

The Winter Season

December 1, 1979 - February 29, 1980

Abbreviations frequently used in Regional Reports

ad.: adult, Am.: American, c.: central, C: Celsius, CBC: Christmas Bird Count, Cr.: Creek, Com.: Common, Co.: County, Cos.: Counties, *et al.*: and others, E.: Eastern (bird name), Eur.: European, Eurasian, F: Fahrenheit, *fide*: reported by, F.&W.S.: Fish & Wildlife Service, Ft.: Fort, imm.: immature, I.: Island, Is.: Islands, Isles, Jct.: Junction, juv.: juvenile, L.: Lake, m.ob.: many observers, Mt.: Mountain, Mts.: Mountains, N.F.: National Forest, N.M.: National Monument, N.P.: National Park, N.W.R.: Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, N.: Northern (bird name), Par.: Parish, Pen.: Peninsula, P.P.: Provincial Park, Pt.: Point, not Port, Ref.:

Refuge, Res.: Reservoir, not Reservation, R.: River, S.P.: State Park, sp.: species, spp.: species plural, ssp.: subspecies, Twp.: Township, W.: Western (bird name), W.M.A.: Wildlife Management Area, v.o.: various observers, N,S,W,E,: direction of motion, n., s., w., e.,: direction of location, >: more than, <: fewer than, ±: approximately, or estimated number, ♂: male, ♀: female, ∅: imm. or female, *: specimen, ph.: photographed, †: documented, ft: feet, mi: miles, m: meters, km: kilometers, date with a + (e.g., Mar. 4+): recorded beyond that date. Editors may also abbreviate often-cited locations or organizations.

NORTHEASTERN MARITIME REGION

/Peter D. Vickery

The winter was one of the easiest, for both birds and birders, in many years. December temperatures were remarkably mild and, not surprisingly, the number of late migrants and half-hardy lingerers was impressive. Temperatures in January and February were normal or lower than normal. The *complete absence* of snow until late February, as far north as Lincoln Center, Maine, provided most ground-foraging species an easy winter. On February 9, one does not expect to find in Massachusetts: one House Wren, 19 Carolina Wrens, three Gray Catbirds, two Brown Thrashers, two Hermit Thrushes, three Yellow-breasted Chats, 28 Rufous-sided Towhees and two Fox Sparrows. No doubt the snow-free winter was partially responsible for the success of Maine's wintering Blue Grosbeak, Chipping and White-crowned sparrows. Considering these conditions, it was not surprising that few birds came to feeding stations.

A review of Christmas Bird Count (hereafter, CBC) material and the accompanying details on unusual and rare birds were very reassuring. Despite obvious difficulties with the reporting format—and contributors should certainly not feel constrained by the CBC rarities form—the number of carefully detailed accounts has allowed the CBC Editor intelligently to assess the validity of many of the unusual birds reported. It will be one of the first times readers can feel confident about the reliability of boldfaced birds. This is a great step forward and is critical to an improved CBC.

PLEASE NOTE — The Regional Editor will be moving to Richmond, Maine. All future correspondence should be sent to: Peter D. Vickery, Box 127, Richmond, Maine 04357.

LOONS, GREBES, TUBENOSES — A winter-plumaged **Arctic Loon** off Plum I. to Salisbury, Mass., Dec. 23 - Jan. 27 (WRP *et mult.al.*) was carefully and fully described.

Three **Western Grebes** occurred in New England this season. The previously reported Plum I. individual was sporadically present to Jan. 27 (*fide* RPE) while another **Western Grebe** was located off Nantucket Dec. 28 - 29 (PAB *et al.*, *fide* EFA). In Maine the Reid S.P. **Western Grebe** reappeared for the third consecutive winter Jan. 27 - 31 (*fide* MKL). A Cory's Shearwater was very late on the Cape Cod CBC Dec. 16.

HERONS — No doubt the mild weather was responsible for the number of lingering herons. A Green Heron was seen in Sudbury, Mass., to at least Jan. 1 (RAF). A Little Blue was observed in Scituate, Mass., Dec. 31 (WRP). On the Westport, Conn. CBC a Little Blue Heron and a Snowy Egret were found together. In Nova Scotia, a Snowy Egret — positively not a Little Egret — was seen in Cole Harbour Dec. 15 - 16 (IAMcL, *fide* CRKA). An imm. **White Ibis**, apparently present all fall, was recorded on the New London, Conn. CBC.

WATERFOWL — In Nova Scotia unexpected winter ducks included: a ♂ Gadwall seen throughout the season in Halifax, a "Common" Teal at the same locality Jan. 30 - Feb. 29+, and a Lesser Scaup at Lingan Beach Jan. 18 (v.o., *fide* CRKA). A ♂ Wood Duck was unusual on the Sackville, N.B. CBC. In Maine three Canvasbacks wintered a bit farther n. than usual; a drake was seen through the season in Damariscotta and a pair was observed through January in Rockland (v.o., *fide* MKL). In the same state Barrow's Goldeneyes were more numerous than usual: 23 were found in Portland Dec. 23 (DWF *et al.*), 15 were noted in Eastport Jan. 1 (NR) and 70 were seen in Bucksport Feb. 3

(SW). A partial survey of Harlequin Ducks off Isle au Haut, Me., Mar. 9 counted 20 birds where 100+ regularly winter (PDV *et al.*). Completely unexpected was the flock of Ruddy Ducks that wintered at Stockton Springs, Me. No fewer than 33 individuals were counted Jan. 1 and 38 on Feb. 22 (PDV *et al.*). Apparently, this was the first record of successful wintering for the state.

VULTURES, EAGLES, FALCONS — Turkey Vultures may be establishing a pattern of wintering farther n. than usual: one was seen on the Portland, Me., CBC, another wintered on Nantucket (EFA *et al.*) and a third individual was found in a debilitated state along Digby Neck at Sandy Cove, N.S., Jan. 2. In recent years Turkey Vultures have successfully wintered in this area and this past summer were suspected of breeding (*fide* IAMcL). An impressive concentration of 22 Bald Eagles (11a, 11i) was found at Quabbin Res., Mass., Jan. 4 while at the same locality a Golden Eagle appeared for the fifth consecutive winter Dec. 29 - Feb. 29+ (*fide* SK). An ad. Golden Eagle was reported from Wellfleet Dec. 30 (DMcN).



For years grave doubts have surrounded any winter report of Osprey. Again this season at least *five* were reported on New England CBCs and *four* on New Brunswick CBCs. While it seems possible that Ospreys could be carried N by southerly weather systems, none of these birds was described. Until winter reports of Osprey are confirmed by photograph or winter specimen one must continue to assume possible confusion with light-phase Rough-legged Hawks (especially over water) or perhaps conspicuously white imm. Bald Eagles.

A gray Gyrfalcon was reported from Northfield, Mass., Jan. 27 (*vide* SK). Two individuals were noted on the New Brunswick CBCs and another was observed in St. John, N.B., Jan. 18 (*vide* CLJ). Seven Grays were noted in December at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, Nfld. (BMacT). Single Peregrine Falcons were observed on three s. New England CBCs. Individuals were also noted on Nantucket Feb. 2 (*vide* EFA) and Monomoy Feb. 20 (BN, PT).

PTARMIGAN, RAILS — A *ptarmigan* presumed Willow (no dark loreal area noted), was seen at Cape Canso, N.S., in early December (*vide* CRKA). Perhaps this was a stray from the introduced and now thriving Scataria I. population 100± mi n.e. of Canso. A Virginia Rail at Salisbury Cove, Me., had the poor judgment to try to overwinter. It was last observed Feb. 13 (*vide* WCT).

SHOREBIRDS — It seems remarkable that four Greater Yellowlegs could successfully overwinter on Cape Cod and that another two survived on Martha's Vineyard (*vide* BN). Equally impressive was a lone overwintering Long-billed Dowitcher in Boston Harbor and two at Weekapaug, R.I. A very late Short-billed Dowitcher was seen and clearly heard on Martha's Vineyard Dec. 2 (BN *et al.*) while a late White-rumped Sandpiper was carefully studied in Newburyport Dec. 23 (WRP *et al.*). No doubt the most unexpected shorebird of the season was the single **Marbled Godwit** on Tuckernuck I., Mass., Dec. 31—providing only a second state winter record (RRV).

JAEGERS THROUGH TERNS — Pomarine Jaegers lingered in considerable numbers off Cape Cod: five were observed off First Encounter Beach Dec. 14 (PDV), one was seen on the Cape Cod CBC and a flock of nine jaeger sp., presumably Pomarine, was noted off Wellfleet Dec. 25 (DMcN). A single Pomarine Jaeger was rare off the New Hampshire coast Dec. 15 (EWP). Single Great Skuas were seen off First Encounter Beach Dec. 14 (BN, PDV) and Feb. 8 (BN). Another Great Skua was observed 90 m. s.e. of Halifax, N.S., Feb. 20 (RGG).

In recent years Lesser Black-backed Gulls have increased steadily. The Greenwich Pt., Conn., bird was again present this season. One was found on Martha's Vineyard (*vide* BN) and no fewer than *six* individuals were thought to be sporadically present in and



Lesser Black-backed Gull, Digby, N.S., 11th consecutive winter. Photo/ P.D. Vickery.

around Nantucket this winter (RRV). In Nova Scotia, the Halifax Lesser Black-backed Gull returned for the second consecutive winter (ELM *et al.*), but the patriarch of the species remains the ever-reliable Digby bird, present for its 11th consecutive winter season. On Cape Cod, a flock of ten Black-headed Gulls at Chatham Dec. 7 and six at North Beach Dec. 16 probably involved some of the same individuals (CAG, *vide* BN). Five Black-headed Gulls in as many Maine localities was a better-than-average winter total (*vide* MKL). Regional Little Gulls numbered at least nine. Some 600+ Laughing Gulls at Martha's Vineyard Dec. 2 dwindled to a single bird Dec. 29 (VL, *vide* BN). An imm. **Ivory Gull** at Cape Neddick, Me., Jan. 3 was unique s. of Newfoundland (RE). Remarkably late were single Forster's Terns seen on Martha's Vineyard Dec. 2 (VL, *vide* BN) and on the Nantucket CBC. Similarly, a Com. Tern was seen on a Massachusetts CBC as was another in Chatham Dec. 16 (*vide* BN).

ALCIDS — Razorbill was the only alcid recorded in any numbers this season. Cape Cod observers noted 1020 off Sandy Neck Dec. 4 and 519 at the same locality Dec. 21 (*vide* BN). At least 250+ were seen off Eastham Jan. 6 (WRP). In late February oiled alcids and other sea birds began appearing along the outer Cape. Although the number of oiled alcids was relatively small — 51+ Razorbills, 10+ Com. Murres, and six Thick-billed Murres — there was considerable concern about the potential for future, major oil spills in the area. Coast Guard aerial surveys could not locate the slick responsible; apparently it was too small (*vide* RAF, BN). **Twelve** Black Guillemots off N. Scituate, Mass., Feb. 2 was a notable figure s. of Boston (WRP).

PARAKEETS, OWLS — Three Monk Parakeets survived an admittedly easy winter at Cape Elizabeth, Me. They bred last summer and produced at least one young bird.

A moribund **Screech Owl** picked up in Hermon, Me., Jan. 17 (PDV) provided at least the fourth reliable state record, the first documented by specimen, within the last year. Interestingly, all these observations fall within an area that stretches from Bangor e. to Machias. There have been no recent records from s. Maine, where one might more readily anticipate the species' presence. Snowy Owls were again unimpressive in most of the Region, but were reported as fairly common in n. Newfoundland (BMacT). The owl of the winter was a **Burrowing Owl** in New Haven, Conn., Dec. 19-28 (v.o., *vide* NSP, ph.). Examination of museum skins indicates that the

New Haven bird was of Floridian origin — *C.s. floridana* (tarsi more heavily feathered, plumage darker brown—NSP). Speculation surrounding the owl's appearance so close to New Haven harbor quite naturally includes the possibility of ship-assisted passage. Single



Burrowing Owl, New Haven Harbor, CT, Dec. 26, 1979. Photo/ Noble Proctor.

Great Gray Owls in Corinth, Me., Jan. 9 (*vide* WCT) and at Oakham, Mass., Jan. 28-Mar. 1 (*vide* RAF) were but a faint glimmer of last year's wonderful flight. A roost of seven Long-eared Owls in Canning, N.S., was probably a provincial high count (*vide* IAMcL).

HUMMINGBIRDS, WOODPECKERS, FLYCATCHERS — The **Black-chinned Hummingbird** in Cohasset, Mass., expired Dec. 12 (see AB:34:140). Comparison of museum skins confirms the bird's identity as *Archilochus alexandri* (RAF).

Red-bellied Woodpeckers surged into Massachusetts in unprecedented numbers in late November and into December. There were at least five on the Cape, 2 or more on Martha's Vineyard, 6-8+ additional birds in other e. Massachusetts areas and no fewer than six in c. and w. Massachusetts. At least two were noted in New Hampshire and two wintered in Maine: one in Salmon Falls and another as far e. as Frankfort (*vide* PDV). This incursion marks the largest movement of Red-bellied Woodpeckers n. of the Connecticut-Massachusetts border and may well result in yet another permanent step n. for this expanding species. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was out-of-season on Nantucket Feb. 10 (*vide* EFA) and another, apparently injured or ill, survived in Phillips, Me., until it was found dead Jan. 30 (*vide* MKL).

Single W. Kingbirds were notably late at Rockland, Me., Dec. 10 (*vide* MKL) and Plymouth, Mass., Jan. 1 (WRP).

SWALLOWS THROUGH THRUSHES — In Massachusetts, single late Tree Swallows were notable in Orleans Dec. 16, on Martha's Vineyard Dec. 29 and at Wellfleet Dec. 25 (v.o., *vide* BN, DMcN). A Barn Swallow in Brunswick, Me., Dec. 1 was, to say the least, unexpected (CL). House Wrens were recorded on a surprising number of CBCs but the individual that survived in Falmouth, Mass., to Feb. 9 was truly impressive (RSH, BN). A fully-detailed **Short-billed Marsh Wren** on a Massachusetts CBC

Dec. 16 was extraordinary, there being only one previous winter record for the state (WRP *et al.*). Three Swainson's Thrushes on as many New England CBCs seems difficult to comprehend. Individuals were *very well observed and fully described* on all three CBCs, conducted Dec. 15. The appearance of four Varied Thrushes at feeders in late February and early March was coincidental with New England's first significant snowfall. Individuals were found in Harvard and S. Orleans, Mass., Raymond, N.H., and Farmington, Me. Presumably, these birds were present all winter and were driven to feeders by snow conditions. A **Veery**, observed to possess an injured wing, at Greenwich Pt., Conn., Jan. 2 - 8 constituted a rare winter record for the Region (JD, PL *et al.*, ph.). The injury, obviously, was the cause of the bird's presence; no particular hardiness should be inferred.

WAXWINGS, SHRIKES — Bohemian Waxwings were generally unimpressive in n. New England but 50 at New Marlboro, Mass., Jan. 19 (*fide* SK) was probably the largest concentration seen in the state in the last ten years. Single Loggerhead Shrikes on two Connecticut CBCs provided noteworthy winter records. Considering the species' scarcity, it would be worth carefully monitoring any summer/breeding records from the Connecticut R. valley and elsewhere in the s. part of the Region. Any records submitted will be gratefully appreciated.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — The number of lingering vireos and warblers was startling but perhaps not entirely unexpected considering the very warm weather through most of December. Impressively late birds included: an impeccably described White-eyed Vireo in Falmouth, Mass., Dec. 15 (RSH, BN); single Black-and-white Warblers in Concord, Mass., Dec. 1 (RAF *et al.*) and in Halifax, N.S., Dec. 5 (*fide* PRD); the previously reported (see AB 34:141) **Lucy's Warbler**, Yellow Warbler and Cape May Warbler — all together in Ipswich, Mass., Dec. 1 (RSH *et al.*); single Cape Mays on Nantucket Dec. 15 (RRV), and on two s. CBCs; a ♂ Black-throated Blue in Northampton, Mass., Dec. 16 (*fide* SK); a Blackpoll in Eastham, Mass., Dec. 13 (*fide* BN); single Prairies on Nantucket Dec. 10 (RRV) & 29 (PAB, *fide* RHS); two Ovenbirds at Manomet, Mass., Dec. 17 (TLL-E); three Wilson's Warblers in Massachusetts in December, the latest in Boston Dec. 17 (*fide* RHS) and an Am. Redstart in Pittsfield, Mass., Dec. 5 (*fide* SK). No doubt the most surprising winter occurrence in Nova Scotia was the four Pine Warblers, scarce at any season. Single birds were found in Halifax Dec. 3 and Wolfville to Dec. 18. Also surprising were the two Pine Warblers that appeared at an E. Pubnico feeder in January and remained through February (v.o., *fide* PRD)!

ICTERIDS, TANAGERS — "Bullock's" Orioles were reported from Greenwich, Conn., Dec. 16, a Connecticut CBC and Nantucket Dec. 30 (RSH, RRV). Two Brewer's Blackbirds wintered again on Martha's Vineyard (VL, *fide* BN) and a female was seen in Provincetown, Mass., Dec. 26 (DMcN).



Western Tanager, Biddeford, ME, Dec. 17, 1979. Photo/ P.D. Vickery.

S.A.

This fall and winter saw at least 14 W. Tanagers in the Region, the largest influx in recent years. Interestingly, birds were found over a wide span of time; a brightly plumaged male was noted as early as Aug. 6 on Matinicus Rock, Me. Not surprisingly, at least six of the tanagers appeared at feeders in late December - early January. Two conspicuously dull gray ♂-type W. Tanagers puzzled a number of observers. The most outstanding features on these notably drab birds were the very bright yellow undertail coverts and the obvious wing-bars.

Western Tanagers - Fall/Winter 1979 - 80

Matinicus Rock, Me.	1 ♂ Aug. 6,
West Cornwall, Conn.	1 ♂ Aug. 11,
Pembroke, Me.	1 ♀ Oct. 11,
Manchester, N.H.	2 Oct. 23-24,
Duxbury, Mass.	1 ♀ Nov. 18,
Eastham, Mass.	1 gray ♀ Dec. 16-17,
Biddeford, Me.	1 ♀ Dec. 15-20,
Framingham, Mass.	1 gray ♀ Jan. 2-April
Dover, Mass.	1 ♀ Jan. 6-31,
New Haven, Conn.	1 ♀ Dec. 15,
Branford, Conn.	1 ♀ no date given
Milford, Conn.	1 ♀ Jan. 1,
West Pubnico, N.S.	1 ♀ Dec. 27,

FRINGILLIDS — In Maine a ♂ **Blue Grosbeak** successfully wintering at a North-east Harbor feeder through March was quite remarkable (v.o., *fide* WCT). There are only a few Regional wintering records for this species. Equally impressive was the carefully scrutinized **Indigo Bunting** on a Nova Scotia CBC. A ♀ House Finch wintering in Yarmouth, N.S., suggested a promising future for the species in the Province (*fide* PRD). Pine Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins and White-winged Crossbills were largely restricted to n. New Hampshire and were notably scarce throughout the rest of the s. part of the Region. In February White-winged Crossbills were on territory on Mt. Desert I., Me., and young were off the nest by late March (WCR). Unique this season was a Green-tailed Towhee in E. Orleans, Mass., Dec. 16 (RAF *et al.*). A freshly-dead Grasshopper Sparrow was notable in Yarmouth, Me., Dec. 23 (DWF *et al.*) as was one on the Halifax (east) CBC. Other impressive wintering sparrows included: a Chipping Sparrow at Seal Harbor, Me.; a Harris' Sparrow in Marshfield, Mass.; a White-crowned Sparrow with a very strong constitution in Danforth, Me. (*fide* MKL); a hardy Lincoln's Sparrow in Richmond, Mass. (*fide* SK). Otherwise, single Lincoln's Sparrows were noted on the Newport, R.I. CBC and in Gloucester, Mass., Jan. 1 (RSH).

Questions surrounding the regular winter range of Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows came to light this season as both species were found n. of their "normal" range. Winter Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found in Scituate (two), Eastham (three), Plum I. (four) and have been reported as more or less regular through December near Manomet. Also, an "Acadian" Sharp-tailed was closely observed in Cole Harbour, N.S., Jan. 20 (IAMcL, *fide* PRD). Seaside Sparrows were noted at Scituate (one), Newburyport harbor (three) and Eastham (one). In addition, there have been recent winter records from Nova Scotia. It seems quite possible that a small number of Seaside Sparrows is indeed overwintering in Nova Scotia and the possibility of the species breeding in the Province should not be overlooked. In Massachusetts and adjoining states, wintering Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows should be followed closely. What better way to spend a bright January day than to walk along the border of a local marsh looking for sparrows? Future winter reports of these two species will be most welcome.

CORRIGENDA — Subsequent information on the report of a ♂ King Eider X ♀ Common Eider nesting (AB 31:111) in Penobscot Bay, Me., in 1976 indicates that this nesting was not successful. An obviously paired ♂ King and ♀ Common Eider were found by a nest but a second visit to the island found the nest destroyed and the ad. birds nowhere in the vicinity. It should be emphasized that there was no doubt these two birds were indeed a mated pair (Al Hutchinson, researcher, MF&WS). Please delete the Yellow-throated Vireo record on E. Egg Rock, Me., July 1, 1979 (AB 33:846).

ADDENDA — An imm. Swainson's Hawk, seen flying over Framingham, Mass., Sept. 15, 1979, was critically identified and fully described (RAF). A dead Sooty Tern was picked up on Melmerby Beach, Pictou Co., N.S., Sept. 7, 1979 (*fide* RGBB). A Yellow-throated Warbler was carefully identified on Matinicus Rock, Me., July 14 - 15, 1979 (*fide* SKR).

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QUEBEC REGION /Michel Gosselin and Normand David

The winter of 1979-80 will be remembered as the "snowless" winter in the southern part of the Province. Not until January 22 did the first "permanent" snow cover the ground, and then only with a few centimeters. Although not as obvious in the northern areas, this situation coupled with slightly above-average temperatures nevertheless, produced an amazing number of interesting winter records. The real "winter birds" were virtually absent; feeders were left to the goldfinches, Purple Finches and the usual Evening Grosbeaks. Snowy Owls were scarce, as were other northern owls so abundant last year.

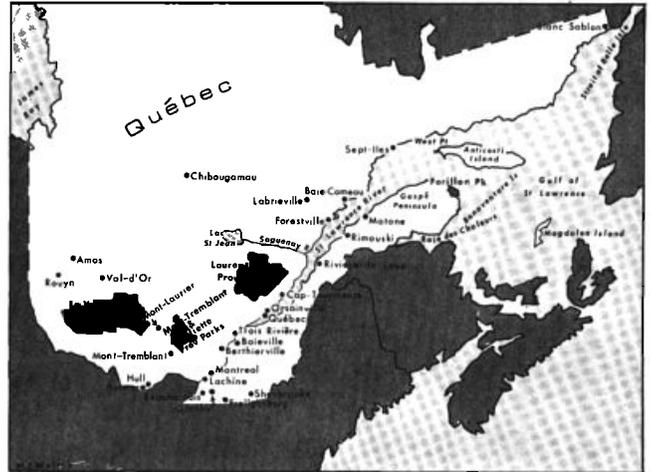
LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A Com. Loon remained on the Ottawa R., near Hull Jan. 10 - Feb. 29+ (BD,JD), establishing a first overwintering record for the Region. Single Great Cormorants at Beauharnois Dec. 19 and Jan. 20 (BB,MM,EF) and Côte Ste-Catherine Jan. 10 (YA) were possibly the same two birds seen at nearby Dixie I., Feb. 16-29+ (PBA); they provided a first winter record on the upper St. Lawrence. Late Canada Geese included 50 birds at St-Fulgence Jan. 5 (AP) and one at Ste-Flavie Dec. 27 (ML); a pair at Les Cedres throughout the period provided a second regional wintering record (BB,MM). Fifty Pintails at Cote Ste-Catherine (YA,PBA) was a high count in the only area where the species is known to overwinter. A ♀ Green-winged Teal seen at Sherbrooke until at least Feb. 22 (*vide* YA,PBo) and a male at Portage-des-Roches Feb. 24 (NB) were unprecedented winter occurrences. A King Eider at Aylmer Dec. 9 (BD,IJ) and eight birds at Cap-d'Espoir Feb. 2 (Rbi,PP) added to the few winter records of this species. A White-winged Scoter at Dixie I., Feb. 16 (PBA) plus four at the mouth of the Saguenay R., Feb. 12 (YA), and a ♂ Black Scoter at Bearn, Abitibi Co., Feb. 4 (MG,GDu,PC) were exceptional. Another first winter record for L. St-Jean was set by a Hooded Merganser at Portage-des-Roches Jan. 15+ (NB).

RAPTORS — The most unusual report of the season involved a **Turkey Vulture** in Gascons, Bonaventure Co., Feb. 9-11, fed by local residents when they noticed that it was robbing dogs of their food (*vide* Rbi)! This established a first regional winter occurrence but the species had been reported on a number of occasions in the Maritimes. The season's Red-tailed Hawks were single birds at Dundee Jan. 13 (PBA) and Quebec City Jan. 27-Feb. 9 (BH), two at Vaudreuil Feb. 15 (MM), and three at Luskville Jan. 13 (RBe); these sightings confirmed that the species is likely to overwinter in small numbers in the St. Lawrence lowlands. A Golden Eagle at Cap Tourmente Feb. 13 (*vide* JLD) was not totally unprecedented. Four Marsh Hawks at St-Etienne de Beauharnois Jan. 19-Feb. 29+ (PBA), two at Vaudreuil Jan. 6-Feb. 29+ (BB,MM) and one on I. Perrot Feb. 24 (*vide* BB) all represented new winter records. An extremely late **Osprey** visited Sherbrooke Jan. 1 (*vide* PBo). The

number of Gyrfalcons reported in the St. Lawrence valley was slightly above average; it included dark birds at Ste-Flavie Dec. 29 (ML), Bergeronnes Jan. 13 (ABd), Aylmer and Luskville Jan. 14 & 23 (BD, DStH), a white bird (possibly two) in Montreal Feb. 2-29+ (MH,m.ob.), and two (white and dark) at Québec City Jan. 11-Feb. 23 (JPB, m.ob.); three Gyrfalcons were also reported in the lowlands of James Bay near Camp Opinaca Feb. 17 & 20 (DStH), and two respectively 100 and 200 km n. of Chibougamau Feb. 29 & 27 (YB). A Peregrine Falcon patrolled feeders in the Rimouski area until Jan. 14 (JRP) and a Merlin until the end of the season (*vide* JL).

GROUSE THROUGH WOODPECKERS — The Sharp-tailed Grouse is still present in the settled parts of Abitibi, as 11 birds were seen at Landrienne Feb. 5 (MG,PC,GDu) and one near Amos Feb. 26 (YB); seven birds were also spotted near Camp Opinaca Feb. 19 (DStH). A record late Killdeer was at Richmond Jan. 22 (*vide* PBo), and unique winter occurrences of Purple Sandpipers were small flocks at the mouth of the Saguenay R., and on I. Ste-Marie in the last week of January (PDs, ABt). A Ring-billed Gull at Lasalle Feb. 3 (PBA) and three at I. Perrot Feb. 23 (*vide* BB) thus left only 20 days within which the species has not been reported in this Region; other reports included birds at Québec City Jan. 3 (Pbr), Hull Jan. 18-19 (BD,RBr) and Beauharnois Jan. 19-26 (BB,MM). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was seen Dec. 16 at Aylmer (HcK) and a record late **Black-headed Gull** Dec. 30 at Les Escoumins (MG,PC,JH). An Ivory Gull turned up at Pointe-au-Père Dec. 7 (JL) and another was quite far inland on L. Magog Jan. 19 (YA). A Com. Puffin was picked up alive at Québec City Jan. 4 (*vide* JG), and six were seen near Mingan in the last week of January (PDs, *vide* ABt). At least 30 Mourning Doves at Chateauguay throughout the period (*vide* BB), three at Sabrevois Jan. 20 (PBA) and five at Stanstead Feb. 24 (GM) showed the hardiness of this bird. The only Great Gray Owl of the season was near Amos in early winter (*vide* MP); a Short-eared Owl at Cap d'Espoir Feb. 2 (Rbi,PP) was a noteworthy local occurrence, and the only Boreal Owls were two at Cap Tourmente Feb. 10-17 (BH,YA). Single Belted Kingfishers in Papineau County at Vendée Jan. 22 (MMe) and Jarnac Feb. 10 (GDe), and in Wakefield Jan. 30 (RBe) repeated reports of previous winters from the same general area. One of the **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** on the Hull-Ottawa CBC Dec. 16 was actually in Aylmer (JK).

KINGBIRDS THROUGH KINGLETS — First in a series of outstanding passerine occurrences this winter was a **Western Kingbird**



on RB's balcony in Percé Dec. 1. The only E. Phoebe reported appeared in Courville Dec. 7 (PLN). Word was received of two **Black-billed Magpies** carefully observed at St-Adolphe de Dudswell Nov. 10 by an observer familiar with the species (PG, *vide* PBo, details in *Bull. ornith.*). **Tufted Titmice** continued to be in evidence; the N. Hatley bird overwintered (*vide* YA) as did a bird discovered in Brossard at the end of December (SM, *vide* MM), the Stanstead birds were present up to Dec. 15 and the Rock I. ones until Jan. 15 (*vide* YA). Carolina Wrens wintered in Senneville and Laval (*vide* BB,PDy), and a Brown Thrasher was reported from Chelsea in mid-January (PW, *vide* BD). Twenty Am. Robins at Rimouski throughout the period (PD1), four at St-Joseph de la Rive Jan. 1 (HM) and 55 at Cap Tourmente Feb. 10 (BH) exemplified the abundance of this half-hardy species. A ♂ **Varied Thrush** in a hemlock grove on I. Perrot Jan. 1-6 (BB,MM,m.ob.) was a good find with which to start the new decade. Single Hermit Thrushes at St-Joseph de la Rive Jan. 1 (HM) and Cap Tourmente Feb. 2 (*vide* SL) were noteworthy, along with a Swainson's Thrush at Lévis on the record date of Dec. 9 (HM). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet spent the entire season at Hudson (*vide* JW), the first such occurrence, and another was at Brossard Feb. 16 (PLD, m.ob.).

WAXWINGS THROUGH WARBLERS — One of the few Bohemian Waxwings of the Montreal area crashed into an airplane at an altitude of 1000 m over Dorval airport Jan. 27 (*vide* HO), another on the list of "bird species hazardous to aircraft." Although an early migrant in spring the Loggerhead Shrike is seldom reliably reported in fall and winter, however we have, at last, an acceptable sight record, from Cap Tourmente Jan. 9 (MD *et al.*). A **Worm-eating Warbler**, a rarity in May, was totally unexpected on I. des Soeurs Dec. 1-2, after a light snowstorm (PAA, m.ob.). On the same island a Tennessee Warbler was closely studied Dec. 2-6 (PBA, JW). The number of Yellow-rumped Warblers reported this season far exceeded the combined totals of all previous winters: typical examples included a bird until Jan. 30 at Rimouski (*vide* JL), Feb. 9 at Repentigny (RL), Feb. 2-4 at St-Nicolas de Lévis (DC), Jan. 13 & 27 at Chateauguay (MG,JB), and on I. des Soeurs during the whole season (*vide*

BB). There were at least three previous wintering record for this species, at Hudson in 1966-67 (unpubl.—JW), Sherbrook Dec. 21, 1975, and Hull Dec. 13, 1976.

ICTERIDS, FRINGILLIDS — Birds found outside their regular seasonal pattern are often also outside their regular range, and vice versa; thus a meadowlark at Cap D'Espoir, Gaspé Co., Dec. 23 (PP) was not necessarily an Eastern, which would be absent there even in summer. Two meadowlarks also appeared in Hull Feb. 8 (RBe), and singles were at Huntingville and Georgeville Feb. 24 and 25 respectively (*fide* YA). Three **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** (♂, ♀, and imm. ♂) turned up in a flock of 2000 Brown-headed Cowbirds near Melocheville Jan. 13-Feb. 10 (BB,MM,YA,m.ob.); a max. of 500 Red-winged Blackbirds was also in the same area Jan. 27 (PBa). Two Rusty Blackbirds lingered near Chicoutimi until March (*fide* YB) and at Cap Tourmente Feb. 15 (SL). A Com. Grackle and seven cowbirds were also in the Arvida-Jonquière area throughout the winter (*fide* YB). A census of Cardinals in the E. Townships, Feb. 9-10, revealed at least 43 birds (*fide* PBo), other birds appeared at Notre-Dame de Lourdes

Dec. 10 (GO), Charlesbourg Dec. 17 (PLt), Trois-Rivières until Feb. 5 (AL), and Rimouski Jan. 14-Feb. 29+ (JRP). Southern Quebec was almost devoid of winter finches (*i.e.*, Pine Grosbeaks, redpolls, and White-winged Crossbills) this season.

A **European Goldfinch** at Châteauguay Feb. 17 (JB) deserves to be recorded since most palearctic species are possible candidates for immigrant status. The first Rufous-sided Towhee in L. St-Jean, at Arvida Dec. 9-Feb. 29+ (*fide* YB), proved to be of the "spotted" race. Another w. visitor was a Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco at Loretteville Feb. 16 (JG); Dark-eyed Juncos were in evidence this winter with single birds until Jan. 15 at Chicoutimi-Nord (RT), Feb. 29 at Bergeronnes (AB), and Feb. 18 at Percé (RBi). A Chipping Sparrow in Hull Jan. 26 (RF), one in Lauzon and two in Grenville for the entire period (CA,JP) represented our first winter records. Unknown in winter until very recently, White-crowned Sparrows survived the winter at Stanstead and Grenville (*fide* YA,BB), and until at least Feb. 23 at Cap Tourmente (PIn), one at Rimouski was dispatched by a Merlin Jan. 21 (JRP). The only White-throated Sparrow reported throughout the period was in Hull (DStH),

although one at Bergeronnes Feb. 29 (ABd) was outstanding, as was a Swamp Sparrow at Cap Tourmente Feb. 13 (RO, *fide* PLt).

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HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION /Keith C. Richards, Robert O. Paxton and David A. Cutler

Several reporters characterized the season as dull, bland and uneventful. But others used words like excellent, late and surprising. They then deluged this editor with well over a hundred pages of notes which proved that all of this was true!

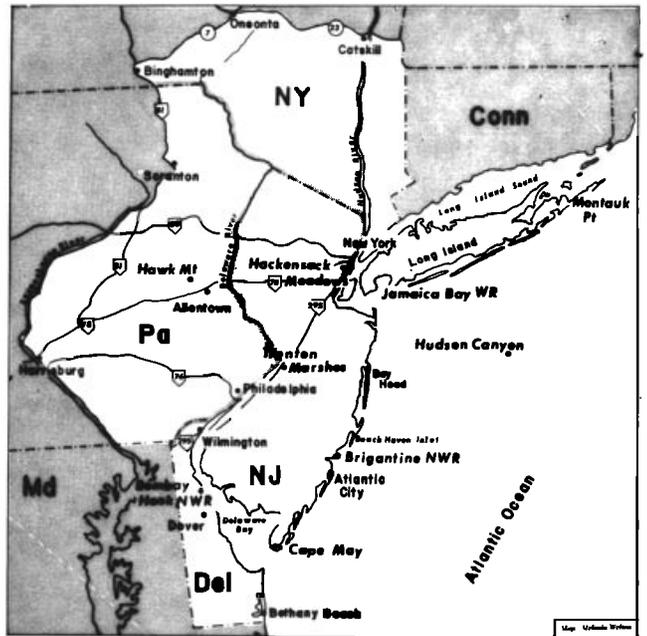
Many species were not in their typical wintering areas this season. The Waterfowl Trend Survey of Region 5 of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (hereafter, W.T.S.), showed that total waterfowl numbers from Virginia to Maine were close to the five-year average (N.L. French). Mild weather and open water held many ducks north of their typical areas.

On the other side of the coin, however, over twenty species of shorebirds were reported, many in mid-winter, and fifteen species of wood warblers were noted. These families are representative of a large element of half hardy birds present this season. The trend of unusual numbers of western stragglers noted in the Autumn Season continued through the winter.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — Red-throated Loons peaked at Cape Henlopen S.P., Sussex Co., Del., Dec. 4 with 54 (BF) and were gone by mid-January. One Red-throated at Peace Valley Park, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 2 was a good record inland (BM,SS). Only three single Red-necked Grebes were noted: at Libery I., Hudson Co., N.J., Feb. 14 (DE), inland on the Susquehanna R., Lancaster Co., Pa., Dec. 16 (RS), and at Boonton Res., Morris Co., N.J., Dec. 25 (H. Wallum, IB). Pied-billed Grebes were well above normal with several Christmas Bird Counts (hereafter, CBC) setting record high counts.

Green Herons lingered in modest numbers, with six reports of single birds in December and early January. Great Egrets were present well into January with the last reports being of one at Little Creek W.A., Del., Jan. 19 (MB,JG) and five at Tinicum Nat'l Environmental Center, Philadelphia, to the end of the month (NP). One was at Cold Springs, Cape May Co., N.J., Feb. 2 (D. Ward). A Snowy Egret at Forge R., Moriches, Jan. 23 (GR) produced a very late Long Island record. Quite unusual were two December records of Louisiana Heron in New York, at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge (hereafter, J.B.W.R.) Dec. 15 (W. Reilly *et al.*) and Ward's I., New York City, Dec. 16 (J. Machado *et al.*). This species may have wintered in Delaware with two records near Indian R. Inlet Feb. 2 (MB) and Feb. 23 (JG,MB). Glossy Ibises also remained in the area quite late with five in Brooklyn Dec. 15 and one or two birds at Little Creek until at least Jan. 20 (JG,BR *et al.*).

SWANS AND GEESE — Mute Swan is increasing, with the W.T.S. showing the number wintering in New York State to be twice the long-term average. A few Whistling Swans wintered on Long I., at Mecox Bay (*fide* TD). On the Susquehanna R., 1000+



Whistling Swans had moved into open water near Wrightsville, Pa., by the beginning of the season. Held by warm water discharge from a power plant, this flock increased to 1500+ by the end of January (T. Hake). Such numbers are unprecedented in winter. Swans may have moved a bit early this year with 200 on the Wading R., Burlington Co., N.J., Feb. 2 (CS) and 500 at Octoraro Res., Chester Co., Pa., later in the month (JS).

Canada Goose numbers were normal on the W.T.S., but so many wintered farther n. than usual that they aroused newspaper comment. They were declared "well above the nuisance level" in Rockland County, N.Y. (RD) and all New York and New Jersey reports cited exceptional numbers. Princeton,

N J , had 16,500 Dec. 26, an unprecedented number (*vide* RB). In contrast, the Southern Lancaster Co., Pa., CBC had only 30% of its usual population Dec. 16 (*vide* RS).

Brant were up about 50% with over 67,000 on the W.T.S. However, this number is well below the long-term average. In s. Delaware, Brant were observed grazing in farm fields, which is new behavior there (BF). Some 1500 Brant were also noted in fields at Cape May, N J , Dec. 26 (CS). A "Black" Brant was at Stone Harbor, N.J., Jan. 19 (†D. Kunkle), for one of the very few state records. A thoroughly described **Barnacle Goose** was at Bombay Hook N.W.R., Del., Jan. 1-26 (†L. Peron, MB, JG *et al.*), although the possibility of an escape can not be excluded. More White-fronted Geese than usual were reported with singles at Peace Valley Park, Pa., Dec 2-16 (FM), Bombay Hook N.W.R., Dec 23-Jan. 14 (E. Marshall, C. Perry *et al.*), Octoraro Res., Pa., during February (JS *et al.*) and Silver L., Sussex Co., Del., Feb. 16-19 (BF). This goose is now of annual occurrence in Pennsylvania as well as in Delaware.

Snow Geese were in good numbers with the W T S. reporting 92,000, about 50% above average. One result may have been the scattering of inland reports, including eight at Peace Valley Park January-February (FM). The high count of the blue morph was > 200 at Octoraro Res., Pa., in late February (JS).

DUCKS — Dabbling ducks made a good showing in the n. part of the Region. Eleven Gadwall at Croton, N.Y., Jan. 6-13 were unusual there (*vide* BW). Blue-winged Teal were more common than usual with two in Peekskill, N.Y., Dec. 15, one at Walnut Valley, N.J., Dec. 15 and an unseasonal bird in coastal Delaware Feb. 23 (MB, JG, JR). European Wigeon were present, with singles at Shark R., Monmouth Co., N.J., and at five Long Island locations. Wood Duck remained scattered throughout the Region, with three at Cornwall Bay, N.Y., to Feb 29+ being the most n. report (JT).

