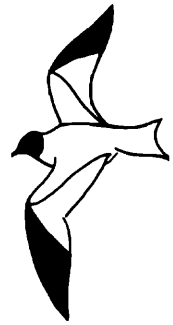


WESTERN BIRDS



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REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: 1999 RECORDS

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ABSTRACT: The California Bird Records Committee reached decisions on 204 records involving 88 species in 1999, endorsing 150 of them. New to California was the Shy Albatross (*Thalassarche cauta*), extensively photographed 9 nautical miles W of Point Arena, Mendocino County. Also added to the state list was the Red-crowned Parrot (*Amazona viridigenalis*), now established in southern California cities and constituting the ninth nonnative species on the state list. The Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*) was removed from the state list following a reassessment of the lone single-observer sight record of this species, from Modoc County in 1985. Adjusted for these changes, California's bird list stands at 614 species.

This 25th report of the California Bird Records Committee (hereafter the CBRC or the Committee) details the evaluation of 204 records involving 88 species. Although most records pertain to birds found in 1999, the period covered by this report spans the 102 years from 1899 to 2000. Seven of these records were not new but rather were reassessments of earlier decisions reached by the Committee. Accepted were 150 records involving 69 species. The acceptance rate of 73.5% was typical for the last decade but below the overall Committee average (Rottenborn and Morlan 2000). Forty-nine records were not accepted because of insufficient documentation or because descriptions were inconsistent with known identification criteria. Five additional records were not accepted because of questions concerning the bird's natural occurrence. Counties best represented by accepted records were Monterey (20 records, 6 of them Manx Shearwaters), San Francisco (14, all from Southeast Farallon I. except two pelagic Parakeet Auklets), San Diego (14), Inyo (12), Santa Barbara (10), and Kern (9). Records were accepted from 20 other counties.

Highlights of this report include the addition of two species to the California list, the Shy Albatross (*Thalassarche cauta*) and Red-crowned Parrot (*Amazona viridigenalis*). Additionally, this report includes the re-

removal of the Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*) from the list. The Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) and Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*), potential first state records, were not accepted because the documentation for these reports was insufficient to establish the identification. The Gray Silky-flycatcher (*Ptilogonys cinereus*) failed to gain acceptance because of concerns over questionable natural occurrence; this species remains on the Supplemental List. With these changes, California's list stands at 614 species, nine of which are nonnative and two of which have been extirpated within historical times. The acceptance of the Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), Nutting's Flycatcher (*Myiarchus nuttingi*), Greater Sandplover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*), Eyebrowed Thrush (*Turdus obscurus*), and Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) to the state list will be addressed in future reports, along with the reasoning for not endorsing records of a Markham's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma markhami*), a Pink-backed Pelican (*Pelecanus rufescens*), a Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*), a Masked Duck (*Nomonyx dominicus*), a Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*), another Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), and a Blue Mockingbird (*Melanotis caerulescens*). No conclusion has yet been reached on records of the Nazca Booby (*Sula granti*), Falcated Duck (*Anas falcata*), Demoiselle Crane (*Anthropoides virgo*), Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*), and Black-backed Oriole (*Icterus abeillei*).

Other highlights include the return of California's first Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*), the second accepted records of the Great-winged Petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera*) and White-winged Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*), the fourth accepted records of the Arctic Loon (*Gavia arctica*) and Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Puffinus pacificus*), and the fifth accepted records of the Violet-crowned Hummingbird (*Amazilia violiceps*) and Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). Species recorded in especially high numbers in 1999 included the Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*; 7 accepted records with three more in circulation), Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*; 9 accepted records), Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*; 5 accepted records), and Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*; 6 accepted records).

The list of species reviewed by the CBRC is posted at the Western Field Ornithologists' web site (<http://www.wfo-cbrc.org>). This site also includes the entire California state list, the Committee's bylaws, a reporting form for the direct e-mail submission of records to the CBRC, the addresses of current Committee members, a photo gallery of recent submissions, including several birds published in this report, a list of relevant publications by CBRC members, and other information about the CBRC, WFO, and its journal, *Western Birds*.

All documentation reviewed by the CBRC, including copies of descriptions, photographs, videotapes, audio recordings and Committee comments, is archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, California 93012, and is available for public review. The CBRC solicits and encourages observers to submit documentation for all species on the review list, as well as species unrecorded in

California. Documentation should be sent to Guy McCaskie, CBRC secretary, P. O. Box 275, Imperial Beach, CA 91933-0275 (e-mail: guymcc@pacbell.net).

Committee News. The Committee's voting membership after the 6 January 2001 annual meeting consisted of Jon L. Dunn, Richard A. Erickson (chairman), Kimball L. Garrett (vice chairman), Robert A. Hamilton, Tristan McKee, Joseph Morlan, Michael A. Patten, Peter Pyle, Scott B. Terrill, and John C. Wilson. After serving as a regular member for 30 years, Guy McCaskie has assumed the duties of a nonvoting secretary. Recent Committee members who also voted on many of the records in this report include Matthew T. Heindel, Alvaro Jaramillo, Guy McCaskie, Michael M. Rogers, Stephen C. Rottenborn, Mike San Miguel, and Daniel S. Singer.

No changes were made to the review list at the Committee's January 2001 meeting. The Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*) and the Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*) may be considered for possible addition to the review list, pending demonstration of their declines in recent years. The Mourning Warbler (*Oporornis philadelphia*) and the Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) each now have over 100 accepted records and could be candidates for removal from the review list. In light of the recent split of the Masked (*Sula dactylatra*) and Nazca (*S. granti*) Boobies, the Committee is reconsidering all records of juvenile "Masked" Boobies. All records of adults and sub-adults are of *dactylatra*.

Format and Abbreviations. As in other recent CBRC reports, records are generally listed geographically, from north to south, and/or chronologically by first date of occurrence. Included with each record is the location, county abbreviation (see below), and date span. The date span usually follows that published in *North American Birds* (formerly *American Birds* or *Field Notes*) but, if the CBRC accepts a date span that differs from a published source, the differing dates are italicized. Initials of the observer(s) responsible for finding and/or identifying the bird(s)—if known and if they have supplied supportive documentation—are followed by a semicolon, then the initials, in alphabetized order by surname, of additional observers submitting supportive documentation, then the CBRC record number consisting of the year of observation and chronological number assigned by the secretary. All records are sight records unless otherwise indicated: initials followed by a dagger (†) mean the observer supplied a supportive photograph, (‡) videotape, (§) a voice recording, and (#) a specimen, followed by the acronym (see below) of the institution housing the specimen and that institution's specimen catalog number.

An asterisk (*) prior to a species' name indicates that the species is no longer on the CBRC's review list. The first number in parentheses after the species' name is the number of records accepted by the CBRC through this report; the second is the number of new records accepted in this report (because this number excludes records thought to pertain to returning individuals, it may be zero). Two asterisks (**) after the species' total indicate that the number of accepted records refers only to a restricted review period or includes records accepted for statistical purposes only; see Roberson (1986) for more information.

When individual birds return to a location after a lengthy or seasonal absence, each occurrence is reviewed under a separate record number and Committee members indicate whether or not they believe the bird is the same as one accepted previously. Such decisions follow the opinion of the majority of members, and, if a bird is considered a returning individual, the total number of records remains unchanged.

Although the CBRC does not formally review the age, sex, or subspecies of each bird, information on these subjects is often provided during the review process (and in some cases a strong or unanimous consensus is achieved). We report much of this information.

The CBRC uses standard abbreviations for California counties; those used in this report are DN, Del Norte; FRE, Fresno; GLE, Glenn; HUM, Humboldt; IMP, Imperial; INY, Inyo; KER, Kern; KIN, Kings; LAK, Lake; LA, Los Angeles; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MOD, Modoc; MNO, Mono; MTY, Monterey; ORA, Orange; RIV, Riverside; SBE, San Bernardino; SD, San Diego; SF, San Francisco; SJ, San Joaquin; SM, San Mateo; SLO, San Luis Obispo; SBA, Santa Barbara; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SIS, Siskiyou; SON, Sonoma; TUO, Tuolumne; VEN, Ventura; YOL, Yolo. A full list of county abbreviations is available on the WFO-CBRC website. Other abbreviations used: I., island; L., lake; Mt., mountain; n. miles, nautical miles; N. W. R., national wildlife refuge; Pt., point; R., river.

Museum collections housing specimens cited in this report, allowing access to Committee members for research, or otherwise cited, are the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco (CAS), Humboldt State University Wildlife Museum (HSUWM), Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles (LACM), Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley (MVZ), San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands (SBCM), Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (SBMNH), and the San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM).

RECORDS ACCEPTED

ARCTIC LOON *Gavia arctica* (4, 1). One in first basic plumage off Bodega Head, SON, 10 May 1999 (SNGH, CC; 1999-104) was the fourth of this species recorded in California. All have been along the central coast. The two observers detailed their observations well, and cautiously. The identification was based almost exclusively on the large white patch evident on the bird's posterior flanks. This feature is considered diagnostic in the separation of these two very similar species (Birch and Lee 1997), and only one member felt the identification had not been established.

SHY ALBATROSS *Thalassarche cauta* (1, 1). An adult, or near adult, was 9 n. miles W of Pt. Arena (38° 57' 08" N, 123° 55' 40" W), MEN, 24 Aug 1999 (JDa, TMcK; LCo, RJK†, PP, DLSh†, AW†, SW; 1999-139; Figure 1). Another observation of what may have been the same individual at "the Football," 14 n. miles SW of Horseshoe Pt., SON, 25 Sep 1999 is under review. Albatross taxonomy is currently in flux, with Robertson and Nunn (1998) proposing splitting the Shy Albatross complex into as many as four species. Currently the AOU (1998) considers the Shy Albatross to be one variable species. The largely white head, extensive white on the underside of the primaries, and pale bill with yellowish tip allow this individual to be identified as either nominate *cauta* or *steadii* rather than the dark-headed *salvini* or *eremita*. A well-researched argument was made that this individual was best identified as *cauta* in

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the strict sense, also known as the "Tasmanian Albatross." This identification was based largely on aspects of the bill color, particularly the presence of yellow at the base of the culminicorn, as well as the coloring of the face (Cole 2000). Because of the recent proposal of these field marks, and uncertainty regarding their variability, the Committee felt that identification of this bird only as *cauta/steadii* was best at this time. Color photographs of this bird were published by Cole (2000) and in *N. Am. Birds* 54:116. Remarkably, following this first state record, four additional *Shy Albatrosses* have been reported off central California between 27 July and 17 September, apparently most of the subspecies *salvini* [*N. Am. Birds* 55 (4)].

SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS *Phoebastria albatrus* (8**, 1). One was 15 n. miles W of Cypress Pt., in Monterey Bay (36° 34.38' N, 122° 18.56' W), MTY, 7 Aug 1999 (TMcK; DLSh, JSof, LT†, SBT†; 1999-151). This bird had the entirely brown plumage typical of younger immatures but was quite worn and had pale eye crescents and the possible beginnings of a pale wing patch. Eye crescents develop through a protracted second prebasic molt during a Short-tailed Albatross' first spring/summer, while a patch of white at the base of the bill develops during the molt in its second spring/summer. This bird was entirely dark area around the bill but did have eye crescents, suggesting that it was a year old when observed. If the pale wing patches were the beginnings of the white upperwings of adults, rather than an effect of wear, the bird may have been two years old (H. Hasagawa pers. comm. to P. Pyle). Another Short-tailed Albatross observed off Pebble Beach, MTY, in early May 1999, thought to be a different bird, is still under review.

GREAT-WINGED PETREL *Pterodroma macroptera* (2, 1). One individual was copiously photographed 9.6 n. miles WNW of Pt. Pinos (36° 42.06' N, 122° 7.27' W), MTY, 18 Oct 1998 (SNGH; RLB†, SJD†, ADeM, AME, GE†, SG, EG†, TMcG, JPN†, DGS, DLSh, JSof, SW; 1998-163; Figure 2). The only other one recorded off California, also the first for the northern hemisphere, was at Cordell Bank, MRN, 21 Jul–24 Aug 1996 (Rotternborn and Morlan 2000). Identification of dark *Pterodroma* petrels is complex. Most similar to the Great-winged are the Solander's (Providence) Petrel (*P. solandri*), which has not been recorded in North America, and the regularly occurring Murphy's Petrel (*P. ultima*). A thorough review of these identification contenders by the reporting observers, as well as an expert opinion from Tony Palliser of Australia, indicated that this bird was a Great-winged Petrel. The large size, uniform coloration, and large thick-set bill are characteristics of the Great-winged and not Murphy's. Despite this, the apparent hooded appearance in some photographs, a slightly paler patch at the base of the primaries, and an uncertainty over how large the bill of a Murphy's Petrel can be left one member unconvinced that Murphy's could be eliminated definitively. Solander's Petrel shows a bold white patch at the base of the underside of the primaries, and it shows an indistinct darker "M" pattern on the upperwing, both of which the Pt. Pinos bird lacked. According to Palliser, another potentially useful characteristic is that Solander's has an entirely black bill, while the Great-winged shows a pale patch at the base of the maxillary unguis (the terminal expansion of the maxilla). This new field mark is still being evaluated in Australia but may be diagnostic. Photographs of the Monterey Bay bird show this pale patch well. As with the previous California record, extensive white on the face of this bird suggested it was of the race *gouldi*. A color photograph appeared on the cover of *N. Am. Birds* 53 (1).

WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER *Puffinus pacificus* (4, 1). One pale-morph individual was photographed in Monterey Bay (36° 36.90' N, 121° 53.44' W), 0.4 n. miles from the Coast Guard breakwater at the entrance to the harbor, MTY, 26 Sep 1999 (DLSh†; CK, TMcK, JSof; 1999-189). The four U.S. records to date are now evenly split between the pale and dark morphs. These records' dates (31 July to 10–21 October) suggest a late summer/fall pattern of occurrence, although this is also the

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period of greatest coverage by pelagic boat trips. This warm-water species, regularly found off Baja California Sur, Mexico (Howell and Webb 1995, Stallcup 1990), should be looked for particularly in years of warm water. Howell and Webb (1995) noted that 70–90% of the 1000 pairs breeding on San Benedicto I., Mexico, are of the dark morph, suggesting that at least some of the California birds came from Hawaiian populations, which are 90–95% of the pale morph. Of course, a dark-morph bird at the Salton Sea in 1988 (1988-150, Pyle and McCaskie 1992) almost certainly originated from Mexico, and a larger sample size is needed for more meaningful inferences. A black-and-white photograph of the 1999 bird appeared in *N. Am. Birds* 54:100.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* (52, 9). A total of seven during 1999 is an increase from 1998, when only five were accepted (Erickson and Hamilton 2001). Furthermore, several reports in 1999 were not submitted to the Committee. On the other hand, some of these records may pertain to the same bird(s) being observed repeatedly. Cold sea-surface temperatures due to the La Niña phenomenon dominated all of 1999. Almost certainly because of this, Black-vented Shearwaters (*P. opisthomelas*), which are associated with warmer waters, were nearly absent from northern California then, with only two reports between Apr 1999 and Feb 2000 (*N. Am. Birds* 53:325, 54:100, 217). The result was a rare inequality in which the Manx became the more commonly observed small shearwater off northern California. It may be that the absence of Black-vented Shearwaters made Manx shearwaters more detectable. The seven 1999 records are as follows: One was 0.8 n. miles N of Pt. Pinos on Monterey Bay (36° 39.09' N, 121° 55.56' W), MTY, 18 Jan 1999 (TMcK; ADeM, DLSh; 1999-068), and one was in Monterey Bay (36° 49.98' N, 122° 07.37' W), SCZ, 13 Feb 1999 (DLSh; RC; 1999-069). These are the fifth and sixth accepted winter records (December–February). One approximately 5 n. miles NW of Pt. Pinos (36° 42' N; 122° 00' W), MTY, 15 May 1999 (SNGH; 1999-105) made only the third spring record from the state. The window of spring occurrence now spans 22 March–15 May. One was observed 9 n. miles WNW of Pt. Pinos on Monterey Bay, MTY, 31 Jul 1999 (DR; SFB; 1999-146). This is the second accepted summer record (June–July). The rest were all in fall, when most Manx Shearwaters are observed in the state. One was in Monterey Bay (36° 35.69' N, 122° 8.56' W), MTY, 11 Aug 1999 (TMcK; SSo; 1999-132). Another 5 miles off Emma Wood State Beach, VEN, 19 Sep 1999 (STu; DD; 1999-152) constituted the first state record south of Morro Bay. Finally, one was in Monterey Bay (36° 35' 08" N, 122° 01' 07" W), MTY, 9 Oct 1999 (MAP, MMR; 1999-166). Three additional 1999 reports are currently in circulation. An older report of a bird 6 miles NW of Moss Landing in Monterey Bay, SCZ, 20 Oct 1996 (JDs; 1999-028) went three rounds before being accepted unanimously. The concern was that the description did not adequately eliminate Newell's Shearwater [*P. (auricularis?) newelli*] from Hawaii, a species yet to be reported from our coast. Another pre-1999 record not previously published was of a bird 1 n. mile north of Otter Pt. in Monterey Bay (36° 38.12' N, 121° 54.21' W), MTY, 25 Oct 1998 (ADeM; DGS; 1998-186).

RED-TAILED TROPICBIRD *Phaethon rubricauda* (19, 1). An adult was observed at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 10 Jul 1999 (JEP, DRW; 2000-062). Given that most records of this species come from fall or winter and at substantial distances from land, this is a remarkable record indeed. The bird was seen well, and the white wings and red tail were well described.

MASKED BOOBY *Sula dactylatra* (14, 3). A subadult seen from Cardwell Pt., San Miguel I. (33° 59.6' N, 120° 21.7' W), SBA, 16 Feb 1998 (SB†, PMcN; 1998-063) and another off the San Pedro Breakwater, Los Angeles, LA, 13 Nov 1999 (HC†, MJSM; 1999-193) were old enough to have acquired adult bill coloration, identifying

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them as Masked Boobies, rather than the recently split Nazca Booby (*S. granti*; Pitman and Jehl 1998, Roberson 1998). A juvenile 7.9 n. miles SW of Wilder Ranch on Monterey Bay (36° 49' 44" N, 122° 08' 67" W), SCZ, 13 Feb 1999 (JSo†; RC, ADeM, AME, DHR, PR†, RTe†; 1999-067) was accepted as a Masked Booby *sensu lato*. This record will now recirculate, along with the other previously accepted records of juveniles of this species, for evaluation of whether identification as *dactylatra* or *granti* is possible.

BROWN BOOBY *Sula leucogaster* (68, 10). Nine accepted records from 1999 (two in spring, seven in fall) were unprecedented for this species. It is unknown if the cold water experienced in 1999 had anything to do with this invasion of Brown Boobies. This was the first fall in which two different Brown Boobies were observed on Southeast Farallon I., SF, an adult male *brewsteri* 2–19 Oct 1999 (PP†, WR; 2000-017) and an adult of unknown subspecies 1–7 Nov 1999 (PC, PP; 2000-018). Peter Pyle hypothesized that the Brown Booby's recent increase in the state may be due to returning numbers of Pacific Sardines (*Sardinops sagax*). The other fall records are as follows: a second-year bird of unknown subspecies at Castle Rocks, MTY, 22–27 Jul 1999 (DR; 1999-183); an adult female of unknown subspecies at the Ventura Harbor, VEN, 7–12 Sep 1999 (RVSt; MSM, MJSM; 1999-148); an adult male *brewsteri* 10 mi SW of Pt. Loma (32° 36' N, 117° 27' W), SD, 11 Sep 1999 (BMu†; 1999-149); an adult female of unknown subspecies 35 n. mi. WSW of Pt. Pinos, MTY, 23 Sep 1999 (JWt†; 1999-181); and an adult male *brewsteri* at the Soquel Hole (36° 49.55' N, 122° 4.91' W), SCZ, 20 Oct 1999 (JB; RTe†; 1999-180). The two spring records were of an immature in the Santa Barbara Channel off Sandpiper Golf Course in Goleta, SBA, 13 Mar–23 May 1999 (DC, JGs, JEL, PK, CAM, GT; 1999-093) and an adult of unknown sex and subspecies from east Santa Cruz I., SBA, 8 May 1999 (DC, PK; 1999-117). The preponderance of fall records is consistent with past occurrences of this species. An immature at Pt. Loma, SD, 27–29 Sep 1997 (GMcC; 2000-046) was later captured and kept by a wildlife rehabilitator. This bird was released in south San Diego Bay sometime in the spring or summer of 1998 (fide McCaskie).

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (10, 0). An adult near Mecca, Salton Sea, RIV, 4 Jul 1999 (MAP; 1999-115) was considered a returning bird, the same as in record 1998-097 (Erickson and Hamilton 2001).

TRICOLORED HERON *Egretta tricolor* (28**, 2). An adult near Mecca, Salton Sea, RIV, 14–27 Feb 1999 (MTH, GMcC, MAP; 1999-077) and 30 Dec 1999–12 Jan 2000 (MAP; 2000-055) was considered a returning bird, the same as in CBRC 1998-048 (Erickson and Hamilton 2001). Another returning adult was at the Tijuana R. estuary, SD, 23 Oct 1999–27 Feb 2000 (GMcC; 2000-002, same as 1998-112 and 1997-184, cf. Rottenborn and Morlan 2000, Erickson and Hamilton 2001). A newly found adult was at Famosa Slough, San Diego, SD, 6–12 Jun 1999 (BMu†; 1999-168), while another adult at Pt. Sur, MTY, 24 May–2 Jun 1999 (DR†; 1999-099) was a first for the county and only the fourth for northern California.

