SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS:
Fall: August–November 2014

Sub-regional Compilers:
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This report summarizes bird sightings from Southeast Alaska for the autumn season, August–November 2014, 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. Unusual finds this fall included Brown Booby, two Cattle Egrets, Black-headed Gull, Clark’s Nutcracker, Northern Mockingbird, Black-and-white Warbler, Spotted Towhee, and two Rustic Buntings.

This fall was slightly warmer than average overall, and it was wetter than normal most of the fall, too. August precipitation was greater than 43% above normal at Ketchikan (14.0 in.), 49% above normal at Juneau (8.5 in.), and 103%(!) above normal at Sitka, where birders enjoyed 13.9 in. rain. Precipitation was below average at Sitka through the rest of the period and below average at Juneau during October–November. Ketchikan, however, was wetter than normal until November; total precipitation at Ketchikan this fall (69.3 in.) was 17% above normal.

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), Elaine Furbish (Skagway), and Bonnie Demerjian (Wrangell). 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.

Names and Initials of observers cited in the text or who reported sightings: Beverly A. Agler (BAA), Robert H. Armstrong (RHA), James F. Baichtal (JFB), Gwen S. Baluss (GSB), Andrew Beierly (AB), Joanne Beierly (JB), R. Brad Benter (RBB), Melissa N. Cady (MNC), Jennifer Cedarleaf (JAC), Amy C. Courtney (ACC), Rich DeCoster (RD), Joe Delabrue (JD), Bonnie H. Demerjian (BHD), Elyse Derbes (ED), Terry J. Doyle (TJD), Janene Driscoll (JDr), Nat K. Drumheller (NKD), Susan Wise Eagle (SWE), C. Elaine Furbish (CEF), Daniel D. Gibson (DDG), Connor P. F. Goff (CPFG), Matt R. Goff (MRG), Steven C. Heinl (SCH), Brad L. Hunter (BLH), Alexia Kiefer (AK), Jerrold F. Koerner (JFK), Laurie A. Lamm (LAL), James D. Levison (JDL), Jim H. Lewis (JHL), Richard E. Lowell (REL), Deanna K. MacPhail (DKM), Walter Moorhead (WM), Paul H. Norwood (PHN), Tana O’Leary (TO), Eric V. Parker (EVP), Bruce B. Paige (BBP), Jack Pino (JP), Teri Pino (TP), Andrew W. Piston (AWP), Lucy Pizzuto-Phillips (LPP), Sunny Rice (SR), Kathleen M. Ripleu (KMR), Patty A. Rose (PAR), Gary H. Rosenberg (GHR), Carol L. Ross (CLR), William T. Sampson (WTS), Jim F. Saracco (JFS), Mark W. Schwan (MWS), Corree Seward (CS), Marsha Squires (Msq), Mark Storm (MS), Mallory St. Pierre (MSt), Paul M. Suchanek (PMS), Chuck P. Susie (CPS), Gus B. van Vliet (GBV), Marge L. Ward (MLW), John West (JW), Helen West (HW), Jack Whitman (JWh), E. L. “Butch” Young (ELY).
SPECIES ACCOUNTS:

WOOD DUCK: A female Wood Duck consorted with Mallards and wigeon at the Petersburg boat harbor 9–14 November 2014 (TO, RBB, ELY; Figure 1). This duck is a rare, annual visitant to Southeast Alaska in fall, winter, and spring—though this bird provided the only report in 2014.

![Female Wood Duck with American Wigeon at Petersburg 11 November 2014. Photo by Brad Benter](image)

EURASIAN WIGEON: Up to four Eurasian Wigeon made for a good showing in the Gustavus area this fall (up to four birds 3–25 November 2014; NKD) but the species went unreported elsewhere in Southeast.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL: Rare in fall, two Blue-winged Teal were found at Gustavus 22–30 September 2014 (NKD) and two were at Wrangell 26 October 2014 (BHD); the latter were also notably late.

