

**SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS:
SUMMER SEASON—June to July 2010**

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This report summarizes bird sightings from Southeast Alaska for the summer season, which covered June and July 2010, and is intended to provide interesting observations for inclusion in an Alaska-wide column written by Thede Tobish for the journal *North American Birds* (published by the American Birding Association <http://www.aba.org/>). Generally we report on sightings of birds that are out of range or out of season, noteworthy breeding records, unusually large or small numbers of a particular species, unusual migration dates, etc., and so on, and so forth.

Summer 2010 will be remembered as the year that all three mimids known from Alaska were found in Southeast Alaska, with single reports of Northern Mockingbird and Brown Thrasher and three Gray Catbirds! Alaska's 9th Heermann's Gull rounded out the list of rarities found this summer. Nice local nesting records were established for Barrow's Goldeneye at Ketchikan and "Yellow-shafted" Flicker near Juneau, and House Sparrows nested at Ketchikan for the 2nd consecutive summer. Eurasian Collared-Doves invaded southern Southeast Alaska again in summer 2010—the 40 birds found in the Ketchikan area alone exceeded the total that was reported in all of Southeast Alaska in 2009.

We would like to thank all of the people that directly sent us observations, shared their photographs, and answered our inquiries about their sightings, all of whom are cited below. The notes and photographs that we received were forwarded to Thede Tobish. We were particularly pleased to again receive reports from Bonnie Demerjian, Rich Gordon, Nat Drumheller, and Matt Goff. We also greatly benefited from access to sightings entered into eBird (www.ebird.org) which we've incorporated into this report (e.g., virtually all of the information for the Juneau area was obtained from eBird). Finally, Nat Drumheller, Paul Suchanek, Mark Schwan, Bruce Paige, and Matt Goff provided reviews of the final draft of this summary.

Names and Initials of observers cited in the text or who reported sightings: Beverly A. Agler (BAA), Terry Albright (TA), James J. Alt (JJA), Mark C. Anderson (MCA), Jim Beal (JB), Pam Bealer (PB), R. Brad Benter (RBB), Gretchen Blanchard (GB), Kelly Bunes (KB), Jennifer A. Cedarleaf (JAC), Bonnie H. Demerjian (BHD), Nat K. Drumheller (NKD), Cheryl A. Fultz (CAF), Matt R. Goff (MRG), Richard J. Gordon (RJG), Marge Hermans (MH), Carrie Hisaoka (CH), Steven C. Heinl (SCH), Laura Huffine (LH), Bob and Kris Jahnke (BKJ), Jerold F. Koerner (JFK), Joan Leighton (JL), Jim H. Lewis (JHL), Deanna MacPhail (DM), Richard Nelson (RN), Paul H. Norwood (PHN), Joseph A. Orsi (JAO), Bruce B. Paige (BBP), Bill H. Pawuk (BHP), Andrew W. Piston (AWP), Boyd and Emily Porter (BEP), Kathy M. Ripley (KMR), Patty A. Rose (PAR), Gary H. Rosenberg (GHR), Bill Sampson (BS), Mark W. Schwan (MWS), Marieke D. Slovin (MDS), Mike Smith (MS), Mark Storm (MSt), Paul M. Suchanek (PMS), Marlys E. Tedin (MET), Theodore G. Tobish, Jr. (TGT), Bill Tweit (BT), Gus B. van Vliet (GBV), Marge L. Ward (MLW), Kathleen Wendt (KLW), Will T. Young (WTY).

SPECIES ACCOUNTS:

BRANT: Late Brant were observed at Sitka 29 June–12 July 2010 (seven; PHN, MLW, MET), Ketchikan 30 June 2010 (five, SCH) and 28 July 2010 (one, WTY), and at Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands 20 June 2010 (five, PMS, BAA, PAR) and 25 June 2010 (one, PMS). Fair numbers of Brant again lingered well into mid-summer in the Glacier Bay area in what is likely an annual phenomenon. High counts on the Gustavus forelands included 54 birds as late as 17 July 2010

(BBP; **Figure 1**), while smaller numbers were found in many different areas of Glacier Bay in June (m. obs.) and a few lingered into July (maximum, 14 in the upper West Arm 9 July 2010 (NKD). Wik and Streveler (1968) discussed similar summer records of non-breeding Brant and other northern nesting species in Glacier Bay, such as scaup and scoters, to which we could probably add Yellow-billed Loon, Long-tailed Duck, and others.



