WASHINGTON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
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"...to increase our knowledge of the birds of Washington and to enhance communication among all persons interested in those birds."

'Hawks' author Bill Clark is featured speaker Feb. 13th at Poncho Theater

Bill Clark, author of the Peterson Series' A Field Guide to Hawks of North America, will speak on "the state of the art in raptor field identification" at the Feb. 13th WOS Seattle-area meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Poncho Theater at Woodland Park. Please note the different date and location. He and his book will be available for autographs starting at 7 p.m.

The event is being widely publicized, so expect a crowd. The theater is at the south entrance to the park on N. 50th Street. Exit I-5 at 50th, head west to Fremont Ave., and turn right into the large parking lot. A $1 donation will be sought to cover costs.

Clark will be participating in Falcon Research Group's annual raptor count Feb. 11-12, and Bud Anderson arranged for him to speak to WOS.

Clark is a well-known author and photographer with over 25 years experience with raptors. He's banded about 88,000 raptors at New Jersey's Cape May, has served for five years as director of The National Wildlife Federation's Raptor Information Center, and is director of "Raptours," a birding tour company.

Clark has a new book, a North American photo guide to raptors, coming in the spring. He is also working on a European and African hawk guide.

WOS dues rising

Rising publication costs and a more ambitious publishing schedule will require increasing WOS dues for the first time in the organization's history. The WOS Board voted to raise individual dues to $20 a year and families to $30. Journal issues (you should receive Washington Birds No. 3 shortly) now cost over $3700 each to produce and mail, and the newsletter runs about $4500 annually. The "savings" we have accumulated in recent years will be substantially eroded when journal No. 4 is produced in mid-1995. Journal No. 5 is planned for this December.

'Good' birds flock to the Lower Columbia Basin

Andy Stepniewski

Ross' Gull, Garganey, Pacific Loons, Tufted Duck, jaegers, plovers, phalaropes and warblers—the list of "good" birds seen in the Lower Columbia Basin in 1994 and early 1995 is impressive indeed.

Phil Bartley found the adult Ross' Gull, the Bird of the Year for Washington, on November 28th on the Columbia River at the McNary Dam—conveniently flying back and forth across the mid-river state line. This charismatic and very beautiful bird lingered until December 1st, allowing it to be seen and photographed by many. It was a first record for Washington and a second record for Oregon.

Bob Woodley discovered a female Garganey on December 15th at the entrance to the Richland yacht basin on the Columbia River. This Eurasian vagrant would cap off a great year for the Colum- Continued on page 13
Washington Field Notes Aug. 1 to Nov. 30, 1994
Compiled by Russell Rogers

All dates are 1994 except where otherwise noted. Thanks to everyone who took the time to send in sightings. Please send any corrections or omissions to me for inclusion in future reports. The next field notes will cover the period between 12/1/94 and 3/31/95, and will be printed in the June 1995 WOSNEWS.

Corrections and additions to the April 1 - July 31, 1994, Field Notes

Sandhill Crane: 1 over the Everett STP, SN, on 4/22 was seen by Fran Wood.
Greater Yellowlegs: 1, not an American Golden-Plover as stated, was at the Winchester Wasteway & Dodson Rd., GR, on 8/10 (DP).
Common Poorwill: 6 on 6/7 were seen by Carol Vande Voorde.
Black-backed Woodpecker: Wenatchee Guard Station is in AS, not in GA. A pair, not a single bird, was on Mt. Salmo, PO, on 7/17 (BW).

Green-tailed Towhee: Wenatchee Guard Station is in AS, not in GA.
Clay-colored Sparrow: Only 1 brood, not 2 as stated, was produced at Spokane, SP (JA).
Golden-crowned Sparrow: 1 noted as being present for the first two weeks of May in Richland, BE, was seen only on 5/1 (BW).

Field Notes: Aug. 1 to Nov. 30, 1994

Red-throated Loon: Rare in e WA, 1 on Palmer L, OK, on 10/8 (MP&FP).
Pacific Loon: Uncommon in e WA: 1 at Blue L, GR, on 10/4 and 3 there on 10/22 (AS); 1 on Palmer L, OK, on 10/8 (MP&FP); 1 of Vantage, KT, on 10/22 (AS); 2 at Priest Rapids, BE, on 10/23 (AS); 2 on Park Lake, GR, on 10/28 (JA); 2 at L Libore, GR, on 10/29 (MD&MID); 1 near Nelson Is, BE, on 10/13 and 10/26 (BW); and 2 at McNary Dam, on 11/28 (KK).

Common Loon: The first report for se WA was 1 at Sacajawea SP, FR, on 9/18 (TG). An exceptionally high count for the interior was 156 along the Coulee lakes of GR, on 10/22 (AS).
Yellow-billed Loon: 1 in alternate plumage at Point Roberts, WC, on 9/11-15 (fide MPr). 1 at Saratoga Passage, near LaConner, SK, on 11/14 (fide BK). 2 at Ft. Canby SP, PA, on 11/13 through at least 11/30 (MPa).
Red-necked Grebe: First report for the Columbia Basin was 5 at Confluence SP, 9/3 (PMA). Uncommon in the Tri-Cities area, 1 at Richland, BE, on 9/29 and 10/8 (BW), and 1 at Kennewick, BE, on 10/23 (PB).
Eared Grebe: Uncommon in both places, 1 off March Point, SK, on 9/25 (SA) and 1 at McNary NWR, WW, on 11/12 (MD&MID).
Clark’s Grebe: Reports from w WA included: 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 10/3 (GH&WHO); 1 at Ediz Hook, CL, on 10/16 (SM&NB); 1 at Fern Cove, Vashon Is, KJ, on 10/23 (RSh); 3 at Westport, GH, on 11/1 (GH&WHO); and 1 at Illwaco, PA, on 11/13 (MPS). In w WA: 1 at Yakima RD, BE, on 8/14 (PB) and 2 there on 8/15 (BW); 1 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 9/11 (MD); and 1 at Kennewick, BE, on 10/28 (DR).
Laysan Albatross: 1 off Westport, GH, on 9/11 (TW).
Buller’s Shearwater: The first fall report was 1 off Westport, GH, on 8/20, with a peak count of 79 on 10/8 (TW).
Flesh-footed Shearwater: 1 on 9/16 and 2 on 10/8 off Westport, GH (TW).
Short-tailed Shearwater: Rare but regular visitor to Puget Sound, 2 seen at very close range, off Point No Point, KS, on 11/18 (VN).
Manx Shearwater: 1 on 8/20 (RR&T) and 1 on 8/27 (GH) off Westport, GH. Neither report was well documented.
Leach’s Storm-Petrel: 1 without supporting details off Alki Point, Seattle, KJ, on 10/8 (fide EH).
American White Pelican: North of their normal range in the Columbia Basin, 12 at White Stone L, near Elllisford, OK, on 8/24 (MP&FP). High counts were 50 at Sprague L, AD, on 10/4 and 60 at Pasco, FR, on 9/26 (TS). Rare but regular visitors to w WA, 1 at Olympia, TH, on 9/24 (MCh) and 5 over Mercer Is, KJ, on 10/4 (fide EH).
Brown Pelican: A high count of 435 at Bottle Beach, GH, on 9/6 (BR,GR&TK). Up to 25 still lingered at Westport, GH, on 11/1 (GH&WHO). Uncommon in the waters of Puget Sound: an imm was in Olympia, TH, on 9/26 for a first county record (MC, MB); 1 flew s past Point No Point, KS, on 9/30 (VN), and 1 at Svinominip Slough, near LaConner, SK, on 10/29, also a first county record (fide JW&KW).
Great Egret: Reported in average or slightly larger numbers than usual. 9 at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 8/5 (LH), 18 on 8/28 (JT), 30 on 8/31 (fide JE), 50 on 9/2 (LH&JE), 20 on 11/3 (LH), and 10 on 11/5 (BT,SP&SM). 15 were at Leadbetter Point, PA, on 9/18 (DP). Uncommon in w WA outside of the lower Columbia R and the outer coast: 1 was at Dungeness, CL, on 8/29-30 (LJ); 1 was at March Point, SK, on 8/29 (KK&DSt) through 9/11 (fide BK); 1 at Nisqually NWR, TH, on 8/26 (DP) through at least 9/20 (MM); 1 on Bainbridge Is, KS, on 9/3 (GG); 1 at Deer Lagoon, IS, on 9/11 (SM); and 1 at the Kent Ponds, KI, on 9/11 (EH) through at least 9/28 (BS). In the Tri-Cities area, where uncommon but regular in the fall, the first migrant at Yakima RD, BE, was 1 on 8/15 (BW), and a very high count there was 92 on 9/5 (BW&TG).
Cattle Egret: This species is continuing a pattern of interior penetrations, with few w WA lowland incursions. A record concentration for WA was 28 near Othello, AD, on 10/26-28 (RH). 1 e of Pateros, OK, on 10/28 (DSw). 1 at Marymoor Park, Redmond, KI, on 11/15 (BD).
Green Heron: Uncommon in w WA, 1 at Crow Butte State Park, BE, on 8/20, (MD&MID), and 1 at Vantage, KT, on 8/27 (BT).
Black-crowned Night-Heron: Post-breeding movements of this species are poorly understood outside of its main breeding areas in the Columbia Basin: 3 imm at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 8/15 (BW) with 4 (1 ad, 2 second year, and 1 imm) there on 8/17 (JE). 1 at Roosevelt Park, KL, on 9/18 (MC,MB); 1 flew s past Point No Point, KS, on 9/30 (VN); and 1 at Swinomish Slough, near LaConner, SK, on 10/29, also a first county record (fide JW&KW).
Tundra Swan: Noteworthy outside of its regular wintering areas in nw and sw WA: 4 at the Kent Ponds, KI, on 10/15 (DV); 160 at Reardan, LI, on 11/12 (BW); 47 at McNary NWR, WW, on 11/5 (MD&MID). 596 (492 ad and 104 juv) at unusual wintering grounds at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 11/9 (LH).
Trumpeter Swan: Also noteworthy outside regular wintering areas: 4 at Lake Aldwell, CL, on 11/10 (SS); 4 at Cedar Falls Reservoir, KI, on 11/12 (fide EH); 1 at the Kent STP, KI, on 11/13 (fide EH); 7 (1 ad and 6 juv) at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 11/21 (NE); and 1 on Mud Bay, TH, on 11/26 (GH&WHO).
Mute Swan: The status of this introduced species in WA is greatly disputed. Please report any sightings so a more complete assessment can be made. 1 near the Lower Granite Dam, WA, on 9/9 (CV&MKo) and possibly the same bird as seen at Clarkston, AS, on 11/5 (WH).