CINNAMON TEAL: Three Cinnamon Teal reported at Gustavus 24 August 2014 (BBP) included a drake with some rusty body plumage. A female or immature was also reported at Juneau 28 September 2014 (GBV). Although this duck is a rare, regular spring migrant in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978), there are very few fall reports owing to the difficulty of separating it from the extremely similar Blue-winged Teal; young birds of the species pair, in particular, may be indistinguishable from each other in the field.

CANVASBACK: The normal scattering of Canvasback sightings included up to three in the Juneau area during October 2014 (m.obs.) and one at Sitka 20 October 2014 (CPFG).

RING-NECKED DUCK: High counts of Ring-necked Ducks at favored sites included 60 at Sitka’s Swan Lake 19–20 October 2014 (MRG), 70 at Bartlett Lake, near Gustavus, 6–20 November 2014 (NKD), and 88 at Twin Lakes, near Juneau, 12 October 2014 (BAA).
LONG-TAILED DUCK: An estimated 6,000 Long-tailed Ducks (“in a long noisy line”) were in the vicinity of South Marble and Leland islands in Glacier Bay 11–12 November 2014 (NKD)—certainly one of the largest counts of this species in Southeast away from Wrangell Narrows.

RED-THROATED LOON: An estimated 80 Red-throated Loons were spread out along several miles of coast on the Beardslee Islands’ west side on 11 November 2014, and another 50 were visible from White Crow Island (east of Strawberry Island) along the Beardslee Entrance on 12 November 2014 (NKD). These counts not only represented new high totals for the Glacier Bay area, but were the largest single-day counts that we know of for Southeast Alaska. Large numbers of Red-throated Loons have occasionally been observed in spring at Point Bridget State Park, north of Juneau, including a count of 50 birds on 12 June 2007 (PMS).

PIED-BILLED GREBE: Pied-billed Grebes were reported in typical numbers this fall, with two at Wrangell 31 October 2014 (CS, JD), one at Ketchikan 11 November 2014+ (SCH), and two at Bartlett Lake, near Gustavus, 20 November 2014 (NKD; Figure 2).

Figure 2. Pied-billed Grebe at Bartlett Lake, near Gustavus; one of two present 20 November 2014. *Photo by Nat Drumheller*

HORNED GREBE: An estimated 300 Horned Grebes (including two hundred in one group) visible from White Crow Island, in the Beardslee Islands, 12 November 2014, (NKD) added to other interesting large counts of water birds in the Glacier Bay area this fall.
WESTERN GREBE: Rare (but clearly regular) sightings of Western Grebes in *northern* Southeast included one at Bartlett Cove 2 October 2014 (NKD) and at least two at Juneau 17–21 October 2014 (m.obs.).

LEACH’S STORM-PETREL: For the 2nd consecutive fall, a Leach’s Storm-Petrel made it all the way inside to Skagway—this fall’s bird was found dead in late September 2014 (JB). This highly-pelagic storm-petrel is rare on Inside waters and normally only turns up following powerful fall storms.

BROWN BOOBY: An adult female Brown Booby landed on a fishing boat off Kruzof Island 29 October 2014 and was turned over to the Alaska Raptor Center, Sitka, the same day (JAC; Figure 3). The bird was sent to an International Bird Rescue center in southern California on 18 November (*fide* MRG). This sighting (and another about 50 miles south of Kodiak on 28 October 2014) were certainly related to an unprecedented northward movement of this species in the eastern North Pacific in 2014 (presumably of subspecies *brewsterii* of the eastern Pacific), which included sightings as far north as Oregon (5 or 6 birds late October–November), Washington (one in Puget Sound in September), and British Columbia (one off southern Vancouver Island in September). The only previous record of a Brown Booby in Alaska was an adult that landed aboard a fishing vessel in the Bering Sea 13 July 2000 and later died; the specimen was identified as the tropical Pacific subspecies *plotus* (*fide* DDG), which occurs as close as the Hawaiian Islands. The origin of that bird was considered questionable, because boobies frequently land on ships and the previous year a Red-footed Booby followed/rode a yacht all the way from Hawaii to Kodiak!

