SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS:
Winter: December 2014–February 2015

Sub-regional Compilers:
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This report summarizes bird sightings from Southeast Alaska for the winter season, December 2014–February 2015, 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. Highlights from this winter included Alaska’s first documented winter record of the Rufous Hummingbird, Alaska’s third White-winged Dove, yet another Rustic Bunting, and a nice selection of casual and very rare winter visitors.

The NOAA Weather Service (http://www.weather.gov/climate/index.php?wfo=pajk) summarized the Juneau winter as “warm and dry” in December, “wet and warm” in January, and “slightly warmer and slightly drier” in February. The Ketchikan winter was similar but warmer and (as to be expected) wetter than normal in all months. January was particularly warm, with average temperatures 24% above normal at Juneau, 18% above normal at Ketchikan, and 13% above normal at Sitka. Juneau birders enjoyed a two-week period in January when temperatures were 10 degrees warmer than normal and daily low temperatures were higher than normal daily high temperatures! Unfortunately, Juneau birders also experienced the wettest January on record, breaking the record set only last year. Precipitation was 124% above normal at Juneau (11.98 in.), 101% above normal at Ketchikan (31.07 in.), and 70% of normal at Sitka (14.28 in.). Not surprisingly, snowfall for Juneau was 52% below normal for the entire winter.

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), 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. Gus van Vliet, Nat Drumheller, and Matt Goff provided information and reviews that improved the final draft of this summary. Our past seasonal reports (since fall 2008) have been archived at the Juneau Audubon website http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org/SE%20AK%20Birding.html.

Names and Initials of observers cited in the text or who reported sightings: Beverly A. Agler (BAA), Blain Anderson (BAn), Robert H. Armstrong (RHA), James F. Baichtal (JFB), Gwen S. Baluss (GSB), Paul Barnes (PB), Heather Bauscher (HB), Andrew Beierly (AB), Joanne Beierly (JB), Earl Benitz (EB), Ryan Carpenter (RC), Dan Churchill (DC), Amy C. Courtney (ACC), Bonnie H. Demerjian (BHD), Mike Denker (MD), Chiska Derr (CD), John Doty (JD), Nat K. Drumheller (NKD), Lisa Etherington (LE), C. Elaine Furbish (CEF), Connor P. F. Goff (CPFG), Matt R. Goff (MRG), Steven C. Heinl (SCH), Glenn Israelson (GI), Karen Johnson (KJ), Jerrold F. Koerner (JFK), Laurie A. Lamm (LAL), James D. Levison (JDL), Jim H. Lewis (JHL), Deanna K. MacPhail (DKM), Mary McCafferty (MM), John W. Morse (JWM), Sean L. Neilson (SLN), Lois Nixon (LN), Paul H. Norwood (PHN), Kimber S. Owen (KSO), Eric V. Parker (EVP), Andrew W. Piston (AWP), Patty A. Rose (PAR), David L. Schmerge (DLS), Mark W. Schwan (MWS), Jessie Soder (JSO), Cinda Stough (CS), James Stough (JS), Greg P. Streveler (GPS), Chuck P. Susie (CPS), Daniel Svetlak (DS), F. Tomkins (FT), Gus B. van Vliet (GBV), Marge L. Ward (MLW), Will Ware (WW), John West (JW), Helen West (HW), E. L. “Butch” Young (ELY), G. Zerbetz (GZ).
SPECIES ACCOUNTS:

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: A Greater White-fronted Goose spent November–11 February 2015 at Game Creek, Chichagof Island (ACC)—there are fewer than 10 mid-winter (i.e., January–February) records of this species in Alaska, all of which are from Southeast.

BRANT: Four Brant at the Beardslee Islands, Glacier Bay, 14 December 2014 (GPS) were late. The Brant is a very rare winter visitant along the coast of Alaska east of traditional wintering grounds at Izembek Lagoon, on the Alaska Peninsula.

