

Notes

First Record of Pacific Golden-Plover In Butte County— On 5 April 2003, Luke Cole and I were birding our way through Glenn and Butte counties. It was an overcast and very cold day for April. We had birded Glenn County in the morning and were birding Butte County in the afternoon. We were on the observation platform at the Llano Seco Unit of Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge along Seven Mile Road at 1500, scanning through the shorebirds and ducks, when we found a Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*). Other shorebirds present included Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*), Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*), dowitchers (*Limnodromus* spp.), Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*), and Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*).

The Pacific Golden-Plover immediately stood out from the Black-bellied Plovers present. It had golden upperparts and was much smaller, slimmer and lankier than the Black-bellied Plovers. It was in nearly complete breeding plumage with a black face (except for a cream-colored supercilium), black throat, chest, and belly. A few very small areas of white feathering scattered on the belly and breast were seen when the bird faced us. There was a narrow band of white continuing along the sides and flanks from the cream-colored supercilium to the undertail coverts. This white band did not have the expanded areas of white on the sides of the breast typical of American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*). The white sides and flanks contained a few flecks of black feathering, as did the otherwise white undertail coverts. The bill was black and the legs were dark, as was the eye. No calls were heard.

A Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) flying in the area continually seemed to flush up the shorebirds present. In flight, the upperparts of the Pacific Golden-Plover had an overall golden brown appearance. The lack of white uppertail coverts (i. e., no white rump) and the even gray underwings with no black axillaries were evident as it flew. The toes extended beyond the tip of the tail.

This is the first record of Pacific Golden-Plover for Butte County (see Snowden, Annotated Bird List for Butte County, California: Altacal Audubon Society, 2001). — John Luther, 6511 Exeter Drive, Oakland, CA 94611.