Figure 1. Believe it or not these things are Brant. Non-breeders have been found regularly during the summer in the Glacier Bay area, here photographed at Gustavus 13 July 2010 (left) and 20 July 2010 (right). *Photos by Nat K. Drumheller*

CACKLING GOOSE: Late Cackling Geese included a flock of 24 at Gustavus 1 June 2010 (and two there the next day; NKD) and one at Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands 6 June 2010 (PMS).

TRUMPETER SWAN: An immature Trumpeter Swan summered on the Mendenhall Forelands, near Juneau (RJG, PMS, DM).

CINNAMON TEAL: A drake Cinnamon Teal was found at the Mendenhall Wetlands, near Juneau, 6 June 2010 and 15 June 2010 (PMS, PAR). This species is a rare spring migrant and summer visitant in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and occurs annually in May and June.

CANVASBACK: The Canvasback is a casual or very rare summer visitant to Southeast Alaska, so singles in the Juneau area at the Mendenhall Wetlands 5 July 2010 (female; PMS) and Point Bridget S.P. 8 July 2010 (male; PMS) were noteworthy.

RING-NECKED DUCK: A female Ring-necked Duck with three downy chicks (perhaps a week old) was found at Norton Lake, on Juneau's Mendenhall Forelands, 19 July 2010 (PMS). This species is a rare [or locally uncommon] summer visitant and very rare breeder in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE: Although the Barrow's Goldeneye is a rare summer visitant in the Ketchikan area (Heinl and Piston 2009) a female with two downy chicks on a small muskeg pond 22 June 2010 provided the first confirmed local nesting record (JHL; **Figure 2**).



Figure 2. This female Barrow's Goldeneye with chicks provided the first Ketchikan-area nesting record.
Photo by Jim H. Lewis

HOODED MERGANSER: A few Hooded Mergansers were observed on the Mendenhall Forelands, near Juneau, all summer (m.obs.) and a female was observed with one chick there late in the summer (RJG). This duck is an uncommon resident and breeder in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

RED-THROATED LOON: Two adult Red-throated Loons were found at a small pond near Ketchikan during June, and a loon egg was found at the edge of the pond on 18 June 2010. Apparently the egg never hatched (JHL; [Figure 3](#)). This species is an uncommon breeder in the Ketchikan area (Heinl and Piston 2009).



Figure 3. This Red-throated Loon egg was found on 18 June 2010 at the edge of a small muskeg pond along the Revilla Highway, an old logging road that runs north of Ketchikan. The egg did not hatch and it does not appear to be in a nest. *Photo by Jim H. Lewis*



Figure 4. Adult Yellow-billed Loon in Glacier Bay 13 July 2010. *Photo by David Wimpfheimer*

YELLOW-BILLED LOON: This species is very rare during the summer in Southeast Alaska, but non-breeders appear to be found regularly in Glacier Bay where there were at least five sightings in summer 2010 including two on 21 June 2010 (NKD et al.; **Figure 4**).

PIED-BILLED GREBE: A singing Pied-billed Grebe at Sitka's Swan Lake 7 June 2010 was a surprise (MRG, BT; **Figure 5**). The bird was present through the end of July, and a second adult was observed 30 July 2010 (more to come in the fall notes). Although this grebe is a rare fall migrant and very rare winter visitant in Southeast Alaska, it is casual at other seasons.



Figure 5. Adult Pied-billed Grebe at Swan Lake, Sitka, 7 June 2010. *Photo by Matt R. Goff*

LAYSAN ALBATROSS: One Laysan Albatross was observed well offshore of northern Chichagof Island in mid-July 2010 (JAO). This albatross is likely a rare to uncommon visitant in the eastern Gulf of Alaska.

GREAT BLUE HERON: Thirteen Great Blue Herons at Gustavus 11 July 2010 was a high count for that area (BBP).

OSPREY: An Osprey was found at Bartlett Cove 12 July 2010 (NKD). This species is a rare summer visitant and very rare breeder in Southeast Alaska.

