

exceptional for the eastside during winter (M&MLD). A Grasshopper Sparrow at Coos Bay 18 Dec furnished the Region's 6th winter record (T. Shelmerdine). A Sooty Fox Sparrow at Umatilla 10 Dec added further evidence that this subspecies group may be of regular occurrence in e. Oregon (ph. D. Herr). A tally of 112 Sooty Fox Sparrows near Hoquiam, *Grays Harbor* 3 Jan was exceptional for Washington (P&RS). It was a slow winter for Swamp Sparrow and an abysmal one for Harris's Sparrow. There were but 9 Swamps in Washington and Oregon each, including 3 on Bainbridge I., *Kitsap* 3 Dec (B. Waggoner, D. Watkins) and 7 throughout the season at Millacoma Marsh, *Coos* (TR). The Region had only 5 Harris's Sparrows, about 20% of normal. A flock of 14 Golden-crowned Sparrows at Umatilla 25 Feb was exceptional for the far eastside (BF, SM). A *pugetensis* White-crowned Sparrow at Umatilla 25 Feb (SM, BF) was apparently the first recorded in e. Oregon, despite being a regular visitor to Washington's Columbia Basin and fairly common e. to cen. *Klickitat*. Oregon's first winter Chestnut-collared Longspurs were 2 in *Benton* 12 Feb (R. Moore). A flock of 800 Snow Buntings near Joseph, *Wallowa* 16 Jan likely set an Oregon record (J. Carlson, Paul Sullivan).

Washington maxima for Tricolored Blackbirds included 12 near Corfu, *Grant* 24 Feb (BF) and 10 at Othello, *Adams* 12 Feb (BF); 3 were found again Shillapoo Bottoms, *Clark* 14 Jan, the only known location for Tricoloreds in w. Washington (SM, B. Deuel). Eastern Washington's 2nd winter Bullock's Oriole adorned Moses L., *Grant* 17 Dec (†L. Cooke), while the 8th for w. Washington visited Florence, *Snohomish* 21 Jan (M. Dufort); despite being nearly annual in Oregon, Washington had not had a winter Bullock's since 1998.

Crook's first Purple Finch was located on the Prineville C.B.C. 31 Dec (*fide* CG) and was followed by 5 in Prineville 18 Jan (CM, MM). The season's sole report of White-winged Crossbill was of 2 on Mt. Spokane 25 Jan (GS, CC, JC). A flock of 50 Common Redpolls at Enterprise, *Wallowa* 16 Dec. (M. Marsh) and 6 in Portland 26 Feb (P. Johnson) were unusual for a non-invasion year. Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins were nearly absent from the Region. The Lesser Goldfinch at Walla Walla remained through 19 Dec (M&MLD), while one in Bellingham, *Whatcom* 27 Feb+ (MB) furnished only the 4th record for the heavily birded P.T. A gathering of 80 Evening Grosbeaks near Stanwood, *Snohomish* 22 Dec provided w. Washington's highest winter count in 10+ years (SM, DD).

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A very wet late December and early January Regionwide included the worst storm in 30 years to hit Humboldt County. Winter also brought a number of ex-

citing rarities, including the state's first Snowy Owl since 1978. Following the state's first Slaty-backed Gulls last winter, careful gull surveys by Jaramillo and others turned up an astonishing 10-12 Slaty-backed this winter.

Abbreviations: C.B.R.C. (California B.R.C.); C.V. (Central Valley); C.R.P. (Cosumnes R. Preserve, *Sacramento*); C.C.F.S. (Coyote Cr. Field Station); FI. (Southeast Farallon I., *San Francisco*); P.R.B.O. (Pt. Reyes B.O.); S.F. (San Francisco rather than 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. Birds banded on FI. should be credited to Pt. Reyes B.O. and those banded at Big Sur R. mouth to the Big Sur Ornithology Lab of the Ventana Wilderness Society.

GEESE THROUGH SHEARWATERS

An imm. and 3 ad. Emperor Geese were reported from Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou*

14 Dec (†Mike McVey). A group of 5 Snow Geese in Diamond Valley 2 Dec (ph. TEa) was thought to mark only the 2nd record for *Alpine*. Following 3 in fall, another coastal blue-morph Snow Goose was found, this time at College L., *Santa Cruz* 10 Dec (DLSu, ph RgW). A lone Ross's Goose with a domestic goose flock at Camanche Res. 9 Feb (KMz) was a first for *Calaveras*. "Extraordinary counts" of *minima* Cackling Geese were reported in *Humboldt*, with 123 at s. Arcata Bottoms 20 Dec (EE, JTz) and 81 on the Centerville Beach to King Salmon C.B.C. 1 Jan (*fide* SWH); perhaps this is related to the increased numbers wintering in the Willamette Valley in Oregon (*fide* DFX). An Aleutian Cackling Goose (subspecies *leucopareia*) at 900 m elevation along Stumpfield Mt. Road 17-23 Jan (JTz, m.ob.) was apparently *Mariposa's* first Well-documented family groups of Trumpeter Swans were found 3 km se. of Durham, *Butte* 23 Dec-6 Feb (up to 3 ads. and 3 imms.; JHS, †BED, †DEQ, ph. DWN et al.) and 7 km n. of Willows, *Glenn* 15-17 Jan (2 ads. and 6 imms.; †CLU, vt. LLu, JLx).