Diving duck numbers seemed a bit lower than normal. Canvasbacks were in good numbers on the lower Hudson R., with 700 at Cornwall Bay Dec. 9 (JT), > 1000 in the Fort Lee-Edgewater area of Hudson Co., N.J., Feb 1-21 (DE), and > 6000 at Bayonne, N.J., Dec 16 (P. Bacinski, D. Roche). In Delaware, the maximum count at Silver L., was 2500 Jan. 2 (TA, JRe). O'Shea reports that this flock feeds in both Delaware and Chesapeake Bays. Twenty Lesser Scaup at Cornwall Bay Dec. 15 were unusual for the date (JT).

A ♀ Tufted Duck at Central Park Res., Manhattan, N.Y., Dec. 30-Jan. 13 was photographed (L. Rosenberg, m.ob.). Common Goldeneye numbers were reported down by most observers and the W.T.S., confirmed they were at about 50% of normal numbers. Barrow's Goldeneye was noted twice, a male at Mecox Bay, L.I., Jan. 12 (J. Ruscica, J. Clinton *et al.*) and the traditional bird at Shark R., N.J. (m.ob.). Bufflehead were in good numbers in Delaware with 75 at Lewes Beach Jan. 1 (BF) but were below normal in the n. The total New York State population was up nearly 100%, thus birds which traditionally winter around New York City may have stayed farther n. Oldsquaw were gene-

rally scarce throughout the Region, but 150 at Drumore, Lancaster Co., Pa., Dec. 5 (RS) was a notable inland count. Harlequin Ducks were present with two at Montauk Pt., L.I., Dec. 15 (m.ob.), one at Shinnecock Inlet, L.I., Jan. 1 (GR) and five at Cape May, N.J., Dec. 16 (DC). Scoters were in low numbers. Ruddy Ducks seemed to be little reported from the n. part of the Region, but the flock on the Delaware R., s. of Philadelphia built up to > 20,000 by mid-January (NP). This year they were not harassed by any significant oil spills. Common Mergansers were late moving into the Region, with 500 arriving at Drumore, Pa., Jan. 16 (RS). However, numbers were high with birds being reported "everywhere" in s.e. Pennsylvania (NP). The January count of 1405 on the Hudson R., in Westchester Co., N.Y., was comparable to last year's (BW).

RAPTORS — Turkey Vultures were reported from Long Island, where they are rare, with single birds at Montauk Pt., Dec. 9-15 (m.ob.), Hempstead Lake S.P., Dec. 27 (S. Dempsey) and in n. Nassau County Dec. 29. The largest roosts reported were 45 at Quaker Hill, Dutchess Co., N.Y., Jan. 2 (M. Hoffman), on the w. bank of the Maurice R., Cumberland Co., N.J., Dec. 15 (CS) and 250 near Angola, Sussex Co., Del., Dec. 28 (JG). Black Vultures continue to expand in New Jersey with a record seven at Princeton Feb. 2-3 (RB). At about the same time, three Blacks were at Bernardsville, Somerset Co., N.J. (RK), and two at Great Swamp, N.J., Jan. 2 (*vide* IB). In Pennsylvania, the Southern Lancaster CBC had only 32 Black Vultures Dec. 16, a third its normal number, but to the n. the Elverson, Chester Co., Pa., CBC had a reported 47 on Dec. 22. Up to eight Blacks were at a roost near Green Lane, Montgomery Co., Pa., during the season (GF, G. Freed).

Only eight Goshawks were reported. In New Hope, Bucks Co., Pa., after a Sharp-shinned Hawk took a feeder bird in February, the other birds resumed feeding at once even though the hawk remained clearly visible (D. Hartman).

Rough-legged Hawks were in very low numbers, although as many as 12 were at Dennisville, Cape May Co., N.J., Feb. 10 (PD *et al.*).

Eagles were in record numbers with about 60 Balds and 15 Golden reported. The largest simultaneous count was in Sullivan County, N.Y., along the Neversink R., between Port Jervis and the Sullivan County reservoirs. As of Jan. 15, 28 Bald Eagles (21 ad., 7 imm.) were there. This has been the biggest wintering area for eagles in the northeast since the early 1970s (*vide* JT, P. Nye). By keeping individual plumage notes, Sutton determined that 29 Bald Eagles (7 ad., 22 imm.) and seven Golden Eagles (1 ad., 6 imm.) were in s. New Jersey at some time during the season. His high count of Bald Eagles was an amazing eight in Cumberland County Dec. 29 and for Golden, a maximum of three in Cape May County Feb. 2. Other multiple counts of Golden Eagles were three on the lower Susquehanna R., Dec. 16 (*vide* RS) and two at the West Point Military Reservation, N.Y., Feb. 3-29+ (E. Treacy *et al.*). Truly, an incredible winter for eagles!

Marsh Hawks were reported as very low with only a few of the 35 birds reported in coastal areas. Indeed, 20 of these birds were on s.e. Pennsylvania CBCs. An Osprey at Dover, Del., Dec. 12 was late (LP).

A gray phase **Gyr Falcon** at Stone Harbor, N.J., Jan. 28, was a Cape May first! (CS) Would-be Gyr reporters must be aware that the Peale's Peregrine released by Cornell University can be quite as dark as any Gyr Falcon and overlaps it in size. Eight Peregrines were reported during the season, one in central Philadelphia, an historic location (G Tallman). Few Merlins were noted, with a maximum of four in s. Nassau County, L.I., Dec. 30.

TURKEY THROUGH COOT — Turkey populations continue high in Warren County, N.J. Big counts were 49 in Knowlton Twp., Dec. 4 (J. Steed), up to 43 at a feeder in Blairstown in February (F. Cook) and 24 at Hardwick Jan. 14 (N. Byl). Flocks were also noted in Sullivan County, N.Y. (BS) and Berks County, Pa. (T. Clauser).

A Sandhill Crane was at Octoraro Res., Pa., Feb. 3-29+ (JS *et al.*). While cranes are casual in Pennsylvania, this was the second in six months there. More than 25 Virginia Rails were reported during this mild season, most located in response to tapes. More surprising were two inland reports of Sora in New York Bedford Hills Dec. 16 (*vide* BW) and near Wurtsboro, Sullivan Co., Feb. 12-17 (P Read). Coots were in good numbers in the n part of the Region but were scarce in Delaware.

SHOREBIRDS — An Am. Oystercatcher present at Shinnecock Inlet throughout the period (GR *et al.*) was the first complete overwintering known from Long Island. Another bird at Indian River Inlet, Del., Feb. 24 (MB, JG, JR) was perhaps an early migrant. An excellent winter count of 250 Ruddy Turnstones was made at Cape Henlopen, Del., Jan. 2 (TA, JRe). American Woodcock were reported as "everywhere" at Cape May Feb. 9 (BR). Although Com. Snipe are routinely reported on regional CBCs a count of 41 at Trenton Marsh Jan. 1 was exceptional (RB). A **Whimbrel** at J.B.W.R., Jan. 19-Feb 10 provided a first mid-winter record for the state (R. Cook *et al.*). An unusual shorebird at Brigantine N.W.R., was a Spotted Sandpiper Dec. 15 (CW, FU). Willets provided some CBC firsts with one on Central Suffolk, L.I., Dec. 26 and two at Bombay Hook, Del., Dec. 23. A bird near Montauk Dec. 15 stayed at Acabonack until Feb. 17, thus providing a first mid-winter record for the state (JA, R Kelly *et al.*). Two hundred Red Knot in a tightly packed flock with about 300 Dunlin was a good winter count at Jones Inlet, L.I., Jan. 6 (RP). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** at Tinicum Dec. 15 marked a second December record for Pennsylvania (J. Miller).

A count of 93 Long-billed Dowitchers at Bombay Hook N.W.R., Dec. 2 was an exceptional number (JG). However, single Short-billeds at Moriches Inlet Dec. 26 (D. Larsen) and Great Egg Harbor, Atlantic Co., N.J., Jan. 4 (JD) represented a quite rare winter record. One can only wish that the bird reported as a dead Semipalmated Sandpiper at Cape May S.P., Feb. 9 had been brought

home for study. Single Marbled Godwits were at J.B.W.R., to Dec. 15 and Moriches Inlet to Jan. 1 (m.ob.). But the boldest Marbled Godwits were the two at Merrick, L.I., Feb. 17-23, for another first mid-winter record (BSp, T. Zwarico *et al.*). Thirty-two Am. Avocets at Bombay Hook N.W.R., Dec. 2 was a large number for the date (JG,DC).

JAEGERS THROUGH TERNS — An ad. light phase Parasitic Jaeger was at Montauk Pt., Dec. 1 (GR)-Jan. 15 (BSp *et al.*), for yet another first mid-winter record. White-winged gulls were well below normal with only one Glaucous and seven Icelanders reported from New York and New Jersey. Great Black-backed Gulls continue to increase in inland areas with 15 at Spruce Run Res., Hunterdon Co., N.J., Feb. 25 (RK), 25 near Lancaster Pa., Dec. 16 and a single in Perry County, Pa., Dec. 23 (C. Jones). Lesser Black-backed Gulls continued to increase, with adults at Montauk Pt., Jan. 1 (m.ob.), Rius Park, Brooklyn, N.Y., Dec. 23 (P. Bernath), L. de Forest, Rockland Co., N.Y., Jan. 10 (RD), N. Arlington, Passaic Co., N.J., Dec. 10 (RK,TK, T. Vogel), Shark River Jan. 13 (GF, A. Brady), Penn Manor, Bucks Co., Pa. (m.ob.) and near Wilmington, New Castle Co., Del., Dec. 22 (JG) & Feb. 14 (AE). Up to five Black-headed Gulls were at Caven Pt., Hudson Co., N.J. (T. Stiles, DE). Another Black-headed was in e. Suffolk County, N.Y., Dec. 15. Bonaparte's Gulls were very numerous on the Delaware coast with a maximum of 2000 at Indian River Inlet Jan. 22 (BF). A large inland movement of gulls at Peace Valley Park Jan. 12 comprised 150 Bonaparte's (FM,AM,JM). Perhaps they came from the Great Lakes with a cold front; they were gone the next day. About eight Little Gulls were in the Indian River Inlet area Dec. 29-Feb. 29+ (m.ob.). On Dec. 29, Gordon photographed four adults and two immatures for the first Delaware documentation for this often-seen species. Eight single birds were reported from the New York City-Long Island area.

A count of 50 Forster's Terns at Indian River Inlet Dec. 15 was really amazing (MB,JG) and three birds were still there Jan. 8 (BF). A single Forster's Tern at Plum Beach, Brooklyn, Feb. 3 was an even bigger shock (T. Stiles, A.&H. Richard). A Com. Tern at Rehoboth, Sussex Co., Del., Dec. 6 was also late (BF). A dead ad. Sooty Tern found Dec. 23 at Cedar Beach, L.I., was possibly a final legacy of hurricane *David* (W. Wilkens). A Black Skimmer at Holgate, Ocean Co., N.J., Jan. 30 (J. Dowdell) produced a first mid-winter record for New Jersey.

ALCIDS THROUGH OWLS — Alcids were scarce. Two Razorbills at Montauk Dec. 15 was the only report there (K. Able, P. Buckley). A Thick-billed Murre was studied at point blank range at Long Branch Dec. 29 (T. Koebel *et al.*). The well-documented **Ground Dove** at Pickering Beach, Kent Co., Del., remained until Jan. 22 (LP, N. Irish *et al.*). Barn Owl numbers seemed down somewhat. A Barn Owl visiting a feeder at day-break in Centerville, Del., Jan. 26 was surely an unusual sight (N. Ednie, *fide* AE). The only Snowy Owl report was one at Prime Hook N.W.R., Del., in mid-December (GO). Bar-

red Owls were in evidence in New York City with 1-2 wintering in Central Park (m.ob.) and up to three through the season at the Bronx Botanical Gardens (m.ob.). However, in s.w. Chester County, Pa., Barred Owls seem to have been displaced by Great Horned Owls (JGr). Long-eared Owls were not at most of their usual roosts, with only 23 birds reported for the season. Short-eared Owls were hard to find, too, with only 18 noted and, like the Marsh Hawk, most of these were not on the coast. Saw-whet Owls were not at their haunts either. However, a few were found: one near Kennett Square, Chester Co., Pa., Feb. 18 (P. Beach) and one at Peace Valley Park Jan. 1-Mar. 1, which was seen by hundreds of observers (FM).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — A Pileated Woodpecker at Wilmington, Del., Feb. 13 was a good suburban record (JCI). Red-headed Woodpeckers seemed in normal numbers with 18 birds reported throughout the Region. While Hairy Woodpeckers were really down in Westchester County, N.Y., they were up 150% in n. New Jersey (*fide* GH) and about normal in s.e. Pennsylvania. Western Kingbirds were notably early in the period with singles at Montauk Pt., Dec. 15 (m.ob.). Abington, Bucks Co., Pa., Dec. 15 (M. Clymer), Cape May Dec. 16 (B.&H. Cutler) and Assunpink W.M.A., Mercer Co., N.J., Jan. 8 (S. Brady). A *Myiarchus* carefully identified as Great Crested Flycatcher just n. of Brigantine N.W.R., Dec. 15 (A. Sexauer, P. Hoppin) was not unprecedented since there was a bird at Ocean City, N.J., last December but late *Myiarchus* are often western stragglers. The Region had its usual quota of E. Phoebes on CBCs, but a bird at Montauk Pt., Feb. 3 represented the only real winter record (JDiC *et al.*). An *Empidonax* flycatcher at Alley Pond Park, Queens Co., N.Y., Dec. 15 (H. Freeman *et al.*) went unidentified, but at that late date one of the w. species is as likely as an e. one. In keeping with the season, single Barn Swallows lingered at Brigantine N.W.R., to Dec. 1 (AM, JM) and J.B.W.R., to Dec. 15 (W. Reilly *et al.*).

JAYS THROUGH SHRIKES — Blue Jay numbers were down almost everywhere, with "incredibly low" from Westchester County, N.Y., being the strongest comment. The only Boreal Chickadee reported was one in Warren County, N.J., Dec. 15 (OH). Tufted Titmice continued to increase inland in the n. with 159 on the Orange County, N.Y., CBC (*fide* JT). However, numbers seem to have leveled off on Long Island. Red-breasted Nuthatches were almost totally absent. House Wrens lingered beyond all reason in Westchester County, N.Y., with singles at Ardsley until mid-February (BW, S. Lincoln) and Rye until Jan. 27 (TB., S. McMahon). Short-billed Marsh Wrens were also present, with singles at Brigantine N.W.R., until Jan. 16 (JD, R. Logan) and Pickering Beach, Del., Dec. 23 (JG). Mockingbirds were in record high numbers in Orange County, N.Y., with 80 counted there on Dec. 15 (*fide* JT). A Wood Thrush at J.B.W.R., Dec. 1 (†S. Walens) and another at Greenbrook Sanctuary, Alpine, Bergen County, N.J., Dec. 15 (DE, D. Amadon) were surprises enough, but one

Feb. 2 at Tinicum (†NP) was apparently injured. Hermit Thrushes were scarce. Eastern Bluebirds were reported in good numbers with 35 in Peekskill Dec. 15 and a total of 177 on five s.e. Pennsylvania CBCs. Many of these latter birds were locally banded first-year birds. Where there were no boxes provided and monitored, there were no bluebirds (JGr). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher remained at Pittstown, Hunterdon Co., N.J., until Dec. 2 (J. Demarrais). Kinglet numbers remained generally low. The only N. Shrike was one Dec. 10-11 at Kissena Park, Queens Co., L.I. (W. Astle).

WARBLERS — A Black-and-white Warbler remained at Crum Creek Res., Delaware Co., Pa., to Dec. 4 (KR, C. Richards), and another at Wall Twp., Monmouth Co., N.J., to Dec. 29 (R. and M. Grant). A **Nashville Warbler** at a feeder in Kennett Square, Pa., Dec. 22-Jan. 24 was carefully and completely described (†H. Alexander *et al.*). The notes seem to match Bent's description of the w. subspecies, *ridgwayi*. A **Black-throated Blue Warbler** wintered at Smithtown, L.I., Nov. 8-Feb. 29+ (N. Sloan). This bird survived on peanut butter and suet at a feeder. Yellow-rumped Warblers were very numerous inland with 184 on an inland Pennsylvania CBC. A **Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler** was carefully studied at Tinicum Feb. 14 (†J. Ginaven). The notes clearly eliminate the e. subspecies, but an intermediate is possible. There are three Pennsylvania specimens and one other sight record for this subspecies.

A **Townsend's Warbler** was photographed in Harmony Twp., Warren Co., N.J. (GH *et al.*). The Townsend's present Dec. 11-14, represented a third state record, all of them in winter. A Pine Warbler was noted at Montauk Dec. 15 and two were near Angola, Del., Jan. 1 (JG). Palm Warblers were well above average numbers with a maximum of seven on a Nassau County, N.Y., CBC Dec. 30. An **Ovenbird** overwintered at a feeder at Southold, L.I., Jan. 7 to at least Mar. 3 (V. Moore *et al.*). This bird fed primarily on small seeds. Yet another unseasonal warbler was a **Northern Waterthrush** at Prime Hook N.W.R., Del., Jan. 1 (P. Weirick). The bird was well observed and its characteristic pumping action noted. Although many yellowthroats were noted on regional CBCs, not one was reported thereafter. One of the two Yellow-breasted Chats on the Montauk CBC remained until Feb. 3 (JDiC *et al.*). The Region had at least three **Wilson's Warblers** in December, one at Pawling, Dutchess Co., N.Y., Dec. 11 (J. McIlwaine), one at Lancaster, Pa., Dec. 22 (C. Gamber), possibly the same bird there Dec. 24 (H. Morrin) and a bird at Bombay Hook N.W.R., Dec. 23 (JC1, P. Hurlock, B. Hurlock). Finally, to end this extraordinary collection of warblers, an **Am. Redstart** remained to Dec. 9 at Bridgehampton, L.I. (JA).

WEAVERS THROUGH SPARROWS — House Sparrows have really declined in s.e. Pennsylvania with CBC counts about 10-20% of numbers found ten years ago. Northern Orioles did surprisingly poorly this mild winter with only six feeder birds reported and but one known to have survived. Rusty Blackbirds were low this season, but the stan-

ard flock of about 20 Brewer's Blackbirds was again at the pig farm near Bombay Hook N.W.R., Dec. 23 (DC). A Boat-tailed Grackle at Oakland L., Queens Co., L.I., Dec. 15-22 (m.ob., ph. W. Reilly) leaves January as the only month in which this bird has not been seen in New York State. A **Western Tanager** seen Jan. 10 at Cape May (K. Seager) was probably the same bird reported there on Dec. 16 (CW, FU). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a feeder near Easton, Northampton Co., Pa., Jan. 9 (WC), and another was at New Providence, Union Co., N.J., Feb. 20-29 (M. Page, W. Boyle). A *Pheucticus* sp., was reported from Boonton, N.J., Dec. 23 (R. Ryan).

Dickcissels were more widely reported than usual, with 12 birds reported in all 4 states of the Region. The most widely seen bird was at the feeders at Peace Valley Park, Pa., the entire season (FM). Winter finches were notably absent, except for a few scattered reports of Evening Grosbeaks. Purple Finch numbers were depressed including even the ubiquitous House Finch. Fewer than two dozen Red Crossbills were reported in the entire Region. Four White-winged Crossbills at Garrison,

N.Y., Dec. 27 was the only report of that species (R. Odell).

A Lake Sparrow reappeared at a feeder near Easton, Pa., Dec. 20-21 (WC, P. Finken). While Dark-eyed Juncos were generally considered low, the Glenolden, Pa., CBC recorded 1620, an all-time high. Three Dark-eyed (Oregon) Juncos were reliably reported and several more claimed. The acceptable birds were at Harmony, N.J., Dec. 17-Feb. 15 (G. Scipione), Allentown, Pa., Jan. 19 (MC) and Tinicum Dec. 15 (A. Keith). Tree Sparrows were in uniformly low numbers in the n. part of the Region. However, Glenolden had 342 Dec. 15, above the average for the 1970s and Pulcinella said numbers really increased at Tinicum after that. This agrees with the observation that Tree Sparrows are showing a decided preference for marshy habitat in upland Pennsylvania (JGr). A Harris' Sparrow at Palmyra, Lebanon Co., Pa., Jan. 28-Feb. 15 (G. Wertz *et al.*) was the only one reported. Snow Buntings were in good supply with a maximum of 450 at Cape Henlopen Feb. 1 (TA, JRe) and several large flocks in Lehigh and Northampton counties, Pa.

INITIALED OBSERVERS - (sub-regional compilers in boldface) T. Allen, James Ash, **Maurice Barnhill**, Irving Black, **Ray Blicharz**, **Thomas Burke**, Joel Citron (JCI), Mark Collicie, J. DiCostanzo, Walter Culpepper, John Danzenbaker, **Thomas Davis**, **Robert Deed**, Peter Dunne, Andy Adnie, Dianne Engleke, George Franchois, Bill Frech, Jesse Grantham (JGr), Jeff Gordon, **Greg Hanisek**, **Frank and Barbara Haas**, Otto Heck, Rich Kane, Tim Koebel, Fred Mears, **James K. Meritt**, August Mirabella, Judy Mirabella, **Bernard Morris**, George O'Shea, Eleanor Pink, Nick Pulcinella, Louise Purrey, Gilbert Raynor, J. Reese (JRe), Bob Russell, Joe Russell, Robert Schutsky, Beezer Seguin, Jim Sheetz, Steve Smith, **P. William Smith**, Barbara Spencer (BSp), Clay Sutton, **John Tramontano**, Fred Ulmer, Berna Weissman, Charles Wonderly. m.ob. many observers, † detailed description submitted.—**KEITH C. RICHARDS**, 348 Summit Road, Media, PA 19063, **ROBERT O. PAXTON**, 560 Riverside Drive, Apt. 12K, New York, NY 10027 and **DAVID A. CUTLER**, 1110 Rock Creek Drive, Wyncote, PA 19095.

MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

/Henry T. Armistead

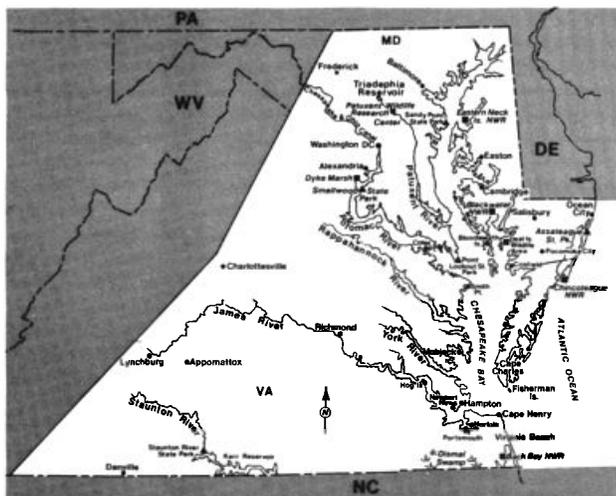
On the heels of a warm (except for October), wet fall, December was 3°-6° F warmer than normal at area weather stations and also very dry. January temperatures were closer to normal or slightly above but the first of several huge snowfalls in coastal Virginia occurred, dumping over 13 inches at Richmond January 5. Most of February was truly cold, temperatures ranging from 1.2° (D.C.) - 6.7° (Norfolk) below the norms, with another major snowstorm hitting coastal Virginia February 6, when Norfolk received 12 inches and Virginia Beach 15 inches, followed by over four inches more February 10. Most of this snow disappeared fairly rapidly. Snows elsewhere were unremarkable. There were no reports of unusual mortality although most of northern Chesapeake Bay was frozen in early February.

Observers were virtually unanimous in classifying this as a rather lackluster winter, especially with regard to pelagic birding, the rarer ducks, northern finches and certain other landbirds, and, to a much lesser extent, the more unusual gulls. Several commented on their unfulfilled expectations of many lingering birds during a mild winter after such a warm fall. In spite of this litany of disclaimers witness below the large number of unusual species, including an albatross, three shearwaters, a pelican, two ibises, a crane, a phalarope, 12 gulls, a goatsucker, two hummingbirds, and 17 warblers! In order to avoid redundancy and foster a closer perusal of the July issue few of the records in this report are from the Christmas Bird Count (hereafter, CBC). General remarks on CBCs apply to the entire states of Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and the District of Columbia.

LOONS THROUGH

IBISES — A Com. Loon in flight over land at Annapolis Dec. 2 was thought to be a late migrant (HW). Loons and grebes proved to be two of the major attractions at L. Anna in Virginia's Piedmont, which continues to enjoy intensive coverage (JB, BK, SC *et al.*). Here were seen a Red-throated Loon Jan. 19-20, a Red-necked Grebe Dec. 24 & Jan. 19, and peak counts of 20 Com. Loons Jan. 19, and 43 Pied-billed Grebes Dec. 24, with 44 of the latter present Jan. 19. Bazuin has written excellent (but unpublished) descriptive material on L. Anna. Horned Grebe numbers were still low with a "severe reduction" on the Potomac R. (JMA). Red-necked Grebes were also seen at Scottsville, Va., late November-Dec. 30 (LW, *vide* CES), Chincoteague N.W.R., Feb. 2 (JMA, RJA) and Baltimore Feb. 17-24, (RBI, *vide* RFR).

In spite of living at sea for a major portion of the winter Rowlett commented on the low numbers of many pelagic species. Some of his records were made at great distances offshore but are mentioned here for lack of an alternative popular forum. They are here expressed in nautical miles e. of Assateague I. A **Yellow-nosed Albatross** was seen 55 mi from the Virginia coast Dec. 3. A **Sooty Shearwater** was well seen at 52 mi Dec. 6. Four **Manx Shearwaters** were 55-60 mi out Dec. 3 and two were seen Dec. 6 in the same area. "Far out" was an Audubon's Shearwater in



the Gulf Stream 430 mi from shore Dec. 13.

The **White Pelican** at Back Bay N.W.R., was present at least until Jan. 26 (RLAn). Rowlett's highest Gannet total was 442 seen 40-55 mi from Ocean City Dec. 3. Great Cormorants continue to winter in small numbers at the mouths of Chesapeake Bay, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (hereafter, C.B.B.T.), and the Potomac R. (especially St. George I., Md.).

A Great Blue Heron in steady flight over Laytonsville, Md., Feb. 19 was believed a migrant (HW), which is quite likely, as Scott has observed them at colonies in Virginia as early as the end of February. Following reports of Green Heron on eight CBCs the only other record was one at Ashland near Richmond Feb. 1 (LM, *vide* FRs). On Assateague I., Md., Buckalew found Little Blue and Louisiana herons more common than usual throughout the winter. Five Cattle Egrets were on the e. side of Mobjack Bay, Va., Dec. 21 (MAB, KR). Mid-winter Great

Egrets were observed at Redart, Va., Jan. 19 (MP), Irish Grove Sanctuary near Crisfield, Md., Feb. 11 (SDr,PL), and Chincoteague N.W.R., Feb. 17-18 (HTA,PD). Very late for the Piedmont was one at Monkton, Md., Dec. 21 (MR, *fide* RFR). At Virginia Beach Wolfe counted 29 on Feb. 25 at Owl's Creek. Winter Yellow-crowned Night Herons of this Region are almost invariably immatures, as were two at Chincoteague Feb. 2 (JMA, RJA). Other than CBC reports there were just two records of Glossy Ibis, three flying S over Parramore I., Va., Jan. 4 (BT,GJH) and one at Irish Grove Sanctuary Feb. 11 (SDr,PL). Very unusual that late in the year was an imm. **White Ibis** photographed at Chincoteague N.W.R., Dec. 8 (RFR,TE).

WATERFOWL — Swans and geese continue to manifest opportunism, even in the face of a not-so-bleak winter, in adapting to grazing habits in many areas. Reese observed 10,000± Whistling Swans, 25,000 Canada Geese and 2000 Snow Geese, most of these in fields, in Kent County, Md., Feb. 13. At Ocean City, 105 Brant were on the baseball field Feb. 17 (RPH,DWe). On the Eastern Shore of Virginia Truitt considered Brant to be "up from the two previous winters" and frequently seen "in farm fields of rye and winter wheat" feeding with Snow and Canada geese. Vaughn saw 1500 Snow and 13 Blue geese inland feeding in fields on the Delmarva Pen., e. of Salisbury Jan. 13. The presence of Whistling Swans in fields in large numbers occurred first in the winter of 1969-70, probably as an adaptation to the decline of submerged aquatic vegetation in Chesapeake Bay, a situation undoubtedly also responsible for the big simultaneous decrease of Am. Wigeon. Six Brant, now also scarce on the Chesapeake, were at Claiborne, Talbot Co., Md., Dec. 3 (JE, *fide* JGR).

The CBC total of 4363 Mallards at Hopewell, Va., Dec. 15 was considered excellent (FRS). Craney I. landfill at Portsmouth, Va., may be the Region's best spot for N. Shoveler, with reports of 1000 Dec. 4 and 800 Jan. 15 (TW). Local sewage lagoons should be checked whenever possible. The one at Easton, Md., proved to be a local hot spot on Jan. 13, when Reese found 13 waterfowl species there including six N. Shovelers, which are scarce in Talbot County. Two reports of **Barrow's Goldeneye**, both very detailed, were received. In Maryland, two believed to be a pair were watched at length but at a distance at Eastern Neck N.W.R., Dec. 16 but were not found again (FP). On Dec. 29, 31 & Jan. 2 a female was carefully studied at C.B.B.T. (DFA, JMA, RJA, KH, HL, ML, LT, MT), some of these observers thoroughly convinced the bird was a Barrow's, others almost equally certain but stating that "this record should be taken very cautiously...in the most tenuous and cautious manner if at all." A good drawing of the Virginia bird was submitted along with the postulate that the southernmost Atlantic birds might be expected to be females if they fit the pattern shown by other n. ducks, especially eiders, most of which tend to be females in Maryland and Virginia (DFA). Regardless of what turns out to be the case, heavy verification and documentation of these birds is currently *sine qua non*.

The only non-CBC eiders were up to two each of Com. and King at Ocean City, and no more than one Com. and three Kings at C.B.B.T. These eiders were present throughout the winter, were mostly females, and were seen by many. The winter's sole Harlequin Duck was one observed from C.B.B.T., Feb. 27 (MM *et al.*). Ruddy Ducks seemed down to the extent of leading one to proclaim them "practically nonexistent" in the Potomac R. area compared to their numbers in normal years (JMA). A count of 102 Hooded Mergansers Feb. 1 at Swift Creek Res., Va., was very high for the Piedmont (FRS) and 125 Com. Mergansers were near Hopewell Feb. 3 (FRS,JD).

HAWKS — The three Goshawk reports were all from Virginia: an adult on Buffalo R., Amherst Co., Jan. 10 (MRB), and immatures at Fredericksburg Jan. 27 (SC) and Ft. Hunt, Fairfax Co., Feb. 13 (JMA). A suspected **Krider's Red-tailed Hawk** was seen in w. Fairfax County by the Abbotts Jan. 17. More conventional, but late migrants, were Red-taileds at S.P.S.P.: three, on Dec. 1; 25 on Dec. 3; seven on Dec. 4; seven on Dec. 7; three on Dec. 15; one on Dec. 25 (HW). Rough-legged Hawks were present in good numbers in favored areas, such as s. Dorchester County, Md. (HTA) as well as other localities where they are less common or rare, such as in the Piedmont of Virginia (CBCs,BK), Baltimore (RFR) and the w. shore of Chesapeake Bay (HW). One was near Williamsburg Feb. 7 (MAB) and one was in e. Henrico County, Va., Jan. 20 (JD, FRS). In late winter they are attracted to the extensive marsh burnings on the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. Three were at Dulles Airport Jan. 1 (DFA,HB).

Golden Eagles, aside from the usual one or two at Blackwater N.W.R., included an adult at S.P.S.P., Dec. 9 (TE, *fide* HW) and immatures at Eastern Neck N.W.R., Feb. 13 (JGR), McKee-Beshers W.M.A., Md., Feb. 24 (WK) and Summit Hill Turf Farm, Montgomery Co., Md., Feb. 24 (DB *et al.*). Byrd coordinated the mid-winter Bald Eagle survey in Virginia, which found 166 birds (101 a., 65 i.) with the highest single total of 68 on the Potomac R. Last winter 114 were seen. J.M. Abbott considers them "noticeably more numerous" in the D.C. region. However Scott points out that some winter birds breed elsewhere and states that "productivity of Chesapeake Bay breeding birds is still not considered up to replacement levels." They were conspicuous in the Blackwater N.W.R. area—more so than usually—with 21 reported Jan. 26 (DWe) and at least 17 immatures seen Feb. 23 (GGD). At locations where they are usually scarce four spent the winter at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (KK). Olson noted an increase at Presquille N.W.R., Va., and one was seen at Willis Wharf, Va., Jan. 21 (GJH). Guarded optimism is called for.

The only Ospreys were two late migrants at Hopewell Dec. 9 (FRS,JD) and one (early?) at Chesapeake, Va., Feb. 12 (GW). Peregrine Falcons increased on CBCs (15 vs 8 in 1978-79). On the Virginia Coast Reserve, Nature Conservancy staff reported them from eight locations, stating that they were

seen throughout the winter on almost every patrol of the barrier islands (BT). Individuals wintered in Baltimore, Norfolk and Newport News. Less usual locations were Saxis I., Va., where one was seen Feb. 10 (RLAn, RLAK) and one near Williamsburg Jan. 25 (BW), a first local record. A Merlin was reported in downtown Richmond Jan. 20 (CRB).

CRANES THROUGH PHALAROPES — A **Sandhill Crane** was at Back Bay N.W.R., Dec. 1 for the V.S.O. field trip (SC *et al.*) There was a singular lack of rail reports slightly compensated for by a report of a Yellow Rail on Assateague I., Md., Dec. 25 (RAR). Also of interest was a King Rail on Carroll I., near Baltimore in January (RB1, *fide* RFR). At L. Anna robust Piedmont counts of Am. Coot were 1497, Dec. 24 and 1285, Jan. 20 (JB,SC *et al.*). American Oystercatchers continue to winter in force on Virginia's Eastern Shore with 88 at Chincoteague N.W.R., Feb. 9 (RLAn, RLAK), 81 there Feb. 17 (HTA), and 137 counted w of there Feb. 27 (JHB). The only mid-winter reports of Semipalmated Plover were two at Ocean City Jan. 20, Feb. 2 & 18 (PD *et al.*) and one on Assateague I., Md., Feb. 26 (RAR,CL). At Ocean City 160 Ruddy Turnstones were seen Dec. 29 (EMW). An unusual count of Com. Snipe was a total of 129 at Blackwater N.W.R., Dec. 29 (SRL). A wintering Willet was at Ocean City through most of January (RAR,CL) and one was there Feb. 17 (RPH,DWe). Two Lesser Yellowlegs were on Assateague I., Jan. 25 (SHD). One of the few reports of Purple Sandpipers was a count of 71 at C.B.B.T., Dec. 28 (FRS,JD) showing how common species are often ignored or not remarked upon. As usual small numbers of Whimbrel as well as a sizable number of Marbled Godwits were found on one or more Eastern Shore of Virginia CBCs. Less usual were the Am. Avocets found on those at Cape Charles, Chincoteague, and Ocean City, while Craney I., which had more this winter than it did last summer, boasted up to 300 Feb. 26 (MRB,RC), other notable counts included 186 Jan. 2 (RLAn) and 175 Jan. 15 (TW). Rowlett encountered Red Phalaropes 65-90 mi e. of the Virginia capes Jan. 12 (four), 15 (one), and 17 (one).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Off the Delmarva Pen. coast from 1-2 Pomarine Jaegers were seen daily Dec. 1-13 as far as 500-600 mi offshore. During a n.e. gale a Parasitic Jaeger was at Ocean City Jan. 5 From 1-6 Great Skuas were seen each day from 60-100 mi e. of Ocean City during the period Jan. 12-21 (all RAR). Up to 5000 gulls frequented the Montgomery County, Md., landfill (hereafter, M.C.L.F.), *circa* 200 of them, mostly Ring-billeds, being color-marked Feb. 17. Within ten days some of these birds were reported from Baltimore, S.P.S.P., and the D.C. area (BP,EMW, HW). Coastal and pelagic white-winged gull reports were at an all-time low in Rowlett's experience, but he saw a Glaucous Gull 60 mi e. of Ocean City Jan. 14. Another was near Williamsburg Jan. 24-30 (MAB,BW). Iceland Gulls fared better with sightings at C.B.B.T., Jan. 6 (HB) & Feb. 3 (RLAn,DFA), M.C.L.F., Jan. 17 (HW), Baltimore Feb

17-29+ (RBI *et al.*), S.P.S.P., Feb. 23 (HW), and Ocean City Feb. 27 (RAR,CL). In late February a massive fish kill from S.P.S.P., s. to Love Pt., attracted 10-15,000 gulls (JGR,HW). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were widespread, with reports from Ocean City, Assateague I., Md., C.B.B.T., Norfolk (up to three), M.C.L.F. (inland), and Baltimore (up to three), most of these representing stable, wintering birds seen by many. One was 65 mi e. of Cape Henry Jan. 18 (RAR). **Thayer's Gull** was reported at C.B.B.T., Jan. 12 (DFA,RJA) with a "probable" one at M.C.L.F., Jan. 17 (HW). Thorough documentation and verification are essential for this species. Black-headed Gulls were seen four times after the CBC period: "offshore" near C.B.B.T., Jan. 20 (RAR), at Ocean City Jan. 20 (PD) & Feb. 28 (RAR), and at Baltimore Feb. 18-29+ (RFR *et al.*). Many thousands of Bonaparte's Gulls spent most of the period in the Ocean City area and there were several inland reports in December, January and February for the Virginia Piedmont. Consorting with the Ocean City Bonies were up to 14 Little Gulls (RAR, m.ob.). Black-legged Kittiwakes were scarce at sea although the high was 515 on Jan. 14, 60-70 mi e. of Ocean City, after which counts of them dropped off sharply (RAR). Perhaps the last remains of hurricane *David* were dead **Sooty Terns** at Myrtle I., Va., Dec. 30 (CC) and Chincoteague N.W.R., Feb. 17 (HTA), the latter still in good enough condition that it was easily identified as an adult. Seven Black Skimmers were present at Lynnhaven Inlet, Va., Jan. 27 "sitting on snow" (RLAn) and at Craney I., where four were Jan. 22 (TW) and one on Feb. 15 (JD,FRS). Three Razorbills 40 mi e. of Cape Henry Jan. 17 "constituted the *only alcid sightings* all winter. In spite of several hundred hours at sea by me the winter of 1979-80 was the worst alcid winter since I started birding here (1972)." (RAR)

DOVES THROUGH VIREOS — Mourning Doves were noted calling as early as Dec. 13 at Arlington, Va., by Bazuin who also first noted courtship Dec. 24, but no unseasonal nests were found. Moderate numbers of Long-eared Owls were seen with up to four at an Assateague I., Md., roost that also included one Saw-whet Owl for most of the winter (RAR,RLAn *et al.*). Gude's Nursery, Rockville, Md., gave shelter to another Long-eared in late January (HW,EMW *et al.*) and Baltimore had up to three throughout the period (RFR). One present at Kingsmill near Williamsburg Dec. 19-Jan. 4 provided a "first local record" (TA,BW). Short-eared Owl received mixed reviews, several coastal observers feeling it was present in slightly low numbers, but with three at Bolling A.F.B., D.C., Jan. 26 (HW) and six at L. Anna Jan. 19 (JB *et al.*). The owl of the year had to be a pelagic Saw-whet 100 mi off Ocean City Dec. 2 in flight over the sea (RAR). Land based individuals were at Gude's Nursery January-March (m.ob.) and the National Arboretum, D.C., Jan. 15 to at least Feb. 18 (HW *et al.*). In Spotsylvania County, Va., one was present Dec. 16-Jan. 20 (SC *et al.*). Extraordinary was a singing **Whip-poor-will** in S. Hanover County, Va., Jan. 29 (TCS, *vide* FRS). More extraordinary still was a wintering **Ruby-**

throated Hummingbird subsisting on warm sugar water and watched daily Nov. 14-Mar. 2 in Norfolk after which it disappeared following massive snowfall (EM). Photographs were taken against a snow backdrop. Equally superlative was a *Selasphorus (sp.)* **hummingbird** well seen on the Wachapreague, Va., CBC, Dec. 16 (CRV).

The abundance of Pileated Woodpecker was well demonstrated by the CBCs with totals of 48 (Bowie, Md.), 77 (Seneca, Md.), 42 (Williamsburg), 47 (Ft. Belvoir, Va.), and 37 (Lynchburg, Va.). Well-chronicled flycatchers were: a W. Kingbird seen by many at Annapolis Dec. 30-31 (HW *et al.*, ph.); another at Hopewell Dec. 15-16 (FRS *et al.*); an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at Kiptopeke,



Ash-throated Flycatcher, Kiptopeke, VA, Dec. 31, 1979. Photo/ Michael Tove.

