SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS:
Summer Season: June–July 2013

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This report summarizes bird sightings from Southeast Alaska for the summer season, June–July 2013, 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/nab). Generally we report on sightings of birds that are out of range or out of season or occur regularly in small numbers, noteworthy breeding records, unusually large or small numbers of a particular species, unusual migration dates, etc., and so on, and so forth.

Summer 2013 was warmer and drier than average, particularly in June. Average June temperature was 6% above normal at both Ketchikan and Juneau, and it was the second warmest June on record at Juneau (after 2004). Maximum June high temperature reached a balmy 85 degrees on 16 June at both Juneau and Ketchikan. July temperatures were 1% above normal at Juneau and 4% above normal at Ketchikan. Precipitation was only slightly below average at Juneau in both June (3.19 in.) and July (4.45 in.), but was 30% below average at Ketchikan in June (4.65 in.) and 36% below average in July (4.19 in.). Very rare thunderstorms on several dates in June and July added to the unusual summer weather.

Birding highlights were heavily tilted toward passerines this summer, particularly flycatchers, highlighted by an Eastern Phoebe at Yakutat, two species of kingbirds, and single Willow and Yellow-bellied flycatchers. Other great finds included Great Egret, Short-tailed Albatross, multiple Red-eyed Vireos, Northern Mockingbird, Clay-colored Sparrow, Bobolink, Common Grackle, and the first documented nesting of the Caspian Tern in Glacier Bay.

We would like to thank the people who sent us observations, shared their photographs, and answered our inquiries about their sightings, all of whom are cited below. We particularly appreciated the extensive reports from Nat Drumheller (Gustavus), Matt Goff (Sitka), Bonnie Demerjian (Wrangell), Gwen Baluss, and Paul Lehman. We benefited from access to sightings entered into eBird (www.ebird.org) which we’ve incorporated into this report, and we thank Gus van Vliet for reviewing the eBird data from Juneau. Nat Drumheller and Matt Goff provided reviews that improved the final draft of this summary. Our past seasonal reports (since fall 2008) have been archived at the Juneau Audubon website:

Names and Initials of observers cited in the text or who reported sightings: Beverley A. Agler (BAA), Robert H. Armstrong (RHA), James F. Baichtal (JFB), Gwen S. Baluss (GSB), Christopher Behnke (CB), Earl Benitz (EB), R. Brad Benter (RBB), Ryan Carpenter (RC), Bob Christensen (BC), John Church (JC), Jan G. Crichton (JGC), Amy C. Courtney (ACC), Bonnie H. Demerjian (BHD), Nat K. Drumheller (NKD), Matt R. Goff (MRG), Richard J. Gordon (RJG), Richard Hebhardt (RH), Steven C. Heinl (SCH), Steven F. Hemenway (SFH), Heidi Herter (HH), Brad L. Hunter (BLH), Sue Karl (SK), Jerrold F. Koerner (JFK), Joanne Leighton (JL), Paul E. Lehman (PEL), Hank P. Lentfer (HPL), Jim H. Lewis (JHL), Tania Lewis (TML), Katja Mocnik (KM), Walter Moorhead (WM), Richard K. Nelson (RKN), Bill K. Neumann (BKN), Tana O’Leary (TO), Hank P. Lentfer (HPL), Joseph A. Orsi (JAO), Bruce B. Paige (BBP), W. Larry Peavler (WLP), Andrew W. Piston (AWP), Kathy M. Ripley (KMR), Patty A. Rose (PAR), Carol L. Ross (CLR), William T. Sampson (WTS), Georgie Sansom (GS), James F. Saracco (JFS), David Schmerge (DS), Mark W. Schwan (MWS), Ellie Sharman (ES), Lewis Sharman (LS), Chuck P. Susie (CPS), Andrew Thoms (AT), Bill P. Taylor (BPT), Stephen Todd (ST), Bill Tweit (BT), Gus B. van Vliet (GBV), Allen Williams (AW), Will T. Young (WTY).
SPECIES ACCOUNTS:

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: Greater White-fronted Geese were reported at many locations into mid-June following a spring migration that was noteworthy for high numbers and late lingerers. High counts included 26 at Gustavus 2 June 2013 (BBP) and 27 there 16 June 2013 (NKD, JFS, AW); up to 10 in the Juneau area 2 and 4 June 2013 (DS, GBV) and five still present there 29 June 2013 (Eagle Beach; ACC); and 13 at Saltery Cove, Prince of Wales Island, 18–21 June 2013 (JL). A few were also reported at Sitka and Ketchikan (m.obs.). Latest were two at Gustavus 4 July 2013 (BBP).

