

Figures 1 and 2. Semipalmated Sandpipers (*Calidris pusilla*) found in early to mid-July are adults (above). They migrate south prior to the first juveniles, which don't arrive in the Central Valley until late July. This adult, photographed on 13 July 2010, was one of six found this summer at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Yolo County. One of a number of juveniles (below) found at the same location later in the fall was photographed on 22 August 2010. Nicely shown in these images is the difference between the patchwork mix of darker, worn alternate (breeding) plumage feathers and paler, rounded basic (non-breeding) plumage feathers on back and wing coverts of the adult, compared to the uniform pattern of fresh, pale-fringed feathers (first basic plumage) on the juvenile.

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## Rare Bird Highlights for the Central Valley in 2010

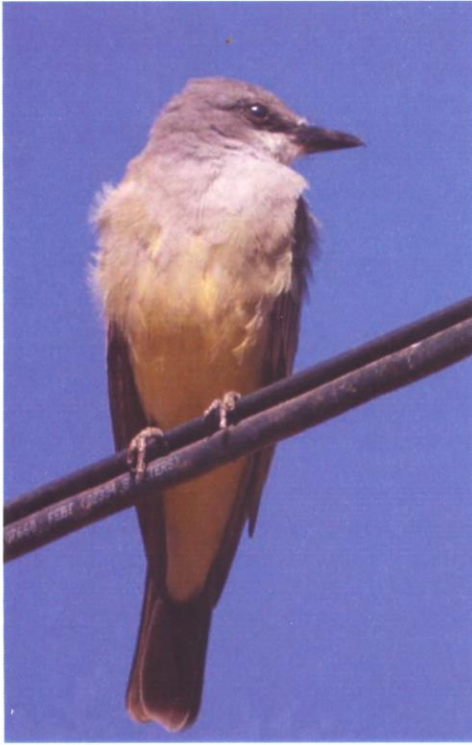
John Sterling, 26 Palm Avenue, Woodland, CA 95965

We here present our annual selection of photos of some of the rare bird highlights of the past year. We'd like to encourage as many Central Valley bird photographers as possible to submit their photos of rarities encountered in the coming months for possible use in this feature in 2011. Please send photographs to the photo editor, Dan Brown (see the inside front cover for the address).



Figure 3. This American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*), photographed against a backdrop of Black-bellied Plovers (*Pluvialis squatarola*) at the Fresno Wastewater Treatment Plant on 19 November 2010, established the first documented record for Fresno County. Clearly visible in this photo is the longer primary extension in the folded wing of this species (as compared to the shorter-winged Pacific Golden-Plover [*P. fulva*]), with four primary tips extending beyond the tertials.

photo © 2010 Gary Woods



Figures 4 (left). Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*) is a sparse and very locally distributed species on the edge of the San Joaquin Valley. One near Capay, Yolo County, was unprecedented in the Sacramento Valley and established a first county record from 15 October thru 21 November 2010.

photo © 2010 John Sterling

Figure 5 (below). Amazingly, Yolo County also scored its first record of a Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*), one found in Davis on 20 November 2010 and staying for over a month. This photograph was taken on 22 December.

photo © 2010  
Daniel Lee Brown







Figure 6. Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) is a very rare winter visitor to the valley floor. This bird was photographed in Sacramento, Sacramento County, in December 2010.  
*photo © 2010 Chris Conard*



Figure 7. A rare vagrant from the east, this Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*), photographed on 14 January 2010, wintered at Noon Park near Buena Vista Lake, Kern County.  
*photo © 2010 Ken Kyle*



Figure 8. American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) is a rare visitor to the Central Valley. This first-year male was singing in southern Yolo County on 5 June 2010.



Figure 9. Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) is a rare winter visitor to the Central Valley. This bird was photographed in Redding, Shasta County, on 25 March 2010.

photos © 2010 John Sterling





Figure 10. The Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) is a rare Siberian vagrant found annually in the Central Valley. Most records for California are during fall migration, but the Central Valley gets 1-3 each winter. This reeve (female Ruff) was photographed at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Yolo County, in March 2010.

photo © 2010 Todd Easterla



Figure 11. Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) was extirpated from the Central Valley, but has been making a comeback in recent years. This singing male, photographed on 16 April 2010, was one of 3-4 birds found at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Yolo County, through the summer.

photo © 2010 Ed Harper

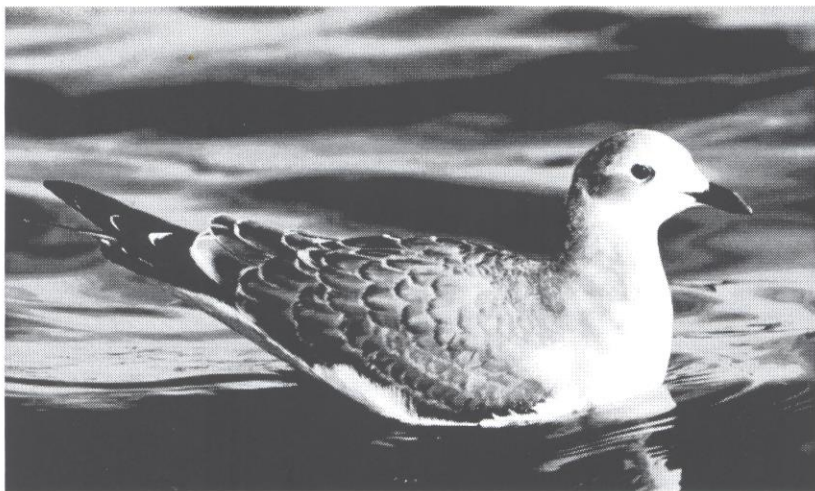


Figure 12. Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) is a pelagic migrant off the California coast, but a few are found inland during fall migration. This juvenile was at the Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant, Yolo County, on the late date of 28 October 2010.



Figure 13. Least Terns (*Sternula antillarum*) have bred in the past two years at the Sacramento County Bufferlands, where this juvenile was foraging on 17 August 2010.  
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