Common (Eurasian Green-winged) Teal were reported in better-than-average numbers, with 12 birds found in five counties; 7 Common × Green-winged Teal intergrades were also reported. Evidence of intergradation is often not obvious, and the recent increase in such reports suggests that observers are commendably submitting apparent Common Teal to close scrutiny. Eleven male and 3 female Tufted Ducks were reported from 10 counties, with 3+ males and 2 hybrids on Borax L., *Lake* 16 Jan–25 Feb (FHa, m.ob.) being the largest concentration. Notable records included the first for *Plumas*, a male at L. Almanor 25 Feb (Phil Johnson et al.), and a male at O'Neill Forebay, *Merced* 16–17 Jan (ph., †Greg Gerstenberg). An unconfirmed imm. male *Steller's Eider* at King Salmon, *Humboldt* 22 Dec (MWa) was reportedly seen both before and after this date by local hunters; it would be just the 4th for the Region if accepted by the C.B.R.C. The imm. male *Harlequin Duck* at the Stockton S.T.P., *San Joaquin* was present until at least 25 Feb (KMz). A *White-winged Scoter* at Lewiston L. 26 Jan was *Trinity's* 3rd (ph. SAG, JLx). The male *Barrow's Goldeneye* below L. McSwain, *Mariposa* was present until at least 15 Dec (JTz). The male *Hooded Merganser* × *Barrow's Goldeneye* returned to L. Merritt, *Alameda* 19 Jan (Matt Ricketts). A *Red-breasted Merganser* at Black Butte Res. 8 Dec (BED, RoS) may have been just the 2nd for *Tehama*.

Normally coastal loons reported from inland locations included 4 *Red-throated* and 6 *Pacific*. A *Pacific Loon* at Bass L. 15 Jan (JLx) was *Madera's* 2nd. Typically the most common inland loon, only 4 *Common Loons* were reported from such locations. Twenty-six *Red-necked Grebes* at King Salmon 17 Jan–20 Feb (MWa, RHw) represented a very high count from a single location in the Region and a record high for *Humboldt*. Other noteworthy *Red-necked Grebes* included singles at Glenburn Church, *Shasta* 2 Jan (BY, CY); *San Jose*, *Santa Clara* 7–9 Jan (found dead on the last date; *fide* Roy Churchwell; MMR, MJM, AME); *Coyote Pt.*, *San Mateo* 22 Jan (RSTh); and *Clearlake Oaks*, *Lake* 25 Jan (JLx). A *Laysan Albatross* (RS, m.ob.) and an imm. *Short-tailed Albatross* (ph., †RyT, ph., vt., m.ob.) were present with 22 *Black-footed Albatrosses* near Cordell Bank, *Marin* 4 Dec. Although *Northern Fulmars* (950), *Pink-footed Shearwaters* (18), and *Flesh-footed Shearwaters* (2) were present in normal numbers on the same trip to Cordell Bank, *Sooty* and *Short-tailed Shearwaters* were present in very low numbers, just 3 and 17, respectively. Similarly, only 3 *Sooty* and 3 *Short-tailed Shearwaters* were observed on *Monterey Bay*, *Monterey* 5 Feb (ShJ).

BITTERNS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The only *Least Bittern* report was of up to 2 birds at C.R.P. in Dec and Jan (JTr). An imm. *Little Blue Heron* was seen near Ft. Dick, *Del Norte* 3–16 Feb (Owen Head; ph., †KGR et al.). *Cattle Egrets* were better reported than usual, with reports received from 10 counties. The high count was of 231 birds at Sebastopol, *Sonoma* 8 Jan (LHg). A group of 29 about 13 km s. of Corning 13 Feb furnished only the 4th record, and by far the largest number, for *Tehama* (BED); one flying along Hwy. 140 across the county line into *Merced* 17 Feb was



Pleasant crowds of birders in Alviso, Santa Clara County, this juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpiper spent 7–18 (here 10) December 2005 roosting and foraging with peeps. This species has now been recorded a remarkable three times on the San Jose Christmas Bird Count, the only California count ever to have recorded it. Photograph by Glen Tepke.

the first for *Mariposa* (DLSu). The *Yellow-crowned Night-Heron* reported last season was present at Inverness, *Marin* at least through 5 Dec (GEC). An impressive 4000 *White-faced Ibis* were seen going to roost along Rd. 40, *Tulare* 12 Dec (SDS, MSanM).

