

THE 37TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: 2011 RECORDS

KRISTIE N. NELSON, P.O. Box 402, Lee Vining, California 93541;
knelson@pointblue.org

STEPHEN C. ROTTENBORN, H. T. Harvey and Associates, 983 University Ave.,
Bldg. D, Los Gatos, California 95032; srottenborn@harveyecology.com

SCOTT B. TERRILL, H. T. Harvey and Associates, 983 University Ave., Bldg. D,
Los Gatos, California 95032; sterrill@harveyecology.com

ABSTRACT: The California Bird Records Committee reached decisions on 254 records representing 309 individuals of 75 species and three species pairs documented since the 36th report (Johnson et al. 2012), endorsing 210 records of 264 individuals. The recent split of the Xantus's Murrelet into the Scripps's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus scrippsi*) and Guadalupe Murrelet (*S. hypoleucus*), combined with first accepted state records of the Taiga/Tundra Bean-Goose (*Anser fabalis/serrirostris*), Common Crane (*Grus grus*), Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), and Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) outlined in this report, brings California's total list of accepted species to 649 as of the end of 2011, 10 of which are established introductions. Other notable records detailed in this report include those of the western Atlantic subspecies of the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima dresseri*), White-chinned Petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*), and Red-flanked Bluetail (*Tarsiger cyanurus*).

This 37th report of the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC or the committee), a formal standing committee of Western Field Ornithologists, summarizes decisions on 254 records of 75 species and three species pairs involving 309 individuals. The committee accepted 210 of the 254 records, involving 264 individuals of 72 species and three species pairs, for an acceptance rate of 83%. We consider 20 records to represent returning or continuing birds that were accepted previously. Forty-two reports of 28 species were not accepted because the identification was not adequately documented, and two reports of two species were not accepted because natural occurrence was questionable. Reports of multiple individuals together are given the same record number for purposes of review; we report the total number of accepted individuals, which may be greater than the number of accepted records. Although the majority of the records we summarize pertain to birds documented in 2011, the period covered spans the years 1971 through 2012.

As of the end of 2011, the California list stood at 649 species. In 2012, the committee accepted first California records of the Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), Common Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), and Gray Hawk (*Buteo plagiatus*); the details of these records will be published in the next report. These records, combined with the recent split of the Xantus's Murrelet into the Scripps's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus scrippsi*) and Guadalupe Murrelet (*S. hypoleucus*) (Chesser et al. 2012), bring the total number of accepted species on California's state list as of August 2013 to 652. At its 2013 annual meeting, the committee removed the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*), Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*), Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*), and Parakeet Auklet (*Aethia psittacula*) from its review list.

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Species accounts are organized with English and scientific names first, followed in parentheses by the total number of individuals accepted for California and the number of new individuals accepted in this report. Following the heading are accounts for records accepted (as applicable), followed by records not accepted (as applicable) because identification was not established or because natural occurrence was questionable. An asterisk (*) preceding the species' name indicates that the CBRC discontinued reviewing records of the species after 2011. A double asterisk (**) following the number of accepted records indicates that the species has been reviewed for a restricted interval, so the number of accepted records does not represent the total number of records for the state. Date ranges for each record are those accepted by the CBRC, and instances where these differ from those published in *North American Birds* are indicated with italics. A dagger (†) following an observer's initials indicates submission of a photograph, (S) indicates submission of a sketch, (S) indicates submission of audio recordings, (V) indicates submission of a video, and (#) precedes a specimen number. The absence of a symbol following the observer's initials indicates the submission of a sight record based on written description only. Additional details regarding minutiae of formatting and abbreviations may be found in previous CBRC reports, at <http://www.californiabirds.org/>, and in CBRC (2007). Also available at the website is the California bird list, the review list, committee news, recent photos of rare birds in California, the CBRC's bylaws, a form for querying the CBRC database, and all annual reports from 1996 through 2009. Age terminology follows that used by CBRC (2007).

Observers are encouraged to submit documentation for all species on the CBRC's review list, sending it to Guy McCaskie, CBRC secretary, P. O. Box 275, Imperial Beach, CA 91933-0275 (e-mail: secretary@californiabirds.org). In recent years, the proportion of records supported only by photographs, without any written documentation, has increased considerably. Even minimal written details on a bird's appearance, accompanying photographs, can assist significantly in documenting records of rare birds. Documentation of all CBRC records is archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, CA 93012, and is available for public review.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

TAIGA/TUNDRA BEAN-GOOSE *Anser fabalis/serrirostris* (1, 1). California's first bean-goose was at Unit 1 of the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge (N.W.R.), IMP, 9 Nov 2010–12 Jan 2011 (AKa†, BoMt†, DL†, CAM†, GMcC, VM†, LS†, CT†, EGK†, JSm†, JLD, KZK†, TAB†, JM†, TME†, BKS†, MSa†; 2010-141; Figure 1). The bird associated closely with one adult and two immature Greater White-fronted Geese (*A. albifrons*) among much larger numbers of Snow (*Chen caerulescens*) and Ross's (*C. rossii*) geese foraging in agricultural fields. Three color photos were published in *N. Am. Birds* (one on the cover of 65[1] and two on 65:199). Few records that the committee has accepted have engendered so much controversy with respect to identification, owing to the intricacies and uncertainties of intraspecific variability and taxonomy. In 2007, the American Ornithologists' Union North American Classification Committee split the Bean Goose into two species, the Taiga Bean-Goose and

Tundra Bean-Goose, on the basis of differences in color, size, proportions, behavior, and evidence that the two taxa were largely allopatric in their breeding and winter ranges (Banks et al. 2007). Bean-geese breed at high latitudes in eastern Europe and Asia, and as implied by their English names, the Tundra Bean-Goose generally breeds on tundra farther north, the Taiga Bean-Goose in taiga farther south. So defined, both species occur as rare visitors to western Alaska. In North America outside Alaska, the Taiga Bean-Goose has been recorded on four occasions—along the Iowa/Nebraska border in 1984–1985, in Quebec in 1987, in Nebraska in 1998, and in Washington in 2002; the Tundra Bean-Goose has been reported outside Alaska only twice, in Quebec in 1983 and the Yukon in 2000 (Banks et al. 2007).

Authors addressing the identification of the Taiga and Tundra bean-geese include Kurechi et al. (1983), Oates (1997), Mlodinow (2004), and Brown (2010). The main features distinguishing them are the head and bill shape (slightly concave culmen with shallowly sloping forehead on the Taiga vs. steeper forehead and convex or straight culmen on the Tundra), the shape of the “grinning patch” along the tomium (longer, thinner, and less conspicuous on the Taiga vs. shorter, deeper, and more pronounced on the Tundra), the ratio of culmen to head length (≥ 1 on Taiga vs. < 1 on Tundra), the ratio of culmen length to bill depth at the base (≥ 2 on Taiga vs. < 2 on Tundra), and call notes (deeper and shorter with a nasal “ang” quality in the Taiga vs. longer, higher, and less nasal in the Tundra). Although the average Taiga Bean-Goose has more yellow-orange on the bill than does the Tundra, there is overlap in this character.

Identification criteria are clouded by intraspecific variability. Within each species, body, neck, and bill size seem to vary clinally, decreasing from east to west, and the difference in size between some western females and eastern males is considerable. Variation in the bean-geese complex has been categorized by as many as seven subspecies, but Sangster and Oreel (1996) classified the birds as two monotypic species encompassing this clinal variation. On the basis of molecular analyses, Ruokonen et al. (2008) suggested a realigned split between *A. middendorffii* of the eastern taiga and *A. fabalis* of the tundra and western taiga. They cautioned, “in the absence of diagnostic morphological traits, morphological measurements or genetical analyses are needed for reliable identification of the taxa especially in wintering areas.”

Initially, CBRC members agreed that the Salton Sea bird was likely a Taiga Bean-Goose but were divided over whether the Tundra Bean-Goose could be definitively eliminated. Despite excellent photos, the features of the bird in question did not lend themselves to an easy identification. Various observers reported that the “grinning patch” on the tomium seemed to be a better fit for a Tundra and that in some postures the bill and head shape suggested the Tundra, with a more acute angle between the forehead and bill and a short-looking bill. The bird’s foraging behavior was also more typical of a Tundra than a Taiga bean-geese. Its close association with other geese (especially the Greater White-fronted) likely influenced its choice of foraging areas more than any innate habitat preferences. Vocalizations, which would have assisted considerably with the identification, were apparently not heard or recorded.

The committee solicited opinions from authorities in Europe and Asia, but none conveyed strong opinions that the bird was a Tundra Bean-Goose. Rather, some considered it likely, others definitively, a Taiga Bean-Goose: Mariko Parslow (in litt.) and Masayuki Kurechi (in litt.) concluded, for example, that multiple measurements (photos) ruled out the Tundra Bean-Goose. Kurechi considered the birds most similar to the Taiga Bean-Geese breeding around the lower Kolyma River and wintering (at least in part) in Shimane Prefecture, Japan, a connection established via satellite telemetry. These birds breed farther west than and are smaller than those that have been classified as subspecies *middendorffii*. Kurechi considered the Salton Sea bird to be about the same size as or slightly smaller than representatives of the lower Kolyma population and opined that it therefore likely originated even farther west (on the basis of the cline of size decreasing from east to west). Such populations have not been well



Figure 1. The size and proportions of the head and bill of California's first bean-geese, shown here with an adult Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*) at the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge, Imperial Co., 16 Nov 2010 (2010-141), suggested that it was likely a Taiga Bean-Goose (*A. fabalis*). However, its characters did not neatly fit any known population of either that species or the Tundra Bean-Goose (*A. serrirostris*), and the committee ultimately accepted it as a Taiga/Tundra Bean-Goose.

Photo by Kenneth Z. Kurland



Figure 2. The bright rufous coloration and features of the bill processes of this female Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) at Crescent City, Del Norte Co., 20–29 Nov 2011 (2011-182), indicate the subspecies *dresseri*, which is typically restricted to northeastern North America and thus was unexpected in California.

Photo by Larry Sansone

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studied, either morphologically or genetically. Parslow noted that some large male Tundra Bean-Geese (*rossicus*) and specimens of Scandinavian and eastern European origin resemble the Salton Sea bird, being small overall but resembling *middendorffi* in bill and head shape. Nial Moores (in litt.) commented that *middendorffi* is a shorter-distance migrant than Taiga Bean-Geese breeding farther west so western birds might be better candidates for vagrancy to California.

Although European experts (e.g., Dan Brown, in litt.) largely agreed that the bird was a better match for the Taiga than for the Tundra, some commented that the short-necked appearance of the Salton Sea bird was quite unlike the long-necked, sometimes swanlike look typical of the Taiga Bean-Goose.