Greater White-fronted Goose: 15 at Ridgefield NWR, CL, on 9/7 (JE); 7 at Nicqually NW, TH, on 9/11 (DP&TSa); 5 at the Kent Ponds, KI, on 9/11 (EH) with 25 there on 9/15 (PS) and on 9/18 (fide EH). 21 on Fir Is, SK, on 9/11 (SA). 42 at Everett STP, SN, on 9/13 (GF,SM). A WA peak count of 165 at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 9/13 (LH). 4 at Port Washington, CL, on 10/11 (BN). 1 at Olympia, TH, on 10/16 (MSP). 5 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 10/31 through at least 11/19 (GH&WHO). In e WA a large concentration of 400+ was at McNary NWR, WW, on 9/18 (MD&MID). 16 at Othello, AD, on 9/4 (MD&MID). 2 at Kennewick, BE, on 10/15 (PB). 1 at Confluence SP, CH, on 11/22 (SR).

Snow Goose: Generally uncommon outside of its wintering area in w WA: 2 on the Saddle Mtn, NWR, GR, on 9/20 (RH); 2 at the Olympic Game Farm near Sequim, CL, on 10/10 (SS); 1 in a pasture near Eatonville, PI, on 10/11-12 (LF); 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 10/25 (MC&RSe); 1 in Richland, BE, on 10/31 through at least 11/30 (BW); over 100 e of Crow Butte, BE, on 11/3 (GH&WHO); and 1 at Ellensburg, KT, on 11/5 (SRA).

“Blue” Snow Goose: Seldom reported in WA, 1 at Hood Park, near Burbank, WW, on 11/11 (MD&MID).

Ross’ Goose: 1 near McNary NWR, WW, on 11/11 (MD&MID).

Emperor Goose: 1s at Everett, SN, on 10/20 (GT).

Brant: Rare away from salt water, 1 at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 10/21 (EA) and 1 (perhaps the same bird?) at Vancouver L, CK, on 11/5 (BT,BLa&SP).

Canada Goose: 20,680 at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 11/9 (LH&EA), including 868 “Dusky” Canadas and 11,300 “Cackling” Canadas.

Wood Duck: A high count of 250 at Hood Park, near Burbank, WW, and 130 about a mile away at Strawberry Is, WW, on 10/17 (MD&MID).

Green-winged Teal: 600 were at the Everett STP and the adjacent Spencer Is, SN, on 11/20 (SM).

American Black Duck: 1 at Nicqually NW, TH, on 10/28 (KS).

Blue-winged Teal: The last report was 1 at Dungeness, CL, on 10/14 (SS&DS).

Cinnamon Teal: The last report was 2 at Spencer Is, SN, on 10/29 (DP).

Eurasian Wigeon: The first reported for e WA was 1 from Richland, BE, on 9/25 (PB) through at least 11/30 (PB). The first reports for w WA were 1 on Vashon Is, KI, on 9/30 (CC) and 2 at Bainbridge Is, KS, on 10/12 (IP).

Canvasback: Seldom reported in CL, 1 near Sequim on 10/4 (SS&DS).

Redhead: Uncommon but regular in w WA in fall and winter, 2 at the Everett STP, SN, on 9/20 and 3 there on 9/24 (SM), 1 at the mouth of the Cedar R, in Renton, on 10/9 (PS&RS), 1 at Spencer I, SN, on 10/25 (SM), and 4 at Vancouver, CK, on 11/1 (SM).

Ring-necked Duck: Notable high counts were 420 at the Everett STP, SN, on 11/20 (SM) and 750 at Vancouver, CK, on 11/5 (SM).

Tufted Duck: 1 male at the Columbia NWR, AD, on 10/17 (RH). 1 first-year male, or a TuftedXscaup hybrid, at the Naval Air Station, Whidbey Is, IS, on 9/2 (MK,KR&KK). Lesser Scaup: An uncommon breeding species in w WA, 2 broods totaling 12 young at the Everett STP, SN, on 8/9 and 3 broods totaling 23 young at Deer Lagoon, IS, on 8/14 (SM).

Oldsquaw: Rare in e WA: 1 male at Soap L, GR, on 10/23 and another near Selah, YA, on 10/29 (NL); in breeding plumage at L.Lenore, GR, on 10/28 (JA); 1 at Othello, AD, on 11/6 (MD&MID); and 1 at McNary Dam, BE, on 11/28 (KK). Unusual in w WA away from salt water, 1 at the Everett STP, SN, on 9/24 and 11/1 (SM).

Surf Scoter: Uncommon but regular in fall and winter in e WA: 1 female in Richland, BE, on 10/7 (BW); 1 at Confluence SP, CH, on 10/19 (SR); 2 near Vantage, KT, on 10/22 (AS); and 1 at L.Lenore, GR, on 10/28 (JA).

White-winged Scoter: Uncommon but regular in fall and winter in e WA: 1 male at L.Lenore, GR, on 10/19 (JA) and on 10/23 (SA), with a high count of 15 imm/female types there on 10/28 (JA); 2 at the John Day Dam, KL, on 10/30 (fide HN); and 3 imm/female types at Medical Lake, SP, on 11/2 (JA).

Common Goldeneye: An early arrival to the Tri-Cities area was a female at Richland, BE, on 8/10 (TG).

Hooded Merganser: A high concentration of 75 at the Kent Ponds, KI, on 10/15 (DVi).

Ruddy Duck: An uncommon breeder in w WA, an ad with a brood of 7 recently hatched chicks was seen at the Everett STP, SN, on the late date of 9/10 (SM). A high count was 2400 in Drayton Harbor, WC, on 11/1 (fide FS).

Osprey: Late reports were 1 at Ridgefield NWR, CK (BT et al) and 1 at Padilla Bay, SK, on 11/13 (fide BK).

White-tailed Kite: 2 ad were feeding a juv near Labam, PA, on 9/18 (SMR&R) and 10/8 (DWi&MA). 1 near Curtis, LE, on 10/14 (BR&GR). 1 at the “historic” Raymond airport site, PA, on 11/9 (fide EH) and 11/21-22 (CL). They had not been reported at this location for several years.

Northern Goshawk: 2 e of Chewelah, ST, on 8/15 (KK). 1 at Soleduck Falls, Olympic NP, CL on 8/18 (SS&DS); 1 at Concrete, SK, on 9/2 (GB). 1 on FSR 6530 in se SN on 10/8 (SM). 1 at Eld Inlet, TH, on 10/13 (LC). 1 ad at the Mount Hardy burn, SK, on 10/7 (JW&KW). 1 imm near Burlington, SK, on 11/11 (JW&KW). 1 ad on the “lower” Skagit, SK, on 11/20 (fide BK). Red-shouldered Hawk: A first county record, 1 ad was e of Ilwaco, PA, on 9/18 (RR).

Ferruginous Hawk: The last report was 1 at Wallula Junction, WW, on 9/17 (SMu).

Rough-legged Hawk: Early for se WA, 2 at Rattlesnake Mountain, BE, on 10/16 and 1 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 10/17 (MD&MID). The first report for w WA was 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 10/7 (GH&WHO). Seldom reported from e Clallam Co., 1 at Dungeness, CL, on 10/14 (DS).

Golden Eagle: Uncommon in w WA, 1 at the Skagit WMA, SK, on 9/11 (SA) and 1 near Wilkenson, PI, on 11/12 (MMA).

American Kestrel: Uncommon on the outer coast, 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 8/11 (PS&RS).

Merlin: 1 imm near Wallula, WW, on 8/16, an early fall bird for the Tri-Cities area (TG).

Peregrine Falcon: Uncommon in e WA, 1 at White Pass, YA, on 8/15 (RR), 1 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 10/1 (BW) with 1 there on 10/15 (TM), and 2 imm at Banks L, GR, on 10/4 (AS).

Gyrfalcon: The first fall report was 1 at Mt. Vernon, SK, on 11/22 (TBe&KS).

Prairie Falcon: Uncommon in w WA, 1 at Crater Mt., WC, on 9/4 (JDu), 1 at Sibley Pass, NCNP, SK, on 9/2 (fide BK), 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 9/20 (BR&GR et al).

White-tailed Ptarmigan: 1 at Big Snow Mt., KI, on 9/21 (EH).

Continued on page 4
Mountain Quail: Up to 6 at feeders in Banner, KS, noted on 8/25 and 9/18 (SC&AC).

Sora: 1 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 8/20, where they are locally uncommon (MD&MID).