Va., Dec. 30-31 (m.ob., ph.); another carefully studied at Haymarket, Va., Dec. 19 & 21 (BM,DS). A late Barn Swallow was seen on the V.S.O. field trip at C.B.B.T., Dec. 1 (SC *et al.*). Many contributors commented on the low Blue Jay numbers owing to the very poor nut crop. Even more remarked on the scarcity of Red-breasted Nuthatch. Many competent observers did not see one all winter. Winter Wren numbers were low for the third straight CBC period, but Carolina Wrens staged a minor comeback (HTA, DME). A N. Shrike was reported on Assateague I., Md., Feb. 2 (*vide* RAR). Loggerhead Shrikes continue to attract the concern of many observers. A Solitary Vireo at Charlottesville Jan. 1 (BR, *vide* CES) and one on a Maryland CBC (JS) were notable.

WARBLERS THROUGH LONGSPURS — Although seven CBCs reported Black-and-white Warblers the only one later detailed as an extended visitor was one at Salisbury Dec. 23-Jan. 27 (CRV *et al.*). Unique was a Tennessee Warbler at Gude's Nursery Jan. 2, seen by Wierenga as close as 10 ft. He also reported an Ovenbird there on the same date. A "very weak" Cape May Warbler was at Frederick, Md., in the city park Dec. 22 (DHW). A feeder-frequenting Yellow-throated Warbler was seen in Scottsville, Va., Dec. 10-Jan. 7 (LW,CES), its preferred entrée—suet. At Dyke Marsh near D.C., a late Chestnut-sided Warbler was seen Dec. 7 & 9 (JMA, BC). Pine Warblers were singing as early as Feb. 13 at Grasonville, Md. (JGR) and Feb. 24 at Lewisetta, Va. (FRS). A Christmas N. Waterthrush on Assateague I., must have

helped to make things bright (RAR). The only post-CBC Yellow-breasted Chat was at Ocean City Feb. 2 (NM *et al.*). Rounding off this embarrassment of winter warblers was a Wilson's at a Richmond feeder Feb. 20-21 (FRS *et al.*). Reports of several other Wilson's Warblers in the Region this period were rumored but details were not forthcoming.

Some CBCs in s.e. Virginia had good numbers of N. (Baltimore) Orioles and Patterson reported that "N. Oriole sightings reported to me this winter have all been associated with pine trees, usually white pines. This has also been noted in previous winters, and offers a habitat clue for searching for this bird." A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was present in Baltimore in January (*vide* RFR) and one was seen in Bowie Feb. 3 (*vide* BP). The latter was seen on the Bowie Intensive Winter Bird Census and is about as far removed from the purpose and spirit of this census as a species can be. This highly structured study of census techniques and results on one CBC sector is recommended for its provocative discussions of duplicate counting, percent of birds actually censused, and a host of other CBC problems. Patterson's report will be published later. The troubled Dickcissel was seen at three Baltimore sites Feb. 1-29+ (RFR) and another was at Arnold, Md., Dec. 9 (WK). Evening Grosbeak was as scarce in the winter as it had been last fall, but the sure key to a high integrity rating this winter was for the observer who had seen no Pine Siskins since last spring. Many of the Region's most active observers saw none although a few were seen to be sure, some of them with details that would do justice to a first state record. Among the scarce n. species Purple Finch drew fewer comments but it was also perceived to be in low numbers. No reports were received of crossbills. American Goldfinch was in the lowest numbers in six years on the CBCs. One very active observer stated, "I can't tell you the last time I've even seen or heard a goldfinch!" (RAR)

A Savannah Sparrow at S.P.S.P., Feb. 24 was felt to be a spring arrival (HW). A Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco was seen at Denton, Md., Jan. 9-Feb. 29+ (AJF *et al.*). Returning Fox Sparrows were noted at Annapolis Feb. 27 (HW) and Williamsburg Feb. 28 (BW). Lapland Longspurs were noted in flocks at Craney I., from 10-28 present Dec. 2-Jan. 15 (RLAn,DFA,HB,SC *et al.*) and Summit Hill Turf Farm had 15 on Feb. 29 (DB *et al.*). Elsewhere singles were at S.P.S.P., Dec. 1 (HW), Gaithersburg, Md., Jan. 10 (HW) and at L. Anna (for the fourth consecutive winter) where there was one Feb. 26 (BK). Snow Bunting was in biggest numbers near Denton where for the fourth year since 1974 a large flock has wintered, this year's totalling up to 120 birds (AJF). As many as eight were seen in the L. Anna area Dec. 24 (BK).

Does this report seem heavily weighted in favor of waterbirds? If so it is because most observers' reports are also. Waterbirds are usually scarcer and more notable, especially in winter. This being the case perhaps there is a need for a greater effort to report landbird sightings.

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SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

/Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.

The winter was clearly a two-phase one in the Southeast. December and January temperatures were several degrees above normal, and precipitation and winds were rather light; thus, weather on Christmas Bird Counts (hereafter, CBC) was generally beautiful. From January 30 to early March, however, rough weather set in. Five or six snow/ice storms hit the Region during this period, and northeastern North Carolina had perhaps the most *relatively* severe weather of any place in the country. This corner of the Region normally averages five inches of snow per year, but this winter approximately five *feet* of snow were dumped there!

Birding this winter was "fair-to-middling," with a scarcity of winter finches for the second consecutive year. Waterfowl were in lower-than-normal numbers, owing to rather mild weather for the first two-thirds of the season. The early mild weather, plus benign conditions in late December, were partly responsible for excellent species totals on many CBCs, and for a surprising number of count rarities, particularly warblers.

GREBES THROUGH IBISES — A Red-necked Grebe was a good find at Pea I., N.C., Feb. 23 (THa, LH). Counts of 250 Horned Grebes on L. Moultrie Jan. 20, and a similar number on L. Murray Jan. 30, both by McNair, attest to the remarkable populations that winter on South Carolina lakes. Single Eared Grebes were found in North Carolina at Orton Plantation, Brunswick Co., Dec. 1 (MG), and at L. Pinehurst, Moore Co., Dec. 19-Feb. 16 (TH, JC *et al.*). No reports of pelagic trips were received, so it was a surprise that a shearwater was noted—a dead Audubon's in "partly fresh" condition at Ft. Macon S.P., N.C., Dec. 18 (JF). Sightings of White Pelicans continue to increase in the Region, with singles on the coast at Ft. Fisher, N.C., from mid-January - Feb. 29 (RN, MG *et al.*), at Huntington Beach S.P., S.C., Jan. 19 (SA, MA), and inland at a pond at Statesville, N.C., in early December (*vide* SM). Brown Pelicans were unusually common in Carteret County, N.C., during the winter. Absolutely remarkable were the 192 Double-crested Cormorants seen at L. Marion, S.C., Feb. 8 (DM); 60% were immatures. A number of Green Herons lingered n. of their winter range, with four at three sites in Carteret County in January being most

notable (HL, MT, JF). There were also considerably more winter reports of Cattle Egrets than normal, with the best counts being 22 near Newport, N.C., Dec. 14 (JF), and five at Powells Pt., Currituck Co., N.C., Dec. 31 (PS). McNair had totals of 240 White Ibises at L. Marion Jan. 19, and 320 there Feb. 8, both high numbers for so far inland at this season.

WATERFOWL — An ad. Brant at Pee Dee N.W.R., N.C., Dec. 7-8 (DM) provided apparently the Region's first record away from the tidewater zone. Other notable Brant reports were of 2000 at the s.w. tip of Hatteras I., N.C., Dec. 29 (BL), and 400 at the s. end of its range at Cape Lookout, N.C., Feb. 5 (SP). Another excellent count was of 16 White-fronted Geese at Santee N.W.R., S.C., Feb. 8 (DM), and McNair had another individual at Pee Dee N.W.R., Jan. 25-Feb. 10. The Augusta, Ga., "Cinnamon" Teal again spent the winter, for the fourth consecutive year (AW), and the always-noteworthy Eur. Wigeon was detected at Pea I., Dec. 27 (MH). Although the mild December and January kept waterfowl numbers rather low in most places, there were several excellent counts: 115 N. Shovelers at Santee N.W.R., Feb. 8 (DM); 15,000 Redheads in Bogue Sound, N.C., in January (*vide* JF); 180 Buffleheads at Cumming, Ga., Jan. 30 (JP); and 20,000 Red-breasted Mergansers seen from the Cedar I. - Ocracoke ferry, N.C., Dec. 24 (KH, MT). Several observers have noted a steady increase in Com. Goldeneye numbers over the past few years along the North Carolina coast, with a few counts of 20+ birds. Inland numbers seem to be more dependent on the severity of the winter weather than are coastal populations, and few were noted inland before the severe weather set in.

Four Oldsquaws at L. Murray Dec. 1 was an exciting find (DM), and another was a rarity for the Atlanta area at Sweetwater Creek S.P., Feb. 16 - 29+ (D&DC, TS). Two imm. ♂ Harlequin Ducks at Ft. Macon S.P., Dec. 18 - Feb. 29+ (JF *et al.*) helped to make Carteret County the Region's hot spot for the winter season. Another Harlequin, a female, was observed Feb. 3 at Oregon Inlet, N.C. (BL, AB, EPo). Both eiders were also en-

countered in North Carolina, with a Common on the Cape Lookout CBC Dec. 22 (MT), a ♀ King photographed at the Ocracoke harbor Dec. 24 (MT, KH), and two Kings at Cape Hatteras Pt., Dec. 25 (MT, KH). Only two reports of Com. Merganser were received, not surprising considering the rather mild December and January; the best count was of four at L. Surf, N.C., Feb. 29 (TH).

HAWKS THROUGH COOTS — Two Krider's Red-tailed Hawks were noted at Eufaula N.W.R., Ga., Jan. 12 (A.A.S.), and another was seen near Savannah, Ga., in late February (JG). On the positive side, three Golden Eagles were noted—one on the Litchfield-Pawleys I. CBC Dec. 27 (ED *et al.*), one at Eufaula N.W.R., during the winter (*vide* C.A.S.), and another in late December in Harris County, Ga. (*vide* C.A.S.). Bald Eagle reports, particularly from South Carolina and Georgia, were far too numerous to list in full. Numbers *do* seem to be up from 5 or 10 years ago, except for the North Carolina Outer Banks. The best counts were of five immatures seen at one time in Harris County (FN—no date) and as many as four birds at Eufaula N.W.R., all winter (C.A.S.). Just one inland report of a Merlin, on the Aiken, S.C., CBC Dec. 24 (AW) was disappointing, and worse, not a single Peregrine Falcon was sighted inland this winter. Two Sandhill Cranes at Eufaula N.W.R., Jan. 12 (VJ *et al.*) were unusual, and a surprisingly late flight occurred over Atlanta Dec. 10-11, with four reports on those days (TM). Fussell was again successful in eliciting Black Rail responses on CBCs: three at Morehead City Dec. 23, and one at Wanchese on the Bodie-Pea I. count. However, he expressed concern that the heavy snows and flooding that occur-





Imm. ♀ King Eider, Ocracoke Harbor, NC, Dec. 24, 1979. Photo/ Michael Tove.

red in e. North Carolina in February and early March may have been very detrimental to rail populations in that area, particularly the Black Rail at Cedar I.

SHOREBIRDS — Fussell saw a Wilson's Plover at Beaufort Feb. 21, likely one of the two birds present there on the CBC Dec. 23. Seven Marbled Godwits were somewhat "inland" at Cedar I., Jan. 26 (HL,MT), and six Long-billed Dowitchers seen with the godwits were also noteworthy (HL,MT).

S.A.

The outstanding bird of the winter was the **Black-tailed Godwit** found by Hughes at Bodie I., on the CBC there Dec. 27. A multitude of birders observed and photographed the godwit through Jan. 12. This established a first record for the Region, and apparently a first winter record for North America. However, after studying this individual carefully, Hughes has stated (pers. comm.) that a godwit seen by him and others at Pea I., Feb. 27, 1971, and reported as a Hudsonian Godwit (AB 25:564) was actually a Black-tailed. At the time the 1971 godwit was observed, he had no experience with either of these two species. This turn of events casts a serious doubt about the validity of godwits reported as Hudsonians on the unlikely dates of Dec. 30, 1972 at Sapelo I., Ga. (*Oriole* 38:1-5) and Feb. 25, 1973 at Moore's Landing near Charleston (AB 27:602).

Both species of yellowlegs lingered at Jordan Res., Chatham Co., N.C., into the winter, with the best counts being five Greater Jan. 19 (JOP,EP), and 14 Lessers Dec. 30 (AC,RC). A **Solitary Sandpiper** was exceptionally late on the McClellanville, S.C., CBC Dec. 16 (PN,TMu, *fide* JS), perhaps a first CBC record for the Region. Mid-winter Spotted Sandpipers were rare near Pendergrass, Ga., Feb. 2 (JG,MJ) and Beaufort, N.C., Jan. 26 (RJH,JF). Notable shorebirds at Santee N.W.R., Jan. 19 were a Lesser Yellowlegs, three Long-billed Dowitchers, and a Dunlin (DM), and four more Dunlins were late Dec. 20 at Jordan Res. (LP).

JAEGERS THROUGH TERNS — A Pomarine Jaeger was seen at Pea I., Dec. 26 (MT,KH,AB), and single Parasitics were noted from shore at Elmore's Inlet, Pender Co., N.C., Nov. 30 (MG) and at Cape Lookout Dec. 1 (JF). Two or three Parasitics were observed at Cumberland I., Ga., Dec. 31 (LB,HG). Both of these species are regularly seen in the Region in December, but most apparently disappear by the end of the month, since January and February records are scarce. The Morehead City-Beaufort area was the site of the best flurry of rare gulls the Region has ever seen. Between Jan. 19 and Feb. 29, one first-winter and two second-winter Glaucous Gulls were found by Fussell *et al.*, in addition to one and possibly two first-winter Iceland Gulls Jan. 17 - Feb. 29 + (JF *et al.*). Fussell also discovered and photographed an ad. Iceland (Kumlien's) Gull there Jan. 18 - Feb. 10. Also in this area were "several" ad. Lesser Black-backed Gulls: one on the Morehead City CBC Dec. 23 (BL), another at nearby Ft. Macon Feb. 4 (LC,BM), and a third at Morehead City Feb. 10-11 (JF,BM *et al.*). The first Regional report of an *imm. Lesser Black-backed Gull* was of an individual believed to have been in first-winter plumage at Beaufort Jan. 26 (HL,MT, KK). Last, but not least, *four* Black-legged Kittiwakes were found in this area Dec. 23-Jan. 26, with the most interesting record being a healthy adult seen in a harbor at Beaufort Jan. 24, undoubtedly pushed "inland" by strong SW winds that day (HL,MT,JF). Elsewhere, exciting gull records were rather sparse. An ad. Glaucous was notable at Cape Hatteras Pt., Feb. 17 (BK *et al.*), and an ad. Lesser Black-backed was there Feb. 2 (BL,AB). Other ad. Lessers, or possibly the same bird, were noted at Bodie I., Dec. 26 (KH) and Jan. 26 (NB,EG). Single ad. Black-headed Gulls were seen at Oregon Inlet Dec. 21 (SGr). Truly remarkable numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls were seen on South Carolina's larger lakes by McNair, with peak counts of 150 at L. Moultrie Jan. 20, 350 at L. Murray Jan. 30, 550 at L. Wateree Jan. 28, and 1300 at L. Marion Feb. 8. Forster's Terns were also in incredible numbers on these lakes, with 450 at L. Moultrie Jan. 20, and 450-550 at L. Marion Jan. 19 and Feb. 8 (DM). A Forster's far inland at Clemson in late January provided a first winter record for that area (SG). No reports of alcids were received for the period.



Imm. ♂ Harlequin Ducks, Fort Macon, NC, Dec. 23, 1979. Photo/ Michael Tove.

ANIS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — The **Groove-billed Ani** at the Savannah N.W.R., S.C., first noted in late October, was last seen Dec. 9 (DF *et al.*). One of the most elusive of the Region's winter visitors, although perhaps regular everywhere but in s. Georgia, is the Long-eared Owl. Therefore, most noteworthy was an injured Long-eared seen on brush and trash piles along NC 49 in n. Stanly Co., N.C., Jan. 30 (EPa,AT), in broad daylight! It was captured by hand, but released immediately. Single Whip-poor-wills were noted on the McClellanville CBC Dec. 16 (TO,BW), in c. Carteret County Dec. 10 & 23 (JF), and near Thomasville, Ga., Jan. 4 (BC). Most unusual was a **Chaetura swift** seen at the dam at Ft. Gaines, Ga., Dec. 2 (JG *et al.*); this provided apparently the first winter record for a swift in the Region. There were five winter reports of hummingbirds: one identified as a Ruby-throated, with no description, at a Mt. Pleasant, S.C., feeder all winter (E&SC,EGi); one (with no rufous) in a Beaufort, N.C., yard until Dec. 4 (SPo), one without description at nearby Gloucester Dec. 6 (CH), one glimpsed at adjacent Harkers I., Dec. 22 (DCa), and one (with no rufous) in a Morehead City yard Jan. 14 (JF II). All of these birds were probably Ruby-throated, and I suspect that *most* winter hummingbirds in this Region are indeed this species, and not Rufous Hummingbirds. Conway and Drennan (AB 33:130-132) summarized Rufous records for the Atlantic Coast states, and it is clear that n. of Florida the species is seen mainly from September to November and that there is no evidence (excepting one South Carolina specimen) to indicate that Rufous occurs in winter n. of Florida. Thus, I feel that Rufous is most likely to occur here in late fall, especially in November. Nonetheless, I strongly encourage full details on all hummingbirds seen from November to March. Quite significant was the discovery of ten Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity trees Dec. 30 in extreme e. Chatham County, not far from Jordan Res. (LP); Peacock observed an individual there Feb. 24. Although this locale extends the range inland only slightly, it is one of just a handful of Piedmont sites in the Carolinas for this species. The 60 Red-cockadedes tallied on the Southern Pines, N.C., CBC Dec. 22, although achieved with a special search, set a new national CBC high (*fide* JC).

LARKS THROUGH PIPITS — McNair found Horned Larks to be quite common during the winter in Richmond and Anson counties, N.C., where they are assumed to be uncommon; a flock of 100 at Ellerbe was notable Jan. 6. An early Tree Swallow was at L. Surf, N.C., Feb. 29 (TH), and at least 500 Fish Crows in two flocks in s. Bertie County, N.C., Dec. 26 was a high number for so far inland in winter (HL,ML). Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce or absent everywhere, with most CBCs missing the species. Two Short-billed Marsh Wrens were new to the Atlanta CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* TM); others inland were one on the Chapel Hill CBC Dec. 30 (FR,MSt), and two at Santee N.W.R., Feb. 22 (DM). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Clemson Jan. 20 (SG) provided a rare January record for the Piedmont, whereas a count of 30 gnatcatchers at Savannah Ref.,

Dec. 9 was excellent for the season (DF *et al.*). Water Pipits became unusually abundant in s.e. North Carolina in February and early March, possibly being pushed southward and coastally by heavy snowfalls; Galizio counted 700+ in coastal Pender County in early February.

WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS — This season was highlighted by a remarkable number of noteworthy warbler sightings, owing mainly to mild temperatures in November and December. A **Tennessee Warbler** was observed by Moore in his yard in Marietta, Ga., Dec. 2, 9 & 16; it was feeding at sapsucker holes. A **Nashville Warbler** at Pea I. (KK, KI) was even more noteworthy, simply because it was seen eleven days later, Dec. 27, and a **Northern Waterthrush** was also seen at Pea I., the same day (PS). In South Carolina notable finds were a ♀ N. Parula near Charleston at Magnolia Gardens Jan. 15 (TR), and a Yellow Warbler on the McClellanville CBC Dec. 16 (PN, *vide JS*). Another rarity was a Cape May Warbler at McCain, Hoke Co., N.C., Jan. 4 (LW), with two having been present there Dec. 5. North Carolina got its second record of **Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler**, a well-marked male seen in woods along a creek at Durham Feb. 3 to the middle of the month (MS, LS). Somewhat outside the edge of the winter range were single Yellow-throated Warblers at Morehead City Dec. 13 (JF), Santee N.W.R., Jan. 20 (C.N.H.S.), and most of December and January at Dublin, Ga. (TKP). Also at Dublin was the same Wilson's Warbler, in the exact location, that was present this past March; it was observed on numerous occasions Dec. 9-Feb. 26 (TKP). A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was noted at Decatur, Ga., Jan. 2 (TF). Single N. Orioles were at feeders at Decatur Dec. 8 & 15 (JRy) and at Sandy Springs, S.C., late January - mid-February (PG, HL); this species seldom winters in the upper Piedmont of the Region. Western Tanagers were found on the Roanoke Rapids, N.C., CBC Jan. 1 (ML) and at a feeder in New Bern, N.C., in late January (BH *et al.*).

FINCHES — Another rare feeder species (in winter) recorded in the Region was Rose-breasted Grosbeak: single males with some traces of breeding plumage were observed at Charleston Dec. 20-25 (SL *et al.*) and at Morehead City Feb. 7 (DB). A ♂ **Indigo Bunting** seen in open pinewoods in w. Carteret County Feb. 1 was most unusual for both time and place (BL, AB). Although a few Evening Grosbeaks pushed S to Savannah, Ga. (JR), they were rare to uncommon in South Carolina and Georgia, but fairly common in parts of c. North Carolina; counts of 200 at a feeder in Chapel Hill Feb. 17 (CHA), and 600 in bottomlands at Pee Dee N.W.R., Jan. 9 (DM) were quite surprising. On the other hand, everyone agreed that Pine Siskin was rare everywhere, with just a handful of sightings. Everyone also agreed on House Finch: it was present in larger numbers in the Region than ever before, with s. limits of occurrence to Morehead City, Augusta, and Columbus. Notable House Finch records were too numerous to list, although counts of 125 at Atlanta Jan. 26 (GS, TS), 50 at Marietta Jan. 16 (BMA), and up to 100 all winter at Augusta (CB) indicate that it may not be long

before Florida birders encounter them regularly. Red Crossbills went completely unreported for the second consecutive winter, nor did anyone see one of the rarer winter finches.

On the other hand, all five of the secretive species of sparrows that winter in the Region were detected. Gauthreaux saw three of them at the Savannah R. Plant near Martin, S.C.: a Grasshopper Dec. 18, a Le Conte's Dec. 17, and a Bachman's Dec. 16-17. Henslow's and Bachman's sparrows are not known to winter as far n. as Carteret County but perhaps no one had ever looked there, despite the presence of prime habitat (open longleaf pine woods). Special search turned up a Henslow's in w. Carteret County Jan. 25-26 (JF, BM *et al.*), and one or two Bachman's there Dec. 21-Feb. 17 (HL *et al.*). Several Henslow's were found near the n. end of the range at Carolina Beach, N.C., in January (PC *et al.*), and a Bachman's seen by Jay Carter near Marston, N.C., Jan. 31 was noteworthy. The shy Lincoln's Sparrow was seen at Bodie I., Dec. 27 (GW) & 29 (KH, HL). Only single reports of Tree Sparrows and Snow Buntings were received, perhaps a result of the mild early winter; yet Lapland Longspurs were found at five localities. In North Carolina, four longspurs were at Mangum Dec. 8 (DM), one at Cape Hatteras Dec. 25 (MT, KH), 12 on the Roanoke Rapids CBC Jan. 1 (BL, MT), and four at Jordan Res., Jan. 19 (LP, MP). Five were very rare near Charleston Feb. 9 (PN); these were with a flock of 100 Vesper Sparrows at the U.S. Vegetable Laboratory.

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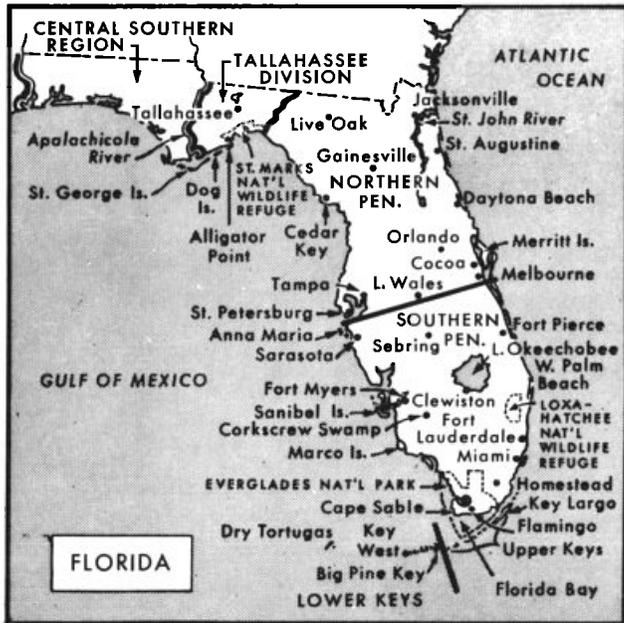
FLORIDA REGION /Henry M. Stevenson

Florida's proclivity for late winters was exacerbated this year. Temperatures ran near normal in December and January, but dropped well below normal in February (mean temp. -4.7°F below normal at Tallahassee). Perhaps because of the lack of cold weather until late winter, a number of species lingered north of their typical winter range, and the flight of northern finches was very poor. However, there were many records of other northern species.

POPULATION DECLINES — In two separate sets of field data in the Tallahassee Division (hereafter, Talla. Div.), Leon County and the coastal counties in December and January, the following species were significantly below their long-term norms in both areas both months: Double-crested Cormorant, *Black Duck*, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, *Black Vulture*, Forster's Tern, Common Ground Dove, Tree Swallow, *Brown Creeper*, *Eastern Bluebird*, *Golden-crowned Kinglet*, *Water Pipit*, Loggerhead Shrike, *Palm Warbler*, Red-winged Blackbird, Rusty Blackbird, American Goldfinch, Rufous-sided Towhee, and White-throated Sparrow. (Omitted from this list are several other species whose apparent decreases are surely owing to a major change in field coverage beginning in 1975.) Italicized species are those that continued a long-term decline. Several other species probably remained farther north in unusual numbers. Probably the most encouraging feature of the list is the presence of only three species (ground dove, pipit, shrike) known to have been much reduced by the cold winters of 1976-77 and 1977-78 (AB 31:323 and 32:339), indicating recovery to about normal abundance by the other species listed. Other species considered subnormal in abundance in some parts of the state are Common Loon (Keys), Lesser Scaup (Southeast Coast), Bonaparte's Gull (Southwest Coast and Keys), Cedar Waxwing (Southeast Coast and Keys), American Robin (Keys), and White-throated Sparrow (Northern Florida).

LOONS THROUGH SHEARWATERS — BO saw a Red-throated Loon at Dekle Beach, Taylor Co., Jan. 20 and two at Cedar Key Feb. 16, but *none* on the Atlantic Coast! Another Gulf Coast record came from Alligator Pt., Franklin Co., Dec. 31 (BA, LA & SI). Still uncollected and unphotographed in Florida, the Red-necked Grebe was seen at St. George I., Jan. 17 (NW). Two **Manx Shearwaters** off Cape Canaveral Jan. 17 (JJ *et al.*) were among the few ever seen in Florida, and a Sooty Shearwater over Florida Bay Dec. 12 (JO, Sandy Sprunt *et al.*) was out of place.

PELECANIFORMS — Ten White Pelicans in flight W off St. Marks Light Feb. 9 (Robt. Crawford, JCG) were early migrants. An imm. Brown Booby at St. George I., Dec. 31 (BA, LA & SI), documented by convincing sketches, may have provided the first winter record in the Talla. Div. Great Cormorants,



rare but increasing in Florida, were at Hickory Mound L., Taylor Co., Dec. 9 (NW), L. Talquin, Leon Co., in early December (Steve Jones), and two were at Sebastian Inlet Dec. 30-mid January (m.ob.). One Anhinga reached Big Pine Key Jan. 19 (RP, BP, Margaret Brown).

WADING BIRDS — According to C. G. Cutlip, 250± “egrets” began nesting early at Corkscrew Sanctuary, but attempted nesting by Wood Storks failed. Rare in winter in the Talla. Div., a Cattle Egret was near St. Marks Light Jan. 13 (RMC); one there Feb. 27 (F. & B. Stoutamire) may have been an early arrival. Two Am. Flamingos were out of range at Mosquito Lagoon Feb. 10 (HK), and the Talla. Div. had its first winter record of the Roseate Spoonbill at St. Marks Light Dec. 1-Feb. 17 (Doug Gage, m.ob.; ph. HMS, to T.T.).

SWANS, GEESE AND DUCKS — Six Whistling Swans on the Occidental Chemical Company's ponds near White Springs Dec. 8-23 (V. B. Willis, Jr.) may have constituted the largest flock on record in Florida; one was at St. Marks Light Dec. 7 (HMS, NW).



First-winter Thayer's Gulls, Toytown Dump, St. Petersburg, FL, Jan. 4 - Mar. 28, 1980. Photos/ Lyn Atherton.

James, Franklin Co., Feb. 17 (RMC). One of Florida's very few King Eiders—and its first ad. male—was reported near Melbourne Feb. 29 by Fred and Pat Harden, who canoed to within 50 ft. Scoters were apparently rare this winter, but one Black Scoter was at Alligator Pt., Jan. 20 (Julia Watt). Common Mergansers appeared at two localities: Wards Bank (formerly Ft. George I.) at the mouth of the St. Johns R., had at least two Dec. 29-Feb. 18, and a female was seen at Double Branch Cr., Hillsborough Co., Dec. 22-Mar. 7 (Wesley Biggs, Dave Goodwin, ph. LA to T. T.). At least 90% of Florida's truly common merganser, the Red-breasted, are usually in ∅ plumage, but ad. males were much more numerous this winter, making up at least 50% the total in a single flock of 200 mergansers in Tampa Bay Jan. 18 (LA & HMS).

DIURNAL RAPTORS — An imm. White-tailed Kite was found 7 mi. n.e. of Bronson Dec. 14; BO provided an excellent description. The locally rare Goshawk occurred in Jacksonville Dec. 2 (VM adult) and an immature was e. of Baldwin Dec. 7 (BO). Almost as rare, a dark-phase Rough-legged Hawk was in the Apalachicola N.F., Dec. 18 (J. Black, John Vickers). Seldom seen on the



Another record-breaking number for Florida was 15 White-fronted Geese near Tallahassee (JCG) in January and February, and seven flew into a field in n. Leon County Dec. 22 (Bob Prather). A large inland count was that of 24 Com. Goldeneyes at L. Talquin, Leon Co., Jan. 26 (RMC & GM). A Canada Goose at Conservation Area 3A, Broward Co., Dec. 13 (PS & Noel Snyder) was unusually far s.. Two Oldsquaws were seen off St. Marks Light Jan. 26 (RL *et al.*) and one was near St.

Keys, a dark-phase Short-tailed Hawk was at Key Largo Dec. 8 (JO, Maryanne Biggar). A single ad. Golden Eagle was being harassed by a Bald Eagle in w. Franklin County Dec. 31 (BA, LA & SI), and an immature was at Tosohatchee State Preserve Feb. 10 (Rick Demmer, Gay Shiver).

CRANES, GALLINULES AND PLOVERS — An unusually large and late migrating flock of 22 Sandhill Cranes flew E past St. Marks Light Dec. 9 (RMC). Winter breeding records of the Com. Gallinule consisted of two broods of young estimated at 3-4 weeks old at St. Petersburg, a brood of four Dec. 10 and one of three Feb. 29 (LA). Rarely seen on the Keys, an Am. Golden Plover remained at Key West Nov. 6-Dec. 17 (TW).

OTHER SHOREBIRDS — The Talla. Div. had its second and third winter records of Solitary Sandpiper at two localities near Tallahassee several miles apart; the fact that the first bird left after Dec. 9 and the second was present Dec. 25-Jan. 12 suggests the possibility that both occurrences involved the same bird (GM; ph. HMS, to T.T.). Another rarity on the Keys is the Whimbrel; one was at Boca Chica Nov. 26-Jan. 4 (Barbara Fox). Two “experienced and reliable” observers carefully noted the bill features and other field marks of a Hudsonian Godwit at Bonita Beach causeway Feb. 29 (J. & P. Ware). The only Ruff reported was near Boynton Beach Jan. 5-8 (HL, GH, Thos. Healty). American Avocets in n. Florida were five at Alligator Pt., Jan. 27 (Leon Neel) and one at Wards Bank Dec. 2 (JLW).

GULLS —

S.A.

Since my arrival in Florida in 1946 it has been obvious that gulls, in contrast with some groups of birds, have greatly increased. Species once common are now abundant, former rarities have become regular, and new species are frequently located. One of the best areas for gulls, Toytown Dump at St. Petersburg, often had 30,000 to possibly 40,000 gulls this winter. It was here that Thayer's Gull was finally known to occur in Florida when Lyn Atherton had her photographs of three first-year birds confirmed by Joe Jehl and Guy McCaskie (extreme dates Jan. 4-Mar. 22; LA, m.ob.). Toytown Dump also had one to four California Gulls throughout the period (LA, m.ob.), even though added to the Florida list just one year ago, and a new max. of nine Lesser Black-backed Gulls (mid-December to March; LA, m.ob.).

Other Lesser Black-backed Gulls included four near Pompano Beach Feb. 11-17 (JB, MG), one at Pelican N.W.R., Feb. 11 (HK, Mike Irwin). Also on the honor roll of rarities was an imm. Black-headed Gull at Anastasia I., Dec. 15-22, well described and sketched (BO, JLW *et al.*). Less unusual were two Glaucous Gulls near Mayport Jan. 15-Feb. 18 (JLW, Robt. Loftin) a first year imm. Glaucous near Titusville Feb. 10 (HK), and two Franklin's Gulls near Pompano Beach Feb. 11-17 (JB & MG).

TERNs — Three reports dealt with species seldom seen here in winter: a Roseate Tern at Sebastian Inlet Dec. 30 (JJ, ph. Robt. Barber but photo not reviewed), a Black Tern in Florida Bay Jan. 5 (RP & M. Van der Voort), and a probable Bridled Tern (light saddle across nape *not seen*) near Loggerhead Key, Dry Tortugas, Jan. 19 (PB).

ANIS, NIGHTHAWKS AND FLY-CATCHERS — A Groove-billed Ani at Paynes Prairie, Alachua Co., Jan. 12 (Steve Nesbitt) was unusual in being farther inland and farther e. than most previous records. Most nighthawks reported in Florida in winter occur near large buildings in cities, but one of uncertain species was seen flying over open country in n.e. Polk County, Jan. 5 (Jack Dozier). Perhaps the first two winter records of the E. Wood Pewee in n. Florida were reported at Newport Jan. 19 (BO) and Orange L., Alachua Co., Feb. 11 (JH). At the latter locality members of the Alachua Audubon Society saw a ♀ Vermilion Flycatcher periodically to Jan. 19.

LARKS THROUGH PIPITS — Also rare in Florida were two Horned Larks at St. Augustine Inlet Feb. 10 (BO, JLW), and a Rough-winged Swallow near Tallahassee Dec. 26 (GM) was unusual for n. Florida. Early Purple Martins were noted at Hypoluxo near Palm Beach Jan. 26 (HL, Barbara Liberman), Jacksonville Jan. 27 (Denby Gatlin), n. Leon County Jan. 30 (HMS), and Tallahassee Jan. 31 (GM). At the s. edge of their range, if not somewhat beyond, were six Fish Crows at Cutler Ridge, Dade Co., Feb. 22 (JO). Sprague's Pipit spent the winter on the St. George I. causeway, where two were seen Dec. 31 (BA, LA & SI) and one Feb. 19 (JS).

VIREOS AND WARBLERS — The only Bell's Vireo reported was near Hypoluxo Jan. 19 & 25 (HL, GH *et al.*). A very late Tennessee Warbler was mist-netted and banded at the Archbold Biol. Sta., Highlands Co., Dec. 1 (Jonnie Fisk), and a Yellow Warbler was at Loxahatchee N.W.R., Feb. 23 (HL *et al.*). Other rare warblers, at least for the areas where recorded, were: Magnolia: Key West Jan. 10-27 (TW), Black-throated Green: Jacksonville Jan. 16-Feb. 15 (VM), Prairie: Jacksonville Dec. 12 (PP), and two Wilson's—one near St. Marks Light Dec. 14 (Chris Howard), another at Loxahatchee N.W.R., Feb. 15 (HL, TT). Some observers commented on the increased numbers of Orange-crowned Warblers, and two observers were fortunate enough to hear the species in song (JS, S.A. Grimes).

BLACKBIRDS AND ORIOLES — A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was near Port Charlotte Jan. 26+ (observer not stated). At or near their n. limit were two Spot-breasted Orioles near Vero Beach Dec. 26-late February (FG). Another change in the status of Florida species was dramatized when the Talla. Div. had only two records of Rusty Blackbirds (RMC *et al.*), but *four* of Brewer's—one near Carrabelle Beach Dec. 17 (HMS), two at L. Jackson Dec. 28 and Jan. 2 (GM), one to two at Tallahassee Jan. 13-Feb. 14 (Jas. Cavanagh, HMS), and a pair near Medart Jan. 28 (HMS).

TANAGERS THROUGH SPARROWS — Malcolm Simons found a pair of W. Tanagers at Captiva I., Feb. 8 and George Saunders found a record-breaking winter group of eight Blue Grosbeaks at Vero Beach Feb. 23-25; another Blue Grosbeak was at Delray Beach throughout the period (BH).

The only Dickcissel reported was at Tampa Dec. 11-16 (LA). Two sight records of Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrows are believed valid: one at Wards Bank Dec. 29-30 (JLW: BA, LA & SI) and one at St. Augustine Inlet Jan. 23 (BO)—apparently the southernmost credible record. All three records of Clay-colored Sparrows came from the lower East Coast: 2-4 near Hypoluxo Jan. 20 to late February (HL, TT, BH, Wm. Matthews, Sr.), one near Boynton Beach Feb. 16 (HL), and one throughout the period at W. Palm Beach (Ann Ayers). The rarest bird in this group was a Harris' Sparrow near Titusville Dec. 31-Jan. 8 (Doug Stuckey, m.ob.). A few White-crowned Sparrows wintered at Tallahassee (GM; RMC & CE). Single Lincoln's Sparrows were near Chiefland Feb. 10 (BO) and Vero Beach Jan. 20 (FG). Those two boreal visitors, the Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting, again appeared at Wards Bank (possibly the only known locality in the Florida Region for the latter)—the longspur Jan. 6 (JLW) and the bunting Nov. 25-Feb. 18 (m. ob.).

INITIALED OBSERVERS — Brooks Atherton, Lyn Atherton, Joanna Burger, Page Brown, Ted Below, Robin M. Carter, Caroline Eastman, Frances Graves, J. C. Gayhart, Michael Gochfeld, Brian Hope, Gloria Hunter, John Hintermister, Scott Isherwood, Johnnie Johnson, Herbert Kale, Howard Langridge, Robert Loftin, Gail Menk, Virginia Markgraf, Bryan Obst, John Ogdin, Peggy Powell, Richard Paul, Jas. Stevenson, Paul Sykes, Tadziu Trotsky, Joseph L. Wilson, Noel Wamer, Thurlow Weed. OTHER ABBREVIATIONS—T.T., Tall Timbers Research Station.—HENRY M. STEVENSON, Tall Timbers Research Station, Rt. 1, Box 160, Tallahassee, FL 32312.

ONTARIO REGION /Clive E. Goodwin

For much of Ontario the past winter never arrived, at least during the reporting period. At Toronto there was a moderate winter storm at the beginning of December and little more snow until March, and continuing mild weather until February quickly eliminated what little snow there was. The story was the same over much of the south, and although snowfall in the north was more normal it also was abnormally mild for the first two months.

The late migrants mentioned in the last report remained to become wintering birds and the result was a formidable list of hangers-on, with good numbers of many species present into February, when such lingerers have usually succumbed to ice and cold.

In spite of this it was a quiet winter. Winter finches and other "traditional" winter birds were scarce or almost absent in most areas. Many feeder owners never replenished their feeders for the three months, and this lack of landbird concentrations was paralleled among waterfowl. Open water led to the birds being unusually dispersed and seeming-

ly thinly scattered, although in fact the Toronto Ornithological Club's January 6 inventory (hereafter, T.O.C. count) recorded an all-time (33-year) record of 29,600 birds, with ten species in record numbers as well.

