

# Southern California



Guy McCaskie | Kimball L. Garrett

Record-low rainfall amounts occurred this winter through most of the Region. Los Angeles, for example, received just under 6.3 cm of rain from July through March (normal rainfall would be about 35 cm for that period). As always, drought impacts have a lag time, likely to be seen in the patterns of concentration of spring migrants and in winter survival and breeding success in resident birds, breeding patterns of summer visitors, and over the longer term the impacts of what will likely be a greatly reduced annual seed crop next fall and winter. The late fall and winter saw moderate flights of some of our irruptive passerines (Mountain Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Varied Thrush) and exceptional numbers of Mountain Bluebirds on the coastal slope; other species (e.g., Red-breasted Nuthatch, Red Crossbill, and Pine Siskin) were virtually absent in the lowlands.

Spectacular concentrations of gulls at the Salton Sea were responding to an abundance



This basic-plumaged Red-necked Grebe at Senator Wash Dam adjacent the Colorado River 14 December 2006 was the first to be found in Imperial County, California. Photograph by Henry Detwiler.

of small tilapia fish, and even with huge fish die-offs late in the winter, the numbers of live tilapia remained high at the end of the period. The gull flocks were dominated (in descending order) by California, Ring-billed, and Herring Gulls, but included an impressive nine

Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Most of the important rarities during the period were birds remaining from the fall; the most notable bird found during the period was a Black-headed Gull at the Salton Sea.

**Abbreviations:** N.E.S.S. (n. end of the Salton Sea, *Riverside*); S.E.S.S. (s. end of the Salton Sea, *Imperial*); V.A.F.B. (Vandenberg A.F.B., nw. *Santa Barbara*). Museum collections abbreviated in the text are: LACM (Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County) and SDNHM (San Diego Natural History Museum). 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 is forwarded to the C.B.R.C. Secretary and archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH HERONS

Two blue-morph Ross's Geese were at S.E.S.S. through the winter (GMcC); one or 2 have been found here each winter in recent years. Amongst the wintering Canada Geese at Bolsa Chica, *Orange* was an apparent *parvipes* 5 Jan–1 Feb and 2 possible *maxima* 11 Jan–8 Feb (RAE); little is known about the status of either subspecies in S. California. A Brant showing characteristics of the "gray-bellied" form was on s. San Diego Bay 2–14 Feb (MJB, MSa). A Tundra Swan on L. O'Neill near Oceanside, *San Diego* 12–17 Dec (PAG), 5 at Borrego Springs, *San Diego* 22 Dec (PJ), and 9 near Blythe, *Riverside* 20 Jan (RH) were the southernmost this winter. Numbers of Blue-winged Teal wintering in this Region continue to increase, as indicated by over 50 on Morro Bay, *San Luis Obispo* through the period (TME), 298 in coastal *Orange* 31 Dec (DRW), and 24 at N.E.S.S.

9 Dec (RMcK). A Eurasian Teal was near El Monte, *Los Angeles* 27 Jan–10 Mar (JSF). A male Tufted Duck, unreported in S. California in recent years, was at the Kern N.W.R., *Kern* 19 Jan (TK). White-winged (13 reported s. of *San Luis Obispo*) and Black (16 reported)

Scoters, along with Long-tailed Ducks (3 reported), continue to be scarce along the coast. Two White-winged Scoters at N.E.S.S. 2 Jan–5 Mar (AD, CMcG) and another near Westmorland, *Imperial* 10–18 Mar (MTH, HD) were inland, where rare. The Surf Scoter found inland at Parker Dam, *San Bernardino* 12 Nov remained through 13 Feb (MP), and the 2 found at S.E.S.S. 28 Oct remained through 19 Dec (GMcC); 2 at N.E.S.S. 13 Jan–18 Feb (RMcK, CMcG) were also wintering locally, but one near Seeley, *Imperial* 7 Feb (GMcC) appeared to be an early spring migrant. Single Long-tailed Ducks on Pleasant Valley Res.



