

More interesting, though, were 3 separate reports of *oriantha* White-crowned Sparrows, with two in Tucson Dec. 11 (CDB), three seen along the upper S.P.R., Jan. 10 (JLD), and another five seen at the P.A.P. pecan grove Feb. 17 (J. Pike). This form is casual at best in winter in s. Arizona. Six Golden-crowned Sparrows, about normal for a winter, were found around the state between Dec. 10 and the end of the season. Two different extralimital Yellow-eyed Juncos were reported, with one at the B.T.A., Jan. 5–13 (CT), and another at a feeder in Prescott Feb. 28–29 (V. Miller; *vide* CT). This species is only a casual winter visitor away from known breeding areas in s. Arizona. There are very few records of Lapland Longspurs anywhere in the state, therefore one seen near McNeal in the S.S.V., Jan. 6 (†JLD) and another in the San Rafael Grasslands Jan. 7–9 (†JLD, CDB, PB, C. Duncan) were noteworthy; this species is most likely overlooked and more common in s. Arizona than the paucity of records indicates. Eighteen Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Mormon L., Dec. 16 may well represent the first winter record for n. Arizona (J. Grahame). Extremely rare anywhere in Arizona during the winter, a ♂ Bullock's Oriole wintered at Granite Cr. near Prescott (CT). A ♀/imm. Purple Finch, casual in s. Arizona in winter, was in Patagonia Dec. 17 (DTr, CDB).

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New Mexico

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An unusually mild winter provided favorable conditions for birds and for those who watch them, but continued drought gave cause for concern. Waterbirds and warblers provided much excitement, and montane species attracted attention in the lowlands.

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (*Bitter Lake N.W.R.*); Bosque N.W.R. (*Bosque del Apache N.W.R.*); E.B.L. (*Elephant Butte L.*); R.G.V. (*Rio Grande Valley*); Zuni (*Zuni Indian Reservation*).

Loons to Ducks

An excellent season for rare waterbirds found single Pacific Loons at E.B.L., Dec. 31 (ph. JO) and Jan. 13 (JEP, JO) and Caballo L., Jan 2–11 (BZ, JNP *et al.*), a possible **Red-throated Loon** at Santa Rosa L. Feb. 17 (CR), and a **Yellow-billed Loon** at Ute L., Dec. 27 (ph. JO), the latter the state's 5th in 5 years. What may prove to be New Mexico's first verified **Red-necked Grebe** was discovered at Caballo L., Dec. 23 (BN, DE, CS), where it remained through Jan. 12 (v.o., ph. JO); unverified reports stretch back over half a century! One–four Horned Grebes wintered at E.B.L., Caballo L., Ute L., Brantly L., and s. *Eddy* (v.o.). Some 4000 *Aechmophorus* grebes were seen during an aerial survey of E.B.L., Jan. 12 (SOW) and ≤2000 Eareds were at Caballo L. during January (v.o.); a possible Least at Bosque N.W.R., Jan. 8 (EW) was not found by others. Moderate numbers of Am. White Pelicans overwintered in the lower Rio Grande and Pecos valleys; early returnees were 150 over Anthony Feb. 9 (EW, *vide* CS) and 18 over Malaga Feb. 25 (SW). A **Brown Pelican** plunge-diving at Caballo L., Dec. 8 (JO) was last seen Dec. 14 (*vide* CS). Unusually far north were six Double-crested Cormorants at Morgan L., Dec. 31 (TR); 38 Double-crested at Willow L., Jan. 20 (SW) was a high number for *Eddy*, while a Neotropic near Deming in December and February (JO, JEP) may provide a *Luna* first. Very late was a Cattle Egret at Bosque N.W.R., Jan. 12–14 (CS, JD) and a White-faced Ibis there through Jan. 7 (ph. JO).