Ultimately, six CBRC members voted to accept the record as pertaining to a Taiga/Tundra Bean-Goose only, leaving the specific identity unconfirmed. Brown (2010) and Luokonen et al. (2008) concluded that some bean-geese may be impossible to identify without measurements or genetic analysis.

All members agreed that the bird's natural occurrence was not an issue. The plumage was not abnormally worn and neither hallux was missing. There are apparently very few bean-geese in captivity, possibly none in North America (Mlodinow 2004).

*TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator* (147, 57). One juvenile was with Tundra Swans (*C. columbianus*) at Lake of Pines, NEV, 20–26 Dec 2008 (JML; DR†; 2009-069). Five adults were at Modoc N.W.R., MOD, 26 Nov–1 Dec 2009 (SCR†; 2011-029; two of these lingered until 23 Jan 2010 (SCR†; 2011-030). Four first-winter birds were near Nelson, BUT, 11–12 Jan 2011 (BEW†; 2010-157); as many as 11 had been reported at this location 24 Nov 2010–11 Jan 2011 (*N. Am. Birds* 65:156 & 335), but the CBRC received documentation for these four. Two adults were on Waltz Road near Sheridan, PLA, 19–24 Jan 2011 (DR†; 2011-173). Two adults were northeast of Tipton, TUL, 8–10 Dec 2011 (DFa†; SSum†, MES†; 2011-271). Fourteen (10 adults and 4 first-winter birds) at Modoc N.W.R., MOD, 28–30 Dec 2010 (SCR†; 2011-031) and up to 24 (14 adults and 10 first-winter birds) there 28–30 Dec 2011 (SCR†; 2011-240) likely included returning birds accepted from the area of Alturas, MOD, in previous years. Clearly, the Trumpeter Swan now winters regularly in eastern Modoc County. The group of 24 on 30 Dec represented the highest concentration ever recorded in California and included a leucistic first-winter bird that was completely white like an adult but had extensive pink in the bill and bright yellow feet. Such leucistic individuals occur with some regularity, particularly in Wyoming and Montana (McEaney 2005). A family group of two adults and three first-winter birds was near Durham, BUT, 31 Dec 2011–9 Jan 2012 (JL†; 2011-231). The committee has discontinued reviewing records of this species after 2011.

IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: Most members thought the identification of an adult and a first-winter bird reported from American Valley, PLU, 18 Dec 2010 (2011-178) may have been correct, but the description was not thorough enough to eliminate the possibility that the birds were Tundra Swans (*C. columbianus*). NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE: The CBRC considered one at Auburn, PLA, 5 Mar 2011 (RP†; 2011-172) the same as one there 6–9 Apr 2009 (2009-122) and one of two there 17 Feb–25 Mar 2010 (2010-014; Johnson et al. 2012). Although both birds may have escaped or been released by a nearby waterfowl breeder (Johnson et al. 2012), they have been recorded only seasonally at this location.

FALCATED DUCK *Anas falcata* (3, 1). An adult male at Colusa N.W.R., COL, 8 Dec 2011–10 Feb 2012 (GF†, DT; DBr†, DWN†, RLB†, JM†, CAM†, GMcC, VM†, LS†, TABe†, KR†§, SLS, DWA†, J D; 2011-205) thrilled observers from all over North America, providing California with its first record since 2003. Photos showed possible tears or holes in the webbing, and a bent toe, on the left foot. Although such injuries could have been suffered in the wild, they prompted some to speculate that the bird may have been held in captivity. The vast majority of North American

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records of Old World ducks such as the Falcated Duck, Baikal Teal (*A. formosa*), Smew (*Mergellus albellus*), and Common Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) away from Alaska are of adult males, presumably the most desirable to waterfowl fanciers (some can be readily purchased over the Internet). But adult males are also the most readily identifiable, and in the absence of bands, clipped halluces, or excessive cage wear, in recent years the CBRC has typically accepted records of flight-capable individuals such as this one. In addition, the date span of this record fits a naturally occurring wintering bird, and this record was accepted unanimously on the first round. After an expected absence through the breeding season, the bird returned to Colusa N.W.R. on 2 Dec 2012.

KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis* (40, 2). Single females were near Marshall on Tomales Bay, MRN, 22–29 Jan 2011 (LH†, DW†; 2011-019) and off the Pt. Reyes lighthouse, MRN, 5–7 Jun 2011 (DSS†; 2011-082), making 2011 the first year since 1993 with multiple records. The vast majority of California records are from fall to early spring; the bird off Pt. Reyes was only the sixth King Eider recorded in June.

COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima* (2, 1). An adult female was at Crescent City, DN, 20–29 Nov 2011 (ADB†, RLB†, BP†, LS†, KPA; 2011-182), the location of California's only prior record, of an adult male 5–18 Jul 2004 (2004-101; Cole et al. 2006). Whereas the adult male was of the race that occurs closest to California (*v-nigrum* of Alaska), the female had bright rufous plumage and rounded, not pointed, tips to the long bill processes (Figure 2), indicating some other subspecies. Information compiled by Ken Able led to the conclusion that the bird was most likely of the race *dresseri*, representing a first record for the Pacific Ocean. The breeding and winter ranges of *dresseri* are in northeastern North America, so the identification led to evaluation of the bird's provenance during a second round of voting. Able's research revealed that several hundred examples of *dresseri* are held in captivity, including at least two private collections in Washington state. The Crescent City female showed no abnormal wear or other signs of captivity, and there are single records of *dresseri* from Illinois and Wisconsin and two from Colorado (AOU 1957). The committee considered natural vagrancy likely, and the record was accepted unanimously on the second round.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus* (3, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A report of a male on the Smith River, DN, 5 km upstream from its mouth 18 Nov 2011 (2011-186) garnered little support, as the description did not eliminate other, more likely species such as the Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*).

YELLOW-BILLED LOON *Gavia adamsii* (91, 3). A second-year bird was upstream from Parker, Arizona, on the Colorado River, SBE, 15 Jan–4 Aug 2011 (LHa†, DVP†; AEK, SR†, JPS†, JWe†; 2011-008). Alternate-plumaged adults were at Battery Godfrey, Presidio National Park, San Francisco, SF, 14 Oct 2011 (HC, MEa, PS; 2011-171) and on salt pond A4 in Sunnysvale, SCL, 25 Oct–2 Nov 2011, found dead (specimen not preserved) on 4 Nov 2011 (MJMam†, LS†, DEQ; 2011-155), the latter being the first recorded for Santa Clara County. IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: An alternate-plumaged adult reported from Pt. Pinos, MTY, 21 Jun 2008 (2009-080) may well have been correctly identified, but the documentation lacked detail sufficient for some members to accept an unseasonal summer record. A northbound migrant reported from Pt. Piedras Blancas, SLO, 10 Apr 2011 (2011-087) and two migrants from that location 1 May 2011 (2011-088) were likewise not documented adequately.

SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS *Phoebastria albatrus* (37**, 5). A second- or third-year bird was seen 65 km west-southwest of Pigeon Pt., SCZ, 28 Mar 2011 (GSM†; 2011-265) during a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research cruise. Single all-dark or mostly dark birds, likely in their first year, were seen 84 km southwest of Año Nuevo Pt., SM, 21 Apr 2011 (RMe; 2011-061), 10 km



Figure 3. California's third Great-winged Petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera*), off Santa Cruz Co., 26 Aug 2011 (2011-122), exhibited the extensive pale feathering on the face and forehead, stout bill, and broad, dark underwings that collectively distinguish this species from other dark gadfly petrels.

Photo by Greg Lavaty



Figure 4. This White-chinned Petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*) at Cordell Bank, Marin Co., 16 Oct 2011 (2011-149), shown here behind a Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*), was the third recorded in California.

Photo by Thomas A. Blackman



Figure 5. California's first Common Crane (*Grus grus*) was at Lake Earl, Del Norte Co., 5–8 May 2011 (2011-065). Although the species is held in (and has occasionally escaped from) captivity in North America, seven committee members accepted that this bird had occurred naturally.

Photo by Larry Sansone

off Fort Bragg, MEN, 15 May 2011 (JWh; RFo†, KAH, RHu†, RJK†; 2011-073), 3 km west of Bodega Canyon, SON, 19 Nov 2011 (DSS†; 2011-183), and from Southeast Farallon I., SF, 6 Nov 2011 (OJ S; JRT; 2011-174). As the population of the Short-tailed Albatross continues to increase, this species is now regular in Alaska waters and rare, but increasingly frequent, off British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California (Howell 2012).

GREAT-WINGED PETREL *Pterodroma macroptera* (4, 1). One 16 km southwest of Table Rock, SCZ, 26 Aug 2011 (ABo†, DLS; RF†, JK†, GL†; 2011-122; Figure 3) showed more pale feathering on the crown than one seen off Santa Cruz, SCZ, 18 Sep 2010 (2010-104; Johnson et al. 2012), suggesting that these were different individuals. All four of California's records through 2011 are from the period 21 Jul–18 Sep, and all have been of the pale-faced subspecies *gouldii*.

HAWAIIAN PETREL *Pterodroma sandwichensis* (14, 1). One was 11 km southwest of Southeast Farallon I., SF, 13 Aug 2011 (MD S, DW; DKu†, JM†);

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2011-117). While the sketch depicted a bird with a dark “cow” more typical of the Galapagos Petrel (*P. phaeopygia*), photos showed the dark hood was limited, with a pale notch at the lower rear portion of the auriculars, as characteristic of the Hawaiian (Force et al. 2007, Pyle et al. 2011b). Given the challenges of assessing such features on the ocean, photos of any Hawaiian/Galapagos Petrel in California are desirable.

GALAPAGOS/HAWAIIAN PETREL *Pterodroma phaeopygia/sandwichensis* (26, 2). Single birds 73 km southwest of Pt. Piedras Blancas, SLO, 10 May 2011 (MH; 2011-081) and 145 km south of San Clemente I., LA, 16 Aug 2011 (JSF, PEL; 2011-121) were accepted as Galapagos/Hawaiian Petrels. The views (and thus the descriptions) of these birds were not adequate to allow identification to species. It is evident that the Hawaiian Petrel is a regular component of California’s offshore avifauna, whereas the Galapagos Petrel ranges north only to 20° N (Howell 2012). Nevertheless, the CBRC accepts as a Galapagos/Hawaiian Petrel any record of a bird of this pair that cannot be definitively identified as one species or the other.

WHITE-CHINNED PETREL *Procellaria aequinoctialis* (3, 2). Single individuals were 11 km north of San Miguel I., SBA, 6 Sep 2011 (TMCg†; WTH, DKe†, ASe†, TW†; 2011-126; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 66:200) and at Cordell Bank, MRN, 16 Oct 2011 (TMCg†; TAB†, GT†; 2011-149; Figure 4). Although both birds were in similar stages of wing molt, careful study of photos revealed that the molt of the October bird was slightly behind that of the September bird, confirming that they were different individuals. California had only one previous record, off Half Moon Bay, SM, 18 Oct 2009 (2009-194; Pyle et al. 2011a). With three records within three years, we wonder whether California can expect a continued increase in the White-chinned Petrel or if the records represent a pulse, like that of the Shy Albatross (*Thalassarche cauta*).