The numbers of Brown Boobies found along the southern California coast are increasing. This adult female was about eight kilometers off Dana Point, Orange County 20 January 2007. Photograph by John Avise.

near Bishop, *Inyo* 3–7 Dec (JLD), on Tinemaha Res. near Big Pine, *Inyo* 19 Dec (T&JH), on the Colorado R. at Parker Dam 16 Dec–13 Feb (MP), and below Imperial Dam, *Imperial* 9 Mar (DVB) were inland, where rare. Up to 12 Hooded Mergansers near Seeley 1 Dec–9 Mar (GMcC) was a large number for this area.

A Red-throated Loon near Westmorland 4 Feb (HD) was inland, where most unusual. A Pacific Loon inland on Tinemaha Res. 2 Dec (J&DP) was considered a late fall migrant. A Common Loon on L. Ming near Bakersfield, *Kern* 1–5 Jan (MMcQ) was in an area where considered rare, but another on L. Perris, *Riverside* 19 Nov–9 Jan (HBK) was on deep fresh water, where expected. Single Red-necked Grebes on Morro Bay 1–28 Dec (TME), near Avila, *San Luis Obispo* 4 Dec (BKS), and at Goleta, *Santa Barbara* 24 Dec–26 Feb (WTF) were along the coast, where rare; one photographed inland at Senator Wash Dam 14 Dec (HD) was the first to be recorded in *Imperial*. An imm. Short-tailed Albatross was photographed from a research vessel 224 km sw. of San Nicolas I. 16 Jan (LSH). A dead Buller's Shearwater recovered in Coronado, *San Diego* 16 Dec (PU;



A few Zone-tailed Hawks spend each winter in the coastal lowlands of southern California, with some returning to the same area year after year. This one, photographed on 24 January 2007, has been returning to Goleta, Santa Barbara County each winter since the winter of 1993-1994. Photograph by Tony Galvin.

\*SDNHM) provides one of a very few verified records for S. California in winter. The last of the Blue-footed Boobies at S.E.S.S. remained there through 19 Dec (RST). An ad. Brown Booby was off Dana Pt., Orange 20 Jan (JEP).

The Tricolored Heron found at the San Diego R. mouth 1 Aug remained through 4 Apr (GMcC), and the one found at the Tijuana R. mouth 8 Oct was still present 25 Mar (RTP); inland, an ad. was at S.E.S.S. 25 Dec (ES), and an imm. was near Seeley 10 Feb-4 Mar (GMcC, HD). At least 8 Reddish Egrets were present in San Diego and Orange, where now rare but expected in fall and winter. The 2 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons found in Imperial Beach, San Diego in 2005 were still present at the end of the period (GMcC). Two Roseate Spoonbills seen at widely scattered locations at S.E.S.S. and the Imperial Valley 1 Jan+ (PJ, GMcC) were believed to be 2 of the 5 present 21 Oct-22 Nov 2006.

## HAWKS THROUGH MURRELETS

A Harris's Hawk near Aguanga, Riverside/San Diego 20 Sep-14 Feb (JW) was believed to be wild. A Swainson's Hawk near Imperial, Imperial 9 Dec (MJB) was probably a late fall straggler; one at In-koh-pah, San Diego/Imperial 20 Dec (MBr) and another over South Pasadena, Los Angeles 15 Jan (SM) were in areas unsuitable for wintering so were presumed to be moving; one at Point Mugu, Ventura 31 Dec (TMcG) was probably wintering locally, and another near El Centro, Imperial 5-30 Jan (KZK) was clearly wintering locally, while 2

at Borrego Springs 2 Feb (PJ) were early spring migrants. At least 5 Zone-tailed Hawks were reported along the coast, including single birds in Goleta 5 Oct-23 Feb (FE), Ojai, Ventura 7 Jan-17 Mar (JGr), and 3 in San Diego; inland, one was at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, Riverside 30 Nov-10 Dec (HBK) and one in Brawley, Imperial 1 Feb (MSa). Small numbers of Rough-legged Hawks were present in the n. part of the Region, as indicated by at least 6 in Inyo and 4 in San Luis Obispo, including one on the coast at Morro Bay 10 Dec (MLS); the one found near Seeley 28 Oct remained through 14 Feb (DRW). The Crested Caracara found near Imperial Beach 9 Sep was still present 22 Mar (RTP); reports of an imm. at Hansen Dam in Los Angeles 29 Jan-1 Feb (JHar) and Goleta 2-3 Feb (JHan) are believed to involve the same bird.