A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck caused considerable excitement at Las Animas Cr., *Sierra*, Jan. 6–20 (JEP *et al.*, ph. JO), but

its close association with domestic ducks and chickens—plus the presence of ≤five Mute Swans (v.o., ph. D. Mott) and a pair of Mandarins in the area (v.o.)—seriously eroded its credibility. A Tundra Swan was at L. Avalon Dec. 4–25 (ph. SW, JO). Ross' Geese reportedly comprised 49% of the "white geese" at B.L.N.W.R., resulting in 6000 Ross' there Dec. 16 (SMB); peripheral Ross' were three–four near Farmington Dec. 2 and Jan. 2 (TR), singles at Lordsburg Feb. 24 (JEP, JO) and Burn L. Dec. 17–23 (ph. BZ), and 20 at Willow L., *Eddy*, Feb. 29 (SW). Wood Ducks continued to winter widely; three at Montezuma Dec. 17 (PRS), a pair near Deming Dec. 30 (JO), and four at Brantly L., Jan. 8 (J. Fanning) were in areas where seldom reported. A ♂ Blue-winged Teal at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 16 (*vide* SW) and four at L. Avalon Jan. 4 (SW) were late; earliest Cinnamons were single males at Navajo Dam Jan. 26 (TR), Zuni Feb. 3 (DC), and Rattlesnake Springs Jan. 27–28 (DE, BN, JO). A ♂ **Eurasian Wigeon** at Black Rock L., Dec. 15 (JT) provided a Zuni first; another was at Albuquerque Jan. 7–15 (BV, JEP, PES, CR, ph. JO). Formerly rare, Oldsquaws have been reported annually in recent years; this season found a male at Tyrone Jan. 1–2 (EL, ph. D&MZ) and a female at Lovington Dec. 28 (ph. JO). Much farther downstream than usual on the San Juan R. were one–two Barrow's Goldeneyes at Farmington Dec. 2–Jan.8 (ph. TR).

Vultures to Doves

Extremely late was a Turkey Vulture near Otis Dec. 21 (ph. SW), but one at Percha Dec. 26 (GE) had a broken wing; notably early was one at the Glenwood roost Feb. 13 (R. Skaggs). Given the virtual absence of Turkey Vultures from New Mexico in mid-winter, the presence of 279 only 25 mi s. at Janos, Chihuahua, Mexico Jan. 10 (WH *et al.*) was startling, as were the 80 Black Vultures a little farther south at Casas Grandes Jan. 11 (WH *et al.*). Blacks are unverified in New Mexico at any season! Two White-tailed Kites in the Uvas Valley, *Luna*, Dec. 30 (ph. JO) furnished further evidence of this kite's expansion into the state. A "black" Merlin near Santa Fe Jan. 24–Feb. 28 (DS) was likely *suckleyi*; elsewhere, one–five Merlins were at 20 locales statewide December–February (v.o.). Far north was a Com. Moorhen at Zuni Dec. 13 (JT). A Snowy Plover was late at Holloman L., Dec. 28 (GE); three were early there Feb. 14 (GE). A remarkable 350 Killdeer were at L. Avalon Jan. 4 (SW). A Mt. Plover was early at Los Lunas Feb. 21 (PES); earliest Am. Avocets were

two each at Bosque N.W.R., Feb. 23 (CR) and Lordsburg Feb. 24 (JEP, JO).

A Lesser Yellowlegs, seen with Greater, was unseasonable at Santa Teresa Jan. 6 (DE, BN). Notably late were 169 Long-billed Curlews at L. Avalon Dec. 30 (JEP) and 150 near Otis Jan. 1 (SW). North were two Least Sandpipers at Morgan L., Jan. 13 (TR). A late Dunlin was at L. Avalon Dec. 17 (JO); early were five at B.L.N.W.R., Feb. 4 (JEP, JO). An **American Woodcock** at Rattlesnake Springs Jan. 27 (DE, BN, CS) was New Mexico's 6th, and the first since 1991. Several rare gulls provided challenges and rewards, including a first-winter **Laughing Gull** at Caballo L., Jan. 20 (JEP, JD, ph. JO); single **Mew Gulls** at E.B.L., Dec. 16 (ph. JO) and Jan. 11 (ph. BZ) and Brantley L., Feb. 3 (JEP, ph. JO); a first-winter Thayer's at Caballo L., Dec. 8–10 (JEP, ph. JO), Jan. 2 (BZ, JNP), and Feb. 25 (CR), plus the same or another at E.B.L., Dec. 31 (JO) and Jan. 20 (JEP, JO, JD); and a well-studied **Glaucous Gull** at Caballo L., Jan. 6–20 (v.o.). The star attraction, however, was a very cooperative first-winter **Black-legged Kittiwake** at Caballo Dam, discovered in late November and seen Dec. 2–Feb. 25 (m.ob., phs. JO, EW, WH, BZ). Far north was an Inca Dove at Bloomfield Dec. 13 (ph. TR).