Swainson's Hawks were seen at several locations away from known wintering areas, including a dark morph at Gray Lodge W.A., *Butte* 3 Dec (†BED et al.), an imm. on the spit of *Humboldt Bay*, *Humboldt* 15 Dec (ph., †KGR), and a light morph at Pacific Grove, *Monterey* 27 Dec (†RbF, †SRv). The first migrants returned to the C.V. 15 Feb (2 w. of *Madera*, *Madera*; GaW). Returning *Harlan's*

Hawks were found at Bayside Cutoff n. of *Eureka*, *Humboldt* 5 Dec+ (7th winter; EE, ph. KGR, m.ob.) and along Devil's Den Rd. near Hwy. 33, *Kings* 6 Jan (3rd winter; JSy). Another sw. of *Madera* 21 Dec (ph. JND) was only the 2nd for *Madera*. The *Santa Cruz Crested Caracara* continued through the season near Davenport (m.ob.). A hardy *Common Moorhen* at over 700 m elevation in Isabel Valley, *Santa Clara* 2 Jan provided the first record for the Mt. Hamilton C.B.C. (MMR, MJM). The only coastal *Sandhill Crane* reported was associating with *Wild Turkeys* n. of Willits, *Mendocino* 8–31 Jan (GEC, CEV, MMt, RJK, BD, m.ob.).

Mountain Plovers were reported in good numbers and at new locations this season. A count of 645 along Rd. 80 s. of Allensworth, *Tulare* 12 Dec (SDS, MSanM) is the highest total in our notebooks in over a decade. They were again present at the location discovered last year sw. of *Madera*, *Madera*, with 286 present 20 Feb (ph. GaW); 7 of these were color banded, 6 in Colorado and one in Montana. Coastally, 4 *Mountain Plovers* e. of Sears Point 28 Feb+ were the first for *Sonoma* (ph. LHg, AWgh, RAR). A *Sharp-tailed Sandpiper* found at Alviso Marina C.P., *Santa Clara* 7 Dec (Mike Tyner, Cliff Cordy) lingered just long enough to be tallied on the *San Jose C.B.C.* 18 Dec (ph., †m.ob.). Six *Rock Sandpipers* at Laguna Pt. 2 Jan was an "all-time high" for *Mendocino* (DT). The *Santa Cruz Rock Sandpiper* continued through the season (m.ob.). One *Ruff* was reported, an apparent male at the Vic Fazio Yolo W.A., *Yolo* 26 Feb (ph. Sami LaRocca).

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS

An ad. *Little Gull* approximately 36 km sw. of Bodega Head (†SBT, †RyT, RS et al.) in *Marin* waters 4 Dec represented one of the few offshore records for the Region. Five *Mew Gulls* were reported from inland locations, where scarce: near *Fresno*, *Fresno* 18 Dec (GWPo et al.); at *Eagle L.*, *Lassen* 21 Dec (†SBT, ph. LTer); at *Turtle Bay East*, *Shasta* 31 Dec (Red

SA Following the paucity of reports last season, *Red Phalaropes* staged the largest "wreck" in over a decade, with reports from all our coastal counties in late Dec garnering extensive coverage by local news media. First noted in *Humboldt*, *S.F.*, and *Santa Cruz* on 20 Dec, numbers in *Humboldt* built quickly to 1500 at King Salmon (MWa) and 2000 on s. *Humboldt Bay* (DFx) 23 Dec. Farther s. in *San Mateo*, numbers peaked 26 Dec, with 579 heading s. off Moss Beach and 750 in flooded fields in the town of Pescadero (both RSTh). Slightly inland in *Santa Clara*, 38 were found at 11 locations 26 Dec, including inland percolation ponds and reservoirs as well as bayside marshes and salt ponds. Up to 2 at L. Hennessey 28 Dec–4 Jan (BDP, m.ob.) and 2 at the Huichica Creek W.A. 29 Dec (JLx) provided only the 2nd and 3rd records for *Napa*. Other inland records included birds at Chain I., *Sacramento* 28 Dec (JTr), at Lafayette Res., *Contra Costa* 4–10 Jan (Martha Breed, m.ob.), and far inland at Mono L., *Mono* 29 Dec (Heidi Hopkins). The total of 2399 recorded on the Centerville Beach to King Salmon C.B.C., *Humboldt* 1 Jan was almost four times the previous high for the count. Numbers dwindled rapidly after New Year's Day, particularly away from *Humboldt*. In *Humboldt*, "only 94" were found 12 Jan (s. Arcata Bottoms; RbF), and the last bird was reported at King Salmon 19 Jan (MWa).