ROSS’S GOOSE: By lingering to 4 June 2013, the Gustavus Ross’s Goose (first found 11 May 2013) squeaked into the summer period and established a new late spring date for Southeast (BBP, NKD; Figure 1). This goose is a casual spring migrant along the south coast of Alaska, and it is a rare summer visitant on the eastern Beaufort Sea coast where nesting was documented in 1984 (Johnson and Troy 1987).

BRANT: Although this was clearly the summer of late geese, small numbers of Brant are regularly found into June and this summer was no exception. As usual, the largest numbers were noted in the Gustavus-Glacier Bay area where maximum was 220 at Gustavus 4 June 2013 (NKD) and latest were 10 in the west arm of Glacier Bay 8 July 2013 (NKD) and three at Gustavus 29 July 2013 (BBP). Brant were also noted at Sitka 1 June (six; RC), Saltery Cove, Prince of Wales Island, 4 June (one; JL), near Ketchikan 5 June (seven; PEL), and Juneau 9 June (two; BAA, PAR). Very rare July Brant were reported at lower Chatham Strait 12 July (one; PEL), Juneau 13 July (one; PAR), and Dixon Entrance 15 July (one; PEL).

CACKLING GOOSE: Two Cackling Geese at Eagle Beach, near Juneau, 2–9 June 2013 (GVB, BT, BAA, PAR) were late.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL: Twenty Blue-winged Teal, part of a late, large concentration of waterfowl at the Mendenhall Wetlands 2 June 2013 (DS), provided a larger than average count for Southeast Alaska. This species is an uncommon spring migrant throughout the region, usually found in pairs or groups of up to eight birds (Kessel and Gibson 1978).
NORTHERN SHOVELER: One hundred Northern Shovelers at the Mendenhall Wetlands 2 June 2013 (DS) was also provided a large, late count for Southeast Alaska.

Figure 2. The White-tailed Ptarmigan is an uncommon resident of mainland alpine in northern Southeast Alaska. This female and chick were found in the alpine above Lemon Creek, near Juneau, 11 July 2013. Photo by Gwen S. Baluss

PACIFIC LOON: Large, late concentrations of Pacific Loons included a flock of 279 at Juneau 6 June 2013 (MWS), 130 in Glacier Bay 3 June 2013 (PEL), and 100 near Haines 4 June 2013 (PEL).

YELLOW-BILLED LOON: Single Yellow-billed Loons were found off Sitka 1 June 2013 (PEL) and in middle Glacier Bay 17 June 2013 (NKD). This loon is very rare during the summer—non-breeders have been reported regularly in Glacier Bay over the past five years or so, and one or two are reported annually elsewhere in Southeast.

WESTERN GREBE: At least 90 Western Grebes in Chichagof Pass, near Wrangell, 31 July 2013 (BHD) provided a new summer high count for Southeast Alaska and added to previous summer records in the eastern Sumner Strait area in 1987, 1989, 1990, and 1994 (including two counts of more than 20 birds; Am. Birds).

SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS: An immature Short-tailed Albatross was observed at the shelf break approximately 65 km southwest of Icy Point 27 July 2013 (JAO). This albatross is likely a regular visitant to the eastern Gulf of Alaska; Kenyon et al. (2009) considered it to be an uncommon, regular summer visitant to British Columbia waters.

SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER: A Short-tailed Shearwater reported feeding with thousands of gulls in Sitakaday Narrows, Glacier Bay, 14 July 2013 (PEL) was unexpected. The status of this species on Inside waters in Southeast Alaska is virtually unknown, and it is notoriously difficult to separate from the Sooty Shearwater, even for experienced observers.
GREAT BLUE HERON: At least four active Great Blue Heron nests with calling young and adults were observed in the forest at Bartlett Cove 6 June 2013 (NKD). Great Blue Herons have traditionally nested in this area according to National Park staff (and BBP).