![Image 1](https://example.com/image1)
![Image 2](https://example.com/image2)

Figure 3. This female Brown Booby was captured on a fishing vessel off Kruzof Island 29 October 2014 and turned over to the Alaska Raptor Center, Sitka, where these photographs were taken on 8 November 2014. The sharp demarcation between the brown chest and the clean white belly identifies the bird as an adult, and the entirely pale yellow face with a square spot of blue-gray in front of the eyes identifies it as a female. *Photos by Matt R. Goff*

BRANDT’S CORMORANT: For the 2nd fall in a row, Brandt’s Cormorants arrived early at Ketchikan, where one was noted 18 October 2014 and two were observed the following day (SCH, TJD, GHR). Maximum was four on 16 November 2014 (SCH).

GREAT BLUE HERON: Twenty-four Great Blue Herons at the Bartlett Cove fuel dock 24 November 2014 (NKD) eclipsed the previous high count for that location. This heron is normally encountered in much smaller numbers in Southeast Alaska, though large congregations occasionally appear at roost sites or feeding areas (Heinl and Piston 2009).
CATTLE EGRET: Cattle Egrets made it to Southeast Alaska for the first time in 16 years! Two Cattle Egrets were reported at Wrangell 21–22 October 2014 (SWE, JP; *fide* BHD)—likely the very same two were found the following day, 32 miles north, at Petersburg (REL, Figure 4). They were observed at Petersburg by many, including by birders that travelled from Anchorage and Fairbanks to see them, through at least 17 November 2014 (*fide* BLH).

The Cattle Egret (*nominate subspecies* *ibis*) expanded its range north into the Pacific Northwest in the 1960s and 1970s, where it occurred regularly as a coastal post-breeding visitant between November and February (Campbell et al. 1990a, Gilligan et al. 1994, Wahl et al. 2005). It was first reported in Southeast Alaska at Ketchikan in 1981 (four birds; Gibson and Kessel 1992), followed by additional southeast Alaska sightings in 1984 (3), 1986 (1), 1989 (1), 1992 (4), and 1993 (2). The frequency of sightings in the Pacific Northwest began to decline in the mid-1980s (Harris 2005, Wahl et al. 2005) and there had been only one report of *nominate ibis* in Alaska in the past 21 years (one at Ketchikan in 1998; Heinl and Piston 2009).

AMERICAN COOT: The usual small numbers of American Coots were reported this fall: one at Gustavus 3 October 2014 (NKD), up to three at Bartlett Lake during November 2014 (NKD), singles at Ketchikan 30 September 2014 (AWP) and 19 November 2014+ (SCH), up to two at Juneau 5–17 October 2014 (m.obs.), and up to two at Sitka 13 October–30 November 2014+ (MRG).

SANDHILL CRANE: Sandhill Cranes, presumably locally nesting Greater Sandhill Cranes, were reported at Zarembo Island 14 August 2014 (WM). Large numbers of migrating Lesser Sandhill Cranes were observed flying over both Wrangell (BHD) and Petersburg (BLH) all day on 23 September 2014, including an estimated 1,900 during a one hour period in the evening at Petersburg, where the movement continued into the night and the following morning (BLH).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: An adult Spotted Sandpiper at Sitka 22 November 2014 (MRG) was very late, though there are several December records and at least two winter records for the region.

UPLAND SANDPIPER: One Upland Sandpiper was reported at Gustavus 21 August 2014 (5th local fall record; BBP), and up to two were reported at the Mendenhall Wetlands 21–22 August 2014 (PAR, MWS, AK, ACC)—certainly the best locations to see this rare fall migrant in Southeast Alaska.

WHIMBREL: A Whimbrel at Auke Bay, near Juneau, 12–13 October 2014 (GBV) was extremely late— the only later Alaska report that we know of is one at Homer 5 November 1972 (*Am. Birds* 27:103).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT: One Hudsonian Godwit at Gustavus 1 August 2014 (BBP) provided the season’s only report of this rare migrant—most of the Region’s reports come from the Gustavus and Juneau areas.

