



Golden-crowned Sparrow at Silver City, New Mexico, October 23, 1995. Surprisingly, five individuals were found in the state during the season. Photograph/Dale and Marian Zimmerman.

row at Columbus Nov. 11 (BN), as was a Sage near Farmington Nov. 26 (TR); a Sage was e. to w. *Harding* Oct. 14 (HS). The only *Baird's Sparrow* was near Holloman L., Sept. 27 (C. Black). Rusty Fox Sparrows, apparently of the *zaborialiliaca* group, were singles at Bosque N.W.R., Nov. 26–27 (ph. JO; BN, DE), near Texico and Melrose Oct. 28–29 (JEP, JO), and at Rattlesnake Springs Nov. 11 (JO). Golden-crowned Sparrows, always a treat, included singles at Santa Fe Nov. 4 (BF), Bill Evans L., Nov. 11 (EL), and Silver City Oct. 22–Nov. 7 (ph. D&M Zimmerman), plus two at Three Gun Spring near Albuquerque Nov. 25–27 (WH, BN, DE). Single Harris' Sparrows were at Clayton (WC), Zuni Nov. 12 (ph. DC), Albuquerque Nov. 14 (ph. JO), and Lea Nov. 17 (SW). Early and far south was a Lapland Longspur at Santa Teresa Oct. 3–4 (DE, BN). A remarkable 16 *Rusty Blackbirds* at B.L.N.W., Nov. 26 (JO) provided the only report. Late Com. Grackles included 60 at Albuquerque through Nov. 10 (HS), and one at B.L.N.W.R., Nov. 26 (JO). Very late were single N. Orioles at Folsom Nov. 23 (ph. JO) and Las Cruces Nov. 27 (GE). Pine Grosbeaks were rarely reported were three in the Rito de la Presa area, *Mora*, Sept. 12 (G. Schmitt) and one at 7200 ft in Rinconada Canyon at the base of Mt. Taylor Nov. 11 (HS). Cassin's Finches were decidedly scarce in their usual haunts, but notable were several at Mt. Taylor Nov. 11 (HS). Red Crossbills were similarly scarce except in the Sacra-

mento Mts. (PES, GE; C. Benkman, *vide* CS), where cones were plentiful. Pine Siskins reportedly suffered a disease outbreak in the Los Alamos area (PRS); one was early at Rio Rancho Aug. 9 (WH). Very late were ad. Lesser Goldfinches feeding two begging fledglings at L.V.N.W.R., Oct. 9 (WH). Two early Am. Goldfinches were at Aztec Aug. 20 (TR) and one at San Andres N.W.R., Sept. 1 (WH, MW), as were two Evening Grosbeaks at Socorro Sept. 8 (PB).

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Alaska Region

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Except for the relentless deposition of widespread heavy snow after November, Autumn 1995 was a copy of 1994. Mild conditions transposed the heavy snow cycles of last year to a series of weekly rain systems, as remnant extensions of an active North Pacific typhoon season. August through October was consistently warm and — between storms — mostly clear, which no doubt assisted migration. A fairly strong, early cold Arctic high pressure system crept over the Region in mid-November, ending what was characterized as an early departure fall out-migration. November was the driest, or nearly so, for the entire upper half of the Region! Most notable of this season's storms was typhoon *Oscar*, September 18–22, a moisture-rich tropical system that slowly tracked across the North Pacific, soaking a broad front that extended into the southern Bering Sea in inches of rain. The southern Kenai Peninsula was flooded in its wake. The Seward area received over 14 inches of rain in a 24-hour period and the Kenai River watershed flooded massively.

Departures for most long-distance migrants were earlier than average and, even with better-than-average coverage, few concentrations were noted from the two main out-migration sections, the central-eastern Interior and down the Pacific



Coast. Late dates were lacking or fewer than the norm, no doubt a function of the mild and mostly storm-free August–September period. For the same reasons, the typically later staging groups and wintering arrivals were very late to arrive and in low numbers at the period's close. Semihardy passerine migrants were very tardy in their southward movements, which continued well into December south of the Alaska Range. Although each subregion noted several new late departure dates, there were few of Regional significance. As with Fall 1994, this season's rarities came from the east, and an Asiatic component, beyond shorebirds, was completely missing.