Modeen, Nancy Modeen); at Kutras L., *Shasta* 7 Jan (possibly the same bird as 31 Dec; Ray Bruun); and near Kettleman City, *Kings* 10 Feb (JSy). Venice S.B., *San Mateo* was once again the Region's winter gull hotspot. Gulls showing characters of Iceland and "Vega" Herring Gulls were there 23 Jan (ph. DVP) and 11 Feb (ph., †DVP, Oscar Johnson), respectively. Additional potential Iceland Gulls were at Terrace Pt., *Santa Cruz* 16 Feb (ph., †SGe) and Redwood Cr. mouth, *Humboldt* 28 Dec and 11-12 Feb (Jeff Allen). These records await review by the C.B.R.C. Remarkably, at least 9 and perhaps 11 Slaty-backed Gulls were detected 2 Dec+ among the thousands of gulls roosting at Venice S.B. (ph., †AJ, †RSTh, ph., vt., †m.ob.). These observations follow the discovery of 3-4 Slaty-backed Gulls (comprising the first accepted records for California) from the same location last winter (N.A.B 59: 320). Another Slaty-backed Gull was at the Alviso salt ponds 14 Jan (*Santa Clara's* first; ph., †AJ). Scarce inland, 6 Western Gulls were noted in the Region's interior. Twenty to 30 Glaucous-winged Gulls at Kutras L. 2 Jan (BY, CY) represented a record count for *Shasta* and a very high number for any well-inland location. Of the 25 Glaucous Gulls reported, at least 6, a high number for a single location anywhere in the Region, were at Venice S.B. throughout the period (AJ, RSTh, m.ob.); one at Kutras L. and Whiskeytown L. 2-31 Jan marked a first for *Shasta* (BY, CY). Caspian Terns are scarce in midwinter in the Region, so up to 6 observed throughout the period in *Humboldt* (fide DFx) are of interest; elsewhere, 2 at Clifton Court Forebay 21 Dec (fide Jimm Edgar) followed the first winter record for *Contra Costa* last winter. The South S.F. Bay wintering flock of Black Skimmers continues to increase, with up to 30 at Charleston Slough and Salt Pond A1, *Santa Clara* 19 Dec-1 Jan (WGB et al.).

High densities of Marbled Murrelets were observed along the *San Mateo* coastline, with 310 and 275 counted off Venice S.B. 21 & 24 Feb (RSTh), respectively, and a county high of 503 off Moss Beach 1 Mar (RSTh). Coupled with these high counts were record-high numbers observed via aerial surveys along the inshore waters of coastal *Santa Cruz*: 246 on 24 Jan and 232 on 8 Mar (fide LHe). Suddjian comments that these high numbers suggest that many of these birds were likely wintering migrants from the n. and not members of the *Santa Cruz* Mts. breeding population. Marbled Murrelets made a good showing in *Humboldt* as well, with 31 on the Arcata C.B.C. 17 Dec (fide DFx). Four Horned Puffins were reported: one at the n. jetty of *Humboldt* Bay, *Humboldt* 21 Jan (fide SWH); one picked up at



Although usually considered a rare summer visitor to southern and central California, this immature Little Blue Heron lingered from 3 (here) through 16 February 2006 near Fort Dick, Del Norte County, in the extreme northwestern corner of the state. The two previous county records have also been of wintering immatures in the same area. Photograph by Kerry Ross.

Bradley Beach, *San Mateo* and transported to a bird rescue center 17 Feb (Michelle Bellizzi); one off Pajaro Dunes, *Santa Cruz* 21 Feb (LHe, Hannah Nevins); and one off La Selva Beach, *Santa Cruz* 27 Feb (fide Michelle Bellizzi). It is possible that the latter two records involved the same individual.