MARBLED GODWIT: A Marbled Godwit at Sitka 31 October–17 November 2014 (MRG, LPP; Figure 5) provided a new late date for Alaska. There are fewer than 10 reports of this shorebird in Southeast during fall migration and there is only one prior November record for the entire state—one at Sitka 22 October–8 November 2012 (*North Am. Birds* 67:139).
Figure 4. Two Cattle Egrets entertained photographers at Petersburg from late October to mid-November. These photos were taken 23 October 2014 (top row and middle left; photos Rich E. Lowell); 2 November 2014 (middle right; photo Eric Larson), and 29 October 2014 (bottom row; photos James Levison).
Figure 5. Very late shorebirds at Sitka included a Spotted Sandpiper 22 November 2014 (left) and a Marbled Godwit (right; 31 October 2014), which lingered to 17 November and established the latest date ever for the state. *Photos by Matt R. Goff*

SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER: Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were reported in normal small numbers at Gustavus, where maximum was two 25 September–4 October (NKD, JFS), and the Mendenhall Wetlands (one, 4 October 2014; BAA, MWS).

STILT SANDPIPER: A Stilt Sandpiper at Gustavus 22 August 2014 (BBP) provided the only Southeast report of this rare migrant.

BAIRD’S SANDPIPER: Some nice counts of Baird’s Sandpipers included seven at Sitka 25 August 2014 (MRG, CPFG), maximum of 20 at Gustavus 26 August 2014 (BBP), and maximum of seven at the Mendenhall Wetlands 21–22 August 2014 (PAR, MWS). Singles at Gustavus 1 October 2014 (new local late date; NKD) and the Mendenhall Wetlands 4 October 2014 (MWS) were very late.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER: A Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Gustavus 25–27 August 2014 (BBP, photo) provided the season’s only report of this rare fall migrant.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER: A Pectoral Sandpiper on an urban Petersburg lawn 11 November 2014 (RBB, photo) was very late. The latest Alaska dates we could find for this species are 12 November 2005 (one at Gustavus; NKD) and 13 November 1982 (three at Adak Island; Gibson and Byrd 2007).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: An estimated 10,000 Red-necked Phalaropes in Wrangell Narrows 29 August 2014 (WTS) provided a very large count for Southeast.

RED PHALAROPE: Always nice to see from shore were at least two Red Phalaropes at Sitka 4–6 November 2014 (MRG; Figure 6). This pelagic species occurs primarily well offshore of Southeast Alaska (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959).

SABINE’S GULL: A 1st-cycle Sabine’s Gull at Sitka 4 November 2014 (MRG; Figure 6) provided the only report of the season. This pelagic species occurs primarily well offshore of Southeast Alaska (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959).
BLACK-HEADED GULL: An adult Black-headed Gull at Juneau 10 September 2014+ (ACC, photo; GSB, Figure 7; m.obs.) was only the 4th ever reported in Southeast (all at Juneau), and it was easily the best-documented. Although this Eurasian gull is a rare spring migrant in the western Aleutians (Gibson and Byrd 2007), it is casual elsewhere in Alaska and along the Pacific Coast south of Alaska (Hamilton et al. 2007).

FRANKLIN’S GULL: Single Franklin’s Gulls were found at Hyder 11 August 2014 (SCH, photo) and at Ketchikan 11 August 2014 (SCH, AWP) and 28 August 2014 (CPS, photo). This species is a rare migrant and summer visitant to Southeast and Southcoastal Alaska.

CASPIAN TERN: Caspian Tern numbers in Southeast Alaska were clearly well below average this fall. Counts at Gustavus during August ranged from only one to three birds (BBP), well down from peak counts over the past decade, which averaged 35 birds (range: 12–92 birds), and the species went completely unreported from elsewhere in the region.

