

WESTERN BIRDS



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THE 50TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: 2024 RECORDS

This report is dedicated to the memory of founding committee members Eugene A. Cardiff (member 1970–1976), Alan M. Craig (member 1970–1977), and David F. DeSante (member 1970–1976 and 1979–1981).

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ABSTRACT: From its last report through 2024, the California Bird Records Committee reached decisions on 208 records involving 179 individuals of 70 species and one species pair, endorsing 178 records of 167 individuals. The first accepted records for California of the Stejneger's Scoter (*Melanitta stejnegeri*), White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), Blue Rock-thrush (*Monticola solitarius*), Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), Siberian Pipit (*Anthus japonicus*), and Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) are outlined in this report. These additions bring the California list to 691 species. Other especially notable records detailed in this report include those of California's second Xantus's Hummingbird (*Basilinna xantusii*), second Jouanin's Petrel (*Bulweria fallax*), second Oriental Greenfinch (*Chloris sinica*), second Tropical Parula (*Setophaga pitiayumi*), second and third Band-rumped Storm-Petrels (*Hydrobates castro*), third American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*), and third and fourth Swallow-tailed Kites (*Elanoides forficatus*).

This 50th report of the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC), a committee of Western Field Ornithologists, summarizes evaluations of 208 records involving 179 individuals of 70 species and one species pair. The committee accepted 178 of the 208 records, involving 167 individuals of 62 species and one species pair, for an acceptance rate of 86%. A record is considered accepted if it receives no more than one "not accept" vote from the nine voting members on the grounds of questionable identification, or no more than two "not accept" votes on the grounds of questionable natural occurrence. We consider 25 records of 14 individuals involving 11 species to represent returning or continuing birds. Twenty-seven records, involving 27 individuals of 13 species, were not accepted because the identification was not considered to be substantiated. For two records, involving two individuals of

two species, we considered the species correctly identified but did not accept the records because we questioned the birds' natural occurrence. For review, reports of multiple individuals together are given the same record number; we report the total number of accepted individuals, which may be different from the number of accepted records. Most of the records in this report are of birds first documented in 2024, although a few are earlier.

Since the period covered by this report, the committee has accepted the first California records of the Waved Albatross (*Phoebastria irrorata*) and Dark-sided Flycatcher (*Muscicapa sibirica*), the details of which will be published in the next (51st) report. These additions bring the California list to 693 species. The committee is currently evaluating records of the Vega Gull (*Larus vegae*), Herald Petrel (*Pterodroma heraldica*), Eastern Warbling-Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*), and Chihuahuan Meadowlark (*Sturnella lilianae*), as well as introduced populations of Swinhoe's White-eye (*Zosterops simplex*) and the Pin-tailed Whydah (*Vidua macroura*), representing potential additions to the state list.

Species account headings are organized with English and scientific names first, followed in parentheses by the total number of individuals accepted for California (this report included) and the number of new individuals accepted in this report. Accounts summarize records accepted (as applicable), followed by records not accepted because the identification was not established, the date or location was uncertain, or the natural occurrence was questionable (as applicable). A double asterisk (**) following the number of accepted individuals indicates that the species has been reviewed for a restricted period, so the number of accepted individuals does not represent the total number known for the state. When the observer(s) who originally discovered the bird provided documentation, their initials are listed first in italics, followed by the initials of subsequent observers supplying documentation. A symbol following an observer's initials indicates she or he submitted a photograph (†), sketch (\$), audio recording (§), and/or video (‡). The absence of a symbol following the observer's initials indicates the submission of written documentation only. Following the initials of the observer(s) is the identifying number assigned by the CBRC's secretary. A (#) precedes a specimen number; we cite the collections of the California Academy of Sciences (CAS), Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM), and San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM) in this report.

As of the CBRC's 43rd report (Singer et al. 2020), age terminology follows that of Humphrey and Parkes (1959) as modified by Howell et al. (2003) and Howell and Pyle (2015). Age determinations largely follow the criteria of Pyle (2008, 2022). If, in the species accounts, we do not specify a bird's age or sex, determining characteristics could not be assessed from the information available. Definitions of abbreviations and additional details regarding minutiae of formatting may be found in the CBRC's previous annual reports and in *Rare Birds of California* (CBRC 2007), both available via the CBRC's website, www.californiabirds.org. Also available through this website are the California bird list, the review list, an online form for submitting documentation of review species, committee news, the CBRC's bylaws, and a form for querying the CBRC's database. Observers are encouraged to submit documentation for all species on the CBRC's review list to the secretary via e-mail (secretary@

californiabirds.org) or the website. Documentation of all records is archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (www.wfvz.org) and is available for public review by appointment or by contacting the CBRC's secretary.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

EMPEROR GOOSE *Anser canagicus* (105, 2). The committee inferred that an adult photographed by an unknown observer near Bouldin Island, SJ, in mid-February 2024 (*unknown*†; 2024-017) was the same as one seen approximately 15 km away at Jersey Island, CC, 1–3 Mar 2024 (*SCh* †, EGM, MJR†; 2024-010). Likewise, the committee considered an adult at the Smith River bottoms, DN, 24 Nov 2024 (*TK*†; 2024-114) to be the same as one at Arcata, HUM, 29 Nov–22 Dec 2024 (*SHt*†; 2024-119); it wintered undetected for 11 weeks before being refound at the Arcata bottoms, HUM, 8 Mar 2025 (*OS*†; 2025-011). Despite there being 105 accepted records for California, the Emperor Goose remains on the CBRC review list because it has averaged only one record per year over the past 25 years.

TAIGA BEAN-GOOSE *Anser fabalis* (0, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: An adult bean-goose reported as this species was at the Arcata bottoms, HUM, 1 Nov–8 Dec 2024 (2024-106). Most committee members agreed that several field marks, such as the large overall size, long neck, gently sloping forehead and bill, relatively long bill with thin “grin patch,” and multiple ratios of bill and head measurements calculated from photos, favored this bird's identification as a Taiga Bean-Goose. Some field marks, however, were more consistent with the Tundra Bean-Goose (*A. serrirostris*), especially the relatively deep-based, broad bill and bill pattern. Additionally, some members expressed conflicting views on whether the grinning patch and size and shape of the neck were a better fit for the Taiga or the Tundra. The wide range of variability in these two taxa, the existence of apparent intermediate and/or hybrid populations, and the opinions of some Japanese and European experts who judged this bird to be a large male Tundra Bean-Goose ultimately resulted in a strong majority of the committee not endorsing the identification as a Taiga Bean-Goose. The CBRC subsequently re-evaluated it as a Taiga/Tundra Bean-Goose (2024-106A; see below).

TAIGA/TUNDRA BEAN-GOOSE *Anser fabalis/serrirostris* (3, 1). An adult at the Arcata bottoms, HUM, 1 Nov–8 Dec 2024 (*GG*†, *GAB*†, *MFd*†, *RF*†, *EM*†, *EGM*†; 2024-106A), reviewed and not accepted as a Taiga Bean-Goose (2024-106; see above), was the third unidentifiable bean-goose endorsed in California.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula* (33, 2). An adult male Garganey in basic plumage at the Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, SHA, 27 Mar 2024 (*BY*†; 2024-018) was the first recorded in Shasta County. An adult male in alternate (eclipse) plumage was at the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, HUM, 15–26 Sep 2024 (*RF*†; 2024-083). A little over half (18) of California's 33 Garganey records come from the state's interior.

MEXICAN DUCK *Anas diazi* (49, 28). Following review of the 24 records detailed in this report, the committee has nearly completed its review of all known historical records of the Mexican Duck in California. Twenty of the records in this report, representing 25 individuals, were from Lake Havasu or the Colorado River below Parker Dam in San Bernardino County (Table 1). Reports away from the vicinity of Lake Havasu include California's earliest record, of an adult male at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, KER, 2 Nov–7 Dec 2001 (*SLS*†; 2001-230) and a pair in alternate plumage at Imperial Dam, IMP, 20 Aug 2014 (*LBH*, *DVP*†; 2014-194).