REDDISH EGRET *Egretta rufescens* (79, 1). A returning adult was at the Tijuana R. estuary, SD, 2 Aug 1998–20 Apr 1999 (GMcC; 1999-083, same as 1997-134, cf. Rottenborn and Morlan 2000). This individual, which has a slightly deformed bill, has been wintering in the same area since first found as an adult on 18 Dec 1982. At over 17 years old, this individual continues to redefine the longevity record for this species (Clapp et al. 1982). An immature was observed near the mouth of the San Diego R., SD, 11 Aug–24 Nov 1999 (BMu; 1999-136).

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (16, 1). A specimen collected at Buena Vista L., KER, 19 June 1938 (#SBMNH 7202; 2001-056)

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was in the Dean Hobbs Blanchard collection, which was recently donated to SBMNH. This record is predated in California only by an unreviewed 1912 record from the Salton Sea, IMP (location of reported specimen unknown) and predates the general expansion of this duck into the American Southwest.

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator* (26, 2). Well-documented adults were at the Smith R. estuary, DN, 19 Dec 1999 (DFx, JCP; 1999-212) and at Pleasant Valley (Tinemaha) Reservoir, INY, 2 Jan-27 Feb, 1999 (DPA, JPa; GC, JoH†, ToH, RLd, MJM, GMcC, MSM, MAP, MMR; 1999-020). The latter bird, a wild (never translocated) female, was given green neck collar 8VO at Harriman State Park in northeastern Idaho on 7 Dec 1996. It was observed in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, in November and December 1997 before making its way to California in 1999. Inyo County's two earlier Trumpeter Swans had been previously translocated to Summer Lakes, Oregon (Jo Heindel in litt.).

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* (6, 1). An adult at Seven Mile Lane, GLE, 1 Jan 1999 (SRE†; 1999-076) was found by birders photographing Tundra Swans (*C. columbianus*). The Committee felt that this bird, well described and photographed, was probably a wild individual, consistent with recent treatment of others of this species.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula* (22, 1). One female was at Rodman Sough, LAK, 16-22 Oct 1999 (RIS; KKC, RKI, JWh; 1999-200). The date, though on the late side, is consistent with fall vagrants of this species.

MISSISSIPPI KITE *Ictinia mississippiensis* (28, 1). An immature at the Iron Mt. Pumping Plant, SBE, 11 Nov 1999 (BDe†; 1999-213) was astoundingly late for California, or anywhere in North America.

HARRIS'S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus* (6**, 2). One was along the Sweetwater R. near Spring Valley, SD, 31 Mar 1996 (PU, SCR; 1996-080IA). This record was previously accepted but was re-reviewed in light of conclusions drawn by Patten and Erickson (2000). They showed that Harris's Hawks make sporadic incursions north into California, as in the mid 1990s. After these incursions, Harris's Hawks may breed and re-establish themselves for a period of time. Nevertheless, not all records were necessarily of wild birds, as there is a background level of released or escaped birds annually. This individual was outside the invasion boundary drawn by Patten and Erickson (2000) and at the edge of metropolitan San Diego. Despite this, the previous decision (acceptance) was sustained, although not unanimously. Two to three adults were at Indio, RIV, 11-27 Nov 1999 (WJM; 1999-211). The Committee felt these were likely wild birds because of the desert locality and because multiple individuals were involved. Harris's Hawks are unusual, for raptors, in that they hunt and travel in social groups. Thus, groups or pairs in California may be more likely wild than single hawks. No documentation was received for a third bird that was reportedly present on 11 Nov 1999. Another 1999 record and three older records are still in circulation.

YELLOW RAIL *Coturnicops noveboracensis* (71, 1). One freshly killed and partially eaten carcass was found at the Smith R. Estuary, DN, 30 Oct 1999 (ADB†; 2000-052). The wings were photographed and deposited in the Humboldt State University Wildlife Museum (HSUWM #8523). It is likely that this species occurs regularly in the state, but the small size of the population, compounded by the secretive nature of this rail, accounts for its apparent rarity.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus palliatus* (17, 1). Two juveniles were together on San Nicolas I., VEN, 7 Sep 1998, with one bird seen again 26 Sep 1998 (RAH; MAP; 1998-137). Both birds had ragged separations between the black and white on the breast, typical of the subspecies *frazari*, but one also had broad dusky edgings on the undertail coverts, possibly suggesting introgression with the

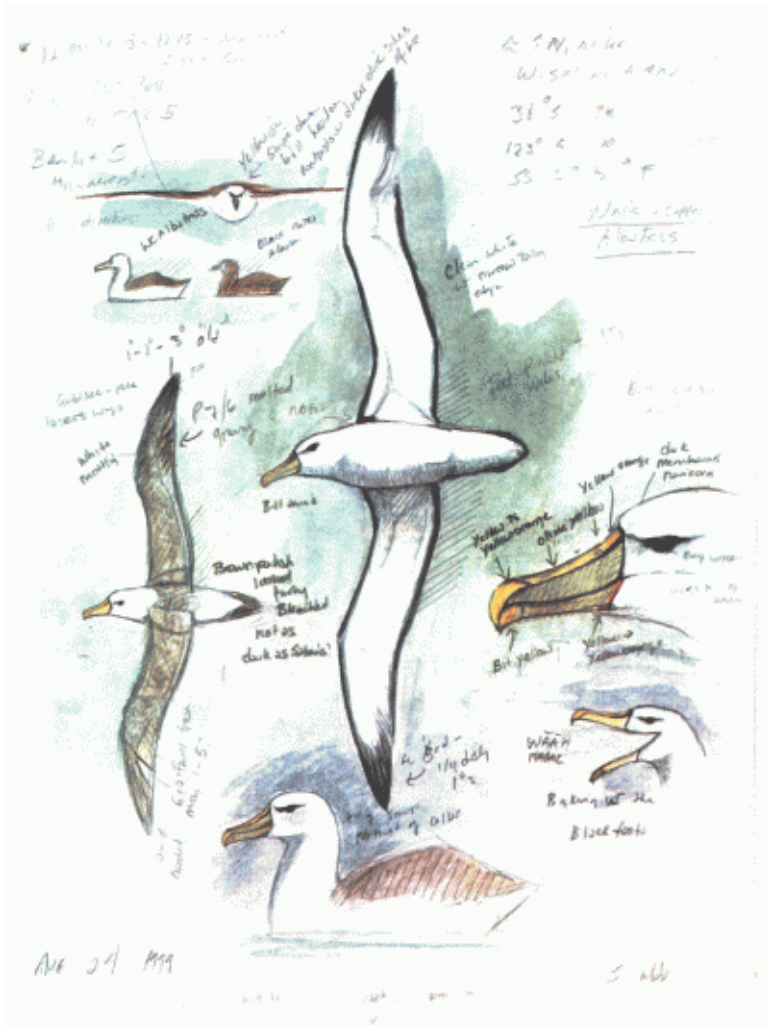


Figure 1. California's first Shy Albatross, *Thalassarche cauta*, 9 nautical miles W of Pt. Arena, Mendocino County, 24 Aug 1999 (1999-139).

Sketch by Sophie Webb

Black Oystercatcher (*H. bachmani*). After three rounds of circulation, the Committee accepted both birds, with several members suggesting they were possibly siblings. Ten of the 17 accepted records are from the Channel Islands, with five of these being from San Nicolas I.

UPLAND SANDPIPER *Bartramia longicauda* (16, 1). A juvenile at the A & G Sod Farms in San Ysidro, SD, 19–23 Oct 1999 (GMcC; GRo, MSM, LSaT, JWSt; 1999-

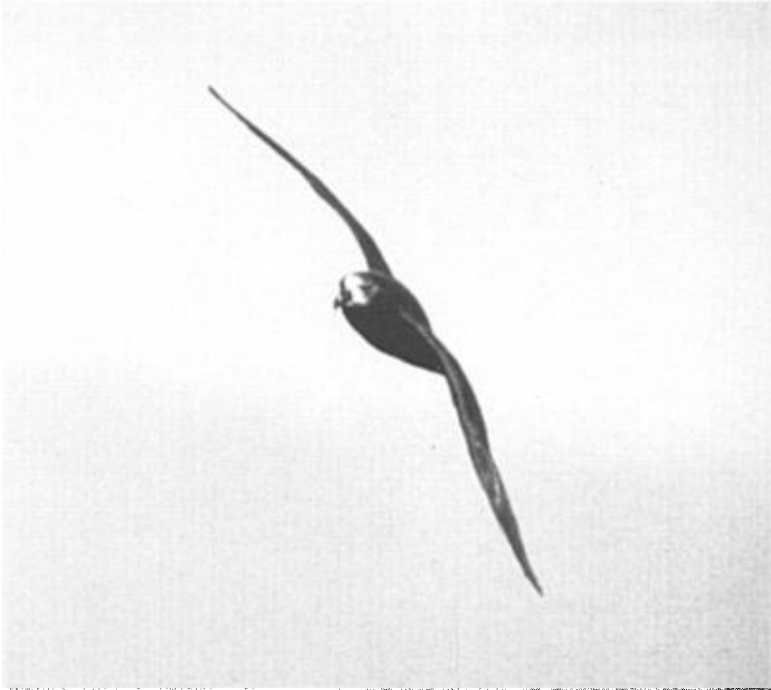


Figure 2. Great-winged Petrel, *Pterodroma macroptera*, 9.6 nautical miles west-northwest of Point Pinos, Monterey County, 18 Oct 1998.

Photo By Gil Ewing

177) was the first to be found in California in October. Ten of the 16 accepted records are from fall. A black-and-white photograph of this bird was published in *N. Am. Birds* 54:104.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT *Limosa haemastica* (16, 1). A juvenile was at the Eel River Wildlife Management Area, HUM, 17–19 Sep 1999 (BCA†, KNN; 2000-054).

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* (25, 2). An apparent adult was at King Salmon, HUM, 29 Aug 1999 (KNN; 2000-053), and a juvenile was seen briefly in flight over Southeast Farallon I., SF, 11 Sep 1999 (PP; 2000-019). Both showed characters of the expected Asian race *baueri*.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* (25, 2). Alternate-plumaged adults were at the Goleta Sewage Ponds, SBA, 10–11 Aug 1999 (DKi, JEL; KSG, RAH†, JHd†, BS; 1999-127) and Ocean Beach Park, SBA, 13–16 Aug 1999 (BrH; JC, SSo; 1999-133). The Committee did not receive photographs of the second bird, making a plumage comparison of the two birds difficult. Given that the locations are nearly 50 miles apart and that the second bird was seen later farther north (when most fall migrants should presumably be heading south), a majority of the Committee felt that the two birds were probably different individuals.



Figure 3. Fourth-winter Lesser Black-backed Gull, *Larus fuscus*, at Lake Cunningham, San Jose, Santa Clara County, 23 Feb 2000 (1999-188). Lingering signs of immaturity include extensive black in the bill, black in the tail, and reduced white mirrors on the outermost primaries, which were not completely regrown until late January.