Abbreviations: North Gulf (*North Gulf of Alaska*); SE (*Southeast AK*); SC (*South-coastal AK*); SW (*Southwest AK*); UCI (*Upper Cook Inlet*).

Loons to Diving Ducks

Observers from coastal sites Regionwide reported tardy arrivals and low numbers through the period for all loons. Pied-billed Grebe was finally documented as a breeder for Alaska from Annette I. in extreme s. SE, the only site where suitable habitat and regular sightings had raised suspicion in the past. A pair feeding three juv. birds on wooded ponds near the island's old airfield Sept. 4 (TJD, KO, SCH) seemed very late, but the description of the early age class of the young could mean nothing else but local nesting. Other Pied-billed reports included single immatures from traditional sites at Ketchikan's Ward L., Sept. 2–22 (SCH) and Mitkof I.'s Blind Slough Oct. 22–27 (PJW), while two birds remained at Ward L., Sept. 26–Nov. 8+ (SCH). Arriving W. Grebes were slow to materialize and local peaks at standard sites included only 180 each from around Ketchikan Nov. 30 (SCH) and off s. Mitkof I., Sept. 30 (PJW). Juneau area reports were again the northernmost for the fall, one each at Eagle Beach Sept. 16 (MS) and at Auke Bay "late" October–Nov. 4 (PS). Some combination of mild conditions, warmer Continental Shelf waters, or the continuous pelagic storms likely contributed to a series of late and inshore Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel reports. Noteworthy were a single Sept. 27 and three Oct. 6 (RD) at the Kenai R. mouth well up into c. Cook Inlet, providing a 2nd local record; ≥ 20 feeding in the surf at Seward Nov. 15 (GHR, TGT); and good numbers around Ketchikan Oct. 12–22 (SCH), with a high count of 65 Oct. 13. Very late and only a 2nd UCI fall report was a single Double-crested Cormorant on

fresh water at Anchorage's Elmendorf AFB Oct. 28 (DFD). Equally as unusual and inland was an imm. Pelagic Cormorant in downtown Bethel Sept. 17–18+ (CH), only the 2nd true "inland" record up the Kuskokwim River.

Out-migration of swans, always controlled by freeze-up of nesting and staging waterbodies, was especially late; good numbers extended well into late October both in the e. Interior and UCI. The Upper Tanana Valley Trumpeter Swan population increased an amazing 34% from previous late-summer counts, and the percent young in the population was the highest in the Region (TJD). Following the late swans were Greater White-fronted Geese, with near or record-late local reports of 331 at Tok Sept. 27 (TJD), a single at Kodiak Nov. 14 (RAM) and ≤ 14 along the Naknek R., Nov. 25–26 (DAD, HM, REH). Average peak fall geese counts from the traditional SW staging sites at the w. end of the Alaska Pen. included 158,424 "Pacific" Brant Sept. 26–Oct. 20, 61,000 Canada Geese Sept. 26–Oct. 20, and 91,009 Emperor Geese Oct. 14–20 (all CPD, RJK, KFB). Peak departure date from the Izembek area for Brant and Canadas was a relatively late Nov. 11. Late freshwater ice-up allowed dabbling ducks, especially N. Shoveler and Green-winged Teal, to linger — in some cases a week — beyond typical late dates. Good numbers of both species braved early November conditions, especially around UCI. Notable waterfowl highlights were nonetheless limited and included only a Blue-winged Teal at Ketchikan, a first recent record, Nov. 2–9 (SCH); and inland ♀ Spectacled Eider at Mother Goose L., Aug. 22 (TDE), out of range at the base of the Alaska Pen., and another extremely late female at Barrow Oct. 5 (RS). The Alaska Pen. report is especially interesting since the nearest Spectacled Eider breeding/brood rearing areas are north of Bristol Bay and most adults and broods have usually departed nesting areas for offshore molting and early fall staging sites by the end of August. The same departure timing for North Slope Spectacleds makes the Barrow record significantly, and perhaps record, late. An ad. ♂ Smew was (marginally) described from Lancaster Cove on the e. side of Prince of Wales I., Oct. 30–Nov. 3 (†MD, MS, DK, RJ), the southernmost report for the Region and only about the 2nd from SE. This rare Aleutian Is. migrant and winter visitor is casual e. of Adak I. Hooded Mergansers were more common than average and reported from all regular sites, with a peak of >12 at Juneau Nov. 11 (LE *et al.*).