The 28 accepted Mexican Ducks summarized above, along with the 21 previously endorsed from California, provide a clearer view of this species' status and distribu-

TABLE 1 Mexican Ducks^a in San Bernardino County Accepted by the CBRC in This Report

Location, <i>n</i>	Date	Record no.	Observers
Lake Havasu			
1	14 Sep 2012	2012-258	LBH, DVP
2 ^b	18 Oct 2013	2013-294	DVP
1 ^c	13 Jul 2015	2015-182	LBH, DVP
Parker Dam			
1	1 Nov 2012	2012-259	LBH, DVP†
1	23 Oct–6 Nov 2014	2014-192	LBH, DVP†
2	6 Nov 2014	2014-193	DVP†
1	21 Nov 2015	2015-185	DVP†
Earp			
2 ^b	26 Oct 2011	2011-287	DVP†
Emerald Cove Resort in Earp			
2	17–30 Aug 2011	2011-288	LBH, DVP†
1 ^d	20 Oct 2011	2011-289	LBH, DVP†
1	26 Oct 2011	2011-290	DVP†
1	29 Oct 2011	2011-291	DVP†
1 ^d	8 Nov 2012	2012-262	LBH, DVP†
1	29 Jun–7 Sep 2013	2013-296	LBH†, DVP†
1	11 Aug 2013	2013-297	LBH, DVP
1	9–20 Aug 2014	2014-190	LBH, DVP†
2	18–22 Aug 2014	2014-191	LBH, DVP†
1	22 Apr 2015	2015-183	DVP†
1	16–21 Jul 2015	2015-184	LBH, DVP†
1	2 Sep–6 Oct 2018	2018-262	LBH, DVP†

^aAll males unless specified otherwise.^bPair.^cSex unknown.^dFemale.

tion in the state. Just over half (27) of California's Mexican Ducks have occurred along the Colorado River, primarily in San Bernardino County at or near Parker Dam, but with one record each downstream in Riverside and Imperial counties. This species occurs with decreasing frequency as one moves west and north through the state: ten have been endorsed from the southeastern deserts from the south end of the Salton Sea north to Bishop, Inyo County, six from the coastal slope of southern California between San Diego and Los Angeles counties, and two from the Central Valley as far north as San Luis National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Merced County. Temporally, the Mexican Duck occurs in California primarily as a post-breeding visitor between late June and mid-December, apparently as a molt migrant (D. Vander Pluym pers. comm.). It is a casual winter visitor and spring migrant, with fewer than one-fourth of California's Mexican Ducks occurring between late December and early June. The committee has endorsed only five records of females; some female Mexican Ducks are not reliably distinguished in the field from female Mallards (*A. platyrhynchos*). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: The committee deemed the description of a female in alternate plumage at the Emerald Cove Resort sewage ponds in Earp, SBE, 25 Jul 2012 (2012-261) and the description and poor photo of a male at Fort Irwin, SBE, 30 Apr 2024 (2024-032) inadequate for acceptance. An adult male photographed at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park in Colma, SM, 28 Dec 2021 (2021-181) showed several characters typical of the Mallard, suggesting a hybrid with that species.

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KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis* (51, 2). A female in first alternate plumage summered at King Salmon on Humboldt Bay, HUM, 30 May–11 Sep 2024 (RF†, CC†; 2024-042), and a female in formative plumage was in Huntington Harbor, ORA, 23–29 Dec 2024 (TAB†, MLB†; 2024-133).

STEJNEGER'S SCOTER *Melanitta stejnegeri* (1, 1). The committee re-evaluated a report, previously not accepted, of a Stejneger's Scoter photographed on Monterey Bay from Zils Road in Watsonville, SCZ, 15 Jan 2014 (2014-187; Benson et al. 2020, including photo). During the current circulation (JFG†; 2014-187A; Figure 1), the committee endorsed the identification, establishing the first record for California, the second for the coterminous United States, and the first winter record for North America. A better understanding of the species' identification criteria and input from European experts aided in reversing the committee's previous decision. While the photos are softly focused and manifest some artifacts of lighting, committee members agreed that the combination of field marks shown in the photos, namely, the yellow stripe on the side of the upper mandible, the shape of the knob on top of the bill, and the black flanks, were sufficient to identify this bird as a Stejneger's Scoter. For a more thorough treatment of the species' identification criteria, see Garner et al. (2004), Dunn et al. (2012), Huhtinen et al. (2025), and López-Velasco et al. (2025).

The Stejneger's Scoter breeds from central Russia and northeastern Kazakhstan east across Mongolia and the Russian Far East and winters along the Asian coast from Kamchatka south to eastern China (del Hoyo et al. 2020). In North America, it is a rare spring and summer visitor to Alaska at Gambell and on the coast of the Seward Peninsula (Lehman 2019, P. E. Lehman pers. comm), and it is casual during those seasons on other Bering Sea islands (Gibson and Withrow 2015). Additional North American records include those of a spring migrant along the Sag River on Alaska's North Slope, 4 Jun 2024 (S. Beaudreault, ebird.org/checklist/ S179441993); a fall migrant on St. Paul Island, Alaska, 5 Oct 2013 (D. Gochfeld, ebird.org/checklist/ S15328293); and a spring migrant at Helena Valley Regulating Reservoir, Montana, 11 Apr–15 May 2015 (Jeff Marks pers. comm.).

GROOVE-BILLED ANI *Crotophaga sulcirostris* (15, 1). An adult was at the Aviara Resort in Carlsbad, SD, 30 Oct 2024 (JMy†; 2024-107). Twelve of California's 15 Groove-billed Anis have been occurred in fall between 13 September and 1 December.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (17, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: One was reported from Los Jilgueros Preserve, Fallbrook, SD, 4 Sep 2024 (2024-079). Although the description was consistent with an adult Black-billed Cuckoo, most committee members considered the brief observation and description inadequate for acceptance, especially because nearly all California records of this species have been of immature birds in their first fall, and there have been none since 2008.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD *Archilochus colubris* (33, 2). Two juvenile Ruby-throated Hummingbirds appeared at Keith Hansen's gallery in Bolinas, MRN, the first, a male 28–30 Aug 2024 (SE†; 2024-076), the second, a female 25 Sep 2024 (EC†; 2024-086). Both birds were commencing their preformative molt, with the male showing a single iridescent red gorget feather on the throat.

XANTUS'S HUMMINGBIRD *Basilinna xantusii* (2, 1). California's second Xantus's Hummingbird, an adult male, visited a feeder in residential Bishop, INY, 25–28 Apr 2024 (DMS, JLD†, CBH†, RH†, NJO†; 2024-036; Figure 2). This species is endemic to the southern half of the Baja California Peninsula, and there are only two well-supported records of vagrants north of Mexico: at Ventura, VEN, 30 Jan–27 Mar 1988 (1988-065, Haiebach 1992, Pyle and McCaskie 1992) and at Gibsons, British Columbia, 16 Nov 1997–21 Sep 1998 (Toochin 1997, Campbell et al. 2001).



FIGURE 1. This adult male Stejneger's Scoter, photographed from Zils Road in Watsonville, Santa Cruz County, 15 January 2014 (2014-187A), was California's first.

Photo by John F. Garrett

As the two previous records both involved females that arrived in fall or winter, the Bishop bird is the first male and first spring migrant documented north of Mexico.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* (10, 2). An adult male in alternate plumage was at Abbotts Lagoon, MRN, 5–6 Sep 2024 (TF†, MJR †; 2024-078), and a juvenile was at the Salinas water-treatment plant, MTY, 5–8 Oct 2024



FIGURE 2. This adult male Xantus's Hummingbird at a residence in Bishop, Inyo County, 25–28 April 2024 (2024-036), represents the second well-supported record for California.

Photo by Nancy J. Overholtz on 27 Apr 2024

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(*Stu*†§; 2024-140). Following California's first Common Ringed Plover in Yolo County in 2011 (2011-118; Nelson et al. 2013), all nine subsequent state records have been from the coast since 2018. All ten accepted California records are of fall migrants between 16 August and 15 October.

PIPING PLOVER *Charadrius melodus* (5, 1). An adult female at Don Edwards San Francisco NWR, SM, 26 Mar–8 Apr 2024 (EGM†, MJR†; 2024-019) furnished the first record for San Mateo County and northern California. Of the state's four prior Piping Plovers, three occurred along the southern California coast between Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo counties from 1971 to 1980 (CBRC 2007), while the most recent was at the south end of the Salton Sea in 2006 (Heindel and Garrett 2008).

SIBERIAN SAND-PLOVER *Anarhynchus mongolus* (18, 1). A juvenile was at Lake Tolowa, DN, 4 Sep 2024 (MK†, TK†; 2024-077). Some committee members expressed concern that the recently split Tibetan Sand-Plover (*A. atrifrons*) could not be conclusively eliminated, but still endorsed it as a Siberian since field marks favored this species and the Tibetan is unrecorded in North America. See Schweizer et al. (2023) for identification criteria for discrimination of these two similar species. All California records of the Siberian Sand-Plover have been of fall migrants along the coast between 25 June and 22 October.

WILSON'S PLOVER *Anarhynchus wilsonia* (27, 1). A female in formative or first alternate plumage was found on the beach at Silver Strand, SD, 8 Apr 2024 (KW†; 2024-023). Two-thirds (18) of California's records of this species have come from coastal San Diego County, with over half (10) of those in spring between 20 March and 12 May.

UPLAND SANDPIPER *Bartramia longicauda* (37, 1). One at the Baker sewage ponds, SBE, 7 Jun 2024 (TC†; 2024-051) was in the spring window of 15 May–28 Jun in which about one-third (14) of California's Upland Sandpipers have occurred. IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A brief description of one in the Panoche Valley, SBT, 16 Oct 2024 (2024-092) did not eliminate other shorebird species, notably yellowlegs (*Tringa* spp.).

