

# pictorial highlights

## Fall Migration



Rufous Hummingbirds have become a staple rarity of the fall season, appearing sometimes quite early in the fall across the continent wherever flowers or feeders are available. Most are young birds and/or females: few are as readily identified as this adult male at Springfield, Illinois, noted November 19. Photograph/Dennis Oehmke



Green Violet-Ear at LaCrosse, Wisconsin, October 27, the second for the Western Great Lakes and first for Wisconsin. Another appeared in central Virginia during the same week—alas, no camera recorded its colors! Photograph/F. Z. Leshner

Anna's Hummingbirds have never had a strong presence as vagrants east of the Mississippi River. Birders



in Binghamton, New York, and Charlotte, North Carolina, were pleasantly shocked to have first state records appear at feeders in November and December. The New York bird was an adult male, the Carolina bird a young male. Wisconsin's third Anna's and Arkansas's third and fourth appeared in November and October, respectively. Photographs/Rick Wiltraut (right) and Martha Sargent (left)



Broad-billed Hummingbird, a male changing from juvenal to adult plumage, resided at John Day, Oregon, September 12–14—a first for Oregon, among six other state firsts in autumn 1998! Photograph/Tim Janzen



A male Costa's Hummingbird photographed at Anchorage, Alaska, September 16 provided the fourth record for the state.

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South Polar Skua at South Beach, Jekyll Island, Georgia. October 18. Another two South Polars graced beaches at Smyrna Dunes Park and Fort Clinch, Florida, not far away. This bird shows a bright golden nuchal area typical of the species, a lack of ruddy coloration in the plumage, and a petite-looking head and bill. Photograph/James F. Flynn Jr.

How often is a jaeger an in-hand study?

This juvenile Parasitic was at New Mexico's Conchas Lake, San Miguel County, September 19. Though there are 9 previous reports of 11 individuals in New Mexico (dating back to 1952), this is the first confirmed



record. Good field characters that together suggest Parasitic are the rufous edging of the upperwing coverts, the haphazard checkered pattern in the uppertail coverts, the pale, streaked nape, and the pale tips of the primaries. The tips of the central rectrices are a bit worn but still do not show the long, rounded shape one sees in juvenile Long-tailed. Photograph/S.O. Williams III and C.G. Schmitt

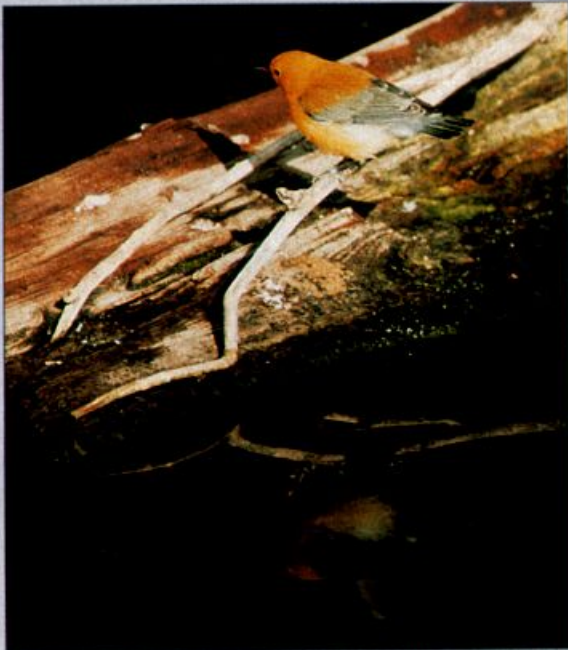


Illinois's first Black Skimmer frequented the beach at Decatur, where it was most satisfactorily photographed on September 4. Photographer/Dennis Oehmke



Masked Boobies are regular in the northern Gulf of Mexico over deep water during the warmer months, sometimes seen daily by whale researchers in the area. Rarely are they documented so nicely as this pair, an adult and a subadult about 72 km southeast of Louisiana's South Pass. Photograph/David P. Muth

An annual vagrant to the East Coast, and particularly regular at Cape May, New Jersey, Ash-throated Flycatcher is apparently the only member of its cryptic genus that regularly strays to the East, at least north of Florida. This photograph was taken November 17. Photograph/Tony Leukering