GREAT SHEARWATER *Puffinus gravis* (9, 1). One in a large flock of Sooty Shearwaters (*P. griseus*) off Half Moon Bay, SM, 30 Jul 2011 (JSF†; TMCg†, SBT; 2011-110; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 65:573 and 682) provided a first record for San Mateo County.

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD *Fregata magnificens* (12**, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: One at Newport Beach, ORA, 10 Sep 2011 (CW; DMcH, JM, SW; 2011-130) was described as having an all-black head and white underparts, consistent with a female Magnificent Frigatebird. However, the majority of the committee believed that the documentation was not thorough enough, especially given the brevity of the sighting, to eliminate the possibility of a female Great Frigatebird (*F. minor*). An immature at Pt. Loma, SD, 30 Oct 2011 (PW†; 2011-161) was also not accepted beyond “frigatebird sp.” As both the Great Frigatebird and Lesser Frigatebird (*F. ariel*) have occurred in California, the committee requires that any record of the formerly frequent Magnificent clearly eliminate the two other Pacific frigatebirds; it is considering whether or not to formally accept such birds as “frigatebird sp.”

MASKED BOOBY *Sula dactylatra* (16, 1). A subadult was at Dana Pt., ORA, 17–24 Dec 2011 (RBMcN; CT†, VM†, BJS†, CAM, OJ†; 2011-217).

MASKED/NAZCA BOOBY *Sula dactylatra/granti* (11, 1). One in its first spring at Pt. La Jolla, La Jolla, SD, 23 Apr 2011 (SW; RR S; 2011-059) was described as having a pale gray bill, suggesting the Masked, but it lacked a complete pale collar, suggesting the Nazca. The committee agreed with the observers that this individual was best not identified to species. Identification criteria for juveniles and first-year birds were proposed by Pitman and Jehl (1998), but many of these birds may not be identifiable to species in the field (CBRC 2007).

*BROWN BOOBY *Sula leucogaster* (125, 3). In a detailed analysis for the com-

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mittee of the ages, sexes, and timing of occurrence of the Brown Booby at Southeast Farallon I., SF, in 2006 and 2007 (PC†, LC†, AK†, DEQ†, JRT, MMR†, MBr; 2007-158). Peter Pyle and Jim Tietz concluded that up to seven individuals had reached the island: an adult male 25 Jan–22 May 2006, an adult female 28 Apr 2006–31 Dec 2007, an adult female 26 Sep 2006–30 May 2007, a second-year female 20 Oct 2006–15 Feb 2007, an adult male 30 May 2007, a second-year female 5–18 Aug 2007, and an adult female 5 Sep 2007. The four birds observed in both 2006 and 2007 were the same as those in record 2007-033 (Singer and Terrill 2009). The two adult males were of the pale-headed subspecies *brewsteri*. The committee reviews records of Brown Booby only through 2007.

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (33, 8). At least two adults were at Parker Dam, SBE, between late 2010 and early 2011. An adult was there on 26 Dec 2010 (LHa†, DVP†; 2010-185). Record 2011-007 included an adult on 16 Jan 2011 (with a second just over the state line in Arizona), an adult on 17 Jan 2011, and an adult on 4 Feb 2011 that showed two generations of feathers, distinguishing it from 2010-185 (DVP†; SR†; 2011-007). The committee voted that at least two individuals were represented by these records, including single individuals at Parker Dam 3 Dec 2011–21 Jan 2012 (TABe; DKa†, CAM†, DVP; 2011-201) and 2 km away at Quail Hollow on the Colorado River, SBE, 17 Apr 2011 (TABe†; 2011-054). For several years three or four have been on the Arizona side of L. Havasu several kilometers from Parker Dam, and some individuals occasionally stray over the state line into California, making it difficult to know how many different individuals are involved in these records. An adult was southwest of Lack and Lindsey roads, south end of the Salton Sea, IMP, 27 Mar–9 Apr 2011 (BoM†; 2011-043). At Ramer L., IMP, an adult and a second-year bird were attending a partially constructed nest 8–9 Apr 2011; the nest was completed and both birds were seen at it through 14 Jun. On 23 Jun, the nest was gone and only the second-year bird, which lingered in the area to 3 Sep 2011, was seen (GMcC; BoM†, JML†, BJS†; 2011-048). California has one previous nesting “attempt”—by a single bird that built a nest near the mouth of the New R., Salton Sea, IMP, but did not attract a mate (CBRC 2007). Given the increase in numbers in Arizona, where the species is now resident as far north as Phoenix (Radamaker and Corman 2008), we can expect further attempts. A second-year bird was at Headgate Dam, SBE, near Parker, Arizona, 20–23 Jul 2011 (DVP†; 2011-106). An adult was at Fig Lagoon near Seeley, IMP, 2 Sep–11 Dec 2011 (GMcC; 2011-124), and another was nearby at Sunbeam L., IMP, 3–11 Dec 2011 (GMcC; 2011-206). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: The report of a juvenile on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 6 Sep 2010 (2011-036) exemplified the difficulty in identifying recently fledged cormorants. The bird was well described, photographed, and reported as the first Neotropic for northern California and the entire California coast in *N. Am. Birds* (65:158). The dark lores and supraloral area, acute angle of the posterior edge of the dull yellow gular pouch, mostly dark maxilla, dark breast, and long tail (barely shorter than the neck) pointed toward the Neotropic, though the bird’s structure appeared intermediate between that of a Neotropic and a Double-crested Cormorant (*P. auritus*). A year later, the observer inspected a dead juvenile cormorant on Southeast Farallon I. that looked very similar to the claimed Neotropic but whose measurements were consistent with the Double-crested, which breeds on the Farallones. He therefore retracted the identification as a Neotropic, and the committee unanimously agreed on the record’s second round. Documentation of one reported at Ramer L., IMP, 20 May 2011 (2011-075) was inadequate for acceptance. One reported at the north end of L. Havasu, SBE, 28 Oct 2011 (2011-165) was likely identified correctly, but given the distance (more than 1 km) and brevity of the observation, the record was not accepted.

TRICOLORED HERON *Egretta tricolor* (61**, 3). Adults were at San Elijo La-

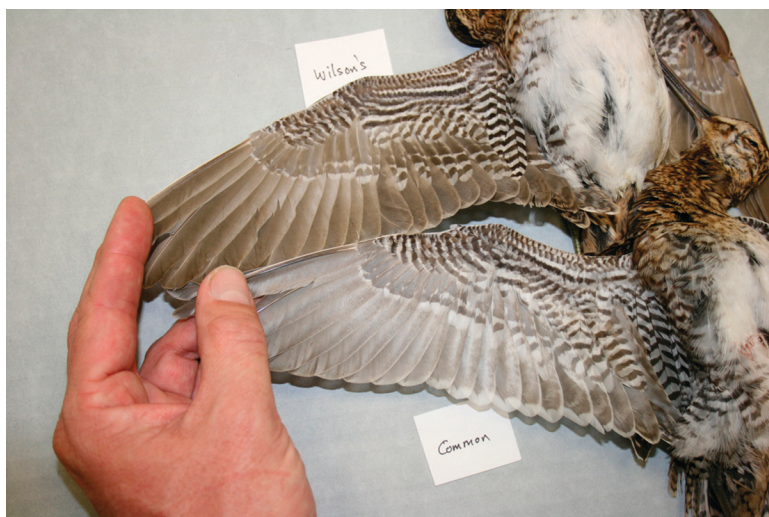


Figure 6. Features distinguishing California's first Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*, the lower bird) from Wilson's Snipe (*G. delicata*, the upper bird) include the much broader white tips to the secondaries, the more extensive white on the underwing coverts, and the overall much paler underwing. These birds were shot by a hunter near Lakeview in the San Jacinto Valley, Riverside Co., 11 Dec 2011 (2011-215).

Photo by Kimball L. Garrett

goon, SD, 9–15 May 2011 (EGK†, JK†, SBr†, GMcC; 2011-070), Desert Center, RIV, 22 May 2011 (CMcG †; CAM†; 2011-077), and L. Havasu, SBE, 10 Aug–17 Sep 2011 (LHa†; DVP, JWet†; 2011-115), the last being the first recorded in San Bernardino County.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON *Nyctanassa violacea* (59, 7). Two adults at Famosa Slough/San Diego River mouth, SD, 28 Apr–7 Sep 2011 (JPet†; PEL, BLC†; 2011-062) were presumably the same birds present in the vicinity intermittently since 27 Apr 2006 (2006-056, 2007-166, 2008-092, 2009-085, and 2010-041; Johnson et al. 2012). A third adult at this location 5 Jul 2011 (JPet†; 2011-100) was considered the same bird present here 15 May–8 Aug 2010 (2010-042; Johnson et al. 2012) and 9 Jul–20 Aug 2009 (2009-112; Pyle et al. 2011a). A second-year bird was in Del Mar, SD, 6 May–10 Jul 2011 (PEL; GMcC, EW†, SBr†, JPet†; 2011-066). An adult was at San Elijo Lagoon, SD, 22 Jun 2011 (JK, SSut; 2011-097). Two chicks were in a nest at Imperial Beach, SD, 27 Jun–20 Jul 2011 (JPet†; 2011-096); one was found long dead on 28 Jul (SDNHM #52127), while the second was seen as a fledgling on 1 Aug. A juvenile at L. Balboa, Encino, LA, 26 Aug 2010 (PN†; 2010-092) was accepted on the third round after it was decided the blurry photos proved the bird was not the hybrid Yellow-crowned × Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) seen 32 km away at Malibu Lagoon around the same time. Two adults at the Imperial Beach Sports Park, Imperial Beach, SD, 17 Dec 2011–29 Jul 2012 (PEL; GMcC, JPet†; 2011-254) were presumably the same as some of those previously accepted from this location, where the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron has nested annually since 2006. IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A juvenile reported at Pacific Beach,



Figure 7. This bird's relatively bright coloration in relation to a Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*), including a thin eye ring, and crisp white edges to the wing covers and tertials, caught the attention of Debby and Jim Parker, who found this Eastern Wood-Pewee (*C. virens*) in Birchim Canyon near Bishop, Inyo Co., 24–26 Oct 2011 (2011-159).

Photo by Jon L. Dunn



Figure 8. This Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) in Zzyzx, San Bernardino Co., 21 Sep 2011 (2011-136) was only the sixth to be found in California's interior.