Immature Black-legged Kittiwake at Caballo Dam, New Mexico, December 3, 1995. Photograph/Bill Howe.



Notably far north was this Inca Dove at Bloomfield, San Juan County, December 13, 1995. Photograph/Tim Reeves.

Owls to Swallows

A **Flammulated Owl** found dead at Santa Fe Jan. 2, following the season's first major snowstorm, furnished an intriguing winter specimen (SOW). A W. Screech-Owl that overwintered at Las Cruces (v.o., ph. BZ) was singing by mid-February (CS); other singles were vocalizing in cottonwood habitat at Farmington Feb. 10 (TR) and in pinyon-juniper near Santa Fe Feb. 16 (DS). Single N. Pygmy-Owls were at Angel Fire Feb. 10 (JEP, ph. JO), Zuni Dec. 16 (CR), and the Sandia Mts., Jan. 1 (D. Broudy). Several Long-eared Owls wintered at Dripping Springs, where there were eight Feb. 6 (GE); two Long-eareds were roosting in saltcedars near Carlsbad Dec. 21 (SW). A few hummingbirds lingered, but details for most were sketchy or absent. Among the more credible reports were single possible Black-chinneds at Roswell until Jan. 2 (J. McElroy) and near Silver City "all winter" (*fide* RF), and two Anna's at Greenwood Canyon near Mangas into late December, with one remaining there through January (RF), plus one–two Anna's at Las Cruces Dec. 17 (*fide* BZ) & 25 (GE). An imm. ♂ Rufous at Albuquerque made the local television news in early January; it was healthy when banded Feb. 7 and was last seen Feb. 17 (HS, J. Day-Martin). An ad. ♂ Rufous was at Silver City Dec. 1 (*fide* D&MZ).

At Farmington, 32 Lewis' Woodpeckers Dec. 16 (AN) furnished a record count; the Lewis' at Sunland Park, first reported in November, continued to divide its time between there and El Paso (v.o., ph. G. Lasley) and was last seen Feb. 15 (BZ). Noteworthy for the R.G.V. was a Red-headed Woodpecker at Las Animas Cr., Jan. 2–Feb. 18 (DE *et al.*, ph. BZ). North of the usual range was a Gila Woodpecker at Buckhorn Dec. 2 (RF). Westerly was a probable Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Silver City Dec. 16 (*fide* RF); others, some described in detail, were at 7 sites from the R.G.V. eastward (v.o.). A possible Red-breasted Sapsucker was in Clanton Canyon Jan. 17 (ph. C&P Williams), but hybrid origin has not been ruled out. Northerly Williamson's Sapsuckers included two at Santa Fe Dec. 23 (PC), with one there Jan. 8 (SB), and another near Gold- en Jan. 5 (SB).

Well-studied was a Least Flycatcher at Percha Dec. 2 (JEP *et al.*, ph. JO) and Jan. 13–15 (JEP, BN, DE, JNP). Apparent Hammond's Flycatchers again overwintered in the south, with singles at Las Animas Cr., from Jan. 2 (DE, JNP) to Feb. 18 (NMC) and at Percha Jan. 20 (JEP, JO, JD, DE, BN); another likely Hammond's was at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 16–17

(ph. SW, JO). A "western" near Mesilla Dam Dec. 17 (JNP, ph. BZ) & 19 (JEP) was tape recorded Dec. 23 (JO); sonogram analysis indicated it was a **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** (J. Travis). Say's Phobes typically withdraw from n. areas in winter, so noteworthy were singles at Farmington Dec. 31 (TR), *San Miguel* Jan. 14 (JO), and *Union* Jan. 20 (CR). A few Tree Swallows persisted in the Caballo-Percha area until Jan. 6–7 (JEP, JO, BN, DE) and reappeared there Feb. 24 (JO); in *Eddy*, the last were two at L. Avalon Dec. 22 (SW), while five returned to Willow L., Feb. 25 (SW). Early N. Rough-wingeds were near Bill Evans L., Feb. 20 (NMC), Mangas Feb. 29 (RF), Caballo Dam Feb. 17 (GE, CS), and Cass Draw, *Eddy*, Feb. 29 (SW).