Wintering Pacific Golden-Plovers included one near Guadalupe, Santa Barbara 8 Dec-15 Jan (WTF), 3 at Seal Beach, Orange in Dec (RS), one on San Diego Bay 6 Dec (MJB), and up to 3 at the Tijuana R. mouth through the period (RTP). The Piping Plover found at S.E.S.S. 7 Aug remained through 19 Dec (RST). Intensive survey efforts of agricultural fields in the Imperial Valley 20-21 Jan yielded



This first-winter Little Gull photographed at the south end of the Salton Sea on 19 January 2007 was one of three found on the Salton Sea this winter. The prominent black "M" across the open wings shows well in this image. Photograph by Kenneth Z. Kurland.

an impressive total of over 4700 Mountain Plovers (KCM); 9 at V.A.F.B. 17 Dec (AA)

were the only ones found along the coast. The American Oystercatcher found on Point Loma 26 Aug remained through 26 Dec (PEL), then moved northward to La Jolla 28 Dec-6 Mar (TM).

Single Solitary Sandpipers in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara 18 Dec (DW) and near Seeley 3 Oct-9 Jan (GMcC), with 2 present at the latter locality 8-13 Dec (MSanM), were evidently attempting to winter locally. Over 12,000 Long-billed Curlews were counted in the Imperial Valley agricultural fields 20-21 Jan (KCM). Twenty-five Ruddy Turnstones at S.E.S.S. through the period (GMcC) was a large number to be wintering inland. The Rock Sandpiper found at Marina del Rey 22 Nov remained through 24 Apr (MBy). A Short-billed Dowitcher at S.E.S.S. 8 Dec (CAM) provided only the 2nd record for this species at the Salton Sea in winter. A Red Phalarope near Ridgecrest 17 Dec (BSt) was inland, where rare.

An abundance of fish (small tilapia) at the Salton Sea attracted a large number and variety of gulls, as indicated by a count of 160,000 total gulls during a survey of the entire shoreline on 5-6 Feb (KCM); California Gulls, in particular, were exceptionally abundant, and at least 10 Thayer's, 20 Yellow-footed, 10 Western, and 25 Glaucous-winged Gulls were seen in Jan-Feb. Single Laughing Gulls at Oceanside 3 Feb (KW) and at the San Diego R. mouth 30 Dec (DT) and 21 Feb (CMcG) were on the coast, where rare, and numbers remained high at the Salton Sea, as indicated by 96 at S.E.S.S. 19 Dec and 30 still present 15 Feb (GMcC). First-winter Little Gulls were found on the Salton Sea at N.E.S.S. 20 Jan-9 Feb (TMcG, SSt), Salton City 5 Feb (MJB), and S.E.S.S. 9-19 Jan (GMcC, KZK). A first-winter Black-headed Gull at N.E.S.S. 15 Jan-9 Feb (DG, CMcG) was only the 8th in the Region and the first at the Salton Sea. The number and location of Bonaparte's Gulls wintering on the coast appears to have changed noticeably in the past 40 years, so observers should monitor the species in the future. An ad. and a first-winter Heermann's Gull were present at S.E.S.S. through the winter, and one on Cachuma L. 11 Jan (LM) provided the first inland record for Santa Barbara. At least 5 Mew Gulls, rare inland, were found on the Salton Sea during the period.

A Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Doheny State Beach, Orange 11 Feb (N&MF), and 9 more were present on the Salton Sea,



This first-winter Black-headed Gull, seen with Bonaparte's Gulls at the mouth of the Whitewater River and at a nearby fish farm in Riverside County, California, was present 15 January through 9 February (here 31 January) 2007 and provided the first record for the Salton Sea. This photograph, taken on 31 January 2007, shows the red basal half of the bill. Photograph by Chet McLaugh.

with an ad. at N.E.S.S. 6-17 Feb (JSF), a first-winter bird at Salton City 22 Feb (TE), up to 3 ads. (8 Oct-23 Feb), 2 third-winter birds (10 & 10-24 Feb), and one second-winter (16 Jan) and a first-winter bird (23 Feb) at S.E.S.S. (GMcC). Two Glaucous-winged Gulls at Lancaster, Los Angeles 16 Dec (KLG) were e. of the coast range. Six Glaucous Gulls were found along the coast, with single first-winter birds near Piedras Blancas, San Luis Obispo 5-26 Jan (MPB), at Pismo Beach, San Luis Obispo 9-18 Feb (MPB), around Long Beach, Los Angeles 21 Dec-17 Mar (KGL), at Dockweiler State Beach, Los Angeles 13 Feb (MSanM), at Dana Point 26 Jan (JMo, DSS), and at Imperial Beach 18-19 Feb (HY); at S.E.S.S., an ad. was at Red Hill 16 Jan (GMcC, PAG), and a first-winter bird was there 5-23 Feb (KLG, GMcC). Black-legged Kittiwakes were scarce, as indicated by only 15 seen during an organized boat trip off San Luis Obispo 13 Jan (TME); one off Dana Point 20 Jan (JEP) and 2 at La Jolla 12 Jan (PAG) were the southernmost.

A Gull-billed Tern at S.E.S.S. 18 Feb (WTF) was probably wintering locally. An Elegant Tern at Dockweiler State Beach 27 Feb-6 Mar (MSanM) evidently wintered locally. A Marbled Murrelet at Dockweiler State Beach 29-30 Jan (JSF) was unusually far south. A count of 13 Ancient Murrelets off Santa Barbara 30 Dec (BKS), along with smaller numbers reported between San Luis Obispo and San Diego though the period, suggested the presence of greater-than-expected numbers in s. California waters this winter.

## PARROTS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

A flock of 350-400 Red-crowned Parrots in La Verne, Los Angeles in Dec (MJSanM) was an exceptionally large number for that area and

suggests continued population growth for this non-native bird. White-winged Doves continue to expand their winter range into se. California, as indicated by the presence of 7 at widely separated locations in the Imperial Valley during the period (GMcC) and one at Blythe 11 Feb (RH); 7 along the coast this winter were at locations where considered rare at any time of the year. The only Ruddy Ground-Doves known present were 3 near Calipatria through the period (GMcC), a male present near El Centro all winter (KZK), and one continuing in La Cañada, Los Angeles through 24 Jan (MH).

A Northern Saw-whet Owl discovered in Palm Desert 11 Feb (SSw) and found dead 2 Mar (\*LACM) was in the low desert, where unexpected. Fifty or more Long-eared Owls at a roost in the Caliente Range, San Luis Obispo 23 Feb (BWS) was an impressive concentration. A Lesser Nighthawk in Brawley 14 Jan (BMi) was undoubtedly wintering locally. Wintering Vaux's Swifts included up to 12 around Bakersfield, Kern 17 Dec-22 Feb (KH-L, JCW) and one in San Diego 13 Jan (GMcC). A Broad-billed Hummingbird at Mission Viejo, Orange 25 Nov-14 Jan (DRW) was the same female present last winter. Single Allen's Hummingbirds in Riverside 5-6 Jan (J&MT) and near El Centro 24 Feb and 3-4 Mar (KZK) were in areas where few have been identified; one in Ocean Beach 26 Dec (PU; \*SDNHM) was of the resident subspecies *sedentarius*, providing additional evidence

that this subspecies is expanding its range southward into San Diego.

A Williamson's Sapsucker in Santa Barbara 30 Dec (RAH) was only the 3rd recorded in coastal Santa Barbara, and another was in Pasadena, Los Angeles 13-15 Dec (DSC). Thirteen Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported from scattered locations throughout the Region. A White-headed Woodpecker at La Cumbre Peak in the Santa Ynez Mts., Santa Barbara 24-30 Dec (WTF), and another at Holiday L. In the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles 9 Dec (EO, JD), were outside this species' normal range and habitat.

Numbers of wintering *Empidonax* flycatchers were well below average. Four Hammond's Flycatchers reported during the period was about average, but amazingly only 5 Gray Flycatchers and 2 Pacific-slope Flycatchers were reported (compared with about 50 and 30, respectively, in winter 2005-2006). A Least Flycatcher in Riverside 24-29 Mar (CMcG) was undoubtedly wintering locally. A Dusky Flycatcher was in Rancho Palos Verdes, Los Angeles 23 Dec (JEP), and another bird felt to be that species was in Lompoc, Santa Barbara 17 Dec (BKH). Ten Eastern Phoebes during the period included at least 4 returning for multiple winters. Six Tropical Kingbirds on the coast during the period was about average; on the se. deserts, the returning bird near Seeley, Imperial remained through 25 Mar (GMcC). A Cassin's Kingbird in Bard, Imperial 1 Mar (DRW) was in an area where rare and from which virtually no winter records exist. The returning Thick-billed Kingbird in Wilmington, Los Angeles re-



This cooperative Black-throated Green Warbler, photographed 15 January 2007, remained in Goleta, Santa Barbara County, California 25 December 2006 through 11 March 2007. Photograph by Oscar Johnson.

mained through 3 Mar (KGL). Western Kingbirds are casual in winter in the Region, so birds in Los Angeles at Inglewood 7 Dec (RB), El Monte 24 Dec (LSc), and Long Beach 1 Jan-1 Mar (KSG) and one near Escondido, San Diego 25 Jan (JMg) were unexpected.



This Worm-eating Warbler, found during the 30 December 2006 Christmas Bird Count, was photographed 26 January 2007 and remained in Irvine, Orange County, California through 10 March 2007. Photograph by Douglas W. Aguilar.

## SHRIKES THROUGH WARBLERS

Although steep Loggerhead Shrike declines are still evident on the coastal slope, an encouraging 28 birds were found on the three Orange Christmas Bird Counts (compared to only 9 during winters 2003-2004 and 2004-2005; DRW). The Bell's Vireo (nominate subspecies) in Pasadena, Los Angeles remained from 4 Nov through 26 Apr (JGa), and the Long Beach wintering bird of the "expected" subspecies *pusillus* was last seen 17 Mar (KGL). Once again, Plumbeous Vireos (30 birds) easily outnumbered Cassin's (7) during the period.

Steller's Jays in Ridgecrest 8 Dec (BMe) and Inyokern 26 Dec-1 Jan (SSt) were on the e. Kern desert, where casual. A Northern Rough-winged Swallow in the n. Antelope Valley 7 Feb (MSanM) was the earliest ever for Kern. Three Bank Swallows at S.E.S.S. 19 Dec (EH) were in an area where the species is nearly regular in winter. A Cliff Swallow in Long Beach 17 Jan (JB) was unseasonal. Mountain Chickadees staged a minor incursion into the Region's coastal lowlands, but Red-breasted Nuthatches were virtually absent this winter. A few Brown Creepers were found in the lowlands, including one at S.E.S.S. 13 Jan-3 Apr (EM). A moderate flight of Golden-crowned Kinglets was noted in coastal areas, but 2 near Calipatria 13 Dec-23 Feb (GMCC) were in an area where always very rare. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, casual in winter in Inyo, were in Bishop 16 Dec (AK) and F.C.R. 22 Dec-4 Feb (V&GW). An impressive flight of Mountain Bluebirds into the coastal lowlands included over 150 birds in coastal Santa Barbara



This showy male Hooded Warbler, photographed on the last day of its long (17 December 2006 through 14 January 2007) stay at Aurora Park in Mission Viejo, Orange County, California, made itself an inviting target for any predator. Photograph by Douglas R. Willick.