NORTHERN HARRIER: Late harriers included singles at Sitka 3 June 2010 (PHN) and Hyder 10 June 2010 (TGT, GHR). A male and female observed repeatedly throughout July near Gustavus were suspected of nesting (NKD, BBP). This hawk is very rare in most of Southeast Alaska during the summer—there is at least one Southeast breeding record, in the Juneau area (*Field Notes* 48:977) and there are a few nest records for the Glacier Bay area (BBP).

SANDHILL CRANE: Up to two Sandhill Cranes summered near Gustavus (NKD, et al.).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT: This species is a rare migrant in Southeast Alaska. Hudsonian Godwits were found at Gustavus and Juneau where most of the Region's records originate. An early flock of 30 Hudsonian Godwits at the Mendenhall Wetlands, near Juneau, 25 June 2010 (MCA) were possibly failed breeders. Two of the birds carried color bands on their tarsi, and had been banded on the wintering grounds at Isla Chiloe, Chile, in December 2008 (fide Jim Johnson, USFWS). Eleven birds were present through 27 June 2010 (BAA, PAR), then a single bird on 5 July 2010 (PMS), followed by a flock of 10 16–18 July 2010 (GBV, PMS, PAR; [Figure 6](#)). A single bird was also found at Gustavus 1 July 2010 (BBP).



Figure 6. Part of a flock of Hudsonian Godwits and one Bar-tailed Godwit (3rd bird from the right) at the Mendenhall Wetlands, near Juneau, 18 July 2010. *Photo by Patty A. Rose*

BAR-TAILED GODWIT: An adult Bar-tailed Godwit was a nice find amongst the flock of Hudsonian Godwits at Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands 18 July 2010 (PMS et al.; [Figure 6](#)). This species is a casual migrant in southeast Alaska, and nearly all previous records pertain to autumn juveniles rather than adults.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: Enormous numbers of kittiwakes were observed in the Glacier Bay area in late July, including a maximum estimate of 8,000 in the Salmon River area, near Gustavus, on 30 July 2010 (BBP).

SABINE'S GULL: Rare on inside waters of Southeast Alaska, a few Sabine's Gulls were reported in the Glacier Bay area with singles in lower Glacier Bay 18 June 2010 (NKD) and 8 July 2010 (MDS), and at Gustavus 24 June 2010 (NKD; [Figure 7](#)), and three in Glacier Bay 2 July 2010 (NKD). More unusual further inshore was a single bird at Juneau's Eagle Beach 19 June 2010 (PMS, PAR, BAA).



Figure 7. Adult Sabine's Gull (center) near Gustavus 24 June 2010. *Photo by Nat K. Drumheller*



Figure 8. This Franklin's Gull in Glacier Bay 11 June 2010 was in its 2nd summer as determined by its incomplete black hood (white flecks visible between the eye and bill), black markings in the primary coverts and the bases of the outer primaries, and the reduced white subterminal bar across the outer primaries that separates the black wingtip from the rest of the gray wings in full adult plumage. Birds of this age can exhibit a variable amount of black in the outer wing and can sometimes cause confusion with the Laughing Gull—in fact, a Laughing Gull reported in Glacier Bay in mid-June 2010 almost certainly referred instead to this individual. *Photo by Terry Albright*

FRANKLIN'S GULL: A Franklin's Gull at Tarr Inlet 11 and 27 June 2010 provided the 2nd Glacier Bay record (NKD, TA; **Figure 8**). This gull is a casual migrant and summer visitant to Alaska and has been found nearly annually in Southeast.

HEERMANN'S GULL: A juvenile Heermann's Gull was found at the mouth of the Good River, near Gustavus, 31 July 2010 (NKD, MDS, JJA; **Figure 9**). The Heermann's Gull breeds in western Mexico; post-breeding dispersal brings it north along the Pacific Coast annually to southern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 1990) but it is casual north of Vancouver Island. The Gustavus bird was the earliest of the nine Alaska records of this species which now span 31 July to 23 September.



Figure 9. The uniform, chocolate-colored plumage and black legs and bill identify the bird on the right as a hatching-year Heermann's Gull. The bird still retains buff-edged juvenile wing coverts and scapulars. Gustavus 31 July 2010. *Photo by Nat K. Drumheller*

RING-BILLED GULL: A subadult Ring-billed Gull at Hyder 11–13 June 2010 (TGT, GHR, photo) was the only summer report of this rare, annual summer visitant to Southeast Alaska.