Photo by Michael M. Rogers



Figure 4. White-winged Tern, *Chlidonias leucopterus*, molting into second winter plumage at the Moonglow Dairy, Monterey County, 7 Sep 1999 (1999-142).

Photo by John Sorensen

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LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus* (76, 4). A basic-plumaged adult at the Davis Wetlands, YOL, 10–12 Mar 1999 (SHa; 1999-080), a first for the county, was considered different from the bird that showed up at the Stockton Sewage Ponds, SJ, on 15 Mar 1999. This latter bird was joined by another adult on 14 Apr 1999, and both remained until 12 May 1999, with one of the two still present the next day (SAb; KBu, LCo, EG†, CL, LML‡, JDP; 1999-082). Videotape taken 25 Apr 1999 confirms that one bird had already acquired a full black hood on this date, while the other retained mostly basic plumage. Eight days later, the two birds seen and photographed both had black hoods, one with “slight white flecks.” The rapidity of this molt led some members to speculate that there may have been three birds. A first-summer bird was at the SE end of the Salton Sea, IMP, 23 May–6 Jun 1999 (MAP†; GMcC, KZK, MBS†; 1999-098). Most wintering birds depart by early May, and the few late May records for the state usually pertain to first-summer birds, which may oversummer while molting to second basic plumage. Although several such records have come from the Salton Sea, the above bird was not refound after 6 June. A black-and-white photograph was published in *N. Am. Birds* 53:329.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* (18, 1). Returning adults included one that spent a second winter at the Whitewater R. delta, Salton Sea, RIV, 26 Jan–



Figure 5. Immature Gray-cheeked Thrush, *Catharus minimus*, banded at Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco County, 10 Sep 1999 (2000-020). Measurements apparently rule out the similar Bicknell's Thrush, *C. bicknelli*.

Photo by Ivan Samuels



Figure 6. Immature Connecticut Warbler, *Oporornis agilis*, at the Point Reyes lighthouse, Marin County, 3 Oct 1999 (1999-162). Note the chunky, short-tailed build, the heavy bill, and the complete broad buffy-white eyering.

Photo by Les Chibana

27 Feb 1999 (MAP†; MTH, GMcC; 1999-050, same as 1998-049, Erickson and Hamilton 2001) and another that spent a fifth winter at Alviso, SCL, 16 Oct 1999–3 Feb 2000 (SCR; AJ, NL; 2000-140, same as 1998-203, Erickson and Hamilton 2001). Another adult was along the Santa Ana R., ORA, 13–14 Feb 1999 (VH; SSo; 1999-073). A bird that spent a third winter at L. Cunningham in San Jose, SCL, 1 Nov 1999–26 Mar 2000 (MMR†; WGB, JMo, BP, MW; 1999-188, same as 1999-001, Erickson and Hamilton 2001; Figure 3) was in its fourth winter, despite retaining black smudges on the bill and tail into spring.

It should be noted that the dark-backed Asian subspecies *heuglini* and *taiyrensis*, formerly considered part of the Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*) complex (e.g., Grant 1986), are now treated by the AOU (1998) as subspecies of the Lesser Black-backed Gull. As with many previous California records of this species, not all Committee members were convinced that the four birds above could be assigned definitively to *L. f. graellsii* rather than to either of these Asian taxa (see also discussions by Rottenborn and Morlan 2000 and Erickson and Hamilton 2001). For example, the bird at L. Cunningham, like some previous California Lesser Black-backed Gulls, was still regrowing its outermost primaries in mid-January, a molt timing similar to that reported for *heuglini* (e.g., Kennerly et al. 1995, Rauste 1999) and different from that of European *graellsii* (Jonsson 1998). However, apparent Lesser Black-backed Gulls in the eastern United States have shown a similar delayed molt (Martin Reid pers. comm.), suggesting that molt timing in North America may be different from that in Europe.

BRIDLED TERN *Sterna anaethetus* (1, 0). An adult at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 10 Jul 1999 (JEP; DRW; 2000-063) was considered to be the same individual that was there 17 Jul 1998 (1998-105, Erickson and Hamilton 2001). This remains one of only four species on the state list supported by written documentation only.

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SOOTY TERN *Sterna fuscata* (7, 1). A pair at the salt works north of Imperial Beach, SD, 15 Apr–10 Jun 1997 (GMcC, #SDNHM 49966 and 49807; 1997-103) incubated a single fertile egg 3–10 Jun. This breeding effort failed when the birds suffered predation on 6 June (male) and 10 June (female), apparently by a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) (Smith 1999). What was presumably the same pair had been seen the previous year on 23 Aug 1996, at the same location and by the same Fish & Wildlife Service personnel who discovered the nest in 1997.

WHITE-WINGED TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus* (2, 1). A bird molting from first summer to second winter plumage was at the Moonglow Dairy, MTY, 4 Sep–16 Oct 1999 (EK†; RLB†, KBu, MD‡, JLD, RF, KKw, DLa, LML‡, JMi, GMcC, JMo, MAP, BP, DEQ, DR†, MMR†, JSot, SBT, DT; 1999-142; Figure 4). Initially called a Black Tern (*C. niger*), this bird was not correctly identified until 6 Sep 1999, and a Black Tern reported at this location as early as 17 Aug 1999 may have been this bird. It represents the second record for California and for the west coast south of Alaska. A black-and-white photograph of this bird was published in *N. Am. Birds* 54:101.

THICK-BILLED MURRE *Uria lomvia* (37, 2). An alternate-plumaged adult was 0.3 mile off the Santa Cruz lighthouse (36° 56.91' N, 122° 1.22' W), SCZ, 17 Oct 1999 (SBT; 2000-060), and a basic-plumaged bird was 0.5 mile off the Pt. Sur lighthouse, MTY, 19 Sep 1999 (CrH, GE†; 1999-207). Another record from Santa Cruz County on 4 Oct 1999 is still under review.

LONG-BILLED MURRELET *Brachyramphus perdix* (6, 3). Three specimen records of alternate-plumaged adults found dead at Mono L., MNO, 9 Aug 1981 (#SDNHM 41544; 2000-041), 2 Aug 1983 (#MVZ 169134; 2000-009), and 6 Aug 1983 (#UMMZ 224652; 2000-067) double the number of accepted state records of this recently recognized species. Another Mono L. specimen from 29 Jul 1983 is still being reviewed. These records, including a photograph of the second specimen listed above, were discussed by Jehl and Jehl (1981) and Sealy et al. (1991). Mlodinow (1997) and Lethaby (2000) summarized criteria for the species' identification.

PARAKEET AUKLET *Aethia psittacula* (70, 2). Single adults were 34 n. miles WSW of Southeast Farallon I. (37° 33.8' N, 123° 32.1' W), SF, 20 Feb 1999 (SCR, IG, GR; 1999-125) and 23 n. miles SW of Southeast Farallon I. (37° 24.9' N, 123° 18.3' W), SF, 23 Feb 1999 (SCR, IG; 1999-126). Despite the infrequency with which this species is detected off California, many believe that it is probably regular far offshore, at least in most winters.

RUDDY GROUND-DOVE *Columbina talpacoti* (70, 1). A male was photographed at a back yard feeder in Santee, SD, 16 May 1999 (BMu; 1999-103). This species has been observed much less frequently in California in recent years, with 56 records from 1988 to 1993 being followed by only 9 records from 1994 through 1999.

SNOWY OWL *Nyctea scandiaca* (69**, 0). Three specimens of adults taken during the 1916 invasion included a female from Ocean Beach near the outlet of L. Talawa, DN, 14 Nov 1916 (#MVZ 27138; 2000-010), a female from Crescent City, DN, 25 Nov 1916 (#MVZ 27140; 2000-012), and a male from J. L. Moxon's ranch in the Arcata Bottoms, HUM, 30 Dec 1916 (#MVZ 27584; 2000-011). This invasion accounts for 21 of the 69 records since 1900. All three of these records were previously accepted for statistical purposes based on their inclusion by Grinnell and Miller (1944), but this is the first time that the specimen evidence was reviewed by the Committee. The Snowy Owl has not occurred in California since 1978.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD *Cyanthus latirostris* (55, 1). A vocal adult male at the town of Big River, SBE, 4 Sep 1999 (BMu; 1999-150) was the earliest in fall in California by two days. There are no accepted records between 18 April and 4

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September.

VIOLET-CROWNED HUMMINGBIRD *Amazilia violiceps* (5, 1). One in Westhaven, HUM, 17–23 Sep 1999 (DFx, RLeV†; 1999-155) was only the fifth for California and also the state's northernmost by 200 miles. The five accepted records form little pattern, spanning the length of the state and eight months of the year. A color photograph of this bird was published in *N. Am. Birds* 54:116.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* (5, 1). An adult near the fish docks on Pt. Reyes, MRN, 17 Jul 1999 (JSm†; 2000-079) constituted only the fifth record for California. Despite extensive searching, the bird could not be relocated after being seen flying from telephone pole to telephone pole toward the Nuñez Ranch. The five accepted records are scattered throughout the state between 20 May and 22 August, except for a wintering bird 14 Sep 1988–23 Apr 1989 in Goleta, SBA (Pyle and McCaskie 1992).

GREATER PEWEE *Contopus pertinax* (33, 1). One found on the Malibu Christmas bird count in Chesebro Canyon, LA, remained for a month, 19 Dec 1999–19 Jan 2000 (RBe; KLG†, KKw; 2000-026). The rectrix shape visible in one photograph suggests that the bird was in its first winter (Pyle 1997a).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER *Empidonax flaviventris* (13, 1). The documentation of an immature at the Iron Mt. Pumping Plant, SBE, 18 Sep 1999 (MAP†; 1999-156) was adequate to confirm the identification, even though no vocalizations were heard. Separation of this species from the similar Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*), as well as other congeners, was discussed by Heindel and Pyle (1999). Of the 13 accepted records, which range from 3 September to 16 October, five each are from Kern County and Southeast Farallon I.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus tuberculifer* (55, 3). One was along Lobitos Creek, SM, 14 Feb 1999 (RST; 1999-088). Another along Carpinteria Creek, SBA, 12–13 Apr 1999 (BH_a, JEL; 1999-118) may have been reported as an Ash-throated Flycatcher (*M. cinerascens*) nearby on 24 Feb 1999 and as a "possible" Dusky-capped Flycatcher on 13 Mar 1999, especially since all previous April records have been thought to be wintering birds. A description from 30 May 1999 of a silent *Myiarchus* thought to be this bird was insufficient to establish what would be the latest spring record for California. No documentation was received for a report from 22 May, which would likewise have been the latest spring record ever. A third bird was at Ole Hammer Park in Glendora, LA, 12 Dec 1999–7 Jan 2000 (JBr; KLG, KSG, MJSM; 1999-209). All three of these birds were heard to give the plaintive "peeur" call diagnostic of this species.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus crinitus* (43, 1). A vocal immature was at the Carmel R. Mouth, MTY, 16–19 Sep 1999 (JLD, JMo, DR, SBT†; 1999-163). The accepted records are all from fall, 4 Sep–2 Nov, with the vast majority being from coastal counties from Marin south.

SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER *Myiodynastes luteiventris* (14, 1). An immature was along Pescadero Creek, SM, 18–20 Sep 1999 (RST; DJP†; 2000-034). The previous San Mateo record, 14 Jun 1998 (Erickson and Hamilton 2001), is the only one outside the fall date range 13 Sep–20 Oct. There are still no accepted records of this species from the interior of California.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD *Tyrannus crassirostris* (15, 1). An adult returned to the campus of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, LA, for its eighth winter, 2 Nov 1999–2 Mar 2000 (KLG, GMcC, JMo, MJSM; 1999-196, same as 1998-175, Erickson and Hamilton 2001), and another returned to the Ocean Colony Golf Course in Half Moon Bay, SM, for its second, 18 Dec 1999–27 Mar 2000 (RF,



Figure 7. Immature female Snow Bunting, *Plectrophenax nivalis*, at Clam Beach, Humboldt County, 14 Nov 1999 (2000-077). The age and sex can be determined from the extensive black in the outer greater coverts and primary coverts, along with the narrow, tapered shape of the outer primary coverts and tapered outer rectrices.

Photo by Brian C. Acord

AJ, JMo; 2000-065, same as 1998-233, Erickson and Hamilton 2001). A bird of unknown age was at the River View Ranch in Santa Paula, VEN, 23 Feb–3 Mar 1999 (SHe†; 1999-086). The last, a first for the county, was videotaped by the landowner, who recognized it as something out of the ordinary despite being unable to identify it.

*SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER *Tyrannus forficatus* (101, 1). Photographs of an apparent adult male in Torrance, LA, 7 Jun 1989 (MiH†; 1991-035A) were recirculated with additional documentation substantiating the circumstances of this record. The Committee regrets that this record was previously not accepted (Patten and Erickson 1994) owing to the Committee's failure to follow up on questions about the documentation originally submitted for review. Records of this species after 1997 are no longer reviewed.

WHITE-EYED VIREO *Vireo griseus* (39, 1). A singing male was at California City, KER, 29 May 1999 (MTH; KSG, DS†; 1999-107). All but eight of the accepted records are from spring, of birds arriving between 8 May and 27 Jun.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO *Vireo flavifrons* (74, 5). Spring migrants were in Jawbone Canyon, KER, 26 May 1999 (MTH†; 1999-106), the first for the Kern desert, and at Lone Pine, INY, 27 May 1999 (DSd; 1999-119). A worn first-summer bird banded at the Big Sur R. mouth, MTY, 28 Jul 1999 completed its prebasic molt while summering through 17 Sep 1999 (JLD, KKw, DR†; 1999-145), establishing the first record of a live bird for Monterey County. In fall, one was at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 9 Oct 1999 (VH; KSG, AH; 2000-044) and another was at the Carmel R. mouth, MTY, 15–23 Oct 1999 (DR; 1999-182). No documentation was received for

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two other 1999 records, one in the San Bernardino Mts., SBE, on 2 May and another at Olema Marsh, MRN, in "early" September.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO *Vireo solitarius* (6**, 1). An immature photographed and banded at Southeast Farallon I., SF, 14 Sep 1999 (RDB, IST; 2000-015) represents the earliest accepted record by two weeks. Early September reports of this species are often thought to pertain to bright Cassin's Vireos (*V. cassinii*), as *solitarius* migrates late in the East. This record indicates, however, that this species can appear in California by mid-September. The identification of this recently recognized species was covered by Heindel (1996). Unsupported reports of this species continue to cloud its status in California (e.g., only two of seven northern California reports from 1999 were documented, *N. Am. Birds* 54:102).

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO *Vireo flavoviridis* (66, 3). An immature was at Pt. Loma, SD, 17 Sep 1999 (GMcC; 1999-167). Recently accepted older records include a bird caught by a domestic cat in San Diego, SD, 16 Sep 1996 (#SDNHM 50241; 2000-014) and another at Andrew Molera State Park, MTY, 1 Oct 1997 (JLD, KLG; 2001-046). Three other records from 1999 failed to garner acceptance (see below). The single accepted record from 1999 was well below the yearly average of six from 1995 to 1998. All accepted records are from fall, 6 Sep–30 Oct, and all but four are from coastal counties.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH *Catharus minimus* (21, 1). An immature banded on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 10 Sep 1999 remained on the island through 16 Sep 1999 (PP, IST; 2000-020; Figure 5). The measured wing cord of 99 mm is slightly longer than the maximum for Bicknell's Thrush (*C. bicknelli*) listed by Ouellet (1993), although the tail length of 65 mm is at the low end for both species, perhaps suggesting a female. All but two of the accepted records are from fall, 10 Sep–31 Oct; eleven are from Southeast Farallon I., with four more from nearby Pt. Reyes, MRN.

WOOD THRUSH *Hylocichla mustelina* (15, 1). One at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 16 Jun 1999 (KSG; CAM; 1999-114) was California's fifth in spring. All spring records are between 2 and 19 June.

RUFIOUS-BACKED ROBIN *Turdus rufopalliatu*s (9, 1). One spent a week at Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, 20–27 Nov 1999 (JLD, JoH†, ToH, RHu, GMcC, MJSM, MSM†; 1999-195). Six of the nine accepted records are from interior counties; all are of late fall/wintering birds, 5 Nov–13 Apr.

***GRAY CATBIRD** *Dumetella carolinensis* (106, 5). In spring, one was at Marion Bear Park, San Clemente Canyon, San Diego, SD, 27 Apr 1999 (MBS; 1999-102). In fall, one was at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 29 Sep–6 Oct 1999 (KSG; JLD, MPo†; 2000-045), one was along Sinclair Road near the SE end of the Salton Sea, IMP, 26 Oct 1999 (MFI; 1999-174), one was in the Saline Valley, INY, 11 Nov 1999 (REM; 2000-007), and one was in Claremont, LA, 18 Nov 1999 (CB; 1999-204). Records after 1999 will not be reviewed.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora pinus* (29, 3). Singing males, both apparently in their first summer, were west of Santa Rosa, SON, 2 Jun 1999 (DWN†; 1999-131) and at Butterbredt Springs, KER, 8–10 Jun 1999 (VH; KSG, MTH†; 1999-108). Another bird, also reported as a male, was at Pt. Loma, SD, 30 Sep 1999 (JW, TP; 1999-161). Accepted records for California are split nearly equally between spring (15 between 9 May and 27 June) and fall (13 between 31 August and 2 October), with one wintering record from Humboldt County.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER *Dendroica dominica* (87, 2). One at Skylawn Memorial Park Cemetery along Highway 92, SM, 19 Jun 1999 (RST; 1999-135) and another in Huntington Beach, ORA, 6 Nov 1999–2 Apr 2000 (MD†, JLD, KLG,

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KSG, KKw, CAM, JMo, MJSM, MSM†, JWb†; 1999-197) were both apparently of the white-lored race *albilora*. Although this is the expected race during migration, the previous two wintering birds showed characteristics of the nominate subspecies *dominica*, as discussed by Dunn (1988) and Garrett and Singer (1998).

PINE WARBLER *Dendroica pinus* (58, 2). An immature female was at Goleta, SBA, 29 Dec 1999–21 Jan 2000 (KBr; DC, AME; 2000-037), and another apparent immature wintered at El Dorado Park in Long Beach, LA, 25 Nov 1999–28 Feb 2000 (KSG; JMo, MJSM, MSM†; 1999-203). This marks the third year in a row that this species has wintered at El Dorado Park; however, all these birds were thought to be immatures and therefore presumed to be different individuals.

WORM-EATING WARBLER *Helmitheros vermicivorus* (87, 2). One wintered in Huntington Beach, ORA, 16 Oct 1999–22 Feb 2000 (CAM, MD†, KLG, KSG, KKw, GMcC, JMo, MJSM, MSM; 1999-190). A second bird found wintering in the same park on 2 Jan 2000 will be discussed in the next report. An additional previously unpublished report of a bird seen in Pacific Grove, MTY, 21 Oct 1972 (BRe; 1996-065) was accepted "for statistical purposes" (see Roberson 1986) at the Committee's 1999 annual meeting. Such acceptance usually applies to older records (prior to 1980) for which documentation is no longer available but have been published in an authoritative source and are thought to be correct.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH *Seiurus motacilla* (10, 2). A briefly seen but well described individual was at the Iron Mt. Pumping Plant, SBE, 28 May 1999 (MAP; 1999-112), and an immature was at Panamint Springs, INY, 24–25 Sep 1999 (SBT†; JLD, RF, JoH†, GMcC, MSM, JMo; 1999-159). The latter is the fourth for fall and the latest by one week. Seven of the ten accepted records are from the interior of southern California.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER *Oporornis agilis* (82, 3). An immature female was banded on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 23 Sep 1999 (PP, IS†; 2000-022), and another individual was seen briefly at the same location on 1 Oct 1999 (PP; 2000-023). Feathers from the latter, apparently the victim of a Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), were found on 2 Oct 1999 (#CAS 88970). A very cooperative immature was at the Pt. Reyes lighthouse, MRN, 2–4 Oct 1999 (LCh†, GE†, RF, LF†, NLe, JMo, KS; 1999-162; Figure 6). Two other records from the fall of 1999 are still circulating. These two locations are popular with this species; 47 accepted records are from Southeast Farallon I., and an additional nine are from Pt. Reyes.

MOURNING WARBLER *Oporornis philadelphia* (109, 4). Two were banded on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 4 Sep 1999 (IS†; 2000-021) and 15 Sep 1999 (RDB, IS†; 2000-016). The first was thought to be an adult female despite reportedly having an incompletely pneumatized skull; the second was an immature female. Immatures were also found at Tunitas Creek, SM, 12 Sep 1999 (RST; 2000-033) and at Pt. Pinos, MTY, 11–12 Sep 1999 (SBT; DR; 1999-184). Two other records from the fall of 1999 are still circulating. Although other species observed with comparable regularity in California have been removed from the review list, the Mourning Warbler remains on this list in part because of the difficulty in identifying this species confidently and in part because of continued uncertainty about its status on the mainland (51 of the 109 accepted records are from Southeast Farallon I.; see also Rottenborn and Morlan 2000).

RED-FACED WARBLER *Cardellina rubrifrons* (12, 1). One discovered at Twentynine Palms, SBE, 16 Jun 1993 was found dead the next day (#SBCM 54100; 2001-023). All but two of the twelve accepted records are of spring birds first detected between 13 May and 17 June.

SCARLET TANAGER *Piranga olivacea* (101, 2). Immature males, with fresh black

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wing coverts contrasting with duller remiges, were found along Marshall Beach Road, MRN, 28 Nov 1999 (KS; 1999-206) and at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 18 Oct 1999 (MTH; 1999-187). Prior to the Marin record there were already 32 accepted records from November, but only two of these were from northern California (both from Southeast Farallon I.). Only two birds (both in San Luis Obispo Co.) have remained into December.