Photo by Brad Singer

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SD, 10–22 Nov 2011 (SMR; 2011-189) may have been of this species, but it was seen only in poor light at dusk, so several key features could not be assessed. The committee removed this species from the review list at its 2013 annual meeting.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* (26, 2). An adult at Owens L., INY, 11–12 Jul 2009 (CHo†; DHo†, BSt†; 2009-125) went through four rounds of voting before being accepted unanimously. The appearance of red in the eyes in photos raised concerns of a hybrid with the White-faced Ibis (*P. chihi*), but the apparent red was likely a photographic artifact, as the bird's features otherwise fit a Glossy Ibis perfectly. An adult was at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area near Lakeview, RIV, 18–28 Jun 2011 (CMcG †; CAM†, GMcC, LSt, DAB; 2011-085). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: The unseasonal report of one at Unit 1 of the Salton Sea N.W.R., IMP, 8 Mar 2010 (2010-024) was supported by only blurry photos and a scant description. The committee had accepted only one March record, from the Prado Basin, RIV, 17 Mar 2008 (2008-044; Pike and Compton 2010). The description as “purplish” of the facial skin of a basic-plumaged adult on Rd. 102 southeast of Woodland, YOL, 27 Aug 2010 (2010-093) suggested a hybrid.

BLACK VULTURE *Coragyps atratus* (7, 3). One at L. Casitas, VEN, 15–30 Oct 2011 (ABe†, BED†, MP†; 2011-158) was evidently the same as the one that wandered through Goleta, SBA, 10–13 Sep 2009 (2009-156), Santa Paula, VEN, 29 Nov–4 Dec 2009 (2009-221), L. Casitas/Ojai, VEN, 4 Jan–22 Feb 2010 (2010-016), and then back to Goleta, SBA, 18 Jul–6 Nov 2010 (2010-073), as revealed by the molt sequence and pattern of facial skin evident in photos (Johnson et al. 2012). The same characters indicated that one at Buellton, SBA, 14 Jan 2011 (BLSt†; 2011-004) was a different individual. The flight feathers of a Black Vulture at the San Diego Wild Animal Park, San Pasqual, SD, 6 Mar 2011 (EGK†, TRSt†; 2011-020) were extremely worn, leading four members to question its natural occurrence in the first round of voting, but alternative explanations (feather mites, electrocution) for this wear are possible, and the committee unanimously accepted the record in round two. This same bird (identified by patterns of wear) appeared in Goleta, SBA, 16–22 Apr 2011 (RHir†; 2011-089); such long-distance dispersal to the northwest further suggested that the bird had occurred naturally. Another was at Lone Pine, INY, 5 Aug 2011 (JLD†; 2011-112). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: One reported near the Miramar landfill, San Diego, SD, 7 Jun 2011 (2011-086) was perched and seen only from a moving car by naked eye.

HARRIS'S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus* (64, 12). A sizeable incursion of Harris's Hawks, the largest in California since 1994, occurred in 2011. Single adults were near Jamul, SD, 22 Mar–26 May 2011 (JK†, MM†; 2011-042), near Boulevard, SD, 30 Mar 2011 (EAE; 2011-044), at Afton Canyon, SBE, 27 Mar 2011 (MC; 2011-046), and at Borrego Springs, SD, 11 Apr–7 Dec 2011 (WTH, SESt†; 2011-050), the latter being considered the same bird as 2009-172 and 2010-124. One in its first spring was at Blythe, RIV, 14 Apr 2011 (JMMc†; 2011-051). A pair of adults at Jacumba, SD, 18 Apr 2011–31 Dec 2012 (TC†; PEL, PKo†, DDiT, GMcC, MBR, SSo, JK†, EGK†, DWA†; 2011-058) nested in an acacia tree; the female was nest-building in early May, incubating by 11 May, and feeding a single chick by 21 Jun. The chick fledged around 1 Aug and was seen through 31 Dec 2012 (PKo†; JK†, PEL, EGK†; 2011-138). This pair was observed nest-building again in Feb 2012. Two additional Harris's Hawks were also at Jacumba, SD, 12 Oct 2011–6 Jan 2012 (PEL; CAM†, LSt, RoR; 2011-154). An adult was at the north end of Poe Road, south end of the Salton Sea, IMP, 28 Apr 2011 (DJ†; 2011-063). Two adults were suspected of nesting (though no evidence was observed) in McCain Valley near Boulevard, SD, 5 May–9 Aug 2011 (SMR†; EM†, RoR; 2011-067). Despite the obvious influx of Harris's Hawks in 2011, there was still some resistance to acceptance of the records for Jamul and Afton Canyon on the grounds that these records were outside of the

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species' historical distribution and outside the distribution of records during the 1994 incursion (Patten and Erickson 2000). One member also expressed concern that the bird at Blythe may have been descended from birds transplanted along the Colorado River. NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE: An adult at San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary, Irvine, ORA, 25–29 Nov 2011 (BC†; BED†, JEP, CAM†; 2011-191) was unwarly and approachable, and was near the coast where vagrancy of Harris's Hawks is less likely than in inland desert areas. Given the incursion of 2011, most members thought that this bird might have occurred naturally. The committee removed this species from its review list at its 2013 annual meeting.

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus* (1, 1). One at Lake Earl, DN, 5–8 May 2011 (ADB†; KR†, AJ†, CCot†, CAM†, GMcC, DWN†, MMR†, LS†; 2011-065; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 65:569) provided California's first record and the first for the west coast south of Alaska (Figure 5). Retained juvenal secondaries, along with pre-definitive features of the head and bill, suggested this bird was in its second or possibly third spring (P. Pyle pers. comm., 2013).

This record engendered considerable discussion of the bird's likely provenance. Most North American records considered to be of naturally occurring birds are from the middle of the continent (e.g., Nebraska, Kansas, and New Mexico) in March and early April with Lesser Sandhill Cranes (*G. canadensis canadensis*) that breed in Alaska and northeastern Russia. Presumably, Common Cranes occasionally take up with these Sandhills and remain with them through the winter and migration. There are also several records of Common Cranes stopping during migration near Fairbanks, Alaska, in May (also with Lesser Sandhill Cranes). In early May, when the Lake Earl bird appeared, any naturally occurring Common Crane that had wintered in North America should already be in Alaska or Russia. Thus the timing of this bird's occurrence and the fact that it was alone (rather than with Sandhills) were cause for concern. Moreover, Common Cranes are held in captivity in North America, and a known escapee from New York, which eventually bred with a Sandhill in New Jersey, set a precedent for wandering by escaped Common Cranes. However, the Lake Earl bird showed no abnormal wear, was unbanded, and had no clipped toes or other signs that it had ever been held in captivity. Furthermore, because some Common Cranes do not breed until they are 4–6 years old (Makatsch 1970, Glutz von Blotzheim et al. 1973), an immature bird might stray from a "normal" pattern of migration, both temporally and geographically. On the basis of plumage pattern, a Common Crane that appeared in the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, from 3 July into August 2011 may well have been the same as that at Lake Earl, suggesting that it was a lost wanderer. Though the committee agreed the bird's origin could not be known with certainty, after two rounds of voting only two members questioned its natural occurrence.

*AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica* (53, 1). A juvenile was at the Madera water-treatment plant, Madera, MAD, 21 Sep 2007 (GW†; 2011-127). The committee reviews records of the American Golden-Plover only from 2004 to 2009.

LESSER SAND-PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus* (11, 1). An alternate-plumaged adult at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 25 Jun–2 Jul 2011 (BED†; CAM†, EGK†, GMcC, TRS†, MMe†; 2011-092) provided Orange County with its first record and was the first of this species recorded in California since 2005. This record also established an early date; the earliest previous occurrence was 10–12 Jul 2005 near McKinleyville, HUM (2005-083; Liff et al. 2007). All California records have been of fall migrants.

WILSON'S PLOVER *Charadrius wilsonia* (20, 4). Single males at the Tijuana River mouth near Imperial Beach, SD, 24 Mar 2011 (MSa†; JLD, EGK†, GMcC; 2011-041) and at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 29 Mar 2011 (PKn†; 2011-105) were the first recorded in California in March; the previous early date was 2 Apr 2010 at the Santa Margarita River mouth, SD (2010-030; Johnson et al. 2012). Adult females were

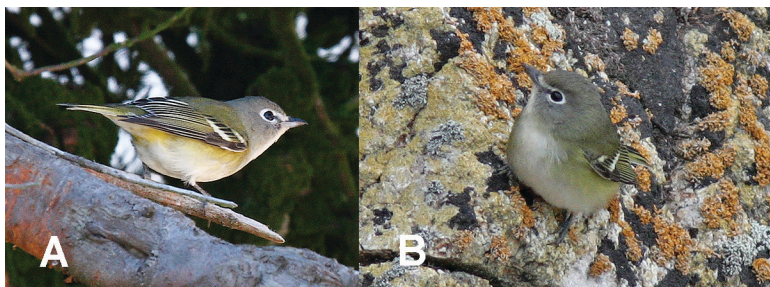


Figure 9. This vireo photographed at Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco Co., 9 Oct 2009 (2009-200) was in its first fall by the brown juvenal primary coverts contrasting with the replaced greater coverts of the formative plumage (see text). Note how different images of the same bird, in different posture and lighting, can make the malar contrast appear distinct or indistinct; because of the ambiguity of this feature, the committee concluded that it could have been either a first-fall male Cassin's Vireo (*Vireo cassinii*) or a first-fall female Blue-headed Vireo (*V. solitarius*), not accepting the record as the latter.

Photos by Matt Brady (A) and Jim Tietz (B)



Figure 10. Discovered on Christmas Day 2011 (photo taken 27 Dec), this adult Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) remained in Chico, Butte Co., through spring 2012 (2011-228).

Photo by John T. Lewis

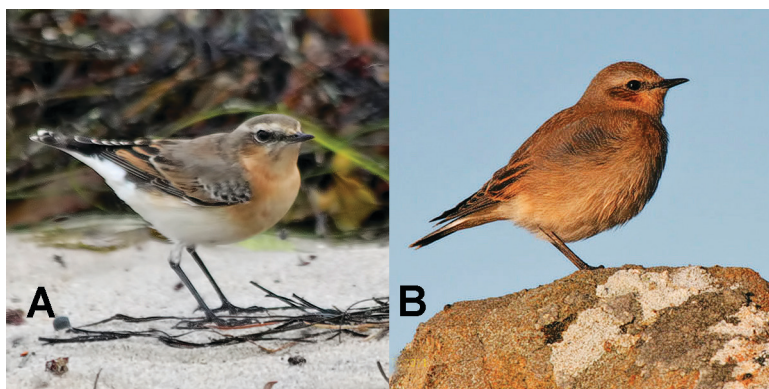


Figure 11. Two Northern Wheatears (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) were found on California's coast in fall 2011. (A) The one photographed in Malibu, Los Angeles Co., 23 Sep 2011 (2011-137), appears to be an adult (and thus a female) because of its black wings and tail, broad and fresh primaries, and gray wash to the back and lesser coverts. (B) The other, at Anchor Bay, Mendocino Co., 2-5 Oct 2011 (2011-145) shows browner and more pointed wings and duller brown plumage, indicating an immature in its first fall.

