wrens were about 2 km w. of the entrance of Tecolutla 19 Apr (RH). Two Ruby-crowned Kinglets were near Tecolutla 19 Apr (RH). Cedar Waxwings appeared in groups of only 4 or 5 in the pepperberry trees of a suburban garden in Tepapan 7, 9, & 19 Mar, where they are usually numerous during a waxwing flight year such as this (HCL). A rarely encountered transient, a male Golden-cheeked Warbler visited Parque El Haya 1-3 Mar (ph. AM, JM). A MacGillivray's Warbler was near Tecolutla on the road that goes through Riachuelos 19 Apr (RH). A Western Palm Warbler and a MacGillivray's Warbler were near Minatitlán, Ver. 12 Apr (MG). A pair of Slate-blue Seed eaters were on territory near Iguala, Gro. 1 May (MDC). Two White-collared Seed eaters were

heard at Parque Ecológico Xochitla 23 May (HGdS). Two Indigo Buntings were seen in the Alameda Central in Mexico City 8 Apr (GdO). A pair of Yellow-tailed Orioles was near the n. end of their range at Ejido Hernández Posada near Tecolutla 19 Apr (RH). A total of 15 Evening Grosbeaks was observed near Conejos (ph. AM, JM).

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## SOUTHERN MEXICO



Many observers noted very little bird activity in Oaxaca and Chiapas during the last week of March and very low numbers of Neotropical migrants throughout the season.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH JAEGERS

Two Muscovy Ducks flew over Rte. 2010 between Zihuatanejo and Atoyac, Gro. 16 Apr (CPD, ALD). Two Ring-necked Ducks were still at Piedra Azul dam, Oax. 31 Mar (JMF et al.). Two West Mexican Chachalacas were at Arroyo Estudiante, Oax. 9 May (JMF), where regular. Four Great Curassows were heard between Limonar and Paval, Chis. 3 Apr (HGdS, MPV). A Townsend's Shearwater was around 15 km off Acapulco, Gro. 22 Apr (MC). A locally very rare Neotropical Cormorant was at Piedra Azul dam 15 Mar (JMF et al.). A Brown Pelican flew over El Triunfo camp, Chis. 9 Mar (AM, JM, WC). Nesting at Laguna de Manialtepec, Oax. 18 Mar were multiple Anhingas, Great and Snowy Egrets, White Ibis, and Wood Storks (JMF et al.).

A Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture was at Carrizal, just n. of Coyuca, Gro. 27 Apr (MC). An ad. White-tailed Kite and a juv. were at a nest near El Tule, Oax. 13-21 Apr (JMF et al.). A White Hawk was noted flying just below the first mirador s. from El Triunfo camp 10 Mar (AM, JM, WC). A Common Black-Hawk was on its nest at Manialtepec Lagoon 18 Mar (JMF et al.). A Zone-tailed Hawk was at Monte Albán, Oax. 14 Mar (JMF et al.). A Barred Forest-Falcon was heard near La Cumbre, Oax. 18 Apr (HGdS, MPV, JdH); there are very few previous records from this site. A Peregrine Falcon was seen flying over agricultural areas near Teotitlán del Valle, Oax. 15 Mar (JMF et al.). Two Soras were found in a small water course near Teotitlán del Valle 15 Mar, and more were heard at the Tlacolula, Oax., sewage discharge area 31 Mar (JMF et al.). A pair of Gray-necked Wood-Rails was at Carrizal 27 Apr (LC, MC).

An American Golden-Plover was at the Tlacolula sewage discharge area 5 May (JMF ph.). A Sanderling was at Barra de Cahoacán, Chis. 9 May (HGdS). Several Wilson's Phalaropes were seen at Piedra Azul dam and near Tlacolula from 28 Mar-7 Apr (JMF et al.). An

imm. Laughing Gull was inland near Ocozacoautla, Chis. 6 Apr, fighting the strong winds that blew all morning and no doubt took it inland (HGdS, MPV, JdH). Around 100 Sandwich Terns were seen at Barra de Navidad, w. of Puerto Escondido, Oax. 17 Mar (JMF et al.). Twenty Elegant Terns were at Los Colorados, Oax. 12 May, and 10 were off Puerto Angel, Oax. 14 May (ph. AM, JM). An ad. Long-tailed Jaeger was around 15 km off Acapulco 22 Apr (MC).

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWING

A female Ruddy Ground-Dove was at El Triunfo camp at 1950 m elevation 9 Mar (ph. AM, JM) and was still there 30-31 Mar (ph. HGdS, MPV, JdH). A Monk Parakeet at San Martín de los Cansecos, Oax. 16 Apr (HGdS, vt. MPV, vt. JdH) was probably a wanderer from the very recently established population in Oaxaca City. Two Mealy Parrots were well seen at a coffee finca above Paval 3 Apr (HGdS, vt. MPV vt. JdH). A Stygian Owl was well seen above Filo de Caballo, Gro. 28-29 Apr (MC). A Greater Swallow-tailed Swift was seen flying over the San Felipe park 19 Apr (JMF et al.). A male Violet Sabrewing was at Paval 4 Apr (HGdS). Five Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds were seen between El Triunfo's Limonar and Paval camps 13 Mar, below 950 m elevation (AM, JM).

A male Resplendent Quetzal was seen and 2 more heard at Lagunas de Montebello, Chis. 14 Mar (MR, SW). An Elegant Trogon was heard along Arroyo Estudiante 5 & 9 May (JMF). An American Pygmy-Kingfisher was seen near La Ventosa, Oax. 1 May (JM). A group of 15 Acorn Woodpeckers was at the San Felipe park 16 Mar (JMF et al.). A Northern Barred-Woodcreeper was above Paval 3 Apr (HGdS). Three Strong-billed Woodcreepers, a high count locally, were heard at La Cumbre (w. side) 17 Apr (HGdS, MPV, JdH). A Common Tody-Flycatcher was discovered near La Ventosa 19 Apr (ph. AM, JM, KS). Three Greater Pewees were near and at Finca Prusia 29 Mar (HGdS, MPV, JdH). A bird that looked and sounded most like a Yucatan Flycatcher was in second-growth forest 6 km sw. of Frontera Cozacoautla, Chis. 11 Apr (HGdS, MPV). Two Scissor-

tailed Flycatchers and a Tropical Kingbird were at the El Triunfo clearing 1 Apr (HGdS, MPV, JdH). Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers were present at Finca El Pacifico, Pochutla District, Oax. 20 Mar (JMF et al.). Two Eastern Kingbirds were feeding at fruiting trees at San Felipe park 30 Apr (JMF). Warbling Vireos were common and singing in alder trees along Arroyo Estudiante 10 Apr-16 May, suggesting they are local breeding birds (JMF).

Multiple Cave Swallows were found near Union Hidalgo, Oax.: one on 1 Apr, 6 on 9 Apr, and 6 on 11 Apr (ph. AM, JM, KS). A Swainson's Thrush was at San Felipe park 10 Apr (JMF et al.). An Aztec Thrush was near La Cumbre 17-18 Apr (MPV, JdH, HGdS). A Gray Catbird was at San Felipe park 16 Mar (JMF et al.). Two singing Happy Wrens were seen about 300 m apart along Arroyo Estudiante 3-9 May, strongly suggesting nesting (EdV, JMF); previous records from the cen. valleys of Oax. are from winter. Two pairs of Rufous-naped Wrens were building nests at Playa Bacocho, Puerto Escondido 18 Mar (JMF et al.). Twenty Cedar Waxwings were seen Sierra de Atoyac 2 km n. of Paraíso, Gro. 16 Apr (CPD, ALD), and a group of around 50 were near Chinkultic, Chis. 9 Apr (HGdS, MPV, JdH). The only Cedar Waxwings recorded this season in the cen. valleys of Oax. were 2 at San Felipe park 10 Apr (JMF).

## WARBLERS THROUGH ORIOLES

A Northern Parula hit a window in the Santo Domingo botanical garden in downtown Oaxaca.



Northern Parula is a rare vagrant in the northern part of the Mexican Plateau. This singing male photographed 16 April 2009 is only the second record, and the first one photographically documented, from the migrant trap of Bosque Venustiano Carranza, an urban park in Torreón, Coahuila. Photograph by Francisco Valdés Perezgasga.

ca 18 Apr (EdV). A Black-throated Green Warbler was at the ford on the Guacamaya Rd., Oax. 14 Mar, and another was at Piedra Azul dam 7 Apr (JMF et al.). A Yellow-throated Warbler was found dead in Ciudad Universitaria, Oaxaca, Oax. in Nov (*vide* EdV). Near La Venta, Oax. were a Western Palm Warbler 9 Apr (ph. AM) and a Prothonotary Warbler 7 Apr (AM, KS). An Ovenbird was at Tequio Park, Oax. 21 Apr (JMF et al.). Three Hooded Yellowthroats were found in bunch grass at La Neveria, Oax. 15 Mar, and one was at San Felipe park 21 & 30 Apr (JMF et al.). Dickcissels and Ruddy-breasted Seedeaters were present in large flocks, probably hundreds of birds, in reeds along the edge of Manialtepec Lagoon 18 Mar (JMF et al.). Up to 7 Stripe-headed Sparrows were farther e. along the Chiapas coast than mapped by Howell & Webb (1995) at Barra de Cahocacán 5 Apr and 9 May (HGdS, vt. MPV, vt. JdH). A Yellow-winged Tanager was up at the El Triunfo clearing 30 Mar (HGdS). A female Varied Bunting was at La Soledad, Oax. 13 May (ph. AM, JM). An ad. male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at San Felipe park 10 Apr (JMF et al.). Two female Orchard Orioles in Tapachula 10 May were rather late (HGdS). Up to 7 Black-vented Orioles were high near 3000 m elevation, feeding in agave flowers with Scott's Orioles near Cuajimoloyas, Oax. 15 Mar (JMF et al.). A male Bar-winged Oriole was about one km coastward of Cañada Honda, Chis. 2 Apr (JdH, HGdS, MPV).

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## YUCATAN PENINSULA



Black-legged Kittiwakes along the central Quintana Roo coast added a new species to

the Peninsula's list, and MacGillivray's Warbler was also confirmed for the subregion—a bird netted and photographed along the coast just north of Cancún.

**Abbreviations:** F.C.P. (Felipe Carrillo Puerto); R.L. (town of Río Lagartos); R.L.B.R. (Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve); S.A.C. (San Antonio Chel, Hunucmá, Yucatán); T.d.V. (Tekal de Venegas, near Izamal); V.C.R. (Vigia Chico Rd., Q. Roo)

## WATERFOWL THROUGH DOVES

An inexperienced birder reported "numerous" Jabirus in the flooded fields along the road leading from Limones to Majahual, Q. Roo 10 Apr (ER). A week later, 2 were still visible from the road in the same area (LT). A King Vulture showed up in Celestún, Yuc. 7 Apr (AD), while 2 were seen at Dzibanché in s. Q. Roo 17 Apr (LT). A Hook-billed Kite was observed perched at Rancho Xocempich near Chichén Itzá 4 Mar (BM). A Swallow-tailed Kite was seen at Yaxcopoil, Yuc. 22 Mar (DB), one was reported along the V.C.R. 28 Mar (DB), and a flock of 5 was seen flying over Punta Laguna, Q. Roo 29 Mar (DB). A total of 4 White-tailed Kites were observed 26 Mar along the Morocoy road in s. Q. Roo (DB), and another was at nearby Dzibanché 28 Apr along with a Plumbeous Kite returning from South America (LT). A nice sight at R.L. were 4 Crane Hawks 6 Apr (DB), while a pair of Gray Hawks was actively nesting in a large *pich* tree at Rancho Chacmultún, se. of Izamal 9 May (BM, AM, RM).

American Golden-Plover, infrequently reported on the peninsula, is typically seen during spring migration, as were the 4 seen at Celestún 22 Mar (DB); one was still there 6 Apr (AD). Four Piping Plovers were noted 20 Mar at R.L. and may well have been the same ones reported in the area in Dec (DB). An Upland Sandpiper was observed at Celestún 6 Apr (AD), while an extremely rare Curlew

Sandpiper (only two previous reports) was apparently be seen by a group of German

birdwatchers and a local guide at R.L.B.R. 20 Mar (DB) but not photographed. An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake was at Puerto Morelos on the pier with Laughing Gulls 26 Feb (ph. PB); an ad. was at the dolphin pool at Xcaret, Q. Roo 24 Mar 2009 (ph. AM); and 3 were at the Grand Xcaret-Delphinus-Xcaret border on the coast the next day (ph. AM). One kittiwake was a first-cycle bird; the other 2 were either second-cycle or older (AM). Evidently, the species invaded much of the Caribbean region this winter and spring. Five Eurasian Collared-Doves were positively identified at Playa del Carmen, Q. Roo 26 Mar (ph. AM).

## SWIFTS THROUGH MEADOWLARKS

A Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift was reported at the Playacar G.C. in cen. Q. Roo 4 Mar (PB). This species was known previously in Q. Roo only from Noh Bec, s. of F.C.P. Two female and 3 male Ruby-throated Hummingbird were observed at T.d.V. 4 May (LK). An uncommon Chestnut-colored Woodpecker was seen at Dzibanché, s. Q. Roo along with a Pale-billed Woodpecker 28 Apr (LT). A Ruddy Woodcreeper observed at T.d.V. 4 May was farther n. than previously recorded (LK). A Stub-tailed Spadebill was reported on the same day in the same location, 5 m from the first cenote in the Oxwatz ecotourism property at T.d.V. (LK). An Eastern Wood-Pewee passed through R.L. 8 May, which is the end of its known spring migration in the subregion (GH, AR). An Eastern Phoebe seen along the road from the T.d.V. park towards Dzoncahuich 4 May provides an interesting inland record of this species, which is normally observed in the coastal zones of the peninsula, particularly during fall migration (LK). A Vermilion Flycatcher at Dzibanché 28 Apr (LT) adds another report of this species for s. Q. Roo, where habitat changes are extending its range. A pair of Streaked Flycatchers 4 May at T.d.V. (LK) adds another Yucatan location for this summer resident. The movement of Fork-tailed Flycatchers in s. Q. Roo is always of interest; singles were seen 26 Mar along the Morocoy road (DB) and at Dzibanché 28 Apr (LT).

The endemic Black Catbird is common along the e. coast of the peninsula, but its unusual distribution in Yucatan makes it a bird of interest. Two were seen in low, secondary dry forest in the village of Yunku in Sacalum, s. of Mérida 20 Mar (BM). Another was in low vegetation near the pond in Rancho Chacmultún s. of Izamal 9 May (BM, RM, AM). A report was received of a Chestnut-sided Warbler and 5 Yellow Warblers fattening up at S.A.C. 5 May prior to their crossing of the Gulf of Mexico (AM). Another Chestnut-

sided was reported passing through R.L.B.R. 8 May (GH, AR). A single Magnolia Warbler was at T.d.V. 4 May (LK), while an uncommon male Cape May Warbler entered the house of a local guide at Celestún 27 Mar (AD). Other late migrants included a female American Redstart, a Northern Waterthrush, and a female Hooded Warbler at T.d.V. 4 May (LK); a rare Swainson's Warbler was reported at Punta Laguna, Q. Roo 29 Mar (DB). An uncommon Mourning Warbler was photo-

graphed in the R.L.B.R. 9 May (GH, AR, ph.), providing the late spring date for the species. In autumn, a male MacGillivray's Warbler was netted and photographed 13 Nov along the coast just n. of Cancún (AP). Another late migrant at S.A.C. included a male Scarlet Tanager 5 May (AM). A Bobolink was recorded at Celestún 20 Apr (DB). Reports of Eastern Meadowlark from s. Q. Roo included one along the Morocoy road 26 Mar (DB) and another at Dzibanché 28 Apr (LT).

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## Central America



**H. Lee Jones**  
**Oliver Komar**

Once again, pelagics took center stage in the Region, with two multi-day expeditions off the Pacific coast of Costa Rica in April, one to Cocos Island and one to waters off the Nicoya Peninsula. Although the majority of pelagic trips have been in spring, patterns of relative abundance and distribution for a few species are beginning to emerge. For the second straight year, Parkinson's Petrel has appeared in numbers that suggest that it is not uncommon, at least in April. Small numbers of Christmas Shearwater both years suggest that it also occurs regularly in spring, although in smaller numbers. Of the closely similar Masked and Nazca Boobies, Masked is clearly the one that nests on Cocos Island, and it may be the expected booby at sea over deep waters; however, Nazca may be more common over the continental shelf. Pomarine Jaeger clearly outnumbers Parasitic off the Pacific coast, at least in spring, but apparently not on the Caribbean side. Surely, a wealth of new information awaits the intrepid sea traveler at other seasons. We know next to nothing about seabird presence off Costa Rica in summer, fall, and winter, but recent expeditions off El Salvador in those seasons have produced some intriguing reports.

The highlight of the season, though, had to be Black-legged Kittiwake. This spring saw

unprecedented numbers of kittiwakes well south of their normal winter range within North America, with reports as far south as northern South America. Prior to this year, the only kittiwake record in the Region was from Belize in January 2000. This spring, both Costa Rica and Panama added Black-legged Kittiwake to their avifaunal lists, with individuals appearing on both Caribbean and Pacific coasts. The other country firsts this season were a Lesser Black-backed Gull at the border of El Salvador and Guatemala (new for both countries) and Pearl Kites in both El Salvador and Honduras.

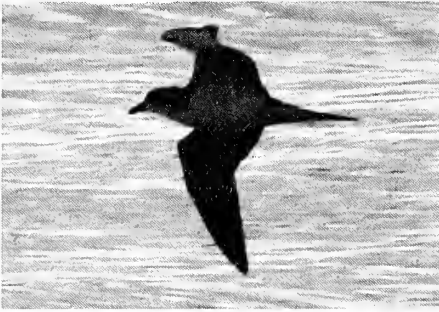
### DUCKS THROUGH BOOBIES

A group of 5 American Wigeons on the ocean half way between Cocos I. and mainland Costa Rica (245 km ssw. of Nicoya Pen.) 1 May (KE et al.) was unexpected. This uncommon winter visitor to n. Costa Rica has only been recorded once before on Cocos I. Within its range in w. Belize and n. Guatemala, Ocellated Turkey is now largely confined to a few areas where, in the absence of hunting and poaching pressure, it is found primarily in close association with humans, notably at several well known resorts and archaeological sites. Outside of these protected areas, it is thought to have been extirpated, or nearly so. Occasional reports, however, come from areas within its historical range that are far from these population centers, such as one seen 2 Apr (EB) flying and running low across the Western Hwy. at Mile 38.5, Cayo.

A Galapagos Petrel seen in flight 158 km nne. of Cocos I. on 1 May (ph. KE et al.) provided the first recent report and first photographically documented record for Costa Rica. Past records had been ascribed to Dark-rumped Petrel before its taxonomic split into Hawaiian and Galapagos Petrels. Following BM's expedition off the Nicoya Pen. in Apr

2008 in which he saw more than 260 Parkinson's Petrels, a species rarely reported in Costa Rican waters, JZ, RG, BY, PM, and JW spent 3-5 Apr in the same area searching for this species. In all they found 15: one on 3 Apr 46 km s. of Punta Guiones and 14 on 4 Apr (ph. JW) from 73 km sw. of the tip of the Santa Elena Pen. sw. to 86° 56' W. All birds were either along the edge of the continental shelf or out over the deep-water trench, and all seen in flight had pronounced flight feather molt. Along with BM's sightings last year, these represent the only recent reports from Costa Rica; however, they suggest the species may be a regular visitor, at least in spring.

Providing additional proof that Christmas Shearwater occurs in Costa Rican waters, at least in spring, JZ et al. found one in a raft of 200 Wedge-tailed Shearwaters 3 Apr (ph. JW, ph. BY) and another in a smaller group of 6 Wedge-taileds 7 km away, both about 45 km w. of the s. tip of the Nicoya Pen. Both birds exhibited pronounced wing molt. An imm. Red-billed Tropicbird was seen about 73 km w. of Playa del Coco, just outside the Gulf of Papagayo, 4 Apr (JZ, RG, BY, PM, ph. JW), and an imm. and an ad. were seen, respectively, 147 km and 262 km ssw. of the Nicoya Pen. on 26 Apr (KE et al.). While all of the thousands of Red-footed Boobies seen on Cocos I. 27-30 Apr were of the expected brown morph (*vide* KE), an ad. white morph, rarely reported in Costa Rican waters, was seen 335 km nne. of the island 1 May (KE et al.). The relative status of Masked and Nazca Boobies in Costa Rica is proving to be complex. On a 3-5 Apr pelagic trip off the Nicoya Pen., 7 ad. and 4 imm. Masked and 2 ad. and one imm. Nazca were seen (JZ, RG, BY, PM, JW). Two Nazca Boobies were in waters over the continental shelf, and one was in an area of deep water over the continental slope; the Masked were all farther out, beyond the continental



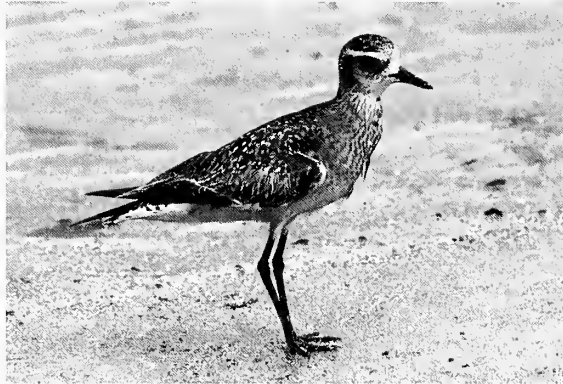
Dark-rumped Petrel is rarely reported in Costa Rica, and there have been no reports since its taxonomic split into Galapagos Petrel and Hawaiian Petrel—until now. This bird, presumed to be a Galapagos Petrel on the basis of a dark axillary smudge and bill size, was seen 158 kilometers northeast of Cocos Island on 1 May 2009. Photograph by Kevin Easley.



Found among Wedge-tailed Shearwaters about 45 kilometers off the southern tip of the Nicoya Peninsula in Costa Rica, this Christmas Shearwater was one of two seen on a 3 April 2009 pelagic trip. Several recorded last spring off the Nicoya and Osa Peninsulas provided the first documented records for Costa Rica. This may prove to be yet another species that occurs regularly off the Pacific coast of Central America, at least seasonally. Photograph by Jim Wolfe.



A spectacular immature Gray-bellied Hawk, one of the least known raptors of South America, appeared at Finca La Selva, Costa Rica for one day in summer 2008, establishing the first documented record for North America. Intensive searches by birders later that day and subsequently over a nine-month period finally paid off on 24 March 2009 (here), when it was re-found less than a kilometer away from the original site. The condition of its plumage suggested that it was about to molt into its decidedly different, more accipiter-like adult plumage. Photograph by Richard Garrigues.



This American Golden-Plover, still in basic plumage, was photographed 500 kilometers south of the Costa Rican mainland on Cocos Island 27 April 2009. Photograph by Kevin Easley.

shelf. On the other hand, of 63 Masked/Nazca Boobies seen at sea during a pelagic trip to Cocos I. with crossings on 26 Apr and 1 May, 25 were confidently identified as Nazca and only 2 as Masked (KE et al.). However, all sightings of both species were in deep water. Corroborating FLs findings in spring 2008, the breeding boobies on Cocos I., however, were all Masked: 15 ads. were in the colony on Roca Dos Amigos Grande, and 10 ads. and an imm. were on Roca Muela, a new site 3 km from Dos Amigos, although nesting status on the latter islets was not established.

## IBISES THROUGH PHALAROPES

Very rare for El Salvador, an imm. *Plegadis* ibis visited L. Güija, Santa Ana 20 Mar (ph. NH, LP), probably the same individual found there in Jan. No facial markings were evident, suggesting an identification of White-faced Ibis, which has been recorded just once before in the country, but photographs were inconclusive. A subad. Jabiru was seen in a drying pond just n. of the Río Tarcoles bridge near Carara, Puntarenas 19-22 Apr (AS, ph. AZ). Jabiru is rare on the Pacific slope of Costa Rica outside the Río Tempisque basin. Rare on the Guatemalan Pacific slope, a Gray-headed Kite was seen in Los Tarrales Reserve, Suchitepéquez 14 Apr (JLL, EB, LLL). In El Salvador, where there are few records, a pair was seen in the Barra de Santiago Protected Area, Ahuachapán 17 May (ph. CF). A pair seen last spring about 150 km to the e. was the first in seven years. A juv. Pearl Kite at Playa Icacal in Intipucá, La Unión 1 Mar (OK, ph. JVD, RJ, LG, MR) was the first to be reported in El Salvador. Another Pearl Kite, age un-

determined, was found 4 km sw. of Choluteca in Choluteca, near the Gulf of Fonseca, 22 Apr (ph. ME), a first documented record for Honduras. For both of these sightings, the nearest known resident population is on the Cosiguina Pen. in nw. Nicaragua. Very rare in Panama, a Black-collared Hawk perched in a tree by the Río Mono near L. Bayano, Panamá 31 May (DM, ph. BA, ph. KK, ph. RM) was the first reported from that locality.

The imm. Gray-bellied Hawk, believed to be a "one-day visitor" to La Selva, Heredia last Jun, resurfaced 24 Mar (MC, ph. RG). After birders eager to see this rare visitor from S.A. had searched in vain for nine months, it was found less than a kilometer from where it was first seen. Its now heavily worn back and wing contour feathers suggested that it may be ready to molt into ad. plumage. Two ad. Savanna Hawks seen in fallow rice fields 8 km se. of Paso Canoas, Puntarenas 5 Mar (JZ) were presumed to be the same pair found with an imm. there last winter. On both occasions, the ads. were vocalizing frequently as if a mated pair.

A Double-striped Thick-knee on a nest at Normandía, Usulután 28 Feb-1 Mar (ph. CF, KL) provided rare documentation of breeding in El Salvador. Remarkably, another active nest was found on Isla San Sebastián, San Dionisio, Usulután 3 Jun (EM). Southern Lapwing was reported for the first time in La Virgen de Sarapiquí, Heredia when one was seen 8 May (JA, IM). It is surprising that this is the first report for this area of Sarapiquí where



Swallow-tailed Gull has been seen almost annually off Costa Rica in recent years, now that more attention is devoted to pelagic birding, including brief expeditions to Cocos Island. This adult, one of three, was seen 29 April 2009 on rocks along the shoreline of Rocas Dos Amigos, Cocos Island. Two others, both adults, were seen at sea, one before dawn 30 kilometers north-northeast of Cocos Island 27 April and another, also before dawn, about 72 kilometers southwest of Punta Guiones on 5 April. Photograph by Jason Horn.



This Black-legged Kittiwake made news in Central America and elsewhere this spring as far south as northern South America. Costa Rica's first kittiwake was this weakened individual found on the coast south of Puerto Limón on 25 March 2009. Photograph by Ernesto Carman.



This Black-legged Kittiwake, perhaps the same bird found 100 kilometers down-coast near Puerto Limón, Costa Rica, was photographed the following day, 26 March 2009, at the mouth of Río Tortuguero. Photograph by Nicole Michel.

suitable habitat is plentiful. An American Golden-Plover at Cocos I. 27 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.) was noteworthy for its location nearly 500 km off the Pacific coast of s. Central America. A rare winter visitor not reported every year in Costa Rica, an ad. Snowy Plover in breeding plumage was found on the n. side of the mouth of the Río Tarcoles 2 Mar (SE, ph. KE). An American Oystercatcher was in Dangriga, *Stann Creek* 1 Mar (BF). Dangriga appears to be the only reliable spot in Belize for this species.

Three Upland Sandpipers at Cocos I. 27 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.) were noteworthy for their remote island location, and one near Quamina Creek bridge along the Manatee Rd., *Stann Creek* 10 May (PB, JR, CC) contributed to the rather short list of records of this species from Belize. Providing the first report for *Ahuachapán* was a Surf-bird observed at Barra de Santiago, Bocana El Zapote 4 Apr (OK, ph. RJ). With fewer than 10 records from the Pacific region of Nicaragua, 2 White-rumped Sandpipers seen feeding on a salt pan at Salinas de Nagualapa, *Rivas* 26 Apr (JT) were noteworthy. The status of Red Phalarope

off Costa Rica remains poorly known, so 10 seen 4 Apr and one seen 5 Apr off the Nicoya Pen. (JZ, RG, BY, PM, JW) are worth mentioning. All were still in basic plumage, although the bills of some were turning yellow.

## GULLS THROUGH JAEGERS

Having only recently been added to the list of birds in North America, Swallow-tailed Gulls continue to be seen off Costa Rica. At sea, an ad. in breeding plumage was observed about one hour before dawn on 5 Apr 72 km sw. of Punta Guiones (JZ, RG, BY, PM, JW), and an ad. in nonbreeding plumage was seen 30 km nne. of Cocos I. 27 Apr (ph. JH, KE et al.). At Cocos I., 3 ads. in breeding plumage were seen standing on rocks near the shoreline on Rocas Dos Amigos 29 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.). A migrating flock of 350 Franklin's Gulls at Cocos I. 29 Apr (ph. JH) was unexpected, although the species is known as a migrant well out to sea off the Pacific coast of Mexico (Howell and Webb, 1995, *A Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America*). A second-cycle Ring-billed Gull observed at the mouth of Río Jiboa, *La Paz* 4 Mar (OK, ph. JVD, RJ) constituted the 3rd record for El Salvador and the first in 16 years. El Salvador's and Guatemala's first Lesser Black-backed Gull was found at L.

Güija 20 Mar (ph. LP, NH). The bird was resting on mud flats in El Salvador and then flew across the border into Guatemala. At least 3 first-cycle Lesser Black-backed Gulls seen 4 Apr at Costa del Este, Panama City (GA, ph. JAC, KK, RM, DM, VW) were the first reported from Panama since 1998; one was seen again 11 Apr (DM). A third-cycle Kelp Gull at Costa del Este 4 Apr (GA, ph. JAC, KK, RM, DM, VW) provided the 2nd record for Panama and the first since a group of 5 was seen in Nov–Dec 2001 at the same locality. What was certainly the same bird was reported regularly until 10 May, when it was seen together with an apparently first-cycle bird (BA).

Only 2 Black Noddies were seen at Cocos I. 27–30 Apr, both in Wafer Bay on the 28th. It has variously been reported in the literature as abundant (Stiles and Skutch, 1989, *A Guide to the Birds of Costa Rica*) and as periodically either abundant or absent (Slud, 1967, *The Birds of Cocos Island (Costa Rica)*, *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 34, Article 4) at the island in Apr and May. As the subspecies *diamesus* breeds only on Cocos I. and Clipperton I. off Mexico, its status on Co-



On 3 April 2009, Panama recorded its first Black-legged Kittiwake, this first-cycle individual photographed at Costa del Este. Prior to this spring, the only Central American record was of an adult photographed at Caye Caulker in Belize 9 January 2000. Photograph by Ghislain Rompré.



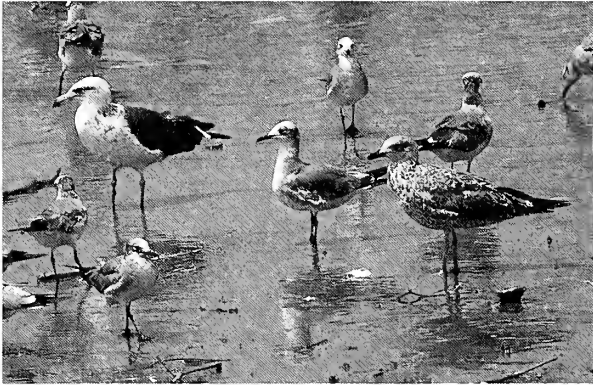
Prior to the discovery of this individual at the mouth of Río Jiboa on 4 March 2009, it had been 16 years since a Ring-billed Gull had been seen in El Salvador. This bird provided only the third record of this species from the country. Photograph by John van Dort.



It is not often that a single bird can establish the first record for two countries, but such was the case when this first-cycle Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen on both sides of the border between El Salvador and Guatemala on Lake Güija 20 March 2009. Photograph by Luis Pineda.

cus I. should be closely monitored. Records to date indicate that Sooty Tern is quite rare in Costa Rica, although seasonal coverage off the Pacific coast, where it would be expected, is heavily skewed toward spring. An ad. was seen on Roca Gissler in Wafer Bay, Cocos I. 27–30 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.), and another was seen 186 km nne. of Cocos I. on 1 May (KE et al.). A Bridled Tern observed ca. 10 km off the coast of Los Cóbanos, *Sonsónate* 28 Apr (ph. RI, LP) provided only the 3rd record for the country and the first from w. El Sal-

**SA** Spring 2009 saw an unprecedented invasion of Black-legged Kittiwakes southward across North America, with a few reaching as far s. as Central America and n. South America. Providing the first record for Costa Rica was a closely approached ad. in apparent weakened condition seen on the coast 100 km s. of Tortuguero, *Limón* 25 Mar (ph. ErC, EV). Either the same individual or another was seen at the mouth of Río Tortuguero the following day (ph. NM). Panama recorded its first Black-legged Kittiwake, a first-cycle bird, 3 Apr at Costa del Este (DR, RMo, ph. GR).



Captured here are images of two of Central America's rarest gull species. The third-cycle Kelp Gull (left) represented only the second record for Panama, the first being of up to five individuals in 2001. One of at least three first-cycle Lesser Black-backed Gulls, the first to be recorded in Panama in 11 years, is seen on the right. Both were found and photographed at Costa del Este in Panama City 4 April 2009. The Kelp Gull lingered until at least 10 May, when it was seen with a first-cycle Kelp. One of the Lesser Black-backed Gulls was seen again on 11 April. Photograph by Karl Kaufmann.



Sooty Tern is thought to be very rare in Costa Rica, but more trips off its Pacific coast may prove otherwise. This adult was seen at Cocos Island on Roca Gissler in Wafer Bay on 27-30 (here 29) April 2009. Another was seen 186 kilometers north-northeast of Cocos Island on 1 May 2009. Little is known of seabirds off Costa Rica at other seasons, when this and several other species may be more numerous. Photograph by Kevin Easley.



This Bridled Tern seen 28 April 2009 about 10 kilometers off the coast of Los Cóbanoes was only the third to be recorded in El Salvador. Photograph by Ricardo Ibarra.

vador. The 2nd record was from Playa Icacal in May 2008. Elsewhere, a Forster's Tern at Barra de Santiago, Bocana El Saite 4 Apr (OK, ph. RJ) was the first to be reported in *Ahuachapán*. This species is rare anywhere in El Salvador. In Panama, where it is also rare, an imm. was at Costa del Este, Panama City 11 Apr (DM, JAC, KK, RM). On the three-day pelagic trip off the Nicoya Pen. 3-5 Apr, 79 Pomarine Jaegers were recorded, including one flock of 16 (JZ, RG, BY, PM, JW); however, only 3 Parasitic Jaegers were seen, all on 4 Apr. These numbers are consistent with previous counts that indicate that Parasitic is much less common than Pomarine on the Pacific side of Costa Rica. On the Caribbean side, Pomarine and Parasitic occur in about equal numbers but are rarely seen from shore. Thus, an imm. Parasitic Jaeger seen flying close to shore off Tortuguero 4 Apr (MG) was noteworthy. Rare off either coast, a first-summer Long-tailed Jaeger was seen 70 km w. of Playa del Coco just outside the Gulf of Papagayo 4 Apr (ph. JW, JZ, RG, BY, PM).

## DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

Belize's first nesting pair of Eurasian Collared-Doves was discovered when a pair with 2 fledglings was found in the heart of Belize City 17 May (PB, JR, DB, PBu). This comes after one or more *Streptopelia* doves that later proved to be this species were found in the same area of the city last fall. A group of 79 Red-throated (Green) Parakeets seen in a mango plantation near the mangrove forest at Playa Ica-

cal 1 Mar (OK, ph. JVD, RJ, LG, MR) appears to confirm predictions that birds move into El Salvador's coastal plain from breeding grounds in the highlands of Honduras. The flock included an additional group of birds, of approximately the same number, that could not be seen directly for species confirmation. A pair of Black-and-white Owls with 2 fledglings at El Balsamar, Cuisnahuat 7 Mar (ph. JH) were at a nest discovered by park guards last Jan. They provided the first breeding documentation for *Sonsonate* for this nearly extirpated species in El Salvador. A pair of Stygian Owls with a fledgling near Blancaneaux Lodge, Mountain Pine Ridge, Cayo 30 May (ph. RMa) provided one of the few breeding records in the Region for this seldom seen owl. Striped Owl has been nearly extirpated from El Salvador, so 4 individuals recorded 17 May in Normandía (ph., v.r. CF, KL) are worth noting.

Virtually all records of Green-breasted Mango from w. El Salvador are from the fall and winter, and the species is presumed to be a seasonal visitor on the Pacific coast from cen. El Salvador to w. Mexico. This spring, at least two records, both of females, in w. El Salvador raise questions about the degree to which it is seasonal. One was seen at Jujutla (Bocana El Zaité), *Ahuachapán* 4 Apr (OK, RJ) and the other at El Congo, *Santa Ana* 9 Apr (OK, LA, VG, IV). Four male Veraguan Mangos and one female at Miguel de la Borda, *Colón* 17 Apr (BAh, CAh, KK, ph. RM, KW, VW) were the first to be recorded from this area and the first on the Caribbean slope e. of *Bocas del Toro* since 1911. A female White-crested Coquette found 3 Mar on a nest at Cuesta de Piedra, *Chiriquí* (ph. EC) was noteworthy because the species is rare in Panama with few records this far east. A male Sapphire-throated Hummingbird seen visiting an orange flowering *Erythrina* tree growing in a roadside fence row near Coto Colorado (12 km s. of Ciudad Neilly), *Puntarenas* 17 Mar (JZ, ph. KE) established the 3rd record for the country roughly between the sites of the first and 2nd records.

Rare in Panama, a Golden-naped Woodpecker at approximately 1200 m at Santa Clara, *Chiriquí* 5 Mar (ph. EC) was at a locality from which it was last reported in 1998. It is also seldom reported from such a high elevation. On the other hand, a Streaked Xenops seen at approximately 70 m elevation at L. Bayano 30 Apr (ph. EC, LR) was the first to be reported from the lowlands of Panama. An extraordinary record, this rare species is otherwise known in Panama only from the e. and w. highlands and has not previously been recorded below 540 m. A Strong-billed Woodcreeper

at the Rana Trail, Omar Torrijos N.P., *Coclé* 29 Mar (ph. EC, KA) was the first recorded from this site since 1984. The species is very rare in Panama. A Belted Flycatcher banded at a SalvaNATURA monitoring station in pine-oak forest at Montecristo N.P., *Santa Ana* 27 Mar (ph., vt. RJ, CZ, DQ) was only the 4th to be recorded in El Salvador. In Guatemala, an unusually high concentration of at least 5 Alder Flycatchers was found along 500 m of trail in the Laguna Lodge Eco-Resort and Nature Reserve, *Santa Cruz La Laguna, Sololá* 22 May (ph., vt. KnE, CA). An uncommon transient in El Salvador, 2 Eastern Kingbirds were observed at the visitor's center in El Imposible N.P., *Ahuachapán* 21 Apr (OK), and 15 were observed near San Martín, *San Salvador* 27 Apr (RI). Providing the first record for Cocos I. was a Fork-tailed Flycatcher 28-30 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.), believed to be more likely an austral migrant from South America than a bird from the essentially resident mainland Costa Rica population.

## VIREOS THROUGH WARBLERS

A Red-eyed Vireo was observed at Ecolodge El Imposible, San Francisco Menéndez, *Ahuachapán* 6 Apr (OK). Singles mist-netted at El Imposible N.P. 5 May (ph. LA, RJ, RV) and at Finca San Marcos, Nahuizalco, *Sonsonate* 13 May (ph. IV, LS) were the first to be captured at these SalvaNATURA banding stations. Another first for Cocos I. this spring was a Tree Swallow 28 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.). A Cave Swallow seen from the Madre Cacao overlook at El Imposible N.P. 5 Apr (OK) provided the latest spring date on record for this uncommon winter visitor in El Salvador. A Blue-winged Warbler, an uncommon winter visitor on the Guatemalan Pacific slope, was seen in Finca El Pilar, *Sacatepéquez* 6 Mar (KnE, CA). In e. Costa Rica, one was at 1100 m in the Wilson Botanical Gardens at Las Cruces (near San Vito), *Puntarenas* 13 Mar (JZ). Providing the 2nd record of Northern Parula in Costa Rica this winter was a male at El Zota Biological Field Station, *Limón* (just nw. of Tortuguero N.P.) 5 Mar (†CH); the other was of a female in Feb at La Selva, only 50 km sw. of El Zota. A male Golden-cheeked Warbler, only the 3rd recorded in the Atitlán Reserve, was at Panajachel, *Sololá* 12 Mar (CA, DA, BH, TKL). Rarely seen in w. Nicaragua were single male Blackburnian Warblers at Laguna de Apoyo, *Masaya* 19 (LL, JT) & 27 Apr (LL, JM). Rare anywhere in Costa Rica, a late Palm Warbler was seen near the Wafer Bay ranger station on Cocos I. 27 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.). An ad. male Cerulean Warbler seen at 2200 m in the cloud forest of the Chelemhá Reserve, *Alta Verapaz* 11 Apr

(AV, KnE, DD) was the first recorded in the Yalijux Important Bird Area. Also providing a first record for the Chelemhá Reserve was a Worm-eating Warbler seen at 2200 m on 12 Apr (AV, KnE, DD). On the Pacific slope of Guatemala, a male Hooded Warbler was seen in Los Tarrales Reserve 19 Mar (KnE, SS, JAJ). A Canada Warbler was seen on Caye Caulker 10 Apr (JB), an exceptionally early date for this rare transient in Belize. A second-year Golden-crowned Warbler banded in pine-oak forest at Montecristo N.P. 26 Apr (ph. RJ, CZ) was the first recorded for the park and was in an unusual habitat for this generally highland moist-forest species. A Yellow-breasted Chat with an orange breast seen at Hacienda La China, Sabalito, in the upper Coto Brus valley, *Puntarenas* 13 Mar (JZ) was present for the 3rd year in a row. When it was first seen two winters ago, it had a half orange, half yellow breast.

## SEEDEATERS THROUGH MUNIAS

Yellow-bellied Seedeater is apparently nomadic in the dry season; however, an ad. male seen in a scrubby field next to a banana plantation in Zapote de Sarapiquí, about 5 km e. of Puerto Viejo, *Heredia* 23 Apr (JZ) was farther afield than expected. Previous records on the Caribbean side of Costa Rica have been from the Central Valley around Turrialba and in the vicinity of V. Arenal. The Sarapiquí bird may represent the first record for this species in Costa Rica's Caribbean lowlands. Several Wedge-tailed Grass-Finches seen on the slopes of Cerro Tute, above Santa Fe, *Veraguas* 16 May (BA, CA, FH) were the first to be reported from this area of Panama. The species is rare and local in Panama. Providing the first record for Laguna de Apoyo, *Masaya* was a male Scarlet Tanager seen 23-24 Apr (ph. JT, LL). Northern Cardinal is rarely reported in *Petén* at the s. edge of its range, so 6 in Tikal 2 Mar (LO) was con-



One of two firsts for Cocos Island in spring 2009 was this Fork-tailed Flycatcher, present 28 (here) through 30 April. Although this species is a common resident on the mainland, at nearly 500 kilometers from the mainland, this individual was more likely an austral migrant from South America. Photograph by Jason Horn.



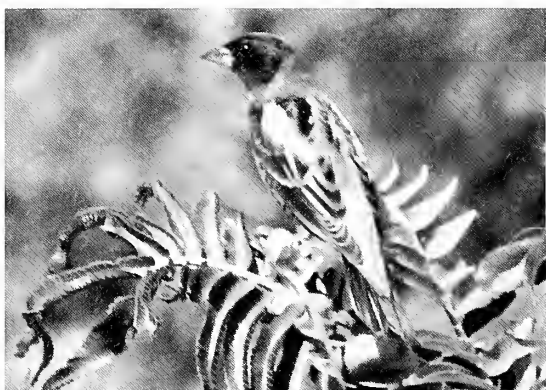
This Red-eyed Vireo, captured at a banding station in El Imposible National Park 5 May 2009, was one of three found in El Salvador this spring. Photograph by Lety Andino.



First records for remote and seldom-visited Cocos Island are easier to come by than they are for more frequently visited island locations in the Central America region. This Tree Swallow found on the late date of 28 April 2009 was one of two island firsts observed on a visit from 27 April through 1 May. Photograph by Jason Horn.

sidered to be an unusually high number.

Two male and 2 female Bobolinks seen together in a grassy clearing on a hilltop above the Chatham Bay Ranger Station on Cocos I. 28 Apr (ph. KE, ph. JH et al.) provided the 2nd spring record from Cocos I. in three years. Shiny Cowbird continues to colonize the



This male Bobolink, one of a group of three seen on a hilltop above the Chatham Bay Ranger Station on 28 April 2009, provided the second spring record for Cocos Island in three years. Photograph by Jason Horn.

Caribbean slope of Costa Rica. A female was seen at Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí 4 Apr (AD), and 4 females and 2 males were seen about 500 m away 24 Apr (JZ). These records are indicative of an expansion in the country to the north and west. Elsewhere in the Caribbean lowlands, 2 females and a male were seen at Caño Blanco de Siquirres, Limón 7 Apr (MG). Spot-breasted Oriole has a patchy distribution in *Alta Verapaz*. Two seen in Finca Chimelb, 4

km w. of Lanquín 6 Apr (KnE, CA) were at a new location. The 15-20 Tricolored Munias seen at San Narciso Village, *Corozal* in Feb were still present on 15 Mar (PB, MB, SM, GS et al.).

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## West Indies & Bermuda



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**Eddie Massiah**

**O**n Bermuda, on about 21 March 2009, the first Bermuda Petrel (Cahow) since 1620 hatched on Nonsuch Island. The hatchling was named "Somers," in honor of Admiral Sir George Somers, who founded the English colony on Bermuda in July 1609. This triumph is the culmination of

nearly six decades of intense conservation efforts, which have brought this species back from the brink of extinction, from just a few pairs to now 90 pairs, a modern record, in the 2008-2009 breeding season. Somers' fledging in June 2009, 400 years after his eponym shipwrecked at Bermuda, is the first fruit of the twin efforts to restore Nonsuch to its pre-colonial state and to translocate fledging Cahows to the island, in hopes that they would return to nest here, an island with greater elevation (and thus more protection against storms and sea-level rise) and offering numerous artificial burrows as well as a natural, rat-free environment. It is impossible to over-laud this ongoing achievement, one of the great conservation tales of our age.

Notable Bermuda bird sightings include the first Ross's Goose, second Common Greenshank, and a rare spring Horned Lark. Guadeloupe had its first record of Eurasian Kestrel, and Barbados recorded North America's second, and West Indies' first, Gray-hooded Gull. After more than a

decade in the preparation, *The Birds of Barbados* has been published (2009. Buckley, P. A., Edward B. Massiah, Maurice B. Hutt, Francine G. Buckley, and Hazel F. Hutt. 2009. *The Birds of Barbados: An Annotated Checklist*. BOU Checklist No. 24. Peterborough, United Kingdom: British Ornithologists' Union). With over 300 pages, including 32 color



A Mute Swan, the second for the West Indies and the Bahamas, was photographed at Reef Golf Course, Grand Bahama Island 28 (here) and 29 May 2009. The first was a first-winter bird photographed at Baker's Bay, Great Guana Cay, Abaco Island 27-28 January 2005. There is no Mute Swan known to be held in waterfowl collections in the Bahamas. Photograph by Mike Acosta.





This Common Greenshank at Spittal Pond, Bermuda 23-31 (here 24) May 2009 marks the third record for Bermuda, the first being in 1965. Photograph by Andrew Dobson.

plates, the book is filled with deep detail about 263 species that have been recorded on Barbados.

It was a dry winter and spring in the Bahamas, with only 8.4 cm of rainfall through mid-May. In general it was a poor migration from North America, with few unusual passerines being reported. Bahamian highlights include the continued presence of the West Indies' first Iceland Gull, the second documented record of Mute Swan, and both Wilson's and Red Phalaropes. Namitz reported on a cruise between Florida to St. Martin, providing a rare sampling of seabirds east of the Bahamas and Greater Antilles. Cuban ornithologist Dr. William Suarez hosted an ornithological expedition that included sightings of endemics in the northern islands at Cayo Coco, eastern Camagüey province, the famed Zapata Swamp, and hot-spots in between. Field Guides, Inc. again toured the Lesser Antilles from Grenada north to Antigua and Barbuda, with some very interesting finds.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH TERNS

A flock of 6 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks was found on the Picard R., Portsmouth, Dominica 1-11 Mar (BJB)—the first report of the species from Dominica in at least 10 years. Another flock of 13 Black-bellieds was seen at Antigua 16 Apr (JeF, JVG). Five Snow Geese wintered in Bermuda, and 2 were present until 10 Apr at Port Royal G.C. (AD). A Snow Goose was photographed 18-31 Mar at the Girls Scout Pond in Estate Bordeaux, St. Thomas (RO). Other than bones of the species recovered from St. Croix middens (Alexander Wetmore), there are no records of Snow Goose from the U.S. Virgin Islands. Bermuda's first Ross's Goose was present at Belmont G.C. until 7 May (AD). Two Canada Geese wintered in Bermuda, and one was present at Belmont G.C. 14 May (DBW). A male Northern Shoveler was at Spittal Pond, Bermuda 23 May+

(DBW). A female American Wigeon was on North Pond, Bermuda 28 Apr (DBW). A first-year Mute Swan, the 2nd for the Bahamas, was photographed at Reef G.C., Grand Bahama 28-29 May (MA). The first record was a bird photographed at Baker's Bay, Great Guana Cay, Abaco, Bahamas 27-28 Jan 2005. Both swans are of unknown provenance.

It has been another record year for the Bermuda Petrel or Cahow, with 90 confirmed pairs and 47 chicks (JM). RN observed a Black-capped Petrel off Hispaniola 27 Mar and one off San Salvador 28 Mar. On 11 Mar, AL tallied 1593 Manx Shearwaters in one hour (a Guadeloupe record) at Pointe des Châteaux. An Audubon's Shearwater was found ashore on s. Bimini, Bahamas 24 Apr. Local people trying to help the bird back to sea observed it being attacked and killed by Laughing Gulls (GM), as often occurs with ailing seabirds. A juv. Brown Booby was at Danger Cay, Exumas, Bahamas 18 May (BP). Namitz saw 3 Brown Boobies e. of s. Eleuthera, Bahamas 23 Mar and 10+ Masked Boobies e. of Turks and Caicos Is. 24 Mar. Six Northern Gannets were seen flying northward 16 km e. of Munjack Cay, Abaco, Bahamas 9 Apr (EB, FB, HA). A Double-crested Cormorant flying around the Atlantic Underwater Test and Evaluation Center (hereafter AUTEK), Andros, Bahamas 6 Apr was unusual (DM). White-tailed Tropicbirds were reported nesting at Powell's Cay, Abaco 5 May (EB, BB) and Rose I. off New Providence, Bahamas (four nests) the same day (O&PS). A Brown Pelican was at various locations in Bermuda 10-14 Apr (JF, PW).

A Gray Heron was a great rarity at Barbados 5 Apr (JeF, JVG). Two dark-morph Reddish Egrets at the e. end of New Providence 16 Mar were unusual there (O&PS). A breeding-plumaged Little Egret was found at St. John's Harbour, Antigua 31 Mar (JHo, CC). Another Little Egret was seen by JHo and CC at Chancery Lane swamp, Barbados 2 Apr,

where they are recorded as breeding. Yet another Little Egret was noted at Dominica 11 Apr (JeF, JVG) for the first record there. An imm. Black-crowned Night-Heron was at Spittal Pond, Bermuda 24 Oct-23 Feb (PW), and an ad. was seen near Grand Case, St. Martin 25 Mar (RN). A single Glossy Ibis, vagrant in the U.S. Virgin Islands, persisted through the spring and was last seen at Great Pond, St. Croix 23 May (LY). Roseate Spoonbills numbered 250 at Las Salinas, Zapata Swamp, Cuba 30 Mar-1 Apr (JS, WS). The 2 Eurasian Spoonbills at Barbados, first found in fall 2008, remained

through the spring period (EM), and one was photographed at Antigua 18 Apr (JeF, JVG), reportedly also there a few days prior. The American Flamingo flock at Gordon's Beach, Long I., Bahamas numbered 28 on 21 Apr (TW, D&MB). At Las Salinas, Zapata Swamp, Cuba, JS and WS counted 2332 American Flamingos 30 Mar.

A Northern Harrier, rare on St. Croix, was seen gliding low over Great Pond 3 Mar (LY) and 24 Mar (CB, LY). Bermuda's long-staying Red-tailed Hawks were present through at least 21 May (DBW). Two Gundlach's Hawks, Cuba's rare endemic of which there may be only 300 individuals remaining, were noted near San Diego de los Baños and Cayo Coco (JS, SW), 24 & 26 Mar, respectively. A Ridgway's Hawk was found near its breeding area near Los Haitises 29 Mar (JHo et al.). Cuban Black-Hawks numbered 20 at Cayo Coco 27 Mar (JS, WS). A Eurasian Kestrel at Désirade I. 3 Apr provided the first Guadeloupe record and only the 2nd for the West Indies (AL, OT), first being from Martinique. An ad. Purple Gallinule, vagrant in the U.S. Virgin Islands, was at Castle Burk Pond, St. Croix 7 Apr (LY). A Black-necked Stilt was at Spittal Pond, Bermuda 4-12 Apr (KR). Piping Plovers reported from the Bahamas this spring included one on Cambridge Cay, Exumas 1 Mar (LD), 10 on Green Turtle Cay 9 Mar (EB), and one at Lighthouse Beach, Eleuthera 23 Mar (RN). Two Southern Lapwings, which made history at Barbados, remained there through the spring period (EM). Five American Oystercatchers were photographed on Goat Rocks between Little and Great Stirrup Is., Berry Is., Bahamas 29 Mar (*fide* BP); it is speculated that the species breeds in that area. A Common Greenshank discovered at Spittal Pond, Bermuda 23-31 May (DBW) was the 3rd overall record there, only the 2nd since 1965. Thirteen Willets, all of the nominate (eastern) subspecies, were seen at Yamacraw Beach, New



Representing a first May record for Bermuda, this Horned Lark lingered at the Dockyard 8-19 (here 9) May 2009. Photograph by Andrew Dobson.

Providence 25 Apr (TH)—either migrants en route to nesting grounds farther north or newly arrived residents (RLN). A Eurasian Whimbrel was on Stocks Harbour mudflat, Bermuda 11-12 Mar (EA). Two Whimbrels were seen on rocks off McLean's Town, Grand Bahama 2 Apr (JH, BP). A Wilson's Phalarope, marking the 2nd documented record for the Bahamas, was photographed at the Emerald G.C., Grand Bahama 18 Apr (BP, IL, ph EG), and 2 Red Phalaropes (also a possible 2nd record) were seen e. of San Salvador, Bahamas 28 Mar (RN).

A moribund Black-legged Kittiwake was taken to Bermuda Aquarium, Museum, and Zoo 3 Mar (DBW). Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported as far s. as Tobago in Mar (*vide* MK). A Gray-hooded Gull was found 30 May (EM) at Congo Road swamp, Barbados; more details will follow in the Summer Season report. A Black-headed Gull was still present in Harrington Sound, Bermuda 23 Mar (JM). The movements of Laughing Gulls in the Bahamas are poorly known. They began to gather at L. Cunningham, New Providence about 15 Mar (PD, TW). The annual influx into Fresh Creek, Andros began 28 Mar (DM), and they first appeared on Long I. the 2nd week of Apr (D&MB). While on Long I., Bahamas 20-23 Apr, White noted Laughing Gulls perching on the telephone and power lines. This behavior has also been observed on Little and Great Exuma (LD) but was unknown in other Bahamian islands. A Ring-billed Gull was noted at St. John's Harbour, Antigua 31 Mar (JHo, CC). Seven Herring Gulls were noted at Havana Harbor, Cuba 2 Apr (JS, WS). An Iceland Gull was present in the East End, Bermuda 3-30 Mar (AD). The Iceland Gull found in Nassau, New Providence in Feb was last seen at Fort Montague 28 Mar (CW). A Lesser Black-backed Gull was found at St. John's Harbor, Antigua 31 Mar (JHo, CC); another at Southwest Ridge, New Providence 25 May (PD, TH) possibly marked a new late date for this species.

Hepburn and BP found up to 15 Gull-billed Terns feeding on the grassy perimeter of

Freeport Airport, Grand Bahama 15 May. A total of 29 Caspian Terns was tallied between Cayo Coco and Zapata Swamp, Cuba 24 & 26 Mar, respectively (JS, WS). A Royal Tern was in Castle Harbour, Bermuda 14-21 Apr (JM). A single Common Tern was seen at Dominica 11 Apr (*vide* JeF, JVG). Five Arctic Terns were off the w. end of Bermuda 3 May (AD, DBW). Least Terns were first noted on Grand Bahama 9 Apr and on New Providence 22 Apr (PD). A light-morph Parasitic Jaeger was seen between Eleuthera and the Exumas 18 May (BP), and a dark-morph Parasitic was harassing Bridled Terns 16 km e. of Eleuthera's s. tip 23 May (RN). While cruising n. of Puerto Rico and Hispaniola 27 Mar, RN saw 400+ Bridled Terns flying northward, 11 Roseate Terns, and a Pomarine Jaeger. A Pomarine Jaeger was seen e. of San Salvador 28 Mar (RN), and 2 were 32 km e. of Tilloo Cay, Abaco 3 May (EB, PB). Single Pomarine Jaegers were seen off Bermuda at Challenger Banks 26 Apr and 3 May (AD, PH).

## DOVES THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

A record 165 White-winged Doves were counted as they fed on rice field stubble at La Grange, St. Croix 7 May (LY). An Eared Dove at Pointe des Châteaux, Guadeloupe 24 May was unusual there (AL). AK reports that he found Eurasian Collared-Dove (and House Sparrow) on Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands 21 Mar, both species previously unrecorded in five years of visits. All of Cuba's three quail-dove species—one Gray-fronted, one Key West, and 5 Blue-headed—were seen at Bermejas 31 Mar-1 Apr (JS, WS et al.). Three Key West Quail-Doves on the old Coral Harbour G.C., Bahamas 2 Apr made a good find (CW). Forty-four Cuban Parakeets were seen between several locations near Najasa and Zapata Swamp 28-30 Mar (JS, WS); populations of this species are declining because of pest shooting, pet trade, and habitat loss. In the same areas, 14 Cuban Parrots were also noted. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was at the Gladstone Road Agricultural Center (hereafter

G.R.A.C.), New Providence, Bahamas 21 Apr; a Mangrove Cuckoo was along Waterloo Rd., Nassau, in an urban environment, the next day (PD). A Barn Owl was noted at Bermejas, Cuba 31 Mar (JS, WS). The recently split Ashy-faced Owl, resident on Hispaniola, was seen at Los Haitises N.P. 5 Apr (JHo et al.). The first Antillean Nighthawk of the season was reported from Wulf Rd., Nassau 2 May (PD). A Chuck-will's-widow calling at Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera 11 Mar was unexpected

(PM). Three Bee Hummingbirds were noted near Bermejas 30 Mar (JS, WS). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was seen visiting a South-down Farm garden, Bermuda 11 Mar-15 Apr (SI). Single Ruby-throated Hummingbirds seen at AUTECH, Andros 4 Mar (DM) and Marsh Harbour, Abaco 27 Mar (EB, MH), plus the 3 noted in winter, made an unprecedented number for the Bahamas in a single migratory season. A Northern Flicker was seen at Morgan's Pt., Bermuda 8 Mar (AD, DW). A West Indian Woodpecker was photographed at McLean's Town on the e. end of Grand Bahama 2 May (BP); it is not known whether this is a survivor from the island's original population or a recent colonist from Abaco.

Single Eastern Kingbirds were at Bermuda Airport 12 Apr (PW) and Jenningsland 17 Apr (JM). An Eastern Phoebe was at the cattle farm, Grand Bahama 7 Mar (BP), and single Eastern Wood-Pewees were at Double-blocked Pond s. of Treasure Cay, Abaco 4 Apr and Spanish Cay, Abaco 16 Apr (EB, BB). Now a single-island endemic and perhaps limited to 1000 individuals (WS), 5 Giant Kingbirds were noted near San Diego de los Baños, Cuba 24 Mar and Najasa 29 Mar. Early Gray Kingbirds were reported from Abaco 16 Mar (EB), Nassau 19 Mar (PD), and Eleuthera 19 Mar (JDW). Cuban Palm Crows are apparently now restricted to a few areas in Camagüey province, where WS found 23 birds 29 Mar. In early Apr, MH found several pairs of Bahama Swallows nesting under the eaves of houses in Sandy Pt., Abaco, Bahamas. Bahama Swallows may be extirpated from New Providence, but single birds seen at Coral Harbour 24 & 27 Apr and 22 May (CW) raise the possibility that a pair or two may persist. At least 20 of the wintering Tree Swallows remained in Bermuda into Mar (AD). A Cave Swallow was seen at Port Louis, Guadeloupe 11 Mar (AL, JMR). A Scarlet Tanager was at Pointe des Châteaux 5 Apr (MM); on Bermuda, singles were at Paget Marsh 25 Apr (RGr) and Pembroke Marsh 22 May (JT). A Blue-headed Vireo was banded at Rock

Sound, Eleuthera 26 MAR (JTh, EC, ADe, SJ, JDW). Five Red-eyed Vireos were at Désirade I., Guadeloupe 18 Apr (AL, PP), and 2 were at Clearwater, Bermuda 19 Apr (PW). A Black-whiskered Vireo at Winton, Nassau 23 Mar was early (LH); the first report from Abaco was 16 Apr (EB). A Horned Lark at Commissioner's House, Dockyard 8-19 May constituted the first May record in Bermuda (RG).

A House Wren (likely of the nominate subspecies) was heard singing at the Cooperstown dump, Abaco 4 Apr (EB). The Lesser Antillean complex of House Wren taxa warrants special attention; the currently recognized subspecies on Dominica (*T. a. rufescens*), St. Lucia (*T. a. mesoleucus*), St. Vincent (*T. a. musicus*), and Grenada (*T. a. grenadensis*) vary in plumage and vocalizations, and even habitat, as noted by JeF and JVG among others who have chronicled this group in the Region. A Wood Thrush at Spanish Cay, Abaco 8 Apr was unexpected (EB). Six Zapata Wrens were found near La Turba, Cuba 31 Mar (JS, WS). A Magnolia Warbler and an early Blackpoll Warbler were at G.R.A.C., New Providence 17 Apr (PD). A male Black-throated Green Warbler, very rarely reported in the U.S. Virgin Islands, was seen at Jolly Hill, St. Croix 1 May (LY). Two Kirtland's Warblers were photographed on Hawksbill Cay, Exumas 3 Mar (LD), which raises the possibility that they had wintered on this small, scrubby island. During the 2008-2009 winter, the Kirtland's Warbler Research and Training Project on Eleuthera banded 41 new Kirtland's Warblers, re-sighted 13 birds, and recaptured 2 birds banded previously. Three of the re-sighted birds had been banded in Michigan. The last re-sights for the season were 2 color-banded birds on 28 Apr near Tarpum Bay, Eleuthera. The last sign of a warbler was the next day at Rock Sound, Eleuthera (*vide* JDW). A singing Prairie Warbler was in Fairylands, Bermuda 21-31 May (BL). A male Hooded Warbler and several Worm-eating Warblers that wintered at Winton, Nassau were last seen 17 Apr (LH). A Northern Waterthrush was noted in mangroves at St. Vincent 7 Apr (JeF, JVG). On 1 Mar, 15 Bananaquits were counted at the feeders on Warderick Wells, Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park, Bahamas (LD).

A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen at Estate William, St. Croix 9 Apr (CB, LY), and singles were at Treasure Cay, Abaco 31 Mar (M&EL) and Nassau 14 Apr (SS). On Bermuda, 2 Blue Grosbeaks were on St. George's G.C. 24 Apr (PW) and one on Cooper's I. 26 Apr (DBW). The male Painted Buntings departed Treasure Cay, Abaco 22 Mar, the females a week later (M&EL). Grassland Yellow-Finches were noted at Antigua 31 Mar (JHo, CC). EB

and BB found a Lincoln's Sparrow 19 Mar at the Treasure Cay dump, Abaco. A White-crowned Sparrow, discovered at G.R.A.C., New Providence 30 Mar, remained until 2 May, singing frequently during its stay (TH, PD, WP, KHL, LH). Ten Zapata Sparrows (endangered) were seen near Cayo Coco and Zapata Swamp 26 & 31 Mar, respectively (JS, WS). An imm. Orchard Oriole was photographed at G.R.A.C., New Providence 6 May (TH). An ad. male Baltimore Oriole, rarely reported from St. Croix, was at Estate Windsor 19 Mar (CB, LY), and 2 (male and female) were at Sugar Bay mangrove forest 4 Apr (LY). A Red-winged Blackbird was in Mills Creek/Point Shares area, Bermuda 19 Feb-9 Apr (JT). A Greater Antillean Grackle was photographed at Five Corners, St. Croix 18 Mar (CC-B), representing the first documentation of the species since 1917, when it was introduced to the island; the species became extirpated there shortly after its introduction. House Sparrows were observed at Kingstown, St. Vincent 7 Apr, and Common Waxbill and Red Avadavat were fairly common at Martinique 12 Apr (JeF, JVG).

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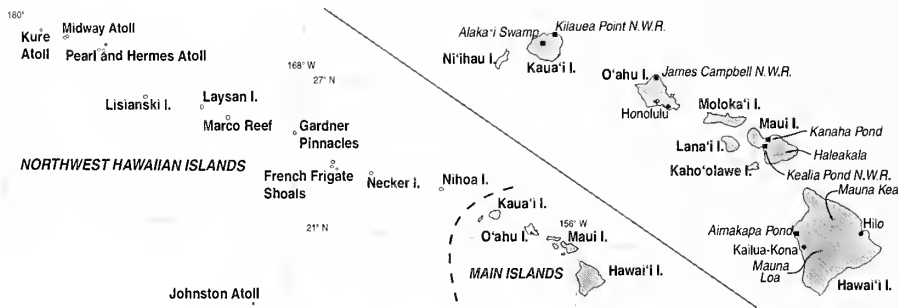
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Red-winged Blackbird display by Donald Metzner

# Hawaiian Islands



## Peter Donaldson

Persistent easterly trade winds usually dominate the weather around the Hawaiian Islands in the spring. Trade winds did persist through early spring, but the weather pattern turned winter-like in mid-April. Low-pressure areas and cold fronts continued to affect the islands through late May. Rainfall distribution was very unusual, with some normally wet locations setting records for dryness, while normally dry locations had unusually wet weather. These weather anomalies may well have affected bird behavior, but the observations received did not provide a comprehensive enough picture to draw any conclusions. Observer coverage was low this season. I received reports from two pelagic trips—not nearly enough to give much idea of the distribution of pelagic birds around the islands, but another small piece of the puzzle.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH ALBATROSSES

A Greater White-fronted Goose was seen at Kahuku, Oahu I. (MW), and 2 were observed in s.-cen. Molokai 18, 23, & 26 Mar (ADY). Greater White-fronteds have been historically rare in the Region but have been regular in recent years. Single Cackling Geese were seen in Kahuku, Oahu I. 11 Mar (MW), at Kilauea Point N.W.R., Kauai I. 17 Mar (GA), and at Kona S.T.P. Hawaii I. 24 Mar (GA). Cackling Geese are uncommon and regular in the Re-

gion. These were the only migrant geese reported through the spring. A male Garganey in breeding plumage was spotted at the Kona S.T.P. 30 Mar (RD; RP), 31 Mar (DL), and 19 Apr (ph. RD). Garganeys are rare but regular in the Region. Peak counts for the commoner migrant waterfowl species included 126 Northern Shovelers at Kealia Pond N.W.R. 16 Apr (MN), 50 Northern Pintails at Kealia 19 Mar (MN), 2 Green-winged Teal at Ohiapilo 6 Apr (ADY), and 21 unidentified scaup at Kealia 19 Mar (MN). These are all rather low counts. Some migrant shearwaters came in close enough to be observed from shore. Six Sooty Shearwaters were seen from the beach at Punaluu Hawaii I. 21 Mar (GA). A pair of Blue-gray Noddies was on Laysan I. 14-22 Apr, and one was observed there 11 Jun–21 Jul (BS, MS). Blue-grays nest on some of the high, rocky islands but have been rarely reported on Laysan.

## IBISES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A White-faced Ibis was observed at the Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R. 1 Mar and 4 Apr (PD) and one was seen at Kealia Mar+ (MN). White-faceds have been regular for several years in low numbers. A Peregrine Falcon was spotted flying by a high-rise condo in Waiki, Oahu I. 9 Mar (MW). The same observer

had seen a Peregrine at the same location 5 Dec. A Peregrine was on Laysan I. 23 Mar–14 Apr (BS, MS) was unfortunately apparently preying on rare Laysan Finches (Endangered). A Peregrine was also seen at Ohiapilo, Molokai I. 8 Apr (ADY). Peregrine Falcons are rare, but regular, in the Region.

There were few unusual shorebirds reported. A Black-bellied Plover was spotted at Kealia 12 Mar (MW), and 2 were seen in Hanalei Kauai I. 15 & 18 Apr (JB). A Greater Yellowlegs was seen in the same area 15 Apr (JB). A *hudsonicus* Whimbrel remained on s.-cen. Molokai I. through at least 29 Apr (ADY). At least 23 Bristle-thighed Curlews were still in Kahuku, Oahu I. 4 Apr (PD). Ten Bristle-thigheds on Molokai was the high count there (ADY), one was at the Kona Village Hotel, Hawaii I. 7-17 May (ADY), and one was spotted at Kilauea Point N.W.R., Kauai I. 29 May (EV). Few Bristle-thigheds are reported in the main Hawaiian Islands away from Oahu and Molokai. Two Least



This unusual photograph taken at Kona Sewage Treatment Plant, Hawaii 23 March 2009 shows one pair each of American Wigeon and Eurasian Wigeon. The leftmost bird is a drake Eurasian, the second bird from the left is a female Eurasian, the second bird from the right is a drake American and the farthest right bird is a female American. Note the subtle differences in the underwing pattern. Photograph by George L. Armistead.

Sandpipers were seen at Kealia 12 (ph. MW) & 19 Mar (MN). There was a Pectoral Sandpiper and a Dunlin at Kealia 12 Mar (MW). A Red Phalarope was seen in a salt pond at Hanapepe, Kauai I. 8 Mar (ph. RS). These species are all regular but uncommon in the Region. Dowitchers were unusually scarce in the main Hawaiian Islands, but 18 Long-billeds were observed on Laysan I. 1 Apr–6 May BS, MS). This is a high count for the nw. Hawaiian Islands. The previous high count was of 9 wintering on Laysan 1991–1992.

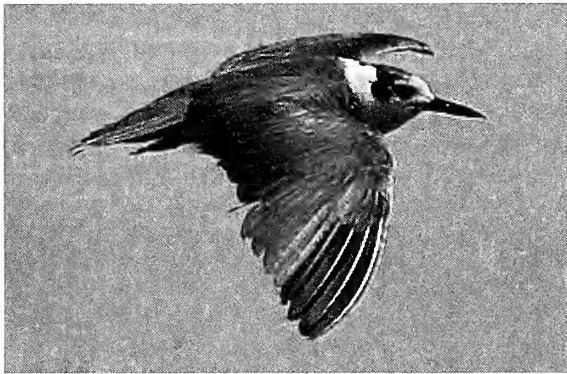
## GULLS THROUGH PASSERINES

A Laughing Gull was seen at Kealia 16 Apr (MN), and 2 were seen at the Kii Unit of James Campbell N.W.R., Oahu I. 3 Apr (PD). A Franklin's Gull in was at Kealia early May was joined by another in late May (MN); one at the Kaunakakai S.T.P., Molokai I. 26 May

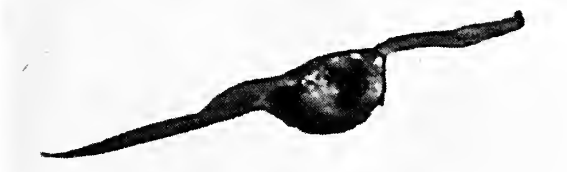
**SA** Two reports came in from birders offshore. A tour group went on a dedicated pelagic trip in the Kaulakahi Channel sw. of Kauai I. on 17 Mar. Notable seabird observations included a Mottled Petrel, 2 Sooty Shearwaters, a Christmas Shearwater, and 3 Gray-backed Terns (GLA). Birders on a regular sightseeing cruise in the Kaulakahi Channel 19 Apr found 20 Laysan Albatrosses, 4 Black-footed Albatrosses, 12 Bulwer's Petrels, 25 Band-rumped Storm-Petrels, 2 Newell's Shearwaters, a Christmas Shearwater, 2 Gray-backed Terns, a Common Tern and a Pomarine Jaeger (DK). Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses are winter breeders in the Hawaiian Islands. Laysans are regularly reported in modest numbers on pelagic trips, while Black-footeds are reported in small numbers. Christmas Shearwaters, Newell's Shearwaters, Band-rumped Storm-Petrels, and Gray-backed Terns are summer breeders in the main Hawaiian Islands but are reported in low numbers on pelagic trips. Mottled Petrels, Sooty Shearwaters, Common Terns, and Pomarine Jaegers are regular migrants to the Region. Sooty Shearwaters are sometimes observed here in large numbers, Pomarine Jaegers are regular in modest numbers, while the other species are regular but rare in the Region.



Peeps are rare in the Hawaiian Islands, and many go unidentified. This Least Sandpiper (here 12 March 2009) was one of two that wintered at Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge, Hawaii. Photograph by Michael Wolther.



When a rare Black Tern was found in Kahuku, Oahu Island in December 2008, birders were disappointed when the bird quickly disappeared. It was thus a pleasant surprise when a Black Tern was found across the island in Kailua 24 March 2009 (here). Photograph by Michael Wolther.



This Peregrine Falcon was seen as it flashed by the thirty-second floor of a condominium complex at Waikiki, Oahu Island, Hawaii on 9 March 2009. Remarkably, a falcon was seen from the same window on 5 December 2008. Photograph by Michael Wolther.

(ADY). A Glaucous-winged Gull was seen at Puuhala, Molokai I. 5 Mar (ADY); this was probably the same gull reported around s.-cen. Molokai in early-late Mar (SB, EM). Laughing, Ring-billed, and Glaucous-winged Gulls are some of the most commonly reported gull species in the Region. A Black Tern was spotted at Kaelepulu Pond, Oahu I. 24 Mar (ph. MW). This may well have been the same bird seen the previous winter around Kahuku, Oahu I., as the bird in both locations was reported to have an injured leg. The bird

while the female had bands identifying it as a captive-bred bird. The only report I received of any of the other rare Kauai forest birds was of one Akikiki in Kokee 19 May (HC). A small group of birders observed a Maui Parrotbill (Endangered) and heard one Akoheohe (Endangered) along the boardwalk in the Nature Conservancy's Waikamoi Preserve on Maui I. 7 Mar (CP et al.). Another group visited Waikamoi 19 Apr and observed a Maui Parrotbill and at least 4 Akoheohe (BR et al.).



Belted Kingfishers are conspicuous enough to attract attention on their rare visits to the Hawaiian Islands, but they are seldom photographed. Fortunately, this female remained in one spot on the western side of Maui Island long enough to allow some photographs (here 11 March 2009). Photograph by Jocqui Probst.

was seen again in Kaelepulu Pond 25 Mar (MO) and 5 Apr (PD, RM). Black Terns are rare in the Region.

Parrots seem to be doing well in urban areas. At least 500 Rose-ringed Parakeets were seen in downtown Honolulu 7 Mar (MO), and 54 Red-masked Parakeets were counted in e. Honolulu 21 Apr (MO). A Belted Kingfisher was observed on w. Maui I. 11 Mar (ph. JP, CP). This bird had been first spotted 17 Feb (SA). Belted Kingfishers are rare in the Region, but because they are conspicuous and easily identified, they are reported rather regularly. A Puaiohi (Endangered), a very rare native thrush, was spotted in Kokee S.P., Kauai I. 18 Apr (GLA et al.). A nesting pair of Puaiohi was observed in Kokee 31 May (PR, EV). The male was unbanded,

Contributors: George L. Armistead, Jeannie Barrett (JBa), Dusti Becker, Jessica Berryman, Steve Burkson, Happy Chambers, Laura Cory, Annie Crary, Ginny Culver, Reg David, Arlcone Dibben-Young, Peter Donaldson, Darren Dowell, Sherree Denise Farmer, Scott Fife, Julie Henig, David Kuhn, Jim Levenson, Richard



This photograph from Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge, Hawaii on 22 March 2009, illustrates the remarkable bill of Akiapouou, a rare Hawaiian endemic. The species has been observed hammering on tree branches with its short, stout lower mandible and using its long, thin upper mandible to extract prey hidden in narrow crevices. Photograph by George L. Armistead.

May, Jeff Miller, Ed Misaki, Daryll Myhr, Mike Nishimoto, Mike Ord, Mike Peczynski, Ralph Perrine, Ellen Peterson, Chuck Probst, Jacqui Probst, Pauline Roberts, Brooks Rownd, Dorcie Sakuma, Ryan Shaw, Brette Soucie, Matt Stelmach, Sonia Stephens, Eric VanderWerf, Michael Walther, Megan Westervelt (MWe).

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# First confirmed record of White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) for Mexico

MICHAEL D. CARMODY • LEGACY TOURS • P. O. BOX 8156 • SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99203 • (MDCARMODY@COMCAST.NET)



Figure 1. When first found, the White-winged Becard was foraging actively from a barbed wire fence, in loose association with a feeding flock of other birds. The lack of gray supraloral stripe, gray hind-collar, and pale gray rump rule out Gray-collared Becard. All images were taken near Benemerito de las Americas, eastern Chiapas, Mexico on 15 January 2009. Photograph by Frank Stermitz.

## Abstract

The author and a small party of birders observed and obtained photographic documentation of an adult male White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*) near Benemerito de las Americas in the eastern part of the state of Chiapas, Mexico on 15 January 2009. This sighting provides the first fully documented sighting of this species for the country of Mexico.

## Field encounter

At 1155 on 15 January 2009, the author and a party of 11 other birders stopped to investigate a mixed-species flock approximately 20 km along the road between Benemerito de las

Americas and Pico de Oro, Chiapas (at 16° 21.892' N, 90° 40.980' W). The flock consisted of nine Groove-billed Anis (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*), a Great Kiskadee (*Pitangus sulphuratus*), six Social Flycatchers (*Myiozetetes similis*), a Clay-colored Thrush (*Turdus grayi*), a Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*), a Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Habia fuscicauda*), and eight Variable Seedeaters (*Sporophila americana*). Other species in peripheral attendance, either using a barbed wire fence that outlined a pasture five meters in from the road, or taller grasses and shrubs up to 10 meters beyond the fence, included a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*), a Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus/couchii*), a

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magna*), a Gray-crowned Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis poliocephala*), a Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*), three White-collared Seedeaters (*Sporophila torqueola*), and the White-winged Becard (*Pachyramphus polychopterus*).

The becard was first detected by Pat Stermitz at approximately noon. Though uncertain of its identification, she noted a black bird with white areas in the wing. Several minutes later, Kraig Kemper relocated the bird, and pointed it out to Carmody, who identified it as a White-winged Becard. During the next hour, we studied the bird for a total of 35 minutes at a range of between 5 and 15 meters. There was one absence of about 25 minutes almost immediately following the initial identification, when the bird flew into heavy foliage on the opposite side of the roadway. Once it was relocated, photographs were obtained and detailed field notes were made. The becard hunted from perches on a barbed wire fence and among taller grass stocks in the rough pasture. Twice the bird flew across the roadway to rest in the upper branches of a cecropia tree. Even after the flock was disturbed by our close approach, birds continued to return to the edge

of the roadway. The reasons for this behavior were not clear, as no ant-swarm was present, but the birds may have been attracted to a concentration of small moths in the grasses. The becard itself was keenly intent on hunting and allowed repeated close approach while it actively sought prey. The weather pattern at the time of observation included below-normal temperatures accompanied by short intervals of cold rain showers, the effects of the third day of a four-day *norte*, that is, a storm system from the north. While in Benemerito de las Americas at 1045 on the same morning, the author had observed nine Gray Catbirds feeding in close proximity to one another on the exposed front lawn of a





Figure 2. The habitat of rough pasture where the White-winged Becard was observed is typical of large areas of Chiapas, and indeed much of Middle America, where deforestation has fueled range expansion in many species that favor open-country and edge habitats. Photograph by Frank Stermitz.



Figure 3. In comparison to adult male Gray-collared Becard, adult male White-winged Becard shows darker gray underparts and more extensive black in the crown that extends below the eye and lacks a sharp contrast between the black of the crown and gray of the cheek. Photograph by David Solos.

home that bordered the busy highway. These birds were seeking food in a more exposed area than normal and were tolerating closer contact with conspecifics than is typical. It is possible that the series of cool, wet days caused many species, including the White-winged Becard, to participate in feeding flocks in more exposed settings than typical for the flocks themselves as well as for the individual species.

## Description

The bird showed the size, shape, and profile of a becard. Readily apparent was the overall darker gray color of this individual relative to the other three congeners that regularly occur in Chiapas: Cinnamon Becard (*P. cinnamomeus*), Gray-collared Becard (*P. major*), and Rose-throated Becard (*P. aglaiae*). The stark blackish and gray tones indicate an adult male becard; females and younger males show brownish or russet tones above. Overall size and shape of both the body and the tail were most similar to Gray-collared Becard; however, the body color was darker gray than that species', including the entire face below the eye, and the throat, breast, belly, and upper tail coverts. The rich blackish crown reached down to the dark eye, through the forehead to the bill, and from the rear of the crown down the nape. No supraloral stripe was evident, and there was no gray hind-collar. The black color of the nape continued unbroken along the length of the back down to the grayish upper tail coverts. When the bird was perched, the blackish graduated tail showed bright white outer rectrices, which were even more prominent when the bird took flight. Nearly half of the total wing area showed white, with a prominent white scapular stripe and extensive white feather edging on the coverts, tertials, and secondaries. The bill was a darkish metallic color that often appeared shiny during the quick hunting sallies. The legs and feet were a dusky color. The bird's plumage is consistent with the northern subspecies *cinereiventris*, found north to Belize.

## Discussion

White-winged Becard had not previously been documented with photographs in Mexico. The sole prior report was from 23 July 1983 at Palenque, Chiapas, by Andres M. Sada and Juan I. Sada (pers. comm.). The brief sighting involved a darker-bodied becard than Gray-collared but otherwise lacks key details. This sight record is the basis for inclusion of White-winged Becard in Sada (1989). Howell and Webb (1995) list this species as resident on the Atlantic slope from southern Belize south-



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Figure 4. The White-winged Becard hunted insects in wet grasses along a roadside and allowed relatively close approach. A cool front from the north, with intermittent rain showers, appears to have stimulated prolonged bouts of foraging in relatively exposed settings in a number of birds in the vicinity. Photograph by Michael D. Carmody.

ward, noting that reports from Chiapas require verification. Jones et al. (2000) indicate that White-winged Becard was not recorded in Belize until 26 April 1970 and that this species' range appears to be expanding northward. This expansion is thought to be in response to habitat created by deforestation, which promotes growth of the open scrubland preferred by this species (Jones 2005).

The location in eastern Chiapas, Mexico, where this bird was recorded is at the same latitude as southern Belize. Additionally, the rough pasture where the bird was observed did not appear different from pastureland edges favored by White-winged Becard throughout the Caribbean lowlands from Belize south into Panama. If indeed this species is benefiting from deforestation in Belize, Guatemala, and elsewhere, then it is likely that the occurrence of this White-winged Becard is a precursor to additional future records in Mexico.

### Acknowledgments

I thank the participants of the group that ac-

companied me to southeastern Chiapas on a Legacy Tours birding tour. Those sharing in this first Mexico record of White-winged Becard include Craig and Kathy Kemper, Mike and Eileen McFadden, Marilyn Milek, Mike Mulligan, Connie Osbeck, David Salas, Frank and Pat Stermitz, and Brooke Stevens. David Salas and Frank Stermitz contributed excellent photographs. Steve Mlodinow and Hal Opperman offered important suggestions for improvements to this article.

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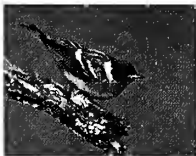
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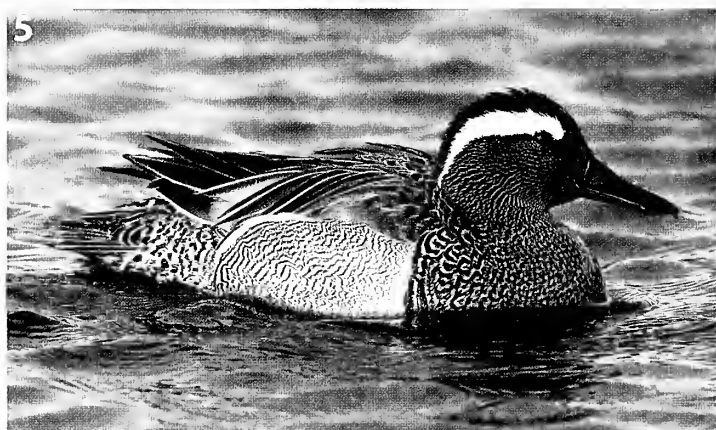
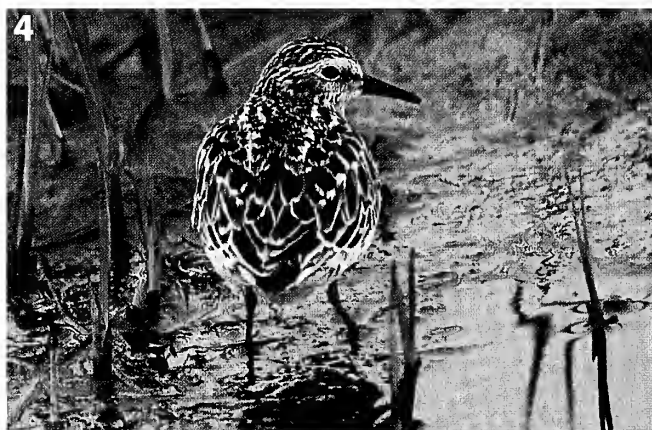
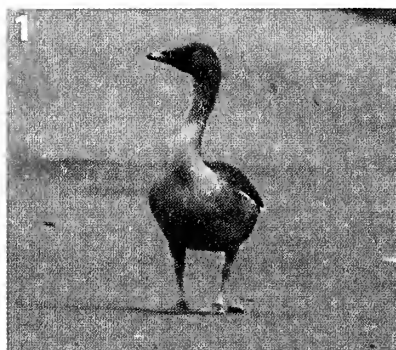


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# Pictorial Highlights



1 • This lone Taiga Bean-Goose appeared briefly on the Adak Island, Alaska airport runway on 18 May 2009; this represents only the second confirmed Aleutian record of this casual Alaska visitor. *Photograph by Isaac Helmericks.*

2 • One of very few reports for the Alaskan Interior, this male Cinnamon Teal hung out with a female on a meltwater pond at Milepost 1330 of the Alaska Highway north of Tok on 14 and (here) 15 May 2009. *Photograph by Luke DeCicco.*

3 • This adult Iceland Gull at Kodiak's waterfront on 29 March 2009 appears to exhibit traits of the nominate subspecies, possibly the first definitive Alaskan record of this subspecies. *Photograph by Richard A. MacIntosh.*

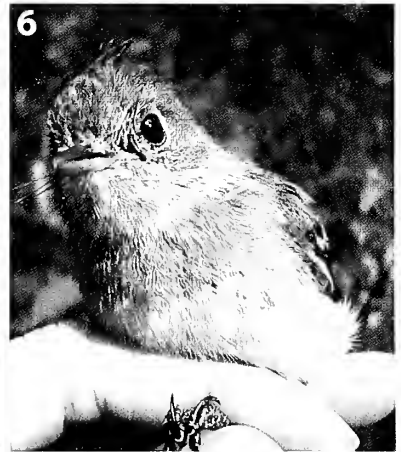
4 • This Least Sandpiper, the first substantiated for the Central or Western Aleutians, was a surprising find after three days of westerly and southwesterly winds. It was found and photographed in the grassy edge of the Clam Lagoon mudflat on 19 May 2009. *Photograph by Johnny Powell.*

5 • Newfoundland's third Garganey was very photogenic at a St. John's city park on the first day (15 May 2009) of a three-day visit before it moved into heavily vegetated marsh where it was difficult to view. *Photograph by Bruce Mactavish.*

6 • This male Audubon's Warbler frequented a nectar-laden bottlebrush hedge 11-18 (here 11) April 2009 at a private residence on Dauphin Island, Mobile County for Alabama's twelfth record of this western subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler. *Photograph by Terry Hartley.*

7 • Providing the fifth confirmed breeding occurrence for Louisiana (all from Cameron Parish since 1994), this Snowy Plover chick was discovered on Rutherford Beach 2 May 2009. *Photograph by Donna L. Dittmann.*





1 • An amazing two Yellow-green Vireos, furnishing the seventh and eighth well-documented records in Louisiana, were located in the Johnsons Bayou area of Cameron Parish, including this cooperative individual that entertained observers at the Baton Rouge Audubon Sanctuary 16-18 (here 17) May 2009. *Photograph by Dove Potton.*

2 • Only Louisiana's second occurrence, this stunning male Varied Bunting popped into view just long enough for this photograph at the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge nature trail, Cameron Parish on 26 April 2009. Interestingly, the first state record also involved an adult male captured, photographed, and released at a banding station in Johnsons Bayou (about 24 kilometers to the southwest) 9 April 2002. *Photograph by Jody Louviere.*

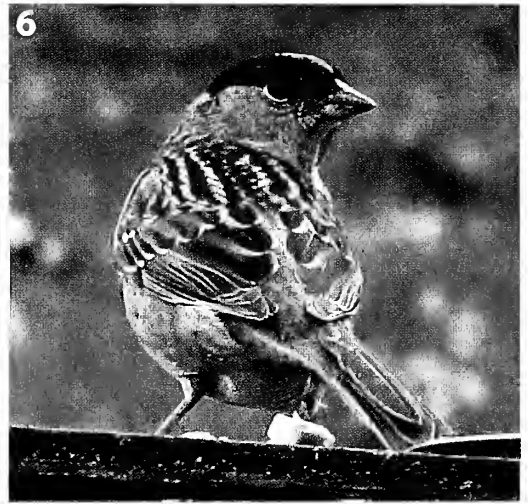
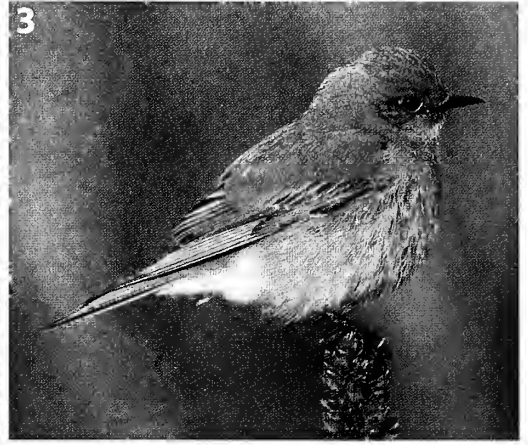
3 • This Sinaloa Wren, resident since it was discovered at Patagonia, Arizona in August 2008 (here 19 May 2009), constructed two dummy nests in May 2009 and sang through the season. *Photograph by Tim Lenz.*

4 • With just ten prior Arizona records, the appearance of a Crescent-chested Warbler here still generates much excitement, as this one did in Pinery Canyon, Chiricahua Mountains 13-16 (here 14) May 2009. *Photograph by Richard Webster.*

5 • This inquisitive young Stygian Owl, accompanied by both parents, was found 30 May 2009 near Blancaneaux Lodge in Belize's Mountain Pine Ridge. Fledgling Stygian Owls are a rare sight anywhere, and this individual was one of only a handful ever seen in the Central America region. *Photograph by Roni Martinez.*

6 • A gem among tyrannids, this Belted Flycatcher was mist-netted at the SalvaNatura monitoring station in pine-oak forest in Montecristo National Park on 27 March 2009, thus confirming the fourth record for El Salvador. *Photograph by Roselvy Juárez.*

7 • The find of the season in Colorado was the state's first Acadian Flycatcher, heard calling and photographed 12 May 2009 at Van's Grove, a productive migrant trap in Bent County. *Photograph by Brondon Percival.*



1 • Although a regular breeder in the Ponderosa Pine forests of Colorado's southwestern mountains, a Grace's Warbler that visited Estes Park in Larimer County 5-7 (here 7) May 2009 is less expected than many "eastern" warbler rarities found along the state's northern Front Range. *Photograph by Rachel Hopper.*

2 • Brightening the day for a group of birders was this Yellow-throated Warbler at Bonny Reservoir, Yuma County, Colorado 11 April 2009. *Photograph by Christopher L. Wood.*

3 • Providing the second record for Ohio, this Mountain Bluebird was widely viewed during its three-week stay 30 March through 17 (here 11) April 2009. *Photograph by George Sydlowski.*

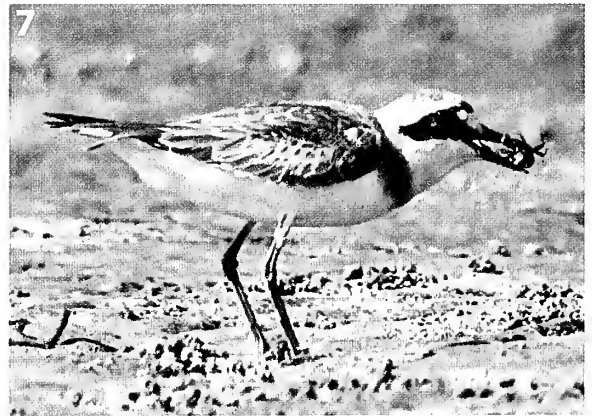
4 • At least two pairs of Prothonotary Warblers attempted to nest in spring 2009 (here 25 May) at Shenango Reservoir, Pennsylvania, a location where the species is normally absent. *Photograph by Geoff Malosh.*

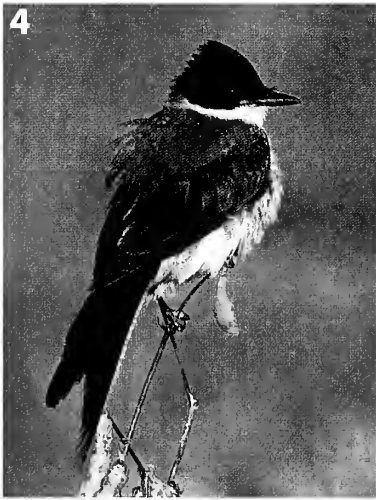
5 • Nicely digiscoped was this Swainson's Warbler holding territory in Preston County, West Virginia 24 (here 30) May through 13 June 2009, well north of the known breeding grounds. *Photograph by Jeff Davis.*

6 • Ohio's first Golden-crowned Sparrow pleased many observers at a Hancock County feeder 7-24 (here 22) April 2009. *Photograph by Gabe Leidy.*

7 • Marking only the second record for the United States, a striking Greater Sand-Plover in breeding plumage drew hundreds of birders to Huguenot Memorial Park, Duval County, Florida 14-26 (here 17) May 2009. *Photograph by Tom Dunkerton.*

8 • A partially leucistic Loggerhead Kingbird at Fort Zachary Taylor State Park, Monroe County, Florida 12 (here) through 23 April 2009 brought in Florida's third record in as many years. *Photograph by Carl Goodrich.*





1 • This male Kirtland's Warbler at Lori Wilson Park, Brevard County 24 April 2009, providing Florida's fifth record, was banded in Oscoda County, Michigan in 2008. *Photograph by Borboro Keskinen.*

2 • This rare Worm-eating Warbler visited the Arlemont Ranch in Dyer, Esmeralda County, Nevada 3 and 4 (here) May 2009. *Photograph by Martin Meyers.*

3 • This Painted Redstart visited Floyd Lamb Park in northern Las Vegas, Clark County, Utah 5-9 (here 6) April 2009. Prior to this spring, there was only one record of the species accepted by the Nevada Bird Records Committee. Remarkably, a second redstart turned up 25-28 April at nearby Corn Creek, Desert National Wildlife Refuge. *Photograph by Greg Scyphers.*

4 • Missouri's first Fork-tailed Flycatcher was seen by many 26-28 (here 28) April 2009 near Muskrat Lake, Buchanan County. *Photograph by Linda Williams.*

5 • Smith's Longspurs are not often seen on migration, even in the far north. A small flock of three (including this female) at the Watson Lake airport 26-27 (here 26) May 2009 established the first record for southeastern Yukon. *Photograph by Jukka Jontunen.*

6 • This fetching Kentucky Warbler, found on Pueblo County side of Chico Basin Ranch on 1 May 2009, established the seventh record for the county and first record for this well-birded ranch. *Photograph by Bryon Patrick.*

7 • This stunning portrait of a *hendersoni* Short-billed Dowitcher in Scarborough, Maine 17 May 2009 represents the first photographic documentation of this subspecies for New England and only the second New England record ever. *Photograph by Lloyd Alexander.*



1 - This striking Blue-winged Warbler × Golden-winged Warbler hybrid backcross was singing a Blue-winged song in Tyringham, Massachusetts 23 May 2009. *Photograph by Jeremiah Trimble.*

2 - This Townsend's Warbler entertained birders and photographers in Newton, Massachusetts 14-19 (here 19) April 2009. *Photograph by Erik Nielsen.*

3 - For all the pelagic exploration of Monterey Bay, California, Murphy's Petrel had not been recorded there prior to spring 2009, when one on the bay on 20 May was followed shortly by two, including this bird in Monterey County waters, on 23 May. *Photograph by Jeff Poklen.*

4 - Sporting a lemon gorget, this Magnificent Hummingbird × Anna's Hummingbird hybrid, the first of its kind reported, visited a feeder near Eureka in Humboldt County, California 2-5 (here 2) April 2009. *Photograph by Jerry Mahlberg and Kathryn Krupnick.*

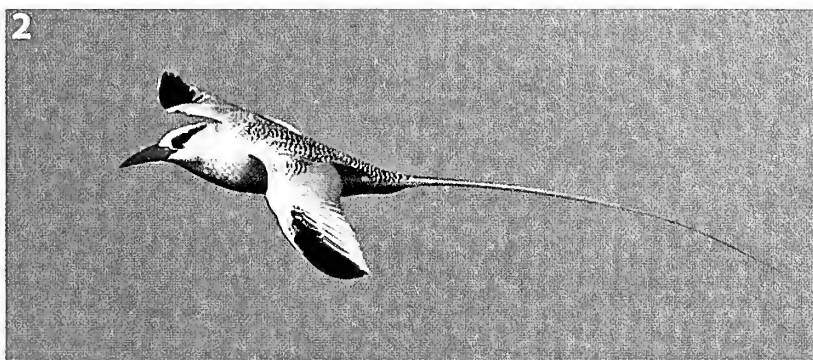
5 - Daytime encounters with migrant Flammulated Owls are a rare treat in Oregon and Washington. This individual, found in a small isolated patch of deciduous trees at Palouse Falls, Franklin County, Washington 24 May 2009, was far removed from suitable nesting habitat. *Photograph by Michael Woodruff.*

6 - One of 11 Summer Tanagers reported in the Prairie Provinces during the spring of 2009, this immature male at Starbuck, Manitoba (here 26 May) was particularly cooperative, staying for six days. *Photograph by Bob Shettler.*

7 - Northwest of its usual range was this male Scarlet Tanager at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on 20 May 2009. *Photograph by Nick Saunders.*







1 - Western Tanager, a rare but annual visitor to Manitoba, turned up near Balmoral on 17 May 2009—one of three reported in the province during the spring of 2009. *Photograph by Garry Budyk.*

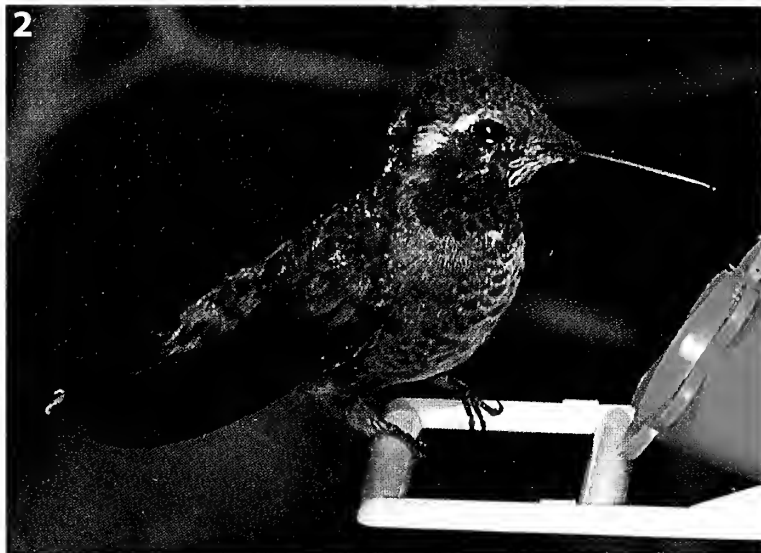
2 - This impressive full-tailed adult Red-billed Tropicbird made an extremely rare onshore appearance at Cape Point, Buxton, North Carolina on 10 March (here) and again on 21 April 2009. *Photograph by Brian Pattenon.*

3 - One of the most exciting passerine finds of the spring 2009 season was this black-backed Lesser Goldfinch that sporadically visited feeders in Beaufort, North Carolina 2-4 (here 3) March. *Photograph by Harry D. Sell.*

4 - A first for Oklahoma was this male Hepatic Tanager at a farmstead outside of Boise City, Cimarron County 24 April 2009. *Photograph by Dan Robinson.*

5 - California's first Great Crested Flycatcher in spring was this individual on Point Loma, San Diego County on 20 May 2009. Note that the tail is almost wholly rufous, with no brown at the tips of the rectrices. *Photograph by Douglas W. Aguillard.*

6 - This Rock Wren lingered all day 11 May 2009 around some barns on a farm in northeastern Jefferson County, Kentucky, allowing many birders to enjoy this second state record. *Photograph by Mark Monroe.*



1 - One of the highlights of the spring 2009 season in Texas was this Surf Screeper that foraged along the Port Aransas jetty in Nueces County from 1-9 (here 3) May. This represents the tenth record for the state. *Photograph by Lynn Barber.*

2 - In the Davis Mountains, the acknowledged hotspot for hummingbirds in Texas, this odd-looking bird frequented feeders from 29 April (here) through 11 May 2009. It appears to be a hybrid between Magnificent Hummingbird and White-eared Hummingbird, a combination that does not seem to have been reported previously. *Photograph by Maryann Eastman.*

3 - Tropical Parula has expanded its range in Texas in recent years, established a population along the Devils River, and is increasing in occurrence on the Edwards Plateau. However, is still a very rare find in the Trans-Pecos, where this male made a brief appearance at Davis Mountains State Park, Jeff Davis County on 28 May 2009. *Photograph by Mark W. Lockwood.*

4 - Black-headed Siskin is a species that is regularly found in bird markets in northeastern Mexico and even occasionally in Texas. As a result, when this adult male appeared on South Padre Island, Cameron County on 4 March 2009, its provenance was immediately questioned. *Photograph by Ted Sears.*

5 - This mysterious hybrid warbler, present in Seattle, Washington 17 May 2009, generated much debate as to the possible parentage. Although the bird will likely remain in the "mystery" pile, an American Redstart x Yellow Warbler would seem to be a likely fit. *Photograph by Collin Vassalo.*

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