Extralimitals included a female-type at Anchorage Oct. 14 (DFD, TGT), UCI's 5th in Fall, and a pair, probably the same from the past 3+ years, at Seward Nov. 15+ (TGT, GHR).

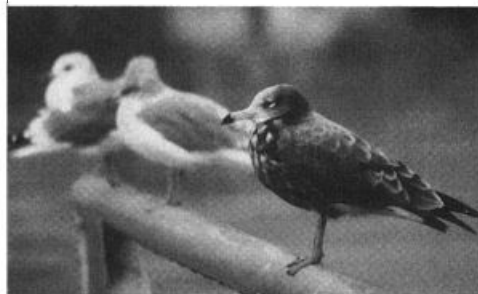
Raptors to Alcids

This season's few raptor highlights included individuals beyond normal migratory corridors: an imm. Bald Eagle in the Pribilofs (where casual) at St. Paul I., Nov. 12 (LP, *fide* SDS); single Sharp-shinned Hawks beyond the taiga w. to Cold Bay Oct. 12 (REG, MGS) and near Mother Goose L., and east and up Peninsula from Cold Bay, (no date; TDE, DAD, FAA); a Rough-legged Hawk near Portage in Turnagain Arm Nov. 22–29+ (DDG *et al.*); and single Gyrfalcons near Pt. Barrow Aug. 25 (EW) and at Gustavus near Glacier Bay N.M., Sept. 17 (BBP).

Three Am. Coot reports were slightly below the fall average: all singles at Juneau Oct. 14 (SZ); Cold Bay, where casual, Oct. 17–18 (CPD, GES, KFB); and on Mitkof I.'s traditional Blind Slough site Oct. 20–Nov. 18 (PJW). Sandhill Crane peak departures were early at e. Interior concentration points, with 70,000 birds noted Sept. 13–14 w. of Tok (CM). The only concentration of coastal migrants was reported from Yakutat, with 7800 Sept. 27 (BAA).

Shorebird highlights reflected an excellent and protracted migration in all coastal areas from the s. Bering Sea to SE. A combination of grounding weather conditions and great August coverage produced a host of significant sightings from the Pribilofs. A peak count of >130 Black Oystercatchers at Kodiak Nov. 11 (RAM, GHR, TGT) rivaled any CBC total and was indicative of prefreeze-up winter congregations from North Gulf resident populations.

The following is a sampling of the more significant shorebird reports: a Lesser Yellowlegs Aug. 16–23 and a juv. Wood Sandpiper Aug. 12–22 (PWS, SAS, SDS), both at St. Paul I.; single Bar-tailed God-



Black-tailed Gull in first-summer plumage at Petersburg, Alaska, September 28, 1995. One of two birds present since late August, establishing the third record for southeast Alaska. Photograph/P. J. Walsh.