CALIFORNIA GULL: Small numbers of California Gulls were reported from northern Southeast Alaska in the Gustavus and Juneau areas. Maximum at Gustavus was nine on 25 June 2010 (BBP), with one or two reported there the rest of the summer (NKD, BBP). Small numbers throughout June in the Juneau area increased to a maximum of 65 on the Mendenhall Wetlands 28 July 2010 (nearly all subadults; SCH). California Gulls were also found at Hyder, with a maximum count of five on 13 June 2010 (all subadults; TGT, GHR).

THAYER'S GULL: Small numbers of non-breeding Thayer's Gulls regularly linger into June–July in the Juneau area. This year up to two were found at Eagle Beach 19 June 2010 and 25 July 2010 (PMS, BAA, PAR). Small numbers (one to two birds) were also reported at Gustavus 25 June 2010 and on four dates in July 2010 (BBP, NKD).

ALEUTIAN TERN: Aleutian Terns were observed in Glacier Bay for the 4th consecutive summer, with singles in the lower West Arm on 6 and 21 June 2010 (NKD). This species was only recently found nesting in Glacier Bay (*North American Birds* 59:641).

CASPIAN TERN: Caspian Terns were reported all summer in the Gustavus area and Glacier Bay N.P., where the maximum count of 23 on 29 July 2010 included the first juveniles (two) of the season (NKD). Caspian Terns were also reported throughout the summer in the Juneau area, with a maximum of 10 birds at the Mendenhall Wetlands 20 June 2010 (BAA, PMS, PAR).

ARCTIC TERN: A nice high count of 142 Arctic Terns at the mouth of the Mendenhall River, near Juneau, 16 June 2010 included 17 juveniles (RJG). This species breeds at glacial river systems on the mainland of southeast Alaska (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959) and is a fairly common breeder in the Juneau area.

POMARINE JAEGER: Two Pomarine Jaegers were found in eastern Icy Strait 27 July 2010 (MWS, GBV). This species is generally very rare on inside waters of Southeast Alaska during the summer, but is probably locally more numerous in Icy Strait where there is an abundance of feed and kittiwakes to chase.

PARASITIC JAEGER: The Parasitic Jaeger is probably an uncommon breeder in Glacier Bay (Wik and Streveler 1968). This summer, two behaved defensively at a traditional nesting site near the glacier in Reid Inlet 19 June 2010 (MDS).

KITTLITZ'S MURRELET: A nice count of 180 Kittlitz's Murrelets was made in Tarr Inlet, Glacier Bay, 27 June 2010 (BBP).

BAND-TAILED PIGEON: A flock of Band-tailed Pigeons at a Ketchikan feeder 6 July 2010 held a juvenile bird, likely reared nearby—the 3rd consecutive year that young birds have been observed at this feeder (CAF). Observations of fresh juveniles at Ketchikan feeders still constitutes the best breeding evidence for Band-tailed Pigeons in Alaska.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: After increasing in number through the spring period, collared-doves invaded southern Southeast Alaska in unprecedented numbers in June. At least 40 individual birds were present along the length of the Ketchikan roadsystem (m. obs.), including up to 15 doves at a single feeder (KMR). Collared-doves were conspicuous at many Ketchikan locations singing and displaying to each other, and copulating birds were observed 2 July 2010 (BEP), 4 July 2010 (BKJ), and 13 July 2010 (KLW). Nesting has yet to be confirmed in Alaska, though young birds have been reported with adults in late summer (and adults were observed collecting nest material at Juneau in 2009). A bird thought to be a juvenile was observed with adults at a Ketchikan feeder in late July (KMR; [Figure 10](#)).

Elsewhere in southern Southeast Alaska, collared-doves were reported from Annette Island (maximum; seven on 14 June 2010, JB), at least two locations on Prince of Wales Island (at least six at Klawock, MSt; one at Saltery Cove, JL), up to 16 at Wrangell (KB, BHD), up to 11 at Petersburg (BHP), five at the mouth of the Stikine River (BS), and a smattering of birds from more remote locations in between, including single birds at the Unuk River 2 July 2010 (LH), at Yes Bay (on the mainland north of Ketchikan; fide GB), and Hyder 13 June 2010 (apparently a bird just arriving—first observed flying up the channel over Portland Canal and then over the tide flats towards the base of town; TGT, GHR).