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* (63*, 1). A recently submitted record of a juvenile at the Eel River Wildlife Area, HUM, 2 Oct 1996 (SEM†; 1996-181) was endorsed by the committee, which discontinued reviewing records of this species after 2021.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* (59, 1). An adult in alternate plumage was in south San Diego Bay, SD, 13–23 Jul 2024 (PEL, MS†, JTS†; 2024-061). Nearly two-thirds (64%) of the Curlew Sandpipers accepted for California have been fall migrants along the coast.

RED-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis* (30, 1). A juvenile Red-necked Stint was at Point St. George, DN, 25 Aug 2024 (TK†; 2024-075). Only four of California's 30 records have been of juveniles, testimony to the more difficult identification of juveniles than of adults in alternate plumage.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* (44, 2). An adult returned to south San Diego Bay, SD, 26 Aug 2024–29 Apr 2025 (MS†; 2024-099) for its seventh consecutive winter (2018-219; Benson et al. 2020), and a different adult in alternate plumage was at the same location 28 Jul 2024 (NT†; 2024-064). A juvenile was at the Salinas water-treatment plant, MTY, 26 Sep 2024 (MAC†; 2024-090).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax minor* (3, 1). One in formative plumage was found injured at Coronado High School, Coronado, SD, 16 Nov 2024 (MGz†, SHm†, HP†, PU; 2024-111; SDNHM 58026; Figure 3) and transferred to Project Wildlife but did not survive, the furcula having been broken in a collision. There

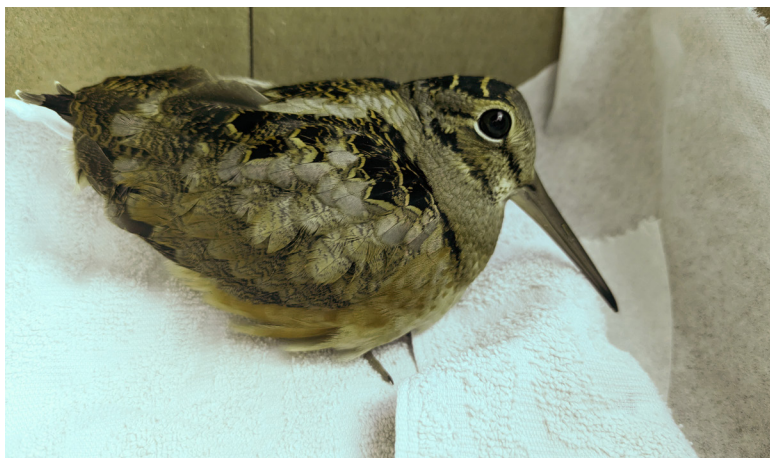


FIGURE 3. California's third American Woodcock was found injured at Coronado High School, Coronado, San Diego County, 16 November 2024 (2024-111) and taken for rehabilitation to Project Wildlife, but it did not survive. It is now a specimen (#58026) in the collection of the San Diego Natural History Museum.

Photo by Sasha Helm

are few records of this species west of the Continental Divide, with one from New Mexico (Dubay and Johnson 2014), two from Arizona (Rosenberg and Core 2024, G. Rosenberg pers. comm.), one from Nevada (Tinsman and Meyers 2016), and now three from California. All three of California's American Woodcocks have occurred in November.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* (5, 1). A juvenile at the Woodland water-treatment plant, YOL, 9–10 Sep 2024 (JGr†, MwF†, JJ†, ZP†, JCS†; 2024-080) was the first for Yolo County and the Central Valley. Three of California's five records have been of juveniles in fall from 9 to 29 September.

SWALLOW-TAILED GULL *Creagrurus furcatus* (7, 2). Adults in alternate plumage were at Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 25 Apr 2024 (HGW†, JWT†; 2024-028) and Bodega Head, SON, 13 Dec 2024 (SWM†, MD†, EGM, ANW†; 2024-128). Four of California's seven Swallow-tailed Gulls have occurred in the last three years (2022–2024); though speculative, it is possible that some or all of these four records pertain to the same individual.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* (36, 1). An adult undergoing definitive prealternate molt at Clifton Court Forebay, CC, 26 Mar–1 Apr 2024 (EGM†; 2024-016) furnished the second record for Contra Costa County.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* (0, 0). **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** The identification as this species of a first-cycle gull photographed at Pomponio State Beach, SM, 29–30 Dec 2024 (2024-136) failed to garner any support from committee members. Although this bird showed some field marks suggesting *L. c. kamtschatschensis*, namely, the patterns of the upper tail coverts, outermost tail feathers (rectrix 6), tail band, and the apparently long bill, these characters may be within the range of variation of the Short-billed Gull (*L. brachyrhynchus*; A. Ayyash pers. comm.). Additionally, other field marks, including the pattern of the head, breast, and belly, and the daintier overall body structure and bill, were more

consistent with the Short-billed Gull. There is much overlap in plumage features between *L. kamtschatschensis* and *L. brachyrhynchus* (Adriaens and Gibbins 2016), so any bird accepted by the committee as California's first Common Gull will likely be a stereotypical example of that species, including being noticeably larger than a Short-billed Gull.

RED-TAILED TROPICBIRD *Phaethon rubricauda* (46, 2). Two Red-tailed Tropicbirds 300 km southwest of San Nicolas Island, VEN, 29 Nov 2024 (Mi†; 2024-138) were the first accepted from California since 2014. **NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE**: An adult was found on a container ship in the port of Los Angeles, LA, 10 Nov 2024 (JeB†, KF†, AG†; 2024-113) and brought to International Bird Rescue in San Pedro. Five committee members did not accept the record because there was no way of knowing when or where the bird landed on the ship en route from China. The tropicbird was rehabilitated and subsequently released at Cabrillo Beach on 26 Nov 2024 (K. Clatterbuck pers. comm.).

SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS *Phoebastria albatrus* (58, 5). Five Short-tailed Albatrosses were recorded in California in 2024, including birds over Noyo Canyon, 16–19 km northwest of Fort Bragg, MEN, 31 Mar 2024 (HS†; 2024-021) and 7 Dec 2024 (STH†; 2024-120); over Pioneer Canyon, 33 km south of Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 28 Jul 2024 (DA†, MJR†; 2024-066); 64 km west-southwest of Point Arena, MEN, 27 Sep 2024 (BLS; 2024-087); and 19 km west of the Eel River mouth, HUM, 4 Dec 2024 (SEM†; 2024-125). All records were of young birds in juvenile, formative, or second basic plumage. There has been a sharp increase in Short-tailed Albatrosses observed off California in recent years, with 17 accepted records from 2021 to 2024, reflecting the continuing recovery of this endangered species (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2020), which now numbers greater than 7000 individuals (Jonathan Plissner pers. comm.).

BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL *Hydrobates castro* (3, 2). An adult, missing a toe on its left foot, was captured in a mist net on Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 19 Oct 2024 (AdH†, SB-B, JRT; 2024-098), and another adult, with an intact left foot, was mist netted at the same location, 23 and 26 Nov 2024 (AdH†, MLB†, JRT; 2024-115; Figure 4). The Band-rumped Storm-Petrel is a complex that may comprise up to seven cryptic species, including four distinct breeding populations in the Pacific Ocean (Smith and Friesen 2007, Smith et al. 2007, Howell and Zufelt 2019, Taylor et al. 2019). Tail feathers from both birds were collected and deposited at Florida Gulf Coast University, potentially allowing for determination of the source population(s) via DNA and/or stable-isotope analysis. California's only other accepted Band-rumped Storm-Petrel was also an adult captured on Southeast Farallon Island, 10–11 Nov 2017 (2017-130; Singer et al. 2020).

WEDGE-RUMPED STORM-PETREL *Hydrobates tethys* (86, 1). One was photographed over the 58 Bank, 44 km southeast of San Clemente Island, LA, 8 Sep 2022 (DP†; 2022-055).

JOUANIN'S PETREL *Bulweria fallax* (2, 1). One undergoing its second prebasal molt was found emaciated "just north of Golden Gate Park," SF, 27 Dec 2024 (precise distance inland unreported; Peninsula Humane Society†, MV†; 2024-135; Figure 5). It was taken to the Peninsula Humane Society in Burlingame, San Mateo County, but did not survive, and was eventually deposited in the ornithology collection at the California Academy of Sciences (#CAS-ORN 101623). The Jouanin's Petrel occurs in the northwest Indian Ocean (Carboneras et al. 2020), but vagrants have been recorded in the Pacific Ocean four times in the Hawaiian Islands (Pyle and Pyle 2017) and once in California, on Santa Barbara Island, SBA, 1 Jun 2016 (2016-058; McCaskie et al. 2018).