DOVES THROUGH WRENTIT

The Eurasian Collared-Dove conquest of the Region continued, with noteworthy records that included 3 near Durham, *Butte* 8 Jan (EP, CIH) and one at C.R.P. 3 Jan, a first for *Sacramento* (JTr). Eagerly awaited by many, California's first Snowy Owl since 1978 thrilled hundreds of birders during its brief appearance s. of Davis, *Solano* 13-14 Jan (JMhu, Betty Berteaux, Sami LaRocca, ph., m.ob.). This



This Snowy Owl, present in Solano County, California 13 (here) and 14 January 2006 thrilled hundreds of observers, particularly those not active when California's last Snowy was seen back in 1978. Photograph by Chris Conard.

is the 3rd record for the C.V., following a *Butte* record from 1916 and a *Yolo* record from 1967; the other 70 state records were strictly coastal or nearly so, with 57 of the records coming from *Humboldt* or *Del Norte*. Though it is known that at least small numbers of Common Poorwills winter in the Region, we

receive few reports; no fewer than 10 birds this season appears unprecedented. A *Chuckwill's-widow* was picked up at Crescent City, *Del Norte* 2 Dec and taken into rehabilitation (ph. Greg Frankfurter, fide EE). It will provide just the 3rd record for California if accepted by the C.B.R.C., though there is some question as to whether the photographs are sufficient to confirm the identification.

Completely unexpected was the appearance of a Violet-crowned Hummingbird at Grass Valley, *Nevada* 8 Feb (vt. Jan & Barbara Collins), providing the Region's 3rd and the state's 5th record. Single Costa's Hummingbirds were at McKinleyville, *Humboldt* 17 Dec (female; Jake Houck, ph. RLeV), Meder Canyon, *Santa Cruz* 13 Jan ("female-type", SGe), and Napa, *Napa* 18 Jan-10 Feb (DeH) Four Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were detected, all coastal; one at Pinto L., *Santa Cruz* 9 Feb (Wayne Macon) was the only one reported after Dec. A Pileated Woodpecker 31 Jan at Carmel Highlands (CHz) was well s. of the species' known range and provided about the 6th record for *Monterey*.

A Hammond's Flycatcher at Auburn Ravine 28 Dec provided a first winter record for *Placer* (AEn); one at L. Solano, *Solano* 4 Jan was likely a returnee (RMu). Though Gray Flycatchers routinely winter in s. California, one at Tres Pinos, *San Benito* 5 Feb was one of few ever found to do so in our Region (†RJA). Single Eastern Phoebes were near Davis, *Yolo* & *Solano* 8-11 Dec (Brent Campos, m.ob.) and near Año Nuevo, *San Mateo* 31 Dec (FrT) One of *Monterey's* male Vermilion Flycatchers at Moonglow Dairy successfully wintered through at least 12 Feb (RE DR, RC, m.ob.) the other male present in fall was last noted 22 Oct. Individual Dusky-capped Flycatchers included a continuing bird at Arcata, *Humboldt* through 11 Dec (m.ob.), one at Meder Canyon 5 Dec-11 Mar (7th for *Santa Cruz*; SGe, m.ob.), and one well described at Venice S.B., *San Mateo* 28 Dec (†Richard Trinkner). Regional Bell's Vireo records have slowly begun to increase in recent years, the newest addition being one along the San Joaquin R. near Friant 5-25 Jan, the first for either *Fresno* or *Madera* since 1956 (ph. P.R.B.O., fide Julian Wood). Four wintering Cassin's Vireos included a first for the Benicia C.B.C. near Benicia, *Solano* 19-20 Dec (DL, Tom Harris, RLCL) and a 2nd winter record for *Santa Clara* at C.C.FS. 25-29 Jan (b.; Rita Colwell).

A Blue Jay at Fairfield 19 Dec-28 Feb provided a startling first county record for *Solano* and a 2nd for the C.V. (Dorothy & Wayne Little, Margaret Barson, Barbara Barter, ph. m.ob.). Though likely present as much as three weeks prior to this, the bird was not

confirmed until the Benicia C.B.C. Wintering Northern Rough-winged Swallows, virtually unknown in the Region just a few years ago, were detected once again, this time with singles at Chesbro Res., *Santa Clara* 30 Dec (WGB) and Pajaro Dunes, *Santa Cruz* 1 Jan (BBrr). Though no longer a novelty, the mid-winter appearance of Barn Swallows throughout much of the Region was much noted again this season, with a bare minimum of 225 birds tallied, mainly between mid-Dec and mid-Jan. Though this recent phenomenon has primarily been coastal, this winter brought inland sightings from *Mendocino*, *Napa*, *Butte*, *Sacramento*, *Contra Costa*, and even *Mono*, where 2 were at Mono L. on the wintry date of 27 Dec (KNN). *Yolo*'s wintering Mountain Chickadee was noted through at least 25 Mar (MP, m.ob.). A Chestnut-backed Chickadee at Sacramento 28 Feb was just the 2nd detected in *Sacramento* ever (CIH). A singing House Wren at Junction City 12 Jan was the first found wintering in *Trinity* (MMo, PAH). A Townsend's Solitaire at Big Basin Redwoods S.P., *Santa Cruz* 12 Dec (DLSu) was at a reasonably expected time and location, but one at FI. 15 Jan (PR.B.O.) seems completely anomalous during midwinter at an offshore site with no suitable habitat. Two Wrentits at the Butte Sink, *Colusa* 20 Dec may have been at a normal location but nevertheless provided the first solid record for the Peace Valley C.B.C. (BDW et al.).