Collared-doves were found in the northern half of the region in similar small numbers as summer 2009, with reports of 1–3 birds from Sitka, Juneau, Gustavus, Haines, Pelican, and Funter Bay (Admiralty Island) (m. obs).



Figure 10. The lack of a black neck ring and dark iris suggests this Eurasian Collared-Dove at Ketchikan in late July 2010 was a juvenile. *Photo by Kathy M. Ripley*

NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL: A Northern Pygmy-Owls was calling near the beginning of the Chilkoot Trail, near Skagway, 9 June 2010 (PMS), and at least one was also found in the Gustavus area 20 and 25 July 2010 (NKD, BBP). Although this species is likely a rare breeder on the Southeast mainland and adjacent islands, the only confirmed breeding is still a single nest record from Mitkof Island (Walsh 1990) and a juvenile that was picked up alive at Haines 19 June 1988 (see Heintz and Piston 2009).

BLACK SWIFT: A Black Swift lumbered over Tongass Avenue, Ketchikan, 21 July 2010 (AWP, SCH), providing only the 3rd local record. This species is a locally uncommon summer visitant and probable breeder on the mainland river systems of southeast Alaska from the Stikine River south (Swarth 1911, Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959).

VAUX'S SWIFT: One Vaux's Swift was found at the Bartlett River 15 July 2010 (NKD). This species reaches the northwestern limit of its summer range in northern Southeast Alaska and is rare in the Gustavus/Glacier Bay area (Wik and Streveler 1968).

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER: A nest with young was found along Eaglecrest Road, Douglas Island, near Juneau, 17 June 2010 (PAR, PMS). This species is a rare resident in Southeast Alaska.

NORTHERN FLICKER: A nest of Northern "Yellow-shafted" Flickers was found near Juneau 27 June 2010 (PMS; [Figure 11](#)). The nest contained at least two young birds (which fledged by the next day). The nest, located in a snag amongst a small island of trees in the middle of a muskeg, was the first to be documented in the Juneau area. Although this woodpecker is locally uncommon year-round in southern Southeast Alaska (Heintz and Piston 2009), it is generally a rare migrant and summer visitant in northern Southeast Alaska.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER: A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher heard singing at Hyder 15 June 2010 (TGT) provided the 3rd local record and one of fewer than 10 for Southeast Alaska. This species is also a rare fall migrant, summer visitant and possible breeder in east-central Alaska (Benson et al. 2000), and a small, disjunct breeding population was discovered northwest of Fairbanks in 2004 (Martin et al. 2006).

ALDER FLYCATCHER: A singing Alder Flycatcher was found at the Ketchikan airport 17 June 2010 (CAF). This species is an uncommon migrant and breeder on the southeast Alaska mainland and a locally rare probable breeder in the Alexander Archipelago (Kessel and Gibson 1978), including the Ketchikan area (Heinl and Piston 2009).



Figure 11. Two “Yellow-shafted” Flicker nestlings at their nest in a hemlock snag on Douglas Island, near Juneau, 29 June 2010. This nest represented the first documented breeding record for the Juneau area. *Photo by Paul M. Suchanek*

WESTERN KINGBIRD: A Western Kingbird at Hyder 11–13 June 2010 (TGT, GHR; **Figure 12**) provided at least the 9th local record. This flycatcher is a casual migrant and summer visitant in Alaska, and the pilings on the Hyder tideflats, all that remains of the original town that burned in 1948, has accounted for nearly half the state records.

CASSIN’S VIREO: A Cassin’s Vireo was singing in the Fish Creek woods near Hyder 10 June 2010 (TGT, GHR). This species has been found nearly annually in summer on mainland Southeast Alaska over the last 13 years, and nesting was documented near Haines in 2005 (see DeCicco and Hajdukovich 2008).

WARBLING VIREO: A Warbling Vireo was found at Gustavus 19 June 2010, following last spring’s 1st local record—it was thought that both sightings may have involved the same bird since the locations were only a half mile apart (NKD).