Photos by Daniel Tinoco (A) and Robert J. Keiffer (B)



Figure 12. This Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) brightened up the undergrowth at Shoshone, Inyo Co., 25 Oct-7 Nov 2011 (2011-157).

Photo by Nancy Overholtz

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at Border Field State Park, SD, 23 Jun 2011 (MSa†; 2011-090) and Carpinteria Salt Marsh, SBA, 23 Jul–11 Sep 2011 (PAGa†; WTF †, CAM†, DWN†, JLD†, OJ†, SBT†; 2011-109); although both birds were heavily worn, different patterns of wear confirmed that they were different individuals. Eleven of the state's 20 accepted Wilson's Plovers have occurred since 2005, suggesting a recent upswing in occurrence or perhaps increased coverage of beaches by researchers monitoring the Snowy Plover (*C. alexandrinus*) and Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*).

COMMON RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* (1, 1). An alternate-plumaged one-year-old male at the Davis Wetlands, YOL, 19–26 Aug 2011 (ToE†; SCH†, LB†, DWN†, CAM†, LS†, GMcC, BY†, JLD†, LH†, JM†, JCS†; 2011-118; Sterling and Easterla 2012), provided the first accepted record for California and the second for western North America outside western Alaska, the first being of a vocal immature at Port Susan Bay, Washington, 23 Sep 2006 (Aanerud 2011). The one at Davis also called frequently, facilitating the identification. See Sterling and Easterla (2012) for details of this record. California's one previous report, from at Pt. Reyes, MRN, 9 Sep 1996, was of a bird well seen and heard by an experienced observer (1997-071; Rottenborn and Morlan 2000), but the committee was reluctant to accept a first state record without photos or documentation from more observers.

UPLAND SANDPIPER *Bartramia longicauda* (30, 1). An Upland Sandpiper calling and displaying near Bellota, SJ, 25–28 Jun 2011 (LPT†; 2011-093) was the first recorded in the Central Valley. Previous records were all of spring (15 May–13 Jun) or fall (8 Aug–28 Oct) migrants, but that for Bellota fits neither of those categories. This species has been declining over much of its range, and it has been recently extirpated as a breeding species in Washington and Oregon (P. E. Lehman pers. comm.).

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* (39, 1). A bird acquiring alternate plumage was at the Santa Barbara harbor, SBA, 21 May 2011 (WTF†; 2011-076; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 65:570). As summarized by Hamilton et al. (2007), the vast majority of California's Bar-tailed Godwits have been fall migrants from Monterey County northward. The one in Santa Barbara was the first recorded in May and only the second apparent spring migrant, the first being near Crescent City, DN, 3–5 Jun 1984 (1984-186; Dunn 1988). This was also a first for Santa Barbara County and only the ninth south of Monterey County.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* (19, 6). One in its first fall with extensive formative feathering at Abbott's Lagoon, Pt. Reyes, MRN, 16–17 Dec 2010 (AK†; KHa†; 2011-114) is the latest recorded in California; the previous latest record was of one in formative plumage collected at Harper Dry L., SBE, on 21 Nov 1988 (1990-210; Heindel and Garrett 1995). The combination of dark legs, lack of webbing between the toes, long primary projection, and bill length/shape eliminated the Western (*C. mauri*) and Least (*C. minutilla*) Sandpipers. Distinction from the Red-necked Stint (*C. ruficollis*), which is very similar in formative and basic plumages, rested primarily on the rusty-brown edging on the retained juvenile tertials and upperwing coverts, secondarily on body shape and a split supercilium. Alternate-plumaged adults were at the Alexandre Dairy near Fort Dick, DN, 6–8 Jul 2011 (ADB†; KMB†, KR†, JCS†; 2011-101), Davis Wetlands, YOL, 15–17 Jul 2011 (ToE†; SCH†, LH, SBT†, MBR, MMe†; 2011-104), and Piute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base, LA, 23–25 Jul 2011 (KLG†; NF†, MF†, KH-L†, CAM†, LS†; 2011-108; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 65:715). While the timing and southward progression of these records led to speculation that at least two of them represented the same bird, comparison of photos suggests that these were all different individuals. Other alternate-plumaged adults at Crab Park, HUM, 15–16 Aug 2011 (DCol; 2011-221) and Mad River County Park, HUM, 21 Aug 2011 (DCol, RFo; 2011-119) were different individuals on the basis of plumage differences noted by Daryl Coldren, who saw both birds. Five individuals

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in 2011 bested the previous single-year high of three in 2010.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis* (25, 1). One acquiring alternate plumage along Wheeler Road at the north end of the Salton Sea, RIV, 8 May 2011 (AD†; 2011-069) provides the earliest accepted record for California; the previous early date was 17 May 1986 at Stockton, SJ (1986-341; Langham 1991). The committee has taken an especially conservative approach to all reports of this species prior to mid-May, but the photos of 2011-069 were adequate for acceptance by all but one member, who thought the bird might be a Western Sandpiper.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* (41, 2). A bird acquiring alternate plumage was at the J Street Marina, Chula Vista, and the nearby saltworks at the south end of San Diego Bay, SD, 24–27 Apr 2011 (JML†; BLC, GMcC, MSa†; 2011-057), while an alternate-plumaged bird was in adjacent Imperial Beach, SD, 24–30 Jul 2011 (GMcC; ABL, CMcG †, AnM†, VM†, DWN†, LS†, TAB†, BED†, CAM†, JN†; 2011-107; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 65:715). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: After two rounds of review, most members found the photos of a somewhat distant sandpiper at Owens Lake, INY, 16 Sep 2007 (2007-208) insufficient for identification and thought that the bird might have been a Stilt Sandpiper (*C. himantopus*).

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago* (1, 1). A hatch-year bird shot by a hunter in the San Jacinto Valley, about 1.5 km northwest of Lakeview, RIV, 11 Dec 2011 (KLG†; 2011-215) is the first recorded in California and the first for western North America away from the Aleutian Islands/Bering Sea region. Although the hunter retained the specimen, Kimball Garrett took numerous measurements (including the width of the outermost rectrix, much broader in the Common than in Wilson's), photographs, and a small sample of tissue for genetic analysis. The features distinguishing the Common Snipe and Wilson's Snipe (*G. delicata*) have been reviewed by Carey (1992), Carey and Olsson (1995), Bland (1998, 1999), Dunn and Alderfer (2007), and Pyle (2008). Most are difficult to impossible to assess in the field, but whiter underwings (with less dark barring) and broader white trailing edges to the wings (see Figure 6) may be noticeable.

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus* (107, 4). The CBRC considered an adult at L. Perris and the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, RIV, 6–27 Mar 2011 (CAM; DFu†, JLD; 2011-023) the same as one at this location 1–14 Mar 2010 (2010-019; Johnson et al. 2012) and 1–10 Mar 2009 (2009-056; Pyle et al. 2011a). Individuals in full juvenal plumage were at China L., KER, 29 Aug 2011 (SLSt†; JLD†; 2011-123) and L. Havasu, SBE, 10 Sep 2011 (LHa S, DVP; 2011-131). Juvenal-plumaged birds had been previously recorded in California on four occasions, all during the period 15 Aug–5 Sep. First-winter birds were at Prado Regional Park, SBE, 14–18 Dec 2011 (HBK; TABe†, BrSt†, CAM, DWA†, BJS†; 2011-212) and L. Los Carneros in Goleta, SBA, 29 Dec 2011 (LW†; 2011-230).

BLACK-TAILED GULL *Larus crassirostris* (3, 0). An adult was at Malibu, LA, 12 Feb 2011 (JF†; 2011-015). A majority of the CBRC considered this bird probably the same as the one 60 km to the southeast in Long Beach, LA, 8–21 Nov 2010 (2010-140; Johnson et al. 2012). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: An adult reported near Vernalis, STA, 28 Mar 2011 (2011-052) may have been an adult or near-adult Lesser Black-backed Gull (*L. fuscus*). Reports from the north end of the Salton Sea, east of Avenue 86, RIV, 9 Apr 2011 (2011-049) and Salt Creek, east shore of the Salton Sea, RIV, 30 May 2011 (2011-080) were inconclusive.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides* (11, 4). Second-winter birds apparently of the subspecies *kumlieni* were at the Ogier Ponds north of Morgan Hill, SCL, 4 Dec 2010 (SCR†; 2011-026) and 5–9 Mar 2011 (SCR†; RWR†; 2011-027, same as 2011-026), at Pillar Pt. Harbor, Half Moon Bay, SM, 4 Feb 2011 (AJ†; 2011-017),



Figure 13. The bold head and throat pattern of a male Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) often gives an initial impression of a chickadee rather than a warbler. This individual was photographed in Birchim Canyon near Bishop, Inyo Co., 2 Jun 2011 (2011-083).

Photo by Debby Parker

and at the mouth of Pilarcitos Creek in Half Moon Bay, SM, 24 Feb 2011 (AJ†; 2011-260). An even paler second-winter bird at the Davis water-treatment plant, YOL, 19 Feb–14 Mar 2011 (ToE†; 2011-242) could have been a paler *kumlieni* or possibly nominate *glaucoides*. These four individuals were larger than most Iceland Gulls previously accepted in California, being similar in size to many Thayer's Gulls (*L. thayeri*). While there may have been a bias in the past toward considering only smaller birds (i.e., females and smaller males) to be acceptable as Iceland Gulls, the committee recognizes that only a small percentage of California's apparent Iceland Gulls are very small, dainty, round-headed, and fine-billed. All four individuals were also in their second year, the age at which the melanism in the wingtips reaches its maximum, and thus less likely than first-cycle birds to have pale wingtips as a result of fading and wear. First-year birds that are as pale as some Kumlien's Gulls on the east coast are not very rare in California in late winter, but most such birds have solid darker tail bands and secondary bars suggesting faded Thayer's. Previously accepted records extended from 30 Dec to 7 Mar; these new records expanded this interval to 4 Dec–14 Mar. IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: An adult at the mouth of Salmon Creek, SON, 9 Jan 2008 (2011-120) may have been a Kumlien's Gull, as the photos showed a smallish gull with dark gray, not black, in the primaries. However, the images did not show the bird from multiple angles, making it difficult for members to assess the bird's size and shape; the bird may have been a small Glaucous-winged Gull (*L. glaucescens*). One photographed at the Recology Composting Facility, STA/SJ, 27 Mar 2011 (2011-264) could not be identified conclusively.