LE CONTE'S SPARROW *Ammodramus leconteii* (29, 1). One was at Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, 3 Oct 1999 (TEW; 2000-027). Furnace Creek Ranch and Southeast Farallon I. each claim eight fall records, spanning 3 Oct–5 Nov and 11 Sep–27 Oct, respectively. However, Furnace Creek's two late May records make it the most frequent location for this species in California.

*NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW *Ammodramus nelsoni* (26, 0). A singing bird at the Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, 23 Apr 1979 (WGB) was taken to be the bird that wintered there 25 Jan–24 Feb 1979, thereby extending the late date of record 1979-014 (Luther et al. 1983) by two months. Few of our coastal wintering birds are detected this late in the year, although there are five records of spring migrants in the interior (Mono, Inyo, and Kern counties) 13–29 May. Records of this species after 1986 are not reviewed.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* (68, 4). A diagnostic photograph of an immature female at Clam Beach, HUM, 14–15 Nov 1999 (BCA†; 2000-077; Figure 7) was received without an accompanying description. Two others seen only in flight on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 28 Oct 1999 (IS; 2000-024) and 6 Nov 1999 (SAN; 2000-025) made the 13th and 14th accepted records for the island, all falling between 22 October and 18 November. Another was seen along the coast near the mouth of Purisima Creek, SM, 7 Nov 1999 (RST; 2000-035).

PYRRHULOXIA *Cardinalis sinuatus* (20, 1). An adult male in Yucca Valley, SBE, 31 Jul 1999 (ZA†; 1999-130) fit the predominant pattern of spring and summer birds in the southern deserts and was accepted unanimously. Another 1999 record, of a bird that wintered in urban Costa Mesa, ORA, continues to circulate because of greater concerns about natural occurrence (the species is known to be kept in captivity in Mexico and may also be held in southern California).

PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris* (73, 9). Of eight 1999 records reviewed, six of females or immatures were unanimously judged to be of natural occurrence. These were at the Carmel R. Mouth, MTY, 19 Sep 1999 (SRv, BaM; 1999-185), at Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, 2 Oct 1999 (JoH; TEW; 1999-175A) and 20–23 Oct 1999 (MJSJ; TEW; 1999-175B), at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 11–12 Sep 1999 (MTH; 1999-186), along Atascadero Creek, Goleta, SBA, 31 Aug–1 Sep 1999 (GT, DC; 1000-029), and in Morongo Valley, SBE, 7 Sep 1999 (JLD; 2001-047). A majority of the Committee questioned the natural occurrence of a winter pair, and another record of a single bird was insufficiently documented to establish the identification (see below). Older records of a female or immature on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 21 Oct 1997 (WR; 2000-083) and of an apparent immature at Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, 24 Sep 1994 (BED; GMcC; 1994-151) were also unanimously accepted as pertaining to naturally occurrences, fitting the pattern of mostly young birds in fall.

The status of the Painted Bunting in California is clouded by released or escaped cage birds from Mexico, where this species is commonly held in captivity, and possibly southern California, where they have occasionally been observed for sale. In an attempt to shed light on persistent controversy surrounding California Painted Bunting records, Hamilton decided to reexamine all the state records of this species (cf. Erickson and Hamilton 2001). On his recommendation, the CBRC reassessed several older Painted Bunting records. These included three spring records, of a singing first-summer male west of Santa Rosa, SON, 24 Jun 1966 (#CAS 69789;

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1985-139, Roberson 1993), an adult male at Oasis, MNO, 23 May 1986 (1986-262, Bevier 1990), and an adult male at Scotty's Castle, INY, 22 May 1987 (1987-138, Langham 1991). Each remained accepted, with votes of 8-2 in the second round of recirculation in all three cases. All Committee members believe that natural spring vagrants of this species are possible in California, especially in light of their occurrence elsewhere in the United States, and most feel that this likelihood is great enough to warrant acceptance of these records. Another older record, of an adult male at Atascadero Creek, Goleta, SBA, 5-10 Sep 1995 (1996-059, McCaskie and San Miguel 1999) was originally not accepted because of questionable natural occurrence, but this decision was overturned after two circulations through the Committee, with the record being accepted 9-1. This bird's worn appearance, originally interpreted as probable cage wear, is now known to be normal for adults in early fall (Pyle 1997a), and all other circumstances of this record were consistent with a naturally occurring vagrant at a known vagrant trap. Other accepted fall records of adult males are from Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, 4 Nov 1972 (Roberson 1986), Hole-in-the-Wall, SBE, 2-5 Sep 1993 (Howell and Pyle 1997), and Twentynine Palms, SBE, 8 Oct 1998 (Erickson and Hamilton 2001). Further compounding the difficulty of assessing this bird's status in California, noncontroversial records of Painted Buntings have exploded in California in recent years (*N. Am. Birds* 55:101-105).

COMMON GRACKLE *Quiscalus quiscula* (48, 4). Males were seen at Cow Creek in the Furnace Creek Ranch area of Death Valley National Monument, INY, 2 Oct 1998 (JLD; 2001-048), in Lompoc, SBA, 3 Jan-4 Mar 1999 (BrH†; GL; 1999-100), near Kettleman City, KIN, 1 Mar 1999 (JSy; 1999-079), and at Panamint Springs, INY, 24 Apr 1999 (CrH; 1999-094). Twenty of the accepted records are from Inyo Co., with 10 more from adjacent inland counties.

BLACK ROSY-FINCH *Leucosticte australis* (8, 1). A specimen of an adult female was obtained at Bodie, MNO, 22 Nov 1968 (#MVZ 159188; 2000-013). Six of the accepted records are from Inyo Co., the other two from Mono. Four other specimen records from these same two counties have yet to be reviewed. Each of these 12 records falls between 11 and 28 November or 31 March and 5 April, except for single records from January and February.

POPULATIONS ACCEPTED

In addition to evaluating and archiving records of birds that rarely occur in California, the Committee also maintains a state bird list, which includes introduced species considered to be established in the state. For a species to be added to the state list, the identification must be established and the population in the state must be considered "viable." The Committee's criteria for viability are (1) that the species has bred in the state for 15 consecutive years, (2) that the population is increasing or stabilized after an initial period of increase, (3) that the species occupies enough geographically contiguous suitable habitat that the population is unlikely to diminish significantly, and (4) that the occupied environment is ecologically similar enough to the species' native habitat, or to that of other successful introductions, that permanent establishment seems likely. Populations maintained primarily by continued releases or requiring intense management are not considered viable.

***RED-CROWNED PARROT** *Amazona viridigenalis*. A comprehensive listing package put together by the Introduced Birds Subcommittee (Kimball Garrett, chairman, Joseph Morlan, and Mike San Miguel; 2001-032; Figure 8) was unani-

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mously judged to demonstrate adequately that the Red-crowned Parrot qualifies for addition to the state list. This species joins the Chukar (*Alectoris chukar*), Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), White-tailed Ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucurus*), Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*), Spotted Dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*), European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), and House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) as the ninth introduced species on the state list. In the future, the Committee anticipates considering other parrot species and perhaps the Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*) and Orange Bishop (*Euplectes franciscanus*) for possible inclusion on the state list as well.

The Red-crowned is the most numerous parrot in California, with population estimates in excess of 2000 birds (Garrett 1997, in litt., Mabb 1997a, b), perhaps representing up to 20% of the world's free-flying population of this species (Birdlife International 2000). This population continues to grow at a rapid rate, with flocks containing up to 50 dependent young in the Temple City/Arcadia area alone each year (Mabb 1997b). The species now occurs throughout the San Gabriel and San Fernando valleys, LA, and urban portions of Orange Co., with smaller numbers in adjacent San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego counties. It is unclear whether smaller populations of *Amazona* parrots in northern California, Palm Springs, and other urban southern California locations are self-sustaining and whether they are all of this species.

The identification of this parrot has been established by specimens (#LACM 106053, 110291, 110292, 110428; 2001-032) and photographs. A few birds show signs of introgression with the Lilac-crowned Parrot (*A. finschi*), including perhaps LACM 110292, and mixed breeding pairs of these species have been observed (Mabb 1997b), but such circumstances appear limited. Karen Mabb has

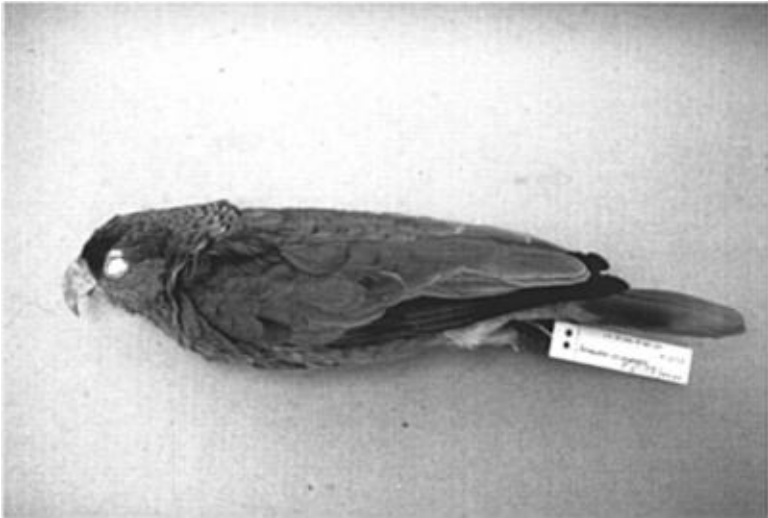


Figure 8. Red-crowned Parrot, *Amazona viridigenalis*, collected at Temple City, Los Angeles County, 21 April 1998 (#LACM 110428; 2001-032).

Photo by Kimball L. Garrett

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documented breeding by Red-crowned Parrots in Temple City and adjacent areas since 1995 (Mabb 1997b). Documentation of earlier breeding is less systematic, but Froke (1981) reported nesting in the San Gabriel Valley during his 1976–1978 field work, apparently as a result of releases in this area in the 1950s. Despite no known documentation of successful breeding by the species in the 1980s, the Committee inferred that such breeding had indeed occurred and that the criterion of breeding for 15 consecutive years had been met.

Red-crowned Parrots have adapted well to California's urban and suburban environments, exploiting a variety of foods (Garrett et al. 1997) and selecting nest sites similar to those in the bird's native range. The species has already been added to the Texas list by the Texas Bird Records Committee. In Texas the species occupies similar urban habitats, albeit of more limited extent. Given the proximity of naturally occurring Red-crowned Parrots, the Texas committee was unwilling to comment on the origin of Texas birds, stating that this parrot was a "well-established species, whether as a result of natural occurrence, introduction, or both" (Haynie 1996). Although the California birds are clearly a result of releases, they appear equally able to establish self-sustaining urban populations.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*. One observed during a seawatch from Pigeon Pt., SM, 20 Mar 1999 (1999-109) was likely correctly identified, but the report lacked details sufficient to eliminate other species, particularly given the spring date. Three fall records, likewise inadequately documented, included one from Southeast Farallon I., SF, 21 Sep 1997 (2000-084), one 15 miles NNW of Pacific Grove, SCZ, 7 Oct 1999 (1999-164), and one from Monterey Bay, MTY, 26 Aug 1999 (1999-137). These reports suffered from brief descriptions that did not address all of the critical field marks of this species, failing to eliminate Townsend's (*P. auricularis*) and other shearwaters from consideration.