Figure 6. Nice finds at Sitka included Red Phalarope 6 November 2014 (left) and Sabine’s Gull 4 November 2014 (right). Photos by Matt R. Goff

Figure 7. Black-headed Gull at Juneau 11 September 2014. Note the larger size and proportionately larger, red bill of the Black-headed Gull compared to the adjacent Bonaparte’s Gulls. Photos by Gwen S. Baluss
EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: A count of 26 Eurasian Collared-Doves at Gustavus on 29 November 2014 (NKD; Figure 8) was 4 or 5 times the previous local high count. Numbers elsewhere in the region appeared to be relatively normal compared to recent years.

MOURNING DOVE: The Mourning Dove is an annual, rare fall visitant to Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978), and this year the species appeared in typical numbers: four at Ketchikan 10 September–7 October 2014 (JFK, SCH, CPS), and singles at Klawock 22 October 2014 (MS), Craig 18–19 September 2014 (JWh, MNC), Petersburg 1 September 2014 (RD), Juneau 27 September 2014 (GBV), and Sitka 26 September 2014 (PHN).

LONG-EARED OWL: A Long-eared Owl at the Mendenhall Wetlands 14 November 2014 (RBB, GBV) was only the 11th or 12th to be found in Alaska. Long-eared Owls were found at the same area in November of 2009, 2011, and 2012 and, amazingly, the observers were actually walking the area in hopes of finding another one! This owl nests as close as central interior British Columbia (Campbell et al. 1990b) but it has also nested as far north as southwestern Yukon (one nest record in 2005; fide Cameron D. Eckert).

BOREAL OWL: A Boreal Owl was caught in a mist-net by biologists trapping bats in White Pass, near Skagway, 20 August 2014 (MSt; Figure 9). This species is apparently rare or uncommon in the Skagway area (fide CEF), and the August date certainly suggests the bird was not a migrant. Scattered sightings elsewhere around Southeast Alaska in recent years suggest this species is likely a rare resident (or migrant and winter visitant) in the region but its status is poorly known.

ANNA’S HUMMINGBIRD: As has been the case in recent years, Anna’s Hummingbirds made a strong showing across the region starting in mid-August with 10+ birds at Ketchikan (AWP, SCH, et al.), at least nine at Sitka (MRG), at least three at Petersburg (BLH), up to three at Wrangell (SWE, CLR, TP), 5+ at Juneau (m.obs.), and up to three at Gustavus (NKD, CPS). This species is typically found near residential areas and feeders, so one on Kruzof Island, several miles from the nearest road, in mid-November 2014 was of interest (MRG). This species has been increasing in abundance in Southeast Alaska at all seasons and it seems likely that it will be found breeding sometime in the near future.

Figure 8. This flock of Eurasian Collared-Doves at Gustavus 29 November 2014 provided a new local high count. Photo by Nat K. Drumheller
Figure 9. This Boreal Owl was captured in a mist net that was being used to trap bats at White Pass, near Skagway, 20 August 2014—the photo was taken shortly after the bird was released. *Photo by Mallory St. Pierre*

**AMERICAN KESTREL:** A late American Kestrel was observed 16–23 November near the Ketchikan airport (AWP, JHL) and another was at Juneau’s Mendenhall Wetlands 16 November 2014 (GBV, DKM, GSB).

**GYRFALCON:** A Gyrfalcon observed at Gustavus on 25 September 2014 was the earliest of only a handful of prior local fall records (NKD). This species is very rare in Southeast Alaska and most reports come from northern Southeast.

**VAUX’S SWIFT:** Large numbers of Vaux’s Swifts were reported in the Juneau area 1 September 2014 (25 at Eagle Beach and 55 at Boy Scout Camp; GBV) and at Game Creek, Chichagof Island, 6 September 2014 (60 birds; ACC). One at Juneau on 22 September was very late for northern Southeast Alaska (GBV).

**PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER:** A Pacific-slope Flycatcher at Gustavus on 23 September 2014 was very late and the first Drumheller had observed there beyond the end of August (NKD). This species is usually absent by mid-September, but there are a couple of Ketchikan records in late September (latest 30 September 1992; Hei1 and Piston 2009).