FIGURE 4. This adult Band-rumped Storm-Petrel captured on Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco County, on 23 and 26 November 2024 (2024-115) was third of this species recorded in California. Amazingly, the second was captured at the same location the previous month (2024-098; details in text).

Photo by Adrian Hinkle on 26 November 2024

STREAKED SHEARWATER *Calonectris leucomelas* (22, 2). One was briefly seen and photographed 23.3 km west of Point Loma, SD, 14 Jul 2024 (ARA†; 2024-062), and one in formative plumage was 10.5 km southeast of Santa Rosa Island, SBA, 10 Aug 2024 (EGM, MLW†; 2024-072).

WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER *Ardenna pacifica* (19, 3). Three light-morph Wedge-tailed Shearwaters were documented in California in 2024. One of unknown age near Anacapa Island, VEN, 4 Jul 2024 (JoB†; 2024-059) was the first in Ventura County. Adults were 8.2 km northeast of Santa Cruz Island, SBA, 17 Oct 2024 (JoB‡, unknown†; 2024-093) and 16.5 km south of Point Fermin, LA, 27 Oct 2024 (NSa†; 2024-104), the latter being the first in Los Angeles County. Nearly half (42%) of California's Wedge-tailed Shearwaters have occurred in the last three years (2022–2024), with six from southern California and three from central California, a



FIGURE 5. (A) California's second Jouanin's Petrel was discovered in poor health near Golden Gate Park, San Francisco County, 27 December 2024 (2024-135). (B) It was prepared as a study skin (#CAS-ORN 101623) at the California Academy of Sciences.

(A) Photo courtesy of Peninsula Humane Society on 27 Dec 2024

(B) Photo by Martha Velez on 17 July 2025

reversal of historical trends. Of California's 19 records of this species, 12 have been of the light morph, seven of the dark morph.

WOOD STORK *Mycteria americana* (2 **, 0). Returning for its fifth consecutive year (2020-043; Benson et al. 2022), an adult summered in the Prado Basin, RIV, 26 Mar–19 Sep 2024 (JEP†; 2024-015). The same bird was subsequently seen at multiple locations in San Diego County, 22 Dec 2024–24 Feb 2025 (ALH†; 2024-132), including Poway (22 Dec 2024); Lindo Lake (22 Dec 2024–12 Jan 2025); the San Diego Zoo

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Safari Park, San Pasqual (16–18 Jan 2025); Sweetwater Reservoir (21 Jan 2025); and back at Lindo Lake (24 Feb 2025). This bird wintered just across the Mexican border in Tijuana, Baja California, in both 2023–2024 (Erickson et al. 2024) and 2024–2025 (L. Kahle, ebird.org/checklist/S201340674; F. Sánchez, ebird.org/checklist/S214899175).

ANHINGA *Anhinga anhinga* (5, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: Photographs of one reported from the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, HUM, 16 Mar 2018 (2018–264) appeared to show a Double-crested Cormorant (*Nannopterum auritum*) or possibly a Neotropic Cormorant (*N. brasilianum*).

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* (52, 2). An adult undergoing pre-alternate molt was at the Piute Ponds, LA, 21 Mar 2024 (JSF†, CAD†; 2024–014), and an alternate-plumaged adult was at Blythe, RIV, 6 Apr 2024 (JF†; 2024–022). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: An adult *Plegadis* ibis at Goleta Slough Ecological Reserve, SBA, 3–6 May 2024 (2024–033) was challenging to assess as some photos showed more, others less, of a colorful hue around the facial skin and eye. Ultimately, the committee nearly unanimously decided that the combination of pinkish facial skin, reddish tint to the eye visible in some photos, and contrastingly bright pink ankle joints is not expected in a Glossy Ibis.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL *Platalea ajaja* (155, 1). One undergoing its second pre-basic molt at the Kern Water Bank, 5 km south of Calders Corner, KER, 13 Jan–15 Mar 2024 (JCS†, TAB†, MFd†; 2024–001) was deemed to be the same bird later seen at the following locations: San Joaquin River NWR, STA, 27–28 Apr 2024 (JSm†, JGa†; 2024–031); Tracy water-treatment plant, SJ, 9 Jul 2024 (ME; 2024–067); BeeEss Gun Club near Los Banos, MER, 3 Aug 2024 (PD†; 2024–069); Faith Ranch wetlands in Modesto, STA, 27 Sep 2024 (SP‡ 2024–089); and back again at the San Joaquin River NWR, STA, 25 Oct–18 Dec 2024 (HMR†; 2024–103). These records represent the first Roseate Spoonbill documented in the Central Valley.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE *Elanoides forficatus* (4, 2). Two adults were seen simultaneously, with one photographed, over a residential neighborhood adjacent to Encino Reservoir, LA, 22 Apr 2024 (LKK†‡; 2024–027, 2024–027A). The committee concluded that one of these birds was then resighted in Santa Rosa Valley, VEN, 27 Apr 2024 (SDC†, MMP†; 2024–030) and again at Point Reyes, MRN, and Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 3 May 2024 (MBu, JWT†, HGW; 2024–034). These sightings established the first records for Los Angeles, Ventura, Marin, and San Francisco counties.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla* (1, 1). A remarkable first for California, an adult was migrating north past Battery Godfrey, SF, 15 Mar 2024 (JFa†, KMa†; 2024–013; Figure 6). In the White-tailed Eagle, adults are generally sedentary while young birds migrate or wander south in the winter (Vaurie 1965, Brazil 2009, Svensson et al. 2023), making this record even more remarkable.

The White-tailed Eagle breeds from western Greenland across northern Europe to northeast Asia and winters through much of the breeding range and south to Pakistan, northern India, southeastern China, Taiwan, the Korean Peninsula, and Japan (Vaurie 1964, Orta et al. 2023). There have been two sightings in Hawaii (Zaun 2009; C. Pott, ebird.org/checklist/S217743069). In North America, this species is casual in the Bering Sea region of western Alaska and has bred on Attu Island in the western Aleutian Islands (Gibson and Withrow 2015). Away from the Bering Sea, there has been only one well-supported North American report, of one from Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska on 28 Jan 2009 (R. A. MacIntosh, Tobish 2009) Four additional reports, one from New York in 1993 (New York State Avian Records Committee 2006, Brinkley and Byrne 2013) and three from Massachusetts in 1914, 1935, and 1944 (Rines 2009, Garvey and Iliff 2013), were not accepted by their respective state avian records committees.

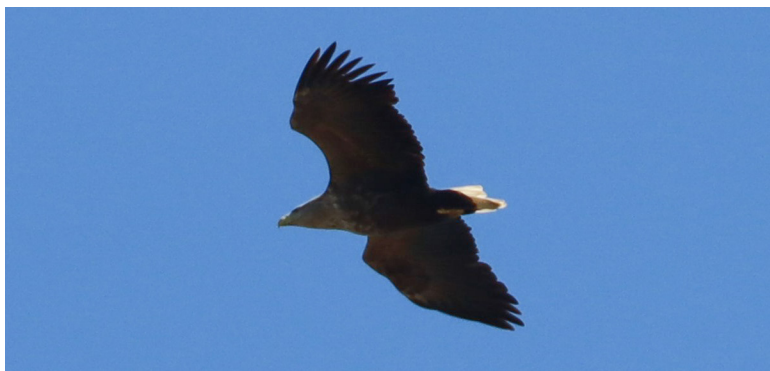


FIGURE 6. This adult White-tailed Eagle was photographed during a spring raptor watch at Battery Godfrey, San Francisco County (2024-013), on 14 March 2024, establishing the first record for California. The short wedge-shaped white tail, dark undertail coverts, and tawny-colored head are diagnostic.

Photo by John Facchini

COMMON BLACK HAWK *Buteogallus anthracinus* (16, 1). A returning adult (2022-011 et seq.; Benson et al. 2025a) was photographed at Palo Verde Ecological Reserve, RIV, 19 Apr–1 Oct 2024 (CAD†, CS-S†; 2024-044), and an adult was belatedly identified from photos from 2.5 km inland along the Santa Margarita River, Camp Pendleton, SD, 8 Jan 2020 (AJo†; 2020-211).

GRAY HAWK *Buteo plagiatus* (4, 1). One undergoing its second prebasic molt at Mojave Narrows Regional Park, SBE, 8 Aug 2024 (BD†; 2024-071) furnished a first record for San Bernardino County.

SNOWY OWL *Bubo scandiacus* (62, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: An intriguing report of one briefly seen by an experienced observer from a plane taxiing at Oakland International Airport, ALA, 30 Jan 2024 (2024-006) was not accepted. The bird was reported quickly to the local birding community but could not be refound. Even though this is a highly distinctive species, most committee members were uncomfortable supporting an identification based on such a brief encounter during a year with no irruption in which the closest record was of a single bird from Washington state. Only four Snowy Owls have been accepted from California in the past 25 years (CBRC 2025), and only seven since 1975 (CBRC 2007), all from Humboldt or Solano counties.

