

## 1995 Report of the Sacramento Bird Records Committee

The Sacramento Bird Records Committee (SBRC) reviews records of unusual birds reported within the boundaries described by the *Checklist of the Birds of the Sacramento Area* (published by Sacramento Audubon Society; most recently revised in 1993). Current members of the SBRC are Ted Beedy, Bruce Deuel, Ed Greaves, Ed Harper, Jeri Langham, Tim Manolis, John Trochet, and David Yee.

Bird species, reports of which the SBRC accepts for review, include those previously unreported for the area, those listed as of accidental occurrence on the *Checklist*, and certain other species of casual occurrence or difficult to identify, indicated on the *Checklist* by asterisks (see the *Checklist* for details). The SBRC also reviews records for the small bit of Sacramento County that lies south of the southern boundary of the *Checklist* (Highway 12) and, occasionally, records from just outside other area boundaries. The committee also evaluates records of unseasonable occurrence, especially reports of birds

found on local Christmas Bird Counts (e. g., Yellow Warbler, Hooded Oriole, Ash-throated Flycatcher) which are normally present locally only in summer or on migration.

This article presents the committee's decisions since June 1994 and as of December 1995. Of the 40 records reviewed in that period, 33 (82.5%) have been accepted, 3 (7.5%) not accepted, and 4 (10%) have been held over for recirculation because of split votes (votes of 8-0 or 7-1 constitute acceptance; votes of 6-2, 5-3, or 4-4 trigger recirculation; votes of 3-4 or less constitute non-acceptance). The number in parentheses preceding a record listed below is the record number, and indicates when the record was received (e. g., number 24-86 was the twenty-fourth record received in 1986).

The SBRC continues to thank all those who have submitted reports for their patience. Don't be discouraged if you don't see your submitted observation(s) here; we'll get to them all eventually.

Tim Manolis

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### REPORTS ACCEPTED

**Stilt Sandpiper** -- (16-87), one at the Woodland Sugar Ponds, Yolo Co., 29 July 1987; (21-87), one at the Sacramento Metro Airport Sewage Ponds, Sacramento Co., 24-25 September 1987; (40-87), one at the Woodland Sugar Ponds, 1-4 August 1987; (6-90), one at the Davis Sewer Ponds, Yolo Co., 1 September 1990.

Three reports in 1987 are more than usual for one season, but the species is now of almost annual occurrence in Yolo County. Records 16-87 and 40-87 are unusual for being of adults, however, as well as our earliest local dates. 21-87 is the first record accepted for Sacramento County.

**Ruff** -- (15-87), one seen at the Woodland Sugar Ponds, 25 July 1987; (32-92), one at Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, San Joaquin Co., 6-13 November 1987; (33-92), one at Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, 7-17 February 1987; (14-93) one at the Cosumnes River Preserve, Sacramento Co., 31 March-1 April, 1993.

Only one local record of a Ruff (from Yolo Co.) existed prior to 1987, which was obviously a banner year. Records 33-92 and 32-92 are first and second records for San Joaquin Co.; 14-93 is the first for Sacramento Co.

**Glaucous Gull** -- (24-87), one at the Davis Landfill, Yolo Co., 3 December 1987; (12-90), one at the Davis Landfill, 22 December 1990; (17-91), one along the American River at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, Sacramento Co., 27 December 1991; (8-92), one at the Davis Sewer Ponds, Yolo Co., 18 January 1992; (36-92), one on Staten Island, San Joaquin Co., 4 February 1989.

As the above records demonstrate, Glaucous Gulls have become annual visitors to our area in recent years, with most reports from the Davis Landfill-Sewer Pond complex. The first three records listed were identified as first-year birds, the latter two as second-year birds.

**Red-naped Sapsucker** -- (39-92), one at Van Assen Park, Camanche Dam, San Joaquin Co., 29 December 1990; (40-92), one at South Camanche State Park, Calaveras Co., 29 December 1991.

Records of this form seem particularly difficult to evaluate because of apparent individual variation in some of the key features of the head pattern and because of its intermediate position (morphologically) between Yellow-bellied and Red-breasted sapsuckers. Hybrids within this group, a number of which have been seen locally, further complicate the picture.

Record 39-92 is an interesting case in point. It was accepted by a 7-1 vote, the lone dissenter citing the observer's mention of red flecks in the black area separating crown and nape as suggestive of hybridization with Red-breasted Sapsucker. That black feathering completely encircled the red throat patch, however, would suggest hybridization with Yellow-bellied Sapsucker! The genetic influence of all three forms in one individual, while perhaps not impossible, seems highly unlikely, and in all other particulars the description fit Red-naped Sapsucker. Needless to say, sapsucker taxonomy and identification merit further study.