WAXWINGS THROUGH FINCHES

The only Bohemian Waxwings reported were one at Simis Ranch, *Mono* 27 Dec (KNN) and 2 at Cedarville, *Modoc* 11 Feb (RoS). Warblers reported this season included 2 Tennessees, 6 Yellows, 15 Palms, 8 Black-and-whites, and 5 Northern Waterthrushes. A Virginia's Warbler was at Laguna Grande, *Monterey* 3 Dec (DWer). A Northern Parula was at *S.F.*'s Presidio 31 Dec+ (Matt Zlatunich, Andy Kleinhesselink, ph. MWE). A female Black-throated Blue Warbler was in Golden Gate Park, *S.F.* 8 Jan (ASH, ph. MWE, Pat McCullough). An American Redstart spent 10 Dec–4 Feb along Coyote Cr., *Santa Clara* (MJM, m.ob.). The Ovenbird first found in fall along Putah Cr., *Yolo* was refound 15 Dec on the *Solano* side of the creek for a first county record (Roger Adamson, Richard Hall); it continued throughout the period until 19 Mar (*fide* CCo). A male Hooded Warbler was in San Jose, *Santa Clara* 12–17 Dec (Donna Yokote, ph. Judy Leonard) and 4–20 Feb (Kay Partelow, ph. Kay Matthews). A Yellow-breasted Chat 14 Dec in McKinleyville (Linda Doerflinger) was the first *Humboldt* record ever between 5 Oct and 1 Feb (*fide* DFx). A

male and female Summer Tanager were in Golden Gate Park, *S.F.* 28 Dec–20 Feb (Matt Zlatunich, ph. MWE, Pat McCullough, m.ob.); a male was at Carmel, *Monterey* 25 Jan–18 Feb (Mike & Nancy Bobay). Ten Western Tanagers were reported.

Two American Tree Sparrows were at Dechambeau ponds, *Mono* 27–29 Dec (KNN). Clay-colored Sparrows were in Ferndale (1 Jan; GSL) and Arcata (29 Jan; GAB), *Humboldt*, and at a feeder in Richmond, *Contra Costa* 20 Feb–4 Mar (ph. Paula & Kevin Landdeck). Two Brewer's Sparrows were at Yokohl Valley, *Tulare* 26 Dec (†AWgh). The Region's 25 Swamp Sparrows included 8 in *Humboldt*, 6 in *Santa Cruz*, and 7 in other coastal or Bay Area counties, as well as singles at Cache Creek Settling Basin, *Yolo* 10–14 Dec (may be continuing fall bird; JCS, m.ob.); Friant, *Fresno/Madera* 10–20 Dec (JSy, LyH); Dechambeau ponds, *Mono* 27–29 Dec (KNN); and s. of Fountain Springs, *Tulare* 21 Feb (SDS). Of the 139 White-throated Sparrows, 40 were in *Humboldt* (*fide* DFx), 38 in *Santa Cruz* (*fide* DLSu), and a remarkable 14 inland in *Contra Costa* (*fide* SAG).

A McCown's Longspur was seen 7 km w. of Elverta, *Sacramento* 4 Jan (TEa); the only other one reported was a female at Shasta Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 21 Jan with the Lapland flock there (RE). This wintering *Siskiyou* longspur flock of up to 150 Laplands 4 Jan–1 Feb included a Chestnut-collared 16 Jan (RE). Small numbers of Laplands were found in *Humboldt* as expected, and one was heard in Salinas, *Monterey* 23 Dec (RyT), but most unusual was one at FI. 15 Jan (PR.B.O.). In what has become an almost annual occurrence in *Humboldt*, up to 3 Snow Buntings were along the Big Lagoon spit 12 Dec–22 Jan (ph. TWL, Sue Leskiw, Rob Santry, RbF). Four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were along the coast, and one was in Redding, *Shasta* 7 Dec–14 Jan (Lou & Linda Simpson); Black-headed Grosbeaks included one male 19 Dec at Stanford, *Santa Clara* (Dick Stovel) and a male and female at a feeder n. of Soquel, *Santa Cruz* intermittently 16 Dec–30 Jan (JPo, DLSu). A male Painted Bunting at a feeder ne. of Sebastopol 8–25 Feb (ph. Kathy Biggs, Dave Biggs, BDP, AWgh, †RAR, ph. RLeb) would be *Sonoma*'s 2nd (the first since 1966) if accepted by the C.B.R.C.