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LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* (95, 16). In 2011, 18 individuals were recorded, two of them being considered continuing birds, as follows: at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, SAC, an adult 9 Jan–5 Feb 2011 (BG†; CCoa†; DBr†; LPT; 2011-002); at Pillar Pt. Harbor, SM, a first-winter bird 18 Jan 2011 (PA†; 2011-150); at Mecca Beach, RIV, adults 1–4 Feb 2011 (CMcG†; 2011-012, considered the same as one there 10–28 Feb 2010 [2010-015; Johnson et al. 2012] and 18 Jan–15 Feb 2009 [2009-013; Pyle et al. 2011a]), and 1 Feb–13 Mar 2011 (CMcG; TABe†, BrSt; 2011-013); at Lower Otay L., SD, a first-winter immature 5–8 Feb 2011 (PEL; JK†, GMcC, LSt, BJS†, VM†, CAM†; 2011-014); at the Davis water-treatment plant, YOL, a first-winter immature 21 Feb–14 Mar 2011 (ToE†; 2011-246; photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 65:513); at the American Ave. landfill, FRE, a first-winter immature 3 Mar 2011 (GW†; 2011-028, a first for Fresno County); at Salt Creek on the east shore of the Salton Sea, RIV, a first-winter immature 12–13 Mar 2011 (CMcG; TABe†, BrSt; 2011-024); at Clear L., LAK, one likely in its fourth spring 20 Mar 2011 (FEH†; DEW†; 2011-047), presumably the same as an adult at Redbud Park, Clear L., LAK, 21 Nov 2011–20 Jan 2012 (FEH†; 2011-185); at Obsidian Butte, south end of the Salton Sea, IMP, a one-year-old 30 May–30 Jun 2011 (DDiT†; GMcC, JPaw†; 2011-079) and three-year-olds 18 Sep–9 Nov 2011 (GMcC; 2011-133) and 20 Dec 2011 (GMcC; 2011-227); at the South Wilbur Flood Area, KIN, a two-year-old 7 Sep 2011–18 Feb 2012 (MES†; SLS†, JFL†, SSum†, ESH†; 2011-125); at the Norco Egg Ranch, near Lakeview, RIV, an adult 19 Nov 2011–13 Jan 2012 (HBK; TABe†, CAM†, BJS†; 2011-193, considered the same as the one there 28 Dec 2010–26 Mar 2011, 2010-188; Johnson et al. 2010) and a second-winter bird 20 Nov 2011–10 Jan 2012 (HBK; CAM†, BrSt, AEK; 2011-194); at Clear L. south of Lakeport, LAK, one in its third or fourth fall 21 Nov 2011 (FEH†; 2011-262.); at the Yolo County Landfill, YOL, an adult 10 Dec 2011 (SCH†; 2011-214); and at Alviso, SCL, an adult 18 Dec 2011 (DMcl†; 2011-234). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: At the Alexandre Dairy near the Smith River, DN, a first-winter bird 3 Dec 2010 and 30 Jan 2011 (2010-189). Records of the Lesser Black-backed Gull have increased dramatically in recent years, and the committee removed this species from its review list at its 2013 annual meeting.

SLATY-BACKED GULL *Larus schistisagus* (43, 5). An adult was at the Potrero Hills landfill, SOL, 25 Feb–8 Mar 2011 (RMu S; 2011-245); although the committee rarely accepts records of this species lacking photographs, the thorough details and annotated sketch were convincing. Other adults were at the Pilarcitos Creek mouth, Half Moon Bay, SM, 11 Mar 2011 (AJ†; 2011-257) and Pacific Commons Linear Park in Fremont, ALA, 17–29 Nov 2011 (NA†; MP, JLD†, DEQ†, JTin, AD; 2011-180), the latter preceding California's previous earliest fall date of 2 Dec. An advanced third-spring bird was at Pomponio State Beach, SM, 4 Mar 2011 (OJ†; 2011-021). One in its second spring was at Half Moon Bay, SM, 5 Mar 2011 (DSS†; 2011-102). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: Features apparent in photos of an adult gull at Ferry Pt., Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline, CC, 11 Feb 2011 (2011-243) were consistent with a Slaty-backed Gull, but the photos did not show the primary pattern well, and no written details accompanied the report. Accompanying the recent proliferation of digital photography, which has been a boon to the documentation of bird records in general, has been a decrease in written details, and many records submitted to the committee lack any description of what the observers noted in the field. Even minimal details on a bird's appearance, accompanying photographs, can assist significantly in documenting rare bird records.

SOOTY TERN *Onychoprion fuscatus* (13, 1). An adult at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 29 Apr–6 Aug 2011 (BED†; 2011-095) was presumably the same as one at this location 4 Apr–18 Jul 2010 (2010-062; Johnson et al. 2012) and 28 Jul–30 Aug 2009 (2009-154; Pyle et al. 2011a). An adult was at the Tijuana River mouth, SD, 23 Jun 2011 (MSa; 2011-091).

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THICK-BILLED MURRE *Uria lomvia* (50, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: One reported at Pt. Pinos, MTY, 29 Jan 2011 (2011-018) was seen rather briefly in flight. The description of a dark head with contrasting white chin, white flanks, and upperparts more blackish than the brown-tinged upperparts of a Common Murre (*U. aalge*) all fit the Thick-billed nicely. However, the bill was not scrutinized or described in detail. Moreover, while white flanks should allow a Thick-billed Murre to be distinguished from Common Murres of the race *californica*, some individuals of the race *inornata*, which breeds in Alaska and British Columbia, have white flanks, and *inornata* could conceivably reach California in winter. The committee is reluctant to accept fly-by records of the Thick-billed Murre.

LONG-BILLED MURRELET *Brachyramphus perdix* (29, 1). One in formative or basic plumage was 200 m off the north jetty of the harbor at Crescent City, DN, 3 Feb 2011 (JJ†; 2011-011).

SNOWY OWL *Bubo scandiacus* (61, 1). A record of one at Delevan N.W.R., COL, 9 Jan 1971 was accepted on the basis of old field notes taken shortly after the observation but only recently submitted (FH; 1971-501).

ELF OWL *Micrathene whitneyi* (3**, 0). One of a pair (2010-050; Johnson et al. 2012) that nested at Corn Spring in eastern Riverside County in 2010 returned to the nest site 17 Apr–28 May 2011 (TABe; DEQ, RT§; 2011-056). See Johnson et al. (2012) for more information on the Elf Owl's recent status in California.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD *Archilochus colubris* (14, 1). A first-fall male visited a feeder in Bolinas, MRN, 30 Sep–1 Oct 2009 (KHa†; 2009-247), the site of two other records of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (Singer and Terrill 2009, Johnson et al. 2012).

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD *Cyananthus latirostris* (81, 3). A first-fall female at Palomarin near Bolinas, MRN, 6 Oct 2011 (RD†; 2011-259) was unusual by being relatively early, a female, and from northern California. One near Mission Valley in San Diego, SD, 6 Nov–2 Dec 2011 was more typical, being a male in early winter from the southern coast (MP; PEL†; 2011-170). Another adult male was at Cottonwood Springs, Joshua Tree National Park, RIV, 10 Mar 2011 (CHa†; 2011-022).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER *Melanerpes carolinus* (0, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: First state records require thoroughly convincing documentation to gain acceptance. A reported Red-bellied Woodpecker at Caswell State Park, STA, 17 Sep 2011 (2011-134) was seen and described only briefly by a single observer. Most members concluded other species of "ladder-backed" woodpeckers such as the Nuttall's Woodpecker (*Picooides nuttallii*) or a female Williamson's Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) were not adequately eliminated. Although generally prone to only limited vagrancy, this species is expanding its range north and west, and records from near Calgary, Alberta, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Nevada (Burton and Anderson 2013), demonstrate its capability of wandering west.

CRESTED CARACARA *Caracara cheriway* (11, 0). An adult in the Tijuana River valley, SD, 25 Sep–1 Oct 2011 (GN; MSn†; 2011-139) was presumably the same as the one seen there sporadically 9 Sep 2006–14 Nov 2009 (2006-127, 2007-144, 2008-093, and 2009-076; Pike and Compton 2010, Nelson and Pyle 2013).

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus* (11, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: Most members considered the submitted video of a large falcon at Smith River, DN, 12–14 Nov 2007 (2007-259) inadequate to support the identification as this species.

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE *Contopus virens* (12, 1). A pewee in Birchim Canyon, INY, 22–26 Oct 2011 caught the attention of two observers by the late date and the

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bird's relatively bright plumage, which included a smooth pale gray nape and rear auriculars contrasting with a darker cap, a whitish throat, thin bright eye ring, and a pale mandible. Suspecting an Eastern Wood-Pewee, the observers kept tabs on the bird, which finally was heard vocalizing on the fourth day of observation, confirming its identity (DPA†, JPA†, JLD†, JoH†, TH, CHO†, RoH, NO†; 2011-159; Figure 7).

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus tuberculifer* (88, 6). One first-winter bird at Shoshone, INY, 5–7 Nov 2011 was relatively early (LSW†; 2011-166). Other immatures wintered at Aviara Golf Course in Carlsbad, SD, 11 Dec 2011–2 May 2012 (SBr†, DWA†, TAB†, CG†, CAM†, GMcC, BJS†; 2011-211), San Lorenzo River in Santa Cruz, SCZ, 17 Dec 2011–16 Jan 2012 (PB†; SG†, JLR†, PS†; 2011-220), and Golden Gate Park, SF, 27 Dec 2011–28 Jan 2012 (ASH†, MEa†, OJ†, JMr†, KS†, LS†; 2011-225). Another of uncertain age was at Demuth Park in Palm Springs, RIV, 20–27 Mar 2011 (BW†; TABe†, JLD, GMcC, SJM†; 2011-034). One at Veterans Memorial Park in Bell Gardens, LA, 2 Feb–21 Mar 2011 (RB†; BED†, KLG†; 2011-010) returned the following fall, being noted 5 Nov 2011–6 May 2012 (RB†; CAM†, ASe†; 2011-232). Finally, one returned for its fifth consecutive winter to La Mirada Creek Park, LA, 1 Dec 2011–25 Feb 2012 (JRw†, JSF†; 2011-233; 2008-040, 2008-187, 2009-222, and 2011-037; Johnson et al. 2012). **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** One reported on Clark Mt., SBE, 6 July 2011 (2011-103) would have represented a first summer record for California. While many members thought the identification may have been correct, the observer's incomplete and brief view and inconclusive photographs were not sufficient to confirm such an unprecedented date and location.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus crinitus* (55, 1). One at Zzyzx, SBE, 21–22 Sep 2011 was only the sixth recorded for California's interior (BrS†; TABe†, JLD†, CAM†, JEP†; 2011-136; Figure 8). **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** A *Myiarchus* seen by two observers on 26 and 27 May 2010 in Olivenhain, Encinitas, SD, may have been correctly identified but no vocalizations were heard, and some members were concerned the bird may have been a vagrant Brown-crested Flycatcher (*M. tyrannulus*). There is only one accepted spring record of the Great Crested Flycatcher for California.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD *Tyrannus crassirostris* (20, 1). One at the mouth of Poggi Canyon in Otay Valley, Chula Vista, SD, 25 Oct 2011–25 Mar 2012 (DWA†, TJ†, GMcC, RBMcN†, JP†; 2011-184) returned for its second documented winter (it was an adult when first found; 2010-176, Johnson et al. 2012). A first-year bird at Middle Ranch on Santa Catalina I., LA, 19 Nov 2011–3 Apr 2012 (LF†; JK†; 2011-192) represented California's first record from an offshore island.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO *Vireo solitarius* (68, 2). One was on Santa Barbara I., SBA, 16–17 Sep 2011 (NAL; PAGa†; 2011-147); another was at Shay Park, HUM, 19 Sep 2011 (DCol; 2011-209). One at Pt. Loma, SD, 20 Nov 2011–28 Jan 2012 (PEL; 2011-177) had returned for its second winter (2011-001, Johnson et al. 2012). **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** Reports from near Alton, HUM, 8 Dec 2011 (2011-204), Arroyo Grande Cr., SLO, 30 Sep 1997 (2008-193), Lake Merced, SF, 3 Oct 2009 (2009-199), and Southeast Farallon I., SF, 9 Oct 2009 (2009-200) were not accepted on their fourth rounds of voting.