Jays to Shrikes

Blue Jays again invaded the R.G.V. and adjacent areas from Española and Santa Fe southward to Percha; high count was eight at Albuquerque Dec. 17 (HS). Among the several submontane Steller's Jays were three at Farmington Dec. 16 (AN) and one at Hill, *Doña Ana*, Dec. 29 (JO). Black-billed Magpies far south included 20 at Santa Ana Pueblo Feb. 16 (WH). The 200 Am. Crows in the Dry Cimarron Valley, *Union*, Jan. 20 (CR) provided a high count for that area; other notable *maxima* were 715 at Farmington Dec. 16 (AN) and 2666 at Las Cruces Dec. 17 (BZ). Unusual were 2 flocks of 225 and 100 Com. Ravens in open country near Tres Piedras Feb. 9 (CR). A Black-capped Chickadee was notably east in *Union* Jan. 20 (CR). One–two Mexican Chickadees wandered to the Peloncillo Mts., Dec. 9 (JO), Feb. 18 (SOW), and Feb. 24 (JEP, JO). Submontane Mt. Chickadees were conspicuous in the lower Rio Grandé and Pecos valleys (v.o.); unusual was one at Moriarity Jan. 7 (SB) & 27 (CR, PRS).

Red-breasted Nuthatches likewise invaded submontane areas, with ≤ 12 at Silver City (D&MZ), one near Deming Dec. 10 (JO), a high 21 at Las Cruces Dec. 17 (BZ), two at Roswell in mid-December (SMB), and one at Hobbs Dec. 28 (JO). Two Pygmy Nuthatches were in cottonwoods at Valmora Dec. 8 (CR). Two Cactus Wrens in Albuquerque Dec. 17 (HS) were a surprise; they remained through the period, and the discovery of an old nest suggested residence there. At least one Winter Wren was at Zuni Dec. 3–5 (ph. DC); another at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 10 (DE, BN) was likely a November holdover. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers made an unusually strong showing, with one–two on various dates Decem-



Northern Parula at Bloomfield, New Mexico, December 15, 1995. Apparently a very late fall vagrant. Photograph/Tim Reeves.

ber-January at Bosque N.W.R., Caballo L., Percha, Las Cruces, and Loving (v.o.); undetailed were eight in the Peloncillo Mts., along with 14 Black-tailed there Dec. 30 (*fide* RS). The only Black-tailed report from the southeast was one near L. Avalon Dec. 25 (JO).

Eastern Bluebirds n. and w. included 17 at Española Dec. 31 (BF), two at Zuni Dec. 16 (CR), and one-two in the Peloncillo Mts., Dec. 30 (RS) and Feb. 24 (JEP, JO). Getting an early start was a pair of nest-building Am. Robins at Silver City Feb. 27-28 (RF). Of interest—or concern—was the general scarcity of N. Mockingbird reports, including from the s. half of the state. Notable for mid-winter were six Sage Thrashers at Zuni Jan. 13 (DC); early was a Sage in *San Juan* Feb. 9 (TR). Single Brown Thrashers were at Bosque N.W.R., Las Animas Cr., Roswell, and Rattlesnake Springs (v.o.). Five Sprague's Pipits were in Otero Mesa grasslands Dec. 5-14 (RM). Cedar Waxwings, absent in some winters, were widespread and numerous from La Plata, Raton, and Clayton southward (m.ob.); high count was 300 in n. *Grant* Jan. 13 (RF). Fourteen N. Shrikes were reported from 14 sites in *San Juan, Rio Arriba, Taos, Colfax, Union, and San Miguel*; far south was an adult at Las Cruces Jan. 26 (ph. S. Hill), furnishing only the 2nd definite *Doña Ana* record.

Vireos to Warblers

A White-eyed Vireo persisted at Percha until Dec. 2 (JEP, ph. JO). Solitary Vireos taking advantage of the Las Cruces climate included a *cassini* Dec. 17 (JNP, ph. BZ), Jan. 20 (JEP, JO), and Jan. 22 (CS), and a *solitarius* Dec. 17 (JNP, BZ). A *plumbeus* was near Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, Mexico Jan. 12 (WH *et al.*). One-two Hurton's Vireos again wintered in the lower R.G.V. at Percha and Mesilla (v.o.); others away from the Peloncillo Mts. were singles at Deming Dec. 10 (ph. JO) and the Florida Mts., Feb. 25 (CR), two at Dripping