CRESTED CARACARA *Caracara plancus* (29, 7). Between December 2023 and May 2024 there was a significant incursion of Crested Caracaras into California with up to six birds documented; other notable incursions occurred from 2006 to 2008 and from 2014 to 2015 (CBRC 2025). Three remained for an extended period, with two of these wandering widely during their stay, as occurred during the 2006–2008 incursion (Nelson and Pyle 2013). These included one in second basic plumage at Stornetta Ranch near Point Arena, MEN, 19 Jan–6 Feb 2024 (CS, RB†, TDB†, MFd†, RJK†, LDW†; 2024-003), providing a first Mendocino County record. Another in second basic plumage at the Tijuana River mouth, SD, 28 Jan 2024 (AW†; 2024-005) was later seen at the Alta Vicente Reserve in Rancho Palos Verdes, LA, 3 Feb 2024 (LYW†; 2024-007) and along the San Luis Rey River Trail in Oceanside, SD, 19–21

Feb 2024 (AIH†; 2024-009). The third, in formative plumage, was at Hollister Ranch, SBA, 1 Dec 2023 (EJD†; 2023-140), then at Lake Los Carneros and near Pershing Park, SBA, 3–5 Mar 2024 (JCn, MBr†; 2024-011), Coal Oil Point, SBA, 11 Apr 2024 (AA; 2024-024), Point Conception, SBA, 20 Apr–2 May 2024 (AC†, JMC†, RFC, DF, GT; 2024-025) and along Casitas Pass Road 4 km northeast of Rincon Point, VEN 14 May 2024 (TW†; 2024-039). Other caracaras that were part of this incursion included one of unknown age at Rohr Park, Bonita, SD, 16 Dec 2023 (NC†; 2023-129), one in second basic plumage at Hahamongna Watershed Park, Pasadena, LA, 27 Dec 2023 (LT†; 2023-136), and one in formative plumage at Borrego Springs, SD, 14 Mar 2024 (PM†; 2024-012). Apart from this incursion, one was seen along the Trinity River 4 km south-southeast of Willow Creek, HUM, 17 Sep 2024 (JA; 2024-012).

YELLOW-HEADED CARACARA *Daptrius chimachima* (0, 0). **NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE:** A long-staying adult was discovered scavenging at a butcher shop in Lomita, then making intermittent visits to Cabrillo Beach in San Pedro, LA, 26 Apr–26 Aug 2024 (TAB†, ARB, PK†; 2024-038). On its last date, it had wandered onto the grounds of Los Angeles International Airport where it was trapped by the United States Department of Agriculture as part of a raptor-abatement program. It was eventually transferred to the Los Angeles Zoo, where it remains in captivity. There is a prior record of another long-staying Yellow-headed Caracara from coastal Humboldt and Del Norte counties 27 Jul 2007–13 Mar 2008 (2008-169; Pike and Compton 2010) that was also not accepted because of questionable natural occurrence.

The Yellow-headed Caracara is resident across much of northern and eastern South America, and north into Central America to southwestern Nicaragua, showing little migratory movement (Bierregaard et al. 2022). Since the 1980s it has been expanding its range north in Central America via deforested areas and increased pastureland (McCrary and Young 2008), recently reaching southern Mexico with records from coastal Chiapas in 2024 (M. Jensen, ebird.org/checklist/S161865364) and coastal Colima in 2025 (F. Serrano, ebird.org/checklist/S231819137). Additionally, there are recent records from Jamaica (2023; Dobson and Levesque 2023), the Dominican Republic (2024–2025; E. Contreras, ebird.org/checklist/S196762592, ebird.org/checklist/S239007313), the vicinity of Miami, Florida (2023–2025; Pyle et al. 2024), and two from the central Texas coast near Houston and Galveston (2024–2025; B. Carnes pers. comm.). These sightings further suggest that this species is capable of long-distance dispersal, although human-mediated transport or escape from captivity are also viable hypotheses for these birds' arrival. Despite this recent spate of extralimital records, most CBRC members were unwilling to accept the Yellow-headed Caracara in Lomita as a natural vagrant, with dissenting members citing the potential for ship assistance (even if unrestrained) and the absence of records from northern Mexico and the southwestern United States. If a pattern of vagrancy to these regions develops in the future, the committee could re-evaluate this record.

THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD *Tyrannus crassirostris* (40, 6). Adults at Bellevue Memorial Park in Ontario, SBE, 12 Oct 2024–15 Mar 2025 (TAB†§; 2024-091) and the Wilson Golf Course in Griffith Park, LA, 7 Nov 2024–11 Apr 2025 (KLG†; 2024-109) were both returning for their third winter (same as 2022-102 and 2022-129, respectively; Benson et al. 2025a). Thick-billed Kingbirds newly discovered in 2024 included adults at Winterhaven, IMP, 20–22 Oct 2024 (PEL†, CAM, GM; 2024-101), Palo Verde, IMP, 22 Oct 2024–10 February 2025 (TAB†§, MLB†§, JLD; 2024-102), and Rancho Cucamonga, SBE, 12 Dec 2024–7 Apr 2025 (MPz†, TAB†§; 2024-126). One in formative plumage was at Lynch Canyon Open Space Park southwest of Cordelia, SOL, 8–13 December 2024 (EGM, ZP†; 2024-122) and another undergoing its first alternate molt was at Beacon Hill in Griffith Park, LA, 24 Dec 2024–26 Apr 2025 (ARB†; 2024-144). An adult at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve,

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SBE, 25 Apr 2021 (*EJ*†; 2021-182), identified from a photograph four years after the observation, was either a previously undetected wintering bird or an exceptionally rare spring migrant.

GREATER PEWEE *Contopus pertinax* (51, 1). One in formative plumage was at Hilltop Park, Chula Vista, SD, 7 Dec 2024–18 Apr 2025 (*AlH*†, *AN*†; 2024-121), and an adult along Ennisbrook Nature Trail in Montecito, SBA, 14 Dec 2024–1 Apr 2025 (*DVB*†; 2024-129) was returning for its second winter (2023-130; Benson et al. 2025b).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE *Contopus virens* (28, 9). An exceptional incursion of seven vocal individuals reached the California coast in June 2024, surpassing the five Eastern Wood-Pewees recorded in the state in June 1998 (CBRC 2007). The initial surge of six birds in early June included four in formative plumage at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, Point Loma, SD, 5–6 Jun 2024 (*AlH*†\$, *BR*\$; 2024-046) and 9–12 Jun 2024 (*PEL*, *JCa*†, *LC*†\$, *NJD*†; 2024-050), Huntington Central Park, ORA, 8–9 Jun 2024 (*LYW*\$, *TAB*†\$; 2024-048; Figure 7), and Dominguez Park in Redondo Beach, LA, 9–11 Jun 2024 (*DJB*†, *ARB*\$; 2024-049). Subsequently, an adult was at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area, SF, 11 Jun 2024 (*KLi*†\$; 2024-053), and a bird of unknown age was at Fairhaven, HUM, 11 Jun 2024 (*FF*\$, *RF*†\$, *GG*†; 2024-054). A later spring migrant in formative plumage was at Davenport SCZ, 29 Jun 2024 (*AMR*†\$; 2024-057). Given the early August date, one singing at Oak Grove



FIGURE 7. This adult Eastern Wood-Pewee at Huntington Central Park, Orange County (2024-048), was part of a remarkable incursion of this species along the California coast in June 2024.

Photo by Thomas A. Benson on 8 June 2024

Park in Ripon, SJ, 2–5 Aug 2024 (JGa†\$; 2024-068) was likely summering. One calling and singing at the fish docks along the Drakes Bay shore of Point Reyes, MRN, 10 Sep 2024 (EGM\$, DESS, MFd†\$; 2024-081) established the earliest date for a fall migrant in California by six days (2021-094; Terrill et al. 2024).

ALDER FLYCATCHER *Empidonax alnorum* (15, 3). Spring migrants included a silent bird in formative plumage at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, Point Loma, SD, 5 Jun 2024 (CAM†, AIH†, PEL, LR†; 2024-047; Figure 8) and a vocalizing adult at Piute Ponds, Antelope Valley, LA, 12 Jun 2024 (JSF†\$; 2024-055). Differences between the Alder and Willow Flycatcher (*E. traillii*) in the pattern of spacing of the primaries, recently described by Lee and Birch (2025), were critical in evaluating both of these records. Despite the San Diego bird being well-watched and photographed, it remained stubbornly silent. However, the contrasting plumage tones and general structural characteristics pointed towards the Alder, and the spacing of the primaries was consistent with that species, resulting in unanimous support by the committee. From the Piute Ponds, the committee endorsed only the documentation from 12 June as representing the Alder Flycatcher; photographs taken the following day showed a Willow Flycatcher, as identified by the spacing of the primaries and dull, buff wing bars. A vocalizing fall migrant in formative plumage was at the Point Reyes fish docks, MRN, 10 Sep 2024 (EGM†\$, DESS; 2024-082).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* (1, 0). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A *Phylloscopus* photographed at Neary Lagoon, SCZ, 8 Oct 2020 (2020-160) was not endorsed by the committee as a Willow Warbler and was subsequently re-evaluated as a Dusky Warbler (*P. fuscatus*; 2020-160A, see below).