Figure 1. The stocky neck and short triangular bill of this goose (rear bird in photo on the left) at Gustavus 18 January 2015 suggest it is a Cackling Goose, a species for which there are few winter reports in Southeast Alaska. This bird, however, exemplifies the problem that we all face since the Cackling Goose was split from the Canada Goose in 2004 on the basis of genetic studies (Banks et al. 2004). While some subspecies of Cackling Goose are readily identifiable in the field, subspecies taverneri (which this bird resembles) is problematic because of its similarity in size and color to the “Lesser” Canada Goose subspecies parvipes. The breeding distribution of taverneri and its relationship to parvipes in Alaska are also poorly understood (see Gibson et al. 2008), and some ornithologists have considered the two taxa, which are now considered different species, one and the same (Palmer 1976, Gibson and Kessel 1997). Identifying a lone, out of range goose as one or the other may not be possible. *Photo by Nat K. Drumheller*

WOOD DUCK: A drake Wood Duck at Sitka 4–5 January 2015 (FT, MRG; Figure 2) was observed intermittently through the end of the period (m.obs.). This duck is a rare, annual visitant to Southeast Alaska, primarily from fall through spring.

GADWALL: The Gadwall is a rare or uncommon winter visitant to Southeast but larger numbers are found locally, for example, in the Glacier Bay and Juneau areas. This winter’s high count of 46 at the Sheep Creek delta, Juneau, 9 January 2015 (GBV) just about matched high counts at the same location over the past two winters.

EURASIAN WIGEON: Rare in winter, single Eurasian Wigeon were reported at Bartlett Cove, Glacier Bay, 13 December 2014 (NKD) and Sitka 7 January 2015 (BAn).
NORTHERN SHOVELER: Northern Shovelers at Gustavus 19 December 2014 (five; NKD) and Juneau 14 December 2014 (four; PAR) were late, and one at Juneau 11 January 2015 (GBV) provided a rare mid-winter report.

CANVASBACK: A Canvasback at Gustavus 11–12 December 2014 followed by two there 28 January 2015 (NKD) provided the only reports of this rare winter visitant.

KING EIDER: Winter birding in the Juneau area was greatly enhanced by the discovery of a female King Eider near Sandy Beach, Douglas Island, 17 January 2015 (PAR). The bird was observed through the end of the period (m.obs.; Figure 3). This species is casual east of Kodiak—the 15 or so Southeast Alaska reports are primarily from winter and spring, the majority of which are from the Juneau area.

LONG-TAILED DUCK: Among the many interesting and large counts of water birds in the Glacier Bay area this winter were 3,000 Long-tailed Ducks near Flap Jack Island, Beardslee Islands, 18–19 February 2015 (NKD). A local fisherman indicated that he often saw Long-tailed Ducks “in huge rafts” in that area in past winters as well (fide NKD).
RED-THROATED LOON: Although Red-throated Loons can often be found at Bartlett Cove, Glacier Bay, during the winter, a maximum count of 24 on 10 January 2015 (NKD) was unusual. This loon is a rare winter visitant throughout most of Southeast Alaska.

PACIFIC LOON: A new high count of 300 Pacific Loons was recorded on the Glacier Bay Christmas Bird Count 14 December 2014 (GPS, SLN).

PIED-BILLED GREBE: A Pied-billed Grebe at Ketchikan through the winter (SCH) provided the only report of this rare, regular winter visitant.

HORNED GREBE: Good numbers of Horned Grebes were observed at the Beardslee Islands, Glacier Bay, in mid-February, including 110 visible from White Crow Island (east of Strawberry Island) on 17 February 2015 (NKD).

WESTERN GREBE: Two Western Grebes at Bartlett Cove, Glacier Bay, 10 January–13 February 2015 (NKD) and two at Sitka 4 January 2015 (DS) provided the usual few sightings in northern Southeast Alaska where this species is rare.

FORK-TAILED STORM-PETREL: A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel near Sitka 27 December 2014 (PHN) provided a locally rare winter sighting. This storm-petrel is known to winter offshore in the Bering Sea and in the Gulf of Alaska (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959, Boersma and Silva 2001), and Day (2006) considered it to be rare in the Gulf of Alaska in December and March.

BRANDT’S CORMORANT: Winter observations of Brandt’s Cormorants on the Ketchikan waterfront have increased steadily over the past 10 years, and for the second consecutive winter, they were frequently and easily observed along the waterfront right in town. Maximum counts were 10 birds on 3 and 16 February 2015 (SCH; Figure 4). Brandt’s Cormorants are more numerous on open waters south of Ketchikan (Heinl and Piston 2007).