Slaty-backed Gull in adult winter plumage at Ketchikan, Alaska, November 30, 1995.
 Photograph/Steve Heini.

wits from the Susitna R. mouth Aug. 18 (LTT, DC) and Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands, where casual, Sept. 28 (RJG); \leq nine Rufous-necked Stints at St. Paul Aug. 5–12 (SDS, PWS, SAS); four Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (earliest of >6 UCI fall records) in Cook Inlet's Goose Bay Aug. 22 (LTT, DC), a peak of >40 in the Pribilofs Aug. 27 (SDS), and a single on Mitkof I., where casual, Sept. 10 (PJW); good Stilt Sandpiper numbers from SE, *maxima* four in Juneau Aug. 21 (RJG *et al.*); single rare s. Bering Sea/N. Pacific Buff-breasted Sandpipers from St. Paul Aug. 12 (PWS, SAS) and Yantarni Sound on the s. side base of the Alaska Pen., Aug. 22 (\dagger HM, FAA); \leq three Ruffs around St. Paul Aug. 13–27 (SDS, PWS, SAS); and a Red Phalarope, rare inshore, late, and a first for Ketchikan Oct. 13 (SCH).

Allen found the 6th South Polar Skua from Kodiak I. pelagic waters Sept. 5, the season's only report. As in 1994, it was another outstanding gull season, with essentially all species reported except Heermann's. The season's only Franklin's Gull was a juvenile at Ketchikan Aug. 26 (SCH), where there are now 15 records — all but one since 1990. Unusual offshore in the Bering Sea was a first-winter Bonaparte's Gull around St. Paul I., Aug. 12–23 (PWS, SAS, SDS). A single first-summer Black-tailed Gull appeared in the Petersburg Harbor Aug. 24 (ph. PJW, SCH) and was joined by a 2nd bird, probably also in late August (SCH). Black-tailed #1 departed Oct. 29 and #2 was last seen Oct.

26. There are now 3 SE records of 4 individuals, all July–October. Reports of both Ring-billed and California Gulls from SE were below recent fall averages. High counts were only four and 165, respectively, from Ketchikan. The only extralimital California Gull report came from Anchorage, with a single first-winter bird Oct. 18 (TGT). Slaty-backed Gull was as widespread as ever, and reports from Barrow to Ketchikan reflected the full extent of what has recently been this Beringian form's regular fall dispersal range. Highlights included a 3rd-year bird inland at the base of the Alaska Pen. near Mother Goose L., Aug. 7 (TDE, HM, TB), an adult on the Peninsula's s. side at Yantarni Sound Aug. 16 (FAA, DAD); at least three each around St. Paul I., Aug. 10–23 (SDS) and Kodiak Oct. 5 (RAM); another 3rd-year individual at the Kotzebue dump Aug. 30 (JR); an adult at Barrow Oct. 3 (EW, RS); and two adults in the Ketchikan area Nov. 8+ and Nov. 25 (ph. SCH). At least eight Western \times Glaucous-winged Gulls and one "pure" 3rd-winter Western were described from Ketchikan Sept. 28–Nov. 30+ (ph. SCH), and the Petersburg one-legged ad. Western Gull was relocated for the 3rd successive fall Aug. 22 (PJW). More-than-usual Sabine's Gulls made a showing inshore (all juveniles), including one near Yakutat Aug. 23 (BAA); two on Jatahmund L. se. of Tok Aug. 25 (\dagger TJD, WB), the first for the Interior; and three near Ketchikan Oct. 12 (SCH). The latest Caspian Tern report involved two adults and a juvenile near Gustavus Aug. 5–12 (BBP). Given the mild season a basic-plumaged Dovekie seemed very early and unusual on brackish Antone L. at St. Paul I., Aug. 3–10 (SDS).

