

Short Notes

A Bay-breasted Warbler in Butte County -- On 16 October 1998, I visited the Feather River Fish Hatchery at Oroville, Butte County, to scout for a field trip I would be leading there at Thanksgiving. At about 1100, while walking around the exhibits and admiring the amazing salmon run, I heard a flock of Bushtits (*Psaltriparus minimus*) in sycamores and understory brush along the river immediately west of Bridge Street. I attracted the birds into view with a variety of pishes and squeaks, and found that the flock included Ruby-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus calendula*) and, astonishingly, a Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*). The bird was well seen through 10X 42 Bausch & Lomb binoculars at distances of 30-70 ft. for perhaps three of the fifteen minutes I was with the flock.

DESCRIPTION: This was a brightly-colored bird and no other species was seriously considered as a possibility. It was obviously a wood warbler based on size, behavior and appearance. The bold, white wing bars, lime-green crown and back (with black streaking) and "bay," almost pink, sides and flanks drew my attention. The upper breast was bright, soft yellow, clear of any dark, blurry streaks as would be present on Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*). The belly was white, merging into buff undertail coverts. The face was green, as was the crown, and was almost featureless except for a paler yellow supercilium that was narrow, short, and weakly defined. The ventral surface of the closed tail was largely white, due to the large white spots in the outer rectrices. The legs and feet were black. The bird was slow-moving for a *Dendroica* and stayed mostly in the sycamores, even when the rest of the flock was working the understory. It did not vocalize.

I have much experience with Bay-breasted Warblers but my autumn experiences are limited to about ten individuals, most at Point Reyes, Marin County. At least three of those individuals were brightly-colored like the Oroville bird, which I suspect was a first-year male. This is a first record for Butte County and one of few records for the Central Valley. -- *Rich Stallcup, P. O. Box 36, Inverness, CA 94937.*