GREAT EGRET: A Great Egret at Kake 9–10 June 2013 (JFB, SK; Figure 3) provided at least the 11th report for Southeast Alaska. New World subspecies *egretta* nests no closer to Alaska than central Washington (McCrnimmon et al. 2011).

![Great Egret](image)

Figure 3. This Great Egret at Kake 9 June 2013 was the 2nd to be found in Southeast Alaska in 2013. *Photo by James F. Baichtal*

RED-TAILED HAWK: Chuck Susie found a pair of Red-tailed Hawks that appeared to include a male *harlani* and a female *harlani × calurus* at a nest at Klukwan, in the Chilkat River Valley, on 3 May 2013 (CPS, photo). The nest held two nestlings on 21 June 2013. At least one *harlani* was also reported at Gustavus 14 June 2013 (BBP) where there were numerous reports of Red-tailed Hawks this summer (m.obs.). The *harlani* subspecies breeds from central Alaska and the Yukon to northern British Columbia (Preston and Beane 2009). It is a rare migrant through mainland northern Southeast Alaska and is likely a rare, local breeder where they intergrade with other red-tailed subspecies.

SORA: Single Sora’s were found at Gustavus 7–21 June 2013 (BBP, NKD, JFS), Juneau 7–10 June 2013 (MWS et al.), and mile 16 on the Chilkat Highway, near Haines, 14 July 2013 (RBB). This species is a rare migrant, summer visitant, and local breeder in Southeast Alaska, primarily along the mainland river systems (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

SANDHILL CRANE: Sandhill Cranes were found in the Gustavus area for the 5th consecutive summer. A minimum of four birds were present all season, including what was thought to be two different pairs (m.obs.), though no evidence of nesting was observed.
KILLDEER: An adult Killdeer and chick at the Gustavus airport 25 June 2013 followed sightings of adults there in May (NKD) and provided the first local nesting record since the early 1970s (fide BBP). The Killdeer is a rare or uncommon migrant and summer visitant throughout Southeast Alaska; it can be found on beaches but favors extensive open disturbed ground, such as gravel lots and industrial areas (and airports).

WILSON’S PHALAROPE: Wilson’s Phalaropes were reported several times in the Juneau area: two at the Mendenhall Wetlands 30 May 2013 (male and female; RJG, GBV, MWS, PAR, photo) and single males at the Montana Creek rifle range 1 June 2013 (GBV) and the Mendenhall Wetlands 22 July 2013 (SCH, photo). Two at Gustavus 27 June 2013 (BBP), provided the 2nd local summer record and 6th overall (fide NKD). This shorebird is a very rare migrant and summer visitant in Southeast Alaska.

SABINE’S GULL: A Sabine’s Gull in lower Glacier Bay 18 July 2013 (JFS) added to what appears to be the annual summer occurrence of this normally pelagic species in Glacier Bay.

CALIFORNIA GULL: Normal small numbers of California Gulls in northern Southeast included 1–4 at Gustavus 22 June 2013+ (NKD, BBP), 20 at Skagway 13 July 2013 (PEL), and maximum 10 near Juneau 25 July 2013 (GBV, SCH).

ALEUTIAN TERN: Aleutian Terns were observed regularly at the entrance to the west arm of Glacier Bay 21 June 2013+ (maximum seven), including up to three juveniles on several dates 12–19 July 2013 (NKD). On 23 June 2013, approximately 40 adult Aleutian Terns and at least one nest were located amongst a colony of 500 nesting Arctic Terns at the Adams outwash, Adams Inlet, Glacier Bay; a full nest survey was not conducted due to the presence of Arctic Tern chicks (TML, KM). Aleutian Terns (37) and nests were found at this same location in 2005 (North Am. Birds 59:641).

CASPIAN TERN: Although suspected for several years, Caspian Terns were finally documented nesting in Glacier Bay when 20 adults and eight nests were found at Flapjack Island 13 June 2013 (TML, CB). This tern was first found in Southeast Alaska in 1981 and, following a long population expansion on the Pacific Coast (Gill and Mewaldt 1983, Suryan et al. 2004), has since become a regular visitant and rare nester in coastal Alaska (Gibson and Kessel 1992, McCaffery et al. 1997, Gill 2008, Johnson et al. 2008, Lohse et al. 2008). An adult at Gustavus 10 July 2013 (NKD) had been banded as a chick at the Copper River Delta, Alaska, in July 2009 (fide Yasuko Suzuki, Oregon State University).