These and other reports of birds seemingly intermediate between the Blue-headed and Cassin's (*V. cassinii*) vireos prompted several committee members to re-examine identification criteria of these two species through study of specimens and consultation of outside experts. Findings indicated some characters previously thought to distinguish these two species can be shared, but the majority of birds of known age should be identifiable (P. Pyle in litt., 2011). The extent of white edging in the outer rectrices is less reliable for identification than previously thought, although within each age/sex

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class it averages broader in the Blue-headed than in Cassin's (P. Pyle in litt., 2011). Head color, often the primary feature used to distinguish these two species, is also variable; the brightest 2–3% of adult male Cassin's Vireos overlap with the duller 2–3% of immature female Blue-headed Vireos, illustrating the importance of age and sex in accurate identification. Malar contrast, sharper in the Blue-headed than in Cassin's, is helpful, though apparent contrast can vary with a bird's posture. Some individuals, even those well photographed, remain unidentifiable because of overlap between bright males of Cassin's and dull females of the Blue-headed (Figure 9). The best features to age these vireos are the color of the primary coverts (brownier and contrasting with the brighter replaced greater coverts in first-year birds, duskiest, with greenish edging, and not contrasting with the wing coverts in adults), and the narrower and more worn and pointed rectrices of first-year birds (Pyle 1997).

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO *Vireo flavoviridis* (103, 3). First-fall individuals were at Neary Lagoon in Santa Cruz, SCZ, 16–19 Oct 2011 (SG†; JoG†, CK†, SL†, WN†, SBT†; 2011-148) and Southeast Farallon I., SF, 18 Oct 2011 (MD; MBr†, ME†; 2011-251). A third of uncertain age was in Goleta, SBA, 23 Oct 2011 (DMC; RFC; 2011-152). All three represented dates and coastal locations typical for this vagrant in California. **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** A brief report of one in Chula Vista, SD, 10 Sep 2010 (2011-263) lacked diagnostic details, mentioning the bird had pale yellow flanks rather than the extensively yellow underparts extending up to the sides of the neck as expected on a Yellow-green Vireo, and the date was unusually early.

BLUE JAY *Cyanocitta cristata* (15, 1). An adult found on 25 Dec 2011 in Chico, BUT, remained through 8 May 2012, the latest date the species has been documented in California (MF†; TABe†, SBT†; 2011-228; Figure 10).

WINTER WREN *Troglodytes hiemalis* (8, 3). One in Malibu, LA, 18 Dec 2005 (KLG; 2010-164) was heard vocalizing and seen briefly on a Christmas Bird Count. Two found by the same observer in Sacramento County were supported with video and sound recordings, one along the American River Parkway 28 Sep–5 Dec 2009 (CCo†§; 2011-219), the other at the Consumnes River Preserve 27 Nov 2011–25 Feb 2012 (CCo†§; 2011-241). Vocalizations most readily distinguish the Winter Wren from the Pacific Wren (*T. pacificus*), until recently considered conspecific (Toews and Irwin 2008, Chesser et al. 2010). Although there is some variation in the common call notes of the Winter Wren, no overlap has yet been reported in the quality of the voices of the Winter Wren and the Pacific Wren. **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** A wren photographed at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley, INY, 2 Nov 2002 (2010-163) was not heard vocalizing, and most members declined to accept a record based on plumage characteristics alone. In an analysis of 26 adult Winter Wren and about 200 adult Pacific Wren specimens, Peter Pyle (in litt., 2013) found considerable overlap in plumage characteristics of both species, reinforcing the limitations that exist in identifying either species on plumage characteristics alone. A report from near Blythe, RIV, 16 Apr 2011 (2011-060) was not accepted because the description of the call was incomplete and how the Pacific Wren was eliminated was not explained. With only eight records (none for spring) so far accepted, the committee still takes a cautious approach with this species until its identification, schedule, and distribution are better understood. Observers of this species should record any calls, if possible, or otherwise describe the calls and plumage in detail.

RED-FLANKED BLUETAIL *Tarsiger cyanurus* (2, 1). Biologists working on San Clemente I., LA, found this remarkable vagrant on 6 Dec 2011 (JRu†; JTS†, SDNHM #53312; 2011-202); it represents only the second record for North America outside of western Alaska. The first for California (and the lower 48 states) was also from an off-shore island, Southeast Farallon I., 1 Nov 1989 (Patten and Erickson 1994).

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After a few days of searching for and not refinding the bird on San Clemente I., the observers finally discovered it stabbed on a cactus spine—the victim of a Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*). Philip Unitt nonetheless prepared the headless remains of this first-fall female as a specimen. Remarkably, this is the third Old World species of the Muscicapidae recorded on San Clemente I., following records of the Stonechat (*Saxicola torquatus*) in Oct 1995 (2005-005; Cole et al. 2006) and the Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*) in Sep 2008 (2008-116; Pike and Compton 2010). Red-flanked Bluetails of the nominate race breed primarily in northern taiga from the Kamchatka Peninsula and Japan west to Finland and winter in southeast Asia. In North America, besides the two records listed above and one near Vancouver, British Columbia, 13 Jan–Mar 2013 (<http://blog.aba.org/2013/01/abarare-red-flanked-bluetail-british-columbia.html>), it is a very rare spring and fall vagrant to western Alaska islands.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* (13, 2). Two were photographed (Figure 11): an adult female at Malibu, LA, 23 Sep 2011, found near dusk and gone the next day (DT†; 2011-137), and a first-fall female near Anchor Bay, MEN, 2–5 Oct 2011 (PK; KAH, RJK†, DTo, RTr, JWh; 2011-145). Although two accepted records seem remarkable for a single season, there is a precedent: the falls of 1988, 1992, 1995, and now 2011 have all had two accepted sightings of this Old World rarity, which had not been recorded in California since 2001.

WOOD THRUSH *Hylocichla mustelina* (28, 2). Two fall vagrants were found in California's interior, where half of California's Wood Thrushes have occurred. One at Galileo Hill, KER, 1 Oct 2011 (SLS; AH, KHL; 2011-140) is California's earliest in fall by eight days. Another was in Shoshone, INY, 25 Oct–7 Nov 2011 (LW†; PEL†, CAM†, NO†; 2011-157; Figure 12).

RUFIOUS-BACKED ROBIN *Turdus rufopalliatu*s (17, 1). One was at Picacho State Recreation Area, IMP, 13 Nov 2011 (GjH; 2011-198).

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER *Toxostoma curvirostre* (28, 1). One of the subspecies *palmeri* singing in El Monte, LA, 10 May–6 Jul 2011 was the second for Los Angeles County, the fourth for the coastal slope of California, and the first for California in summer (CAM†S; BED†, JLD†, JSF†, KLG; 2011-072). Another returned for its second winter (23 Nov–3 Dec 2011) to Black Meadow Landing, Colorado R., SBE (TABe†; 2011-199; previously accepted as 2011-003; Johnson et al. 2012). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A thrasher with a deformed, abnormally long bill was 16 km southeast of Holtville, IMP, 21 Jan–3 Feb 2011 (2011-009). It was either a Bendire's (*T. bendirei*) or a Curve-billed Thrasher and unfortunately did not vocalize.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* (124, 2). One photographed near Orick, HUM, 14–15 Nov 2010 (TK†; LET†; 2010-148) had considerable white in the rump, tail, and secondaries, apparent dark bases to the outer greater coverts, and was pale overall, raising the question of its being a McKay's Bunting (*P. hyperboreus*) or a hybrid McKay's × Snow Bunting. Outside expert J. Rogers (in litt., 2010), however, advised that this bird was within the range of a first-fall male Snow Bunting. See Rogers (2005) for more information on distinguishing these species. Another apparent first-winter male Snow Bunting was near Kneeland, HUM, 15 Nov 2011 (MJMaz†; 2011-210).

WORM-EATING WARBLER *Helmitheros vermivorum* (120, 1). One was at Ramer Lake, IMP, 26–27 Nov 2011 (CrS†; HBK, BKr†, KZK†, CAM†, GMcC; 2011-195).

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora chrysoptera* (75, 2). A male photographed in Birchim Canyon, near Bishop, INY, 2 Jun 2011 was the 25th recorded in eastern California (JPart, DPa; NO†, CHo†, RoH; 2011-084; Figure 13). A first-fall female on Santa Barbara I., SBA, 20–21 Oct 2010 (WTF†; 2010-181) was the

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second for the Channel Islands.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER *Oporornis agilis* (115, 3). One was at the fish docks on Pt. Reyes, MRN, 12–13 Sep 2011 (SCH; 2011-128). One in its first fall at Oxnard, VEN, 2–5 Oct 2011 (SCR†; JCa, DC†, JLD, HBK, CAM; 2011-144) was initially found and photographed by a 12-year-old observer. A third on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 20 Oct 2011 (MBr, MD, DMx†; 2011-252), also in its first fall, is one of latest recorded in California.