RED-EYED VIREO: A singing Red-eyed Vireo was found at Hyder 10 June 2010 (TGT, GHR). This vireo is very rare in Alaska and nearly all records are from the Southeast mainland during the summer (Kessel and Gibson 1978, Johnson et al. 2008).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW: Two Northern Rough-winged Swallows were found over the Hyder tide flats 11–12 June 2010 (TGT, GHR). Kessel and Gibson (1978) considered this species to be a rare migrant, summer visitant, and breeder in Southeast Alaska, where it occurs on the mainland and on islands near the mouths of the mainland rivers—the Hyder area is one of the most consistent locations for this species in Alaska.



Figure 12. This Western Kingbird was present at the Hyder tide flats 11–13 June 2010. *Photo by Gary H. Rosenberg*

BANK SWALLOW: A Bank Swallow at Sitka 9 June 2010 (BT) was a rare find on the outer coast. This species is found more regularly (but locally) on the mainland where nesting substrate is more readily available along large rivers (Kessel and Gibson 1978, Johnson et al. 2008).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH: A pair of nuthatches that visited a Gustavus feeder all spring brought their family to the feeder in June where they fed the juveniles (NKD).

GRAY CATBIRD: Amazingly, three Gray Catbirds were found in Southeast Alaska this summer. The first was heard singing during a breeding bird survey near Sitka 10 June 2010 (CH, details provided; JAC); the bird's song was recorded on 13 June 2010 (RN). Another Gray Catbird was observed briefly as it fed at grape jelly feeders that had been put out to attract orioles (!) at Ketchikan 22 June 2010 (JFK, details provided); that bird was not relocated. Finally, a Gray Catbird was found in elderberry thickets at Mountain Point, near Ketchikan, 12–16 July 2010 (AWP, SCH, RBB; **Figure 13**). There were only six prior Alaska records of this species, which breeds as close as southern interior British Columbia (Campbell et al. 1997).



Figure 13. Gray Catbird at Mountain Point, Ketchikan, 16 July 2010—one of three reported in Southeast Alaska in summer 2010. *Photo by Jim H. Lewis*

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD: A secretive Northern Mockingbird was found in elderberry bushes near the Gustavus airport on 22 and 24 July 2010 (NKD, BBP). This bird provided the 2nd local record. There are now at least 18 Alaska records of this species, most of which are from summer and fall.

BROWN THRASHER: A strange bird photographed at Ketchikan's Mountain Point vagrant trap ([Figure 14](#)) in late June (MS; [Figure 15](#)) was finally identified as a Brown Thrasher on 26 June 2010 (AWP), providing only the 7th Alaska record of this eastern species. The bird was observed through 1 July 2010.

CEDAR WAXWING: Small numbers of Cedar Waxwings in the Gustavus area included a new local high count of 20 birds on 22 July 2010 (NKD, BBP). Waxwings were also present in slightly better-than-average numbers in southern Southeast Alaska (m.obs.), including at Hyder where waxwings were observed copulating and gathering nesting material and the maximum count was 32 birds 10–15 June 2010 (TGT, GHR).

SNOW BUNTING: A Snow Bunting was reported at Reid Inlet, Glacier Bay, 19 June 2010 (MDS). This species reaches the southeastern limit of its Alaska breeding range in the Glacier Bay area where it is a rare breeder (Wik and Streveler 1968). Nesting has also been documented just north of Glacier Bay in northwestern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001) and southwestern Yukon (Sinclair et al. 2003).



Figure 14. Aerial view of Ketchikan's Mountain Point "vagrant trap." The area within the red circle is an overgrown vacant lot cleared for development more than 15 years ago. Open grassy areas combined with brush piles, burned areas and dense alder/salmonberry/elderberry thickets (and a sprinkling of bird seed) provide excellent habitat for migrants that otherwise face a sea of spruce-hemlock forest. The Brown Thrasher and Gray Catbird found in this vacant lot in summer 2010 add to a long list of interesting finds over the years, including Mourning Dove, Western Kingbird, Hammond's Flycatcher, Nashville Warbler, Palm Warbler, Lark Sparrow, Swamp Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows, Black-headed Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Western Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole (nearby), and Bullock's Oriole.