Figure 4. This photo shows two (2nd and 3rd birds from the left) of six Brandt’s Cormorants that were present on the Bar Harbor breakwater at Ketchikan 16 February 2015. In addition to the tan chests and buffy throats of the Brandt’s, note their intermediate size compared to the smaller Pelagic Cormorants (left- and right-most birds) and the larger Double-crested Cormorant. Photo by Steven C. Heinl
GREAT BLUE HERON: Continuing a recent trend, 27 Great Blue Herons at the Bartlett Cove fuel dock 14 December 2014 established a new local high count (SLN, GPS). This heron is normally encountered in much smaller numbers in Southeast Alaska, though large congregations occasionally appear at roost sites (as in this case) or excellent feeding areas (Heinl and Piston 2009).

CATTLE EGRET: A Cattle Egret reported at Point Babbler, on the mainland near Wrangell, around 30 December 2014 (DC; fide BHD) was of interest—was it one of the two Cattle Egrets observed at Wrangell and Petersburg last fall (through 17 November 2014), or was it a different individual?

NORTHERN HARRIER: An immature Northern Harrier was observed at Gustavus through at least 15 February 2015 (NKD). This hawk occurs sporadically along the south coast of Alaska after November and there are few mid-winter records for Southeast.

RED-TAILED HAWK: An immature Harlan’s Red-tailed Hawk successfully overwintered in the Juneau area, where it was last observed 19 February 2015 (GBV; m.obs.). The Red-tailed Hawk is very rare in winter in Southeast (it has been reported annually for at least 10 years), and there were only three prior winter records of subspecies harlani (two at Juneau).

AMERICAN COOT: At least one American Coot wintered at Sitka (MRG, MLW), and another wintered at Ketchikan (m.obs.).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: Unusual were two Spotted Sandpipers at Sitka 13 December 2014 (RC), one of which spent the entire winter (m.obs.). Most Spotted Sandpipers depart the region by the end of September, and there are probably fewer than 10 winter records for Alaska.

WILSON’S SNIPE: Wilson’s Snipe were reported in what seems to be normal numbers over the past few winters; maximum counts were two at Gustavus 21 January 2015 (NKD) and six at the Mendenhall Wetlands 3 January 2015 (BAA, PAR). Singles were also reported at Sitka (HB), Wrangell (BHD), and Ketchikan (m.obs.).

BONAPARTE’S GULL: Two Bonaparte’s Gulls at Ketchikan 20 December 2014 (AWP) were within normal timing for late migrants in the southern part of the region.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: The number of Eurasian Collared-Doves in some areas of northern Southeast Alaska appear to be on the increase as illustrated by high counts of 10 at Haines 31 January 2015 (MD), 28 at Gustavus 11 December (NKD), and 21 at one feeder at Yakutat 3–4 January 2015 (GI, photo). For some reason, collared-doves have yet to catch on in the Juneau area, where only one bird was reported all winter (JD).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: Perhaps the most exciting find of the winter was a White-winged Dove that visited a Wrangell feeder 1–31 December 2014 (BHD, JWM; Figure 5). There were only two prior Alaska records: one at Skagway October 1981 (Gibson and Kessel 1992) and one at Wrangell 12 September 2007 (North Am. Birds 62:130 and 132). Since the 1980s, this semitropical species has expanded its southwestern U.S. breeding range north (Schwertner et al. 2002) and wandering individuals have been found far north of its breeding range with increasing frequency (see Leukering and Gibbons 2005).

SNOWY OWL: Single Snowy Owls were observed at Bartlett Cove, near Gustavus, 12 December 2014 (LE) and Sitka 15 December 2014 (PHN). This species is an irregular visitant to Southeast Alaska (Gabrielson and Lincoln 1959), primarily in late fall.
Figure 5. Alaska’s third White-winged Dove was nicely documented at Wrangell 6 December 2014 (left; *photo Bonnie H. Demerjian*) and 17 December 2014 (right; *photo James D. Leision*).

NORTHERN HAWK OWL: A Northern Hawk Owl at Dyea, near Skagway, 27 December 2014 (JB, AB; Figure 6) was present for a week (*fide* CEF). This species is very rare in Southeast Alaska and most reports are from the northern mainland.

LONG-EARED OWL: Presumably the same Long-eared Owl that was found 14 November 2014 near the Juneau golf course/Mendenhall Wetlands was relocated 14 December 2014 (DKM et al., photo) where it remained to at least 9 January 2015 (GBV, LAL; Figure 7). This bird was only the 11th or 12th to be found in Alaska. The Long-eared Owl nests as close as central interior British Columbia (Campbell et al. 1990), 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 photographed in downtown Juneau 29 December 2014 (WW; Figure 6). This species’ status in Southeast Alaska is poorly known but scattered sightings around the region suggest it may be a rare resident (or migrant and winter visitant?).

Figure 6. A Northern Hawk Owl at Dyea, near Skagway, 27 December 2014 (left; *photo Andrew Beierly*) and a Boreal Owl at Juneau 29 December 2014 (right; *photo Will Ware*). Most Southeast records of these species are from the northern mainland.
Figure 7. A Long-eared Owl that had been found earlier in the fall at Juneau was relocated on the Christmas Bird Count 14 December 2014 (left; *photo Deanna K. MacPhail*) and subsequently observed by others (right; 19 December 2014; *photo Mark W. Schwan*).

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD: Recent winter reports of Rufous Hummingbirds in Southeast Alaska have usually turned out to be Anna’s Hummingbirds, which have increased dramatically in Southeast Alaska over the past five years. On 8 January 2015, Matt Goff checked on a report of a Rufous Hummingbird that was visiting a Sitka feeder—and was shocked to find an adult male Rufous Hummingbird! (Figure 8). This sighting provided Alaska’s first well-documented mid-winter record. This species largely departs the region for its Mexico wintering grounds by mid August and it is casual after early September. The latest previous Alaska dates we know of are an immature photographed at Sitka to mid-December 2004 (*North Am. Birds* 59:309) and one at Gustavus through at least all of November 1988 (*Am. Birds* 43:153).

Figure 8. Astounding was Alaska’s first documented mid-winter record of the Rufous Hummingbird, a male no less, at Sitka 8 January 2015. *Photo by Matt R. Goff*
Woodpeckers provided rare local records at Ketchikan and Gustavus. Although the American Three-toed Woodpecker is a rare or uncommon resident throughout Southeast Alaska, it has seldom been recorded at Ketchikan where this bird (left) was nicely documented 3 January 2015 (photo Chuck P. Susie). The Red-breasted Sapsucker (right) provided only the second winter record for Gustavus on 4 February 2015 (photo Nat K. Drumheller).

RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER: A Red-breasted Sapsucker at Gustavus 4 and 7 February 2015 (NKD, PB; Figure 9) may have provided only the second local winter record. At nearby Juneau, one was found dead 21 February 2015 (GBV), two were observed 27 February 2015 (MM), and one was observed 28 February 2015 (DLS)—the Juneau birds were thought to represent extremely early migrants, rather than wintering birds, since there are very few local January–February records. Conversely, single birds observed at Ketchikan 20 December 2014 (SCH), 19 January 2015 (AWP), and 27 February 2015 (AWP), and two there 28 February 2015 (AWP) were thought to represent wintering birds. Singles were also observed at Sitka 5 January 2015 and 27 February 2015 (MRG). Although sapsuckers appear to be rare in winter, some of this scarcity, at least in some areas, appears to be related to their less conspicuous behavior and dispersal throughout coniferous woods, which are seldom birded hard during the winter. In past years, major winter cold snaps have resulted in the sudden appearance of large numbers of sapsuckers at sea level at both Ketchikan (AWP, SCH) and Sitka (MRG).

AMERICAN KESTREL: An American Kestrel spent the entire winter at Juneau (m.obs.; Figure 10), and another at Sitka 8 January 2015 (PHN) was present for several weeks. This species is casual in the winter in Southeast Alaska.

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE: Unusually large numbers of Black-billed magpies were observed at Juneau 5 January 2015 (40 birds; GSB) and 17 January 2015 (50 birds; ACC). One at Wrangell 3–4 December 2014 (CC) provided the only report in the southern part of the region. No magpies have been reported at Ketchikan for nine years!

HORNED LARK: Still considered a casual winter visitant, Horned Larks were found in the Gustavus area 15 December 2014 (four), 22 January 2015 (two), and 20 February 2015 (three; NKD) and another bird spent the entire winter at Sitka (m.obs.).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET: Ruby-crowned Kinglets lingered to mid-winter at Sitka 11 December 2014–1 February 2015 (MRG, PHN), Ketchikan 1–2 January 2015 (SCH, photo), and Juneau 18 January 2015 (PAR, BAA).
MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD: Single Mountain Bluebirds at Ketchikan 18 December 2014–3 January 2015 (GZ; JHL, m.obs.; Figure 11) and Sitka 7 December 2014 through the end of the period (KJ, MRG, et al.; Figure 11) established first winter records at both locations. One was also found at Gustavus 28 December 2014 (JSo, KSO) where there are a handful of prior winter records. This species is a locally uncommon spring migrant and casual or rare fall migrant and winter visitant in Southeast Alaska, and it occurs primarily on the mainland.

HERMIT THRUSH: A late Hermit Thrush was observed at Ketchikan through 6 December 2014 (SCH) and at least one lingered to mid-winter at Sitka 29 December 2014–9 January 2015 (MRG, EVP).

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD: A Northern Mockingbird found at Sitka 25 September 2014 was observed through at least 3 January 2015 (fide MRG). 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).

AMERICAN PIPIT: A late flock of 15 American Pipits was observed at Wrangell 1–2 December 2014 (BHD), and one at Sitka 11 December 2014 remained through the end of the period (m.obs.).

CEDAR WAXWING: Two Cedar Waxwings were found at Ketchikan 13–14 December 2014 (JHL; Figure 12). This species is casual in Alaska during the winter, and there were only five prior Ketchikan winter records.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: A late Orange-crowned Warbler was found at Sitka 17–19 December 2014 (MRG, photo). More unusual, two Orange-crowned Warblers lingered into mid-winter in the Juneau area: singles 28 December 2014–6 January 2015 (ACC) and 7 December 2014–10 February 2015 (GBV, m.obs.). There were at least a dozen prior mid-winter records for Alaska. Photos of both the Sitka bird and the later Juneau bird showed them to be the dull-plumaged boreal subspecies *celata*, rather than the more colorful coastal subspecies *lutescens*.
Figure 11. Mountain Bluebirds at Sitka (left; 8 December 2014; photo Matt R. Goff) and Ketchikan (right; 21 December 2014; photo Jim H. Lewis) provided first winter records at both locations.

Figure 12. Cedar Waxwing at Ketchikan 13 December 2014. Photo by Jim H. Lewis

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER: A late Yellow-rumped Warbler near the Sitka airport 1–8 December 2014 (MRG, CPFG) provided the season’s only report.

SPOTTED TOWHEE: A male Spotted Towhee first found at Thorne Bay, Prince of Wales Island, 30 November 2014 was present to at least 6 February 2015 (JFB; Figure 13). There are at least 14 Alaska records, of which nine are from the Juneau area. This species breeds as close as southwestern British Columbia (Greenlaw 1996).

CHIPPING SPARROW: An immature Chipping Sparrow first found at Jerry Koerner’s Ketchikan feeders on 27 November 2014 remained through at least 25 February 2015 (FK; CPS; Figure 14), and another immature bird was present at Sitka 28 December 2014–1 February 2015 (MRG, PHN, DS; Figure 14). This species is a casual winter visitant to Alaska, and there are probably fewer than 10 records after November.
SAVANNAH SPARROW: Normally a casual winter visitant in Alaska, Savannah Sparrows made a nice showing in Southeast. Singles were found in the Gustavus area 11–16 December 2014 and 13 February 2015 (NKD, LN; Figure 15) and the Mendenhall Wetlands 21 December 2014 (GBV, BAA), and two were found at Sitka 7 December 2014–4 January 2015 (MRG).

LINCOLN’S SPARROW: A Lincoln’s Sparrow at Gustavus 11 December 2014 was late and provided only the second local winter record (NKD; Figure 15). This species is rare in southeast Alaska during the winter.

SWAMP SPARROW: A Swamp Sparrow found at Ketchikan on 30 October 2014 lingered through at least 17 December 2014 (SCH, AWP). This species is a rare fall migrant and winter visitant in Southeast Alaska.
Figure 15. A Savannah Sparrow 13 February 2015 (left) and a Lincoln’s Sparrow 11 December 2014 (right) were nice winter finds at Gustavus. *Photos by Nat K. Drumheller*

**WHITE-THROATED SPARROW:** Perhaps not unexpected following a poor fall showing, a White-throated Sparrow at Juneau 18 January 2015 provided this winter’s only report (PAR, BAA).

**RUSTIC BUNTING:** A Rustic Bunting first found at Gustavus 23 November 2014 was last observed 2 December 2014 (NKD). Another Rustic Bunting photographed at Juneau 8 December 2014 (CD; Figure 16) had apparently been present since late November (*fide* GBV). Although a Rustic Bunting had been observed earlier (23 October–6 November 2014) and not too far away at another Juneau feeder, plumage details suggest these sightings represented different individuals. Thus, *three* Rustic Buntings were found in Southeast Alaska last fall. This Eurasian species is found regularly in Alaska only in the western Aleutian Islands in spring (Gibson and Byrd 2007); it is casual elsewhere in Alaska, primarily at other Bering Sea locations in the fall, and prior to 2014, there were only five Southeast records. A Rustic Bunting was also recorded at Middleton Island, Gulf Alaska, 13 October 2014 (Lucas H. DeCicco, pers. comm.), so there was apparently quite a movement of Rustic Buntings well east of the Bering Sea area last fall.

**WESTERN MEADOWLARK:** A Western Meadowlark found at Ketchikan’s North Point Higgins area 20 October 2014 remained through at least 4 January 2015 (m.obs.). This species breeds north to central and northeastern British Columbia (Campbell et al. 2001) and is casual in Southeast Alaska.

**BREWER’S BLACKBIRD:** A female Brewer’s Blackbird first found at Ketchikan on 22 October 2014 lingered through at least 11 January 2015 (CPS, SCH). There are more than 25 Alaska records of this species, all but one of which are from Southeast, and it has been found nearly annually in Southeast Alaska over the last 15 years.

**GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH:** A Gray-Crowned Rosy-Finch at Ketchikan 7–8 February 2015 (AWP; Figure 17) provided only the 2nd local winter record. Kessel and Gibson (1978) considered this species to be a fairly common probable breeder, and an uncommon to rare local winter visitant in southeast Alaska, with most records from northern southeast Alaska.
When more than one unusual bird shows up in an area, it is often impossible to determine if the observations involved two individuals or one individual that moved around. Two Rustic Buntings were found at Juneau in late fall 2014: one 23 October–6 November (left; photo Patty A. Rose) and one late November–8 December 2014 (right; photo Chiska Derr). The much broader buff edges on the tertial and greater covert feathers of the bird on the left clearly indicates they are different birds.

**PURPLE FINCH:** A Purple Finch at Sitka 17 December 2014 (CPFG; Figure 17) provided a first local record and the only report this winter. This species is a very rare, but annual, fall migrant and winter visitant at Ketchikan (Heinl and Piston 2009), but is casual in northern Southeast Alaska.

**PINE SISKIN:** Pine Siskins swarmed areas of the northern Southeast mainland to take advantage of a bumper cone crop. They were ubiquitous at Juneau and Gustavus, inciting comments like “constant din”, “swirling murmuration”, and “plague proportions”, and single flocks maxed out at an estimated 800 at Gustavus 17 December 2014 (NKD) and 700 at Auke Bay 8 February 2015 (GBV). Large numbers of both White-winged and Red crossbills were also present at Gustavus and Juneau.

**EVENING GROSBEAK:** Three Evening Grosbeaks (a male and two females) present at a Ketchikan feeding station since 14 November 2014 were observed regularly through the end of the period (JW, HW). Another male was photographed at Farm Island, Stikine River, on 3 January 2015 (CS, JS, EB; Figure 18). This species is very rare in Southeast Alaska, where there are records in all seasons.

**HOUSE SPARROW:** A pair of House Sparrows was present throughout the period at Petersburg (ELY et al.; Figure 19) and small numbers were present at Ketchikan, where they have bred for the last six summers (AWP, SCH).
Figure 17. Nice finches included a Purple Finch at Sitka 17 December 2014, which provided a first local record (left; *photo Connor P. F. Goff*), and a Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch at Ketchikan 8 February 2015, where the species is casual in winter (right; *photo by Jim H. Lewis*).

Figure 18. Male Evening Grosbeak at Farm Island, Stikine River, 3 January 2015. *Photo by Cinda and James Stough*

Figure 19. This pair of House Sparrows has been at Petersburg since at least summer 2014 (here 7 February 2015). *Photo by E. L. “Butch” Young*
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