DUSKY WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuscatus* (25, 1). With respect to the bird at Neary Lagoon, SCZ, 8 Oct 2020, originally reported but not accepted as a Willow

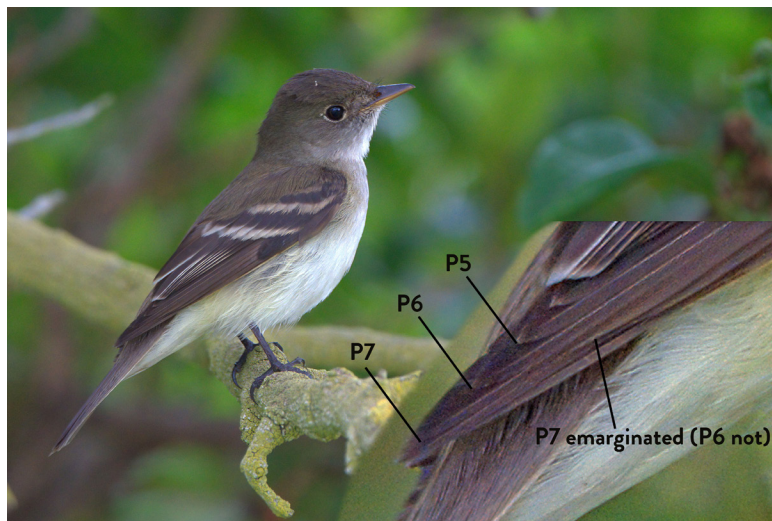


FIGURE 8. This photo of an Alder Flycatcher at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego County (2024-047), shows that the distance between the tips of primaries 7 and 6 is greater than that between the tips of primaries 6 and 5, supporting the identification as an Alder.

Photo by Curtis A. Marantz on 5 June 2024

Warbler (2020-160; see above), the committee re-evaluated and accepted it as a Dusky Warbler, the fourth for Santa Cruz County (*BRB*†; 2020-160A). The photos appeared to have a greenish cast causing the subject bird to show greenish upperparts and yellowish underparts, therefore inviting confusion with the Willow Warbler. These colors appeared to be an artifact of the photo or lighting, however, and other field marks including the supercilium meeting at a point in front of the bill, the plain wing coverts, secondaries, and evenly colored pink legs and feet helped to confirm the identification as a Dusky Warbler.

WINTER WREN *Troglodytes hiemalis* (53, 5). A spring migrant of unknown age was at La Motte Spring in the Argus Mountains, INY, 6 Apr 2024 (*AM*§; 2024-037). Fall migrants or wintering birds, all in formative plumage, were at Berkeley Meadows, ALA 24 Nov 2024–27 Mar 2025 (*ZD*†§, *JCT*†, *EGM*, *ER*§, *EY*†§; 2024-116); Muir Beach, MRN, 24–27 Nov 2024 (*LC*†§, *EGM*§; 2024-117); Camino Corto Open Space, Goleta, SBA, 4 Dec 2024–30 Jan 2025 (*AC*†§, *MLB*§; 2024-124); and the San Francisco Zoo, SF, 22 Dec 2024 (*AdH*†, *ZD*†§; 2024-131). IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: A purported returning bird photographed at Dry Creek Regional Park, STA, 26 Jan 2024 (2024-004) was not accepted by the committee. The photos did not conclusively eliminate a Pacific Wren (*T. pacificus*), and the wren apparently did not vocalize. While some Winter Wrens are identifiable by a combination of morphological characters (Freeland et al. 2026), clear audio recordings of the typical single or double-noted call are the most useful documentation for identifying individuals of these two species (Monk and Freeland 2026).

CURVE-BILLED THRASHER *Toxostoma curvirostre* (44, 2). Wintering birds included an adult at the Rio Bend RV & Golf Resort 3 km south of Seeley, IMP, 21 Oct 2024–2 Apr 2025 (*GM*, *JSt*†; 2024-100) and a bird in formative plumage at the Baker sewage ponds, SBE, 8 Nov 2024–5 Apr 2025 (*DESS*, *JSt*†; 2024-108).

BLUE ROCK-THRUSH *Monticola solitarius* (1, 1). California's first and North America's second recorded Blue Rock-Thrush was a stunning adult male of the East Asian subspecies *philippensis* on Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 25–28 Apr 2024 (*JWT*†, *ASp*, *HGW*†; 2024-029; Figure 9). Remarkably, this might be the same individual that was photographed on a beach at Hug Point, Oregon (800 km to the north) four days prior (Sanchez and Withgott 2024, Janzen 2025; see also Pyle et al. 2024). The earlier North American Blue Rock-Thrush, also a male of *philippensis*, was photographed in Goldpan Provincial Park, British Columbia on 6 June 1997 (McDonald 1997). It was accepted by the provincial records committee (Davidson 1999) but was not accepted by the ABA Checklist Committee because of concerns about its provenance (Robbins et al. 2003).

The Blue Rock-Thrush is widespread across the Palearctic from southern Europe and northwestern Africa east through much of Asia, and it winters south to the Sahara, Arabia, India, and southeast Asia (Vaurie 1959, Brazil 2009). *M. s. philippensis*, the male of which has chestnut underparts, is the most distinctive of the five described subspecies; it breeds from the Russian Far East south through Korea to northeast China and northern Japan. It winters from the southern part of the breeding range south and west to southeast Asia, the Philippines, Palau, and islands in eastern Indonesia (Collar 2020a). Ship assistance always needs to be considered for long-distance Eurasian migrants with little history of vagrancy to North America. Nevertheless, as *philippensis* undertakes a long-distance migration and has been recorded multiple times as a vagrant to New Guinea, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and mainland northeastern Australia (Menkhorst et al. 2017, T. Palliser pers. comm.), the committee considered it to be a viable candidate for natural vagrancy to California.

VEERY *Catharus fuscescens* (17, 2). Two Veeries were well documented in California's Sierra Nevada during June and July 2024. The first, at Lake Tallac, ED,



FIGURE 9. This adult male Blue Rock-thrush of the East Asian subspecies *Monticola solitarius philippensis*, with its distinctive chestnut underparts, was on Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco County (2024-029), 25–28 April 2024, furnishing a first California record.

Photo by Jason W. Talbott on 25 April 2024

10–11 Jun 2024 (EGM†, LYW†§; 2024-052), was the first recorded in El Dorado County. The second, a female at the Feather River mouth in Chester, PLU, 16 Jun–20 Jul 2024 (EM†§; 2024-056), built a nest and laid eggs; these eggs proved to be non-viable, but this does provide the first evidence for this species attempting to reproduce in California.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH *Catharus minimus* (27, 2). A Gray-cheeked Thrush in formative plumage at the Point Reyes Lighthouse, MRN, 16–18 May 2024 (CC†, RF†, DL†, EGM†; 2024-040) was only the fourth recorded in California in spring; it was significantly earlier than the state's three previous records between 28 May and 11 June. An adult at the 29 Palms Inn, Twentynine Palms, SBE, 19–27 Oct 2024 (JBo†, TAB†, MLB†, MAG†, AlH†; 2024-096) was a more typical fall migrant.

WOOD THRUSH *Hylocichla mustelina* (45, 2). In spring, Wood Thrushes are among the latest vagrants to California and are more likely to be found at desert oases than on the coast, thus one in formative plumage at Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley, INY, 2 Jun 2024 (CAD†; 2024-043) occurred at a typical date and location. A second Wood Thrush in coniferous forest along the Sherwin Lakes Trail near Mammoth Lakes, MNO, 29 Jun 2024 (JFi, TJH†; 2024-058), however, was a surprise find away from a traditional migrant trap.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* (1, 1). Providing an unexpected first record for California, a Song Thrush was captured and banded on Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 11–12 Nov 2024 (JRT, AdH†, NSc§; 2024-110; Figure 10). The Song Thrush breeds across Europe and northern Asia as far east as Lake Baikal in central Siberia and winters from western and southern Europe south to northern Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and southwestern Asia (Collar 2020b). In North America, there are fewer than 10 records from Alaska, of which three are for 2024, and only



FIGURE 10. An unexpected addition to California's avifauna, this Song Thrush was at Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco County, 11–12 November 2024 (2024-110). It represents just the second record of the Song Thrush for the coterminous United States and the third for North America away from Alaska.