Figure 15. This Brown Thrasher was found at Mountain Point, near Ketchikan, in late June 2010 (right photo; Mike Smith). The photo on the right was taken 27 June 2010 (Jim H. Lewis), and the bird was present through 1 July 2010.

MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER: A MacGillivray's Warbler in a mixed-flock of migrants was a rare find at Gustavus 20 July 2010 (BBP). This species reaches the northwestern limit of its breeding range in northern Southeast Alaska and is very rare in the Gustavus/Glacier Bay area (BBP).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT: A singing-male Common Yellowthroat at Sitka's Swan Lake 8–9 June 2010 (BT) was a rare find for the outer coast. This warbler is an uncommon to locally fairly common breeder in freshwater marshes and estuarine meadows along the Southeast mainland and adjacent islands (Kessel and Gibson 1978; Heintz and Piston 2009), but has also been reported from Prince of Wales Island (e.g., eight birds 7 July 1995; *Field Notes* 49:965) suggesting that it may occur more regularly on the outer islands than has been reported in the past.

CHIPPING SPARROW: The Chipping Sparrow is an uncommon breeder along the rivers of mainland southeast Alaska and a rare migrant elsewhere on the mainland (Kessel and Gibson 1978). A Chipping Sparrow near Gustavus 26 July 2012 was noteworthy as the species is not found annually in that area (BBP). Elsewhere, Chipping Sparrows were reported from the Mendenhall Wetlands, near Juneau, 16 July 2010 (one; RJG) and in the Skagway area 9 June 2010 (two; PMS).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW: The White-crowned Sparrow is not known to breed in Southeast Alaska, so a singing bird, possibly accompanied by a 2nd White-crowned Sparrow, was of interest at Red Bluff Bay estuary, Baranof Island, 18 June 2010 (MRG). Most migrant White-crowns have moved through Southeast Alaska by the end of May.

WESTERN TANAGER: Normal small numbers of Western Tanagers were found in the Juneau area, including three at Point Bridget S.P. (RJG), and singles closer to Juneau 15 June 2010 (PAR) and 16 June 2010 (PMS). Small numbers were also found in the Skagway area; maximum three on 10 June 2010 (PMS).

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD: Breeding activity (adult carrying food) by a pair of Red-winged Blackbirds was documented at Gustavus 17 June 2010 (NKD, MDS). This species is a fairly common local breeder on the Southeast mainland (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and has been reported nesting in the Glacier Bay area in the past (e.g., five active and three empty nests in Glacier Bay N.M. 17 June 1971; Kessel and Gibson 1978).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD: A pair of Rusty Blackbirds with a just-fledged juvenile was a nice find in a beaver pond three miles up the Chilkoot Trail, near Skagway, 10 June 2010 (PMS). Another pair was reported to be present all summer at Norton Lake, in Juneau's Mendenhall Forelands (RJG). This species is a rare to uncommon local breeder on the mainland (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD: A male Brown-headed Cowbird was found at Sitka 9 June 2010 (BT), and two males and a female were present at Hyder 10–15 June 2010, some of which were observed copulating (TGT, GHR). This species is a rare migrant and probable breeder in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and small numbers have been found at Hyder in June in past years.

HOUSE SPARROW: House Sparrows nested at Ketchikan for the 2nd straight year and in the same building that was used in 2009 (AWP, SCH). This year, at least a dozen juvenile House Sparrows were fledged from three nests through the period, and at least six adults were present in the area. Two nests were active simultaneously in opposite eaves of the same building in early June and chicks fledged on approximately 13 June 2010 (at least four birds) and 21 June 2010 (at least three birds). By early July, one of the nests was active again and on 19 July at least five adults

were observed tending nestlings that appeared to be near fledging. Adult birds were also observed entering the second nest on the opposite side of the building on this date, but no further signs of nesting activity were observed there. On 21 July 2010 at least five just-fledged juveniles were being attended by adults at a vacant lot across the street from the nest building (AWP, SCH) and adults were still observed entering the nest opening, so more chicks may have been waiting to leave the nest.

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Nat Drumheller at work in Glacier Bay, summer 2010. Nat has been birding the Glacier Bay area for many years and has regularly provided excellent seasonal summaries of noteworthy bird observations in the area, though, as Nat says, “it is not all fun and birds.”