BIRDS NORTH OF NORMAL WINTER RANGES — Wintering attempts by species that normally leave the Region were undoubtedly the feature of the season. Arnold Dawe, reporting from Toronto, said his account was more like fall than winter, and fully 45% (74 species) of the noteworthy observations this winter fell into this category. Presenting a coherent summary of the phenomenon

is not easy, however, and is even more difficult if the data are submerged in the traditional systematic sequence. Much of the story



is of birds wintering farther north, in greater numbers, and surviving longer than is usual. With two or three exceptions all the species reported have occurred in winter before, and most of them occur regularly; and enumerating the increased volume of reports would be boring even if space was available. So what follows is a sampling, with much omitted.

On New Year's Day in London it was possible to see two species of swallows and four of warblers, most of these birds at the Greenvale sewage plant; three Rough-winged and a Barn Swallow had been found there Dec. 3 (BDS,WRJ), and a Yellow Warbler — the first ever in winter in Ontario — had appeared Dec. 18 (BH,WRJ). Elsewhere a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** had been seen Dec. 28 with chickadees, only Ontario's sixth-ever (H&SI), and all these species remained until a cold snap Jan. 6, and in fact, a



Barn Swallow, London, Ont., Jan. 5, 1980. Photo/ Alan Wormington.



Black-throated Gray Warbler, London, Ont., Jan. 5, 1980. Photo/ Alan Wormington.

Barn Swallow was seen at nearby Melbourne Jan. 21 (DM).

Not even Point Pelee N.P. and vicinity (hereafter, Pelee) had quite such a remarkable assortment, but the Provincial picture of winter rarities spanned the check list. Unprecedented in winter were a Green Heron at Burlington Dec. 18 (EV) and a Chimney Swift at Rondeau Jan. 4 (PAW). Pelee had the last of three Turkey Vulture sightings Jan. 5 (CV,GC). A Com. Gallinule was at Whitby to Jan. 13 (DC), and there was an assortment of shorebirds: a Semipalmated Plover and two Sanderlings at Presqu'île P.P., to Dec. 7 (GC,RDM), the latest of several Killdeers at Hamilton Jan. 18 (AW), and on the Niagara R., a Dunlin at the Falls Jan. 6 (TH,MR) and a Red Phalarope at Niagara-on-the-Lake Jan. 6 (GC). Late wrens included a Long-billed Marsh Wren at Cayuga to Dec. 10 (BD) and three or more House Wrens, the latest at Bronte Jan. 18 (MJ,AW).

Pelee had a veritable bonanza of lates, particularly in the first couple of weeks in De-

cember. An E. Phoebe was there to Jan. 27 (PAW), a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher to Dec. 2 (GBR,RC,JO), a Swainson's Thrush to Dec. 8 (JAG,JK,KO), a White-eyed Vireo to Dec. 9 (AW,DF), and a Black-throated Blue Warbler to Dec. 5 (RDM). The latter was one of 11 species of warbler recorded during the season. These included an Orange-crowned at Ipperwash Dec. 15 (*vide* AHK), a Yellow-breasted Chat at Long Pt., Dec. 5-Jan. 8 (m.ob.), and several other species were present right through the period: Yellow-rumped e. at least to Toronto (m.ob.), a Black-and-white in London in early February (*vide* WRJ) and a Palm there Mar. 1 (MEC *et al.*), and a Pine at Hockley throughout (*vide* GB).

The dates of sightings were more remarkable than the species alone in several other reports: late season occurrences of such species as Great Blue Heron and Brown Thrasher were unusually common, but less usual were records such as the Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Whitby Feb. 2 (MB), Water Pipit at Toronto Feb. 28 (MW,LW), and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at Pickering throughout (GS,m.ob.) and at Kirkland L. in January (IR,LH,*vide* PWR).

The Rose-breasted Grosbeak in the n. was one of the most noteworthy of several species remaining unusually far n. On Manitoulin I., open water not only allowed Greater Scaup and Red-breasted Merganser to winter (JN), but there was a Ring-necked Duck and an Am.Coot at Mindemoya Feb. 9 (JL,CB). At Sudbury there were five Com. Grackles Feb. 18 (DN) and two White-throated Sparrows there in the same period (JN). In the n.w. a Dark-eyed Junco at Sapawe Feb. 15 (NB) and a Tree Sparrow at Atikokan Feb. 22 (TN) were equally rare for that area. In the extreme e. of the Province the story was similar. Ottawa had its first wintering Pintails and Am. Wigeons, and also a Whistling Swan to Dec. 7 (MBr) and a Gadwall Dec. 30 (SG). Landbird winterers there included two Red-headed Woodpeckers, a N.Oriole (*vide* SG) and a Clay-colored Sparrow (WEG). Winter waterfowl records away from the Great Lakes reflected the greater amounts of open water: most noteworthy were a Gadwall at London Jan. 13 (JWL) and two Com. Mergansers on the Oxtongue R., Algonquin P.P., Feb. 15 (CE).

Many migrant species were felt to be in unusually large numbers: Brown Creepers, Gray Catbirds, Hermit Thrushes, Golden-crowned Kinglets and several sparrow species were among those mentioned most frequently. However, many of the species involved are those felt to have been hard-hit by the severe winters of the previous three or four years, so their abundance would be relative to an initially low level. In an attempt to assess this, figures from the CBCs of the past three winters (provided by Dennis Rupert's excellent analyses) were compared with totals for 1963-64 and 1966-67 for 18 selected species, using the 25 Ontario counts that were most comparable over these two periods. The exercise provided some interesting results — interesting enough to suggest that a more careful statistical analysis along these lines might be worthwhile. Most species showed marked increases from the 1960 censuses, for reasons one might suspect are perhaps more related to

the increased participation in the counts than to the actual number of birds present. However, both Dark-eyed Junco and Tree Sparrow were down in numbers from the earlier years, and 13 species showed increases over 1978, although only in seven of these were the totals also higher than in 1977 (Screech Owl, Com. Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Com. Grackle, Cardinal, White-crowned and White-throated sparrows). Interestingly, neither Swamp nor Song sparrows showed much change from 1978, so the picture was by no means clear cut.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Two Red-throated Loons were seen, off Kettle Pt., Dec. 1 (AR) and Wolfe I., Dec. 16 (RKE). The Port Credit Great Cormorant did not reappear there but both species were reported: Double-crested at Erieau Dec. 16 (*vide* PAW) and at Dundas to Feb. 20 (RF), and Great reports started at Prince Edward Pt. (hereafter, P.E.Pt.), Dec. 15 (JE *et al.*) and moved on to Toronto Jan. 15 and Feb. 25 (MF,FB) with a bird of ambiguous identity which sounded more like this species at Ingersoll Jan. 11-13 (DB *et al.*). A late fall Cattle Egret was at Holiday Beach Nov. 30 (BE).

SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS — Mute Swans continue to increase along the n. shore of L. Ontario: the T.O.C. count yielded a record 49 and a bird was inland at Buckhorn Dec. 14 (RDM). Two Whooper Swans reappeared at Bronte from Feb. 3 (m.ob.) but the general consensus is now that these birds were escapees. At least three sources of breeding stock exist in Ontario alone, and birds reportedly have been sold to waterfowl enthusiasts for prices in the \$200-300 range: while not exactly "scattered around like so many budgerigars", as one observer drily put it, there seem to be ample to make escapees probable. The date of their reappearance this year—just after freeze-up of the larger inland water bodies—is also consistent with this idea. Canada Geese numbers are still growing, with 11,247 on the Ontario Inventory Jan. 2-6 (M.N.R.); their flocks included scattered Snow Geese, 15 in all. Five Brant were on Amherst I., Dec. 11 (FP) and a White-fronted Goose at Toronto Jan. 19 & Feb. 14 (PRM,BC). An exceptional flock of 350+ Black Ducks was seen at Whitby Jan. 13 (MB), and the T.O.C. count included a single flock of 484 Gadwall (CEG,JEG,AD), much exceeding all previous count totals: the new total was 868. There were some high counts of other species at the beginning of the period with 75 Green-winged Teal at Dundas Dec. 1 (RC) and 27 at Mimico the same day (JAK). Kelley also had 50 N. Shoveler at Toronto Dec. 8 when 35 Ruddy Ducks were seen at Hamilton (KMCL).

There were five Barrow's Goldeneyes, as both the "old faithful" at Ottawa (SG) and another bird at Niagara Falls (m.ob.) were present throughout. Other birds were at Mindemoya Feb. 9 (CB,JL), Presqu'île P.P., Jan. 17 (RDM) and periodically at Sombra from Dec. 29 (DR). Harlequin Ducks were also present in record numbers: there was a high of three at Oakville and two at Mimico Feb. 3 (JAK), one at Hamilton from Dec. 2 (HK,m.ob.) and others at Ipperwash Dec. 10-29 (AR) and Sombra from Dec. 11 (DR).

Four King Eider reports in December included a near-record 20 on the St. Clair R., Dec. 1 (DR). A flock of 25 was reported in 1966. The presumed hybrid Hooded Merganser X Com. Goldeneye was again in Sarnia Bay to Feb. 3. There were four reports of this bird, which was identified primarily on the basis of head and bill shape (DR, m.ob.). An unusual concentration of 4000 Red-breasted Mergansers was off Fort Erie Feb. 13 (GB,AD).

HAWKS, EAGLES — It was not a particularly good hawk winter. *Accipiter* numbers were low-to-average, although it is only in the past few years that winter totals have been kept. Excluding CBC records there were 12 Goshawks, 18 Sharp-shinned and nine Cooper's hawks reported. There was little in the way of late *Buteo* movement, although 114 Red-taileds were migrating at Holiday Beach Dec. 2 (BE), and the usual return movements of Rough-leggeds were seen in Vaughan and King Twps., from Feb. 10 (DF,GB,AD). Over the winter the largest concentrations were on Wolfe I., where highs of 34 Red-taileds and 23 Rough-leggeds were seen Dec. 16 (*vide* RDW), but on the whole both species were quite scarce. Algonquin P.P. had a rare Red-tailed Feb. 23 (TS) and there were three ad. Bald Eagles there in February (GCb) but no Golden Eagles were reported, possibly because changes in wolf populations in the park have resulted in fewer deer kills for the birds to feed on (*vide* RT). Elsewhere Golden Eagles were seen at Holiday Beach Dec. 2 (BE), London Dec. 17 (BH) and P.E.Pt., Dec. 15 and Jan. 6 (RDW,PM,AEB *et al.*). Twelve other Bald Eagles were seen, six of them in the s.w., and five e. from Kingston. Wolfe I. also had good numbers of Marsh Hawks with the 53 on the Kingston CBC all from there. A gray-phase Gyrfalcon was at Ottawa mid-December-Jan. 31, preying on Rock Doves (m.ob.), but a dark bird at Toronto Jan. 5 (JR) was later brought into the Humane Society and reportedly had to be destroyed after going into convulsions, a very similar pattern to the bird in 1978. It seems that Toronto is an unhealthy place for Gyrfalcons, and so the white-phase bird at Weston Jan. 14 (CEG) seen leaving the city at a great rate, was doubtless wise! Eight Merlin sightings along L. Ontario may have involved some duplication, as the species is very rare in the s. in winter. The only Peregrine Falcon reported was at London in mid-December (JS). American Kestrels were n. to Gore Bay Jan. 5 (JN) and Chatsworth Feb. 5 (DG).

GROUSE TO GULLS — Two Chukars on Wolfe I., Dec. 16 (GF,CW) were presumably escapees. Comments on the decline of Ring-necked Pheasants in the Toronto area have been frequent, but since poaching is a serious local problem here I had not realized that the species had suffered such a serious decline in its Provincial numbers until undertaking the CBC analysis referred to above. Average in the 1960s was 1043, but over the past three years 173, only 16% of the numbers 10-15 years ago! Niagara Falls yielded its now-customary Purple Sandpiper sightings over the period (m.ob.) and there were two at Presqu'ile P.P., Dec. 7 (RDM).

Glaucous and Iceland gulls were in about normal numbers, with the largest single



Imm. Ivory Gull, Beaverton, Lake Simcoe, Ont., Jan. 25, 1980. Photo/ Alan Wormington.

counts reported (16 and 3 respectively) from the s.w. Other species were in good numbers: sample counts were 400 Great Black-backed at Niagara Falls Jan. 6 (GB,DF), 1025 Herring Gulls at Ottawa Dec. 16 (*vide* SC) and 2500 Ring-billeds at Cobourg Dec. 24, when there were also 50 Bonaparte's (RJ). The Niagara gull concentrations included up to three Lesser Black-backed, to seven Little Gulls, and single Franklin's and Black-headed through January (m.ob.). The Province has averaged three Ivory Gulls in each of the last three decades, so the 1980s started well with one at Port Bolster Jan. 26 (GBy,m.ob.).

S.A.

Sarnia lighthouse, at the entrance of the St. Clair R., from the s. end of L. Huron, is increasingly becoming recognized as an outstanding vantage point for migrant water birds in the late fall and early winter. Species moving down through the upper Great Lakes system — and probably overland from James Bay into the system — are likely to end up along the Kettle Pt. — Sarnia shoreline, and the only exit from the *cul de sac* of land is along the river. In recent years systematic coverage of Kettle Pt., by Rider and at Sarnia by Rupert have shown the amazing numbers and variety of birds that do end up there, and it has supplanted w. L. Ontario as the place to see jaegers in fall. November 30-Dec. 8 yielded three Pomarines and six Parasitics at Sarnia, plus another unidentified bird as well as three Black-legged Kittiwakes (DR,JAG), but the rarity of the season was a well-described ad. **Mew Gull** there Nov. 30 (DR), only the third for the Province, the earlier birds both being in 1967. The only adequately described Thayer's Gulls were also there Dec. 30-Feb. 9, with Rupert's accounts again models of rare-bird documentation. Another report of this species from the fall, for Thunder Bay, did not adequately eliminate the *kumlieni* race of Iceland Gull.

DOVES, OWLS — Documentation is awaited on a Band-tailed Pigeon report from Presqu'ile P.P., Dec. 18. Mourning Dove continues to expand its winter range with

birds n. to Mindemoya in January (EG) and Sudbury Feb. 2-29 (CB,JL). Owls were scarce. The Owl Rehabilitation and Research Foundation only handled ten owls in three months, the lowest count since the facility was properly established. It is noteworthy that in about six years the Foundation has released 96 young Barn Owls along the lower Great Lakes, 89 of them hatched and raised by permanently damaged wild parents (KM). The second surprising result from the CBC analysis was a huge and totally unexpected jump in Screech Owl figures: fourfold, from an average of 12 in the 1960s to 48 in the late 1970s. Are there really more Screech Owls, or are census groups finding them more efficiently? We did not think the practice of tape recorder searches had hit the Ontario CBCs to any great extent. The Snowy Owl flight was poor to mediocre, and Long-eared Owls were equally scarce. Short-eareds were in good numbers only in the e., particularly on Wolfe I., and Ottawa, with 20+ birds apiece. Ottawa also had exceptional numbers of Saw-whets: nine were there Feb. 19 (MR) and 15 were found dead. Of the rarer owls there was a Hawk Owl at Odessa Dec. 20-Jan. 26 (EH,m.ob.), a Barred at Delaware Jan. 26 (F&JB), a Great Gray at Whitney Jan. 20-Feb. 17 (DJ), and the now traditional Boreal at Claireville from Feb. 10 (PJ, m.ob.).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH WRENS

— There were 15 Red-bellied Woodpecker reports n. and e. to Beaverton (GM) and Ottawa (*vide* SG) in December, including a remarkable eight at Ipperwash Dec. 15 (*vide* AHK). Woodpeckers generally were felt to be scarce, and there were relatively few three-toed woodpeckers reported. A suggestive, but unfortunately incompletely substantiated report of a Say's Phoebe was received from King City in January. The peak Com. Raven count at the Atikokan dump was 400+ (DHE), and an active Gray Jay nest also was located near there (SP). A Boreal Chickadee was at Presqu'ile P.P., Dec. 7 (RDM), and Black-capped Chickadees were in good numbers across most of the s., although down at Pimisi Bay (LdeKL) and almost absent in the s.w. White-breasted Nuthatches were unusually common over roughly the same area. The Ontario Bird Feeder Survey is gradually building up a picture of the winter distribution and numbers of such common feeder visitors as these two species, and it will be interesting to see this year's results. Tufted Titmice were e. to Ottawa, and Kingston from Jan. 8 (DH), but were rather eclipsed by the five at Niagara-on-the-Lake Jan. 6 (DF,GB). The Carolina Wren picture was a little more cheering: seven were reported, including two at Toronto (HK,TRS).

MIMIDS THROUGH THRUSHES

— Six Mockingbirds at Ottawa was the largest number ever there, and there were widespread reports elsewhere including a bird at Atikokan, Dec. 10-Feb. 16, which survived a fall down a chimney (DHE)! Varied Thrushes maintained their now-regular pattern of winter occurrences: the five this year were only exceeded by the 1977 influx when eight were recorded. Birds were at Cedar Springs, London, Oshawa, Darlington and Ottawa Dec. 3-Feb. 29+, although not all the dates overlap. Two

Mountain Bluebirds were seen, the sixth and seventh for the Province (although there has been one unsubstantiated report). The first was at Pelee Nov. 28-Jan. 6 (AW,DF,m.ob.) and a second at Colpo Bay Dec. 20-22 (JWJ *et al.*) Ironically, three of the previous birds were at Pelee and the others in the Thunder Bay area.

WAXWINGS, SHRIKES, BLACKBIRDS — Bohemian Waxwings were rare at Ottawa, and the only report of numbers elsewhere was of 25 at Huntsville Feb. 26-27 (SC) and 45 at Parry Sound in mid-February (CAC *et al.*). Cedar Waxwings were less numerous than last year (a pattern shared with Com.Crows and robins) but there were 1000+ at Pelee Feb. 21 (ERH). Northern Shrike was yet another regular winter species in low numbers. A Brewer's Blackbird was seen on Manitoulin I., Feb. 10 (CB).

FINCHES, SPARROWS — Winter finches were scarce to absent over much of the s. Small numbers of Evening Grosbeaks and Am.Goldfinches, increasing in February with a few Purple Finches, was the general pattern. At Atikokan however, White-winged

Crossbills were in good numbers from late January with Pine Siskins also numerous (SP). Single Dickcissels were at Streetsville from Feb. 17 (Mr. & Mrs. W. Wagner,m.ob.) and Port Hope Dec. 16-18 (WO,m.ob.). At least eight House Finches were present at Niagara-on-the-Lake feeders throughout (m.ob.) and six appeared at St. Thomas Jan. 10-23, the first for Elgin County (RK,MHF, WR *et al.*). There were also birds at Burlington Jan. 29 (AG) and at Ottawa throughout (m.ob.). Harris' Sparrows appeared at Gore Bay . 16 (JN,VR) and Meaford Feb. 16 (JCC).

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NIAGARA-CHAMPLAIN REGION

/Douglas P. Kibbe

Moderate temperatures which had characterized fall continued well into winter. The Region was spared, or (if one happened to hear broadcasts emanating from the Adirondacks) a few might say deprived, of significant snowfall. In Burlington for example, accumulations were one-fourth normal.

Predictable, perhaps, were the phenomenal numbers of late lingerers which tarried to be tallied on CBCs. Still would anyone have guessed that four heron, five crane and rail, and eight warbler species would be among the 178 species adequately documented this winter? Included in this total were enough rarities to satisfy the hardcore 'lister' at any season. Despite the unprecedented richness of this season's report, many termed the winter dull; doubtless because enthusiasm over feeders hosting catbirds, towhees, or a myriad of sparrows wanes quickly after they are tallied on CBCs and the hordes of invading winter finches which might have re-kindled spirits were shortstopped by the boreal bounty they encountered in Vermont's 'Northeast Kingdom.' Indeed, many lingerers forsook feeders for much of the milder portion of the winter and several of the most exotic visitors were not observed until after light snowfalls in January or February.

WATERBIRDS — An exhausted Gannet found pecking shoreline debris at Parma (RD *et al.*) expired Jan. 7. Three Double-crested Cormorants were also sighted on L. Ontario and one lingered at Dunkirk Harbor on L. Erie until Jan. 9 (*fide* VP). Lingered herons included several dozen Great Blues at scattered locations, an imm. Black-crowned

Night Heron at Conesus L., through Dec. 6 (R.B.A.), two Green Herons Dec. 14 at Montezuma N.W.R. (VD, *fide* WB), and an Am. Bittern there which overwintered. A Mute Swan was recorded Jan. 9 on Cayuga L., and flocks of Whistling Swans appeared there and on other c.

New York lakes throughout the period. Open water bolstered waterfowl counts far above normal and hastened N migration. For example 35,000 Canada Geese on Cayuga L., in January swelled to 100,000 by late February. Scattered Brant were sighted throughout December and one confused individual was still on L. Flower Jan. 20 (H.P.A.S.). Other unusual waterfowl finds included: a Blue-winged Teal, very rare in winter, at Dunkirk Jan. 6 (FR); single Barrow's Goldeneyes at Niagara Falls (m.ob.), Oswego Harbor on L. Ontario (FS, MR), and Shelburne on L. Champlain (J&MCD); two Harlequin Ducks and three King Eiders near Rochester (G.O.S., R.B.A.) and another King at Oswego (MR); and an immense congregation of White-winged Scoters estimated at 10,000 birds off Rochester's Oklahoma Beach in late December (FD).

HAWKS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — The noteworthy appearance of a Turkey Vulture Jan. 28 at Greece was overshadowed by an even more remarkable Black Vulture photographed (JS *et al.*) Dec. 22 at Scottsville, N.Y. The latter occurrence, exceptional at any season, is unprecedented in



winter. Other unseasonable New York raptor occurrences (all unsupported by details) were an early Red-shouldered Hawk at Wales Feb. 6 (*fide* VP), a late Broad-winged Hawk near Essex (*fide* H.P.A.S.), and a misguided Osprey along Ithaca's Six Mile Creek in February (*fide* WB). One Golden and about eight Bald eagles were noted, one of the latter found shot at Shelburne, Vt. (BF). Despite favorable snow conditions and the best cover-



Black Vulture, Scottsville, NY, Dec. 29, 1979. Photo/ Jean Skelly.

age to date, observers at Island Pond succeeded in locating only three Spruce Grouse. Their efforts were not entirely in vain, however, for they set a Regional record high Ruffed Grouse count of 84. It will be interesting to note whether the population, high throughout most of the Region, crashes despite the exceptionally mild winter. Exotics reported included a covey of 35 Bobwhite at a Charlotte, Vt. feeder and two Japanese Green Pheasants on the Ithaca CBC. The latter, introduced locally in hopes of revamping plummeting Ring-necked populations are reportedly less dependent on agricultural land.

A **Sandhill Crane** seen flying S Dec. 10 (VD, *fide* WB) vied with a report of two **King Rails**, apparently taken by trappers in December (HH, *fide* VD, *via* WB), as Montezuma N.W.R.'s seasonal rarity. This marks the second winter Sandhill sighting while there are three previous regional mid-winter specimens of King Rail. As anticipated Virginia proved the most common wintering rail, four at Mendon Ponds being the best report. This location also produced a Sora, photographed Feb. 10 (R&SS), providing only the third Regional winter record. Ferrisburg yielded Vermont's first Am. Woodcock as well as the state's third or fourth Com. Snipe winter record. The latter lingered in at least a half dozen New York areas. Best reports of Purple Sandpipers were three at Rochester (R.B.A.) and Niagara Falls (B.O.S.), the latter area also hosted the Region's only Dunlin. A **Northern Phalarope** convincingly described from Charlotte, N.Y., Dec. 9 (MDa) was the Region's first winter sighting. More expected, but notable, were single Red Phalaropes at Webster Dec. 9-15 (G.O.S., R.B.A.) and at Dunkirk, N.Y., Jan. 9-Feb. 19 (RSu *et al.*).

GULLS THROUGH OWLS — Not one but two Pomarine Jaegers graced the Region. The first, identified from photos (*fide* RY), tarried on the Hudson R., near Troy Dec. 29-30 while the second appeared a day later at Rochester (CP,RC,MDa). Observers there were also treated to fine views of a Lesser Black-backed Gull Dec. 30, and another was sighted sporadically along the Niagara R., in December and January (B.O.S.). A **Thayer's Gull** picked out at Oswego Jan. 20 (FS), two Franklin's at Rochester through Dec. 16 (R.B.A., G.O.S.), and an imm. **Sabine's Gull** at Dunkirk Dec. 1-2 (BCh *et al.*) round out the list of true rarities. Rochester hosted an unusual buildup of *Larids* that peaked mid-December at 190,000 ± birds, 85% ± Ring-billed. Bonaparte's Gull, normally among the first to depart, peaked there at 3500 in late December and continued in unusual numbers with up to 500 throughout the period. The real excitement however was Little Gulls. They lingered well into January from Dunkirk Harbor on L. Erie to L. Champlain but Rochester established itself without question as the continent's Little Gull capital when 60 adults and one immature were carefully counted Dec. 28 (MDa *et al.*).

Forty-one Great Horned Owls on one central New York CBC may be a good reflection of this species' abundance in much of the w. Region where small woodlots dot an otherwise agricultural landscape. Snowy Owls, like Rough-legged Hawks and N. Shrikes, showed

no evidence of an invasion. It seems safe to assume that sightings of a Hawk Owl at Brooktondale (KA-C, *fide* WB) and Greece (*fide* G.O.S.) and a **Great Gray Owl**, eventually photographed near Schenectady (*fide* RY) generated far less excitement than they would have only two years ago before "the invasion of 1979." Only two Long-eared Owls were reported and Short-eared counts were a fraction of past years.

WOODPECKERS THROUGH WRENS

— An apparent "Red/Yellow"-shafted Flicker intergrade was banded at Schenectady (RY). A Red-bellied Woodpecker at a Vergennes feeder (m.ob.) provided only the third Vermont record. Range expansions in other areas and the fact that this was the state's second consecutive winter occurrence would seem to point to a further breeding range extension. A record-breaking ten Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers were recorded at Island Pond but no Northern were found anywhere in the Region. The season's sole E. Phoebe seen Feb. 19, was probably an overzealous migrant as were two record-early Tree Swallows at Rochester Feb. 24 (NH). Five extralimital reports of Gray Jay were received (*fide* RY), all near Schenectady. Common Ravens continue to be reported from s.w. New York and have now been recorded on all but two of Vermont's CBCs. A regional record of 80 Boreal Chickadees set at Island Pond was surpassed a week later by chickadee counters at Craftsbury who tallied 93. Tufted Titmice continued their expansion, being recorded on 70% of Vermont's CBCs. The species is now lacking only in the n. tier of Vermont counties and seems likely to follow the Cardinal into these areas shortly. Red-breasted Nuthatches invaded n.e. Vermont in record numbers but remained noticeably scarce in all other areas. A House Wren Jan. 27 (FS) in c. New York was little short of extraordinary, there being no previous upstate winter records. Winter Wren remained scarce, reflecting its decline from several severe winters. Several Long-billed Marsh Wrens lingered, some until January. This species is probably more common in winter than records indicate.

MIMIDS THROUGH ICTERIDS — Both Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers were reported well into January. Robins wintered in numbers with a huge roost in Onondaga County. Vermont's third or fourth **Varied Thrush** appeared at an Athens feeder after the first significant snowfall Feb. 20 (MW, m.ob.), where it was viewed by all those patient enough to await its sporadic appearances. A few Ruby-crowned Kinglets were found on w. New York CBCs indicating, perhaps, some recovery of populations decimated by recent winters. Although Cedar Waxwings were well reported in scattered flocks, only a single Bohemian was spotted, at Cabot, Vt., Feb. 24 (BC).

Rare but not unexpected warbler sightings included an Orange-crowned at Penn Yan (*fide* WB), a Palm on Pt. Breeze (J&WL), several Com. Yellowthroats, and dozens of Yellow-rumped, many of them overwintering even in Vermont. Less expected but not unprecedented in the Region was a Nashville Warbler also at Penn Yan (*fide* WB), an Ovenbird on the Burlington CBC, and a N.



Painted Redstart, Dansville, NY, Dec. 19, 1979 - Jan. 24, 1980. Photo/ D.P. Kibbe.

Waterthrush near Buffalo Jan. 5 (*fide* B.O.S.). By far the most noteworthy occurrence of the season was a **Painted Redstart** attending a feeder in Dansville, N.Y., Dec. 19-Jan. 24 (M&CD, m. ob.). The well-publicized but inexplicable appearance, only the third for the Northeast, brought throngs of eager observers to the doorstep of its benefactors (750 signed the registry book) before the bird met an untimely fate in the jaws of a house cat. Despite the latter rather significant drawback this feeder must have had a special aura all its own for two of the Region's six wintering N. Orioles also selected it.

FRINGILLIDS — Cardinals have completed their sweep along the length of Vermont, now being absent only in the high boreal forested areas. The selective processes which this and other s. emigrants (*i.e.*, Mockingbird, Carolina Wren, and Tufted Titmouse) have undergone in a remarkably brief time period would seem to make them ideal subjects for evolutionary ecologists. Are, for example, any of these new hardy populations incipient subspecies with the large body characteristics which typify n. populations of many species? A laggard imm. Rose-breasted Grosbeak was present in Greece Dec. 16 (RS *et al.*). Four vagrant Dickcissels were reported, all at New York feeders. A superb invasion of "northern finches" (including Purple Finch, Pine and Evening grosbeaks, Pine Siskin, Am. Goldfinch, and White-winged Crossbill) occurred in boreal portions of n.e. Vermont. Except for the ubiquitous Evening Grosbeak however, these species were virtually unreported from the remainder of the Region, apparently being scarce even in the Adirondacks. Nearly every CBC yielded lingering sparrows, including Savannah, Vesper, "Oregon" Junco, Chipping, and Lincoln's, as well as all the more usual half-hardies in better-than-usual numbers. Both Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting proved scarce, however 200 longspurs at Hamlin, N.Y. (KG) proved the exception to the rule as did 850+ buntings recorded in Craftsbury to set a new Vermont record. It is, perhaps, these exceptions and the ever present element of surprise which contribute much to birding's appeal.

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APPALACHIAN REGION

/George A. Hall

After three abnormally cold and snowy winters the Region experienced a generally mild and unusually dry season. However, the shortage of real winter weather was accompanied by a shortage of birds. December was much warmer than normal and was slightly drier than average. What precipitation there was was rain, and only the northernmost areas had snowfalls. In January temperatures averaged about normal, but were consequently much warmer than during the past three years. February averaged much colder than normal but this came as a result of some violent oscillations between record lows and periods of extremely balmy weather. Both January and February were much drier than normal. In the north the snowfall was only about half of the 1978-79 amount. The south experienced somewhat more snow than usual in February and it remained on the ground longer.

During the mild December many of the usual winter species remained in the north in larger-than-usual numbers, and many migrants remained later than usual. This included not only the usual run of the so-called half-hardy species but also many others, particularly some of the wood warblers. As a result, Christmas bird counting was quite exciting at most places. Location after location reported long lists of species found in record numbers.

With the advent of colder weather many, but not all, of these species departed (perished?). There were essentially no incursions of "winter invaders", and most reporters felt that fewer than the usual number of birds were coming to their feeders. As a result most people reported January and February as being rather dull. In late February there were few signs that spring migration was about to take place. A few waterfowl had begun to move and the southern part of the Region was beginning to note arrivals, but by the end of the period one could say that the spring migration was running behind schedule.

The mild weather, particularly the absence of snow and ice caused some redistribution of wintering areas in some species. In many cases reports of unusual scarcities of a given species from one region could be neatly balanced by reports of unusual numbers somewhere else.

A late winter thought. Does the increased cutting of firewood in this Region, and in the Northeast portend trouble for hole-nesting species? [Being actively discussed nationwide. Observers should begin to monitor and report discernable effects.—Ed.]

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Three

Red-throated Loons were seen at Hanover, Pa., Jan. 1 (CG). A Red-necked Grebe was seen at Erie, Pa., Jan. 20 (SS) and an Eared Grebe was at Presque Isle S.P., Pa., through Dec. 16 (JM). The Pied-billed Grebe was one of the species present in unusual numbers in December, as for example, the Charleston, W.Va. CBC listed a record 12 (NG).

Great Blue Herons were numerous and widespread in December and some of these attempted to winter. There were 23 Great Blues at Presque Isle Jan. 5 (JF). A Green Heron was at Elizabethton, Tenn., Jan. 3 (GE). A Cattle Egret near State College, Pa., Dec. 11 was the first Pennsylvania winter record (MW).

WATERFOWL — In December waterfowl numbers were generally higher than usual throughout the Region, although while all n. areas reported more than the usual numbers some s. areas had shortages, a typical example of the previously mentioned changes in winter distribution. Even the n. areas complained of low numbers of Com. Goldeneyes (for example, Pittsburgh CBC, lowest on record) indicating that this species found open water well to the n. In the n. a few waterfowl arrived on the N flight Feb. 23 but no great movements had started.

Whistling Swan showed a marked deviation from its normal fall migration pattern. A flock of 2-300 remained near Warren, Pa., as late as Dec. 27, 200 were at Presque Isle Jan. 19 (RFL & ML), six were present at McElhattan, Pa., early January - Feb. 29+ (PS) and in e. Tennessee one was at the Tellico L., mid-December - Feb. 29+, two were at Oak Ridge Feb. 17 (WJ), and one was near Chattanooga in late January (DJ). Canada Geese were thought to be down by 80% at Chattanooga (RS) but this was compensated for by larger-than-normal numbers in the n. The large wintering concentration at Pymatuning L., Pa., numbered 7500 on the CBC and perhaps 6000 on Feb. 22, a larger-than-usual number (RFL & ML). A White-fronted Goose was at L. Arthur through Dec. 16 (MG). Snow Geese of the blue morph were reported from Powdermill Nature Reserve, Pa. (hereafter, P.N.R.), Feb. 23 (RCL), Pymatuning L., Pa. (blue morphs) one Dec. 2 and five Feb. 23 (RFL & ML), and Frederick



County, Va., in January and February (RSI).

The Black Duck numbers in this Region have been declining steadily for years as this species is being replaced by Mallards, but this year at Chattanooga, Blacks outnumbered Mallards by two to one (RS). At Pymatuning 3500 Mallards were counted on the CBC, near normal (RFL) while at Presque Isle a total of 7000 Canvasback Jan. 1 was noteworthy (JM). Greater Scaup are seldom seen in this Region, but 60 were at L. Arthur, Pa., Dec. 6 (PH) and a remarkable 400 at Chickamauga L., Tenn., in early February (RS & K & LD). As usual there was a scattering of scoter records: White-winged at L. Arthur, Pa., Dec. 10 (GW), Surfs near Milton, Pa., until Dec. 16 (SSi), and Presque Isle Dec. 2 (seven) and Dec. 16 (one — JM), and Blacks at L. Arthur Dec. 16 (MG) and at Presque Isle seven on the CBC Dec. 16 and one Jan. 19 (JM).

RAPTORS — The general picture for wintering hawks was fairly good. Cooper's Hawks were generally thought to be in good numbers but Sharp-shinned Hawks were thought to be below normal. In both cases these bird-eating hawks were not as commonly seen as they were last year when so many of them wintered near populous feeding stations. There were five reports of Goshawks from the Pittsburgh area (PH), one at Lock Haven, Pa., Jan. 27 (CH), and one on several occasions through the season at East Liverpool, O. (NL).

Almost all areas reported excellent numbers of wintering Am. Kestrels and this probably reflects the lack of prolonged snow cover. Rough-legged Hawks were also reported more widely and farther s. than is usual.

Most heartening were the following eagle reports. Three Golden Eagles were listed on the Franklin, W.Va., CBC (GP). One was seen at Bear Meadows, Pa., Feb. 10 (RW & SB) and two were in Highland County, Va., Dec. 9. (BrK) two in Christmas week (SC) and two sightings Feb. 19 (LT), which may not have duplicated the previous ones. In the Chattanooga, Tenn. region careful examination of nearly 100 mi of river Jan. 13 located 11 adult and seven imm. Bald Eagles. At the same time 17 adults and four immatures were located on the various reservoirs in e. Tennessee (CN). Other Bald Eagle reports were: what may have been a very late migrant flying S along a mountain ridge near Fayetteville, Pa., Dec. 15 (CG), one Dec. 20 and two Jan. 16 at Warren, Pa. (TG), two sightings each at Pymatuning L., and Conneaut, Pa. (RFL & ML), an immature seen several times in January and February near Upper Tract, W.Va. (GP), Rockingham County, Va., Jan. 8 and Feb. 20 (LT), Harpers Ferry, W.Va., Dec. 3 and Feb. 19 (DW), and two wounded birds brought to a rehabilitation center at Knoxville in December (SJS).

A Merlin was listed on a Tennessee CBC (BS) and one was seen at Knoxville Dec. 30 (SJS & BS). A Peregrine was seen at Oolteawah, Tenn., Jan. 8 - 9 (K&LD).

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS, CRANES AND RAILS — Ruffed Grouse were reported in low numbers at P.N.R. (RCL), and the Pittsburgh CBC had an all-time low number of pheasants (PH). The Bobwhite remains almost wiped out in the n. of the Region.

Sandhill Cranes were still migrating in early December with reports from Norris, Tenn., Dec. 8 (CN), Chattanooga, Tenn., Dec. 13 (RS), and Dalton, Ga., Dec. 9 (DSh). The only spring report by Mar. 1 was from Westel, Tenn., Feb. 23 (BS & SJS). A Virginia Rail was listed on a Tennessee CBC Dec. 16 (BSh). The very fresh remains of a Sora were found in a Screech Owl box at P.N.R., Dec. 8. The bird was apparently killed the previous night which would be a record late date for Pennsylvania (RCL).

SHOREBIRDS AND GULLS — Common Snipe were reported from Butler County, Pa., five Dec. 22 (CB), Rector, Pa. CBC Dec. 15 (DSm), Clarksville, Pa., CBC Dec. 29 (RB), and the Ona, W.Va. CBC three Dec. 15 (LW). More remarkable were the unusual shorebirds: Lesser Yellowlegs, Clarke County, Va., all December (RSi), Greater Yellowlegs, Hiwassee R., Tenn., Jan. 1 (K&LD), Pectoral Sandpiper, Augusta County, Va., Dec. 29 (IO & RSn) - Feb. 29+ (LT), and Calmes Neck, Va. CBC (RSi). Dunlin were reported from Wooster, O., Dec. 11 (JBr), one in Augusta County, Va., Dec. 29 (IO & RSn) and two there Feb. 18 (MH), and Kingston, Tenn., 1 - 3 Jan. 26 - Feb. 9 (BS & SJS).

As usual the reports of rare gulls came from Presque Isle on the L. Erie shore, where 30 Great Black-backed Gulls were seen Feb. 3 and 10,000 Ring-billed Gulls Jan. 19 (RFL & ML). The unusual records from there included: Glaucous Gull Feb. 2-14 (SS & JF); four separate sightings of Little Gull, possibly of the same bird Dec. 16-Feb. 2 (m.ob.), and the most unusual, a Lesser Black-backed Gull Dec. 8 (JB).

DOVES, OWLS, AND WOODPECKERS — Mourning Dove populations are booming throughout the n. of the Region. For example, at East Liverpool, O., 60-70 were coming to one feeding station (NL). High counts on CBCs were 275 (new high) at Clarksville, Pa. (RB), and 437 (2nd highest) at Charleston, W.Va. (NG).

Screech Owl populations in the n. remained at low levels after the series of bad winters but are possibly starting to come back, while at Elizabethton, Tenn., they were thought to be normal (GE). Barred Owl populations were thought to be low at P.N.R. (RCL) and Elizabethton (GE) but other stations did not mention them. There were four reports of Snowy Owls: two at Presque Isle Jan. 27 and one Feb. 10 (SS,JB), Erie Jan. 26 (SS). It was a good year for Short-eared Owls: on the Ona, W.Va. CBC Dec. 15 (LW), several present all winter at Roanoke, with a peak of five Jan. 26 (BK, NM), at Mercersburg, Pa., three in a field with 15 N. Harriers Feb. 2 (CG), Warren County, Va., two all through January (RSi). Long-eared Owls were reported from Raccoon Creek S.P., Pa., Dec. 16 (NK), Wise, Va., Jan. 18 (RP), Clarke County, Va., in February, Shenandoah County, Va., one found dead (RSi). The only report of Saw-whet Owl came from a Virginia CBC Dec. 15 (RSi).

Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue to do well in the n. with three records from Erie County (*vide* DS), and a count of 60 Red-headed Woodpeckers on a n. Pennsylvania CBC was noteworthy (DS). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were generally thought to be in low numbers, and indeed were missing from some places.

The Hairy Woodpecker has been placed on the Blue List and observers in this Region were specifically asked to comment on this species. Reaction was mixed but at nine locations the species was said to be in stable populations, and only in three (Wise, Va., Knoxville, Tenn., and Dalton, Ga.) were they thought to be down. One Tennessee CBC had a remarkable count of 14 Hairies to 14 Downies, instead of the usual 1-5 or 1-6 ratio (TF).