Photo by Adrian Hinkle on 12 November 2024

two others away from Alaska: at Saint-Fulgence, Québec, 11–17 Nov 2006 (Auchu et al. 2007) and at Port Angeles, Washington, 12 Jan 2024 (S. Gremel, ebird.org/checklist/S158946747). The California Song Thrush represents one of the state's most extreme examples of long-distance vagrancy; it was in formative plumage, indicating a bird making its first migration.

RUFIOUS-BACKED ROBIN *Turdus rufopalliatus* (35, 2). Rufous-backed Robins included an adult in Shelter Valley, SD, 9 Feb–3 May 2024 (SHs†; 2024-008) and one in formative plumage at the Palo Verde Ecological Reserve, RIV, 24 Dec 2024–10 Jan 2025 (KMi†; 2024-137). California now averages about one Rufous-backed Robin every fall or winter, mirroring a recent trend of increased vagrancy to the southwestern United States.

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla tschutschensis* (22, 2). Two Eastern Yellow Wagtails visited California in fall 2024. An adult male at Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, LA, 21–23 Aug 2024 (KLa†, TAB†, MAG†; 2024-073), was the first adult documented in California; the relatively long white supercilium and narrow white submoustachial stripe suggest that it likely belonged to the nominate subspecies. The other, of undetermined age and sex, at Lake Isabella, KER, 22–23 Sep 2024 (AM†, SR†; 2024-085) was the first recorded in the interior of California or in Kern County. The CBRC acknowledges that most records of this species in California fail to rule out the Western Yellow Wagtail (*M. flava*), formerly regarded as conspecific, but has assumed they represent Eastern Yellow Wagtails on the basis of range and likelihood of occurrence in the state.

SIBERIAN PIPIT *Anthus japonicus* (21, 21). Following the split of the Siberian Pipit and American Pipit (*A. rubescens*) by the American Ornithological Society

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(Chesser et al. 2024), the CBRC began evaluating both current and historical records of the Siberian Pipit from California. As of September 2025, the committee has evaluated 36 records, endorsing 22 records of 21 individuals (Table 2), with an additional nine records pending review. The 21 accepted records reveal that this species is a casual fall migrant to coastal California between 9 October and 30 November, with records of 18 birds evenly split between northern and southern California. There is only one accepted record well inland away from the coast, of one at Mystic Lake, RIV, 23 Nov 2001 (2001-232; Lee and Birch 2002). There are two records of wintering (or likely wintering) birds, both from Los Angeles County: the first was at Griffith

TABLE 2 Siberian Pipits Accepted by the CBRC^a

Location	Date	Record no.	Observers
San Diego Co.			
Tijuana River valley ^b	26 Oct–11 Nov 1991	1991-238	GM, REW†
Tijuana River valley	11–13 Oct 2003	2003-215	GM, LS†
Kate O. Sessions Park	22–30 Nov 2003	2003-219	GM, BLS†
Tijuana River valley	9 Oct–12 Nov 2014	2014-195	GM, KR†
Orange Co.			
Harriet M. Wieder Park	1 Nov 2007	2007-313	JEP, BED
Riverside Co.			
Mystic Lake	23 Nov 2001	2001-232	C-TL
Los Angeles Co.			
Griffith Park	16 Dec 2020– 31 Jan 2021	2020-210	ARB, TAB†, CAD†, GS†
Griffith Park ^c	4 Nov 2021– 21 Feb 2022	2021-180	ARB, CAD†, GS†, JCS†
Griffith Park ^c	15 Nov–13 Dec 2022	2022-137	ARB, GS†
Ballona Wetlands	21–28 Dec 2024	2024-134	KLa†
Ventura Co.			
Casper Road, Oxnard	29 Oct–3 Nov 2001	2001-231	NL, ARB\$
Arnold Road, Oxnard	30 Oct 2008	2008-235	DVP†
San Luis Obispo Co.			
Oso Flaco Lake	19 Oct 2013	2013-298	TME†, CAM†
Monterey Co.			
Salinas water-treatment plant	13–15 Oct 2007	2007-312	OJ†, AJS, DVP†, BLS
Salinas water-treatment plant	29 Oct 2008	2008-234	BLS†
Salinas water-treatment plant	14 Oct 2023	2023-141	BLS†
Salinas water-treatment plant	12 Oct 2024	2024-142	AJS, STu†
Santa Cruz, Co.			
Wilder Ranch State Park	11 Nov 2014	2014-197	AMR
San Mateo Co.			
Redwood Shores	27–30 Oct 2008	2008-236	RST, KO†
San Francisco Co.			
Southeast Farallon Island	21–24 Oct 2013	2013-299	CR†
Alameda Co.			
Arrowhead Marsh	22–27 Oct 2013	2013-300	PB†, CL†, DM†
Oyster Bay Regional Shoreline	24 Nov 2016	2016-157	NA†
Mendocino Co.			
Alder Creek Beach	14–16 Oct 2003	2003-221	JRW

^a*n* = 1 bird unless noted otherwise.

^bTwo individuals.

^cReturning bird, same as 2020-210.

Park, 16 Dec 2020–31 Jan 2021 (2020-210) and returned for two subsequent winters (2021-180, 2022-137; Figure 11), while the second was at the Ballona Wetlands, 21–28 Dec 2024 (2024-134).

The Siberian Pipit breeds across much of eastern Russia, south to northern Mongolia and northeastern China, and winters in Japan, the Korean Peninsula, and from southern China west to northern India, northern Pakistan, and Israel (Shirihai 1996, Mlodinow et al. 2024). In North America it is a regular migrant in the western Aleutians and on Bering Sea islands (Gibson and Withrow 2015) but is otherwise a casual fall migrant along the Pacific coast. Its arrival in California often coincides with influxes of the Red-throated Pipit (*A. cervinus*; Lee and Birch 2002).

IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED: While some or even many historical reports may have been of birds correctly identified, in general these reports lacked substantive documentation. Some reports that were not accepted included substantial documentation, but the written descriptions or photos did not eliminate the American Pipit. As there is considerable overlap in appearance between these two species, the committee accepted only well-described or well-photographed Siberian Pipits that meet multiple identification criteria for this species (see Birch et al. 2024). Reports reviewed and not endorsed by the committee included those from Point Reyes, MRN, 7–18 Oct, 1989 (1991-241; Yee et al. 1992); Irvine, ORA, 25 Oct 1991 (1991-237; McCaskie 1992); Mission Bay, SD, 23 Nov 1991 (1991-239; McCaskie 1992); Abbotts Lagoon, MRN, 26 Jan 1993 (1993-215); Rush Creek Open Space Preserve near Novato, MRN, 25–26 Oct 2001 (2001-233); Las Posas Road sod fields in Oxnard, VEN, 24–26 Oct 2002 (2002-229); Santa Maria sewage-treatment plant, SBA, 17 Oct 2003 (2003-217); Moonglow Dairy near Moss Landing, MTY, 17 Nov 2003 (2003-218); Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, 24 Oct 2009 (2009-263); Zmudowski State Beach, MTY, 1–10 Nov 2014 (2014-196); White Slough water-treatment plant, SJ, 11 Feb 2019 (2019-218); Fiesta Island, Mission Bay, SD, 21 Nov 2019 (2019-219);



FIGURE 11. This Siberian Pipit (2022-137) returned for three winters between December 2020 and December 2022 to the John Ferraro Athletic Fields at Griffith Park, Los Angeles County. Most of the field marks useful for distinguishing this species from the American Pipit can be seen here: a thick black malar patch, thick and dense blackish streaking across the breast and flanks contrasting with white underparts, blackish median coverts with narrow white tips, and pink legs.

Photo by Naresh Satyan on 2 December 2022

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and Santa Cruz Island, SBA, 10 Oct 2022 (2022-139). The CBRC is unable to review two additional published reports because there is no extant documentation: Lake Tolowa, DN, 13 Oct 1989 (Erickson et al. 1990) and Bodega, SON, 10 Nov 1991 (Yee et al. 1992). Several more historical records are still undergoing review and will be addressed in a future report.

ORIENTAL GREENFINCH *Chloris sinica* (2, 1). Written documentation for an Oriental Greenfinch reported from Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 11 Oct 2008 was deemed insufficient to represent a first California record on its initial evaluation in 2009 (2008-161; Pike and Compton 2010). Since then, the pattern of vagrancy in Alaska's Bering Sea region (Kessel and Gibson 1978) has extended more widely in western North America, with five records from Yukon (Yukon Bird Club, /ebird.org/checklist/S123668069), southeastern Alaska (C. Wyatt, ebird.org/checklist/S90307643), British Columbia (Hentze 2017), Oregon (Herlyn 2022), and, following re-evaluation and acceptance of an earlier record, California (1986-450A; McCaskie et al. 2018). Given this, the committee voted at its January 2024 meeting to re-review the 2008 record. Upon re-evaluation, the committee considered the documentation for this record (MLB; 2008-161A) sufficient to endorse the bird's identification and natural occurrence, establishing a second record for California. The only two specimens of this species collected in North America are of the northeasternmost, migratory subspecies *C. s. kawarabiba* (Gibson and Withrow 2015).