Springs Feb. 10 (GE), and one in the Guadalupe Mts., Jan. 1 (RM). A remarkable 16 warbler species were reported, but lack of documentation relegated four to the "rumor only" category. Lingering/wintering Orange-crowneds led the way, including singles n. to Santa Fe Dec. 23 (PI) and Albuquerque Dec. 17 (T. Brownell), two at Percha Dec. 2 (JO) and Jan. 20 (JO, JD), and a record 19 at Las Cruces Dec. 17 (BZ) with two-four still there Jan. 20 (JO, JD). Single N. Parulas, rare at any season, were at Bloomfield Dec. 9-19 (N. Mahon, ph. TR) and Albuquerque Jan. 14-15 (JO, JEP, CR). Early was a Lucy's at Mangas Feb. 28 (RF); late was a Black-throated Gray at L. Avalon Dec. 22 (SW). Single Townsends were at Silver City Feb. 7 (MZ) and Mesilla Dec. 19-Feb. 24 (v.o., ph. BZ). A find perhaps attributable to last-minute Christmas shopping was a Yellow-throated Warbler discovered at a Las Cruces Wal-Mart Dec. 22 (T. McKimmie); it remained until Feb. 24 (m.ob., ph. JO). An imm. Prairie Warbler at Percha Jan. 13 (JEP, ph. JO) & 15 (JNP) provided the 2nd definite state record. Typically rare or absent at this season, single Com. Yellowthroats were at Zuni Dec. 16 (CR), Bosque N.W.R., Dec. 16 (*fide* SC) and Feb. 23 (CR), Silver City Dec. 16 (*fide* RF), Caballo L., Dec. 2-3 (JO, WH), Percha Dec. 2-Jan 15 (v.o.), Loving Dec. 21 (SW), and Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 10-Feb. 29 (v.o.). A Wilson's Warbler at Las Cruces Dec. 17 (W. Whitford, J. Howard) may provide a winter first; another Wilson's was near Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, Mexico Jan. 12 (WH *et al.*). An Olive Warbler strayed E to Mesilla Dec. 17 (JNP, ph. BZ) to Jan. 11 (DE), for at least the 2nd winter report there.



Prairie Warbler at Percha Dam State Park, New Mexico, January 13, 1996. Second confirmed state record, but only three months after the first. Photograph/Jerry R. Oldenettel.

Cardinals to Finches

More evidence of northward expansion by N. Cardinals was provided by two at Santa Rosa Feb. 17 (CR). Unusual was a Rufous-crowned Sparrow at Watrous Dec. 8 (CR); a record 445 Rufous-crowneds at Carlsbad Caverns N.P., Dec. 16 (SW) doubled the previous high. American Tree Sparrows w. and s. of usual included 20 near Farmington Jan. 2-Feb.9 (ph. TR) and ≤12 in the Albuquerque area December-January (HS). Four Field Sparrows were at Walnut Canyon, *Eddy*, Feb. 24 (SW); one was at Rattlesnake Springs Jan.27 (BN, DE) and Feb. 4 (JEP, JO). Northerly for the season was a Lark Sparrow at Silver City Dec. 16 (*fide* RF), as were two Lark Buntings at E.B.L., Dec. 25 (JO).

Golden-crowned Sparrows reports, regular in recent winters, included two at Carnuel Dec. 31 (BV) and one there Jan. 7 (JEP), plus singles at Bosque N.W.R., Dec. 16 (*fide* SC), Percha Jan. 2 (BZ, JNP), Aguirre Springs Jan. 8 (BZ), and Spring Canyon S.P., Dec. 29 (JO), the latter a Florida Mts. first. Single Harris' Sparrows were at Albuquerque (HS), Bosque N.W.R. (JEP), Silver City (RF), La Huer-ta (*fide* SW), Loving (*fide* SW), and Mad-dox L., Lea, Dec. 9-26 (SW). Well-detailed was a White-winged Junco at Los Alamos Jan. 20-29 (PRS), the first there in many years; another was in the Sandia Mts., Jan. 1 (*fide* T. Bulow). Noteworthy Lapland Longspurs included ten at Sub-blefield L., Dec. 26 (ph. JO), four at Sedan Dec. 27 (JO), two at Moriarity Jan. 27 (CR, PRS, WH), and one in Doña Ana Feb. 24 (CR, DE). Rusty Blackbirds had an impressive season, with one at Sandia Park Jan. 1 (ph. WH), three at Santa Rosa Feb. 17 (CR), and two-three at Percha Jan. 2 (JNP, ph. BZ), Jan. 7 (DE, BN), and Jan. 13 (JEP, JO). Early-winter reports of Com. Grackles continued to increase, including substantial numbers at Farmington, Roswell, and Las Cruces, but whether this species was always carefully distinguished from Great-taileds was uncertain; Rattlesnake Springs yielded 18 Dec. 16 (SW), one Jan 27 (DE, BN), and two Feb. 3 (JEP, JO). Three Bronzed Cowbirds were early at Las Cruces Feb. 21 (GE). Late was a Scott's Oriole at Columbus Dec. 10 & 30 (ph. JO), as was a probable Bullock's at Caballo Dam Dec. 3 (WH). Single ♀-plumaged Purple Finches were at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 16-17 (SW, JO) and Las Animas Cr., Jan. 5 (CR). Cassin's Finches away from their usual haunts were two-three near Folsom Dec. 26 (JO), 25 each in the Magdalena Mts., Dec. 3 (JO) and at Emory Pass, Sierra, Feb. 18 (JEP, JO), and six at Drip-