SWALLOWS, LARKS AND NUTHATCHES — Purple Martins arrived in the Knoxville area Feb. 23 ± (*vide* CN), about the only sign of passerine migration evident for the season. Horned Larks were reported to be in low numbers, as for example one Pennsylvania CBC listed only 80 compared with an average 700 (SSi), second lowest CBC at Pittsburgh (PH), scarce at State College, Pa. (KJ), and low at Harrisonburg, Va. (R.B.C.) but at Lewisburg, W.Va., they were thought to be recovering from a low (CHa).

White-breasted Nuthatch populations seemed good and several areas reported record CBC counts. On the other hand Red-breasted Nuthatches were quite scarce throughout. Brown-headed Nuthatches were found near Chattanooga in early December and remained into January (RS). The very tame Brown-headed Nuthatch was back at Waynesboro, Va., this winter (RSn).

WRENS, MIMIDS, AND THRUSHES — Carolina Wren numbers were improved over the last few winters but are still far below pre-1977 levels. Winter Wrens were generally in short supply. There was an unusual num-

ber of House Wren records Allegheny County, Pa., Dec. 15 (J&BB), Botetourt County, Va., Dec. 15 (T&JK), three in Shenandoah County, Va., in December (RSi), Huntingdon, W.Va. CBC (*vide* GP), Chattanooga, Tenn., Jan. 14 (DJ). Long-billed Marsh Wrens were seen near Chattanooga Jan 1 (DJ) and in West Virginia Dec. 15 (LW)

As usual a few Brown Thrashers and Gray Catbirds were present in December but most later vanished. A Gray Catbird was seen near Lock Haven, Pa., as late as Feb. 17 (CS), and thrashers wintered successfully at Elizabethton, Tenn. (GE), Wise, Va. (RP), and in Letcher County, Ky. (RP). A Veery was seen at Warren, Pa., Dec. 21 (BH). A **Varied Thrush** at Trenton, Ga., Feb. 17 - 18 (m ob.) provided the first Georgia record for this species, which is now turning up annually this far e.

KINGLETS THROUGH VIREOS — Both kinglet species, hard hit by recent winters, remained at low numbers, but these two have shown some improvement over last year. Water Pipits were unusually common in late January and early February throughout the e part of the Region. Northern Shrikes were reported from L. Arthur, Pa., Dec 9-23 (m.ob.), State College, Pa., late January (MW), and two sightings in Erie County, Pa., Jan. 13 (JM) & Feb. 5 (JB). Loggerhead Shrikes remained in low numbers and may be disappearing from this Region entirely. A Solitary Vireo was listed on the Great Smoky Mountains N.P. CBC (MD & LTu)

WARBLERS AND BLACKBIRDS — It was a remarkable winter for stray warbler records. The numbers reported for Yellow-rumped Warbler illustrated nicely the "redistribution effect" mentioned above. Several areas reported record counts, but others thought the species was unusually scarce. Pine Warblers were in greater numbers than last year at Dalton, Ga. (AH), and there were two records from Botetourt County, Va., in mid-December (*vide* BK). An Orange-crowned Warbler was found on the Great Smoky Mountains N.P. CBC Dec. 30 (FA). Nashville Warblers were found at Jersey Shore, Pa., Dec. 2 & 10 (PS), and on a West Virginia CBC (CM). A Cape May Warbler was present at N. Park, Allegheny Co., Pa., Dec. 31 - Feb. 29+ (JG) and there was a sighting of one there earlier on Dec. 8 (PB). Three Palm Warblers wintered at the Hiwassee River Area near Chattanooga (AJ, K&LD, RS), and one was recorded on a Virginia CBC (RP). But the prize of the season goes to the Com. Yellowthroat with records from: Presque Isle Dec. 16 (two), Rector, Pa., Dec. 15 (DSm), Bald Eagle S.P., Pa., Jan. 6 (DN), Wooster, O., Dec. 21 (JBr), and Luray, Va., Dec. 16 (RSi).

There were five reports of N. Oriole in the early winter: Clarke County, Va., Dec 15 (RSi), Alexandria, Pa., Jan. 18 (CF), Sewickley, Pa., early January (JG), Franklin, W.Va., early January (GP), Bridgewater, Va., Jan. 9 (R.B.C.). Brewer's Blackbirds were reported on a Tennessee CBC Dec 15 (RS), Clarke County, Va., Dec. 15 (RSi), Waynesboro, Va., Jan. 19 (LT), and Jonesboro, Tenn., Feb. 10 (RK).

FRINGILLIDS — It definitely was not the year of the "northern finch" but perhaps it was the year of the "Neotropical Finch". There were two reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Conneaut Marsh, Crawford Co., Pa., Dec. 23 (RCL, RFL, ML), and two at a feeder in Huntington, W. Va., until Jan. 16 (m.ob.). A Black-headed Grosbeak was at Wheeling, W. Va., Dec. 9 (H&CC), and an Indigo Bunting was at a feeder in Clarke County, Va., Dec. 29 (RSi). Less unusual was a Dickcissel at Keenan, W. Va., Jan. 31 (MF).

Evening Grosbeaks were reported from throughout the Region, but at most places the numbers were low, and some places had none. The only report of Pine Grosbeak came from State College, Pa., Jan. 14 (JBw). As has been reported in these accounts earlier, the House Finch has now spread throughout this Region, but this winter the populations began to explode. At some places it was the most common winter bird. Banders reported handling large numbers, and many CBCs reported high counts. On the other hand Purple Finches were unusually scarce at most places although these too were considered abundant at Knoxville (SJS). American Goldfinches were in good numbers at most places but the only reports of Pine Siskin were of 14 on a Georgia CBC (AH) and a few scattered reports from w. Pennsylvania (PH). There were several reports of Red Crossbill from the mountains along the Virginia-West Virginia border, and those in e. Tennessee but the only reports from the lowlands came from Colyer L., Pa., Feb. 14 (RW & SB), Butler County, Pa., Dec. 16 (MK & JL), and Allegheny County, Pa., Dec. 7 & 29 (JG). A small flock of White-winged Crossbills at Charleston Dec. 26 (AS) constituted the only report.

Tree Sparrows were extremely scarce at most places, and many of them may have wintered n. of our Region, although the disappearance of suitable wintering habitat owing to land development may also be a factor. The winter populations of White-throated Sparrows in w. Pennsylvania and n. West Virginia had been increasing steadily but this year the species was found only in low numbers there, although considered quite common farther s. Song Sparrows were also low in n. West Virginia.

Some unusual winter records were Vesper Sparrow on a Pennsylvania CBC Dec. 29, Savannah Sparrow, Lock Haven, Pa., Dec. 21, and Lewisburg, W. Va., Dec. 22-Jan. 27 (CHA), and Chipping Sparrow Dec. 6-9 at Erie, Pa. (C&ZK). Two rarer species were Clay-colored Sparrow, Waynesboro, Va., Dec. 18 (BrK), and two records for Lark Sparrow, Waynesboro, Va., Dec. 18 (BrK), and Carlisle, Pa., Jan. 13-21 (JR). Snow Buntings were uncommon and were reported only from Milton, Pa. (SSi), Pymatuning, Pa. (RFL), and Warren, Pa. (CP). The only report of Lapland Longspur came from Erie County, Pa., Jan. 31 (SS).

CORRIGENDA — The Hudsonian Godwit reported from Kingston, Tenn., May 11-16, 1979 (AB 33:771) represented the third state record, not the first, as reported. The records of a W. Tanager at Knoxville (AB 33:771) and the Jan. 11, 1979 record for Snow Buntings from Knoxville (AB 33:282) should be deleted.

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WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

/Kim R. Eckert

One advantage of prolonged periods of miserable weather is that when normal conditions finally return they seem much better than they really are. So it was in this Region when, after three severe winters in a row, the winter of 1979-80 was unanimously described as mild, when in reality it was pretty close to normal. Indeed, snowfall was generally light in most areas, with bare ground the rule into early January, and milder-than-average temperatures prevailed into mid-January (Duluth, for example, had its warmest December in 20 years). But after that temperatures were mostly slightly below normal and snow cover at many northern locations began to approach more normal levels. Still, no one complained, as memories of those previous winters left us content with this average one.

On the other hand, it was more difficult to be content with the birding. Like last winter, birds of all types were few and far between in most areas with "dull" the word used by most to describe the season. The shortage of "winter" finches was particularly apparent—only northern Minnesota recorded good numbers of some species—and for the second

successive year this closely-watched group made a very disappointing showing. On the positive side, to offset the generally poor quantity of birds, was the "quality" in unusual visitors and "southern" species (note especially the stunning array of warblers in Wisconsin and Michigan).

LOONS THROUGH BITTERNS — A Com. Loon lingered through most of December at Duluth, a quite unexpected species this far n. (m.ob.). Two White Pelicans returned to Albert Lea, Minn., to overwinter (m.ob.)—the four there last winter constituted an unexpected first for the state. A pair of Double-crested Cormorants lasted until Jan. 1 at Ortonville, Minn., to rival the pelicans as the oddest lingerers in the state (m.ob.), but even more remarkable was the find of a freshly dead cormorant Jan. 30 far n. at Marquette in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (hereafter, U.P.) (*vide* DM). Great



Blue Herons responded to the mild December when they were frequently found in Wisconsin and Michigan, although there was only one early December report in Minnesota. A very late Green Heron below the Petenwell Dam, Wis., Dec. 20 was a month later than the previous record date (DF). Also late was a Black-crowned Night Heron at Menasha, Wis., in early January (DT), but surprising was an Am. Bittern Dec. 28 near McGregor in n. Minnesota (JL), a record late date.

SWANS AND GEESE — The feral Mute Swan population in Michigan showed evidence of continuing its gradual range expansion; two wandered across L. Michigan to Manitowoc Jan. 3 (DT) and Milwaukee Feb. 2 (GC). Several Whistling Swans lingered in all three states in December and early January, and Minnesota even managed three February records: until Feb. 6 at Weaver, Wabasha Co. (D&WM), Feb. 10 at Ortonville (C&MB) and another overwintered at Fergus Falls (m.ob.). Canada Geese overwintered in greater numbers at more sites than usual: 15,000 were still present at Lac Qui Parle W.M.A., Minn., Jan. 1 with 6000 overwintering (BJ, C&MB); 1000 wintered at Horicon N.W.R. (BD); and 5-6000 remained at Fennville, Mich. (*vide* DM). Snow Geese also lingered later than normal with five January/February reports.

DUCKS — As expected, a larger-than-usual variety of ducks was found. Most unexpected among these were 24 Am. Wigeons at three places in the Detroit area (*vide* AK), peaks of up to 5000 Redheads and 3000 Canvasbacks on the Detroit R., an inland Greater Scaup into early January in Winnebago County, Wis. (DT), and an unprecedented 300 Ruddy Ducks wintering in Detroit (TC). A lone Ruddy tarried until Jan. 19 at Rochester, Minn. (JD), good Com. Merganser concentrations of 15,000 were present in Wabasha County, Minn., Dec. 3 (KE), with 1200 at Madison Dec. 18 (AS, ST), and 2000 at Detroit Jan. 3 (*vide* AK). There was also a good showing of species in the rarities category: a ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye, quite casual in Minnesota, was found Dec. 30 on the Minnesota R., in St. Paul (B. Litkey) where it was sporadically reported through the rest of the season (m.ob.); a Harlequin Duck remained at Duluth through December (m.ob.); an amazing concentration of 20 King Eiders somehow turned up at the favored Port Huron, Mich., site Dec. 1 (*vide* DM), while an unidentified ♀ eider was seen Feb. 21-28 at Harbor Beach, Mich. (CS); and five inland White-winged Scoters were unusual at Ann Arbor, Battle Creek and Kalamazoo. About the only disappointment among the ducks seemed to be a shortage of Red-breasted Mergansers noted by some Great Lakes observers in Michigan.

RAPTORS — Most observers noted a healthy population of hawks due not only to ground free of snow but also to a plentiful supply of small mammals. The best example of this was the Rough-legged Hawk which, although thought to be down in Michigan and s. Wisconsin, did well in n. Wisconsin and Minnesota; for example, there was a good late peak of 34 in the Sax-Zim bog, St. Louis Co., Minn., Jan. 2 (KE). More Golden Eagles than normal were also found, including two unusual n. Minnesota individuals Feb. 17 at Sax-Zim (KE) and at Agassiz N.W.R. in early February (*vide* S&KS), three in Adams and Jackson counties, Wis., Dec. 20 (DF), another found fatally injured in a coyote trap in Oconto County, Wis., Feb. 17 (*vide* TZ), and one as far e. as Fennville, Mich., Feb. 9 (GW). A mid-winter count sponsored by the Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources of 37 Bald Eagles was also en-

couraging. There was a lone Wisconsin Gyrfalcon Dec. 13 in Burnett County (JP) while Minnesota reported no fewer than five individuals including one which was most unusual since it uncharacteristically remained in the same location all winter in the Duluth-Superior harbor (m.ob.). Very late was a Peregrine Falcon Dec. 4 at McFarland, Wis. (PT). More Merlins have been reported in recent winters in Minnesota, and this season four were found; there was also a lone Wisconsin record.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS THROUGH RAILS — Michigan had generally a poor season among gallinaceous species with very low numbers of Ruffed Grouse, Bobwhite and Ring-necked Pheasant. Sharp-tailed Grouse also seemed harder to find in n.w. Minnesota where numerous tracts of brush, bog and woodland are being cleared and drained for farming. The last of the long-established introduced flock of Chukars at Ely, Minn., was last seen in 1977, so it was a surprise when two were found 35 ± mi distant between Aurora and Biwabik Dec. 7 along railroad tracks at the edge of an abandoned open-pit iron mine—favored habitat at Ely (J. Gross); whether these were recent local releases or wanderers from Ely is difficult to say. A flock of 50 Sandhill Cranes over Lac Qui Parle L., Minn., Dec. 2 was very late (P. Joyce). Four Virginia Rails tried to overwinter in Waukesha County, Wis., but the last was found dead Feb. 15 (SS); five were also reported from s. Michigan.

SHOREBIRDS AND JAEGERS — The first winter record of Am. Woodcock in the Detroit area occurred Jan. 26 when one flew into a window in Wayne County (ES). Unusual for n. Minnesota was a Com. Snipe Jan. 28-30 in Cass County (SY). A Dunlin was very late Dec. 8 at Midland, Mich. (SM). Most exciting was a mixed flock of Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers Dec. 1 at Port Huron, Mich. (JG *et al*); three Pominines were seen well and carefully identified (lending additional credence to this extraordinary report was the fact that several individuals in the flock of a dozen or so were wisely left as jaeger, sp.).

GULLS — Although Wisconsin and Michigan managed close-to-normal numbers of Glaucous Gulls, there was not a single report on the Minnesota side of L. Superior all winter, where Herring Gulls were also severely down in numbers. A third-year Great Black-backed Gull was discovered at Racine, Wis., Jan. 14-26 (TD *et al*), while another gull identified as a Lesser Black-backed was at Loon L., Benzie Co., Mich., Dec. 15, although complete details of this report are not yet available (HH, SN). Only one Thayer's Gull was reported, an adult at Duluth Dec. 9 (P. Egeland). Three Bonaparte's Gulls were still at Detroit Jan. 5 (JFo), and at least three Black-legged Kittiwakes were also found among all those jaegers at Port Huron Dec. 1 (JG).

DOVES AND OWLS — During January and February 7000 ± Rock Doves were trapped and removed for commercial use from the Duluth harbor, which casts serious

doubt on the "reliable" count of 5091 on the CBC here. Mourning Doves did well in s. Michigan during the relatively mild winter, and this encouraged a January nesting attempt in Dearborn with a fledgling found frozen in the nest Jan. 30 (JF1). Snowy Owls appeared in mixed numbers with "a good flurry" in Michigan, "not a good year" in Wisconsin, and a better-than-average population in the Duluth-Superior harbor area for the second winter in a row. More than the usual number of Hawk Owls appeared in n. Minnesota with at least 12 individuals found at 9 locations. On the other hand, Great Grays were down here with only six reports, although Michigan did well enough with two reported in December at Neebish I. (*vide* DM) and singles in Iron County late January - early February (JWa) and in Dickinson County Feb. 6 (Mrs. Bratt). Long-eared Owls were down again in Wisconsin with only two reporting counties, and there is concern here that the species bears watching. Unusual for n. Minnesota were Short-eared Owls near Aitkin until Feb. 9 (WN) and in Marshall County Jan. 27 (S&KS). At least ten Boreal Owls, a better-than-average number, were found along the North Shore of L. Superior - seven at Duluth Jan. 19-Feb. 9, one at Tofto Feb. 18 and two in Cook County Jan. 29 — but none remained in one spot for more than a day and the species remained just as elusive as ever. And n. Minnesota also did well with Saw-whet Owls where the species is usually absent in winter: Jan. 19 near Nickerson (D&GW), Jan. 22 in Itasca County (MS), and two calling in Duluth Township Feb. 22 (KH).

WOODPECKERS — Red-headed Woodpeckers rebounded to normal numbers after being down in recent winters in Minnesota, Wisconsin also reported better numbers than last year but the population was still thought to be below average. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker until Jan. 4 was very late in Nicollet County, Minn. (JF). Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers were clearly up in numbers in n. Minnesota with this normally uncommon and retiring species almost easy to find in many areas. Correspondingly, the Northern Three-toed, usually a most elusive species, was found all winter at Babbitt (TH) and Isabella (SW), and in Cook County Feb. 5-16 (KE); Michigan even had one Dec. 30 at Sault Ste. Marie (G&MB).

MAGPIES THROUGH WRENS — The Black-billed Magpie, an uncommon winter visitor in n.w. Minnesota, seemed particularly scarce this winter. Both Black-capped and Boreal chickadees were more common than usual in Minnesota, although Wisconsin could manage Boreals only in Oconto County (JP). Red-breasted Nuthatches were decidedly scarce in s. Wisconsin and s. Michigan, although parts of n. Minnesota noted this species in abundance. Brown Creepers were noted by many in Minnesota and Wisconsin as up in numbers. Michigan's first recent Bewick's Wren overwintered near Otis L., Barry Co. (JFo *et al*)—it was mistakenly reported as a Carolina Wren in the fall report. Michigan also managed the only Carolina Wrens, with two in Kalamazoo County, but the Detroit area un-

characteristically reported none. Long-billed Marsh Wrens were unexpected in Dane County, Wis., Jan. 19 (AS) and at the Metro-beach, Mich., marshes into February (*vide* AK).

MIMIDS — Members of this family are usually quite foreign to most of this Region in winter, but this year there was an exceptional showing. Mockingbirds appeared five times, as far n. as Two Harbors, Minn. (*vide* KE), Green Bay (JB, JJ), and Traverse City, Mich. (GB). Gray Catbirds in early January near Madison and Detroit were very late, but quite remarkable was one overwintering at a Little Marais feeder up in n. Minnesota (B. Fensstad). The normally rare Brown Thrasher was reported at least 15 times. Certainly the bird of the season was Wisconsin's first documented **Sage Thrasher** which survived through at least early February at McFarland, Dane Co. (m.ob.).



Sage Thrasher, McFarland, WI, Dec. 15, 1979 - early February. Photo/ Steve Lang.

THRUSHES THROUGH SHRIKES — Good numbers of Am. Robins were found in Wisconsin and along the North Shore of L. Superior owing to a healthy crop of mountain ash and other berries. Lots of Varied Thrushes again wandered E into the Region, with at least 15 in Minnesota, six in Wisconsin and four in Michigan. Eastern Bluebirds were scarcer than usual in s. Michigan, but two in Nicollet County, Minn., was a good find Jan. 4 (JF). Another good find was a ♂ Mountain Bluebird in Superior Jan. 19 (AC), only about the eighth Wisconsin record. The casual Townsend's Solitaire appeared Feb. 20 in Devil's Lake S.P., Wis. (KL), and another overwintered in Mankato, Minn. (JF). Golden-crowned Kinglets rebounded well from previously low numbers; this was most evident in Wisconsin during December and in n. Minnesota throughout the winter. The much scarcer Ruby-crowned was also reported more frequently in December and early January, and one survived until Feb. 10 in Mason County, Mich. (EG). Both Minnesota and Wisconsin observers found fewer N. Shrikes than usual.

VIREOS AND WARBLERS — This group is usually more alien to this Region in winter than the mimids discussed above, but Wisconsin and Michigan reported an incredible variety of warblers and even one vireo. Normally winter reports of vireos can safely be dismissed as misidentified goldfinches, but with so many warblers present that **White-eyed Vireo** at Madison through Dec. 15 seems credible (BH *et al.*). Obviously late were Orange-crowned Warblers at Madison Dec. 1 (MS) and at Dearborn, Mich., Jan. 3 (JFo)—this latter date about five weeks later than the

previous Detroit area record. Also at Madison Dec. 2 was a Nashville Warbler (AS), and, not to be outdone, Michigan responded with a dead **Magnolia Warbler** found Dec. 5 in Oakland County, this more than two months later than the previous Detroit record (RO). But the warblers in Michigan refused to quit: a Cape May survived at a feeder in Climax Dec. 9-Jan. 7 (ME), a Pine was in Detroit Dec. 26-Jan. 3 (JG, EC), an Ovenbird at an Oakland County feeder until Dec. 12 was photographed lest you think we are making all this up (JWi), and one or two Com. Yellowthroats lasted in the Detroit area through December (*vide* AK). Of course there were several interesting Yellow-rumped Warbler sightings as well, but at this point they pale.

ICTERIDS — Meadowlarks were thought to be unusually scarce in Wisconsin this winter, perhaps dispersed by the lack of snow cover. Three Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported in December in Wisconsin, but more unusual were singles Jan. 1-5 in Big Stone County, Minn. (BJ, DB) and Jan. 25 in Nicollet County, Minn. (JF). A N. Oriole lasted until Jan. 12 at a Minneapolis feeder (*vide* BJ). Blackbirds in general wintered in better than average numbers in all three states, especially Red-winged, Com. Grackles and Brown-headed Cowbirds — this last species especially common in s. Michigan.

GROSBEAKS THROUGH TOWHEES — Somehow three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks decided to remain into the winter in Minnesota: one lasted at a feeder in Dakota, Winona Co., until Dec. 29, another was chanced upon near Deerwood, Crow Wing Co., Jan. 21 (TL), and still another was at a Minneapolis feeder Jan. 29+; there was also one at a Michigan feeder Dec. 3-23 in Dickinson County (A&FK). As mentioned in the introduction, the movement of winter finches was again disappointing. There were a few bright spots and some species appeared in average numbers, but most numbers were obviously low: Evening Grosbeak — normal numbers in Minnesota and n. Wisconsin, scarce elsewhere in Wisconsin; Purple Finch — good numbers in n. Minnesota, but down somewhat elsewhere in the Region; Pine Grosbeak — way down with only a few scattered in six n. Minnesota counties, in Wisconsin limited to only a few n. counties in December, and 37± total for the season throughout n. Michigan; Com. Redpoll — only two s. Minnesota reports and not many more than that in n. Minnesota where there was a lone Hoary reported, in Wisconsin even scarcer than the Pine Grosbeak with no more than five counties reporting, and fewer than 50 total individuals in Michigan all season; Pine Siskin — good numbers in extreme n.e. Minnesota but clearly down elsewhere, the scarcity in Wisconsin was "shocking" and in Michigan "only about 40 statewide at feeders"; Red Crossbill — consistently low, but not shockingly so, in n. Minnesota and n. Wisconsin, only five reports in n. Michigan, and no reports anywhere in the s. half of the Region; White-winged Crossbill — curiously common in Cook County, Minn., where courtship display of several males was noted, only three other reporting counties in n. Min-

nesota, virtually absent in Wisconsin where there were no post-CBC reports, and only one report from Michigan. Filling in the gap left by the other finches was the Am. Goldfinch, which was reported in good numbers throughout the Region, even in n. Minnesota where the species is normally absent in winter. Wisconsin's sixth **Green-tailed Towhee** remained at an Ashland feeder (HB), where it was seen and photographed by m.ob. There were several Rufous-sided Towhee reports with the one overwintering at a Lutsen feeder in n.e. Minnesota clearly the most unusual (TB).

SPARROWS THROUGH SNOW BUNTING — A Vesper Sparrow overwintered at a Waukesha County, Wis., feeder (SS) and another was in Kalamazoo Jan. 13 (RA). Both Dark-eyed Junco and Tree Sparrow were considered to be low in Michigan, although their populations in Minnesota and Wisconsin seemed to be about normal. Three Field Sparrows reported in Minnesota were interesting since normally none are, good numbers of Swamp Sparrows wintered in Michigan, and two n. Michigan Song Sparrows were noteworthy. Unusual for n.e. Minnesota were single Lapland Longspurs at feeders in Duluth Jan. 10 and Tofte Feb. 16 (KE); however, this species seemed to be down in numbers in Wisconsin and Michigan. Finally, Snow Buntings were reportedly harder to find throughout, with lack of snow cover probably to blame.

CORRECTION — The Kirtland's Warbler total for Summer 1979 in Michigan should read 210, not 310.

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MIDDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

/Vernon M. Kleen

This was a rather uneventful winter but there were enough unusual sightings to make the season interesting. The obvious lack of winter finches coupled with the paucity of normal wintering species spelled boredom for the majority of bird-feeding enthusiasts. Unique excitement, though, did stir at selected feeders throughout the Region with such species as Varied Thrushes, Black-throated Sparrows, and various warblers adorning the otherwise dull settings.

The near-normal winter (extremely mild if compared to the past three) helped to induce many species to linger longer and farther north than expected. The usual number of catbirds, thrashers and "myrtles" was joined by other shorebirds, gulls, wrens, warblers, Dickcissels and various sparrows. One of the best records may have been of the Heermann's Gull photographed in Ohio. Waterfowl, gull and robin populations exceeded those of even normal winters.

In contrast, there was a scarcity of Marsh and Rough-legged hawks, Long-eared, Short-eared, Snowy, and Saw-whet owls; juncos, and many sparrows. In addition, those populations that suffered in past winters, such as kinglets, wrens, mockingbirds and bluebirds, were still low in numbers—but, in some places there were positive signs of a beginning recovery.

Cold weather did not hit the Region until late January and then only remained through mid-February. As the cold weather snapped, some species—ducks, woodcock, waxwings, meadowlarks and blackbirds—were already migrating into the Region. One concern that should be carefully monitored is the new wood-burning stove craze. Many persons managed to utilize only wood as their heat-source this winter; if this becomes very popular, it will prove detrimental to some woodland species. Careful investigations are in order.

As usual, all extraordinary sight records must be thoroughly documented at the time of observation. For the winter season, 143

documentation forms were received: Ohio—43, Indiana—38, Illinois—32, Missouri—17, Kentucky—7, and Iowa—6. In addition 13 photographs were received. All documented records have been denoted by a dagger (†). Records which were not satisfactorily documented, but which may be credible appear in the UNCORROBORATED RECORDS section.

As a reading aid, the following abbreviations have been used in the text: CBC—Christmas Bird Count (most such records have not been included in this report) C.O.R.—Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, Ill; L.Cal.—Lake Calumet, Ill; O.W.R.—Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, O.; S.C.R.—Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Mo. and Spfld.—Springfield, Ill.

LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS —

Only five Com. Loons lingered into January, and three of those until Feb. 10 in Gibson County, Ind. (CMI); most were gone prior to the CBC period. The only Red-necked Grebe encountered was in the Greater Miami R., Ind., and O., Dec 18-Jan. 7 (†NW, DSt). The majority of Horned Grebes had departed prior to the report period; a few lingered into December and occasionally until mid-January (m.ob.). A W. Grebe appeared for two days at Michigan City, Ind., Jan. 19-20 (†PG, †KB, m.ob.). There were a few Double-crested Cormorants in December—most were gone before the CBCs.

HERONS, WATERFOWL — Small numbers of Great Blue Herons braved the winter in many areas. Black-crowned Night Herons remained in L. Erie marshes until Jan. 3(JP). From one to seven Mute Swans were located at seven areas; one remained the entire period at Sandusky, O., some remained part of the period, but most were encountered on only one day: Dec. 4 (seven birds) at Springfield, Mo., to Feb. 1 (2 birds) in Jefferson County, Ky. Forty Whistling Swans wintered at Cedar Point Wildlife Ref., O. (ET); 50 remained through Dec. 6 in n.e. Iowa (DK); there were four isolated instances of 1-3 birds at other localities. The final build-up of wintering Canada Geese (and many ducks) did not materialize in s. Illinois and w. Kentucky until the extreme cold spell of late January with the maxima not occurring until mid-February. Thousands of Snow Geese remained in Fremont County, Ia., until mid-January (IG). A large number and wide variety of ducks lingered at selected ponds and lakes throughout the Region. Practically all normal waterfowl species were present somewhere (often in greater-than-expected numbers) and usually in more than one place. With the advent of warmer weather in mid-February, some of the ducks began their N migration into the Region. Greater Scaup were routinely identified at many places they rarely frequent. Two Harlequin Ducks were detected at Michigan City, Dec. 29 (CK); one remained



Feb 29+ (KB, PG). Single King Eiders were noted at O.W.R., Dec 8 (†JP) and Huron, O. Dec. 13 (†JP). Small numbers of White-winged Scoters were on L. Erie and L. Michigan—longer than usual; one bird was identified in Vermilion County, Ill., Dec. 13 (†MC). The Dec. 9 presence of a Black Scoter in Calhoun County, Ill., was noteworthy (HWu).

DIURNAL RAPTORS —

The 244 Turkey Vultures in Casey County, Ky., Jan 1 was unexpected (JE1); 125 were recorded at Hopkinsville, Ky., Jan. 13 (PHY); there were single observations at three other locations. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were reported regularly—most often in conjunction with feeding stations. The six reports of Red-shouldered Hawks from Ohio were not that encouraging since the species was not reported from traditional areas at all this year; the species was also noted in four Missouri and two Illinois locations. Rough-legged Hawks were few this year and absent from some areas. There were seven records of Golden Eagles (not including those observed on the coordinated eagle surveys); the most e. record was of an adult at Brookville Res., Ind. Dec. 1 (†TPe). The final tally of Bald Eagles on the midwinter survey (Jan. 7-12) was 1334—a slight decrease from the 1979 results. Marsh Hawks were scarce. Winter records of Ospreys are always subject to skepticism; however, the following seem legitimate: two (both banded) in the St. Louis area through Feb. 10 (m.ob.); one at River-ton N.W.R., Ia, Jan. 17 (IG); and one (probably the first acceptable winter record for Ohio) at Lorain Jan. 13 (†JP). A gray phase Gyrfalcon was present at O.W.R., Dec. 2-9 (LV, †JP). A Prairie Falcon was discovered in Holt County, Mo., Dec. 26 (†R); another was present at Lawrenceville, Ill., Dec. 2-3 and Feb. 3-18 (†LH, †DJ, m.ob.); and a third near Alton, Ill., Nov. 27-Dec. 23 (†BR, m.ob.). There were only two documented Peregrine Falcons—both in Missouri. There were also only two documented Merlins—both in December. American Kestrels were fairly common this winter in most places.

BOBWHITES THROUGH RAILS —

Bobwhite remained quite scarce; some were observed using ground feeders. Gray Partridge were scarcely reported (one record in s. Illinois). The 54 Sandhill Cranes heading S over Dayton, O., were rather late for Dec. 2 (fide CMT); seven were noted at Cincinnati Feb. 16 (fide W). A King Rail was caught and

banded in Ottawa County, O., Jan. 1 (JP). A Sora was observed in the same Ottawa County marsh Dec. 30-Jan. 6 (JP).

SHOREBIRDS — Indiana's first winter Ruddy Turnstone appeared at the Gary dump Feb. 2 (†PG, †KB, *et al.*). American Woodcock began returning about Feb. 22-23. A curlew, sp., was seen at the St. Charles County, Mo. airport, Jan. 6 (†VB). One Spotted Sandpiper was still present at Lorain, O., Dec. 16 (†JP). Three Purple Sandpipers were reported: one at Michigan City Dec. 7 (TK) and observed through Jan. 19 (†PG, m.ob.); one at Cleveland Jan. 5 (M, LRo); and one at Lorain, Jan. 7 (†JP). A Baird's Sandpiper was photographed at Huron, O., Dec. 11 (TL). Late Dunlins included three at Huron Jan. 2 and one at Castalia, O., Jan. 2 (JP). A Red Phalarope was noted at Darby Marsh, O., Jan. 1 (†JP, †CMT, m.ob.).

GULLS —

S.A.

“Nearly daily observations of gulls at Lorain, O., by JP provides insight into the seasonal movement patterns of these species. When Lake Erie was open, the most numerous inshore species were Ring-billed and Bonaparte's. White-winged, Great Black-backed and even Herring gulls were uncommon or absent. When cold weather arrived and the lake started to freeze, the large Bonaparte's flocks left. The species composition changed radically when the lake was mostly or entirely frozen. At this time, Herring Gulls were nearly as common as the Ring-billed Gulls while the peak concentrations of white-winged species and Great Black-backed occurred. When the ice broke up, almost all species disappeared, leaving only small numbers of Ring-billed and Herring gulls.” (J).

A peak of 13 Glaucous Gulls occurred at Lorain Feb. 5 (JP); three were present at Alton Dam (Ill. and Mo.) Feb. 2 & 4 (BR *et al.*), up to five were noted in n. Indiana during the period (†PG); more distant singles were documented for C.O.R., Feb. 16-17 (†MMI) and Spfld., Dec. 6 (†H). Up to three Iceland Gulls occurred in the Cleveland/Lorain area Jan. 18-Feb. 11 (JP *et al.*); one bird was identified at Gary, Ind., Feb. 28 (†KB) and another at Spfld., Feb. 27 (†H). The peak concentration of Great Black-backed Gulls reached 170 Jan. 31-Feb. 9 at Cleveland (M) and nearly as high at Lorain Feb. 5 (JP); four were noted in the Chicago area Dec. 25-Jan. 2 (RB, SM); and two more Jan. 20 (RB); one was present at C.O.R., Feb. 24 (†MM1). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was documented at Gary, Ind. (for the state's 3rd record) Dec. 28 & Jan. 6 (†EH, KB, PG); also, at Cleveland Jan. 5 (†RH, m.ob.) which bird may have been at Lorain Jan. 15—Feb. 11 (†JP). Thayer's Gull craze seems to be spreading; four different birds were reported from Chicago Dec. 25-Jan. 5 (RB, SM); three immatures and one adult at Alton Dam December through February; one at Gary Dec. 1-Jan. 29 (PG *et al.*); two adults at Lorain Feb. 5-19 (†JP, m.ob.); and one immature at Cleveland during January (†RH, m.ob.); and two at L. Calumet during

February (WM, †RCh) **The Heermann's Gull** at Lorain (a 2nd-year bird) Feb. 12-18 may represent the first record e. of the Mississippi R. (†JP, †JF, m.ob.—ph.). Three different Black-headed Gulls were present in the Lorain area Jan. 2-Feb. 11 (†JP, m.ob.); another was noted at Cleveland Jan. 7 (M). The number of lingering Bonaparte's Gulls was exceptional in both the Cleveland and Chicago areas. Up to eleven Little Gulls were present at Cleveland in December; there were fewer than five during January and the last had departed by the end of January (M); the peak at Lorain reached six, Jan. 12 (JP); there were at least six, possibly eight at Chicago Dec. 25 with some remaining through Jan. 6 (RB, SM). Two Black-legged Kittiwakes were detected at Evanston, Ill., Jan. 5 (†RB, JL, SM); singles were documented at Cleveland Dec. 24 (M), Dec. 27 (†TBt); and Dec. 26-Jan. 25 (†JP); another was reported from the Mississippi River at St. Louis, Jan. 12 (DAN).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

— Mourning Doves were well distributed and in higher numbers—especially in urban areas (m.ob.); the species attempted nesting in January and February around Cincinnati (KM). Three **Ground Doves** were reported from one Missouri CBC; another was noted at Pleasant Hill, Mo., Jan. 12-13 (†JGa, †m.ob.). Five Barn Owls were reported—one in Indiana, three in Iowa and one in Ohio. There was only a scattering of Snowy Owls—13 to be exact—all at the n. edge of the Region (except the one at Shelbyville, Ky., Dec. 15 (WBn); all were individual reports except for the four at Toledo (m.ob.). Long-eared Owls were scarcely encountered—from only nine localities and then in small numbers. Short-eared Owls were more widespread and in greater numbers; most were noted in February; the 23 at Lexington, Ky., Feb. 17 (RM) was the greatest number reported—most were in groups of fewer than seven. There were three or four Iowa reports of Saw-whet Owls; only two birds in Ohio—both at Cincinnati. (RA); and two birds in Illinois in late February to early March (JA, LJ). Belted Kingfishers were widely encountered, in small numbers, owing to the availability of open water. Common Flickers were more common than experienced during the past three winters. A “Red-shafted” Flicker that had been banded at Palos Park, Ill., Mar. 2, 1979 was recaptured there Dec. 3 & Jan. 8 (KBa). The number of Pileated Woodpeckers reported—nearly always in bottomlands—indicated a good winter (possibly expanding) distribution; most notable were birds in s. Ohio and Indiana and e. Illinois. Red-headed Woodpeckers were much more common this winter than usual and were mostly associated with bottomland forests.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH NUTHATCHES — An E. Kingbird was still present at Goose Lake Prairie S.P., Ill., Dec. 9 (KBa). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher made a Feb. 22 appearance at Springfield, Mo. (WC). The latest of three E. Phoeebes encountered was in Fairfield County, O., Jan. 19 (J); the others were in Chicago, Dec. 22-Jan. 7 (†RB) and Lake Forest, Ill., Dec. 7 (SM). A Say's Phoebe was documented at St.

Anthony, Ia, Dec. 22 (†CK) An *Empidonax* flycatcher was still at Louisville Dec. 9 (†LRA). Observers felt that Horned Larks were less common than expected; however, owing to the lack of snow cover, the birds may have been less conspicuous as well. Both species of chickadees were recorded in high numbers on CBCs—and therefore have apparently survived the harsh winters of past years successfully. However, the numbers of Tufted Titmice are still rather low in contrast to the “good” years; some areas (Ohio in particular) have suggested moderate increases again. Red-breasted Nuthatches were practically nonexistent this year.

WRENS, MIMIDS AND THRUSHES —

The only really late record of a House Wren was at Louisville Feb. 5 (†BP). Winter Wren remained present—but scarce, suggesting the beginning of its comeback. The same is true for Carolina Wrens—with definite, positive signs in the s. portions of the Region. A Long-billed Marsh Wren was noted in Ottawa County, O., Jan. 1 (JP). Although Mockingbirds were still encountered, the total number remains low compared to average years; the species was absent from many areas where it usually occurs. Only five Gray Catbirds were reported—the latest in s.w. Ohio Feb. 3 (TPE). There were nearly 15 records of wintering Brown Thrashers in the n. portion of the Region. American Robins were reported as the most common woodland species in some areas; high numbers were reported (much higher than normal) Region-wide. There were five **Varied Thrushes** observed: Findlay S.P., O., Dec. 23-Feb. 29+ (LCh, †m.ob.) and Mansfield, O., Feb. 10-Feb. 29+ (†SMc, m.ob.) for Ohio's second and third confirmed records; Monticello, Ia, mid-December to mid-March (PW, †m.ob.); Savanna, Ill., Dec. 24-January (TB, †m.ob.); and Peoria Feb. 5-29+ (CR, †VH, m.ob.). There were more wintering reports of Hermit Thrushes than usual, some survived all winter in n. areas. Eastern Bluebirds remained scarce (or absent), but showed signs for optimism in Kentucky and Ohio.

SYLVIIDS, THROUGH SHRIKES — A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was photographed in Gibson County, Ind. Dec. 8 (DJ). The number of Golden-crowned Kinglets encountered was encouraging—although still scarce. A Water Pipit was present at Columbus Jan. 26 (J). The only report of a Bohemian Waxwing came from Christian County, Mo., Jan. 24 (†DHg). Cedar Waxwings wintered in excellent numbers Regionwide and were joined by a wide band of migrants in mid-to-late February as evidenced by the 4000 at Murray, Ky., Feb. 25 (JEr). The regular number of N. Shrikes was reported—as usual, in the n. portions of the Region; one was reported as far s. as Waveland, Ind., Feb. 29 (AB). The number of Loggerhead Shrikes encountered remained low.