LONG-TAILED JAEGER: Single Long-tailed Jaegers were found in Glacier Bay 7 June 2013 (NKD) and 14 July 2013 (PEL). Like the Sabine’s Gull, this pelagic species, which is normally rare on inside waters in Southeast, has recently been an annual summer visitant to Glacier Bay.

KITTTLITZ’S MURRELET: High counts of Kittlitz’s Murrelets in Glacier Bay this summer included 800 near the mouth of the bay 3 June 2013 (PEL) and numbers probably exceeding 1,000 in the upper west arm 9 and 12 July 2013 (NKD).

BAND-TAILED PIGEON: A single juvenile Band-tailed Pigeon was reported among a flock of adults at a Ketchikan feeding station 29–30 June 2013 (KMR). Observations of fresh juveniles at Ketchikan feeders still constitutes the best breeding evidence for this species in Alaska.
EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: Eurasian Collared-Doves were widely reported throughout the region this summer, with an increase in sightings in northern Southeast Alaska. Drumheller reported that collared-doves were observed throughout the period at Gustavus and that several pairs likely attempted to nest this summer (maximum count at one location=6). Other reports of interest in the northern part of the region included one in early June at Bartlett Cove (HH); two near a home on Lemesurier Island in Icy Strait on several dates in June, then one at that location through early July (BC, HPL); one on 19 June on Drake Island in Glacier Bay (HPL, RKN); and four at Hoonah 13 July 2013 (BLH). At Juneau, ten birds at Van Vliet’s feeders 5 July 2013 provided a new high count for his yard-list.

MOURNING DOVE: A Mourning Dove at Klukwan 26 June 2013+ (CPS; Figure 4) provided a very rare mid-summer record for Southeast Alaska. This dove is a rare fall migrant in Southeast Alaska, but it is very rare in spring and summer (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and is certainly not found annually at those seasons.

SHORT-EARED OWL: Single Short-eared Owls at Gustavus on 21 and 23 July 2013 (BBP) were thought to be migrants as they were both observed flying high over the area in a southerly direction.

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL: Northern Saw-whet Owls raised five young in a nest box at Gustavus, which fledged during the last week of June (ES, LS).

BLACK SWIFT: The Black Swift 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). Small numbers were reported at the Stikine River from late May through mid-July (WTS, ST; maximum, 18 on 1 June 2013, ST).

VAUX’S SWIFT: A single Vaux’s Swift at Gustavus 4 June 2013 (NKD, BBP) was a rare find for the location. This species occurs regularly as far north as Lynn Canal in Southeast Alaska, but it is considered rare in the Gustavus area, at the northwestern fringe of its regular range.
ANNA’S HUMMINGBIRD: Anna’s Hummingbirds made a good showing in the region this summer. A male and female visited a Juneau feeder 14–21 July 2013 (JGC, photo) and a hatch-year female was observed at another Juneau feeder 30 July–4 August 2013 (GSB, photo). At Ketchikan, an adult male, present since winter, continued at Piston’s feeders until 5 June 2013, while Koerner’s feeding operation hosted a female 30 July 2013 (possibly also present since spring) and a different bird on 2 August 2013. This species is a rare fall and winter visitant to Southeast Alaska, but is typically casual in late spring and summer.

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD: Although a familiar species throughout the region, the number of Rufous Hummingbirds at Bill Neumann’s Farm Island (Stikine River) residence was truly spectacular—An estimated 40–50 birds per day visited his feeders from early to mid-July (BKN; Figure 5).

![Figure 5. Rufous Hummingbirds at the Stikine River in July. Photos by Bill K. Neumann](image)

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE: Single Western Wood-Pewees at Yakutat 23 June 2013 (GSB) and Gustavus 1, 22, and 24 June 2013 (NKD, BBP, JFS) were all west of the species’ usual haunts. This flycatcher breeds to east-central Alaska and the northwest Kenai Peninsula, but is generally found away from coastal areas. This flycatcher is an uncommon migrant and breeder in mainland southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER: A singing Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Gustavus 16 June 2013 provided a first local record (AW, NKD, et al.; Figure 6) and only about the 9th record for Southeast Alaska. This species is casual in Southeast Alaska and is also a rare fall migrant, summer visitant, and breeder in east-central Alaska (Benson et al. 2000, Martin et al. 2006).

ALDER FLYCATCHER: The Alder Flycatcher 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). It is one of the latest arriving spring migrants and earliest this year were two at Gustavus 3 June 2013 (NKD). Alder Flycatchers were reported to be more abundant than usual in the Gustavus area where at least 14 were located near the airport 30 June 2013 (BBP). At Wrangell, observers noted this species near the airport, where it has been found regularly in recent years, beginning 20 June 2013 (CLR, WM, BHD). One at Rust Lake, Chichagof Island, 29 June 2013 (MRG; photo and recording) provided a rare record for the outer coast.
Figure 6. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Lake Gustavus 16 June 2013. This species is very similar to the Pacific-slope Flycatcher, but note the uniformly round eyering (typically teardrop shaped and thicker at the rear of the eye in Pacific-slope Flycatcher). The two species also have very different songs, and this bird was ultimately identified by its song. *Photo by Bruce B. Paige*

WILLOW FLYCATCHER: A probable Willow Flycatcher at a Juneau residence 21 July 2013 was well described (GBV). On 30 July 2013 Drumheller heard what could have been this species singing briefly at Gustavus; but due to the lack of visual confirmation, the presence of Alder Flycatchers in the vicinity, and brief nature of the encounter he considered the report hypothetical. The Willow Flycatcher is casual in Alaska and most records are from the Southeast mainland between mid-June and early July.

HAMMOND’S FLYCATCHER: A Hammond’s Flycatcher at Bartlett Cove, near Gustavus, 13 June 2013 provided only the 2nd local summer report (and 5th overall; *fide BBP*). This species breeds through northern British Columbia, southern Yukon, and into east-central Alaska; it is an uncommon breeder along the mainland rivers of Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

EASTERN PHOEBE: An Eastern Phoebe at Yakutat 20–25 June 2013 (GSB et al.; Figure 7) provided only the 6th Alaska record. This eastern species breeds in small numbers as close as northeastern British Columbia and extreme southeastern Yukon (Weeks 2011).

WESTERN KINGBIRD: A Western Kingbird was a nice surprise at Pack Creek, Admiralty Island, 12 July 2013 (GBV, RH; Figure 8). There are now more than 30 Alaska reports of this casual migrant and summer visitant (*fide GBV*).

EASTERN KINGBIRD: An Eastern Kingbird at Gustavus 30 July 2013 (NKD, BBP; Figure 8) provided a 5th local record. This species is a rare migrant and summer visitant in Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).
Figure 7. In a season heavy with rare flycatchers, this Eastern Phoebe at Yakutat 20 June 2013 took the prize. *Photo by Gwen S. Baluss*

Figure 8. This summer’s kingbirds included a Western Kingbird at Pack Creek, Admiralty Island, 12 July 2013 (left; *Photo by Richard Hebhardt*) and an Eastern Kingbird at Gustavus 30 July 2013 (right; *photo by Nat K. Drumheller*).

**CASSIN’S VIREO:** A singing Cassin’s Vireo was found along the Chilkat River near Haines 4 June 2013 (PEL, WLP). This vireo is a very rare annual visitant to mainland Southeast Alaska (DeCicco and Hajdukovich 2008).
WARBLING VIREO: A Warbling Vireo at Rust Lake, Chichagof Island, 30 June 2013 was a good find for the outer islands of Southeast Alaska (MRG). This species is an uncommon to fairly common breeder along the rivers of mainland Southeast Alaska, but is rare on the inner islands of the Alexander Archipelago and very rare or casual on the outer islands.

RED-EYED VIREO: Single Red-eyed Vireos were found at Juneau 25 June–6 July 2013 (GBV et al.; Figure 9) and 15 July 2013 (possibly same bird, GSB), at Mosquito Lake, Chilkat River, 14 July 2013 (RBB), and at Ketchikan 29 June to 7 July 2013 (AWP, SCH; Figure 9). The Ketchikan bird provided a second local record and only about the third from the Alexander Archipelago. 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).

BANK SWALLOW: A colony of approximately 40 Bank Swallows at Wrangell Island, observed 4 and 22 June 2013 (JC), likely represented the first nest record for the Alexander Archipelago. The colony was located in a large mound of old wood chips with a flat face toward saltwater at the 6-Mile mill; John observed the birds as they entered and exited nest holes while he was trolling for fish (fide BHD). The Bank Swallow is a locally uncommon to fairly common breeder along mainland river systems in Southeast Alaska where cut-banks provide natural nesting substrate (Kessel and Gibson 1978, Johnson et al. 2008). Bank Swallows have been documented nesting in human-made substrates, including sawdust piles, elsewhere in North America (Garrison 1999).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD: A Northern Mockingbird was a great find at Farm Island, Stikine River, 9 June 2013 (EB; Figure 10). There are now more than 20 Alaska records of this species (primarily in summer and fall), which has nested as close as southernmost British Columbia (Campbell et al. 1997).

CEDAR WAXWING: Three Cedar Waxwings were found at Gustavus 26 July 2013 (NKD), at the northwestern edge of this species’ regular summer range. There was only one local record prior to 2003, but Cedar Waxwings have since been seen regularly in summer and fall and have nested (fide NKD). Waxwings were more numerous than normal at Sitka, also at the northwestern edge of their range, where the high count was eight on 28 July 2013 (MRG). Conversely, Cedar
Waxwings were present in well below average numbers in the Ketchikan area where they were seldom observed and maximum was only seven on 23 June 2013 (AWP, SCH).

Figure 10. Northern Mockingbird at Farm Island, on the Stikine River, 9 June 2013. Photo by Earl Benitz

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: A Northern Waterthrush at Gustavus on 1 June 2013 provided the first local summer record (BBP). There are at least two prior fall records at Gustavus (fide NKD). This species is a rare migrant and breeder along the Southeast mainland (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

TENNESSEE WARBLER: A singing Tennessee Warbler was found at Glacier Bay 19 June 2013 (HPL, RKN) and at least four were located in the Juneau area, where this species occurs annually, through 24 June (m.obs). This warbler is a rare migrant and local breeder on mainland southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

BLACKPOLL WARBLER: A singing Blackpoll Warbler at Juneau 2 June 2013 (BT, GBV) provided the season’s only report of this rare Southeast Alaska migrant.

CHIPPING SPARROW: Chipping Sparrows made a good showing at Gustavus where they are typically very rare. Up to three were seen in the Good River neighborhood 15–19 June 2013 (NKD, BBP) and one was observed near the airport 24 June 2013 (BBP). This species is an uncommon breeder on mainland river systems in Southeast Alaska; north of this area, its range extends into east-central Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: A Clay-colored Sparrow at Klukwan, Chilkat River, 2 June 2013 (CPS; Figure 11) provided about the 12th Alaska record of this species, which breeds as close as northeastern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001).
Figure 11. Chuck Susie’s bird feeding station at Klukwan was a magnet for unusual birds this spring and summer, including this beautiful Clay-colored Sparrow 5 June 2013. *Photo by Chuck P. Susie*

**WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW:** Following a sighting of an adult White-crowned Sparrow in subalpine habitat on Mt. Roberts, near Juneau, 4 July 2013 (RHA, photo), probable nesting was indicated by an agitated adult carrying food there on 27 July 2013 (ACC). The birds were not identified to subspecies; *gambelii* nests in nearby British Columbia and *pugetensis* has been reported at sea level in the summer in the Juneau area. The only prior Southeast Alaska nest records are from Ketchikan (subspecies *pugetensis*) where at least two sang on territory at the Ketchikan airport this summer (SCH, WTY).

**GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW:** The Golden-crowned Sparrow is a regular, uncommon breeder on the northern Southeast mainland, primarily in subalpine habitat but also in tidewater subalpine-like habitat in upper Glacier Bay (Wik and Streveler 1968, Kessel and Gibson 1978). This status was exemplified by observations in the Juneau area this summer: an adult with at least one young bird in the alpine at Sheep Creek 30 June 2013 (GSB, photo), four pairs of defensive adults on Mt. Roberts 4 July 2013 (RHA), adults and young on Gold Ridge 17 and 20 July 2013 (GSB, photo), and singing males at Thunder Mountain 16 July 2013 and above Lemon Creek 11 July 2013 (GSB). Since this species also breeds in mountainous regions of British Columbia well south of Alaska (Campbell et al. 2001), it seems reasonable to expect that it “probably nests among the low shrubs of the inaccessible subalpine zone along the crest of the Coast Range” (Kessel and Gibson 1978).
WESTERN TANAGER: A Western Tanager at Gustavus 1–2 June 2013 (NKD, BBP) was a good find near the northwestern fringe of this species’ regular range. There were approximately a dozen prior local records and they are thought to be becoming more regular in the Gustavus area (fide NKD). This species is an uncommon probable breeder along the rivers of mainland Southeast Alaska and occurs rarely as a migrant and summer visitant to islands near the mouths of those rivers (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK: Three Black-headed Grosbeaks were reported at the Stikine River 11 June 2013 (WTS; photograph of another bird later that day on the Canada side of the border), where the species apparently occurs annually in small numbers (fide WTS). One was also reported at Wrangell 20 June 2013 (GS; fide BHD). This grosbeak is a rare, annual migrant and summer visitant in Southeast Alaska. It breeds north to at least southern British Columbia, and its range has expanded steadily in British Columbia over the past 50 years (Campbell et al. 2001).

BOBOLINK: A male Bobolink was well described at Sitka’s Swan Lake 8 June 2013 (BPT). There are only three prior Alaska records: singles at Point Barrow (23 June 1976; Kessel and Gibson 1978), Hyder (14 June 1991; Am. Birds 45:1151), and Ketchikan (10 October 2000; Heinl and Piston 2009).

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD: After abandoning a nest at Sitka’s Swan Lake in May, a female Red-winged Blackbird built a new nest, paired with a 2\textsuperscript{nd}-year male, and fledged three or four young by the end of the period (MRG; Figure 12). This species is a fairly common local breeder on the mainland (Kessel and Gibson 1978) but we know of no prior nesting records for the outer islands of the Alexander Archipelago.

Figure 12. A pair of Red-winged Blackbirds successfully nested at Sitka’s Swan Lake, where these juveniles were photographed 24 July 2013 (left) and 28 July 2013 (right). Photos by Matt R. Goff

COMMON GRACKLE: A male Common Grackle at Koerner’s Ketchikan feeding station 20–22 June 2013 provided only about the 10\textsuperscript{th} Alaska record and, amazingly, the third from his yard (JFK; Figure 13). This species breeds as close as northeastern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001); the breeding range recently expanded west of the Rocky Mountains (Peer and Bollinger 1997) and it has occurred with increasing frequency in the Pacific Northwest (see Marshall et al. 2003).
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD: A pair of Brown-headed Cowbirds was found at Gustavus 1 June 2013 (BBP, NKD), a single bird was there 30 July 2013 (NKD), and a female was found near the Brady Glacier, along the north side of Cross Sound, 21 July 2013 (SFH). The first wandering juveniles were reported at Klukwan in mid-July 2013 (CPS) and Juneau 25 July 2013 (GBV, SCH). This species is a rare migrant and breeder in Southeast Alaska.

HOUSE SPARROW: For the second year in a row, a male House Sparrow was found at Farm Island, Stikine River, on 13 June 2013 (BKN; Figure 14), while an overwintering male at Petersburg was present until at least 7 July 2013 (TO). Ketchikan’s breeding population of this majestic and powerful species continued to thrive, although local birders mostly ignored the amazing spectacle at the nesting colony.

Figure 13. Male Common Grackle at Ketchikan 20 June 2013. Photo by Steven C. Heinl
Figure 14. Male House Sparrow at the Stikine River 13 June 2013. *Photo by Bill K. Neumann*

**LITERATURE CITED**


Martin, P. R., Bonier, F., and Gibson, D. D. 2006. First nest of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher for Alaska, with notes on breeding biology. Western Birds 37:8–22.