Prothonotary Warblers made news from California to New Mexico to West Texas to Nova Scotia and beyond this fall (apologies for the many photos not published!). This adult male (and its reflection) were captured on film at Wascana Waterfowl Park in Regina, Saskatchewan, on October 9! Photograph/Fred Lahrman



This adult Harris's Sparrow in basic plumage remained at Iron Mountain Pumping Station in southeastern San Bernardino County, California, from October 24 through November 10. Photograph/Larry Sansone



New York state had its second record of Cave Swallow on the New York City Oceanfront at Riis Park November 28. Two birds here were believed to be of the expanding western race *pelodoma*. Photograph/Angus Wilson



Though not a vagrant in New Mexico, the nomadic White-winged Crossbill can be notoriously hard to find for years at a time. Delighting the crowds was this male at a Santa Fe feeder October 22. Photograph/Jerry R. Oldenettel

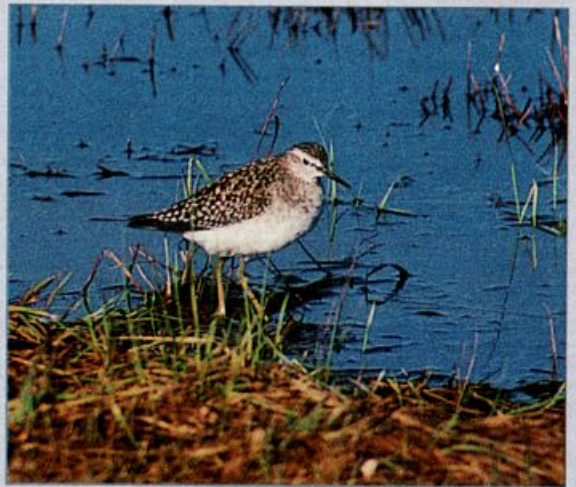


Prior to this fall, Idaho had no records of Blackpoll Warbler, so the capture of four at the Idaho Bird Observatory between August 29 and September 5 was very exciting. Pictured here is the state's third, captured September 2. Photograph/John Gatchet

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Hawks migrating along Atlantic coastlines (as opposed to interior ridges) are largely immature birds, and this is true of vagrant species as well: nearly all records of Swainson's Hawk in the East are of nonadults. This light-morph juvenile (with biologist Jamie Cameron) at Kiptopeke was only the second caught in Virginia, though there are about 30 records in this vicinity. Photograph/Marshall J. Iliff



A juvenile Wood Sandpiper, only the third for eastern North America, materialized November 11 at Renew's, Newfoundland, a very birdy area. It remained for three days. Photograph/Bruce Mactavish



Swainson's Hawks were especially numerous in the East this year. This juvenile of one of the darker morphs was on Great Gull Island September 18, a first Long Island, New York, record. The subterminal tailband is scarcely wider than other tailbands, a good clue for ageing this young perched bird. Photograph/Lisa Nield



Little Gull, a striking juvenile photographed at Prewitt Reservoir, Washington County, Colorado, in mid-September, was one of two in the state this season. A Little Gull in New Mexico showed up just after this bird's departure. Photograph/Ernest Black Ellis



Sabine's Gulls once again stole the show this fall: record counts in Monterey Bay, a slew of Texas records, some the result of Hurricane Frances, and a healthy scattering across the coasts and interior from an alphabet soup of sites: AR, NC, LA, MI, MS, WI, NB, ND, VT, MA, with great numbers in CO (40), NM (18-25), NE (32), AZ (13), and Bermuda (13)! This lovely photograph was taken at Millwood Lake, Little River County, Arkansas. Photograph/Charles Mills



This Gray-tailed Tattler, one of eight present on Gambell, Saint Lawrence Island, Alaska, between August 25 and September 9, can be distinguished from the similar Wandering Tattler at this age by the extensively pale belly and large amount of white spotting in the scapulars and tertials. ("And, yes, we heard it call as well," the photographer assures.) Photograph/Paul Lehman