WARBLERS — Such surprises! A Black-and-white Warbler at Kent, O., Dec. 16 (†LRO); a Tennessee Warbler at Charleston, Ill., Dec. 13 (LH); two Orange-crowned Warblers at Chicago Dec. 26 (SM) with one remaining through Jan. 7 (m.ob.—ph.),

another Orange-crowned at an Indianapolis feeder November-Feb. 7 (LP, m.ob.). A Nashville Warbler at Monmouth, Ill., Dec. 9 (†LM). A Cape May Warbler at Spring Mill S.P., Ind., Feb. 4-27 (†DC—ph.). A Black-throated Blue Warbler at another Indianapolis feeder (eating sunflower seeds) Dec. 16—Jan. 30 (†LP—ph.). Large numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers—including 100± at Chicago Jan. 10 (SM) and 50 in Lawrence County, Ill., Jan. 26 (LH). Three Palm Warblers at Chicago as late as Jan. 10 (SM, m.ob.)—one remaining until Jan. 14 (RB); one at Columbus Dec. 22 (†JSk) and another in Pickaway County, O., Dec. 1 (J). A N. Waterthrush at Chicago Dec. 15 (†SM). Single Com. Yellowthroats at Dayton Feb. 20 (CMt, PHa); C.O.R., Jan. 19 (†MM1); Prairie Creek Res., Ind., Jan. 12 (LC); O.W.R., Dec. 2 (*fide* P.J.) and up to three at Chicago as late as Jan. 7 (RB, SM) and one through Jan. 14 (RB, m.ob.—ph.). And finally, an Am. Redstart at Somerset, Ky., Jan. 1 (†JE1).

MEADOWLARKS, BLACKBIRDS AND ORIOLES — Eastern Meadowlarks were still scarce, but suggested a slight increase in the s; the species was absent from many areas; the first spring influx was detected in early February. Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds wintered at S.C.R. (BHe *et al.*); another wintered at O.W.R. (ET, m.ob.); and one was noted at Cedar Point Wildlife Ref., O., Jan. 1 (JP). A N. Oriole was present near Evingham, Ill., Jan. 2-Feb. 13 (WS, *fide* H). The first winter record for a **Great-tailed Grackle** in Missouri was established Dec. 22 at S.C.R. (BC, HB). The only blackbird roosts reported were in Kentucky—"millions" of birds at Bowling Green and an estimated 3,000,000 (mostly grackles and Starlings) at Somerset.

FRINGILLIDS — The only documented Black-headed Grosbeak occurred at Sterling, Ill., in early February (†BSh). Four Indigo Buntings were documented: two on CBCs; the other two birds were at Spfld., Dec. 1 & 13 (H) and L. Sangchris, Ill., Dec. 20 (H). Seven Dickcissels were reported—all but one in January or February and were reported just as the harshest part of winter arrived, Jan. 20-31; the one present at Findley S.P., O., was joined by another Feb. 23 (m.ob.). Evening Grosbeaks were scarcely reported—however, there were 25 in Columbus Jan. 19 (J) and another 25 in Hocking County, O., Jan. 22 (JF). Purple Finches are usually dependable—but not so this year; they were scarce everywhere. The usual large flocks of House Finches now expected around Cleveland did not materialize this year—only very small numbers were encountered; the species' first occurrence was duly established at Sandusky, O., Dec. 5-Feb. 26 (†TB); nine birds were reported from Somerset, Ky., during the period and some were present in Lexington, Ky., into January (DC). The only Com. Redpolls were seen in extreme n. Ohio. Pine Siskins were virtually absent this winter and there were no large flocks of Am. Goldfinches. A small influx of Red Crossbills appeared about CBC time and were sporadically distributed through mid-February; although flocks reached 50, small

er numbers were usually encountered. There were two reports of White-winged Crossbills—both in Ohio and both consisting of four birds. The mild winter may have been beneficial for Rufous-sided Towhees. A Lark Bunting was documented in Lawrence County, Ill., Dec. 9 (†LH, DJ). A small number of Savannah Sparrows wintered in the Region. There were three Ohio records of wintering Vesper Sparrows and three birds were noted in McLean County, Ill., Feb. 3 (DBz). Dark-eyed Juncos were generally much scarcer than in other recent years (there were only isolated exceptions); the same was reported for Tree Sparrows—with only isolated large flocks encountered. Even the skeptics proved themselves wrong by discovering Chipping Sparrows at Decatur, Ill., Dec. 23 (†H, RS); Findley S.P., O., Feb. 25 (†JP); Pickaway County, O., Feb. 10 (†J); Urbana, Ill., Dec. 15 (RB). Field Sparrows were scarcely reported, but slight gains were suggested for n. portions of the Region. Single **Black-throated Sparrows** were present at feeders in Glencoe, Ill., Jan. 6-Feb. 29† (RB, †m.ob.—ph.) and at Rockford, Feb. 7-24 (KBr, †m.ob.—ph.). The expected number of Harris' Sparrows were recorded; the eastern most was at Louisville, in February (†MB). Observers reported a scarcity of both White-crowned and White-throated sparrows. Ohio observers found more Fox Sparrows than expected. Lincoln's Sparrows were reported from three w. Missouri localities in December and January. Lapland Longspurs were widespread in the n. portions of the Region—but difficult to locate because of the lack of snow cover; when snow did appear, the birds were more readily detected. There were many fewer Snow Buntings this winter than in other recent years with no large flocks encountered at all.

UNCORROBORATED RECORDS — Barn Owl at Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 15; Varied Thrush at Cincinnati beginning Dec. 29; Orange-crowned Warbler there Jan. 6; Cape May Warbler there Jan. 24-Feb. 29+; Ovenbird at two different Cincinnati feeders, Dec. 15-Feb. 29+ and Feb. 10-Feb. 29+.

CORRIGENDA — The following records were from Forney's Lake in s.w. Iowa not Decorah, Ia., (AB 33:866-867) W. Grebe, White Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorant and Snow Geese. Also, (p. 868, same issue) the Sanderling records for Louisville, Ky., should be July 24, not June 24).

ADDENDA — Since Missouri's fall report did not arrive in time for inclusion, the following noteworthy records should be added: Groove-billed Ani, Kingdom City Oct. 11-26 (m.ob.). Barn Owl, three young in two nests near St. Joseph Aug. 17. Black-headed Grosbeak, St. Louis County Sept. 26. Ferruginous Hawk, Eldorado Springs Oct. 19.

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CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION /Robert B. Hamilton

Throughout the Region the weather was relatively mild in December and January, but February was colder than normal. Many northern invaders were absent or present only in limited numbers; the mild December was probably responsible for many of the unusual birds reported on the coast Christmas Birds Counts (hereafter, CBC). The number of lingerers was not as large as might have been anticipated on the non-coastal counts. The increase in House Finch reports from Tennessee and northern Alabama was noteworthy (House Finches apparently outnumbered Purple Finches) as was the Alabama record for Red-footed Booby (the second record for

the Gulf of Mexico). The most interesting trend was the abundance along the coast of western vagrants such as Anna's Hummingbird, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher and the first United States record of Blue Bunting. The variety of flycatchers on CBCs was almost unbelievable.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — The Com. Loon at Horseshoe L., Crittendon Co., Ark., Feb. 23 (L&BBC) was unexpected. The **Red-throated Loon** reported at Pensacola Beach, Fla., Dec. 5 (LD, RDU) represented the second n.w. Florida record in 15 years and the one at Gulf Shores Dec. 31 (JP) provided the tenth Alabama coastal record in 25 years; one inland at Guntersville L., Jan. 26 (CDC, DMB) provided the fourth record for the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama since 1951. A Red-necked Grebe was reported at Hattiesburg, Miss., sewage ponds Dec. 23 (TF) & Feb. 16 (TF, DH). Large numbers of Eared Grebes wintered as far e. as Hattiesburg (59 Feb. 10—TF) and Guntersville L. (17 on Jan. 26—CDC, DMB). At Jackson County, Miss., Dec. 1 there were 16 White Pelicans (JAT, LG, SP, TF). The **Red-footed Booby** reported at Gulf Shores Jan. 12 (CDC, DMB, *vide* TI) marked the first Alabama record and only the second that I know of from the Gulf of Mexico. Gannets were seen with the booby; six were also reported at Rutherford Beach, Cameron Par., Jan. 27 (JK, LHa). An imm. **Great Cormorant** was at Gulf Shores Jan. 11-13 (CDC, DMB) & Mar. 4 (GJ, DGJ) for the second Alabama record. There were two Alabama Green Heron winter records in addition to those on CBCs; one at Spring Hill Feb. 12 (GJ, DGJ) furnished the fourth inland winter record and one at Mary Lou Slough Feb. 19 (GJ) provided the 11th coastal record (*vide* TI). The Cattle Egret seen and photographed at Cold Springs, Cullman Co., Dec. 21 (FC, W&DAR) was the only known winter appearance in the n. half of Alabama (*vide* TI). In Mississippi a Reddish Egret was found at Gulfport Harbor, Harrison Co., Dec. 2 (LG, JAT, SP, TF). The Am. Bittern at Shreveport Airport Jan. 12 (BCr, JRS, SHe, N&PCN) was found in an "unbelievably small amount of suitable habitat." Two *Plegadis* ibises were at Pascagoula R. marsh, Jackson Co., Miss., Dec. 1 (JAT, LG, SP, TF).

WATERFOWL — Two Whistling Swans stayed at Wapanocca N.W.R., Crittendon Co., Ark., Dec. 3-Feb. 29+ (EH) and two were at Crowley's Ridge S.P., Green Co., Ark., Dec. 17-18 (EH). The two White-fronted Geese that wintered at Wapanocca (EH) did not arrive until January. Two at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., Oct. 16-17 (PFC, GJ) represented the ninth coastal Alabama occurrence. At Bayou Cassotte Ind. Pk., Jackson Co., Miss., there were two Black Ducks Jan. 31 (JAT, BB) and nine Feb. 16 (JAT & LG). The Cinnamon Teal (one male, two probable female) at the same location Dec. 1 (LG, JAT, SP, TF) & Dec. 19 were the first ever reported for the Mississippi coast and only the third state report. On Feb. 2 there were four Redheads at University L., Baton Rouge (BCr). Greater Scaup were reported from Louisiana (male at Miller's L., Evangeline Par., Dec. 23—BO), Alabama

(female at Oak Mountain L., Shelby Co., Dec. 11—HW, MMc), and Mississippi (two at Hattiesburg sewage ponds Dec. 10-16—TF, DH). The 200,000 Lesser Scaup at Bon Secour Bay, Baldwin Co., Ala., Mar. 6 (PFC, NG, JB *et al.*) were believed to have been present all winter. There were 20 Com. Goldeneyes offshore at Bay St. Louis, Hancock Co., Miss., Dec. 22 (JAT, MHo, BMi) and three (2 ♂ & ♀) at University L., Baton Rouge Jan. 15 (BCr). At L. Fayetteville, Washington Co., five Oldsquaw reported repeatedly Dec. 16-Jan.

27 (JB, DJ, CP, RR, CL, JN) was the second occurrence ever recorded for n.w. Arkansas. On Jan. 28 at Ship I., Miss., 40+ were present (JAT, JAJ, BS); the female at Oak Mountain L., Ala., Dec. 9 (HW) was the earliest local date.

The White-winged Scoter at Oak Mountain L., Nov. 6-23 (HK, RS) provided the fourth Alabama mountain region record; two immatures were at Wheeler N.W.R., Ala., Jan. 19 (DMB, CDC) and one was at Gulf Shores Feb. 5 (GJ). In Louisiana, the maximum numbers reported were in Cameron Parish—14 at Cameron and seven at Rutherford Beach Jan. 26-27 (JK, LHa). The Surf Scoter reported last period at Radnor L., Nashville, stayed until Jan. 5 and a male was at Cameron Jan. 26 (JK, LHa). The 800 Ruddy Ducks reported on the Hancock County, Miss., CBC (JAT, AD, E&RC) was an unexpected high number. A ♀ Com. Merganser stayed at Lake Villa Pond, Metairie, Jefferson Par., Jan. 8-Feb. 2 (N&PCN *et al.*); another female was seen periodically Nov. 28-Feb. 29 at Hattiesburg sewage ponds (TF, MHo, LG, JAT, DH).

HAWKS, CRANES, RAILS — The Mississippi Kite at Baton Rouge Feb. 27 (NN) was undoubtedly an early migrant. A Sharp-shinned Hawk preyed on feeder-attracted birds in Baton Rouge (PC) and two (one adult) used the same food source at Malvern, Hot Springs Co., Ark., Feb. 16-29 (H&MP). The Rough-legged Hawk seen at Guntersville L. CBC was the eighth for Alabama's Tennessee Valley; there were two there Jan. 26 (CDC, DMB). There were only four reported in Tennessee this winter. An imm. Ferruginous Hawk was at Hattiesburg sewage ponds Nov. 23 (LG), Dec. 8 & 27 (TF). There were 29 Golden Eagles reported on U.S.F. & W.S. mid-winter eagle survey in Arkansas, one in Mississippi and two in Alabama. In addition one was observed on top of a utility pole at Bayou Cassotte, Jackson Co., Miss., Feb. 23; while being observed the eagle was shot at four times by a motorist. The U.S.F. & W.S. mid-winter eagle survey in Arkansas found 286 adult and 200 immature Bald Eagles, in Louisiana 37 adult and 20 immature, in Mississippi 7 adult and 6 immature, and in Ala-



bama 14 adult and 21 immature. One was at L. Seminole, Jackson Co., Fla., Jan. 22 (HS, FSt). In Alabama some were present all winter at Eufaula N.W.R., with a maximum of four Dec. 16 (DC); at Wheeler N.W.R., two were present Jan. 5 & 19 (DMB, CDC). In Mississippi five (3 adult) were at Noxubee N.W.R., in late January and early February (JAJ *et al.*) and an adult was at Delisle Feb. 10 (JW). One was at a reservoir in Rankin County Feb. 16 and two were there Feb. 23 (FWi, RD, ELo, MS, CB). An adult spent January at Bay St. Louis (ELE). The nest site near Gulfport was occupied and appeared to be successful (JAT *et al.*).

An Osprey was at Horn I., Miss., Jan. 1 (JAJ) and one was 39 mi s. of Baton Rouge Dec. 2 (VR). One was observed at L. Seminole, Jackson Co., Fla., on several occasions Nov. 29-Feb. 28 (HS, FSt, MG). In addition to CBC reports, a Peregrine Falcon was seen Jan. 19 at Eufaula N.W.R., diving at an imm. Bald Eagle (DC). One was at Marianna, Jackson Co., Fla., Jan. 4 (MG) and one at Port Bienville Ind. Pk., Hancock Co., Miss., Dec. 31-Jan. 1 (SP, JAT). Migrating Sandhill Cranes were reported several times from Tennessee: 40 at Rickman, Overton Co., Nov. 12 (RZ, *vide* RH); 80-87 at Byrdstown, Pickett Co., Dec. 3-9 (DaH, RH); and 42 at Brother-ton Mt., Putnam Co., Dec. 9 (RSi). One wintered at Lynn Haven, Bay Co., Fla., and fed regularly with domestic geese. Two were flushed Feb. 16 at Eufaula N.W.R. (BO). A large flock again wintered e. of Cheneyville, Rapides Par.: 45 were reported Jan. 12 (BCr, BMc, N&PCN); 50± were there Mar. 1 (KG & JLo). Both Virginia Rail and Sora wintered at Monsanto Ponds near Columbia, Tenn. (C.T.O.S.).

CHARADRIIFORMES — An Am. Oystercatcher was seen Sept. 18 at Fort Pickens, Fla. (WV) and Sept. 29 at Perdida Key, Fla. (WV, CC). Four Snowy Plovers were at Horn I. (JAJ) and three at W. Ship I., Miss. (JAJ, MM) Jan. 2. Five Spotted Sandpipers apparently wintered at Hattiesburg sewage ponds (LG, TF) and one also at L. Millwood, Hempstead Co., Ark. (CHM, RLG, DK *et al.*). The six Lesser Yellowlegs at Ben Hur Farm Feb. 1 (VR, SC, DRH) represented on-

ly the second Baton Rouge area winter record. A Purple Sandpiper was found at Destin, Fla., Dec. 9 (DR) & 28 (L&SD). The six Pectoral Sandpipers at Eufula N.W.R., Feb. 16 (BO) provided the earliest Alabama spring record. Although Stilt Sandpipers are extremely rare in winter, this species was found on two Louisiana CBCs. Two Marbled Godwits were found at Pascagoula R. marsh Dec. 1 (JAT, LG, SP, TF); one was at Mobile Jan. 13 (DMB, CDC). Fifteen Am. Avocets were also at Pascagoula R. marsh Dec. 1 (JAT, LG, SP, TF).

The imm. Glaucous Gull at Wheeler N.W.R., Feb. 23 (MF *et al.*) was the latest local winter occurrence. An ad. Great Black-backed Gull was at Fort Pickens, Fla., Dec. 20 (WV), Feb. 13 (WV), & Mar. 8 (DR) and at Destin Feb. 4 (RDu). An immature was at Ono I., Baldwin Co., Ala., Feb. 18 (PFC). The three Ring-billed Gulls at Miller's L., Feb. 23 (BO) marked the second Evangeline Parish winter record. A Bonaparte's Gull, infrequent in Alabama mountain region, was found Dec. 10 & Jan. 11 at Walker County L. (DAR, SW, BW). The second Alabama **Black-legged Kittiwake**, an immature, was at Gulf Shores Jan. 13 (DMB, CDC). A Roseate Tern was at Bellefontaine Beach, Miss., Feb. 24 (MHo). **Least Terns** were found as a winter bird for the first time in n.w. Florida at Panama City Dec. 18 (BH) where there were two and in Alabama at Gulf Shores Jan. 11 (DMB, CDC) where a single was found. On Feb. 19 a Sandwich Tern was at Alabama Pt. (GJ).

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — A Ground Dove at Farville, Craighead Co., Dec. 2-3 (C&NL) provided the third n.e. Arkansas record and two at Wheeler N.W.R., Feb. 2 (CDC, DMB) furnished the fourth Alabama Tennessee Valley record. Two Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at Spanish L., Iberia Par., Jan. 8 (MJM) and one was at Mississippi R. batture, St. Bernard Par., Dec. 29 (RJS, TT, BMC, N&PCN). Groove-billed Anis were found along the coast throughout the Region in groups of one to three Oct. 13-Jan. 5.

Although Barn Owls are unusual in n.w. Florida, one was at Pensacola Beach "Christmas season" (CWM) and one was tallied on a CBC. Burrowing Owls were found on the Lafayette, La., CBC; at Norco, St. Charles Par., Jan. 20 (JK, LHa); inside Fort Massachusetts, Ship I., Jan. 28 (JAJ, JAT, BS); and at Ft. Pickens Dec. 7 (ND) and Mar. 2 (WV). A road-killed Long-eared Owl was found Feb. 23 at Jonesboro, Craighead Co., Ark. (EP)—many of our most unusual owl records are road kills. A Short-eared Owl was seen at Miller's L., Evangeline Par., Dec. 23 (BO, RJS, MWe) and one was at Shreveport Airport Jan. 12 (BCr, SHe, JRS, VR); 8-10 were flushed when the prairie was burned Feb. 28 near Stuttgart, Ark. (EH). The **Chuck-will's-widow** at Marianna, Jackson Co., Dec. 29 (TS) represented the first winter record for n.w. Florida. A lone Whip-poor-will was well documented on the Johnson's Bayou CBC. Single Com. Nighthawks were reported for the first time in winter in n.w. Florida: Ft. Walton Beach Dec. 6 (EL); Pensacola Beach Dec. 29 (CT, *fide* DR); and Gulf Breeze Dec. 31 (CT, *fide* DR). Two

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds wintered in New Orleans (RRA, *fide* NN). A ♀ Anna's Hummingbird was collected near Johnson's Bayou Dec. 16 (VR, DRH, SC, HL); all three Louisiana records (two specimens) were obtained at the same location. From New Orleans, Nancy Newfield reported that hummingbirds did not linger in spite of the warm weather. They came, stayed a few days and left. She banded a total of eight Black-chinned and nine Rufous. She said that this represents 1/3 to 1/4 of birds that she knew were present. The one reported last year as a possible Rufous X Allen's hybrid was an Allen's with an anomolous notch in its tail. She collected another this year Dec. 21 that appears to be a hybrid. Only one Buff-bellied Hummingbird was reported from New Orleans Dec. 24 (ELE).

FLYCATCHERS, LARKS, SWALLOWS — Several unusual flycatchers including a Scissor-tailed were found in coastal CBCs. An E. Kingbird was reported at Sabine. The most unusual flycatcher found was a **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher** recorded on the Hancock City, CBC. An **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was found on the Sabine N.W.R. CBC. On Dec. 17 a **Least Flycatcher** was collected at Peveto Beach, Cameron Par. (SC, LH, DRH, VR); one was on Ft. Smith, Ark., CBC and later collected. At least three different W. Wood Pewees were found at or near Holly Beach in Cameron Parish this fall Oct 6-21 (BCr, SC, N&PCN); these furnished the third-fifth definite Louisiana records. A fourth bird, probably this species, was found in Cameron Parish Nov. 11 (VR). The most interesting of the Vermilion Flycatcher records (see CBCs) was of one at Magnolia, Ark., Dec. 9, 15 & 24 (C&RW, SL). Although early winter was mild, 300± Horned Larks were relatively far s. near Cheneyville, Rapides Par., Jan. 12 (BCr, BMC, N&PCN). A Rough-winged Swallow was found Feb. 26 in Harrison County, Miss. (MHo, JAT). Two Barn Swallows were at Ocean Springs, Miss., Dec. 15 (TF). The earliest Purple Martin report was of two Jan. 29 at New Iberia, La., (MJM).

NUTHATCHES THROUGH WARBLERS — Red-breasted Nuthatches were rare in middle Tennessee (T.O.S.) and erratic in Memphis and surrounding area (BBC, T.O.S.). There were few reports from the Region. The House Wren at Nashville Dec. 31 (MLB) was the second local winterer. One wintered at Cookeville, Tenn. (RS); CBC data indicate widespread presence in the area. The two Long-billed Marsh Wrens at Cheatham L., Dickson Co., Dec. 15 (MLB, OL) was the fourth Nashville area winter appearance and the Gray Catbird at Nashville Dec. 22 (JA) was their third. Several observers commented that E. Bluebirds were more common than usual. The maximum number reported was 125 in one flock in Washington Parish (BH). There was an encouraging increase of Golden-crowned Kinglets this winter (see CBCs). Five Sprague's Pipits were at Norco, St. Charles Par., Jan. 20 (JK, LHa) and one was on the beach at Grand Isle S.P., Jefferson Par., Jan. 27 (N&PCN). As usual, large numbers of Cedar Waxwings moved into the Region in February. Observers in every

state mentioned that numbers were higher than usual. At the Hattiesburg sewage ponds on Dec. 28 & 30 a Yellow-throated Vireo was seen (TF). The Red-eyed Vireo in Santa Rosa County, Fla., Feb. 23 (FW, MJ, LHo) was the first in n.w. Florida in February and was 17 days earlier than previous spring appearances. The mild early winter probably explains the 12 Black-and-white Warblers found in Florida and perhaps many of the other unusual CBC warbler records. An Orange-crowned Warbler was at Reelfoot L., Tenn., Jan. 22 (DRJ, RD, D&PCr). Two Yellow-throated Warblers were at Cross L., Caddo Par., Jan. 13 (VR, JD, SC, LH, BCr). The Prairie Warbler at Panama City Dec 28 (CH, MAO) was the second in n.w. Florida in winter and the one at Gulf Shores Jan 12 (DMB, CDC) the fifth in Alabama in winter. The 3001 Yellow-rumped Warblers on the Hancock County CBC was an all time high for the Mississippi coast. The fourth-sixth wintering Nashville area Com. Yellowthroat records occurred this winter: at Cheatham L., Dickson Co., Dec. 15 (MLB, OL); Dec 29 there were four birds at two widely spaced sites (MLB, DV, RCa, RJM, DTh). There were two reports of Wilson's Warbler in Louisiana in addition to CBCs: one at New Iberia Dec. 1 (MJM) and one near Baton Rouge Feb. 28 (VR). The male at Ft. Walton Beach Dec. 3-8 (EL, SLe) was the third n w winter Florida occurrence.

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH FINCHES — The N. (Baltimore) Oriole wintering from Dec. 29 at Nashville (VB, JH) was the fifth recorded locally. One wintered at my yard in Baton Rouge. At least one Bronzed Cowbird was at Pascagoula R. marsh Dec. 1 (LG, SP, JAT, TF). A ♂ W. Tanager was at Bellefontaine Beach, Miss., Dec. 19 (JAT, MHo, AD) and another male was at Petal, Miss., Jan 27-Feb. 2 (TF) An ad. ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Petal, Feb. 2-Mar. 5 (TF, LG, D&MH). An imm. Black-headed Grosbeak wintered at Baton Rouge (PC) A *Pheucticus* sp. was found near L. Hamilton, Garland Co., Ark., Jan. 14-23 (JBH, JEH) An ad. ♀ **Blue Bunting** (*Passerina parellina*) was discovered on the Johnson's Bayou CBC. This represents the first record for North America n. of Mexico. The bird, in postjuvinal molt, was apparently wild Indigo and Painted buntings were found on CBCs and a Painted at Fort Morgan Nov 30 (GDJ, DGJ) may have been wintering—it was 4 weeks later than previous records. There were the usual scattered Dickcissel records from Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana Dec. 5-Feb. 29+. There were very few Evening Grosbeak reports; two at Nashville Dec. 5 (AN), up to 30 at Loretto, Lawrence Co., Tenn., late December-Feb 29+ (DSi) and 8-10 in S. Harpeth Valley near Nashville Feb. 18 (DWh).

There were very few Purple Finch reports and Michael Bierly commented that many feeders in Tennessee had none; ten was the maximum but there was an increase in late February and early March. At Malvern, Hot Springs Co., Ark., Feb. 16, the maximum reported was 17 (H&MP). As unbelievable as it would have seemed several years ago, House Finches were more common than Purple Finches in parts of our area. In Alabama, TI

received reports of 125-200+ birds, mostly from the n. half of the state. A maximum of 75 was at Jacksonville (TI, JP, CWS). In middle Tennessee Michael Bierly reported many present. At a feeder in Gallatin there were 30. At a feeder in Nashville 13 were banded. The one at Humboldt all winter (SH, *fide* GM) was the first reported in w. Tennessee. At least eight spent January and February at a feeder in Starkville, Oktebheha Co. (ECr, MC, JAJ *et al.*), for the first Mississippi record. Birds were photographed and a casualty preserved.

Practically no Pine Siskins were reported this winter. American Goldfinches were unusually common at Starkville in January and February—flocks of 100-200 were common (JAJ *et al.*). The Gray-headed Junco reported at Loggy Bayou W.M.A., Bossier Par, Jan. 12 (NN) represented the third Louisiana record. The 20 Lapland Longspurs at Turrell, Crittendon Co., Ark., Jan. 12 (L&BBC) were the first there in several winters. The species was present at Shreveport (35 on CBC) and as far s. as Cheneyville Jan. 12 (BCr, BMc, N&PCN). Six Smith's and two Chestnut-collared longspurs were also present at Shreveport Jan 12 (JRS, VR, JD *et al.*).

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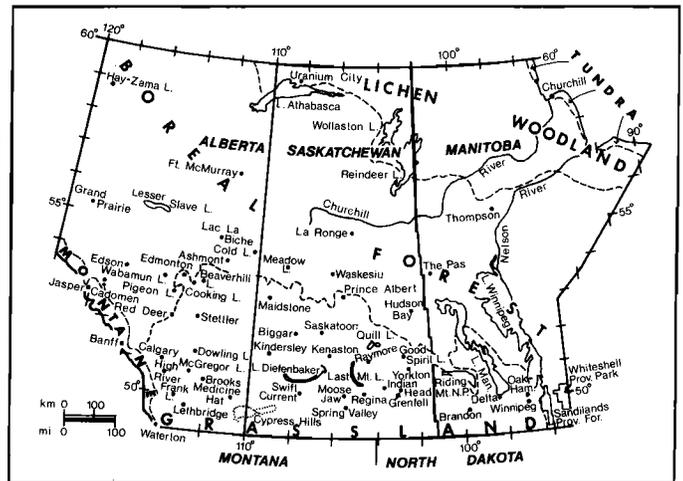
PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION /Wayne C. Harris

The winter was generally mild and dry with very few periods of extended cold temperatures. Much of the southwestern portion of the Region had less than 10 cm of snow cover at the end of the period and only eastern Manitoba had more than 25 cm of snow cover. The weather was relatively easy on all winter bird populations and half-hardy species attempting to over-winter were much more successful than usual. South of the boreal forest the favourable weather resulted in most species remaining dispersed throughout rather than concentrating around farm and ranch yards for shelter and food as is normal. This, combined with exceptionally low numbers of winter finches gave the impression that much of the grassland region was almost void of bird life.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — The late freeze-up across the Region resulted in many water-related species being reported well into December. A single Com. Loon was seen at Wabamun L., near Edmonton Dec. 23 (JF, JL, Ch). A **Yellow-billed Loon**, at Glenmore Res., in Calgary, through the first week of December provided only the third Alberta record (JS, AW, m.ob.). A W. Grebe on L. Diefenbaker was one of a spectacular

collection of 12 waterfowl species found on a 3 km² area of open water Dec. 19.

In last year's winter season report (*AB* 33(3):291 Northern Great Plains Region) the plight of the *Wascana Canada Goose* population at Regina was mentioned. The geese, which have remained yearly through the winter on an area of open water created by a power generating station were to lose the open water on which they depended when the station was shut down in 1979. Last year the lake was allowed to freeze naturally in an attempt to force the geese to migrate S. However they refused to leave and the power plant was restarted to provide some open water for the remainder of the winter. During the past summer the power station was permanently closed as planned. Again this winter the geese refused to migrate. The flock was able to keep a small area of water open until Dec. 15, after which no open water was available to them. Supplementary feeding did not begin until after Jan. 1 when it became obvious the



birds were not going to leave. A total of 1550 Canada Geese, the most ever, over-wintered with virtually no mortality. This remarkable feat, even during a mild winter, provides an excellent example of the durability of this species. Predation at night from dogs, coyotes or foxes was not a problem as the nearby city lights allowed the geese to fly away from any threatening animals (LS, RK). Along with the geese were about 225 Mallards (predominantly males). Although the Mallards appeared less adaptable to the "no water" conditions, they survived relatively well.

On the Bow R., in Calgary a single Black Duck was present through the winter (*vide* JS). At Canmore, Alta., four Green-winged Teal were seen Dec. 23 (SJ,DM) and a single Blue-winged Teal remained at Ft. McMurray, Alta., until Dec. 14 (BW). A Ring-necked Duck was present at Winnipeg until Jan. 9 (DH,m.ob.) and a Greater Scaup at Lac du Bonnet, Man., until Dec. 1 (M.N.S.). At Calgary an imm. ♂ Oldsquaw on the Bow R., Jan. 19 provided one of the few winter records for Alberta (PS). Hooded Mergansers were reported from Gardiner Dam, Sask., Dec. 19 (GW,WR) and Saskatoon Feb. 23 (SS).

HAWKS, EAGLES, FALCONS — Goshawk numbers, low s. of the boreal forest, were average-to-high within the forest. From Squaw Rapids, Sask., e. to s.e. Manitoba populations were above average. Exceptional concentrations occurred at Squaw Rapids where 13 were seen Dec. 23 and n. of Hudson Bay, Sask., Jan. 10 when seven were seen (WH,SL). In s.e. Manitoba up to three per day were seen regularly (HC,AM). At Churchill, Man., where Goshawks are extremely rare during the winter months, there were reports Feb. 2 of one found dead and of a single bird Feb. 3 (BC). Single Cooper's Hawks at Indian Head and Leader, Sask., both Dec. 17 were unusual for the winter months (MWS,WH). Reports of Red-tailed Hawks are very rare in this Region during winter, thus singles Dec. 4 at Prince Albert and Jan. 11 at Riding Mountain N.P., were of interest (SL,AM). Rough-legged hawks were well distributed throughout s. Alberta and s.w. Saskatchewan with reports n. to Biggar and Battleford, Sask., and Edmonton (GW,RE). Golden Eagle numbers were normal throughout the Region with six sightings from Alberta and 36 from Saskatchewan. Bald Eagle populations were also normal with the majority of reports being in December as the last of the migrants moved S. The only reports past the end of December were from Calgary where one adult and two immatures over-wintered and from Indian Head (JS,MWS). A total of 14 Gyrfalcons was reported from widely scattered localities across the s. half of the Region (SJ,SOJ,HC). In addition to these were three birds from Churchill (BC). Prairie Falcon numbers were stable with 13 sightings in s. Saskatchewan, 13 for s. Alberta and two from s. Manitoba. Peregrine Falcons were recorded only in s. Manitoba where six reports were received including a pair at Winnipeg through late February (DH,DF,m.ob.). Although Merlin numbers were stable in urban areas, they were much more widespread in rural areas of Saskatchewan than in previous years. There was a total of 21 reported from rural areas.

GROUSE, GULLS, DOVES — Ruffed Grouse numbers were generally below normal in Manitoba and Saskatchewan but higher than usual in s.w. Alberta (SJ,JS). An unprecedented four species of gulls were reported this winter from the Region. Three Glaucous Gulls were seen at Gardiner Dam Dec. 21 (WR,GW). An **Iceland Gull** at Squaw Rapids Dec. 23 established only the third

record for Saskatchewan (WH). Single Herring Gulls were seen at Seven Sisters, Man., Dec. 8 and Winnipeg Dec. 18 (PT,J.Zoch). A **Black-legged Kittiwake** found dead Dec. 23 at Wabamun L., provided only the third Alberta record (*AS). Mourning Doves were reported in December at Prince Albert and Vibank (SL,FB).

OWLS AND WOODPECKERS — Snowy Owl numbers were generally low-to-normal throughout the Region with only two exceptional concentrations reported: 25 at Regina Dec. 26 and 15 at the n. end of Last Mountain L., Dec. 28 (RK,WH). Great Gray Owl numbers were high for the third consecutive year in s.e. Manitoba where 42 were banded (RN,HC). Elsewhere Great Grays were reported in their normal low numbers (JP,MS). The only report of Long-eared Owls was of one wintering w. of Calgary. Single Boreal Owls were seen at Water Valley, Alta., Feb. 10 (JP,B&DC), Maidstone Dec. 16 (D.Lamont) and from two s. Manitoba localities, Delta and Kleefeld (DF,CC). Woodpecker populations were generally stable with the only observation of note being two Pileateds well s. of their range at Round L., n. of Broadview Dec. 28 (DFr).

LARKS THROUGH CREEPERS — Winter Horned Lark numbers were low throughout the Region for no apparent reason as one would expect larger numbers with the mild weather and reduced snow cover. Possibly individuals remained in the fields rather than concentrating along the roads as is usual and consequently were less visible. Two Steller's Jays were visiting a feeder at Banff, Alta., where they are considered rare winter visitors (NM). Mountain Chickadee numbers were above normal throughout the foothills of s.w. Alberta (SJ,JS). Four **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** in Waterton N.P., provided the first documented occurrence of this species for Alberta and the Region (JS,AW—ph.). Red-breasted Nuthatch and Brown Creeper populations were high particularly in the foothills of s.w. Alberta (SJ,JS) and in the Cypress Hills area of s.w. Saskatchewan (MG,WR).

THRUSHES, KINGLETS, WAXWINGS — Numbers of over-wintering robins were generally below normal. The one exception was s. Manitoba where many more than usual were reported with flocks of up to nine in some areas (HC,RFK). Elsewhere in the Region there were scattered individuals in urban areas and towns in s. Saskatchewan, the highest number being a flock of ten in a coulee near Kelfield (GW). In Alberta there was only one report, from St. Albert, with Calgary having none—the first time in recent years robins have not over-wintered there (RE,JS). A Varied Thrush was present in Winnipeg Dec. 15-Jan. 30 (F.Clarke) while another was reprinted from Regina Dec. 7-17 (RK,FHB,BL). A group of eight Mountain Bluebirds in mid-December near Eastend provided a rare winter occurrence for this Region (MG). Townsend's Solitaires are becoming regular but rare winter residents in s. Saskatchewan, as indicated by reports of a single from the Cypress Hills, Sask., Dec. 14 and one to two in Regina through the winter.

Golden-crowned Kinglets were unusually abundant in the s.w. portion of the Region as indicated by numerous reports from the Wildlife Reserve of Western Canada 9 km s.w. of Bottrel, Alta. (SJ) and good counts from Eastend (MG) and Cypress Hills (WR,SL). Bohemian Waxwings were generally common in the boreal forest and nearby areas (HC,WH) but below normal in s. areas in spite of abundant food supplies. Cedar Waxwings conversely were much more common than normal. Southern Manitoba had unprecedented numbers with flocks of up to 130 in Winnipeg (RFK). Saskatchewan had flocks scattered throughout s. areas with reports from Luseland (KF), Prince Albert, (WH,SL), Fort Qu'Appelle (BL), Raymore (WH), Moose Jaw (EK), Saskatoon (PON), Regina (RK) and Indian Head (MWS)

STARLINGS, WARBLERS, BLACK-BIRDS — Starlings benefitted from the mild winter as illustrated by the population at Prince Albert. The normal 30+ individuals began the winter and for the first time in 5 years there was no noticeable mortality. The previous years have recorded 90-100% mortality by the end of February (CD). A single Starling remained at Churchill until at least Dec. 5 (BC). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was present in Calgary up to Dec. 9 providing the first winter record of this species for the Region (PS,DM,ph.). A Brewer's Blackbird over-wintering at Rennie (D.Fitzjohn) was a rarity as there are very few winter records for this species in Manitoba.

FRINGILLIDS — A ♂ Cardinal was present at a Selkirk, Man., feeder Dec. 20-Feb 29+ (J.Copland, m.ob.). Winter finch numbers were much reduced s. of the boreal forest in the Region. Almost without exception Evening and Pine grosbeaks and Hoary and Com. redpolls were reported as very low or absent. Saskatchewan CBCs provided an excellent indication of how low the numbers of these species were. Only 17 of 59 counts reported Evening Grosbeaks, nine reported Pine Grosbeaks, 12 reported Com. Redpolls and one reported Hoary Redpolls. In all instances only small numbers of these species were seen on the counts. For example there were only 27 Pine Grosbeaks reported for the entire province for those nine counts. Only in the boreal forest and nearby areas were there any numbers of these species reported. The excellent cone and berry crops of the forest combined with the mild winter appear to have been the major factors for the failure of these species to move S. Several species of "summer" finches over-wintered in unprecedented numbers. Purple Finches were present at many more feeders than usual in s. Manitoba (HC,RFK) and a single was seen in Regina in December (SJo). Pine Siskins were common, with flocks of up to 30 in Winnipeg and scattered numbers in the boreal forest in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (HC,RFK,MS)

White-winged Crossbills were widely scattered throughout the Region with only s. e. Manitoba reporting high numbers. Dark-eyed Juncos were much more common in s. Manitoba with > 60 reports while Saskatchewan and Alberta had the normal number of scattered reports. Both White-throated

and Harris' sparrows are rare during the winter, consequently a single White-throated at Saskatoon through the winter and two Harris' at Dauphin Dec. 22 were noteworthy. Snow Bunting numbers were generally low with a few large flocks seen, possibly owing to the mild weather this winter.

S.A.

The **American Goldfinch**, however, was the species which was most conspicuous by its presence. In Manitoba it is considered a very rare species during winter. This year > 1000 were recorded on 24 CBCs making it the fourth most common species in the Province! Goldfinches were seemingly everywhere, at feeders, in weed and sunflower fields and birch trees throughout the s. portion of the province. In Saskatchewan the species was previously unrecorded during winter. This winter up to 40 were seen in Saskatoon Dec. 7 - Feb. 12 (SS,DGH,PH) a three individuals thought to be this species were studied closely as Oxbow Feb. 23 (HP). In Alberta several were seen at Wabamun L., Dec. 2 (CH).

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NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS

/Esther M. Serr

The winter season was considered by many reporters dull for birding. Birds seemed scarce during the mild and very dry weather. Food supply was plentiful and exposed and birds did not come to feeders. yet, western North Dakota sent in five first state records and that can hardly be called dull birding.

WATERFOWL — Canada Geese were able to remain on the Missouri R., throughout the period owing to mild weather. The peak count in South Dakota was 240,000 in January (BKH). There was a big loss of Canada Geese and some ducks from lead poisoning caused by ingestion of lead shot. The South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Dept., is

hoping to ban lead shot in counties along the Missouri R. A few thousand Mallards were observed feeding in Gregory County, S.D., cornfields along the river (GLS).