**SAY’S PHOEBE:** A Say's Phoebe was photographed along the Mendenhall Wetlands Dike Trail on 9 September 2014 (AK). This species is a casual migrant in Southeast Alaska, primarily in the fall (Kessel and Gibson 1978). It was described as a very rare probable breeder (Kessel and Gibson 1978) based on observations in Glacier Bay in the 1960s (Wik and Streveler 1968).

**WARBLING VIREO:** A Warbling Vireo at Ketchikan 16 October 2014 (TJD, JLH, JDL) was extremely late; there were only about five prior October records for Alaska.
STELLER’S JAY: Following the complete absence of Steller’s Jays at Ketchikan last winter, their numbers returned to normal during the spring and summer, then exploded in the fall. Steller’s Jays seemed to be everywhere from September through November, and we received lots of comments about the increase in their numbers—and about how fast they can pack food away from a feeder. It was not unusual to see more than 20 jays in sight at one time at a good feeder operation, coming and going in a constant stream, industriously caching food. When Jerry Koerner counted more than 50 jays at one time in his driveway he quit feeding birds until things simmered down in late November! Similar irruptive movements have occasionally been documented as close to Southeast Alaska as Vancouver Island, British Columbia (Stewart and Shepard 1994), as well as elsewhere in the species’ range, possibly in response to food shortages (see Walker et al. 2014). One has to wonder, where did all those Ketchikan Steller’s Jays end up for the winter?

CLARK’S NUTCRACKER: A Clark’s Nutcracker observed at Ketchikan 13–14 October 2014 (JHL, AWP; Figure 10) was, according to locals, present for at least a week before it was reported. This species breeds in southern British Columbia, but is an “erratic vagrant” to the British Columbia coast (Campbell et al. 1997) and a casual visitant to Alaska (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959). This was the first Alaska record since 2004.

![Figure 10. The drenched plumage of this Clark’s Nutcracker at Ketchikan 13 October 2014 was the result of nearly 7 inches of rain in the days preceding the photo. Photo by Jim H. Lewis](attachment:image.png)

HORNED LARK: A Horned Lark at Sitka 1 October 2014 (EVP) was the only report of the season. This species is a rare or uncommon migrant in Southeast Alaska, primarily on the mainland (Heinl and Piston 2009).

TREE SWALLOW: Two Tree Swallows at Juneau 1 October 2014 were very late (PAR).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW: Two Northern Rough-winged Swallows at Gustavus 25 August provided only the second local fall record (BBP). This swallow is a rare migrant and breeder in Southeast Alaska, primarily on the mainland (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and islands near the mainland.

BANK SWALLOW: Bank Swallows normally depart Southeast Alaska by mid-September, so five at Gustavus 2 October 2014 were very late (NKD). One south of Bartlett Cove 22 October 2006 (NKD) is the only other October Southeast report that we know of.
BARN SWALLOW: A Barn Swallow at Gustavus 29 September 2014 was very late (NKD).

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD: A Mountain Bluebird was found at Gustavus 9 November 2014 (NKD). This species occurs primarily along the mainland of Southeast Alaska, where it is a locally uncommon spring migrant and rare fall migrant and winter visitant.

TOWNSEND’S SOLITAIRE: Single Townsend’s Solitaires were found in the Juneau area 26 October 2014 (MSq) and 18 November 2014 (PAR). This species is a rare migrant and probable breeder in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD: A Northern Mockingbird at Sitka 25 September 2014 through the end of the period (MRG; Figure 11) provided at least the 3rd local record (fide MRG, MLW). 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).

![Northern Mockingbird](https://www.sitkanature.org)

Figure 11. This young Northern Mockingbird at Sitka was in heavy molt when first discovered (left; 28 September 2014), but its appearance had improved substantially by November, when its molt was nearly complete (right; 7 November 2014). *Photos by Matt R. Goff*

EUROPEAN STARLING: A stunning European Starling was found at Skagway 29 October 2014 (AB). Starlings are not found year-round at Skagway and although there are prior local records they have not become established there (fide CEF).