ping Springs Feb. 6 (GE). A salmonella outbreak, centered in the Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and Cochiti areas, affected House Finches, Pine Siskins, and Evening Grosbeaks; 200 birds/day were reported dying at the outbreak's peak (K. Ramsey). East were 250 Pine Siskins in *Union* Jan. 20 (CR). Northerly Lesser Goldfinches included 18 at Farmington Dec. 16 (AN), eight at Zuni Dec. 10–Feb. 4 (DC), and three at Albuquerque Dec. 17 (HS). Evening Grosbeaks were widespread, including 25 e. to Folsom Jan. 27 (JO) and singles s. to Emory Pass Feb. 18 (JEP, JO) and Dripping Springs Dec. 17 (GE).

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Alaska Region

T. G. TOBISH, JR.

Weatherwise winter 1995–1996 evolved into one of the strangest of the last decade, with typical patterns completely out of sync. A broad-scale upper atmosphere shift of “jet stream” conditions well to the south basically created a void in the North Pacific low pressure circulation, keeping the entire Region storm free until late January. Snow accumulations across the state into January were anywhere from 10–75 percent below long-term averages. Snowfall and storm fronts more typical of the late November–early December period eventually rolled out of the Aleutian Low, and all of a sudden February snow accumulations, at least on the Mainland, caught up and in several places surpassed local averages by up to 100 percent. Before this February snowfall catch-up, the season was abbreviated by short periods of sub-zero and locally windy conditions. And the season produced only one serious high pressure cell that built into an extended Regionwide sub-zero cold snap, highlighted by -50° F. temperatures for over three weeks straight nearly everywhere north of the Alaska Range. Exactly the opposite of last year, the Bering Sea southward pack ice extension was one of the weakest in years, reaching only to St. Matthew Island.

As is typical in winter in Alaska, weather conditions end up having little influence on bird distribution after December.

However, early on virtually all coastal waterbird sites reported very late winter arrivals, with weak local concentrations. Long distance migrants were extremely efficient and timely in the fall departures, and early season winter condition at best only influenced the make-up, numbers, and timing of a regular (and short) list of semi-hardy lingerers. As highlighted in the Christmas Bird Count season, the relatively mild and snow free early winter conditions did allow for decent concentrations of semi-hard passerines, at least on the North Gulf Coast. Also typical of most winters, essentially all of the unusual records occurred in the first half of the season, and predictable feeder concentrations did not develop until well into January. Similar to the past three winters, an Asiatic component was lacking this season.

Abbreviations: North Gulf (*North Gulf of Alaska*); PW (*Prince William Sound*); SE (*Southeast AK*); SC (*Southcoastal AK*); SW (*Southwest AK*); UCI (*Upper Cook Inlet*).

Loons to Waterfowl

Perhaps because of the mild and mostly ice free early season, few loon concentrations were reported. At least three ad. **Brandt's Cormorants** in near breeding plumage were picked out of a group of staging cormorants on Walden Rocks in Nichol's Passage near Ketchikan Feb. 18 (+SCH, TH). Two other single Brandt's from late winter in the same general location provided the Region's only previous winter reports. In Alaska, Brandt's Cormorant is a very rare, local breeder, known from few islets in SE and at the entrance of Prince William Sound. Great Blue Heron reports beyond typical SE and PWS wintering sites included >four around Kodiak Dec. 6+ (RAM) and one near Chenega in s.w. PWS Feb. 12 (*vide* WS).