Doves to Nuthatches

After several years of few or no fall reports, Mourning Doves made an impressive appearance. Singles showed up in s. SE at Ketchikan Sept. 3 & 5 (SCH, TG), on nearby Annette I., Sept. 4 (TJD, SCH), and Prince of Wales I. Oct. 2 (MD); in central SE at Rowan Bay, Kuiu I., Sept. 13 (PJW, SCH) and Mitkof I., Sept. 16 (PJW); and n. to Anchorage Sept. 27 (SDS), where casual. This year's pulse of N. Pygmy Owls after early September was not as strong as last year's (*q.v.*) but was still above average and included six on Mitkof I. through the period (PJW), only two in Juneau Oct. 14–Nov. 18+ (SZ, GVV), and five around Ketchikan September–early November (SCH). Since pygmies are accidental n. of Juneau, a single at *Gustavus* Sept. 14–21 (BBP) was especially noteworthy. Ketchikan's apparently resident Barred Owl at Ward's L. was the season's only report Sept. 2–3 (TJD, SCH). The Tok area's Com. Nighthawks lingered well into August, with two–four birds hawking above the main Alaska Hwy. intersection to at least Aug. 12 (\dagger TJD). Only singles had ever been reported in the Interior in the past. Another single appeared briefly in Auke Bay near Juneau Aug. 19 (GVV) where there are several recent Fall reports. About the recent average, three Anna's Hummingbirds, ad. male types, showed up early around Ketchikan Aug. 10–Nov. 30+ (JR, SCH). At least one immature wandered well to the north to a Palmer feeder "early October" to Oct. 26+ (*fide* ph. DWS). Photos of a possible 2nd individual, also from Palmer, are being reviewed. Even more exotic was at least one and probably two imm. types, described by the observers as Anna's, at *Eagle* on the *upper Yukon R.* Sept. 9–18+ (ph. \dagger SH, *fide* TJD). Neither the photos or the field descriptions were definitive.

This year's extralimital westward-wandering Red-breasted Sapsucker was a single that ended up around Kodiak town Oct. 22–29+ (BH, LH, RAM), providing the Kodiak Archipelago's 13th record. Banding operations around the Mother Goose and Becharof L. systems at the base of the Alaska Pen. continue to produce rarities. This year's highlight was SW Alaska's first confirmed W. Wood Pewee, captured Aug. 23 (BJJ, NE, PW). This mainly e. Interior breeder is surprisingly rare anywhere beyond localized central Mainland populations limited to drier forests. The Alaska Range and satellite s. and w. extensions apparently are effective barriers to pewees into SW. Two reports of Rough-winged Swallows were above average and

included a pair with two juveniles at Ketchikan Aug. 4–11 (SCH), only a 2nd local fall record. At least four juveniles around Mitkof I., Aug. 4–9 (PJW) represented that area's first record. There was no Red-breasted Nuthatch irruption out of SC beyond the Alaska Range this year. Three singles noted (one banded) between Tok and Scottie Cr. at the Canada border Aug. 10–27 (TJD) could have been remnants from last year's northerly pulse.

Kinglets to Finches

The only wandering Golden-crowned Kinglets beyond typical evergreen forest habitats included \geq four banded near Becharof and Mother Goose L., Sept. 8–14 (DAD, TDE, BJJ, FAA), and three at the Tok banding station Aug. 28–Sept. 25 (TJD). Good coverage at St. Paul I. in August allowed an excellent enumeration of an impressive Yellow Wagtail fallout Aug. 11–17 (PWS, SAS, SDS). Although mostly singles were noted at either end of the period, a peak estimate of "low hundreds" were by far SW's highest fall tally of this annual migrant — usually represented by a few birds over an entire season anywhere in SW. An imm. Cedar Waxwing around downtown Kodiak Oct. 23–24+ (CH, LH, ph. RAM) provided the only extralimital report and a 4th local record. Cedars were reported otherwise only from Ketchikan, where a ground count of 30 birds was noted August–Sept. 21 (SCH). An adult feeding two juveniles near Ward L. and three other juveniles located some distance away Sept. 3 (TJD, SCH) represented the best evidence of local nesting to date.