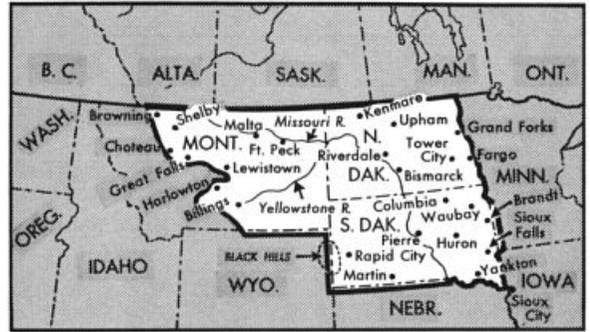
Two Black Ducks were seen Jan. 20 in Yankton County, S.D. (WH). A Barrow's Goldeneye wintered again on Canyon L., Rapid City (JLB,NRW). In contrast two ♂ Barrow's were found in the huge Garrison Dam area in North Dakota Jan. 5 to move the species up to the documented from the hypothetical list (D.Disbro, TAG, GBB). Four Oldsquaws were on Garrison Dam Dec. 14 (CAF). At least 30 Wood Ducks were at Silesia, Mont., Jan. 20 (GJF). A ♀ **Hooded Merganser** offered the first sighting in ten years on Canyon L., Rapid City Feb. 17 (LMB,NRW).

HAWKS AND EAGLES — Single Gosawks were observed in w. Rapid City Dec. 16 (NRW) and one in e. Billings, Mont., Jan. 1 and another near Chester, Mont., Jan. 27 (HMM). A Ferruginous Hawk was noted in Sully County, S.D., Dec. 15 (RLS).

Bald Eagles outnumbered Golden in this Region; however, both species have shown an increase. The protected areas along the Missouri R., could be responsible for the increase in actual, or at least observed numbers in the January eagle surveys.

There were four sightings of Gyrfalcon at Ft. Peck Jan. 1 - Feb. 16. One adult was trapped and released by the falconer as a requirement of a Montana license (MWA,CMC). [?—Ed.]. Prairie Falcon was sighted four times near Reliance, S.D., Dec. 14 - Jan. 16 (WCT); five sightings were reported from Ft. Peck, Billings and Chester, Mont., Dec. 23 -Feb. 22. Another Prairie Falcon harassed a few thousand pigeons on the U.N.D. campus at Grand Forks during most of the period (DOL,PJD,GSL). A Peregrine Falcon was observed e. Tolley, Renville County, N.D., Dec. 7 (IOR, ME); and one was seen near Billings Jan. 2. A Merlin was viewed from a window at 15 ft, in Clay County, S.D., Jan. 28 (KJH). A ♂ Merlin spent the period on the U.N.D. campus at Grand Forks (DOL,SOL, PJD,VSD) and one was seen near Chester, Mont. (HMM).

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS — Several Greater Prairie Chicken flocks of 50 were present in Gregory County, S.D., along the Missouri R., Dec. 4 and Jan. 6 (GLS). A flock of 24 constituted a first sighting for Yankton County, S.D., Jan. 5 (WH). Sharp-tailed Grouse numbers were average in the Region. Personnel of J. Clark Salyer N.W.R., Upham, N.D., found 280 Feb. 1 during a refuge count (FGG,GAE). Sage Grouse inhabit remote areas in the three states so it is difficult for observers to find them; there were no reports. Eight Bobwhite wintered at Burke L., S.D. (GLS) and eight were in s.w. Clay County, S.D., Dec. 18 (RAP). Pheasant populations were still low. A flock of 25 Turkeys fed in a lot with cattle during the winter at Scenic, S.D., and none was lost to predators (P. Jurisch). A flock of



22 was seen n. Washburn, N.D. Dec. 22 (TAG).

SHOREBIRDS — A Killdeer was flying and calling over Jamestown, N.D., Jan. 22 (CAF). Eight Com. Snipe were seen on a trip in Yellowstone County, Mont., Jan. 20 (HWC,GJF).

GULLS — The prediction in AB: Winter 1975 - 1976 by Regional Editors Harris and Lamont that gull observations would become a more common occurrence in this Region has proven true. This winter the Missouri R. lakes produced seven species of gulls plus an alcid. The mild weather allowed more open water and better viewing over the water. Observers along the Missouri R., are becoming more familiar with these species. These large river lakes require higher-powered equipment and it has taken time for local birders to learn this kind of birding after being strictly prairie birders.

Lake Sakakawea, formed by the Garrison Dam in North Dakota, was the "hot spot" this season, drawing an increased number of observers. Five Glaucous Gulls were found on Garrison Dam Dec. 2 - 23 (TAG); one each was at Big Bend Dam, Buffalo Co., and Gavin's Pt. Dam, S.D., Dec. 7 - 9 (WH) and two immatures were on Ft. Peck L., Mont., Jan. 1 (CMC). An imm. **Iceland Gull** showing a dark bill was studied at Ft. Peck L., Dec. 4 (CMC—ph.). A first-year **Iceland Gull** provided a first North Dakota record at Garrison Dam Dec. 14 (†CAF).

Two Herring Gulls fed on an eagle-killed mallard at Oahe Dam, Stanley Co., S.D., Feb. 15 (RLS). Herring Gulls peaked at 31 on Dec. 1 at Gavin's Pt., S.D. (WH) and a peak of 36 was counted Dec. 25 at Ft. Peck L., Mont. (CMC). A first year **Thayer's Gull** furnished another first North Dakota record Dec. 2 - 22 at Garrison Dam (TAG, †CAF). One California Gull was seen Jan. 1 - 4 at Ft. Peck (CMC). Ring-billed peaked at 270 Dec. 1 at Gavin's Pt. Dam, S.D. (WH).

Most unusual was the sighting of an imm. **Black-legged Kittiwake** flying about the Camp Crook, S.D., schoolhouse. It rested on the roof for 30 min., Dec. 13 and was viewed at 20 ft, by two students and the teacher, Bob Rogers. Another first year **Black-legged Kittiwake** represented a first state record for North Dakota at Garrison Dam Dec. 14 - Jan. 5 (†CAF, R.Faanes, RAS *et al.*).

An **Ancient Murrelet** was mistakenly shot by a duck hunter below Ft. Peck Dam Dec. 10 and was turned in to the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Dept. (*MWA). This provided a fifth record for the state but a first for e. Montana.

DOVES AND OWLS — The unusual number of 300 Mourning Doves was at a feed lot near Mayville, N.D., Jan. 1; the number reduced to 30 on Jan. 13; by Jan. 26 one remained alive and a few dead were found (PSH).

A Screech Owl was not disturbed while perched within several feet of an operating chain saw near the Milk R., Glasgow, Mont., Dec. 8 (MWA). Seven Screech Owls were sighted in South Dakota during the period and one was calling Feb. 24 in Hutchinson County (RLS). Screech Owls were also seen at Fargo, Bismarck and Minot, N.D., Dec. 16 - Feb. 4 (PPF, KJW, GBB).

Great Horned Owl sightings frequently averaged five daily around Mt. Rushmore, S.D. (CCM). One was seen eating a Gray Partridge on a barn roof in n. Moody County, S.D., (LIW) and another was being harassed by a falcon Jan. 1 at Hazen, N.D. (DNS, BGI). Snowy Owls were not present in their usual numbers. Short-eared Owl observations were well-spread over the Dakotas. Seven of them were together Jan. 5 on Oakville Prairie near Grand Forks, N.D. (GSL, DOL) and six were together in Rapid Valley, Rapid City, S.D., Jan. 13 (NRW). A Saw-whet Owl spent most of the winter on a farm near Fargo, N.D. (RPS, MAB).

WOODPECKERS AND CORVIDS — Common Flickers were very numerous in the Region, with a maximum daily count of 20 around Bismarck (RNR). Two Pileateds wintered at Fargo (HDM, WEL, ENP) and one was seen at Mayville, N.D., Dec. 22 (PSH). A ♂ Red-bellied Woodpecker wintered in s. Bismarck (WAB), and one was present at Gary, S.D., Dec 30 - Feb. 27 (J. Cole) and three were seen at Yankton Jan. 20 (WH). Red-headed's seldom winter in the Region but there were 42 sightings in s.e. South Dakota. Ten were seen in Clay County, S.D., Dec. 18 (RAP) and a group of 15 was seen in Newton Hills S.P., Lincoln Co., S.D., Feb. 9 (RLS). Four Lewis' were observed e. Spearfish, S.D., Feb. 15 (DLB). A Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was at Mt. Rushmore Visitors' Center, S.D., Jan. 15 (CCM).

Five Gray Jays were present all winter at a feeder in s. Chester County, S.D. (MJP). Twenty Black-billed Magpies were counted on a day-long trip Feb. 18 in Pembina and Cavalier Cos., N.D. (SOL). The magpies seem to be extending their range E of the Missouri R., in the Dakotas. One Piñon Jay of the four reported last fall remained at Mandan, N.D., during the season (JGS, OSS). A



Piñon Jay near Mandan, ND, present throughout the season.

Steller's Jay was at Billings Jan. 12, where the species is seen about once in four years (HWC, BBF). A Clark's Nutcracker was seen in c. Black Hills, S.D., Dec. 7 (RDM).

CHICKADEES AND WRENS — A Mountain Chickadee was seen Jan. 25 and two Feb. 9 at Billings (FK, MB). Red-breasted Nuthatches still outnumbered White-breasted but the latter has shown a slight increase. Five Pygmy Nuthatches were seen at Billings Jan. 19 and four were at a feeder in w. Rapid City during the season. (NRW). Brown Creepers have shown another good increase. There were 33 sightings in South Dakota and 40 in North Dakota. For the last three years total sightings almost doubled over each previous year.

A Dipper was seen in Stillwater County, Mont., Jan 12 (HWC, BBF *et. al.*). Three Long-billed Marsh Wrens were found at Sand Lake N.W.R., S.D., Dec. 9 (RLS) and one was in close view at Farm I., Pierre, S.D. (D. Backlund).

THRUSHES THROUGH WAXWINGS — One Varied Thrush was seen in s. Brookings County, S.D., Dec. 15 and Jan. 16 (NJH *et. al.*) and a male was at Fargo Dec. 15 - Jan. 7 (MAB, CV, JF). A Hermit Thrush was noted Dec. 15 at Mayville, N.D., but it was in a weakened condition by Jan. 11 (PSH, GSL). Five E. Bluebirds were sighted in Yankton County Jan. 20 but only one was seen Feb. 27 (WH). A Townsend's Solitaire was unusual at Fargo Dec. 14 (CAS).

Cedar Waxwings outnumbered Bohemians this season for a change. Flocks of 100+ seemed phenomenal after the usual reports of a few Cedars here and there. One N. Shrike was in hot pursuit of an Am. Goldfinch in Grand Forks County, N.D., Dec. 1 (JFK, DOL) and another caught a Gray-crowned Rosy Finch at Rapelje, Mont., Dec. 6.

KINGLETS THROUGH WARBLERS — Golden-crowned Kinglet numbers continued on the upswing in the Dakotas. A late Ruby-crowned Kinglet was found at Yankton Dec. 1 (JEW). Four Yellow-rumped Warblers were feeding on watercress in a spring-fed stream in Rapid City Feb. 19 (NRW).

FINCHES THROUGH SPARROWS — A **Brambling** produced a first state record for North Dakota at Becky Quanrud's feeder in Bismarck Dec. 15 - Feb. 29+. This is a common Eurasian finch and there have been only a handful of sightings in the lower forty-eight



Brambling, Bismarck, ND, Jan. 12, 1980. Photo/ David Lambeth.

states. It fed with juncos and Am. Goldfinches and seemed the flightiest bird at the feeder,

suggesting that it wasn't an escape. Birders came from neighboring states to see the bird (RLQ—ph.).

Purple Finches averaged ten Dec. 15 - Feb. 20 at Waubay N.W.R., S.D. (LLW, RRRJ). Four attended a Bismarck feeder throughout. (RNR). Gray-crowned Rosy Finches were present in flocks of 100 in the Billings area



Female House Finch, Bismarck, ND, Feb. 2, 1980. Photo/ Tom Gatz.

this winter. A ♀ **House Finch** provided a first North Dakota record Feb. 2 at Bismarck and remained until at least Feb. 26 (†RNR *et. al.*). Five White-winged Crossbills were at Jamestown, N.D., Jan 13. (CAF).

The mild weather probably was the reason for late sparrow sightings. A Vesper Sparrow was at Yankton Dec. 1 (WH). Single White-throated's wintered at feeders in Fargo (CHB, BPC, MBB, RLN), Arrowwood N.W.R. (JGS) and Grand Forks (PJD)—all in North Dakota. A Clay-colored was observed at Miles City, Mont., Dec. 14 (TCH). A Fox Sparrow was seen at Brookings, S.D., Dec. 29 (CAT).

Lapland Longspur flocks totaling 2500 were feeding in sunflower fields Jan. 5 in s. McLean County, N.D. (GBB). The best movement of Snow Buntings was in Grand Forks County with flocks averaging 1000 Jan. 1 & Feb. 2 (RKC, JFK).

CORRIGENDUM — AB 33:783, second paragraph, first column to read—"A Green Heron was in Turner County, S.D., May 1 (WH) and by May 19 a total of 12 sightings was reported in the state."

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SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS

/Frances Williams

Although official weather bureau records show that temperatures through the winter season averaged one to three degrees F below normal, all contributors called it a mild winter. There were fewer severe storms, the storms were of short duration, and there was relatively little snow.

Several events characterized the season ornithologically. Fall migrants remained very late, some until early January. Many species wintered in good numbers far north of their customary winter range. There was a pronounced eastward movement of several western species.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — A Red-throated Loon was observed on the Oklahoma side of L. Texoma Jan. 19-20 (CB,KN). A Horned Grebe wintered at L. Balmorhea, Reeves Co., Tex., w. of the usual range of the species. Single White Pelicans remained through December in several areas. One in Sedgwick County, Kans., was found in an emaciated condition Dec. 12 and recovered nicely at the Sedgwick County Zoo. Double-crested Cormorants also lingered until late December in many areas. Green Herons remained until early December at Buffalo Lake N.W.R., Tex. (hereafter, Buffalo L.), and overwintered at Lubbock, Big Spring and Midland for the first time. Black-crowned Night Herons were discovered in Sedgwick County Jan. 6 and Buffalo L., Dec. 26. Single Yellow-crowned Night Herons were observed at Lubbock Dec. 28 and Midland Jan. 6.

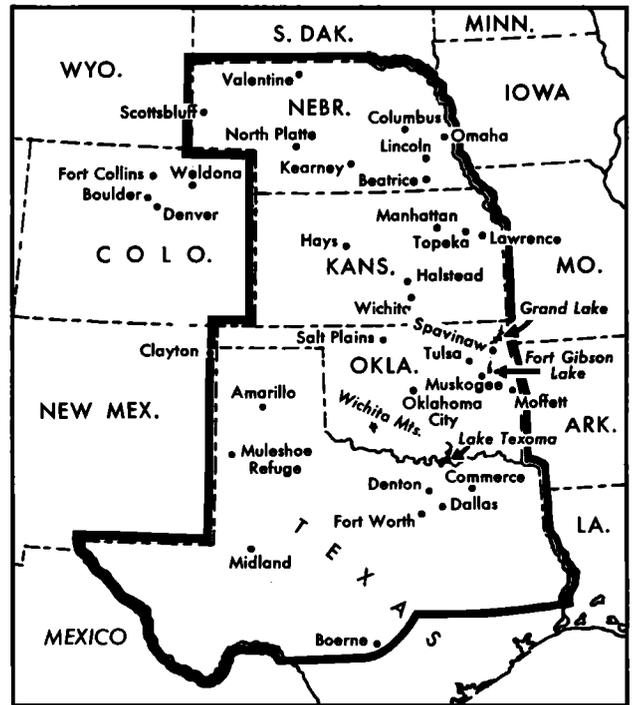
WATERFOWL — Few geese and ducks were present on the South Plains; most observers assumed that waterfowl stayed farther n because of the mild winter. Whistling Swans made news: four at DeSoto Bend Ref., Neb., in early December and another there Jan 21-24, nine at Tulsa Dec. 2, one in Linn County, Kans., Dec. 4, one at El Paso Dec. 8, and one in Big Bend N.P., Tex., Dec. 9. Five Barnacle Geese arrived at Tishomingo N W R., Okla., Nov. 21 and were present at least until Jan. 16, providing a third Refuge record (CB, m.ob.). Two White-fronted Geese visited the Ft. Worth area in December. Eight Ross' Geese wintered at Tishomingo. Ten Black-bellied Whistling Ducks spent Jan 3-7 in Burleson County, Tex., and returned in mid-February. At Huntsville, Tex., 30 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks were discovered two days before the CBC, but on county day they were gone. Sea ducks were almost absent, as only three Greater Scaup and two White-winged Scoters were reported. Two Barrow's Goldeneyes remained at N. Platte N.W.R., Neb., Nov. 26-Dec. 19 (FZ, m ob). Hooded Mergansers were present in good numbers throughout the Region. A Red-breasted Merganser was recorded in Lubbock County Dec. 26-29 (DS, m.ob.) and three were in Keith County, Neb., Feb. 18.

VULTURES THROUGH FALCONS — Turkey Vultures arrived in Big Bend N.P., Feb 4 and in the Davis Mts., Tex., Feb. 27,

both early dates. White-tailed Kites were present near College Station, Tex., during December. Although Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were not as common at feeders as last winter, they were seen more often in the field. Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported twice as often as Cooper's. Only two Goshawks were recorded, one in Trego County, Kans., Jan. 24 and one in Cimarron County, Okla., in December. Rough-legged Hawks were present in many areas, but were not especially common. It was possible to see as many Ferruginous Hawks as Red-tailed Hawks in many w. Texas localities. The former were very common, while the normal influx of Red-tailed from the n. did not occur. The annual mid-winter eagle surveys tallied 442 Bald Eagles in Nebraska, 331 in Kansas and 500+ in Texas (figures not available for Oklahoma). At least two Bald Eagles wintered in the Davis Mts. Seyffert reported that at least two-thirds of all Bald Eagles in the Texas Panhandle were immatures. Golden Eagles wintered in greatly increased numbers in the Davis Mts., with as many as five often being seen together. Mrs. Miller noted that it had been ten years since such groups had been present.

A very large number of Marsh Hawks were present in new farming areas near Valentine, Tex. Cattle feeding operations near Balmorhea also attracted many hawks of various species to feast on the rodents attracted by the feed. At Muleshoe N.W.R., Tex., CBCs in the 1950s averaged 15.7 Marsh Hawks/count, but in the late 1970s the average dropped to 7.5/CBC. The habitat and number of observers at Muleshoe have remained unchanged (KH). Very few Ospreys wintered in the Region, but one arrived at the DeSoto Bend Ref., on the early date Feb. 23. Two Caracaras were observed in Kaufman County, Tex., Jan. 17 (KE). Prairie Falcons were found e. to Barber County, Kans., Tulsa, Okla., and Duncanville, Tex. Merlin observations were numerous throughout the Region, with one in Sarpy County, Neb., in February being especially noteworthy. A Peregrine was sighted in Dallas County, Jan. 15 and one was found dead in Runnels County, Tex., Jan. 7.

PRAIRIE CHICKENS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — A flock of Greater Prairie Chickens comprising 20 birds was located near Tulsa in December. This was the largest number reported in 20 years. The fewest number of Sandhill Cranes in 30 years wintered in Martin and Howard counties in w. Texas. Apparently they had remained in the n. Texas Panhandle, where 25,000 were



counted at Buffalo L., and "thousands" were reported in Briscoe County. Sandhill Cranes were found e. of their habitual range in Neosho County, Kans., in late November. A Killdeer in Dawes County, Neb., Feb. 9 provided an unusual winter record (D&RR). At least 77 Mountain Plovers were discovered in a plowed field in Comal County, Tex., Jan. 14 (E&KM). Long-billed Curlews at Buffalo L., at the end of December and a Long-billed Dowitcher at Lubbock in mid-January were n. of their accustomed winter range.

GULLS — Glaucous Gulls were present at Buffalo L., Dec. 26-Jan. 6 (LW, m.ob.), Oklahoma City Dec. 8-Feb. 17 (JS, JN), Keith County Jan. 24 (RR, FZ) and Tulsa Jan. 6-Feb. 11 (JCH, m.ob.). Extraordinary was a **Heermann's Gull** at Tulsa Dec. 4-Feb. 29+ (EH, m.ob.). It provided a first state record for Oklahoma and the second record for the Region. Incredible was a flock of 4000 Franklin's Gulls at Tishomingo on the late date of Dec. 28.

DOVES THROUGH OWLS — Mourning Doves wintered in unusually large numbers in Pawnee County, Kans. Inca Doves moved into Iowa Park, Wichita Co., Tex., in December, and increased greatly in Lubbock.

In December, two adult and five nearly grown Barn Owls were discovered in the Texas A&M football stadium at College Station. They remained into early January. On Feb. 20, two adults and two downy young were in the nest hole. There are thousands of football stadia in Texas—if all were inhabited by Barn Owls in winter and kestrels in summer (see the March, 1980 issue of *American Birds*) there would be no shortage of nesting sites for these fine predators.

There was an unusual number of Barn Owl reports this season; perhaps birders are becoming more adept at detecting them. The only Snowy Owl observed was at Lincoln,

Neb. A Burrowing Owl made its winter home in a bit of unkempt land next to a busy parking lot in downtown Midland. The owl was unafraid and watched the people curiously. Long-eared Owls were located at seven localities, Short-eared Owls at five. Surely a little more effort would reveal many more of these in the Region.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Five Anna's Hummingbirds wintered at Huntsville in e. Texas. The Anna's Hummingbird reported in the Davis Mts., last period remained until Dec. 5 and two other Anna's were noted at El Paso. Rufous Hummingbirds adorned feeders in Kerrville until Feb. 15 and in Ft. Davis until Jan. 1. A ♀ **Coppery-tailed Trogon** was located in the Chisos Mts., Big Bend N.P., Jan. 8 - Feb. 29+ (JSh, m.ob.). There had been only one previous sighting of this species in the park. Ornithology students at Baker University in Baldwin, Kans., banded 44 woodpeckers of four species in one backyard during a one-month study. The owners of the backyard stated, "More suet in more places plus more nets may be the reason" (AJB, KK). Acorn Woodpeckers are maintaining a small population in w. Kerr County and s.w. Real County in the Texas hill country. Williamson's Sapsuckers visited Big Bend N.P., Dec. 31 (JNa), Alpine, Tex., Dec. 16 (GWh) and Guadalupe Mountain N.P., Tex., Dec. 31 (GL *et al.*).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH CORVIDS — An Ash-throated Flycatcher photographed in Tarrant County, Tex., Jan. 23 - Feb. 1 was not only unusual for the season, but also comprised a first county record (BC). One remained in El Paso Jan. 19 - Feb. 6 and several were located during CBCs along the Rio Grande. Say's Phoebe wintered n. and e. of their habitual winter quarters. They were sighted in Morton County, Kans., Ellis County, Okla., the Texas Panhandle, n. and c. Texas. They were also unusually abundant in their customary w. Texas habitats. Eastern Phoebes arrived early in Washington County, Okla., Feb. 23 and Crosby County Feb. 28. This species wintered at Midland for the first time since 1957. Two ♂ Vermilion Flycatchers brightened Lubbock Jan. 15 and one was seen in Kaufman County Jan. 25. Many *Empidonax* flycatchers, presumed to be Dusksies, wintered in Big Bend N.P., and up river along the Rio Grande. Tree Swallows cruised over sewage ponds in Collinsville, Okla., Dec. 16 & Jan. 20 (JCH). Common Crows visited Kendall and Comal counties, Tex., where they are rarely seen. A Clark's Nutcracker ate pecans at Big Spring, Tex., Dec. 12-20 (SC *et al.*).

NUTHATCHES THROUGH MIMIDS — Red-breasted Nuthatches were common only on the Nebraska Pine Ridge and at El Paso. Bewick's Wrens have recovered a little from the series of severe winters, but Carolina Wrens are still very scarce. Long-billed Marsh Wrens failed to winter in n.w. Nebraska but were unusually common in the Dallas area. A Rock Wren wintered in the rock riprap of Possum Kingdom dam, Palo Pinto Co., Tex. (KN). A Mockingbird in Pawnee County, Kans., Jan. 16 provided a new

winter record (SS). A Gray Catbird in Tarrant County Jan. 25 constituted only the third winter record there. Although three parties independently reported Bendire's Thrasher in Big Bend N.P., in December and January, none of the details provided completely eliminated the imm. Curve-billed Thrasher. Crissal Thrashers were unusually abundant in trans-Pecos Texas, and one wintered at Monahans Sand Dunes S.P., Ward Co., Tex.

THRUSHES THROUGH WAXWINGS — Large numbers of Am. Robins remained in Nebraska and Kansas all winter, perhaps accounting for their scarcity in Oklahoma and Texas. A **Varied Thrush** was in Big Spring, Tex., Jan. 1 - Feb 29+ (Kat, m.ob.). Excellent details were submitted with a report of a Swainson's Thrush at DeSoto Bend Ref., Jan. 27 (B&LP). Several hundred Mountain Bluebirds were found in Cimarron County, Okla. This species was scarce elsewhere, as were all species of bluebirds. A lone W. Bluebird was seen in Tarrant County Feb. 15 (DSy). Townsend's Solitaires were common only in Garden and Keith counties, Neb., and Pawnee County, Kans. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in Crosby County Feb. 3 and Tarrant County Jan. 25 were unusual for the season. Golden-crowned Kinglets were present in good numbers in e.c. Nebraska, c. Kansas and n. Oklahoma.

Sprague's Pipits are rarely reported, probably because Plains birders spend little time in the grasslands. But this winter the "Missouri skylark" was detected in Canadian and Grady counties, Okla., and Bell, Dallas and Midland counties, Tex. Cedar Waxwings wintered in good numbers throughout the Region. It would be interesting to know whether wintering flocks were absent from Mexico this year. The usual number of Bohemian Waxwings was present in n.w. Nebraska. The only extralimital record of this species was at Ft. Worth, where two were seen Feb. 2 and one Feb. 14 (SSI).

VIREOS THROUGH ICTERIDS — Solitary Vireos remained late in Tarrant County Feb. 3-4, Midland Jan. 5 and Big Bend N.P., Jan. 8. A Bell's Vireo lingered at Midland until Dec. 7. Orange-crowned Warblers wintered as far n. as Omaha and were unusually common at Ft. Worth. Seven Nashville Warblers tarried in Llano County, Tex., until Dec. 15 (E&KM). In Big Bend N.P., a N. Parula was found Jan. 11 and a Yellow-breasted Chat was seen Jan. 8 (J&NS). For the past five years, Kelly Himmel has been examining road-killed, predator-killed and frozen meadowlarks found on the Texas s. plains. He reported that 25% were Eastern Meadowlarks, 75% Western. He also noted that the population of meadowlarks at Muleshoe N.W.R., has decreased from 150/CBC in the 1950s to 75/CBC in the 1970s. Yellow-headed Blackbirds lingered at several n. Texas localities, and one was seen in Crosby County Feb. 3. A Scott's Oriole was present in Llano County Feb. 15. In Bellevue, Neb., a N. Oriole frequented a feeder throughout December. Another visited a feeder in Lubbock Jan. 20-Feb. 20 and one was seen in Tarrant County Jan. 14. Rusty Blackbirds were located in Comanche Coun-

ty, Okla., Jan. 1, Feb. 9 & 17 (JMM) At Baldwin a Great-tailed Grackle caught and banded in December provided a first record. A Com. Grackle arrived at Baldwin on the early date of Feb. 13.

FRINGILLIDS — Pyrrhuloxias wintered in Palo Duro Canyon S.P., Tex., n. of their accustomed range. A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited Lubbock Dec. 9 and a Black-headed Grosbeak was seen several times in Waco December-Feb. 6. A Painted Bunting was photographed in Lubbock Dec. 26 (CS). A Dickcissel fed with House Sparrows at a feeding station in Oklahoma City Feb. 3-29. The only Evening Grosbeak recorded was in Keith County Feb. 18 (FZ). Purple Finches were few and far between. Richard Rosche reported that House Finches continued to slowly spread E in Nebraska. The species is common in Scottsbluff County and a small number are present in Oshkosh, Garden Co. This winter several were seen in Wellen, Garden Co., farther e. About 12 Gray-crowned Rosy Finches were espied in a flock of Pine Siskins in Dawes County, Neb., Jan. 20 (D&RR). Two small flocks of Com Redpolls remained in Omaha Dec. 17-Feb. 29. Pine Siskins were nowhere common and Am. Goldfinches were also infrequent. Red Crossbills wintered at Lincoln and visited Plattsmouth, Neb., during December. At least 25 Red Crossbills were tallied at El Paso Feb. 10 (JD).

It was a big year for Green-tailed Towhees. They appeared on nearly all CBCs in w. Texas in above-average numbers and were reported far n. and e. of their normal winter range. They visited feeders at Lincoln, Raymond and York, Neb. In Texas they wandered E to Waco, College Station, Junction and Burleson County. It was also the year of the Lark Bunting's e. invasion. Flocks comprising 35-100 birds played leap-frog through Llano, Palo Pinto, Denton, Tarrant, Dallas and McLennan counties.

Thousands of sparrows of at least 11 species wintered at Hueco Tanks S.P., Tex. Numbers of Savannah and Vesper sparrows improved somewhat, but populations of both are far below those of the 1950s. A Lark Sparrow in Washington County, Okla., Jan. 7 was noteworthy for the season. A Black-throated Sparrow visited feeding stations in Oklahoma City during February. A Sage Sparrow in Ward County Jan. 18 was somewhat e. of its usual wintering area (CSe). A Gray-headed Junco provided a first record for Tarrant County Dec. 18-Mar. 6 (SSI). Few Tree Sparrows moved S as far as Texas. Chipping Sparrows remained through December in unusual numbers in w. and n.c. Texas. Brewer's Sparrows were present in the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles in December and early January. A Black-chinned Sparrow was carefully identified in Big Spring Feb. 10 (GWa). Several contributors noted that the number of White-throated Sparrows was low. Fox Sparrows wintered in the Davis Mts. A Fox Sparrow of the w. race at Hueco Tanks S.P., Feb. 17, provided a new park record (KZ, JD). Few flocks of longspurs comprising more than 100 birds were noted except in Bell County, Tex. There Feb. 10, observers tallied 1500 Chestnut collared, 250 McCown's and 2000 unidenti-

fied longspurs. A few Snow Buntings were noted in n.w. Nebraska on several occasions in mid-January.

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SOUTH TEXAS REGION /Fred S. Webster, Jr.

Precipitation was near normal in most areas until rainfall all but ceased in mid-February. Nevertheless, fresh water reservoirs in the western half of the Region were low as a result of late fall drought. Temperatures averaged near normal for the season; periods of cold were short-lived and by mid-January extremes tended toward the warm side with a number of all-time high readings. The coldest spell of the winter rode in on an Arctic front March 1, setting all-time records and killing new vegetative growth all the way to the Rio Grande Delta. Really good habitat, food crops and water supplies were confined mainly to the eastern half of the Region; conditions westward were marginal. Mild weather and favorable environment may explain the presence of an unusual diversity and number of lingering passerines.

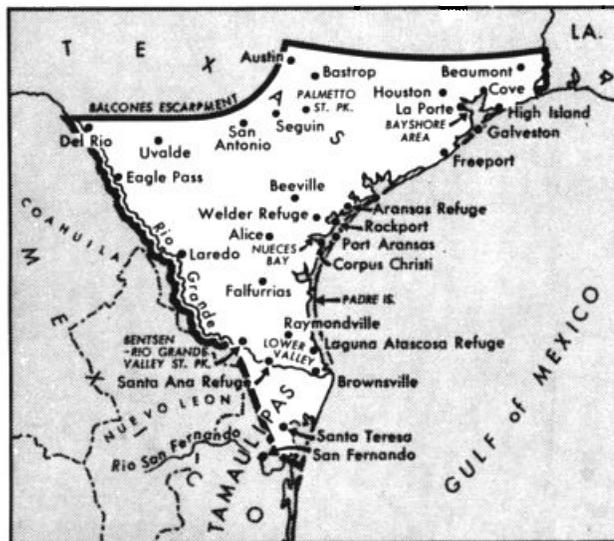
By far the highlight of the season was a substantial invasion of western species, certainly one of the best on record for numbers and variety. Sexton suggested some explanations for this trend: "The influx seems to be broadly based both ecologically and taxonomically. Vagrants have come from (among other groups) hummingbirds, flycatchers and seed-eaters; from deserts, semi-deserts, brushlands and montane forests.

There was little hint of the influx until mid-or late September. By mid-October there were signs of a broad influx, and the end of October brought a rash of western vagrants. The influxes of various species were apparent all the way through February at least. The breadth of the influx suggests a large-scale ecological phenomenon. This might be (1) major sustained weather patterns conducive to such movements, (2) widespread habitat deterioration (seasonal, not long-term), (3) widespread habitat improvement and resultant bumper crop of birds, or (4) a variety of causes which varied among the species but combined to give the appearance of a single ecological phenomenon."

PELICANS, HERONS, IBISES — Twenty Brown Pelicans, three times the number of recent years, wintered at Aransas N.W.R. (SL.). Herons apparently lingered inland and northward in greater numbers than usual. In the Eagle L. area, White-faced Ibis numbers dropped from 525 last year to < 50, and White Ibises from 700 to two; however, it was surmised that this drop in local numbers was owing to the birds changing their evening roost (WAS). The former species numbered up to 1000 in the Rockport area, while the latter showed a reduction in numbers (DW). Similar ratios were apparent for these species on the upper Texas coast.

WATERFOWL — A Ross' Goose was found at Austin in January (KB, PS *et al.*) in a small mixed flock of geese. About 250 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks wintered in the Eagle L. area, possibly a record number (WS). Dabbling ducks were well represented on the upper coast and inland. Canvasbacks were reported in good numbers on the upper and c. coasts, but Lesser Scaup were far below normal. A ♀ **Masked Duck** was seen at Aransas N.W.R. (EC, SL).

HAWKS — A ♀ Hook-billed Kite was present in the Santa Ana N.W.R. area for at least part of the season. White-tailed Kites decreased in number on the upper coast but showed well from the Coastal Bend (c. coast) southward. Red-tailed Hawks were more common than usual in all areas reported. An imm. **Broad-winged Hawk**, very rare in winter, was seen near Bolivar Flats, Galveston Co., Jan. 7 (JL, JM). An imm. Gray Hawk was reported from Santa Ana N.W.R., Dec. 27 (GL, KL), and the Falcon Dam area, Jan. 12 (RA, RB, MAC). Travelers between Laredo and the Rio Grande Delta reported Harris' Hawks common. A Golden Eagle in Colorado County Jan. 26 (MA) was unusual. At L. Casablanca, Webb Co., Dec. 24, the Langhams watched a Marsh Hawk standing belly-deep in



water, drown a coot by holding it under water. The dead coot was then dragged ashore and eaten. American Kestrels were below normal in the e. half of the Region.



Adult and juv. Whooping Crane, Aransas N.W.R., TX, winter season 1979-80. Band indicates juvenal is of 1979 cohort. Photo/ Steve Labuda, Jr.

SHOREBIRDS, GULLS — A significant number of shorebirds wintered on the upper coast (TE) but all usual winter species were reported low at Rockport (DW). Two Am. Oystercatchers, not to be expected in winter, were at Texas City Dike Jan. 29 (ES). Black-bellied Plover and Red Knot were all but absent from Padre I. beaches and Willets were reduced to almost one-half of normal numbers (*vide* KM). It was suggested that small marine organisms were badly affected by oil spilled from the well Ixtoc 1, in the Gulf of Campeche since June 3, 1979; the spill apparently did not affect the upper coast. Gull numbers were about 50% of normal on Padre I., and below normal at Rockport. A first-winter Glaucous Gull was found at Boca Chica near the mouth of the Rio Grande Jan. 17 (GWL). An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen a few miles n. of the preceding site Dec. 2 (GWL, BW) and a different individual at Boca Chica Dec. 27 (AB, G&BL, WS). A California Gull remained on Galveston's East Beach throughout the period.

ANIS, OWLS, NIGHTHAWKS — Groove-billed Ani numbers were "far above normal" on the upper coast (JGM). As many as four Burrowing Owls took up quarters in

large pipes "lying around" at a dam in Karnes County (WS). A Lesser Nighthawk wintered at Rockport (CC).

HUMMINGBIRDS — The record books will have to be rewritten for Anna's Hummingbird. When several individuals of this species were discovered at Rockport in September 1955—first ever on the Texas coast—there was skepticism over such an improbable occurrence. Had it not been for the reputation of beloved Connie Hagar, then at the peak of her career as Rockport's expert guide and gracious hostess, the Regional Editor might have ignored the reports in the hope they would self-destruct. But since the 1950s Anna's Hummingbird has gained respectability—albeit gradually—as a regular if scarce late-fall and winter visitor to Texas, particularly to coastal areas. The possibility of this species—or the fairly common Rufous and still scarce Broad-tailed hummingbirds—choosing a South Texas winter vacation has encouraged year-round feeder maintenance, which in turn has promoted more observations of w. hummingbirds. As recently as Feb. 28, 1973, cut-off date for material to be included in *The Bird Life of Texas* by Harry C. Oberholser and edited by Edgar B. Kincaid, Jr., Anna's had been recorded without reservation only in Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Cameron and Harris counties of



Anna's Hummingbird, Guadalupe County, TX, Dec. 26, 1979. Photo/ Greg Lasley.

South Texas. On the basis of this season's reports alone, the following counties could be added: Bexas, Brazoria, Comal, Hidalgo, Kleberg, Nueces, and Wilson. These latter additions would not all represent county "firsts," as we do not include the March 1973-November 1979 records—but are cited to show the geographical extent of this season's invasion. Aransas, Brooks and Harris counties also figure in the current records. At least 20 reliable reports came from the upper coast (JGM), and at least 15 from the c. coast. Farther inland, San Antonio reported at least 10 birds (*fide* JAM) and New Braunfels, Comal Co., two (GWL). A singing imm. male was seen at Santa Ana N.W.R., Dec. 1 (GWL, BW). An ad. male in Wilson County Feb. 22-26 was apparently migrating (WS), which would be in keeping with the early disappearance of most of the individuals from this Region. It is noteworthy that few females were reported. The Rufous was still the most common hummingbird, with the Buff-bellied running a poor third behind Anna's, and with a very few Ruby-

throated, Black-chinned and Broad-tailed hummingbirds. Reports of Allen's Hummingbirds are not included for lack of examination in hand.

KINGFISHERS THROUGH JAYS — A Ringed Kingfisher visited Welder Wildlife Ref. (GB). The species ranged as far up to the Rio Grande as San Ygnacio, Zapata Co. Green Kingfishers were seen more frequently than usual at Austin and adjacent areas. Common Flickers were below normal along the coast. A Downy Woodpecker was at Rancho Santa Margarita, Starr Co., in January; this appears to be the southernmost sighting ever for Texas. A Tropical Kingbird was photographed in Brazoria County Dec. 8 (D&RM), an easternmost winter record for the Texas coast. The Ash-throated Flycatcher, casual in winter, was reported from four locations on the upper coast. Two Wied's Crested Flycatchers were on territory at Welder Ref. (GB), a most unusual occurrence. A Black Phoebe was near Aransas Pass Feb. 8-17 (*fide* CS). Two were found at San Ygnacio Dec. 25 (JL), a new species for Zapata County. Say's Phoebes were more common than usual, reaching as far e. as Colorado County. Horned Larks were abundant in fields e. of Austin to Elgin (CE). Green Jays in an apparent N expansion, reached Jim Wells, Live Oak and Bee counties in increasing numbers.

NUTHATCHES THROUGH THRUSHES — Red-breasted Nuthatches were all but absent from the Region while Brown Creepers, Winters Wrens and Brown Thrashers were below normal. A few Sage Thrashers spilled E as far as Colorado County (WAS) and Port Aransas (*fide* GB). American Robins were "extremely abundant" on the upper coast (JGM), and were considered by some observers to be above normal in the Austin area. A Clay-colored Robin was seen in Brownsville Feb. 24 (AB, G&BL). Two Varied Thrushes discovered in Baytown, Harris Co., Dec. 15 (JT) remained for several weeks. A Veery was carefully scrutinized at Aransas N.W.R., Jan. 8 (JL).

KINGLETS THROUGH VIREOS — Again Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce. Five Bohemian Waxwings were identified in w. Bastrop County Feb. 12 (HD), and one individual was seen in the Bellaire area of Houston Feb. 20 with Cedar Waxwings (PJ). The latter species was in below-normal numbers in most areas. A ♀ Phainopepla, rare in winter, was seen at Del Rio Feb. 13 (DD). A Warbling Vireo apparently of a w. race, was at Bensten-Rio Grande Valley S.P., in mid-winter (JL). This species was seen at Rancho Santa Margarita Jan. 12 (RA, RB, MAC).