WEDGE-RUMPED STORM-PETREL *Oceanodroma tethys*. Documentation for a storm-petrel seen approximately 33 miles SW of San Miguel Is., SBA (33° 34.07' N, 120° 49.57' W), SBA, 6 Sep 1997 (1997-137†; Figures 9 and 10) was extremely difficult for the Committee to evaluate. The written descriptions read very well for a Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel, but problems arose from apparent inconsistencies between them and an extensive series of photographs, which were not quite crisp enough to clinch the identification. For example, some members thought that the enlarged look to the white rump was due to the photos' blurriness. Others thought that apparent yellowish color visible near the tail may have been the bird's feet, as shown by Wilson's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), although this color was eventually written off by most members as a photographic aberration, exaggerated in scans of the original slides. The tail appears asymmetric in some photos, suggesting that molt may have given another storm-petrel species the short-tailed look (relative to the uppertail coverts) expected of a Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel. It was generally recognized that the extent of white on the rump was at the low end for this species, while the amount of black tail visible beyond the white uppertail coverts was at the high end. The bent-winged structure and the long "hand" shown by this bird are unlike the wing shape of a Wilson's and more like that of a Wedge-rumped or Leach's (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*). The white "wrap-around" extending from the rump to the sides of the undertail coverts matched photos of Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels from the eastern tropical Pacific very closely, if not exactly. Although most members thought that the described size and extent of white on the rump and undertail coverts was incorrect for a Leach's Storm-Petrel, that species is the most variable Pacific storm-petrel, leaving room for uncertainty. Additionally, the small subspecies *O. l.*



Figure 9. Possible Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel, *Oceanodroma tethys*, 33 miles southwest of San Miguel Island, Santa Barbara County, 6 Sep 1997 (1997-137). Although slightly atypical in shape for this species, the white rump patch was likely too extensive for a Wilson's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), a species which would have also shown a more rounded wing shape.

Photo by Ronald M. Saldino

socorroensis is essentially identical in size to the Wedge-rumped (Naveen 1976). Voting was divided throughout the four rounds, and many members changed their minds as more analyses and comments on the identification came forward. Although the final vote was evenly split, keeping this record from being endorsed, the bird may well have been correctly identified. Members with the most experience with this species, as well as outside seabird experts, felt that the bird was, indeed, probably a Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel.

ANHINGA *Anhinga anhinga*. A report from Decker Canyon Road, LA, 11 Nov 1999 (1999-214) was consistent with a worn immature Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*).

ROSEATE SPOONBILL *Ajaia ajaja*. A report of three individuals from the Wister Unit, Salton Sea, IMP, 30 Mar 1999 (1999-091) was troublesome; while the description was perhaps adequate for this species, it left enough doubt to deter the Committee from accepting the record. Escaped Chilean (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*) and Lesser (*Phoeniconaias minor*) flamingos continue to be observed at the Salton Sea, and CBRC members thought that these birds may have been involved.

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator*. A mixed group of Trumpeter and Tundra (*C. columbianus*) swans was reported flying over Staten I., SJ, 22 Jan 1999 (1999-049). The calls were described as being different from those of Tundra Swans, but the vocal description was less than diagnostic. A bird heard, but not seen, in fog at the Cosumnes R. Preserve, SAC, 24 Jan 1999 (1999-085) was not endorsed, with one member suggesting that the Whooper Swan (*C. cygnus*) was not eliminated. The



Figure 10. The same storm-petrel shown in Figure 9. The apparent extent of the white "wrap-around" from the rump onto the sides of the undertail coverts in this photograph matches well that of known Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrels from the eastern tropical Pacific.

Photo by Ronald M. Saldino

details in a report from Modoc N. W. R., MOD, 8 Mar 1999 (1999-084), involving eight birds flying over and calling, were not adequate to confirm the identification. Another report was of a bird flying in a flock of Tundra Swans and calling from the Bobelaine Wildlife Sanctuary, SUT, 19 Dec 1998 (1999-019). While most members felt that the observer very likely saw a Trumpeter Swan, the details given failed to convince three members of the identification.

NORTHERN BOBWHITE *Colinus virginianus*. A report of two males and a female from Confidence, TUO, 15 Mar–11 Aug 1998 (1998-113) was not accepted because details on the identification were not conclusive, particularly with respect to neotropical bobwhites. Furthermore, those members who accepted the identification questioned the natural occurrence of these birds.

MONGOLIAN PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus*. A report of an apparent adult female seen at a distance of 100 to 200 yards by a single observer at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 17 Jul 1999 (1999-141) was thought to quite likely pertain to this species but gained little support. The description did not rule out a Greater Sandplover (*C. leschenaultii*), and some members were concerned that the bird might have been a stained or color-marked plover of another species.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus palliatus*. A brief description of one at San Clemente I., LA, 4–5 Aug 1999 (2000-030) was not detailed enough to eliminate a hybrid with the Black Oystercatcher (*H. bachmani*). Photographs of this bird apparently exist but were never received by the Committee.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*. "Six to nine" birds seen only in flight along the Santa Ana R., ORA, 16 Oct 1999 (1999-172) were thought by the

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Committee probably to be misidentified Long-billed Dowitchers (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*).

RED-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis*. A brief description of an adult at the Santa Clara R. Mouth, VEN, 25 Jun 1999 (1999-138) failed to convince the Committee that the bird seen was not a small Sanderling (*C. alba*).

LONG-TOED STINT *Calidris subminuta*. The description of an injured juvenile in a closed area of the Lower Klamath N. W. R., SIS, 13 Aug 1999 (2000-051) did not eliminate a bright Least Sandpiper (*C. minutilla*), as some key features, such as the pale base to the mandible, the loreal pattern, and the toes, were not described.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis*. A shorebird described from near Selma, FRE, 1 Sep 1999 (1999-199) was quite possibly this species, but the bird was observed without a scope, resulting in some important details being overlooked. Additionally, the white rump was not seen to confirm the identification.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*. A belated submission of one at Virgin Creek Beach, MEN, 4 Aug 1997 (2000-114) was not detailed enough to confirm the identification. The description of the bill as short, blunt tipped, and with a pale base seemed wrong for this species, suggesting perhaps a Red Knot (*C. canutus*) with a bill deformity. Rather brief descriptions of another at Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, 14–20 Sep 1999 (1999-154) failed to eliminate a Stilt Sandpiper (*C. himantopus*), present there at the same time.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*. The description of a first-year bird migrating north with Black-legged Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*) past Pigeon Pt., SM, 21 May 1999 (1999-111) failed to eliminate the possibility that the bird may have been a Bonaparte's Gull (*L. philadelphia*).

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*. Four first-winter birds failed to gain Committee acceptance. Three of these were studied and photographed at the San Jose–Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant, SCL, 12 Feb–6 Mar 1999 (1999-074†), 26 Feb–5 Mar 1999 (1999-123††), and 8 Mar 1999 (1999-124†), and the fourth was seen and photographed at Doheny State Beach, ORA, 13 Feb–12 Mar 1999 (1999-072††). The Committee continues to maintain conservative standards about what constitutes an “Iceland Gull” in California. Although all four of these birds would likely be identified as this species in eastern North America, concerns about the range of variation in Thayer's Gulls (*L. thayeri*), particularly as a result of bleaching late in the winter, and the possibility of various hybrid gull combinations resulted in a maximum of two accept votes for any of these records. Rottenborn and Morlan (2000) outlined the criteria the Committee used in assessing these records. Terrill et al. (1999) discussed the three Santa Clara birds, including a photograph of the bird in record 1999-074.

SLATY-BACKED GULL *Larus schistisagus*. A first-winter gull perhaps of this species was at the Davis Oxidation Ponds, YOL, 4 Nov–12 Dec 1998 (1998-209†). It was slightly paler than the many Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) it associated with and had pale underwings like those of a Glaucous-winged Gull (*L. glaucescens*). Patterns of the individual primaries were consistent with those of known Slaty-backed Gulls (see Pyle 1997b), and most members agreed that this bird was a reasonable match to what they felt a first-winter bird of this species should look like. The Committee also agreed, however, that identification of first-winter Slaty-backed Gulls is still confounded by ignorance of diagnostic characteristics. In particular, most members felt that the possibility of this bird being a hybrid Glaucous-winged × Herring Gull, perhaps back-crossed to a Herring Gull, could not be ruled out, despite its differences from other gulls presumed to be of this hybrid combination. In the future, perhaps, improved knowledge of large-gull identification will permit reassessment of this and other records of the Slaty-backed Gull in California.

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RUDDY GROUND-DOVE *Columbina talpacoti*. An incompletely described small dove at a feeder in Valley Center, SD, 24 Jun 1999 (1999-169) was noted as lacking scaling on the head and neck but had a fairly pronounced whitish eye ring and iridescent flecks on the neck, suggesting a different species. Although some of the multiple wintering birds at Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, have remained into June and July, there are no other June records of this species in California. Another dove at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 21 Oct 1999 (2000-031) was likely this species but was not studied critically enough to confirm the identification.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD *Archilochus colubris*. A hummingbird with a golden-green back in Big Sycamore Canyon, VEN, 1-6 Oct 1999 (1999-160), initially thought to be perhaps an immature male Ruby-throated, was later identified as an Anna's (*Calypte anna*).

THREE-TOED WOODPECKER *Picoides tridactylus*. When this record from the South Warner Wilderness, MOD, 2 Nov 1985 originally circulated 15 years ago, several members anticipated further observations of this species, inferring that there was probably a resident population in the area. This has proven not to be the case, and the record was recirculated (1985-146A) for reassessment with this knowledge. Ultimately, after four rounds of circulation and discussion at the 2001 annual meeting, only two members continued to support the identification; the Three-toed Woodpecker has thus been removed from the state list. For details of this record, see Bevier (1990) and Trochet et al. (1988). The Committee's stance on single-observer first-state records that lack physical documentation has become more conservative over time, and there are no longer any species on the California list based solely on such records.