RED-THROATED PIPIT: A Red-throated Pipit was found at Gustavus 23 September 2014 (NKD). This species is a casual fall migrant along the Pacific Coast east and south of the Bering Sea region.

CEDAR WAXWING: A Cedar Waxwing at Gustavus 7 October 2014 provided a new local late date for this species (NKD).

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: A Northern Waterthrush at Ketchikan 21 October 2014 (SCH, GHR; Figure 12) provided a first local record and the latest date for Alaska by two weeks. One at St. Paul Island 6 October 2011 and one at Juneau 4 October 2013 are the only prior Alaska reports for October.
BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: A Black-and-white Warbler at Juneau 6 October 2014 was a stunning find and provided only the 4th Southeast Alaska record (ACC; MWS photo; m.obs.). This species breeds as close as northeastern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001).

TENNESSEE WARBLER: Single Tennessee Warblers were documented at Ketchikan 22 October 2014 (SCH; Figure 12) and Sitka 9 November 2014 (MRG; Figure 13). This species is a rare migrant and local breeder on mainland Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978) but is casual during fall migration and along the outer islands of Southeast Alaska.

Figure 12. Rare warblers at Ketchikan included a Tennessee Warbler 22 October 2014 (left) and a Northern Waterthrush 21 October 2014 (right). *Photos by Steven C. Heinl*

MACGILLIVRAY’S WARBLER: A MacGillivray’s Warbler at Ketchikan 17–19 October 2014 (SCH, TJD, GHR, KMR) was very late. Although this species is an uncommon to common breeder in appropriate habitat on the Southeast Alaska mainland, it is rare away from the mainland, and most depart by early September.
YELLOW WARBLER: A Yellow Warbler at Sitka 13 November 2014 (MRG; Figure 13) provided the second-latest Alaska record. The only later Alaska record for this species was a bird at Ketchikan on 5 December 2002 (Heinl and Piston 2009).

BLACKPOLL WARBLER: A Blackpoll Warbler at van Vliet’s Auke Bay yard 9 September 2014 provided his 3rd yard record in the past 27 years. This species is a sparse breeder on the mainland and a very rare fall migrant in Southeast Alaska.

WILSON’S WARBLER: A Wilson’s Warbler at Juneau 28 November 2014 was extremely late (BAA).

SPOTTED TOWHEE: A Spotted Towhee was well documented at a window front feeder at Thorne Bay, Prince of Wales Island, 30 November 2014+ (JFB; Figure 14). There are now at least 14 Alaska records, of which nine are from the Juneau area. This species breeds as close as southwestern British Columbia, where coastal populations are considered to be mostly resident (Greenlaw 1996).

Figure 14. Male Spotted Towhee at Thorne Bay, Prince of Wales Island, 30 November 2014. *Photo by James F. Baichtal*

CHIPPING SPARROW: Single Chipping Sparrows were found at Juneau 11 September 2014 (GBV, photos) and at Ketchikan 22 October 2014 (SCH) and 27 November 2014+ (JFK). This species is an uncommon breeder at mainland river systems (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and a rare migrant throughout Southeast.

FOX SPARROW: A “Red” Fox Sparrow was found at Bartlett Cove 2 October 2014 (NKD), and singles visited Juneau area feeders 12 November 2014+ (GBV) and 16–27 November (DKM). This Taiga breeder is a rare, annual fall and winter visitant to Southeast Alaska but is found more frequently (and earlier) in northern Southeast.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: A Clay-colored Sparrow at Auke Bay, near Juneau, 22–26 October 2014 (GBV; Figure 15) provided the 13th Alaska record of this species, which breeds as close as northeastern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001).
SWAMP SPARROW: A Swamp Sparrow was present at Ketchikan from 30 October through the end of period 2014 (SCH, et al., photo) and another was found at Gustavus 7 November 2014 (NKD). This species is a rare fall migrant in Southeast Alaska.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW: White-throated Sparrows made a poor showing in Southeast Alaska this fall and four birds at Ketchikan 3–28 October 2014 (SCH, KMR, JFK) and one at Wrangell (no dates, BHD) were the only reported.

RUSTIC BUNTING: A Rustic Bunting was present at a Juneau feeding station from 23 October–6 November 2014 (GBV, m.obs.; Figures 16 and 17) and another showed up at Gustavus 23 November 2014 and remained through the end of the period (NKD; Figure 17). This Eurasian species is found regularly in Alaska only in the western Aleutian Islands in spring (Gibson and Byrd 2007); it is casual in the western Aleutians and other Bering Sea locations in the fall. There were only five prior records for Southeast Alaska: two at Ketchikan (one record involving two birds), two at Juneau, and one at Mitkof Island.

WESTERN TANAGER: A basic-plumaged Western Tanager was found at Ketchikan 25 September 2014 (SCH, AWP) where it is a locally very rare fall migrant. This species is an uncommon probable breeder along the mainland rivers of Southeast Alaska and occurs only rarely as a migrant and summer visitant to islands near the mouths of those rivers (Kessel and Gibson 1978).

WESTERN MEADOWLARK: A Western Meadowlark was found at Ketchikan’s North Point Higgins area 20 October 2014 (SCH, TJD, GHR), where it remained through the end of the period (m.obs.; Figure 18). Another bird was found on the Mendenhall Wetlands 15 November 2014 (LAL; Figure 18), but was not seen again. This species breeds north to central and northeastern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001) and is casual in Southeast Alaska. There were 10 prior records from Ketchikan but only two prior records from Juneau—both from the 1970s.
Figure 16. (Left photo): Gus van Vliet’s spotting scope strategically setup to document rare birds at his Auke Bay feeder. (Right photo): Rare bird documented—a Rustic Bunting digiscoped using an iPhone on 23 October 2014! *Photos by Gus B. van Vliet*

Figure 17. Two Rustic Buntlings were found at Southeast feeders this fall; one at Auke Bay, near Juneau (left; 24 October 2014; *photo Patty A. Rose*) followed by one at Gustavus (right; 24 November 2014; *photo Nat K. Drumheller*). Note the streaked throat of the Gustavus bird compared to the unstreaked buff throat of the Auke Bay bird—clearly two different birds were involved.
Two Western Meadowlarks turned up this fall: one at Ketchikan (left; here, 1 November 2014; photo Jim H. Lewis), where this species has been found nearly annually over the past decade, and one at Juneau (right; 15 November 2014; photo Laurie A. Lamm) which represented the first local record since the 1970s.

Figure 19. Female Brewer’s Blackbird at Ketchikan 26 October 2014 (left; photo Chuck P. Susie) and male Rusty Blackbird at Sitka 22 October 2014 (right; photo Matt R. Goff). The Brewer’s Blackbird has been found nearly annually in Southeast Alaska over the last 15 years. The Rusty Blackbird is an uncommon migrant and breeder on the mainland, but is a rare migrant along the outer coast.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD: Single juvenile Brown-headed Cowbirds were observed at Juneau 30 August 2014 (ACC, AK; photos), on a cruise ship in Glacier Bay 21 August 2014 (JDr, ED), and at Gustavus 23 August 2014 (JFS). This species is a rare migrant in Southeast Alaska (Kessel and Gibson 1978) and there is one certain breeding record from Juneau (North Am. Birds 66:146–152).

EVENING GROSBEAK: A male Evening Grosbeak visited a Petersburg feeder 18–24 October 2014 (SR photo; TO) and a male and two females were regular at a Ketchikan feeding station from 14 November through the end of the period (JW, HW, photo). This species is very rare in Southeast Alaska.
Alaska, where there are records for all seasons, but it is considered a rare or uncommon migrant and casual winter visitant on the adjacent northern coast of British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001).

HOUSE SPARROW: A pair of House Sparrows was present throughout the period at Petersburg (ELY et al.) and small numbers were present at Ketchikan, where they have bred for the last six summers (AWP, SCH).

LITERATURE CITED