WARBLERS — Northern lingerers were more common and varied than usual and while specific numbers were low there are too many to list here. Both parulas wintered sparingly in the Rio Grande Delta. Because of the scarcity of Tropical Parulas in recent years, it was encouraging to note that at least four individuals occurred this season. Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers were quite common in n.c. areas. More than the usual

number of the Audubon's race was noted at Welder Ref. (GB). A ♂ Townsend's Warbler was seen at Santa Ana N.W.R. (RA, RB, MAC). Single Ovenbirds were seen in Colorado County Jan. 26 (MA), and at Aransas N.W.R., Jan. 2 (JL); both are new locality winter records.

S.A.

We nominate the **Golden-crowned Warbler**, *Basileuterus culicivorus*, for "bird of the winter." It was discovered in Brownsville Dec. 29 (JL), at the home of the Sydney Benns, a site already recognized historically for a Yellow-green Vireo nesting. This bird entertained countless visitors and was present at least into late February. This species was certified for Texas through two ♂ specimens credited to Brownsville in January 1892. One sighting was made a few mi s. of Harlingen, also in Cameron County, in September 1945. This tropical species is common in parts of n.e. Mexico, but there is a considerable environmental barrier between its preferred habitat and the Rio Grande Delta.

ORIOLES, BLACKBIRDS, TANAGERS — A Lichtenstein's Oriole was seen at San Ygnacio Dec. 25 (JL). Plowed fields in the Elgin area of Bastrop County attracted large flocks of Com. Grackles; one flock of 25,000 was observed (CE). A W. Tanager was at Austin Jan. 7-12 or later (*fide* EK). A Hepatic Tanager discovered at Palmetto S.P., Mar. 8 (FSW *et al.*) probably should be considered a winter visitor as it stayed at least three weeks after discovery.

FRINGILLIDS — Only small groups of Purple Finches could be found in n. areas. Once common in the Rio Grande Delta but apparently decimated by agricultural spraying, the White-collared Seedeater can now be found with some certainty only at San Ygnacio, well upriver from the heavily cultivated Lower Valley. On Jan. 13 Langham discovered what he suspects is a communal roosting site, as he watched 20-25 birds disperse in different directions after sunup. One bird was found below the dam at Falcon L., Dec. 28 (AB, G&BL, WS). Pine Siskins were quite low, while Am. Goldfinches were considered subpar at most localities. Green-tailed Towhees moved E in invasion numbers, considering its uncommon status. As many as four birds were located in w. Harris County (*fide* JGM), and about ten were present at Welder



White-collared Seedeater, San Ygnacio, TX, Dec. 25, 1979. Photo/ J.M. Langham.

Ref., at one time (GB). An E push of some w. species was evident. A **Rufous-crowned Sparrow**, a species of rocky, semi-arid country, was collected at Welder Ref., and one appeared at a feeder in Calallen near Corpus Christi (GB). Cassin's Sparrows could be found in unusual numbers with up to 50/day on Welder Ref., near its e. range limit, and even on Mustang I. (*vide* GB). The Clay-colored Sparrow, a bird of the Great Plains, is sometimes common in winter in South Texas brush country, but this year considerable numbers could be found on the coastal prai-

ries as far e. as the upper coast where they occurred in unprecedented numbers (JGM), as well as to the n. limits of the "brush country."

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NORTHWESTERN CANADA REGION

/Helmut Grünberg

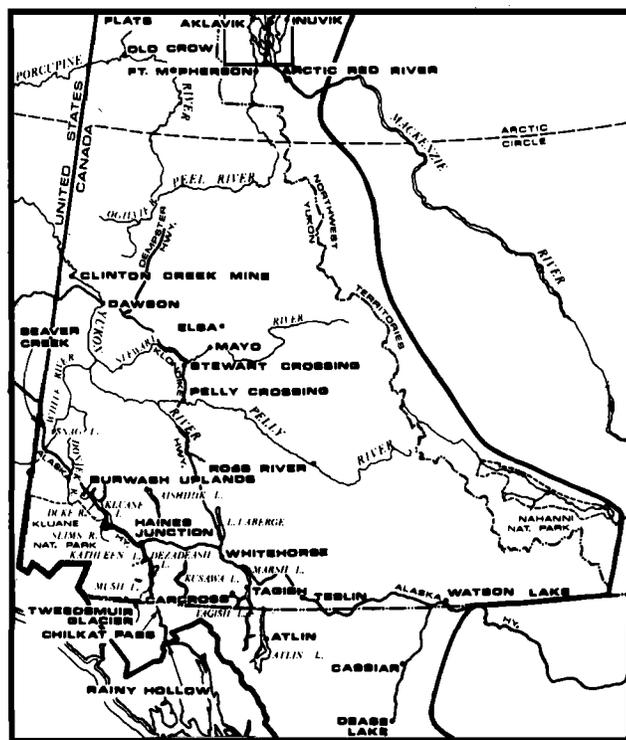
December and January temperatures in most areas of the Yukon and northern British Columbia were close to the long-term average (Whitehorse: December -16.2°C , January -21.2°C), while February was significantly warmer than normally (Whitehorse: -8.4°C as opposed to -13.2°C normal). This caused some rivers and creeks which usually freeze late, to stay open all winter. The southern Northwest Territories experienced a relatively mild winter also, but there was little open water. Precipitation (as snow) was normal in December and January in the Whitehorse area and below the long-term average in February. Since we started out with no snow on December 1, and experienced many days of temperatures above freezing every month and a mild, dry February, the snow cover was generally light.

Many observers managed to get out into various areas and watched a total of 37 species in the Yukon and northern British Columbia. There were at least three new winter records, one first observation. To our great surprise, the Northwest Territories reported only six species although efforts to find birds were made by about 20 observers. As in previous winters, number of species and individuals observed does not seem to depend upon how severe the winter is (unless the species is directly dependent on open water) but rather on the availability of food. This can be shown particularly well for birds of prey and owls.

GREBES THROUGH FALCONS — The first winter observation of **Red-necked Grebe** was reported from Whitehorse (hereafter, Whse.). A weakened bird was caught and later released in open water on the Yukon R., Dec. 31 (MD). Since the winter was relatively mild, there were many stretches of open water. Ducks were reported from several locations in the Yukon but only a few were identified. Four Com. Goldeneye were observed on the Yukon R., 30 km s.e. of Whse., Dec. 15 (DD,WH). A ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye was seen in Whse., Dec. 31 (AM). A flock of 26+ Com. Mergansers was seen on L. Laberge Dec. 2 (HG,WH) and three were noted on the Yukon R., 40 km s.e. of Whse., Dec. 15 (DD,HG,WH,KM). This species was also reported from Whse., Dec. 31 (*vide* DM).

Birds of prey stayed in the Region in good numbers, presumably because their food supply (small mammals, grouse and ptarmigan) was good. Goshawk observations were unusually numerous throughout the s. to c. Yukon and n. British Columbia (RF, HG, WG, BL, DM, DN & US, D & SR). Even Golden Eagles stayed throughout the winter in a few areas. One was observed in the greater Haines Jct. area (RC&NW, C & LD, BL, KP) and one or two in the Whse. area (*vide* DM, DN&US). An ad. Bald Eagle was observed near open water at L. Laberge Dec. 2 (HG, WH). Three individuals stayed for several days at Graham Inlet, n. B.C., in mid-January (MB). A Gyrfalcon was observed near Yellowknife in early January (DK, CK) and one was noted at Donjek R., Jan. 18 (DM). One was seen at Dezadeash Lodge s. of Haines Jct., Feb. 4 (RC&NW) and one appeared 10 km w. of Haines Jct., Feb. 29 (LD).

GROUSE THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Spruce Grouse were abundant in many areas other than N.W.T. They were noted by at least 11 observers. Ruffed Grouse were regularly seen at Graham Inlet (MB). One was observed in Whse., Feb. 8 (RC&NW). They were also noted in the c. Yukon, km 10 Dempster Hwy. (RF). Fifteen Sharp-tailed Grouse were reported from Donjek R., Jan. 18 (DM). Willow Ptarmigan were seen near Yellowknife (*vide* DK), at Dempster Hwy. (RF, DR), in the Haines Jct. area (KP), at Lower Post, B.C., Feb. 29 (DS) and near Graham Inlet in January (MB). Over 100 individuals were reported from mile 75 Haines Rd., Jan. 28-Feb. 29 (AvF). Four Rock Ptarmigan were seen near Kluane L., Dec. 26 (FP) and three at mile 70 Haines Rd., Jan. 28 (AvF). Four White-tailed Ptarmigan were observed at mile 80 Haines Rd., Feb. 8 & 28



(AvF).

Rock Doves were observed in Yellowknife throughout the winter (DK *et al.*). They were seen by many observers in Whse. The highest count here was 200+ individuals Jan. 6 (RC&NW).

Great Horned Owls were noted by at least 12 observers in the Yukon and n. British Columbia. This was once again the most common owl in our Region. The report of three Barred Owls, for a new winter record, at Kluane L., Dec. 26 (KP) needs confirmation. A Hawk Owl was seen near Swan L., n. of Whse., Dec. 2 (HG,WH). It was also reported from Whse., Dec. 31 (*vide* DM). The only Boreal Owl observed was one at Graham Inlet Feb. 11 (MB).

Hairy Woodpeckers were seen away from feeders this winter on several occasions: one 40 km s.e. of Whse., Dec. 8 (HG,WH), one 6 km n.e. of Whse., Jan. 20 (HG) and one at the Yukon Game Farm Feb. 10 (WG). Two birds were regularly seen throughout the winter at a feeder n.w. of Whse. (D&LS). A Downy Woodpecker was reported from Graham Inlet Jan. 9 (MB) and one appeared regularly at a feeder n.w. of Whse. (D&LS). The most common woodpecker in our Region

was once again the Northern Three-toed Woodpecker; it was seen by at least nine observers in the Yukon and n. British Columbia.

PERCHING BIRDS — Gray Jays were commonly observed in all parts of the Region including N.W.T. Thirteen observers reported Black-billed Magpies in the Yukon. There was a high count of 14 birds in Whse., Feb. 8 (RC&NW). This species seems to be increasing in numbers. Every observer in the Region saw Com. Ravens. An increase in numbers was apparent in Whse., as 580 birds were counted at the city dump Dec. 31 (DM). Both Black-capped and Boreal chickadees were common in the Yukon and n. British Columbia. They were not reported from N.W.T. One or two Dippers were regularly observed in Whse. (DD,HG,WH,KM, *vide* DM) and at the Dempster Hwy. (RF). One was noted at Partridge L., in the Bennett area Feb. 29 (WG). Seven to eight were counted in two areas near Atlin, B.C., Feb. 17 (HG).

During a snowstorm Dec. 7, a large flock of Bohemian Waxwings invaded the downtown area of Whse., and was seen by many observers. Over 500 birds were counted Dec. 8 (HG). This flock disappeared quickly, and only remnants of one to two birds were seen in January. Five Bohemian Waxwings were noted at Graham Inlet Dec. 26 (MB). The

first report for the Yukon of **House Sparrows** was obtained Feb. 28 when three were seen in downtown Whse. This species was common in Yellowknife (DK *et al.*).

Pine Grosbeaks were seen in small flocks by 16 observers in the Yukon and n. British Columbia. Redpolls were usually reported as "redpoll sp." However, definite identification of two Hoary Redpolls was made in Whse., Jan. 27 (RC&NW). Other likely reports were received from the Dempster Hwy. (RF) and from Whse. (HG,WH). Common Redpolls were identified as well as in several cases in the Yukon and n. British Columbia (MG,RC&NW,HG,WH, *vide* DM). Six Red Crossbills, an uncommon species in winter, were seen in Whse., Jan. 27 (D&LS). Two to five individuals were noted at Cassiar, B.C., on several occasions during January and February (PM). White-winged Crossbills were more common than Reds. They were reported by at least 10 observers, in the Yukon only. A "probable" Savannah Sparrow, rare in winter, was observed at a feeder in Whse., Feb. 10, 23 & 28 (SH). Snow Buntings in numbers of up to 18 were seen in the Whse. area throughout the season (HG,WH, *vide* DM,D&SR). Three were noted at Dezadeash Lodge s. of Haines Jct., Feb. 2 (*vide* BL to RC&NW). Three birds were observed in Atlin, B.C., Feb. 16 (HG). Two flocks of 20±

birds each were reported from Kluane L., Dec. 15, 17 & 23 (KP).

CORRIGENDUM — Chestnut-backed Chickadee and *ruber* race of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, erroneously reported for the Kluhini R. (AB 33(6):880), were actually seen at the Klehini R., about 50 km farther s., separated by the Coastal Mts., and in a totally different climate.

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NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN-INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

/Thomas H. Rogers

Winter over the Region was generally mild except for a cold snap in January. Much open water remained, encouraging wintering waterfowl. Precipitation was generally subnormal, resulting in often shallow or intermittent snow cover in the valleys, a low snow pack in the mountains, and prospects for a water-deficient summer. Only the extreme western areas along the east base of the Cascade Mountains had normal or better precipitation.

The mild winter encouraged many half-hardy species to linger late or remain all winter, and a number of abnormally early arrivals appeared. Many observers considered the season dull birdwise, with low numbers. There was some indication that the open winter kept birds, particularly the "northern finches," farther north or in the mountains. Mild conditions and abundant food may have kept populations scattered, or, as Skaar suggested, the previous severe winter may have wiped out many birds that normally winter.

LOONS AND GREBES — A Com. Loon was on the Columbia R., at Richland, Wash., Feb. 16 (WH). A few loons wintered on Rocky Reach and Rock I. Dam pools of the Columbia near Wenatchee, Wash., and up to 25 Horned Grebes were there in December and January (PC). Groups of 1-3 Horned

Grebes wintered on the Clearwater and Snake Rivers at Lewiston, Ida. (EM) and one was on Pend Oreille L., at Sandpoint, Ida., Feb. 7 (PS). A single Eared Grebe was at Turtle Rock 1 mi above Rocky Reach Dam Feb. 11 (PC). Wells Pool on the Columbia near Brewster, Wash., had 30 W. Grebes Dec. 3 (NM) and a few were in the Wenatchee, Wash., area (PC).

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — Seven White Pelicans wintered on the Hanford Reach of the Columbia n. of Richland (W.F.G.; Y.A.S.). Another enigmatic **Brown Pelican** was sighted below Lucky Peak Dam on the Boise R., s.e. of Boise, Ida., Dec. 29 (DT) for the state's second record. A Double-crested Cormorant was reported at Irrigon, Ore., Feb. 8 (JM). A migrating group of 52 Great Blue Herons stopped along the Snake R., below Am. Falls Dam in s. Idaho Feb. 23. An imm. Cattle Egret taken Dec. 7 near Townsend, Mont. (*Montana State U.) pro-



vided the state's first specimen (*vide* PDS). Nineteen Black-crowned Night Herons wintered near Burley, Ida. (WS) and three were at the Ringold rearing ponds, Franklin Co., Wash., Jan. 6 (TT). Up to three were in the Richland, Wash., area during the winter (RW) and 97 were along the Link R., near Klamath Falls, Ore., Dec. 16 (SG).

WATERFOWL — A Mute Swan was found dead on Osoyoos L., n. of Oroville, Wash., Nov. 25 (NM). Whistling Swans wintered on Coeur d' Alene and Pend Oreille Lake in n. Idaho; at Columbia N.W.R., Othello, Wash., and on the Shuswap-S. Thompson R. system e. of Kamloops, B.C. The 605 birds at the latter locality Jan. 1 dwindled to 291 by Jan. 13. The adult: cygnet ratio was about 3 : 1 (RH). At Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., Lima, Mont., Trumpeter Swan numbers went to an above-average 355 from mid-January owing to freezing of much of Henry's Fork of the Snake R., in Idaho. The midwinter aerial survey Feb. 11-13 revealed 939 Trumpeters in Montana, Wyoming and Idaho, an 8% increase over last winter. Adults and subadults totalled 767 (RRS). Five Trumpeters, two adults and three immatures, were on Wallowa L., Wallowa Co., Ore., Jan. 13 (FC).

Canada Geese peaked at 10,000+ at Deer Flat N.W.R., Nampa, Ida., Dec. 1. At least 2000 wintered on Pend Oreille, Coeur d' Alene and Hayden Lakes in n. Idaho. Columbia N.W.R., had 12,000 in December but their numbers dwindled to 1400 in January. Conley L. n. of Union, Ore., had 2000 White-fronted Geese Feb. 29 (MH). The mild winter enabled high numbers of ducks to winter. Deer Flat N.W.R., the "Mallard capitol" of the Region, hosted a peak of 404,000 of the birds Dec. 5 and had 30,550 Feb. 20 after the ice breakup. Umatilla N.W.R., Umatilla Co., Ore., had about 50,000 Mallards Jan. 27 (DI) and 3000, high for the area, wintered on Kalamalka L., near Vernon, B.C. Waterfowl numbers in most of the Columbia Basin of c. Washington were above normal, with Mallard concentrations especially high along the lower Columbia R. Increased field corn production there was an added attraction. Ducks at Columbia N.W.R., totalled 110,000+ in December but dropped to 56,000 in January. A very few Gadwall were noted in the La Grande and Union, Ore., vicinities in December and at Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, Ida., Feb. 7. A good wintering concentration, including Gadwall and Pintail was at Livingston, Mont. Many ducks, mostly divers, wintered in the Wenatchee area, but there were a few Am Wigeon and Gadwall and more Green-winged Teal than usual. Large flocks of Ring-necked Ducks, Lesser Scaup and Ruddy Ducks and more than the usual number of Canvasbacks frequented the Columbia R. there. The Pend Oreille R., in n. Idaho had 6200 Redhead, 75 Canvasback and 350 Lesser Scaup Dec. 17 and Pend Oreille L., had 6700, 125 and 600, respectively Jan. 11 (RR). The largest number of Com. Goldeneye reported was 2000 at Lewiston Dec. 9. Biggest concentrations of Barrow's were near Brownlee Dam on the Snake R., n. of Weiser, Ida., 200 Jan. 27, and at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., 150 wintering. Pend Oreille L., had 145 Bufflehead and 925 Com. Merganser Jan. 11. Lewiston, had up to 100 of the former and 25 was a high number for the Snake R., below Marsing, Ida.

For "rarities", a **Black Duck** was well seen at Pocatello Feb. 7 (CT *et al.*). One or two Eur Wigeon were at Lower Klamath Lake N.W.R., Ore., Feb. 9+ (SS) and the Richland vicinity had up to three Dec. 2-Jan. 5

(RW). At least five Greater Scaup were on Upper Klamath L., with hundreds of Lesser Scaup and goldeneye Feb. 23 (SS). The only Oldsquaw spotted was a pair on Lenore L., Grant Co., Wash., Dec. 8 (BW). A ♂ Harlequin Duck, very rare in winter in British Columbia, appeared at Nelson Dec. 8 (JS) and a male and a female were sighted at Trail Jan. 19 & 31 (ME). A ♀ White-winged Scoter on the Columbia R., near Wenatchee was apparently the first ever recorded there (PC). At least two more were in the Lewiston area, one on the Clearwater R., Dec. 9 and the other on the Snake R., near Asotin Dec. 16 (EM). A ♀ Surf Scoter near Wenatchee Jan. 5 also was an apparent first there (PC). Up to six Red-breasted Mergansers were at Trail, B.C., Dec. 29-Feb. 20 (ME) and Vernon had two Jan. 12 (JG).

VULTURES AND HAWKS — Remarkably late Turkey Vulture records were: one along the Wenatchee R., at Monitor Dec. 14 (PC) and one at Oak Creek W.R.A., Yakima Co., about 18 mi s.w. of Ellensburg Jan. 10 & 18 (LS; Y.A.S.). At least 12 sightings of Goshawks were reported. The species was "very scarce" in the s. Okanagan Valley, B.C., however (JG). Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawk numbers appeared good. Rough-legged Hawks were decidedly scarce in the Bozeman and Helena areas and around Lewiston, but their numbers appeared normal elsewhere. Numbers of both Golden and Bald eagles seemed good. Highest numbers for the latter were in the Klamath Falls area with 165 feeding on mice Jan. 12 and 225 counted leaving their Bear Valley roosting site Feb. 24 (SS). Totals for the midwinter eagle count were not available. An Osprey along the Columbia R., at Whitebluffs, Benton Co., Wash., Jan. 24 was remarkable (GS). There was one report of a Gyrfalcon and seven of Peregrine Falcons. Prairie Falcon sightings were rather common. Merlins were reported more commonly than usual, at least in part because of extensive coverage by W.F.G. personnel.

TURKEYS AND RAILS — The Turkey flock on Bozeman Pass e. of Bozeman was down to about six birds (PDS). Twenty-four were at Prairie, Ida., in December and January (PC). A few Virginia Rails, almost unheard of in winter in the Region, were reported. Three were at Penticton, B.C., Dec. 25 (SC); five were seen or heard at the Yakima R. slough between Mabton and Sunnyside, Wash., Feb. 10 (KB, B&GR) and one was at a small seepage area 2 mi n. of Rocky Reach Dam, Douglas Co., Wash., Jan. 26 (PC). The Chewelah, Wash. CBC also found the species and Wallowa County, Ore., had one Dec. 18 (*vide* WD). Equally unusual were two Sora at the Yakima R. slough on the same date. The Pocatello CBC had both species.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Spotted Sandpiper wintered at the dam on the Link R., near Klamath Falls (SS). Six Greater Yellowlegs at the mouth of Asotin Cr., Asotin, Wash., Dec. 1 were very late; one was there Feb. 16 (RG). A Pectoral Sandpiper was along lower McDonald Cr., Glacier N.P., Mont., Nov. 11 (EM). Four Long-billed Dowitchers and a Least Sandpiper were

found in the Ft. Klamath, Ore., area Feb. 16 (DA, DF & DI). The Yakima R. delta, Richland, had 13 Dunlin Feb. 16 (WH & RW). At least three Glaucous Gulls were in that area during the winter (RW) and an adult and three first-year birds were at Coeur d' Alene, Jan. 11-12 (THR & SGS). Lower McDonald Cr., Glacier N.P., had an immature bird Nov. 11 (EM). For the fourth consecutive winter Glaucous-winged Gulls visited the Klamath Basin, two adults on the Link R., Dec. 15 (EP) and one immature at Klamath Falls, Feb. 15 (SS). An **Ancient Murrelet** was picked up alive on the highway near Helmville 60 mi e. of Missoula, Mont., Dec. 2 (GA) for the state's third record. The bird died two days later (*U. of Mont.).

OWLS AND HUMMINGBIRDS — Barn Owls still appeared on the increase, with sightings in Benton, Franklin, Grant and Yakima counties. The Lewiston area had two reports and Nampa and Am. Falls Res. had single sightings. Five were counted at Union, Ore., Dec. 15 (RRo). Snowy Owls put in an extremely poor showing, with a few sightings in the Selah, Wash., and Reardan-Davenport, Wash., areas and one at Missoula for the only reports. The only Hawk Owl report was of one on Big White Mt., near Kelowna, B.C., Feb. 14 (BH). A few Burrowing Owls apparently wintered in w. Grant and Franklin counties, Wash., and near Hardman, Ore. Barred, Great Gray and Saw-whet owls were reported as uncommon in w. Glacier N.P. (RD). Short-eared Owls continued scarce in the Klamath Basin but their numbers seemed normal elsewhere. Single Saw-whets were reported near Richland, Brewster, Yakima, and Klamath Falls. The only Anna's Hummingbird report was of an ad. male photographed at Okanagan Falls, B.C., and present from autumn until Jan. 22 (*vide* SC).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — One or two Lewis' Woodpeckers were sighted in the Wenatchee area during January - early February. The species appears to be making a comeback in Chelan and Douglas counties (PC). One was on Short Mt., 2 mi n. of Riverside Dec. 5 (JK); two appeared near Moxee Jan. 1, and one was in the vicinity of Naches Feb. 2 (Y.A.S.). A bird of this species, very rare in winter in the Klamath Falls area, was seen there Jan. 19 (SS) and Salmon, Ida., reported one Dec. 14 (HR). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, "red-breasted" race, was found along Indian Cr., Union Co., Ore., Jan. 27 (JC & JE). Good numbers of Horned Larks wintered in the Vernon, B.C. area, where they had not previously been known to winter. Conversely, the species was decidedly scarce in the Helena area. McNary Park just e. of Umatilla, Ore., had a very early Violet-green Swallow Feb. 16 (NB) and a Barn Swallow apparently feeding on insects from the water surface was skimming over the Columbia R., at the Yakima delta Dec. 1, a month after the normal late date (RW).

JAYS THROUGH CHICKADEES — A few Blue Jays appeared. Three at Union in November stayed at least until Feb. 9 (JE *et al.*) and one was at Summerland, B.C., throughout the winter period (SC). One or

two arrived at a feeder near Spokane in late January (EK) and one was sighted near Asotin, Wash., Dec. 1 (MK). The two at Hamilton, Mont., stayed all winter (CP). A Chestnut-backed Chickadee photographed at Waterton Lakes townsite, Waterton Lakes N.P., Alta., Feb. 10 was the first ever recorded for that area (AW, M&JS). One at a Helena feeder furnished that area's first record (AS *et al.*).

THRUSHES THROUGH KINGLETS — Robins apparently wintered sparsely in the Region. Wintering Varied Thrush numbers in the Wenatchee area were down from last year, with five the largest number. Dryden, Wash., had one Jan. 9 (L&JG) and one was seen near Nampa Feb. 14 (MF). It was a good winter for Hermit Thrushes in Richland with up to nine seen. Yakima had one Jan. 5 (EC). Two W. Bluebirds were found in McNary Park Jan. 2 (MC). Two Mountain Bluebirds were found near Clarkston, Wash., Jan. 7-9 and two in the Nampa area Feb. 26. Apparently wintering, four Ruby-crowned Kinglets were recorded at Nampa Jan. 19, at Yakima and Glead, singles, and at Chief Joseph W.R.A., Asotin Co. A late lingerer was at Lavington, B.C., Dec. 4.

PIPITS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — A single Water Pipit appeared at the Snake R.-Clearwater R. confluence at Lewiston Jan. 8-9 (PHi). Bohemian Waxwing numbers were somewhat above normal; the largest concentration reported was of 2000 at Columbia View Experimental Plots (hereafter, C.V.E. Plots), 2 mi n. of Rocky Reach Dam, n. of Wenatchee. Cedar Waxwings stayed in unusual numbers (flocks up to 210), at Spokane, Yakima, Helena, the Klamath Basin and Nampa (300 Feb. 21). A Loggerhead Shrike was reported at Iona, Ore., Jan. 19 (RP) and Nampa noted a high of 1500 Starlings Feb. 17. Two Orange-crowned Warblers were braving bitter cold at Sacajewa S.P., Pasco, Wash., Jan. 20 (RW) and Parker Heights near Yakima had six Yellow-rumped Warblers Dec. 29 (Y.A.S.). An **Ovenbird** was observed at Ephrata, Wash., Nov. 12 (B&SJ). Western Meadowlarks wintered in high numbers at Helena and in the s. Okanagan. The n. arm of Okanagan L., had 60 Jan. 27 (JG). One Yellow-headed Blackbird was in a mixed flock of about 500 Tricolored and 1500 Red-winged blackbirds near Klamath Falls Dec. 16 (SG). Otter L., near Vernon had six Rusty Blackbirds Feb. 9 and two Feb. 17; two were sighted at Valley, Wash., Feb. 9 (WH & BW). A window-killed Com. Grackle was picked up in Bozeman in January (LM).

FINCHES — Evening Grosbeaks were scarce or absent from most of the Region, appearing mostly in the n. and w. parts. The s. Okanagan reported above-normal numbers and Wenatchee had up to 100 in January and February. The only other flock of any size was one of 90 near Asotin, Wash. Purple Finches visited a Wenatchee feeder Feb. 8-23 (PC). The only note on Cassin's Finches was that they were "practically nonexistent in s. interior British Columbia" during the winter (JG). A small flock of House Finches wintered in Bozeman (JSp *et al.*) and "a good winter" there was reported for Pine Gros-

beaks for the only account except for Glacier N.P., Mont., Blueslide, Wash. and Wallowa L., and Union, Ore., Gray-crowned Rosy Finch numbers were low and appearances spotty. Bozeman reported "hardly any." All the others were in c. and e. Washington and n. and e. Oregon. Not even one Com. Redpoll was reported and Pine Siskins were virtually absent, except for the Bozeman area, where a good flock wintered. American Goldfinches showed up in a number of localities, however. Red Crossbills nearly drew a blank. "Extremely few" were at Kimberley, B.C.; Penticton, B.C., had 12 on Feb. 23, and one was found on the Kalispell, Mont. CBC. There were no reports of White-winged Crossbills.

SPARROWS — A Rufous-sided Towhee was at Vernon Dec. 23 (JG), one was reported at Nampa (C&EF), and three were at a Chukar feeding station at the C.V.E. Plots. A **Lark Bunting** visited a feeder in Boise Feb. 6 (JCr) and a Lark Sparrow was found in the Grande Ronde Valley near La Grande, Ore., Feb. 9 (HN). Equally surprising were two reports of Sage Sparrows, one along the Columbia R., in Richland Feb. 16-17 (WH & RW) and two in Toppish N.W.R., Yakima Co., Wash., Feb. 10 (KB, B&GR). Only a few Tree Sparrows were sighted: in the Bozeman area, at Bonners Ferry, Ida.; at Reardan and Coulee City, Wash.; at Umatilla N.W.R., and near La Grande, Ore. The Mondovi area, Lincoln Co., Wash., had a Brewer's Sparrow Feb. 22 (JH). At least one Harris' Sparrow wintered at Bozeman (CL) and an imm. bird stayed near Joseph, Ore., Jan. 1-4 (FC) for the only reports. Wintering White-crowned Sparrows were reported at Yakima and Nampa. C.V.E. Plots had five Golden-crowned Sparrows Jan. 26 (HO). A White-throated Sparrow visited a Missoula, Mont., feeder periodically throughout the winter (SF); one appeared Oct. 4 in Ephrata, Wash. (B&SJ), an immature appeared at Glead near Yakima Feb. 22 (PH) and one was sighted at Island City, Ore., Nov. 1 (R&GS). Three Fox Sparrows were reported along Cottonwood Cr., Lincoln Co., Wash. (JH) and one or two were sighted at Glead and Yakima December - early February (Y.A.S.). Single birds were found in Richland Dec. 8 and Feb. 16 (WH & RW) and one wintered at a Kimberley feeder (MW). Lapland Longspurs, not reported otherwise, were found scattered throughout the Klamath Basin, with a high of 100+ on Lower Klamath N.W.R., Jan. 27 (SS). Two **McCown's Longspurs** were identified on the Idaho Nat. Energy Lab. site near Atomic City Feb. 20 (TR). Snow Bunting numbers appeared sparse except for a flock of 200 near Usk, Wash., around Christmastime (JSt) and a flock of 100 in the Nampa area, date not given (CB).

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MOUNTAIN WEST /Hugh E. Kingery

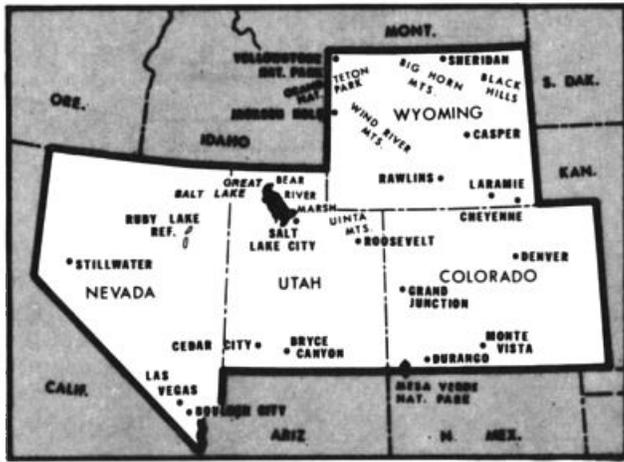
November cold dispatched most semi-hardy species from the Region, but no birds arrived to occupy the vacant niches. Most reporters noted fewer birds this winter. A vanguard of waterfowl and a few other species accelerated spring migration by one-to-two weeks. The mildness did not cross over the mountains to eastern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming, which experienced snow and cold all season. "The worst year for wildlife and birds in particular I have ever seen," said May Hanesworth, referring not only to Cheyenne's severe winter but its summer hailstorms and a tornado.

Perceptions of weather are relative, however. Reporters referred to both Ridgway, Colorado, and Dubois, Wyoming, as "banana belts," which at Ridgway meant only one below zero recorded and at Dubois meant only one 24-hour period below zero, plus a seasonal low of -38°F.

Winter brought many odd records, such as a brood of ducklings, and warblers in December, thrushes in January, and very early migrants.

Habitat disturbances probably represent the greatest threat to stable bird populations. In the arid West, the riparian habitat is a lifeline, often the only green trees for miles. Oakleaf mentioned two disturbing threats to riparian river bottoms in Wyoming: subdivisions in Teton County which may displace nesting Bald Eagles, and woodcutters who take both dead and live trees.

State-financed water developments may turn into another threat. Dams already occupy all the good stream sites. With revenues piling up from mineral severance taxes, western states now have money to build water projects which the federal government rejects because of poor cost/benefit ratios or bad environmental consequences. Most western states lack good environmental safeguards, and their politics foster "booster" philosophies which impel all kinds of development



The pressures will impact severely on the remaining riparian habitat.

Christmas Bird Counts. The report which follows includes frequencies calculated for several species on a party-hour basis. The figures exclude Nevada, unless otherwise specified; they cover 1972-1979.

Nomenclature. In past reports I have referred to the junction of plains and mountains as the "piedmont," an accurate term semantically but not a term in local use. Colorado has co-opted the term "Front Range" for that meeting place, although geographic accuracy reserves the name for the range of high peaks along the Continental Divide 20-50 miles to the west. Henceforth I will succumb to the new usage of "Front Range" for that stretch of megalopolis from Cheyenne to Pueblo.

Latilongs. This column has started locating some bird records by latilong. Latitudes and longitudes divide Wyoming and Colorado neatly into 28 blocks—"Latilongs" or "degree blocks." Each latilong contains 3600 square miles—bigger than Rhode Island and Delaware combined. Published distribution studies keyed to latilongs are becoming well-used references. Wyoming's draft study is available from Bob Oakleaf, Wyoming Game & Fish Dept., 260 Buena Vista, Lander, Wyo. 82520. Colorado's edition is available from Colorado Field Ornithologists, c/o Judd Sundine, 5325 Garland, Arvada, Colo. 80002, for \$2.00.

GREBES, HERONS — Hundreds of grebes spent December on L. Powell, Utah, gradually diminishing in numbers until only a few remained by Feb. 29. They were 60% Western, 20% Horned, 10% Eared, and 10% Pied-billed (CC). Lake Mead had no large flocks of grebes, with counts of Westerns way down; the CBC had the lowest total in 12 years (VM). A recently-hatched Eared Grebe found Oct. 9 waddling down a lane at Dubois, Wyo., was released in a warm pond at Wagon Box Ranch where the owner feeds ducks; it spent the winter there (MB). A White Pelican with an injured wing lasted at Barr L., near Denver through Jan. 5 (D.F.O.). More Great Blue Herons than usual overwintered, with more seen in n. Nevada (SS, SB), Utah (MW, LE), and c. (mountainous) Colorado (KC, JM). Summer 1979 saw the first observations of Cattle Egrets in w. Nevada, we have learned, with 5-10 throughout at Lahontan Valley near

Fallon (NS). Fish Springs, N.W.R., Utah, near Dugway, Utah, sported a Snowy Egret Feb. 4 (LM). Black-crowned Night Herons, which regularly winter at Reno (JA, IH), have recently started to winter along the S. Platte R., in metropolitan Denver (D.F.O.).

WATERFOWL — Utah wintered twice as many ducks this year as last, with a seasonal low of 29,292 (70% of

them shovelers at Ogden Bay W.M.A.), compared with a low of 14,600 in 1979. The fall migration lasted longer (60,164 ducks Dec. 1-15 *cf.* 17,526 last year), and spring migration accelerated over last year (131,593 ducks—including 48,192 Pintails—by Feb. 29, *cf.* 32,320 in 1979.—U.D.W.R.). Eastern Colorado reported 304,578 ducks, 150,696 Canada Geese, and 350 Snow Geese on Dec. 12 (C.D.W.). February 18 saw 10,000 Snow Geese at Rocky Ford, Colo., including 200 Blues (JR). Several Ross' Geese were seen through the winter at Greeley and Denver (F.C.A.S., D.F.O., JR) and one Jan. 23 at Reno (IH). Utah had 4712 Whistling Swans by the end of February (U.D.W.R.). Western Nevada has recorded, for four years straight, a flock of Com. Shelducks, usually 3-4 but one aerial flight this year counted seven at Stillwater W.M.A. (NS). "A bizarre discovery," at Blue Mesa Res., near Gunnison, Colo., occurred Dec. 13 "of two ad. Gadwalls with five feathered young. They all clustered toward one adult, peeping as they did so, very characteristic duckling behavior" (KC). In addition to the high numbers of N. Shovelers at Ogden Bay, D.F.O. reported 2500 in Denver Jan. 12. By Jan. 15 10-20 Cinnamon Teal had arrived at Humboldt Sink in n.c. Nevada (SS). The Antelope I. causeway across the Great Salt L., had 800-900 Com. Goldeneyes Dec. 10, comparable to last year, but with those in ♀ plumage outnumbering males 5:1. They had disappeared by Dec. 27 (JN). Add to the fall scoters another Surf, shot at Carson L., Nev., during hunting season (NS).

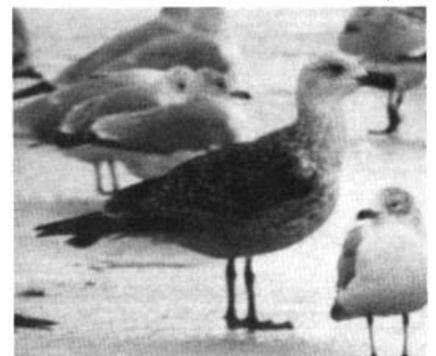
HAWKS, EAGLES — CBCs produced hawk numbers equal to last year, except that Accipiters continued their gradual increase, from .016/party-hour in 1972 to .055/party-hour in 1979. A Turkey Vulture cruised over the Univ. of Wyoming campus at Laramie Dec. 5 (DM, †DK). All three Accipiters thrived with the aid of artificial food supplies—Sharp-shinned and Cooper's at feeders throughout the Region and a Goshawk at Rapid Cr. Ranch near Sheridan, where the owner's pigeons "act as a bird feeder" (BB). Impressions of increased numbers of Red-tailed Hawks (VM, EB, KC) are borne out by the CBC counts of .15/party-hour, highest of the 8 years. Rough-legged Hawks did not move S to s. Utah (MW) while e. Nevada had above-average numbers (SS). State Bald Eagle surveys reported 600-700 in both Wy-

oming and Colorado. Greatest concentrations were in the San Luis Valley, Colo., with 77, Evanston, Wyo., with 60±, and Cedar City, Utah with 42 (BO, C.D.W., SH *et al.*). The Evanston roost built up to 200+ Mar. 6, probably due to an influx of eagles from Utah (BO, DM).

We received without details a smattering of Osprey reports, as we have for several years. Since Ospreys normally winter in s. Arizona and s. Nevada, February birds are possible, although their resemblance to imm. Bald Eagles could mislead an unwary observer (Garrett, *W. Tanager*, L.A. Aud. Soc., March 1980, 46:6:4). Observers supported observations at Durango Feb. 9 & 23 (†RE, EF *et al.*). Sheridan had its winter Gyrfalcon again, with observations Dec. 16-Feb. 6 (HD, EP). Prairie Falcon numbers have steadily increased on CBCs, from .02/party-hour to .03/party-hour, and Wyoming noted a sharp increase in numbers in February at Lander, Lovell, and Jackson (BO, BR). More Am. Kestrels wintered at Sheridan (1-4 each field trip, *cf.* 3 all last winter—HD). Eagle, Colo., had its first winter record Dec. 30 (JM). Zion had about average numbers but fewer wintered along the Front Range.

CRANES, SHOREBIRDS — Twelve of the 15 Whooping Cranes of the West had reached the San Luis Valley by Feb. 29; the first arrived Feb. 9, 11 days earlier than in 1979 (MBS). Sandhills also arrived early, with 5000 by Feb. 15, compared with 100 in 1979 by that date (MBS). Sandhills arrived at Lund, Nev., Feb. 15 and peaked Mar. 6 at 1028 (SS). Stragglers were seen at Barr L., near Denver Dec. 23 (JR) and Wellington, Colo., Dec. 22-Jan. 5, originally found on the Ft. Collins CBC (WDG). Observations of a Com. Gallinule at Provo, Utah Dec. 1, