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THE 34th REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: 2008 RECORDS

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ABSTRACT: The California Bird Records Committee reached decisions on 233 records involving 76 species, one species pair, and one hybrid combination evaluated during 2008, endorsing 200 of them. New to California was the Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*), bringing California's bird list to 641 species, ten of which are non-native. A potential first state record of a Yellow-headed Caracara (*Milvago chimachima*) was not accepted on grounds of questionable natural occurrence, and potential first state records of the Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) and Oriental Greenfinch (*Chloris sinica*) were not accepted on grounds of identification.

MOLECULAR DATA CONFIRM THE FIRST RECORD OF THE LONG-BILLED MURRELET FOR NEW MEXICO

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ABSTRACT: A small alcid of uncertain identity was salvaged from a brine pool associated with a potash mine in Eddy County, New Mexico, on 12 July 2009. The carcass was brought to the Museum of Southwestern Biology, prepared as a specimen, and tentatively identified as a Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*), but identification based on measurements and plumage characteristics was not conclusive. DNA sequence from the mitochondrial gene cytochrome-*b* confirmed the specific identity but revealed a previously unrecognized mitochondrial variant of the Long-billed Murrelet. This specimen provides the first documentation of the Long-billed Murrelet in New Mexico, a record that was anticipated from the species' established pattern of vagrancy across North America. This vagrant's novel mitochondrial DNA haplotype reveals previously undescribed population genetic structure within the Long-billed Murrelet.

COUNTING THE COUNTLESS: ESTIMATING THE NUMBER OF LEAST AUKLETS ATTENDING THE COLONY ON ST. GEORGE ISLAND, ALASKA

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ABSTRACT: Estimating the abundance of auklets at breeding colonies has proven extremely difficult, and no satisfactory method has emerged. Auklets nest in concealed rock crevices and socialize on the sea's surface during portions of the day. Several methods of estimating population trends have been attempted, but a true census has so far been unattainable at any colony. On St. George Island, Alaska, an unusually late snow cover in 2008 made possible a photo count of Least Auklets (*Aethia pusilla*) attending the inland colony at Ulakaia Ridge. We estimated the number of birds in the colony on 15 May 2008 to be 88,263 • } 3056. Because of the timing of the count and the known life history of the species, the count likely represented almost the entire population breeding at the colony that year.

WINTER MOVEMENTS BY CALIFORNIA SPOTTED OWLS IN A BURNED LANDSCAPE

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ABSTRACT: The movements and habitat requirements of the California Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*) during the nonbreeding season remain poorly understood in comparison with those during the breeding season, and no data are available on the subspecies' use of burned landscapes in fall and winter. From October 2006 to March 2007, we estimated the locations of daytime roosts of five radio-marked California Spotted Owls in an area of the southern Sierra Nevada that burned in a 60,985-ha wildfire 4 years previously. Our objectives were to determine whether these owls expanded their movements during the nonbreeding season and whether they roosted in the area burned. During the nonbreeding season, two males increased the distance between locations of successive roosts while still remaining within their breeding-season ranges. One pair migrated from its breeding territory for the winter but returned by 1 March. One female dispersed to a new breeding territory. Three of the five owls roosted in burned landscapes during the nonbreeding season, and 30% of all roost locations were within the fire's perimeter. Burned forests may therefore represent important winter habitat for the California Spotted Owl.

NOTES

FIRST EVIDENCE SUGGESTING HYBRIDIZATION BETWEEN THE SUMMER TANAGER AND WESTERN TANAGER

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KILLDEER OBSERVED DEPREDATING A WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER NEST

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NESTING OF THE GOLDEN EAGLE IN THE GUADALUPE VALLEY, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

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SOFTWARE AND BOOK REVIEWS

DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN PACKAGING RECORDINGS OF BIRDS

Audubon Birds—A Field Guide to North American Birds, Version 1.3.1, by Green Mountain Digital. 2010. www.audubonguides.com.
BirdJam, by MightyJams, LLC. 2010. www.birdjam.com.
iBird Explorer PRO, Version 2.3, by Mitch Waite Group. 2010. www.ibirdexplorer.com.
National Geographic's Handheld Birds, Version 1.0.0, by National Geographic Society. 2009. www.handheldbirds.com.
The Sibley eGuide to the Birds of North America, Version 1.01, by Cool Ideas, LLC. 2010. www.mydigitalearth.com.

BOOK REVIEW

Birds of Wyoming, by Douglas W. Faulkner. 2010. Roberts and Company Publishers, Greenwood Village, CO. 404 pages, at least 250 color photos, 242 range maps. Hardback, \$45.00. ISBN 978-1-936221-02-8.

FEATURED PHOTO CAROTENISM IN CASSIN'S FINCH

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**IN MEMORIAM
MICHAEL J. SAN MIGUEL, 1939–2010
PRESIDENT OF WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS, 1999–2003**