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE *Contopus virens*. The plumage description of a bird near Pt. Sur, MTY, 21-25 Sep 1999 (1999-179S) seemed good for this species, as did some of the described vocalizations, but tape-recorded vocalizations suggested that the bird actually may have been a Western Wood-Pewee (*C. sordidulus*). In particular, the taped clear "pwee" notes are monotone and often slightly burry, rather than clear and sharply upslurred. Another record of a silent immature studied at close range for two hours and photographed on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 5 Sep 1998 (1999-009†) received considerable support, with only two members expressing reservations about the identification. In direct comparison with several nearby Western Wood-Pewees this bird had a grayer head contrasting with a greener back, blacker wings with conspicuously brighter whitish (tinged lemon) wing edgings, whiter and more contrasting throat, and much more extensive, brighter orange on the lower mandible. Perhaps of greatest significance, the distance between the distal end of the uppertail coverts and the tail tip was much greater on this bird than on the Western Wood-Pewees, perhaps in the range diagnostic of the Eastern Wood-Pewee (see Pyle 1997c).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER *Empidonax flaviventris*. An intriguing description of a silent *Empidonax* studied carefully for two hours at Galileo Hill Park, KER, 26 Sep 1999 (2000-043) included many field marks of this species, but the back color, described as "deep olive with some slight grayish tones" and "uniformly brownish-olive" by the two observers, was atypical. Ultimately a majority of the Committee felt it best to leave this individual unidentified.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus tuberculifer*. A silent *Myiarchus* at Oceano, SLO, 21 Nov 1999 (2000-032) was likely this species, given the date and location, but the very brief description was insufficient to substantiate the identification.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO *Vireo solitarius*. The single description received of a widely seen bird at the Pt. Reyes lighthouse, MRN, 19 Sep 1999 (1999-157) could

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have pertained to a bright Cassin's Vireo (*V. cassinii*).

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO *Vireo flavoviridis*. An unprecedented spring report of a bird seen for ten seconds, mostly without binoculars, at Big Morongo Reserve, SBE, 11 May 1999 (1999-120) failed to receive any support. A bird on eastern Santa Cruz I., SBA, 17 Sep 1999 (1999-158), apparently identified by others as a Red-eyed Vireo (*V. olivaceus*), and another at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, SD, 11 Oct 1999 (1999-171†), reported to have completely yellow underparts, received only minority support after two circulations.

CAVE SWALLOW *Petrochelidon fulva*. An interesting swallow observed and sketched at the North Prado Basin, SBE, 29 Apr 1999 (1999-090) had some features suggesting a Cave Swallow, but the color of the back, forehead, and rump, and especially the lack of a capped appearance (the blue crown being connected to the blue back) strongly suggested that the bird was actually a hybrid Barn (*Hirundo rustica*) × Cliff (*P. pyrrhonota*) swallow (Pyle 1997a). One such hybrid was photographed at Mystic L., RIV, 15 May 1999 (Michael A. Patten pers. comm.), and others have been seen N of California City, KER, 7 Oct 1997, near Pt. Mugu, VEN, 2 Sep 1999, and at Finney L., IMP, 10 Sep 2000 (Jon L. Dunn pers. comm.).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD *Sialia sialis*. The report of a male and "possible" female observed for "two minutes" on private property at Benton Hot Springs, MNO, 4 Jun 1999 (1999-129) by an excellent observer was intriguing, as the male was fairly well described. However, single-observer first state records lacking physical evidence are held to very high standards, and the record received little support, as anticipated by the observer. Some members expressed concern about hybrid Mountain Bluebirds (*S. currucoides*) (e.g., Lane 1968, Spear 1975), a possibility that was not considered by the observer. Neither bird could be relocated on later visits. The observer noted that any bluebird at this location on this date would be unusual, with the Western Bluebird (*S. mexicana*) being a rare and irregular visitor to Mono Co. and the Mountain Bluebird being expected only at higher elevations. Dunn (1981) prepared a useful summary of bluebird distribution and identification.

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT *Anthus spragueii*. Incomplete or brief descriptions of single birds at widely spaced locations, both on 5 Dec 1999, by the same observer left little doubt that they were misidentifications of a more common species, perhaps a pale Savannah Sparrow (e.g., *Passerculus sandwichensis nevadensis*), which has whitish outer edges to the tail. The first was reported from L. Perris Dam, RIV (1999-201), the second from Long Beach, LA (1999-202).

WORM-EATING WARBLER *Helmitheros vermivorus*. A briefly seen bird at Butterbredt Springs, KER, 20 Apr 1999 (1999-089) received only two votes to accept on its second circulation. Although the description suggested a Worm-eating Warbler, it was not sufficient to extend the earliest spring record for this species in California by ten days.

MOURNING WARBLER *Oporornis philadelphia*. A briefly described bird at the Iron Mt. Pumping Plant, SBE, 16 Oct 1998 (1998-224) failed to gain acceptance after three rounds of circulation.

SCARLET TANAGER *Piranga olivacea*. A description from Saline Valley, INY, 17 Nov 1999 (2000-008) did not eliminate the possibility of a Summer Tanager (*P. rubra*).

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. A calling bird seen flying overhead briefly and without binoculars by an experienced observer at Venice Beach in Half Moon Bay, SM, 28 Nov 1997 (2000-042) was likely correctly identified but did not meet the Committee's minimum standard for acceptance, particularly since the similar McKay's Bunting (*P. hyperboreus*) could not be eliminated under such conditions.

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PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris*. A very brief description of a bird at Furnace Creek Ranch, INY, 16 Oct 1999 (1999-173) was insufficient to confirm the identification. It is possible that this bird may have been the same as that in accepted record 1999-175B, discussed above.

COMMON GRACKLE *Quiscalus quiscula*. What was thought initially to be perhaps California's first Purple Grackle (*Q. q. stonei/quiscula*) summered at Preisker Park in Santa Maria, SBA, 8 May–5 Jul 1999 (1999-122†). The bird also foraged across the Santa Maria R. in nearby San Luis Obispo Co. It assisted a pair of Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) in raising their young, bringing food to the nest in late May (often being chased by the blackbirds when doing so) and feeding fledglings in late June. Although this bird's size and shape resembled those of a Common Grackle, the bird's courtship displays (given only to Brewer's Blackbirds) and tail cocking recalled the Great-tailed Grackle (*Q. mexicanus*), whereas the vocalizations were similar to those of a Brewer's Blackbird. Additionally, several plumage features on this bird were not typical of any race of Common Grackle. In particular, it did not have the typical strongly contrasting hood of a Common Grackle, usually bluish in *versicolor* and *stonei* and purple in *quiscula*. The uniform purple back of the Santa Maria bird was inconsistent with that of a Common Grackle, which should be bronze (*versicolor*), green (*quiscula*), or purple with variegated and barred patterning (*stonei*). The uniformly purple wing coverts were also atypical of Purple Grackles, which generally have blue coverts. A hybrid Brewer's Blackbird × Great-tailed Grackle could explain the behavioral and plumage features of this bird, and most Committee members felt that this was indeed the individual's identity.

COMMON REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*. Although the identification of this male Common Redpoll specimen, taken by an unnamed person from an unspecified location in "Plumas County," 23 Dec 1899 (#SDNHM 27420; 1992-051), was not disputed, there was considerable controversy regarding the location at which the specimen was obtained and whether a specimen without a collector's name and precise location constitutes an acceptable record. Even if the county designation on the specimen tag was correct (and lacking a precise location this may be questionable), the boundary between Plumas and Lassen counties has changed since 1895, raising the possibility that the bird may have been taken in what is now Lassen County. The method of specimen preparation suggests that this bird may be one of a series collected by J. M. Willard from a flock at Eagle L. in Lassen County during his stay from 30 November to 23 December 1899, particularly since all of the five specimens from that flock were taken on the same date as this bird. This individual was likely part of the major redpoll invasion into northeast California in 1899 but may well have been part of the Eagle L. flock and therefore not a new record separate from CBRC record 1984-159.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE (IDENTIFICATION ACCEPTED)

HARRIS'S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus*. One was observed from Highway 101 south of Nacimiento Creek, MTY, 20 Nov 1998 (SES, LSp; 1999-192). The Committee was not ready to accept a report from northern California, given that a background level of escapees is known to occur in the state and that invasions of this species typically extend into the southern deserts only (Patten and Erickson 2000).

GRAY SILKY-FLYCATCHER *Ptilogonys cinereus*. A heavily worn bird with a damaged tail at Cabrillo National Monument, Pt. Loma, SD, 16 Jun 1999 (REW; 1999-121) was thought by the observer to be likely an escaped caged bird, a conclusion shared by the Committee. The Committee received no details supporting

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reports of this individual on 28 Jul and 18 Aug 1999 (*N. Am. Birds* 54:106). Previous records of this species from coastal urban locations near the Mexican border have also been deemed to be of questionable natural occurrence.

Another long-staying, well-documented male at a more remote location near Blue Jay Campground in the Cleveland National Forest, Santa Ana Mts., ORA, 29 Jan–19 Feb 1999 (DLo†; RAH, ChH, KZK†, LML†, MJM, CAM, GMcC, DWM, JMo, BP, CER, DR†, MMR†, LSa†, JWb†, MW, JOZ; 1999-051) was felt by many observers to be a naturally occurring vagrant. In each of two rounds of circulation, seven members felt that the natural occurrence of this individual was questionable. Although this bird showed no signs of cage wear, it is impossible to know whether cage worn feathers had been replaced by molt. The location, although admittedly more remote than those of previous records in urban areas, could easily be reached by an escaped cage bird; in fact, Black-throated Magpie-Jays (*Calocitta colliei*) are known not far from this spot. Despite claims to the contrary, this species is kept as a cagebird adjacent to the California border in Mexico (R. A. Hamilton in litt.). Although the Gray Silky-flycatcher is not known to wander widely, most members felt that such movement could be possible. There is a record from northwestern Baja California (Cota-Campbell and Ruiz-Campos 1995), but it too may be of questionable origin. In the end, the lack of records from Arizona, which is much closer to the normal range of this species, and the limited (two) records from Texas, within 100 miles of known populations, make all five California records suspect, particularly because several of these birds have shown signs of prior captivity. Currently, a majority of the Committee is unlikely to accept this species to the state list until records from Arizona and intervening areas in Mexico are documented. However, in realization that some of the California records may indeed pertain to naturally occurring vagrants, the species was added to the Supplemental List (Erickson and Hamilton 2001). A color photograph of this bird was published on the cover of *N. Am. Birds* 53 (2).

PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris*. An adult male and female feeding with six Nutmeg Mannikins (*Lonchura punctulata*) and two White-collared Seedeaters (*Sporophila torqueola*) at the Dairy Mart Pond, Tijuana R. valley, SD, 30 Dec 1999–8 Jan 2000 (GMcC; 2000-047) were close to the Mexican border at a time of year when naturally occurring vagrants are not expected. All but two members felt the origin of these birds was questionable. An adult male visiting a water drip at a desert oasis with many other migrants at Corn Spring, RIV, 19 Apr 1997 (JF†; 1997-090) ultimately failed to gain acceptance, with four members of the Committee considering the natural occurrence of the bird questionable. The concern was that spring migrants in California may be birds formerly held in captivity to the south, especially in this case, given the relatively early date in comparison to the late May dates of previously accepted spring adult males.

CONTRIBUTORS

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