3 Dec-13 Jan (WTF, CP, MPB), up to 20 in Ventura, Ventura (OJ), and well over 100 in Orange (DRW). An apparent Mountain Bluebird × Western Bluebird hybrid was photographed in Round Valley, Inyo 16-17 Dec (JLD). Up to 8 Western Bluebirds in Brawley, Imperial 1 Dec-3 Feb (GMCC) were in an area where rare and erratic. Numbers of Varied Thrushes were considered to be above average, at least in San Luis Obispo (TME) and Orange (DRW). Wintering Brown Thrashers remained from the

fall until 3 Mar in San Pedro (KGL) and 7 May on Pt. Loma (CH). The Red-throated Pipit in Irvine remained from 23 Nov to the exceptionally late date of 20 Dec (LDT, LO). Three Sprague's Pipits were in a field near Calipatria 19 Dec (OJ), and up to 2 were in a field 3 km away 29 Dec-3 Feb (GMCC).

Tennessee Warblers, presumably wintering, were in Montecito, Santa Barbara 29 Dec-24 Feb (PEL), Long Beach 18 Dec-6 Jan (KSG), Placentia, Orange 20 Jan (DRW), and Pt. Loma 25 Feb-14 Mar (MSa). A Virginia's Warbler near Whittier, Los Angeles 10 Dec (LSc) was possibly a very late fall vagrant. The only Lucy's Warblers reported were 2 different birds in Goleta 2 Dec (DMC) and 24 Nov-3 Mar (RPH). Northern Parulas included a returning winterer in Torrance, Los Angeles 7 Dec-19 Apr (KGL) and one in San Diego 26 Dec-7 Apr (PAG). A female Black-throated Blue Warbler, one of our rarest winter warblers, was in Pasadena 6 Dec-25 Jan (SF). The only Black-throated Green Warbler was in Goleta 25 Dec-17 Mar (MAH). Exceptionally late for the n. interior were Yellow Warblers in Bishop 16

Dec (C&RH) and at F.C.R. 2 Jan (V&GW). A Hermit Warbler at Pine Mountain Club 5 Dec-20 Jan (KC) was only the 2nd ever to be found in winter in Kern. A Yellow-throated Warbler in Costa Mesa, Orange 12 Nov-11 Mar (DRW) was of uncertain subspecific identity but showed some characters suggesting the nominate. Two returning Grace's Warblers were on Pt. Loma Sep-19 Mar and Sep-14 Apr (RF, PAG), and a different individual was there



A male Hepatic Tanager, photographed on 21 February 2007, spent the winter on the coast in Imperial Beach, San Diego County, California. The dark coloration on the throat was stain acquired when feeding on coral tree (*Erythrina*) flowers. Similar staining can be seen on warblers and other birds feeding on eucalyptus flowers through the winter. Photograph by Thomas A. Blackman.

23 Feb-7 Mar (MSa); the returning bird in Santa Maria, Santa Barbara was present through 10 Mar (DMC). A female Pine Warbler was in San Diego 7 Jan (PEL, DWA). A dozen Palm Warblers along the coast during the period was about average, as were the 15 Black-and-white Warblers and 13 American Redstarts (plus 7 redstarts at the Salton Sea). A Worm-eating Warbler was in Irvine 31 Dec-10 Mar (BED). Only 4 Northern Waterthrushes were reported during the period. A Common Yellowthroat n. of Bishop 16 Dec (T&JH) was exceptionally late for the far n. deserts. The only MacGillivray's Warbler found during the period was in Huntington Beach 28 Oct-31 Dec (BED). A stunning Hooded Warbler in Mission Viejo 17 Dec-14 Jan (JEP) was only the 3rd to be found in winter in Orange. The perception that Painted Redstarts are a regular part of our winter avifauna is reinforced by the frequency with which birds return for multiple winters; returning birds were in San Dimas, Glendora, and Los Angeles, Los Angeles through the period and in Harmony Grove,



This American Tree Sparrow, photographed on the last day of its 3-5 March 2007 stay near the mouth of the Whitewater River at the north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside County, California, was unusually far south. Photograph by Chet McGaugh.

