

***Central Valley Bird Highlights:  
August 2004 through November 2004***

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**WATERBIRDS**

A **Pacific Loon** was on the O'Neil Forebay in Merced County on 12 November (JG) where they are rare but regular. Another **Pacific Loon** at Tulloch Reservoir on 31 October (JLu) was a first for Tuolumne County and a **Red-necked Grebe** found there that same day and present through the winter was a second record for both Tuolumne and Calaveras counties (JLu) (same location as the first record in 1995). A **Common Loon** at Lake Solano along Putah Creek on 5 November (RH, JH) was a rare find for Yolo County. A **Least Bittern** at the Consumnes River Preserve on 13 November (JT) was one of the latest fall records for the Central Valley. Eleven **Tundra Swans** at the Fresno Sewage Ponds on 21 November (JD, JSe) were rare for the San Joaquin Valley south of Merced County. A **Tundra Swan** in the foothills of Tuolumne County on 30 October (FO) was a county first and seen for about two weeks afterward by many birders. A male **Barrow's Goldeneye** at the Merced River in Mariposa County (just east of the Merced County line) on 8-30 November (JLu, JS) was only the second record for the county, but at a site where the first record was found in 2002. Along the Sacramento River in Redding, two **Surf Scoters** were found, a female on 15 November (TE, BD) and an immature male on 23-30 November (RB, BD), along with three-four female **Red-breasted Mergansers**. These species are becoming regularly (annually) reported from this area in Shasta County. Another female **Surf Scoter** at Black Butte Reservoir on 19 November (JLo) was a first record for Tehama County. A **Long-tailed Duck** shot by a hunter at the Mendota Wildlife Area on 30 October (fide JT) was a first record for Fresno County. A **Sora** near Copperopolis in the foothills on 8 November (JLu) was a first record for Calaveras County. The Fresno Sewage Ponds hosted a few good shorebirds included a **Pacific Golden-Plover**, a **Red Knot** and a **Reeve** (female Ruff) on 11 October (BB), and the former two species on 16 October (PS). Another **Reeve** was along Sante Fe Grade Road near Los Banos on 6 October (MR) in Merced County. A late **Pectoral Sandpiper** was found in the Vic Fazio Wildlife Area on 13 November (KG) in Yolo County. A juvenile **Long-tailed Jaeger** at Lagoon Valley from 5-9 September (RMu+) was seen by many during its stay and was one of few records for Solano County. An unidentified dark morph **jaeger** was at Black Butte Reservoir on 6 September (BD) and was a first record of a jaeger for Tehama County. A **Western Gull** on the O'Neil Forebay in Merced County on 9 October to 12 November (PM, KVV, JG) was at one of the few locations where they are regularly found away from the coast and coastal bays. A very early adult **Western Gull** was discovered at the Davis Wetlands on 24 August (SH) and was seen by many

for weeks thereafter. A **Glaucous-winged Gull** at the Sacramento NWR on 21 November (RF) was one of few records for Glenn County. A 2nd-cycle **Mew Gull** was at Kutras Lake along the Sacramento River in Redding on 23 November (BD) where it is becoming increasingly reported but is still relatively rare in Shasta County. A **Common Tern\*** at the Woodland Sewage Ponds on 6 October (RH) was only the sixth record for Yolo County. Another **Common Tern** flying around Camanche Reservoir on 13 September (JS) was a first county record for both Amador and Calaveras counties.

## LANDBIRDS

The bird of the season was the return of the **Common Black Hawk\*** to Lodi on 1 October (VS) where it stayed through the winter and was seen and photographed by many. It was seen by only one birder and photographed during the previous winter. If accepted by the California Bird Records Committee, this would be only the third state record and the first for Northern California and the Central Valley. An immature **Band-tailed Pigeon** near Los Banos on 16 October (KVV) was a rare find on the valley floor. An injured **Flammulated Owl** found in Benicia was brought into the Lindsay Museum on 29 October (fide RL) for the first record for Solano County and one of few for a migrant of this elusive species. An **Eastern Phoebe\*** at the Consumnes River Preserve (ML, JT+) was found on 13 November and seen by many through the winter and was a first for Sacramento County. An immature male **Vermilion Flycatcher\*** at the Consumnes River Preserve on 10 October (JT) was the first of several found in the Central Valley this winter and an adult male was found at Los Banos Wildlife Area on 29 November (LS) in an area where one wintered the previous year. A **Sage Thrasher\*** was at the Rancho Seco Park on 10-13 November (HG+) for a good Sacramento County record. Lagoon Valley was the site of many great records this fall including a **Least Flycatcher** on 3-9 September (JLu, EH) for the first record for Solano County, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** on 9 September (JS, EH) for the fourth county record, and the county's first waterthrush on 10 September (TE) that was photographed and may prove to be a **Louisiana Waterthrush** that, if accepted by the California Bird Records Committee, would be a first Central Valley record. A **Tennessee Warbler** along the Kings River on 24 September (AD) was a first record for Kings County. The American River Parkway at the Gristmill area proved to be a magnet for vagrants as a **Blackpoll Warbler\*** was found on 28-29 September along with a **Chestnut-sided Warbler\*** from 28 September to 2 October (JLa+). A **Blackpoll Warbler\*** was along Putah Creek at Pedrick Road on 1-2 October (RH, JS) in both Solano and Yolo counties. A **Palm Warbler\*** at the end of Vail Road on 30 October (TE) was one of few records for San Joaquin County. A **Virginia's Warbler** at Turlock Lake on 13 November (JG) was one of few records for the Central Valley and a first for Stanislaus County. Adding to the impressive list of vagrant landbirds

found at the campground on O'Neil Forebay in Merced County was a **Black-and-white Warbler** on 6 October (KVV) and an **Indigo Bunting** on 16 September (ST). Another **Black-and-white Warbler\*** was found at the Consumnes River Preserve on 20 September (JT).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** at the Vic Fazio Wildlife Area on 10-30 November (SH+) was only the fourth winter record for Yolo County. This species may prove to be regular in winter at scattered locations in the Central Valley, if it wasn't so difficult to survey. Studies in Arizona have shown that they stay in one small patch of grassland throughout the winter. A **Brewer's Sparrow** at Tuolumne River Reg Park in Modesto on 3 September (EP+) was a rare find in Stanislaus County. A **Swamp Sparrow\*** was discovered at the Consumnes River Preserve near the Visitor Center on 18 November (HG) and seen through the month. An immature **Harris Sparrow\*** at the Colusa NWR on 26 November (RF) was a first record for Colusa County, and another was in southern Shasta County on 29 November (RMo). A **Chestnut-collared Longspur\*** on Staten Island on 30 October (TE) was a first record for San Joaquin County.

\* Pending endorsement by the Sacramento Bird Records Committee

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