Record 39-92 is the second for San Joaquin Co., and 40-92 may well be the first for Calaveras Co.

**Hammond's Flycatcher** -- (25-88), one at Reichmuth Park, Sacramento Co., 20 October 1988.

Like the following two species, this is no doubt a regular migrant through our area, but accumulation of well-documented reports is useful in understanding the relative timing of migration of various *Empidonax* flycatchers through the region.

**Dusky Flycatcher** -- (15-88), one at Paradise Beach, American River Parkway, Sacramento Co., 30 April 1988.

**Gray Flycatcher** -- (24-92), one at Lodi Lake Wilderness Area, San Joaquin Co., 10 April 1986.

Eastern Phoebe -- (6-93), one in Davis, Yolo Co., 26 January-14 March 1993, 27 February-8 March 1994, and 13 November 1994-18 March 1995.

Despite the fact that apparently the same bird spent parts of three winters at the same location and was seen by many birders, only one observer submitted documentation (written description and photos). This is the first record for Yolo Co. and the *Checklist* area.

Ash-throated Flycatcher -- (2-90), one at American River College, Sacramento Co., 18 February 1990.

Though a fairly common local breeder, it is accidental in winter, when care should be taken to eliminate other *Myiarchus* flycatchers.

Townsend's Solitaire -- (12-91), one found dead in Sacramento, Sacramento Co., 19 November 1991.

There were a number of reports of this species in the winter of 1991-92.

Northern Shrike -- (50-85), one in the Yolo Bypass near Elkhorn Ferry, Yolo Co., 1-13 January 1985; (51-85), one at Sailor Bar, American River Parkway, Sacramento Co., on 7 December 1985.

Record 50-85 was of an immature bird; record 51-85, of an adult. The account of the Sailor Bar bird mentions another Northern Shrike, in immature plumage, present near that location on the same date, but documentation for this bird has never reached the SBRC.

Chestnut-sided Warbler -- (35-92), one at Lodi Lake Wilderness Area, San Joaquin Co., 1 September 1989.

The first record for San Joaquin County.

Black-throated Gray Warbler -- (5-88), one along the Garden Highway near Sacramento, Sacramento Co., on 27 December 1987.

Blackpoll Warbler -- (25-92), one at Lodi Lake Wilderness Area, San Joaquin Co., 25 September 1987; (25-93), one in Davis, Yolo Co., 18 June 1993.

The Lodi Lake bird was a first for San Joaquin Co. The Davis bird was a singing male.

Brewer's Sparrow -- (29-86), one on the Folsom Lake Peninsula, El Dorado Co., 16 May 1986; (5-91), one along Dry Creek east of Galt, Sacramento Co., 18 April 1991; (27-93), one at Rancho Seco Park, Sacramento Co., 15 May 1991.

This nondescript sparrow is probably a rare but regular spring migrant through the area, but is easily overlooked.

Black-throated Sparrow -- (13-93), one on the Spenceville Wildlife Area, Yuba Co., 22 March 1993.

This is perhaps the first record for Yuba County.

Swamp Sparrow -- (7-93), one at the Elkhorn Pumping Station near the Sacramento Metro Airport, Sacramento Co., 22 January-7 February 1993.

The first record for Sacramento County.

Harris' Sparrow -- (28-93), one along the American River Parkway near the Mayhew Drain, Sacramento Co., 4-17 February 1989.

Red Crossbill -- (20-90), five seen in Granite Bay, Placer Co., 29 December 1990.

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#### REPORTS NOT ACCEPTED

Hammond's Flycatcher -- (52-92), one in Davis, Yolo Co., 12 September 1992.

The description was suggestive of this species, but was insufficient to rule out other *Empidonax* flycatchers (especially Least Flycatcher, which is a distinct, if less likely, possibility).

Western Kingbird -- (1-92), 8-10 along Scott Road, Sacramento Co., 28 December 1991.

A single Western Kingbird in winter would be unprecedented, so 8-10 are mind-boggling. The very skimpy description, however, does not support the identification.

Red Crossbill -- (10-88), five seen in Sacramento, Sacramento Co., 24-26 February 1988.

The observers may indeed have seen this species, but quite simply failed to describe the birds.

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The following observers kindly submitted reports evaluated herein: Ted Beedy, Gil Ewing, Ed Greaves, Waldo Holt, Joan Humphrey, Richard Jones, John Kemper, Jeri Langham, Tim Manolis, Ralph McCormick, Michael Perrone, Judy Whitcombe, Brian Williams, Fenton Williams, Jr., Roger Willmarth, David Yee.