As expected with mild early to mid-season weather, there were plenty of late warblers, mostly s. of the Alaska Range. Highlights included a Yellow-rumped at Barrow Oct. 1 (RS), one of the North Slope's latest ever, and two at Ketchikan Nov. 11 (SCH); a near-record late Townsend's Warbler, also at Ketchikan Nov. 17 (SCH); only one Palm Warbler, reported from Juneau Oct. 14 (†SZ), about that area's 5th; a UCI record-late Blackpoll at Anchorage Oct. 17 (SDS); and single late Wilson's, which is turning out to be the most likely late November warbler, at Tok Oct. 25 (=new local late date, *vide* TJD), at Anchorage Nov. 4 (TGT), and at Juneau Nov. 25 (LE). Single N. Waterthrushes at Gustavus Aug. 21 (BBP) and banded at Yakutat (No date submitted! BAA) were local firsts on the outer coast of n. SE.

Two nicely described Swamp Sparrows were found in the Ketchikan area, imm.-types Nov. 7–30 and Nov. 12–27 (SCH+). These represent Ketchikan's 7th and the Region's 11th records. All but the first are

from late fall and from coastal sites. White-throated Sparrows spilled out of interior British Columbia into at least s. SE, with \geq four around Ketchikan Nov. 26+, and a single n. to Petersburg Sept. 16–19 (PJW), a first Mitkof I. record. This fall's only Purple Finch was a female at the Petersburg Nursery Oct. 17, a 3rd local report. A late-summer dispersion of Red Crossbills way w. and n. of usual found two females at Cold Bay Aug. 6 (NC), and kept \geq two of the earlier summer individuals around St. Paul Aug. 4–23+ (SDS). Both crossbill species were otherwise very local, quiet, and in small numbers Regionwide. It appeared that at many locations small groups retracted deeper into the forests and most others left the Region. Quite anomalous was an alternate-plumaged δ American Goldfinch at a Petersburg feeder Aug. 25 (ph. PJW), providing the Region's 2nd documented record and 4th overall report. Given Petersburg's location at the mouth of the Stikine R., it is tempting to assign this individual to the s.c. British Columbia breeding form *C. tristis pallidus*.

Corrigenda

The reference in *NAEFN* Vol. 49, No. 1 to the "...more than usual Townsend's Wablers..." was a typo and should have read Townsend's Solitaires.

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British Columbia/ Yukon Region

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An unsettled first three weeks of August led into a glorious warm, dry September, at least during its first three weeks. This was followed by a gradual descent into winter across Yukon and northern British Columbia, while a constant barrage of Pacific storms crossed farther south through October. During November, a strong northwesterly Arctic stream across the northern half of the Region clashed with an equally strong southwesterly stream of tropically enhanced air over southern areas — resulting in cold, mostly dry weather for Yukon, occasionally snowy weather for northern British Columbia, alternating snow and rain for central and southern interior regions, and mild, very wet weather across coastal sections. The mild weather across the southern half of the Region prompted many species to linger north. As befits the predominantly westerly flow, a few East Asian/Alaskan strays turned up, including British Columbia's first Yellow Wagtail at Victoria and a Kittlitz's Murrelet on the Queen Charlotte Islands. However, these wanderers were overshadowed by a Whooping Crane which touched down in central British Columbia.

No detailed account was received from the Vancouver area for this summary.

Abbreviations: B.C. (*British Columbia*); G.C.B.S. (*Gagnon Cr. Banding Station, near Mackenzie, n.c. B.C.*); Ok. L. (*Okanagan L.*); Ok. Villy (*Okanagan Valley*); P.G. (*Prince George*); p.a. (*pending acceptance by responsible Bird Records Committee*); Q.C.I. (*Queen Charlotte Is.*); R.P.B.S. (*Rocky Point Banding Station, s. end Van. I.*); S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant/Ponds*); T.I.B.S. (*Triangle I. Banding Station, off n.w. tip Van I.*); Van. (*Vancouver*); Van. I. (*Vancouver I.*); Vic. (*Victoria*); V.L.B.S. (*Vaseux L. Banding station, s. Ok. Villy*); Whse. (*Whitehorse*).

Loons to Ibises

The now annual fall gathering of Com. Loons on Ok. L. off Okanagan Mountain P.P. peaked at 150 Oct. 14 (CC, DB); the