Sandhill Crane: 690 at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 9/28 (JE). 2335 in the Ridgefield, Vancouver lowlands, and Sauvie Is (Oregon) area on 10/6 (fide JE). Uncommon in w WA away from the lower Columbia R, 40 over Copalis Crossing, GH, on 9/22 (RW); 7 over President's Point, s of Kingston, KI, on 9/30 (JC); and 3 over Tacoma, PI, on 9/16 (IK).

Golden-Plover Species: 1 on Bainbridge I, KS, on 8/7 (IP). Golden-Plover reports were very low this year.

American Golden-Plover: In w WA, 2 on Fir Is, SK, on 8/28 (SA).

Black Turnstone: High counts were 301 at Penn Cove, IS, on 9/10 (BW).

Ruddy Turnstone: 4 on Jetty Is, Everett, SN, on 9/27 where Bar-tailed Godwit: 1 in alternate plumage, probably a male, at Long-billed Curlew: Uncommon in SK, 1 at March Point on 8/20 (BL). 1 at Crockett L, IS, on 8/14-20 (SM) and 9/25 (KA). Late for e WA, 6 at Yakima RD, BE, on 10/2 (BW).


American Avocet: Uncommon in w WA, especially in these numbers, 6 at Swantown, IS, on 8/13 (HO), 12 on 8/14 (SM), 9 there on 8/18 (RR), and 14 on 8/20 (SM). 1 at Crockett L, IS, on 8/14-20 (SM) and 9/25 (KA). Late for e WA, 6 at Yakima RD, BE, on 10/2 (BW).

Solitary Sandpiper: Late for e WA, 1 at Yakima RD, BE, on 10/4 and 10/7 (BW).

Willet: A county first was 1 at Kennedy Creek, MA, on 9/19 (PS&RS).

Upland Sandpiper: Rare in WA, especially in w WA, 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 9/27 (CC) and 9/30 (VN).

Long-billed Curlew: Uncommon in SK, 1 at March Point on 8/29 (KK&DSt). A high fall count and a late date for e WA, 112 (PS&RS), and 1 at Swinomish Slough, near LaConner, SK, on 10/6 (fide JE). Rare at inland locations in w WA, 1 at Drayton Harbor, WC, on 8/26 (RA), 1 at American Camp, SJ, on 8/9 (SM&RR), and 4 at American Camp, SJ, on 9/4-5 (SM&RR). Ajuv at Kennedy Creek, MA, on 10/1 (CC).

Bar-tailed Godwit: 1 in alternate plumage, probably a male, at the Ocean Shores Game Range, GH, on 8/19 (RR). 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 9/3 (TP) and 9/4 (RS). 1 juv at Kennedy Creek, MA, on 10/1 (CC).

Marbled Godwit: Rare in e WA, 1 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 8/17 (CCo) and 8/23 (MD&MID), and 1 at Yakima RD, BE, on 9/4 (BW) through at least 9/16 (BL, NL&RF). Rare at inland locations in w WA, 1 at Drayton Harbor, WC, on 8/26 (HA), 1 at Kennedy Creek, MA, on 9/15 for a first county record (PS&RS), and 1 at Swinomish Slough, near LaConner, SK, on 10/10 (JW&KW).

Ruddy Turnstone: 4 on Jetty Is, Everett, SN, on 9/27 where they are uncommon (CP). Rare in e WA, 1 near Othello, AD, or 9/10 (DSt).

Black Turnstone: High counts were 301 at Penn Cove, IS, on 9/11 (SM) and 430 at Penn Cove and Oak Harbor, IS, on 10/30 (SM&RR).

Surfbird: A common for KI was 50 at Alki Point, Seattle, KI, on 11/21 (RR).

Red Knot: Uncommon in fall and winter: 2 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 8/19 (RR); 3 w of Belfair, MA, on 8/28 (KK); 2 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 9/4 (SM); 2 at Leadbetter Point, PA, on 9/17 (SM); 2 at Swantown, IS, on 9/25 (KA); and 1 at Tolekland, PA, on 11/10 (CL).

Sanderling: A high count for w WA was 5000+ on Leadbetter Point, PA, on 9/17 (SM&RR). Uncommon in e WA: 4 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 8/20 with a high count of 7 there on 8/23 (MD&MID); 2 at Potholes SP, GR, on 9/4 (HA); 2-3 at Yakima RD, BE, on 9/5-7 (BW, PB); 1 at Reardan, LI, on 9/15-17 (JA); and 1 at Soap Lake, GR, on 10/23 (AS), with perhaps the same I there on 10/29 (SR, MD&MID) and on the record late date of 11/3 (SR).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: A high count of 7 on Whidbey Is, IS, on 8/14 (SM). The last report was of 4 at Swantown, IS, on 9/17 (SM).

Little Stint: A single-person report of 1 juv at Skagit WMA, SK, on 9/28 (SA). There are no accepted records of this species from WA. This report must be reviewed by WBRC before it is accepted.

White-rumped Sandpiper: An unconfirmed report of 2 at Bottle Beach, GH, on 9/9 (BR&GR). This report must be reviewed by WBRC before it is accepted. There are only 3 records for WA, 2 from the Davenport area and 1 from Dungeness (see Paulson's Shorebirds of the Pacific Northwest).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper: Very few reports from WA in recent years. 1 juv at the Ocean Shores STP, on 9/18 (EL).


Stilt Sandpiper: The high count for the fall was 7 from Whidbey Is, IS, on 8/20 (SM). There were two late reports: 1 at Monroe, SK, on 10/10 (KK), and 2 at Toke Point, PA, on 10/15 (TB).

Ruff: The 4th, 5th and 6th records for e WA and county firsts for BE and WW, were 1 ad s of Burbank, WW, on 8/16-17 (PB, MD), 1 imm at Yakima RD, BE, on 9/26 (BL&BW), and 1, apparently a different bird, there on 10/7 (BW). In w WA, 1 at Ocean Shores, GH, on 8/12 (GG).

Wilson's Phalarope: Uncommon in w WA, 5 at the Everett STP, SN, on 8/9 (SM). 1 at Deer Lagoon, IS, on 8/14 (SM), and 1 at Crockett L, IS, on 8/20 (SM).

Red-necked Phalarope: A high count of 4000-5000 was noted off Point No Point, KS, on 9/3 (VN). In contrast, this species was in very low numbers off the coast (BT).

Red Phalarope: Rare in e WA, 1 at Yakima RD, BE, on 10/5 (BW&NL).

Pomarine Jaeger: Rare in Puget Sound, 1 off the Bainbridge Is ferry, KS, on 10/16 (SM).

Parasitic Jaeger: Rare for e WA: 1 was found dead at Mill Creek, WW, on 9/10 (MD); 1 ad at Walla Walla RD on 9/10 (AS); 1 1st year dark morph bird there on 9/11 (MD); and 1 imm at Richland, BE, on 9/14 (PB). Noteworthy reports form w WA were 10-15 off Edmonds 10/6-8 (SM), and an estimated 30 passed Point No Point, KS, between 9/21 and 9/28, with 23 light-morph passing by on 9/24 (VN). The last report was 1 light-morph at Ocean Shores, GH, on 10/25 (MC).

Long-tailed Jaeger: Rare at any inland location, 1 at Point No Point, KS, on 9/3 (VN).

South Polar Skua: Observed on Westport pelagic trips: 1 on 8/6, 1 on 9/1, 2 on 9/11, 4 on 9/24, 2 on 10/8, and 1 on 10/9 (TW).

Franklin's Gull: An uncommon but regular fall migrant, mostly at STP's: 2 at Mud Bay, TH, on 9/1 (fide EH); 1 at Golden Gardens, Seattle, KI, on 9/1 (fide EH); a maximum high count of 15 at the Everett STP, SN, on 9/6 with the last observation there on 11/8 (SM); 1 at the Cedar R mouth in Renton, KI, on 10/3 (JP); 1 at Dash Point, SP, KI, on 10/18 (EP); and 2 at Crescent Harbor, Whidbey Is, IS, on 10/30 (SM, GT&RR). In e WA they are also uncommon in fall: 1 at Whidbey NWR, BE, on 9/11 (AS); 1 at Walla Walla RD, on 9/11 and 10/17 (MD&MID); 1 at the Kennewick STP, BE, on 10/23 (PB); and at least 2 at Columbia NWR, AD, on 9/20 (RH).

Little Gull: Rare but regular in w WA in the fall and winter, 1
imm at the Everett STP, Sn, on 10/8-10 (SM) and 1 ad at Mukilteo, SN, on 11/19 (SM).

**Common Black-headed Gull:** An ad in basic plumage was with Bonaparte’s off Alki Point, Seattle, KI, on 10/27 (RR).

**Bonaparte’s Gull:** A high count of 10,000 at Everett STP, Sn, on 10/18 (SM).

**Heermann’s Gull:** A high count of 5000 at Ocean Shores, Gh, on 8/7 (SM). A high count for Puget Sound was 1700 on Whidbey Is, IS, on 8/14 (SM). 1 at Marysville STP, SN, on 9/30 (BS), was an unusual location. At least 2 ad at Edmonds, SN, on 11/26 (SM&RR) for a late report.

**Western Gull:** Uncommon in e WA, 1 ad and 1 1st year at McMurry Dam, BE, on 11/29-12/1 (m.ob.).

**Glaucous-winged Gull:** An ad feeding a juv at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 8/6 may indicate breeding for that county (MD&MID), however, these birds could be from breeding sites downriver in BE. Fledglings will follow their parents for great distances. Uncommon in AD, 1 ad at Othello on 11/6 (MD&MID).