CASSIA CROSSBILL *Loxia sinesciuris* (0, 0). **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** Large numbers of Red Crossbills (*L. curvirostra*) were encountered at Skylawn Memorial Park in Half Moon Bay, San Mateo County, during a widespread irruption of this species in fall 2023. Within a flock of up to 60 crossbills of several different call types were one or more birds giving flight calls thought to be consistent with the Cassia Crossbill, 26 Oct–16 Dec 2023 (2023-108). This species was considered endemic to the Albion Mountains and South Hills of southern Idaho but has recently been found in Colorado (Gent 2022). Outside experts agreed that field recordings most closely matched those of Cassia Crossbills recorded in the South Hills. After two rounds of voting, however, the majority of the committee concluded that there was too much uncertainty in the variation within crossbills' call types, that the recordings did not precisely match those classic for the Cassia Crossbill, and that details of the birds' morphology (e.g., bill size and shape) were not observed. Some members were also concerned about the likelihood of long-distance vagrancy in an ostensibly sedentary, range-restricted species.

SMITH'S LONGSPUR *Calcarius pictus* (15, 1). A male in formative plumage at "Mount Trashmore," Hayward Regional Shoreline, ALA, 16 Nov 2024 (KHⁱ, JCT[†], HF[†], MJR[†], ER[†]; 2024-112) was the first recorded in Alameda County.

FIELD SPARROW *Spizella pusilla* (27, 5). An unprecedented five Field Sparrows were found in California during 2024, all showing plumage consistent with the western subspecies, *S. p. arenacea*. One in formative or first alternate plumage at Griffith Park, LA, 29 Mar 2024 (MPy[†]; 2024-020) may have wintered locally. The remaining four late fall migrants or winter visitors included three in formative plumage, at Turnace Creek Ranch, INY, 18–21 Oct 2024 (EI[†], DES; 2024-094), at Pillar Point Harbor, SM, 26 Nov 2024–2 Mar 2025 (MLB[†], CH[†], EGM, JMo[†], ASi[†], SBT[†]; 2024-118), and along Indian Reservation Drive near Porterville, TUL, 15–29 Dec 2024 (JSe[†]; 2024-130), the last furnishing the first record for Tulare County. In addition, a Field Sparrow of unknown age was at Oso Flaco Lake, SLO, 30 Oct 2024 (HE[†]; 2024-105).

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH *Parkesia motacilla* (26, 1). An adult Louisiana Waterthrush wintered along a fast-flowing creek in the Santa Cruz Mountains at Mount Hermon, SCZ, 13 Jan–10 Feb 2024 (MFd[†], DL[†], SBT[†]; 2024-002). Only six

of California's 26 accepted Louisiana Waterthrushes have been wintering or likely wintering birds, this being the northernmost.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora chrysoptera* (93, 1). A male at San Clemente Island, LA, 3 Jun 2024 (BS; 2024-045) was a first for this well-watched location.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER *Vermivora cyanoptera* (58, 1). The only Blue-winged Warbler identified in 2024 was an adult female at Butterbrecht Spring, KER, 21 May 2024 (LYW†; 2024-041). This site has attracted no fewer than seven Blue-winged Warblers over the years, all in the spring and more than at any other location in California.

TROPICAL PARULA *Setophaga pitiayumi* (2, 1). California's second Tropical Parula, a singing male, was enjoyed by many in Big Dalton Canyon, LA, 12–14 May 2024 (JX†, TAB†; 2024-035). Surprisingly, what a majority of the committee inferred was the same individual, was refound at Switzer Picnic Area, LA, 18 Jun–26 Sep 2024 (EGM†, MAS†\$, JTS†; 2024-060; Figure 12), just over 30 km northwest of Big Dalton Canyon and also within the San Gabriel Mountains. This bird showed the characters of the west Mexican subspecies *S. p. pulchra* (Xia 2026, Figure 12). California's only other Tropical Parula wintered in Huntington Beach, ORA, 5 Jan–14 Feb 2018 (2018-001; Benson et al. 2020). Xia (2026) determined that the plumage and song of this individual better fit the east Mexican subspecies *S. p. nigrilora* (contra Benson et al. 2020). Xia (2026) detailed these records, as well as the distribution of this species and its occurrence in the western United States.

CAPE MAY WARBLER *Setophaga tigrina* (58**, 1). A well-described Cape May Warbler on Santa Rosa Island, SBA, 1–4 Oct 1974 (LJ; 1974-502) was found during the initial period in which the committee reviewed this species (1972–1974), but documentation was not submitted to the CBRC until the record's inclusion in an upcoming publication on the birds of the Channel Islands (Collins and Stahl 2026).

SLATE-THROATED REDSTART *Myioborus miniatus* (1, 1). One of the most surprising finds of 2024, the first Slate-throated Redstart for California, was enjoyed by many at Pine Lake Park, SF, 29 Jul–16 Sep 2024 (DM†, TAB†, MfD, LL†, GM, JMo†, PP, MJR†, RWR†, ASi†, LST†, SBT†, ANW†; 2024-065; Figure 13). The Slate-throated Redstart occurs in montane forests from northern Mexico to southern Bolivia with 12 described subspecies, which differ widely in ventral coloration. All records for the United States are attributable to the northern nominate subspecies, *M. m. miniatus*, which has deep vermilion red underparts (Harrod and Mumme 2022). While records of this colorful and widespread Neotropical warbler have increased over the past decade in the border region of the southwestern United States, especially in the mountains of southeastern Arizona and western Texas, few would have predicted that the first for California would come from a small urban park in coastal San Francisco in late summer. The bird underwent its second prebasic molt during its stay, and it sang frequently, implying it was a male. Mosur and Freeland (2025) provided a detailed account of this occurrence, including more detailed commentary on the bird's subspecific identification, hypotheses for its arrival in California, and the species' status and distribution in North America.

PYRRHULOXIA *Cardinalis sinuatus* (34, 1). A female patronized a feeder in Yucca Valley, SBE, 15 Jul 2024 (TS†; 2024-063).

YELLOW GROSBEEK *Pheucticus chrysopleus* (0, 0). **IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED:** The report of a Yellow Grosbeak briefly seen and incompletely described from urban Wheeler Park in Claremont, LA, 4 Aug 2024 (2024-070) failed to garner any support from the committee.



FIGURE 12. California's second Tropical Parula was a singing male, shown here at Switzer Picnic Area in the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles County (2024-060). The relatively broad white wing bars indicate the northwestern subspecies *Setophaga pititayumi pulchra*. Records of the Tropical Parula have been increasing across the southwestern United States in recent years, and this individual extends that trend to its northwesternmost extent.

Photo by Mark A. Scheel on 7 July 2024



FIGURE 13. California's 47th species of New World warbler, this male Slate-throated Redstart was found at Pine Lake Park, San Francisco County, on 29 July 2024 and remained for nearly seven weeks (2024-065). It represents, by far, the northernmost and westernmost occurrence of the Slate-throated Redstart.

Photo by Langtian Lang on 31 July 2024

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MISCELLANEOUS

The long-staying Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*) first seen at Southeast Farallon Island, SF, 25 Apr 12 (2012-058; Pike et al. 2014) was still present at the time of preparation of this report in April 2026.

CORRIGENDA

The committee wishes to correct several errors in its 47th (Terrill et al. 2024) and 48th (Benson et al. 2025a) reports. Italic print signifies corrected dates. In the 47th report, a Yellow-billed Loon (2021-099) was at Crescent City harbor, DN, 20 Sep–24 Oct 2021. A Short-tailed Albatross (2021-060) was in Monterey Bay, SCZ, 17–24 Jul 2021. Only four (not seven) Glossy Ibis were accepted, so the header for this account should read (46, 4). Three (not two) Roseate Spoonbills were accepted, so the header for this account should read (153, 3). In the 48th report, a Little Stint (2022-017; not accepted) was reported at Arcata Bottoms, HUM, on 17 Apr 2022, and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (2022-067) at Point Loma, SD, was present 5–7 Oct 2022.

The date range of a Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*) at Lake Havasu, SBE (2010-133; Johnson et al. 2012), is extended from 28 Mar 2002 to 4 Mar–8 Apr 2002 on the basis of documentation from Brennan Mulrooney and Nathan Moorhatch, and corresponding to the dates published in *North American Birds* (McCaskie and Garrett 2002). The late date for a Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Calidris subruficollis*) in the Tijuana River valley, SD (1991-001; Heindel and Garrett 1995), is extended by one day to 17–24 Nov 1990 on the basis of documentation from Paul Labhart. Likewise, the late date for a Greater Pewee in the Laguna Mountains, SD (2005-069; Iliff et al. 2007), is extended by one day to 11 Jun–4 Jul 2005 on the basis of documentation from Bob Henry.

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