A female Rusty Blackbird was in a flock of 6000 blackbirds in rural s. *Yolo* 11 Dec (JMHu). Experienced oriole watchers were humbled this winter, with 7 birds in *Humboldt*, *Santa Clara*, and *Santa Cruz* remaining unidentified. *San Francisco* retained its mantle as "Oriole Central," with 3 Orchard Orioles at Ft. Mason in the period (Kathy Robertson, ASH, MWE, m.ob.), a Bullock's

29 Dec–24 Feb at the Presidio (Matt Zlatunich, BFi), and a Scott's at the Presidio 8 Jan (ph. CLo, HaF). *Humboldt* also had a triffecta, with a Hooded 24 Jan at Arcata (ph. KGR), a Baltimore in Eureka 4 Dec (TWL, Sue Leskiw), and a Bullock's in Fortuna 1–30 Jan (ph. Dee Myers). A Bullock's was at Edenvale Garden Park, *Santa Clara* 30 Dec (Bruce Barrett et al.).

A Cassin's Finch seen during the Benicia C.B.C. 19 Dec was a first for *Solano* (DLc, Tom Harris). Two House Finches 29 Dec at Mono City, *Mono* provided only the 2nd winter record for the Mono Basin (KNN). Feeders in Lee Vining, *Mono* continue to attract a growing winter flock of Lesser Goldfinches, which numbered up to 35 over 29 Dec–20 Feb (KNN). The only Evening Grosbeaks reported were 5 in a flock over Davis, *Yolo* 9 Feb (MP)

Observers (county compilers in boldface type): R.J. Adams, Bruce Barrett, Murray Berner (*Napa*), Gary A. Bloomfield, William G. Bousman (*Santa Clara*), Adam Brown (FI.), Rita Carratello, George E. Chanot, Luke W. Cole (*Kings*), Chris Conard (*Sacramento* and *Yolo*), Jeff N. Davis (*Madera*), Bruce E. Deuel (n. C.V. counties), Barbara Dolan (BD), Todd Easterla, Mark W. Eaton (*San Francisco*), Alan M. Eisner, Ray Ekstrom (*Siskiyou*), Elias Elias, Andrew Engilis, Brian Fitch, David Fix (*Humboldt*), Rick Fournier (RF), Rob Fowler (RbF), Harry Fuller, James H. Gain (*Stanislaus*), Steve Gerow, Steve A. Glover (*Contra Costa*), Denise Hamilton, Stanley W. Harris, Chris Hartzell, Cliff Hawley, Floyd Hayes, Laird Henkel, Pablo A. Herrera, Rob Hewitt, Alan S. Hopkins, Lisa Hug, Joan M. Humphrey, John E. Hunter (*Trinity*), Al Jaramillo, Robert J. Keiffer (*Mendocino*), Rick Lebaudour, Darrell Lee (DLc), Robin L. C. Leong (*Solano*), Tom W. Leskiw, Gary S. Lester, Ron LeValley, Cindy Lieurance, Leshe Lieurance, Jim Lomax, Calvin Lou, Michael J. Mammoser, Matthew A. Matthiessen, J. Mac McCormick (*Plumas* and *Sierra*), Peter J. Metropulos (*San Mateo*), Kurt Mize, Mark Morrisette, Roger Muskat, David W. Nelson, Kristie N. Nelson (*Mono*), Ed Pandolfino (*Placer*), Benjamin D. Parmeter, Michael Perrone, Jeff Poklen, Gary W. Potter, Jude C. Power (*Humboldt*), David E. Quady, Robert J. Richmond (*Alameda*), Don Roberson (*Monterey*), Michael M. Rogers, Kerry G. Ross, Steve Rovell, Ruth A. Rudesill (*Sonoma*), Mike San Miguel, Rob Santry, Jeff Seay, Shearwater Journeys (ShJ), Jim H. Snowden, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling (*Modoc*, *Alpine*, and *Calaveras*), Tim Steurer (*Amador* and *El Dorado*), David L. Suddjian (*Santa Cruz*), Steven D. Summers (*Tulare*), Linda Terrill,

Ryan Terrill, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Jim Tietz, Dorothy Tobkin, Francis Toldi, John Trochet, Steve Umland (*Tuolumne*), Charles E. Vaughn, Kent Van Vuren (*Merced* and *San Benito*), David Vander Pluym (*Mari-rosa*), Matt Wachs, Dave Werner, Jerry R. White (*Lake*), Alan Wight, Brian D. Williams,

Roger Wolfe, Gary Woods, Bob & Carol Yutzky (*Shasta*). Many more observers are not specifically cited; all are appreciated. ☺