San Diego 19-22 Dec (OJ). Others were in Goleta 22 Nov-21 Mar (MAH), Montecito, Santa Barbara 23 Feb (CC), Pt. Loma 8 Feb-24 Mar (SBM, TAB), and Yucaipa, San Bernardino 27 Feb-1 Mar (AEK).

## TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A male Hepatic Tanager was in Imperial Beach 12 Jan-1 Apr (GMCC); this species is casual in winter and anywhere in the lowlands. Six Clay-colored Sparrows were at scattered localities on the coastal slope during the period. An American Tree Sparrow in Bishop 14-20 Jan (C&RH) was in an area where regular, but one photographed at N.E.S.S. 3-5 Mar (DG, CMcG) was among the few ever found on the se. deserts. The winter and migrant status of Black-throated Sparrows remains poorly understood; 3 in coastal sage scrub n. of Castaic, Los Angeles 6 Feb (BED) were certainly unexpected. Grasshopper Sparrows are equally poorly known; single birds in the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo 17 Feb (TK) and in the foothills behind Santa Barbara 30 Dec (MBA) were in areas where rare. At least 5 Red Fox Sparrows (*P. i. zaboria*) were found in San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, and Orange; a bird of the Sooty (*unalaschcensis*) group in Big Pine 21 Jan (T&JH) was casual in that area. Coastal Harris's Sparrows were in Long Beach 30 Dec-15 Mar (LLA, TEW) and Escondido, San Diego 4-16 Dec (EH); interior birds were in Bishop 24 Dec-1 Mar (C&RH), Big Pine 22 Feb-10 Mar (BSc), and near Calipatria 18 Dec-20 Jan (WTF). Seven Golden-crowned Sparrows around S.E.S.S. during the period (GMCC) was a large number for that area. Golden-crowned Sparrow × White-crowned Sparrow hybrids included a returning bird at Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo (BKS) and an ad. near Castaic 27 Dec (KLG). Single McCown's Longspurs near Santa Ynez 12 Dec-9 Jan (WTF) and Cuyama, Santa Barbara 6 Jan

(NAL) were only the 2nd and 3rd ever found in Santa Barbara. Up to 75 Chestnut-collared Longspurs were near Santa Ynez 6-15 Jan, with 7 still present 17 Mar (WTF); a very obliging single bird was in Santa Barbara 19 Nov-31 Dec (HPR), and the only other report was of 3 in Rancho Bernardo, San Diego 19 Dec-23 Jan (RTP). The presence of only 2 Lapland Longspurs (and no other species) around Calipatria 2-18 Dec (GMCC, WTF) was a far cry from the >300 birds of four species found here last winter.

Five Rose-breasted Grosbeaks during the period (including a late Nov bird not included in the fall report) were outnumbered by 8 Black-headed Grosbeaks. An ad. male Painted Bunting in San Diego 22 Feb (DCr) was considered an escapee. A male Tricolored Blackbird at N.E.S.S. 21 Jan-18 Feb (TEW, LLA) was in an area where casual. An imm. Common Grackle near Seeley 1 Dec-20 Jan (GMCC, MJB) was the only the 2nd to be found in Imperial. Orchard Orioles were found in Arroyo Grande Nov-25 Jan



This Chestnut-collared Longspur, photographed on 29 November 2006, remained faithful to a small area of grass at Elling's Park in Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County from 19 November through 31 December 2006. Photograph by David M. Compton.

(MSi), Montecito 3 Dec-8 Feb (JEL), Santa Barbara 30 Dec (JLD), and Palos Verdes, Los Angeles 6 Dec-21 Apr (KGL). A Hooded Oriole in Oceano, San Luis Obispo 26 Feb (MLS) was in an area where very rare in winter, and one in Solvang 20 Jan (KJ) was the first in winter in Santa Barbara away from the coast. Five Baltimore Orioles were found near the coast through the period. An impressive concentration of Lawrence's Goldfinches at Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve in interior San Diego built up to 400-500 birds in Feb (JMa).

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