**Glaucous Gull:** First reports for e WA were 1 at Rock Is, DO, on 10/20 (RH) and 1 at Soap Lake, GR, on 10/29 (SR, MD&MID). First for w WA was 1 at Point No Point, KS, on 11/7 (VN).

**Ross’ Gull:** A first state record, 1 ad in basic plumage was at the McMurry Dam, BE, on 11/27 (PB) through 12/1 (m.ob.).

**Sabine’s Gull:** The only report from the mainland was 1 on the beach at Leadbetter Point, PA, on 9/17 (SM&R). A peak count was 39 off Westport, GH, on 9/16 (TW).

**Caspian Tern:** The last report was 13 at Swinomish Slough, SK, on 10/10 (JW&KW).

**Elegant Tern:** The only report for WA was 4 at the North Jetty of the Columbia R, PA, on 9/17 (DP).

**Common Tern:** Uncommon in se WA, 1 at Walla Walla RD, WW, on 8/17 with a high count of 37 there on 9/11 (MD&MID), and 1 at Richland, BE, on 9/9 (PB, MD&MID). First for w WA was 1 at Point No Point, KS, on 11/7 (VN).

**Hammond’s Flycatcher:** A high count of 35 at Washtucna, AD, on 8/27 (BT). The last report was of 1 at ALES near Richland, BE, on 8/6 (TG) and 1 at Soap Lake, GR, on 10/29 (MD&MID), however, these birds could be from breeding sites downriver in BE. Fledglings will follow their parents for great distances. Uncommon in AD, 1 ad at Othello on 11/6 (MD&MID).

**Least Flycatcher:** Rare in WA, with reports down significantly from last year; 1 at Washtucna, AD, on 8/27 (BT).

**Willow Flycatcher:** The last report of the fall was 1 at McLane Nature Trail, TH, on 11/3 (JD). 1 heard calling at Forest Park, Everett, SN, on 11/20 (KK).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Migrants first appeared in the Tri-Cities area with 1 at ALFS near Richland, BE, on 8/6 (TG) and 1 in Richland, BE, on 8/18 (BW).

**Red-naped Sapsucker:** A late date for the Blue Mts. was 1 along Biscuit Ridge Road, WW, on 10/13 (MD&MID).

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**Horned puffin:** A 1 ad in breeding plumage with a large flock of Rhinoceros Auklets at the Ocean Shores Jetty, Gh, on 8/7 (SM&NB).

**Northern Pygmy-Owl:** Seldom reported from KS, 1 at Koeneman L on 9/17 (GR) and 1 at Point No Point on 9/26 (VN).

**Rhinoceros Auklet:** A high count of 10,000+ at the Ocean Shores Jetty, Gh, on 8/7 (SM&NB).

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**Mourning Dove:** A high concentration for w WA was 200 at the state pheasant hatchery near Coupeville, IS, on 10/30 (SM, GT&RR). Another good concentration was 60-75 near Puyallup, PI, on 10/26 (JT) and 25 on the Lummi Flats, Bellingham, WC, on 11/12 (J Du). Seldom reported in urban areas of Seattle, 1 was at Alki Point, Seattle, KI, on 10/3 (MS) and one over North Seattle, KI, on 11/6 (DP).

**Cassin’s Auklet:** Very rare in s Puget Sound, 1 at the n end of Hartstene I, MA, on 9/27 (JG). Uncommon to rare in w Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, 1 off Point No Point, KS, on 10/27 (VN).

**Rhinoceros Auklet:** A high count of 10,000+ at the Ocean Shores Jetty, Gh, on 8/7 (SM&NB).

**Horned Puffin:** A 1 ad in breeding plumage with a large flock of Rhinoceros Auklets at the Ocean Shores Jetty, Gh, on 8/7 (SM&NB).

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Continued from page 5

**Pacific-slope Flycatcher:** 1 was singing on territory and feeding fledglings at Fort Canby SP, PA, on the late date of 8/28 (TW). The last reports were 1 in Tacoma, PI, on 9/4 (BR&GR ct. al) and 1 in Renton, AD, on 9/29 (BR&GR).

**Eastern Phoebe:** 2 single-person sightings: 1 at Discovery Park, Seattle, XI, on 9/4 (SA) and 1 at the Kent STP, XI, on 9/15 (DB). 

**Say's Phoebe:** Rare in XI, 1 at the Montlake Fill, Seattle, XI, on 10/3 (DVi). **Ash-throated Flycatcher:** 1 in Seattle, XI, on 10/30 (RO&JfJf), for a possible third county record. In e WA, it was not of its normal range at Vantage, KT, on 8/16 (RR).

**Western Kingbird:** Uncommon in w WA, 1 at Skagit WMA, SK, on 9/11 (GBT).

**Eastern Kingbird:** 3 at Spencer Is, SN, remained until at least 8/16 (SM).

**Horned Lark:** Uncommon in SN, 1 at Everett STP on 10/4 and 1 at Spencer Is on 11/13 (HD&DP) and 11/20 (SM&KK).

**Bank Swallow:** Rare in w WA, a group was at the Everett STP, SN, from 8/13 to at least 9/10, with a maximum of 10 on 9/6 (SM). 1 at the Skagit WMA, SK, on 9/11 (SA).

**Barn Swallow:** Late reports were 15 at the Kent Ponds, XI, on 10/15 (DVi) and 2 at Post Office L, CK, on 11/5 (SM). 1 at Yakima RD, BE, on 10/31 (BVi) and 1 at Sundale, XI, on 11/3 (GH&Wh). A fall high count was 5500 at Wahluke NWR, BE, on 9/11 (AS).

**Blue Jay:** An unusual number of reports were received this fall, including in w WA: 1 at Discovery Park, Seattle, XI, on 10/5 (JW); 1 in West Seattle, XI, on 10/8 (PC); 1 at Longview, CV, on 11/2 (FL); 1 at Nooksack, WC, on 11/6 (GD); and 1 near Portland, OR, on 11/1 (fide GH). In e WA, as many as 7 may have been in the Clarkston area from 10/7 through 11/15 (fide MKo). The Spokane area hosted at least 6 birds in October (BDi,AS,JA,TR). 2 near Soap Lake, GR, on 10/9 (NLe) and 1 there on 10/12 (RH). 2 in Walla Walla, WW, first seen on 10/22 (LM).

**Mountain Chickadee:** Lowland sightings in w WA were 1 at Seattle, XI, on 10/22 (RL), 1 at Swamp Creek, SN, on 10/25 (RR), and 1 at a feeder in Federal Way, XI, on 10/25 (TB).

**Rock Wren:** Uncommon in w WA, 1 at Alki Point, West Seattle, XI, on 10/18 (PS).

**Winter Wren:** Uncommon in the Columbia Basin, 1 at Walla Walla, WW, on 10/20 (MD&MID), 2 at White Bluffs, GR, on 10/23 (AS,MD&MID) and 1 at Vantage, KT, on 9/9 (EH&RR).

**Western Bluebird:** A high count for w WA was 30 at Fort Lewis, PI, on 9/2 (DE).

**Mountain Bluebird:** Migrating flocks with as many as 60 were above the tree line in Mt. Rainier NP, PI, on 8/17 (BR&KL). Uncommon at lower elevations in w WA, 9 in Olympia, TH, on 8/3 (CSa).

**Townsend’s Solitaire:** Unusual in the Tri-Cities area, 1 at ALES, near Richland, BE, on 8/28 and 9/3 (TG). 1 in North Seattle, XI, on 11/24 (DP).

**Gray Catbird:** Uncommon migrant in the Tri-Cities area, 1 at ALES, near Richland, BE, on 8/11 and 8/13 (TG&PB), and 1 at Richland, BE, on 9/25 (TG) with 2 at the same site on 9/1 (BW).

**Northern Mockingbird:** Uncommon in WA, 1 near Vancouver L, CK, on 10/18 (BR).

**Sage Thrasher:** The last report was 1 at Hayward Road, KT, on 9/13 (BR&GR et all).

**Phainopepla:** 1 calling female, a single-person sighting, in West Seattle, XI, on 9/24 (DB). There are no confirmed records of this species for WA.

**Bohemian Waxwing:** Very early were 25 ad at Billy Goat Pass near Winthrop, OK, on 9/5 (EH). 30+ flew across the Pacific Crest Trail at Union Gap on 10/10 (KK). In se WA, the first reports were of 14 in Kennewick, BE, on 10/29 (DR).

**Northern Shrike:** Early e WA sightings were 1 at Richland, BE, on 9/13 and 1 there on 9/16 (CS). Early w WA sightings were 1 imm at the Montlake Fill, Seattle, XI, on 10/7 (GT), 1 at Fort Lewis, PI, on 10/10 (GR&DE), and 1 at the Kent Ponds, XI, on 10/12 (DB).

**Solitary Vireo:** The last report for WA was 1 at Burbank, WW, on 8/18 (BVo) and 2 at Waughop L, PI, on 8/31 (BR&GR).

**Hutton’s Vireo:** Accidental in e WA, a single-person sighting of 1 at ALES, BE, on 10/8 (TG).

**Warbling Vireo:** The last report was of 1 at Richland, BE, on 9/11 (CS).

**Tennessee Warbler:** A single-person sighting of 1 at Wahluke NWR, BE, on 9/11 (AS).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Late for e WA were 2 at ALES, near Richland, BE, on 10/3 (TG).

**Nashville Warbler:** The last report from e WA was 1 at Kennewick, BE, on 9/7 (PB). Uncommon in w WA, 1 at the Montlake Fill, Seattle, XI, on 9/25 (DM).

**Yellow Warbler:** The last report for w WA was 1 at San Juan CP, SJ, on 10/9 (SM). The last report for e WA was 3 at Kennewick, BE, on 9/7 (PB).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** An ad male at a feeder on Mercer Is, XI, from 11/2 to at least late Jan. ‘95 (MH) was the first photographed record for WA. There are 2 previous accepted single-person sight records: 1 at Ruby Beach, Olympic NP, JE, on 11/3/88 and 1 from Richland, BE, on 10/8/93.

**Black-throated Gray Warbler:** The last reports were 1 at Sequim, CL, on 9/9 (SS&DS), 4 at Discovery Park, Seattle, XI, on 9/10 (EH) and 1 at the Montlake Fill, Seattle, XI, on 9/25 (DM).

**Hermit Warbler:** Pushing its northern limits and a late date, was at Sequim, CT, on 10/5 (SS&DS).

**Palm Warbler:** Uncommon fall and winter visitor to WA: 1 at the Everett STP, SN, on 10/3 (DBe) and 10/4 (SM); 2 at Da­mon Pt., Ocean Shores, GH, on 10/10 (fide EH); 1 at Neah Bay, CL, on 10/15 (NB); 2 at Ocean Shores on 11/14 (MC,MD&D) and 1 on 11/15 (HA); and 1 at Magnuson Park, Seattle, XI, on 11/17 (fide EF).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** 2 single-person sightings were 1 imm at the Saddle Mountain NWR, GR, on 9/4-5 (AS) and 1 imm at Vantage, KT, on 9/8 (KA).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** Rare migrant in WA, 1 on the Lummi Flats, WC, on 9/27 (KK&DS).

**American Redstart:** Uncommon migrant in the Columbia Basin, 1 at ALES, near Richland, BE, on 8/6 (TG), 1 imm at Vantage, KT, on 8/27 (BT), and 2 at Washtucna, AD, on 9/28 (BT).

**Northern Waterthrush:** Rare in w WA, 1 on Mt. Townsend, JE, on 9/4 (DJ), and 1 at the Skagit WMA, SK, on 9/18 (GB).
for a second county record. In e WA, the only report was 1 at Ososyoos, OK, on 9/27 (MP&FP).

MacGillivray's Warbler: The last report for e WA was 1 near Spokane, SP, on 10/3 (AR). In w WA, 1 at Everson, WC, on 11/4 (PD).

Wilson's Warbler: A high count of 80+ at Washtucna, AD, on 8/28 (BT). The last report for e WA was 1 near Touchet, WW, on 10/23 (SMu). Perhaps a late migrant, 1 near Woodland, CW, on 11/5 (BT).

Western Tanager: The last report was 1 at Anacortes, SK, on 10/5 (HA).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Rare in WA, 1 male at Neck Point, SK, on 8/15 (Custom).

Lazuli Bunting: Uncommon in w WA, 1 at the Skagit WMA, SK, on 8/28 (SA). and 1 in Bellingham, WC, on 9/1 (CB).

Indigo Bunting: 1 male at Spokane, SP, on 9/23 until at least 10/2 (JA, m.obs.). There are at least 4 accepted reports for WA.

Chipping Sparrow: A late report was 1 at Port Angeles, CL, on 10/24 to 11/1 (BN).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Rare in WA, 1 imm at Washtucna, AD, on 8/27 (BT). 1, possibly 2, at Spokane, SP, 9/23 through at least 9/28 (JA).

Black-throated Sparrow: The last report (the only one for this period) was 1 imm at the Wahluke WMA, GR, on 8/28 (AS).

Sage Sparrow: The last report was 5 at the Quilomene WMA, w of Vantage, KT, on 8/16 (RR).

Lark Bunting: A female or imm was photographed on Tatoosh I, OK, on 10/5 (RA).

Fox Sparrow: A very early migrant for the Tri-Cities area was 1 at ALES, Richland, BE, on 8/6 (TG).

Song Sparrow: A high count was 250 on Spencer Is, SN, on 10/29 (SM).

Swamp Sparrow: Many fewer reports this fall and winter as compared to last season, including: 2 on Spencer Is, SN, at least to 11/13 (DP,HO) with 3 there on 10/29 (SM); 1 at Ridgefield NWR, CK, on 11/5 (SM); 1 near Monroe, SN, on 11/20 (SM); 1 near Nine Mile Falls, SP, on 11/20 (JA); and 1 at McNary NWR, WW, on 11/28 (JA).

White-throated Sparrow: Average numbers this fall and winter included: 1 at a feeder in Richland, BE, on 9/15 (BW); 1 at Sacajawa SP, FR, on 9/18 (RF); 2 at Spokane, SP, on 9/23 through at least 10/2 (JA); 1 at a feeder in Richland, BE, on 9/25 through 10/3 (BW); 1 at Steptoe Butte SP, WH, on 9/25 (MCR); 1 at Davenport, LI, on 9/25 (JA); 1 at a feeder in North Bend, KI, on 9/30 (MMe); 1 at Five-Mile I, KI, on 10/8 (TB); 1 in Fife, PI, on 10/9 (TB); 1 at Kennewick, BE, on 10/12 (PB); 1 in Richland, BE, on 10/12 (NL); 1 at Walla Walla, WW, on 10/13 (MD&MID); 2 at the Kent STP, KI, on 10/15 (EH); 1 on Bainbridge Is, KS, on 10/21-11/11 (IP); 1 at Spokane, SP, on 10/21-27 (TB); 1 at Bay Center, PA, on 10/23 (AR); 1 on Ebye Is, SN, on 10/25 (SM); 1 at Bellevue, KI, on 10/27 (RR); 1 at Sequim, CL, on 11/1 (fide DS); 1 of Sedro-Woolley, SK, on 10/31 (HA); 1 at Gold Bar, SN, on 11/2 (KK); 1 at Vancouver L, CK, on 11/5 (SM); 1 at a feeder on Vashon I, KI, on 11/5-6 (GS); 1 at Tokeland, PA, on 11/12 (MC); 1 at a feeder in Burlington, SK, on 11/19-27 (JW&KW); and 1 on Samish Is, SK, on 11/29-30 (HA).

Golden-crowned Sparrow: First reports were 1 at Skagit WMA, SK, on 9/11 (SA) and 1 at a Scattle, KI, feeder on 9/13 (DV). In e WA, where they are uncommon in the fall, 1 w of Paterson, BE, on 9/18 (MD), at least 3 in Spokane, SP, from 9/20 to at least 10/3 (JA), and 1 at Richland, BE, on 9/24 (NL).

Harris's Sparrow: Very few reports were received: 1 at Canyon Terrace, BE, on 10/24 (NL) and 1 at a feeder in Burlington, SK, on 11/8-9 (JW&KW).

Lapland Longspur: Few reports were received. 20 at American Camp, SJ, on 10/8 (SM); 1 at Neah Bay, CL, on 10/15 (SM); 1 on Spencer Is, SN, on 10/25 (SM); and 1 at Point No Point, KS, on 11/12 (VN).

Snow Bunting: Uncommon in w WA, 1 at Magnuson Park, Seattle, KI, on 11/2-4 and possibly a different bird there on 11/12-17 (EH), and 1 at the Duane Berentson Bridge on Highway 20, SK, on 11/5-6 (JW&KW). In e WA, the highest count reported was 100-150 w of Reardan, BE, on 11/12 (BW).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Uncommon in w WA, 4 at Deer Lake, IS, on 8/14 and 8/20 (SM), and 1 at Copalis Beach, GH, on 8/26 (TB&PK).

Rusty Blackbird: In w WA, 1 at the Montlake Fill, Seattle, KI, on 9/24 (EN), and in e WA, 1 male in breeding plumage at Soap Lake, GR, on 10/29 (SM,MD&MID).

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: Rare in w WA, several “flocks” were over Sibley Pass, NCP, SK, on 10/12 (fide BK), 2 male “Hepburn’s” types were on the Lummi Plats, Bellingham, WC, on 11/12 (fide TW), and a first for KS was a “Hepburn’s” type at Point No Point, KS, on 11/22 (VN).

White-winged Crossbill: Of sporadic occurrence in WA, 1 at a feeder in Seattle, KI, on 9/30 (SSu), and 4 at Gold Bar, SN, on 11/4 (KK).

Common Redpoll: Rare in w WA, 1 at Point No Point, KS, on 11/22-26 (VN).

Lesser Goldfinch: A single-person sighting of a female at the Everett STP, SN, on 9/3 (SM).

Pine Grosbeak: A higher number of reports than normal included: 2 on Mt. Rainier, PI, on 10/23 (SP); 12 at Siskiyou Mountain, WC, on 10/25 (JDu); 1 near Waterville, DO, on 11/6 (DL&LL); 6 in the Van Creek area on Saurgoal Mt., 8 miles ne of Leavenworth, CH, on 11/11 (RP); 8 at Rattlesnake Springs in the Swakane WMA, CH, on 11/26 (RP); and 1 at Ellensburg, KT, on 11/2 (PM).

County abbreviations are given immediately after place names, (i.e., Se­attle, KI, etc.). Observer abbreviations are given in parentheses.


Continued on page 14
Northwest migrant traps — Tweeters

The following material was captured from the Northwest birding bulletin board Tweeters and has been very slightly edited by Dennis Paulson.

12 May 1994— I’ve been periodically checking the outer part of Point Defiance Park in Tacoma for two springs now, waiting for a migrant bonanza that has never fully appeared. This morning, after an overcast, dreary night in mid-May, should have been perfect for a big fallout. The totals (40 species in 2 hours, of which about half were Neotropical migrants) were OK but hardly impressive. It seems clear that Point Defiance, for all its geographical appropriateness, is not the nirvana of Northwest migrant traps. What is? I’ve spent much of the last 8 springs and falls looking for an elusive coastal migrant trap in western Washington. Where other people see islands and points, I see potential migrant traps. But nothing has proven reliable. What are other peoples’ experiences here: are there good traps hidden out there (and, if so, where are they), or are we wasting our time looking? Will we never have a Northwest version of Pt. Reyes?

Rob Thorn, Seattle, WA

13 May — I think there is to do with the biogeographic fact that we are at or near the northern end of most West Coast migratory paths. The breeding ranges of most species that pass through W Washington are somewhere in s or c British Columbia or se or sc Alaska. So I believe it is our fate never to enjoy a Pt. Reyes, Pt. Pelee, or High Island experience.

Gene Hunn, Seattle, WA

16 May — I agree entirely with Gene Hunn’s assessment of the situation. He and numerous others in the state have spent a lot of mental energy trying to pinpoint such hot spots for migrants, and physical energy visiting those suspected of being good candidates. I would say without hesitation that there are many places in WA that are worthwhile checking for migrants, both regular and rare. There are willow groves in the Columbia Basin that I have found teeming with migrants on a few occasions, but, from all our experiences put together, the probability of finding something rare (the Peak Experience that birders seek) at any of them on a given visit is vanishingly low. Rarities have certainly been found at eastern WA oases and on small islands such as Tatoosh, for example, where I was amazed to see a Pygmy Nuthatch in June 1970. Bob Paine claimed to have seen an Eyebrowed Thrush there years ago, but didn’t think anyone would believe him so didn’t write it up. And I agree that Leadbetter Point would be a good place to look for such birds, but Ralph Widrig, who birded there almost daily for several years, found only a few such rarities.

The point Gene made is that we are sufficiently out of the migratory pathway of wandering eastern birds that we just can’t expect to find that many, so there is a strong “needle in a haystack” element here. This is exacerbated in western WA, which is virtually entirely forested, but it still has patches of woods at tips of peninsulas that “look good.” Many places with great potential—Washuena, Ocean Shores, Point Roberts, the Davenport cemetery, etc.—have come up negative again and again when checked, and only every once in a while has something shocking turned up. Is this enough reason to call these places “migrant traps?” I don’t think so. We don’t seem to have any place in WA as productive of migrants as the southern Oregon oases such as Fields and the Malheur NWR headquarters, and I have long thought this was a product of latitude, not attitude.

Dennis Paulson, Tacoma, WA
have terrific vagrant records, including many southern and western species, despite being at a similar latitude as the Pacific NW. What we lack is a vision of an oasis. We are not the East or Midwest, where huge migrant waves can make many places oases. Our oases should have incredible isolation to concentrate the few vagrants that we have. Malheur and the Farallons teach us that lesson. We need to readjust our concept of an oasis, and start looking at the truly isolated locations. Tatoosh or Smith Island might be a good start.

Rob Thorn

16 May—Just a few thoughts on the migrant trap issue.

1) It may be more than latitude. The vagrants on the east coast could be carried by the prevailing winds. The ones on the west coast have to migrate in the wrong direction, and are probably reverse-image migrants. At our latitude we would not expect to see any reverse migrants, and on the west coast we wouldn't expect any weather-related migrants.

2) Many of our vagrants are not true vagrants but are individuals pushing the edge of their species limits. They are quite common just to the east in Montana or to the north in Canada. There are not enough of these to produce the huge numbers of vagrants that seem to be following reverse migration routes through southern Oregon and into California to be discovered on the coast or in the desert.

3) There are a lot of vagrants moving through California. Too many to say they just have the right geography.

4) We might expect to pick up more Eurasian vagrants than we actually do. It may just be the number of birders, but a lot of birds seem to skip Washington and end up in California. Witness records of Wheatears, Brown Shrikes, Red-throated Pipits, and Skylark. These must have flown past our coast. We do alright, or almost alright, on the waterbirds, but where are the landbirds?

Jerry Tangren, Wenatchee, WA

16 May—I notice that a larger number of species move n into Ontario across Lake Erie than n into BC through WA. Many species found in BC migrate AROUND WA into BC, so we rarely find them. Also, our migrations here simply do not compare with those almost anywhere back east; the sheer numbers of individuals and species just aren't here in the West. Further, many of those which do migrate in this area do so offshore, where they will not contribute to the oases which birders seek. In short, the Pt. Pelee phenomenon is partially offset by the presence of the Pacific ocean, which helps to right the numerical balance between East/Midwest and Northwest, but doesn't create many oases in the process.

Charles Easterberg, Seattle, WA

16 May—Rob's statements are well-taken, but there seems no or little chance of our putting observers on Tatoosh or Smith islands through a migration season to test his hypothesis. In addition, both Tatoosh and Smith are rather close to mainland forests in terms of a migrating bird's visual ability, and Destruction Island, well off the coast, would really be the place to look (surely those Brown Shrikes and Dusky Warblers found in California stopped at Destruction Island for a day or so). What a shame access is so difficult to all these places. However, in terms of rarities a single Magnolia Warbler was found on Protection Island by a birder who lived there a year or more and was in the field almost every day, so—like it or not—there's no way PI could be called a migrant trap. Because its forest could be checked in a matter of hours, it still seems a good place to check, but Smith and Tatoosh, with really limited trees, would be better. Who volunteers to live on one of them through a migration? (I'd love to, but I'm not footloose and fancy-free.) I still think latitude plays a part, and I don't think the West and East are exactly comparable. The great mass of migration across much of Canada and even parts of Alaska flows from NW to SE in fall, as most of the birds breeding all across the boreal forest are of eastern origin and go back to their "eastern" Neotropical wintering grounds. If the "mirror-image orientation" hypothesis—that is, some birds in fall migrate 90°away from their normal direction—has any validity to explain eastern vagrants in the west, then a tiny proportion of migrating birds all across Canada will deviate each fall at right angles from the normal NW-SE (or even WNW-ESE) path. It makes sense for many more birds to hit the California coast than the Washington coast, as when I look at a map of North America and superimpose on it the ranges of all the "eastern" species of birds, it looks to me that a simple explanation could be that there would be many more birds to the NE (or ENE) of California than of Washington.

Continued to page 10
16 May—I have long suspected that if we had an army of fanatical twitchers camped out in the Tri-Cities throughout the peak of migration we’d turn up quite a bit. In fact, there are a rather disproportionate number of rarities from those locations despite the fact that it’s mostly Bob Woodley who gets out looking.

However, if the Dave DeSante thesis is correct, many vagrant fall warblers, predominantly immatures, are mirror-image reversal misdirected migrants. He plotted the straight-line migratory path for Blackpoll Warblers from the center of their breeding range to the center of their staging point on the Atlantic coast, then flipped that line around the N-S axis, calculated the modal departure date and rate of movement, and lo and behold he “predicted” the time and place of greatest concentration of vagrants on the central California coast—ca. Sept. 20. If fall immature vagrant warblers of other species follow this pattern, it would go a long way toward accounting for our poor luck with vagrants, as we are very much farther from the modal paths of such vagrants than Malheur, for example, especially on the coast. That still leaves the spring to explain.

Gene Hunn

Tweeters

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Leave the subject line blank and in the message section say only: subscribe tweeters your name (your real name, not your e-mail address).

Mike Patterson

17 May—Thanks for responding so quickly with the vagrant records from Oregon, Mike. Good food for thought and great supplement to Rare Birds of Oregon. I think the latitudinal hypothesis is supported by the difference between the two states, when the Oregon Bird Records Committee is no longer even evaluating records of Tennessee and Black-and-white warblers and Rose-breasted Grosbeak!

Dennis Paulson

30 May—I’m guessing that I am the first person back from Malheur this Memorial Day Weekend. So, I will place the rare stuff I know onto the line:

5/27/94

HEADQUARTERS
Gray Catbird
Blackpoll Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Northern Waterthrush (this one was very friendly, I got to see it)

FRENCHGLEN
Summer Tanager
5/28/94
HEADQUARTERS
Eastern Wood-Pewee (calling continuously, 1st state record)
American Redstart (at least 2, a third showed the next day)
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (one of several reported from various sites, the only one seen by many)
Northern Parula (singing male)

FIELDS
Black-and-white Warbler

5/29/94
HEADQUARTERS
(All the good stuff from yesterday was still there)

I left the refuge at about 10:00 a.m., because Astoria is a very long drive and we like to break up the trip. We stopped at Sage Hen Hill Rest Area just west of Burns for lunch and there, working the junipers, was an EASTERN PHOEBE. I left a message at the Frenchglen Hotel Sunday night and one at the headquarters Monday morning. I hope it got through to other folks.

Please let me know. And let's come up with some consistent method for communicating back and forth off the refuge.

Mike Patterson

30 May—Mike Patterson’s message on tweeters really underscored the comments about differences between Oregon and Washington. Kevin Aanerud went to eastern WA the weekend before Memorial Day just to check all the potential vagrant traps, saw quite a few common migrants but no eastern birds. I don't know if anyone did the same this last weekend, but I can't imagine a locality in eastern WA that gets the number of visitors who come to Malheur over Memorial Day weekend.

Dennis Paulson

31 May—Just to add to Dennis’ post comparing Oregon to Washington, as mentioned in an earlier post, there do seem to be a handful of records of eastern birds along the southern edge of our state, Pullman, Walla Walla, Tri-Cities, etc., many more than would be expected given the intensity with which the area is birded. Wilson Cady once remarked that the area around the Maryhill Museum is good for eastern birds; don’t particularly know what records he was speaking of, however. I do know that if you haven’t stopped off and eaten breakfast with the peafowl in the small picnic area there you have missed a treat (you bring the breakfast, they bring the appetite).

Jerry Tangren

31 May—I can’t resist additional comments based on Jerry Tangren’s mentioning of rare-bird records from Walla Walla and the Tri-Cities.

I agree there are a lot of records from there, but they probably don’t total much more than the number accrued from a good spring or two in the Malheur area. If you look in the OFO’s Rare Birds of Oregon, you will see many eastern species that have been seen in OR that haven’t been accepted on the WA list yet: Red-headed Woodpecker* (1 record), Alder Flycatcher (2), Wood Thrush (2), Brown Thrasher* (8), Golden-winged Warbler (2), Yellow-throated Warbler (1), Pine Warbler (1), Bay-breasted Warbler (6), Connecticut Warbler (1), Mourning Warbler* (2), Canada Warbler (1), Summer Tanager (4), Scarlet Tanager (4), Blue Grosbeak (2), and Painted Bunting (2). (Just for information, I marked species with asterisks that probably have occurred in Washington, but the submitted descriptions were considered inadequate). Conversely, only a single eastern bird had been recorded in WA up to that time that hadn’t in OR: Sharp-tailed Sparrow (1). This is a substantial discrepancy which, again, I attribute to latitude. Parenthetically, there are many, many records of Sharp-tailed from CA, and I am sure the OR birders are gnashing their teeth at the absence of this species (maybe it’s been recorded since Rare Birds of Oregon).

A much less important, but worth mentioning, reason why there are far fewer eastern bird records from eastern WA is that some are single-person sight reports that have not been accepted by the Washington Bird Records Committee (which will be putting out a report soon). Large number of the rare birds found at Malheur have been documented photographically—at least the rarest ones—by the gung-ho Oregon birders; almost none of the rare birds reported from eastern WA are supported by photographs (not to mention many from western WA, where there are at least a lot more people and a better chance of someone with a camera in calling range). Why can’t WA birders carry cameras? Or at least those who make it a point of finding rarities? A camera and lens usable for documenting rarities can be acquired for $400 and, by getting a used camera body, perhaps for only $200-250. Once you have it, it doesn’t have to be used only for rare birds!

Dennis Paulson
Do bird band sightings count?

Editor's note: Do your bird band sightings get noticed? You bet! Jan Wiggers of Burlington reported the collar number of a banded Tundra Swan and received an informative letter back from the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge in Cold Bay, Alaska. The writer outlined the particular history of that swan, the history and purpose of the banding program, and encouraged her to continue to report her "valuable" sightings. Two thoughts occur: we should all seek out, identify and report banded birds, and banders would be wise to emulate Izembek NWR's good PR response because it can't help but encourage more sightings.

Watch for bands

Taverner's and Lesser Canada Geese have been marked during migration in Fairbanks, AK, with white neck collars containing three black alphanumeric characters. These geese may winter in western Oregon and eastern Washington. Please report sightings to Mike Eichholz, Univ. of Alaska Fairbanks, Institute of Arctic Biology, P.O. Box 757000, Fairbanks, AK 99775-7000; 907-474-6602; or e-mail to: FTMWE@AURORA.ALASKA.EDU

Three hundred Double-crested Cormorants were banded with red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and white leg bands by the Canadian Wildlife Service in summer of '94 in the southern Vancouver Island-Strait of Georgia area. The CWS is most interested in Washington sightings, as the project's purpose is to document seasonal movement patterns. Radio transmitters (166MHz range) were also attached to 10 adults. Persons reporting sightings or radio receptions should contact Ian Moul at 604-598-3141; fax 598-3120; or Donald Norman at e-mail: DONORMAN@AOL.COM

Hundreds of Harlequin Ducks in British Columbia have been banded with colored and coded right leg bands. Please note color and letter-number code and report sightings to Ian Goudie, Canadian Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 340, Delta, BC V4K 3Y3; 604-946-7022 or e-mail: Goudiei@cwsvan.dot.gov.ca

Peregrine Falcons are being banded and color marked along coastal Washington from the Columbia River to Point Grenville, just south of Taholah on the Quinault Indian Reservation. Most of the banding effort is focused in the area between Ocean Shores (including Grays Harbor) and Moclips. The color markers are a blue and black combination band placed on the left leg. They are coded with two numbers, or one number and one letter, and can be read from a distance with a spotting scope. Please reportsightings, code and location, to Dave Varland, Rayonier, P.O. Box 200, Hoquiam, WA 98550; 360-538-4582.

Birding in the USA is somewhat different than birdwatching in New Zealand. In our country birdwatching is a rather laid-back hobby, with few of us rushing around the country in search of a bird that he or she has not seen before.

In the States the object is to see as many bird species as possible and tick them off on a checklist. It can almost be compared to collecting stamps. The people who partake of this hobby are slightly mad and talk birds, and more birds. It does not matter what has happened on the political scene or that your house may have burned down, when you meet each other you talk birds. I had one (American birder) in the car who talked birds continuously for three hours.

The jargon is never explained to a stranger. You are expected to know and understand it. A Lifebird is a bird you have seen for the first time in your life. A Yearbird is a bird you have seen in a particular year. A Statebird is a species you have seen in your particular state.

These birders have a hotline. This is a phone number for information about where you can see a particular rare or vagrant bird.

If you have a friend who is a birder, be prepared at the drop of a hat to be taken to some remote part of the country. For example, we had just traveled for nine hours from Illinois to Arkansas and back. Coming home at midnight, the hotline reported a White Ibis had been seen in Illinois. We left early the next morning to see the bird, spending all day searching without success. Arriving home that evening, there was another call to say that nine Anhingas had been seen in roughly the same area, so after a few hours sleep, we had another five-hour drive in search of these birds. It turned out that they were a case of mistaken identification—they were only cormorants. Tired and bleary-eyed, we drove home, nearly colliding with another vehicle. Fortunately the hotline had no further new birds to report.

However, there are compensations. They (American birders) are good sorts, entertain you lavishly at their homes, and 152 White Herons (Great Egrets) roosting or 3,000+ Cattle Egrets make up for stiff limbs and lack of sleep. The birders, even if they have missed a particular bird, are still cheerful and determined to try again as soon as the hotline reveals a new bird. Fortunately I will be flying out the next day and will miss another grueling drive.

Henk Heinekamp
OSNZ news, No. 72, Sept. 1994
June 16-18, 1995

Northwest events and meetings

Feb. 11-12  Skagit-Samish Raptor Count in Skagit County. For information, contact Bud Anderson at Falcon Research Group at 360-757-1911.

Mon., Feb. 13, 1995  Washington Ornithological Society monthly meeting in Seattle. The speaker is Bill Clark, author of Hawks, from the Peterson Field Guide series. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Poncho Theater at Woodland Park. See story page 1.

Wed., Feb. 22, 1995  Bellingham Birders meet at 7 p.m. at Fairhaven Public Library. For information, contact Terry Wahl at 360-733-8255.

Mon., March 6, 1995  Washington Ornithological Society monthly meeting in Seattle. The speaker is Joe Buchanan of Olympia, speaking on “wintering shorebirds in Puget Sound, 1990-91 to present.” Joe will also show slides of local shorebirds in the spring. The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Burke Museum classroom (back door, loading dock) at the University of Washington.

Wed., March 29, 1995  Bellingham Birders meet. For information, contact Terry Wahl at 360-733-8255.

Mon., April 3, 1995  Washington Ornithological Society monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Burke Museum in Seattle. George Brady, WDFW biologist from Pateros, Douglas County will speak on his various banding projects, particularly his Kestrel project.

Mon., May 1, 1995  Washington Ornithological Society monthly meeting in Seattle. The program is “Show & Tell.” Please bring your slides.

Sun., May 21, 1995  Okanogan (or Okanagan depending on your national preference) Big Day Challenge on either side of the border. For information, contact Dick Cannings at 604-734-9489 or Andy Stepniewski at 509-877-6639.

June 16-18, 1995  Washington Ornithological Society and Western Field Ornithologists joint annual meeting in Spokane. For information, see story on page 15 or contact Bill Tweit at 360-754-7098. Details in the April 1995 WOSNEWS.

Columbia Basin

Continued from page 1

In the Columbia Basin, or perhaps foretell an even better coming new year.

The Garganey appeared to be slightly injured, as one wing did not fold symmetrically over its back. Still, it was quite capable of flight. It fed actively in the same manner as Northern Shovelers—skimming the weedy surface waters with its bill in a lateral motion. It kept company with Pied-billed Grebes, Mallards and a few American Wigeon.

From an identification perspective, the two white bars framing the large green speculum patch and its facial pattern were most distinctive. The large grayish forewing was also conspicuous when it raised a wing, but was otherwise hidden. Gene Hunn and others have compiled extensive written descriptions of the bird to add to the many photographs taken.

1995 started with a bang on January 1st when Larry and Jacque Goodhew found a Common Grackle among the hordes of blackbirds and starlings occupying the Walla Walla College dairy farm. Mike and MerryLynn Denny followed up a few days later with a Rusty Blackbird in the same flock, and Ken Knittle and Howard Armstrong later added a second Rusty.

Earlier “good” birds included two late fall reports of Pacific Loons in the Richland area and one below McNary Dam during the Ross’ Gull visit. A Tufted Duck was discovered by Phil Bartley way back on March 18th (through the 23rd) at the Walla Walla River delta. Phil found a Ruff on August 14th (through the 17th) at the McNary NWR. A second Ruff was spotted at the Yakima River delta on September 26th by Nancy Laframboise and identified by Bob Woodley, who later found a third Ruff on October 7th at the same location. The Yakima delta also turned up an American-Golden Plover (Bill LaFramboise and Phil Bartley) and a lone Red Phalarope on October 5th (Bob Woodley and Nancy LaFramboise).

I located an adult Parasitic Jaeger and an adult Arctic Tern at the Walla Walla delta on September 5th. Mike Denny observed an immature Parasitic Jaeger there the next day.

Moving to the passerines, Tony Greager found an American Redstart on the Arid Land Ecological Reserve (ALE) west of Richland on the Hanford Reservation on August 6th. I found an immature Black-poll Warbler September 4-5 in the Saddle Mountain NWR north of the Hanford Reservation, and on September 12th I also found an immature Tennessee Warbler in locust trees at the old White Bluffs ferry landing on the Columbia River (DeLorme page 53, C-5). It shared the trees with hordes of migrant flycatchers, vireos, warblers, tanagers and sparrows.

An influx of Black-throated Sparrows was impressive moving from the Hanford Reservation upriver to Priest Rapids from mid-June through early July. Further work may reveal this sparrow is a regular resident there.

I believe this impressive list of birds from this part of Washington reflects not an increase in rarities, but the expanding coverage of the area by avid, competent field observers. Increased observer expertise and more birders in the area have helped make it clear that the Lower Columbia Basin is the place to find rare and vagrant species in eastern Washington.

We are all, in my opinion, standing on Bob Woodley’s shoulders. Bob has been a tireless and careful observer of birds in the Tri-Cities area for over 25 years, and he has amassed, mostly on his own, a very remarkable list of rare migrant waterbirds and “Eastern” passerines. Bob protested a bit when he edited this article, saying, “I’m only doing what I like to do.”
**Field Notes**

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WOS membership

Anyone interested in joining WOS should send dues to WOS, POB 85786, Seattle, Washington 98145.

Annual memberships are $20 for individuals and $30 for families.

Recent literature

Birds of Oregon: status and distribution

By Jeff Gilligan, Mark Smith, Dennis Rogers, and Alan Contreras, Eds. 1994.

Cinclus Publications, Box 284, McMinnville, OR 97128

352 pages, $24.95 ppd pbk or $32.00 ppd hbk.

The first comprehensive treatment of Oregon birds since Gabrielson and Jewett in 1940. Complete coverage of 477 species.

Birds of East Central Idaho


Published by the author.

119 pages, $9.95 ppd pbk

The Birders Guide to Montana

By Terry McEneaney. 1993.

Falcon Press, Helena, Montana.

200 pages, $12.95 ppd pbk

Editor's note: WOSNEWS will periodically run a "recent literature" listing as above. If you are aware of recent publications of regional interest, please inform your editor.

Whither the Bird Box?

"Almost ready," says Bob Morse, the Bird Box champion. "We expect to have this new hotline up and running by mid-March. Stay tuned for details."

The Bird Box is a computer-operated, voice-recorded rare bird hotline originally developed and currently in use in California. WOS is committed to supplying some operating funds, and individual members are contributing capital funds and equipment. Call Bob at 360-943-8600 for more information.
Plan ahead for the 1995 WOS Annual Meeting
Michael Carmody - WOS President

WOS requires very little from a member, only that one pay the annual dues. Though the monthly Seattle-area meeting is regularly attended by about 75 members, for the most part our organization is loosely held together by our shared enjoyment of birds in Washington, and a desire to add to the ever-increasing pool of knowledge of those birds.

Once a year we shift to a higher level of interaction, coming together for the annual meeting. This celebration of the birds and birders of Washington alternately takes place on opposite sides of the Cascade Mountains. This year we assemble in Spokane from Friday through Sunday, June 16-18. You might want to arrive on Thursday as field trips take place on Friday.

This WOS annual meeting is special as the Western Field Ornithologists will jointly hold their meeting with ours—a treat for WOS members who also belong to WFO, and a treat for all in WOS as we get to show our splendid state to some of the best ornithologists and birders in the western United States. We also stand to benefit from the knowledge and keen senses this influx of vagrant birders will share with us.

The evening programs which are a feature of WFO meetings also promise exceptional content and entertainment.

The annual meeting is the largest single gathering of our membership during the year. For some the group size (100+ plus WFO) might be a reason not to attend, but for most of us these three days are an opportunity to share the mutual importance birds have in our lives. We have fun together, we learn together, and we bird together. Mark your calendar for the third weekend in June. Details and sign-up forms will be in the April WOSNEWS.

113 W 5th Ave.
Olympia, Washington 98501

Common Terns hawking for insects
Michael Carmody

On the afternoon of September 20, 1994, Lanny Carpenter reported an unusual observation made the previous evening at Henderson Inlet, Thurston County. There he had watched a large number of Common Terns hawking for insects. Our previous experience with the feeding behavior of this species had involved their eating fish or crustaceans. One authority, The Birder's Handbook: A Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds, maintains that fish comprise 90 percent of the bird's diet.

That evening Lanny and I visited the same spot to document the phenomenon. Standing at the top of a low bluff, approximately 50 feet above the shoreline, we enjoyed an unobstructed view of the mouth of the inlet. We observed well over 100 individuals from 6:30-7:45 p.m. During our final 20 minutes the movements had shifted and intensified as nearly all the terns left the inlet.

The feeding behavior of the terns was particularly striking. At no time did we see the birds take food from the water. We did see at least 30 terns catch and eat flying insects, which we believed to be damp-wood termites. The insects used the updraft from the bluff below us to gain elevation, causing the terns to focus their hawking behavior around us. Several birds caught insects within 15 feet of us, either above our heads or at eye level. Spotting an insect on the updraft, we had only to wait a few seconds before a tern picked it out of the air. As few as three and as many as 20 terns patrolled the headland. The activity ended abruptly, coinciding with the movement of birds leaving the bay.

Finally, it should be noted that during our period of study, two Parasitic Jaegers passed through the area, neither attempting to harass the terns nor even change their course of flight to investigate the feeding birds.

Rare Bird Hotlines
Seattle Statewide
206-526-8286
SE Washington/Idaho
208-882-6195
Oregon
503-292-0661
Vancouver, B.C.
604-787-9910
Victoria, B.C.
604-592-3381

Audubon Field Notes deadlines

Spring: (March - May) 
Summer: (June & July) 
Autumn: (August - Nov.) 
Winter: (Dec. - Feb.)

Send bird sighting records to:
Bill Tweit
POB 1271
Olympia, WA 98507-1271

Please submit detailed descriptions and photographs, if possible, of any unusual birds.

Newsletter contributions
WOSNEWS eagerly seeks articles and photographs for publication. We would even settle for suggestions of potential articles. Give us your idea and we will find someone to write it up. Below are some general areas of reader interest:

- NW meeting/event notices
- Bird/birding photographs
- Bird banding notices
- Research project summaries
- Favorite birding sites
- Personal birding experiences
- Interesting bird facts
- Project ideas

Please send items, photographs, questions, etc. for the next WOSNEWS by March 15th to Fred Bird, 1249 NE 92nd Street, Seattle, WA 98115 – 206-526-5671, or e-mail fredbird@halcyon.com

Program suggestions?
If you have ideas for future Seattle-area WOS programs, please call Linda Feltner at 206-767-9937, or Jan Wiggers at 360-757-0772. For a listing of upcoming meetings and events, see page 13.
A brief visitor

Patrick Sullivan

On December 1, 1994, my mother Ruth Sullivan, Jim Flynn of Renton, and I ventured to the McNary Dam on the Washington-Oregon border along the Columbia River to look for the Ross' Gull. Mother and Jim drove up the Oregon side of the Columbia while I travelled and birded along Highway 14 on the Washington side.

I met up with them and a lot of other birders on the Oregon side of the dam about 2:45 p.m., after taking the elevator to the top of the fish ladder. Mother quickly noted she and Jim had seen the Ross' Gull feeding with Bonaparte's Gulls when the two of them arrived at noon. I scanned the river with my scope and picked out the Ross' from among a flock of about 12 Bonaparte's.

This extremely rare gull is known to breed in the Siberian Arctic, but more recently it has also been found breeding in the high Canadian Arctic and near Churchill, Manitoba.

The winter range of the Ross' Gull is poorly known, as it is primarily pelagic and can turn up anywhere. There is one winter sighting record for a Ross' Gull from Clover Point, Victoria, on Vancouver Island, and one previous Oregon record from Yaquina Bay, Lincoln County, in February 1987. And now Washington has its first record as this bird was observed on several occasions feeding on the Benton County, Washington, side of the river.

I and others noticed this bird feeding by both diving and plucking from the surface, similar to the feeding behavior of the Black-legged Kittiwake.

In flight the bird was much more buoyant and tern-like than the larger, nearby Bonaparte's, and it tended to have a faster wing beat. When it fed close to us we could see the partial necklace on the nape, its pinkish underparts, and pale to dark gray underwings. In flight, the fairly large, wedge-shaped tail stood out. Others noted it was stockier and chunkier than the Bonaparte's.

I felt it was well worth the six and a half hour journey to see this rare and beautiful gull from the high Arctic.

513 Ramsdell Street
Tacoma, Washington 98466