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Southern California



Guy McCaskie | Kimball L. Garrett

With temperatures warmer than average and precipitation less than expected during the winter period, this seemed like the winter that wasn't. This perception was reinforced by the near-absence of irruptive northern species pushing into the Region, or mountain species moving into the lowlands. The presence of "Arizona specialties" included three Broad-billed Hum-



The only species of golden-plover known to winter in California is Pacific Golden-Plover. This one, photographed on 14 January 2006, was present on Mission Bay in San Diego through the winter season. Photograph by Douglas W. Aguillard.

mingbirds, three Thick-billed Kingbirds, an amazing nine Dusky-capped Flycatchers, six Grace's Warblers, and nine Painted Redstarts; of course we really have no evidence that these birds come from Arizona (the nearest area where significant numbers breed), and it is indeed possible that many represent reverse migrants from well into Mexico. The season's

rarities included California's sixth Baikal Teal (and the first to be seen by birders), five Lesser Black-backed Gulls, a Rufous-backed Robin, and a wintering Smith's Longspur.

Abbreviations: C.L. (China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme ne. Kern); F.C.R. (Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley N.P., Inyo); N.E.S.S. (n. end of the Salton Sea, Riverside); S.C.R.E. (Santa Clara R. estuary near Ventura, Ventura); S.E.S.S. (s. end of the Salton Sea, Imperial); V.C.G.P. (Ventura County Game Preserve near Pt. Mugu Naval Air Station, Ventura). Museum collections abbreviated in the text are: SDNHM (San Diego Natural History Museum). Because virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included. Documentation for species on the California Bird Records Committee (C.B.R.C.) review list is forwarded to the Secretary and archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.

WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

The presence of 4 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks shot by hunters on the Wister Unit at S.E.S.S. in late Oct-early Nov (Aaron Freitas, *fide* KCM), along with one in El Monte, Los Angeles 17-28 Dec (LS), and another in Goleta, Santa Barbara 1 Dec+ (KB), suggests the movement of these birds into se. Arizona spread into s. California. At least 2 blue-morph Ross's Geese accompanied white morphs at S.E.S.S. through the winter (BM, GMcC), and another was at C.L. 9 Dec-21 Jan (SSt). Two Tundra Swans at Desert Center, Riverside 7 Dec (CMcG) and another near Westmorland, Imperial 4-10 Dec (AK) were at the s. extreme of this species' winter range. Numbers of Blue-winged Teal wintering along

the coast now equal or exceed those of Cinnamon Teal, with flocks of up to 81 in *San Luis Obispo* and 36 in *Orange*; in addition, numbers at the Salton Sea continue to increase, as indicated by 30+ at the mouth of Salt Cr. on the e. shore of the Salton Sea, Riverside 26-31 Dec (MSanM, GCH). A Baikal Teal in Lompoc, Santa Barbara 10 Dec-9 Jan (WTF) was the 6th to be found in California, the other 5 having been shot by hunters. A Common (Eurasian Green-winged) Teal, rare in s. California, in Goleta 14 Dec-11 Jan (WTF) was the same bird present during the past three winters, and single males were near



This Fulvous Whistling-Duck in Goleta, Santa Barbara County, California was present from 1 (here 13) December 2005 through the winter season; it was believed to be associated with the movement of these ducks into Arizona, Baja California, and Utah in November 2005 through January 2006. Photograph by Jamie M. Chavez.

El Monte 24 Dec (CAM) and on Upper Newport Bay, Orange 8-10 Feb (SSm). Two or 3 Harlequin Ducks on the coast of *San Luis Obispo* were the only ones reported. A Surf Scoter at F.C.R. 17-26 Dec (V&GW) and up to 2 at the mouth of Salt Creek 21-26 Dec (GMcC, MSanM)—along with a White-winged Scoter at Tinemaha Res. near Big Pine, Inyo 13 Dec (T&JH) and up to 3 at the mouth of Salt Creek 4 Dec+ (PS)—were inland, as was a Long-tailed Duck on the Colorado R. below Parker Dam, San Bernardino 18 Dec-29 Jan (HV). The continued decline in the number of White-winged Scoters on the coast of s. California

is illustrated by reports of only 6 this winter. Twenty Black Scoters along the coast, along with San Clemente 1's first on 8 Dec (ELK, see *Western Birds* 36: 158-273, 2005), was about average. Ten Long-tailed Ducks along the coast, including 3 together on Morro Bay, *San Luis Obispo* 10 Dec-27 Feb (DML), were fewer than normal. A Common Goldeneye × Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid with 3 Barrow's below Parker Dam 18 Dec (HV) was believed to be the same bird present here each of the past two winters; a Barrow's at the mouth of Salt Cr. 19 Dec-22 Jan (AH) was one of a very few ever on the Salton Sea.