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Southern California Postscript

Received much too late to be incorporated into continental summaries, Blue List recommendations from six correspondents from the Southern Pacific Coast Region differed in few conclusions from those previously tabulated.

The following species were unanimously considered deserving of Blue-listing: White-faced Ibis, Fulvous Whistling Duck, Swainson's Hawk, Harris' Hawk, Osprey, Merlin, Gull-billed Tern, Least Tern, Yellow-billed

Cuckoo, Purple Martin, Bell's Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat and Grasshopper Sparrow.

The following additional species were supported for retention by a majority of the six reporters: White Pelican, Prairie Falcon, Snowy Plover (one dissent), Burrowing Owl, Short-eared Owl and Yellow Warbler.

The following species were unanimously *disapproved* for inclusion in the list: Western Grebe, Black-crowned Night Heron, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Am. Kestrel, Hairy Woodpecker, Cliff Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Mountain Bluebird and Loggerhead Shrike. Other Blue List species had indecisive tallies.

Nominations for additions to the list by two or more reporters included: White-winged Scoter, Elf Owl, Willow Flycatcher, Vermilion Flycatcher, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*P.m. californica*), Gray Vireo, Summer Tanager, and two races of Savannah Sparrow.

A few pertinent comments:

"Harris' Hawk — Formerly fairly common along the Colorado River, but now extirpated from the state. The primary factor that has been attributed to it has been the sport of falconry."—JD.

"Swainson's Hawk—has suffered catastrophic declines in California."—JD.

"Elf Owl—habitat destruction."—GMcC.

"Willow Flycatcher—This species has suffered catastrophic declines as a breeding bird in California in the last twenty years. It no longer breeds in southern California, and is no longer found in most of its breeding range in northern California. . . .this bird has declined more than any other species on the Blue List."—JD. "Habitat destruction"—GMcC.

"Black-tailed Gnatcatcher—has a very small range; has declined from many parts of its former range; very local, habitat threatened with development."—JD.

"Gray Vireo—cowbird predation."—GMcC, SS, SC.

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A Streaked Shearwater in California

by Don Roberson¹, Joseph Morlan², and Arnold Small³

ON OCTOBER 9, 1977 we observed a Streaked Shearwater (*Calonectris leucomelas*) from a chartered pelagic birding boat in Monterey Bay, Monterey County, California. At the time of the sighting we were approximately 6-7 miles west of Moss Landing and above the south rim of the Monterey submarine canyon. The bird was initially flushed in company with two Pink-footed Shearwaters (*Puffinus creatopus*) but although similarly sized it was immediately distinctive because of the largely all-white head and pale mottled back. Roberson, on the bow of the boat, and Morlan, on the bridge, having previously studied the literature, soon suggested the probability of Streaked Shearwater. Small, having had previous field experience with this species off Japan, was able to confirm the initial identification and his shouting alerted the entire group. The bird landed on the water several times and cautious approach allowed several diagnostic photographs to be obtained.

We were in radio contact with another chartered birding boat and called them over. The Streaked Shearwater was seen well by all observers of both boats — about 80 birders in all.

It is difficult to confuse the Streaked Shearwater with any other species. Although the Northern Fulmar may have a white head, its chunky shape and heavy bill quickly differentiate it from the much slimmer, longer-winged Streaked Shearwater. The possibility of a partially albino Pink-footed Shearwater was considered, but the scaly appearance of the back caused by whitish feather edgings seemed unlike any albino. In cases of bilateral albinism, irregular white patches are interspersed among more normal feathers. Here the back feathers were paler and grayer than in a Pink-footed Shearwater. The bird was also shaped somewhat differently from a Pink-footed Shearwater, being slimmer in the body and wings, with a more pronounced angle at the wrist. Thus it was shaped and marked more like a Cory's Shearwater (*Puffinus diomedea*). In fact, the white edgings to the upper tail coverts were quite similar to some plumages of Cory's, however the white face and crown, narrowly streaked nape, and dingy horn-colored bill eliminated that species. The various field guides that picture or discuss this bird (King and Dickinson (1975), Alexander (1954), King (1967), Kobayashi (1975), Gore and Won



This photo shows the extensive white on the underwings and the white underparts (the undertail coverts were also cleanly white). Although the head is in shadow, close examination reveals the all-white head—with the dark eye conspicuously on the white face, and a dark nape. The color slide also shows pink feet and a light bill.



Although somewhat out of focus, the markings of the dorsal surface are visible: white face, pale back, white edgings to rump forming a conspicuous "U", and whitish patches on wings (probably due to molt, which caused a primary to stick out vertically at rest). In life, the back and wings showed a scaly appearance, especially clear on the grayish back. Photos by Don Roberson.

(1971), Yamashina (1961), and Slater (1971) tend to over-emphasize the streaking on the head, although King and Dickinson indicate it is seen only at close range. Several (King and Dickinson, Kobayashi, King, and Gore and Won) show the scaly-backed appearance correctly.

THE STREAKED SHEARWATER breeds on the islands off Japan, Northern China, Korea, and the Bonins, and winters to the Philippines, Borneo, and New Guinea. Vagrants have been recorded once in Ceylon and northeast Thailand (King and Dickinson, 1975), and an unsubstantiated report comes from near the Hawaiian Islands (King, 1967). It prefers offshore waters but usually within sight of land (Ornithological Society of Japan, 1974).

This is the second record for North America. The first was collected by Victor Morejohn in Monterey Bay, Monterey Co., Calif., on October 3, 1975 (*American Birds* 30: 118).

How these birds, otherwise unrecorded in the eastern Pacific, arrived in California is a mystery but it is noteworthy that our observation is close to the date of the previous record. This species has been recorded north to Sakhalin and the Kuriles, and it is possible that this bird wandered north into the Gulf of Alaska and was caught up in a southerly move-

ment of Pink-footed Shearwaters. Another possibility is that it joined a group of New Zealand Shearwaters (*Puffinus bulleri*) in the southwestern or central Pacific and traveled with them to California. Moderate numbers of New Zealand Shearwaters were in Monterey Bay on the same day.

Whatever the explanation, the presence of two individuals of this unexpected species in the last three years points to our superficial knowledge of seabird movements and the awareness pelagic birders need to possess. Almost any pelagic species is possible offshore and birders need to broaden their horizons to those possibilities. The recent increase in organized trips offshore is encouraging. Our boat was chartered by the Santa Cruz Bird Club and the second boat was organized by the Golden Gate Audubon Society, while other trips during the same time were sponsored by Western Field Ornithologists and several other Audubon societies. Continued year-round coverage may yield further important data and other unexpected species.

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