MOURNING WARBLER *Geothlypis philadelphia* (141, 1). One was in Eureka, HUM, 14–16 Sep 2011 (SEM†, JSa, SBT; 2011-168). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A singing *Geothlypis* lacking white eye arcs, observed near Brooks, YOL, 19 May 2011 (2011-074), may have been a Mourning Warbler, but several committee members had concerns about the identification. The relative length of the undertail coverts was not noted, and description of the hood pattern, in which the black was concentrated on the lores yet absent from lower part of the breast, may have been better for the MacGillivray's Warbler (*G. tolmiei*) or a hybrid.

CAPE MAY WARBLER *Setophaga tigrina* (20**, 12). Twelve records accepted in 2011 were far above the average reported in California in recent years. A spring male was photographed in Birchim Canyon near Bishop, INY, 14 May 2011 (DPa†; BJK, NO†; 2011-071). Ten, apparently all in their first fall, were found between 11 Sep and 23 Oct: at Pt. Reyes, MRN, 11–25 Sep (SBT; 2011-162), Lake Merced, SF, 14–15 Sep (DMo; RfI, AlM, JMr, LSt†; 2011-129), Laguna Niguel, ORA, 17 Sep (RBMcN†; 2011-132), Fort Mason, SF, 26–27 Sep (DMO†; MEa†; 2011-143), at Southeast Farallon I., SF, 28 Sep (MBr†, DMx†, JRT; 2011-249) and 1 Oct (MBr†, DMx†, JRT; 2011-250; different individual), Lighthouse Field, SCZ, 30 Sep (JMy†; 2011-141), Twenty-nine Palms, SBE, 30 Sep (TABe†§; CAM†; 2011-146), Santa Barbara I., SBA, 22–25 Oct (PAGa†; WTF†, MV†; 2011-156), and the campus of the University of California, Santa Cruz, SCZ, 23 Oct (JoGS; 2011-151). Finally, a first-winter male was found on the Pt. Reyes Christmas Bird Count in Inverness, MRN, 17 Dec 2011 (SCy†; 2011-226). The committee added this species to the review list in 2011 on the basis of a significant downward trend in California reports. From 1980 to 1995, California averaged 5.5 reports per year, but from 2000 to 2009, that number dropped to 3.3 (J. Dunn, in litt.). The Cape May Warbler's population cycles with outbreaks of the Spruce Budworm (*Choristoneura fumerifana*) in the boreal forest, so 2011 may have been a good summer for budworms. IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: The description of a bird observed briefly in Los Angeles, LA, 17 May 2011 (2011-078) was incomplete and unconvincing.

PINE WARBLER *Setophaga pinus* (103, 2). A male was at Laguna Niguel Regional Park, ORA, 12–13 Nov 2011 (RBMcN†; 2011-175), and a female was in Santa Maria, SBA, 2–3 Feb 2011 (JMC; 2011-039). Two males returned for a second winter: one to Palos Verdes Estates, LA, 31 Oct 2011–14 Feb 2012 (MBY; RJN, JEP; 2011-236), another to Hansen Dam, LA, 11 Nov 2011–16 Mar 2012 (KLG†; 2011-237; previously accepted as 2011-025 and 2010-159, respectively; Johnson et al. 2012).

*YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER *Setophaga dominica* (139, 7). Singing males were at the Big Sur River mouth, MTY, 5 Jun 2010 (MiSt†; 2011-045) and Vandenberg Air Force Base, SBA, 20 Apr 2011 (JMC; 2011-055). In fall, one was at Pt. Reyes, MRN, 10 Oct 2009 (NST†; 2009-246), at Lake Merced, SF, 5 Sep 2011 (HC†; 2011-135), and at Santa Barbara I., SBA, 19 Oct 2011 (NAL; WTF†; 2011-176). One first found on the relatively early fall date of 13 Sep 2011 at Ferry Park in San Francisco, SF, remained through at least 30 Dec 2011 (JHy†; PBa†, TABe†, DMo†, DEQ†, DSS†, LSt†, JMr, MVe†; 2011-142). It had a yellow spot on the lores and a relatively long bill, suggesting *S. d. dominica*, but a white chin, typical of the more

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frequent subspecies *S. d. albilora*. A small amount of yellow on the lores is not unusual for *S. d. albilora* (Pyle 1997, Jaramillo 1993), making subspecific identification more challenging. McKay (2008) suggested synonymizing *S. d. albilora*, arguing that the morphological and genetic differences between *albilora* and *dominica* are weak. Also in winter was one at Park La Brea, LA, 30 Dec 2011 (BK†; 2011-238). An older record of one at Pt. Reyes, MRN, 10 Oct 2009 was also accepted (NS†; 2009-246). The committee reviews records of this species through 2011.

GRACE'S WARBLER *Setophaga graciae* (61, 2). A fall migrant was at the Ocean Meadows Golf Course in Goleta, SBA, 5 Nov 2011 (DMC; 2011-224), and two winter records were accepted, of a first-year bird at Greenwood Cemetery in San Diego, SD, 16 Dec 2011–18 Feb 2012 (DBz†; PEL, GMcC, RBMcN†, BJS†, MSn†; 2011-216) and an adult at Bella Vista Open Space in Goleta, SBA, 26 Oct 2011–26 Feb 2012 (DMC†; KR†; 2011-223), the latter returning for its fourth consecutive winter (2009-046, 2009-217, and 2010-179; Johnson et al. 2012).

LE CONTE'S SPARROW *Ammodramus leconteii* (34, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: The description of a sparrow at the Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, 10 Nov 1976 (1976-501) suggested Le Conte's Sparrow but was written several days after the observation and after field guides were consulted. The location is now known to host a small wintering population of Nelson's Sparrow (*A. nelsoni*), which was unknown at the time of the observation. There is only a single accepted record of Le Conte's Sparrow for the mainland San Francisco Bay area (CBRC 2007, www.californiabirds.org/cbrc_book/update.pdf).

PYRRHULOXIA *Cardinalis sinuatus* (27, 2). A female was in Inyokern, KER, 7–8 May 2011 (SLS; KHL, CAM†, BS†; 2011-068), and an adult male was in a backyard in Niland, IMP, 5–12 Aug 2011 (TABe†, MJB†, HBK, CAM†, DMx†, GMcC; 2011-111).

*PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris* (107, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A single-sentence description suggested an adult male was in Ventura, VEN, 17 Oct 1980 (2011-261) but was too brief to convince the committee, which discontinued reviewing records of this species after 2004.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD *Euphagus carolinus* (24**, 6). An adult male at Bodega Bay, SON, 18 Nov 2010 (DBr†; 2010-166) caused pause for a few members because of its overall shiny black appearance—a characteristic usually associated with the Brewer's Blackbird (*E. cyanocephalus*). However, it had thin pale rusty edges to the tertials, back and upper breast and a faint black mask across the face with black lores, as well as structural differences including a slender bill—traits in which the adult male Rusty differs from Brewer's. A female at Clear Lake Riviera, LAK, 23–28 Oct 2011 was a first for Lake County (VMi†; JWh; 2011-164). Males were at Ridgecrest, KER, 5–14 Nov 2011 (KHL†, CAM, AS†, SL†; 2011-167) and Galileo Hill, KER, 18 Nov 2011 (SLS†; 2011-181). A female was at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary, ORA, 26 Nov 2011 (BA; TABe†, BED†, VP†, SS†; 2011-190), and another spent much of the winter at Thousand Palms Oasis, RIV, 7 Dec 2011–26 Feb 2012 (GS†; TABe†, CAM†, GMcC, CMcG†, SJM†; 2011-203). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: The description of a supposed Rusty Blackbird at Ridgecrest, KER, 1 Nov 2011 (2011-169) lacked confirming details. A report from the Woodlands Wastewater Treatment Plant, YOL, 28 Oct 2010 (2010-190) barely described what the bird looked like.

COMMON GRACKLE *Quiscalus quiscula* (87, 3). Spring vagrants were in southeastern California at the River Lodge Resort along the Colorado River 6 km southwest of Parker Dam, SBE, 16 Apr 2011 (TABe†; 2011-053) and Big Pine, INY, 4 Jun 2011 (JoH†; TH†; 2011-083). A male in Cypress, ORA, 9 Nov 2011 (BED†; 2011-213) represented a date typical for a fall vagrant. IDENTIFICATION

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NOT ESTABLISHED: A male icterid photographed in Sierra County, 3 Jul 2011 (2011-196) did not show the typical coloration of subspecies *versicolor* of the Common Grackle, lacking any apparent bronzy tones to the body or bluish tones to the head, and most committee members suspected the bird could be a Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) × Great-tailed Grackle (*Q. mexicanus*), a hybrid that has occurred in California before (Rogers and Jaramillo 2002).

BLACK ROSY-FINCH *Leucosticte atrata* (16, 1). An adult male visiting a feeder in Aspendell, INY, 21 Feb 2011 was the sixth recorded at this location (BST†; JLD, CAM, JPar†, DPa, SLS; 2011-016). All of California's records are from Inyo and Mono counties.

COMMON REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea* (81, 1). One that hit a window in June Lake, MNO, on 1 Dec 2011 (BaM†, KNN†; 2011-197, LACM #115935) was—at the time—unprecedented for California so early and so far south. This bird was also the first of an invasion of the Common Redpoll during the winter of 2011–2012 that was remarkable not only in the number of individuals but also in how far south many of them strayed. Most of these records will be covered in the 2012 annual report.

CORRIGENDA

It was recently brought to our attention that CBRC record 2004-124, of a Crested Caracara observed 20–24 Aug 2004 in Mendocino County, had been observed at two different locations over 60 km apart. Unfortunately, all publications referencing this record (Cole et al. 2006, CBRC 2007, and Nelson and Pyle 2013) mention only the initial location. The bird was first observed flying north near Manchester S. P. 20 Aug 2004, then seen and photographed feeding on a deer carcass in Westport 22–24 Aug 2004. If the bird followed the coastline, it flew over 75 km.

The list of people who contributed observations listed in the committee's 36th report (Johnson et al., 2012) inadvertently omitted Diana L. Humple, Barbara E. Kus, Emilie Strauss, and Glen Tepke.

DATA SOLICITATION

Sightings for 2011 published in *N. Am. Birds* for which the CBRC has received **no** documentation are of up to 11 Trumpeter Swans near Durham, BUT, Jan 2011 (documentation of only four was submitted) (*N. Am. Birds* 65:335); a Yellow-billed Loon at Table Bluff, HUM, 3 May (*N. Am. Birds* 65:512); an Iceland Gull in Half Moon Bay, SM, 14 Mar (*N. Am. Birds* 65:514); single first-cycle and second-cycle Lesser Black-backed Gulls on 9 Mar, and an adult 8–14 Mar, at Folsom Lake, PLA, and one along the American River Parkway, SAC, 12 Mar (*N. Am. Birds* 65:514); and a Long-billed Murrelet off Duncan's Landing, SON, 4 Dec (*N. Am. Birds* 66:341). We welcome submission of documentation for these reports.

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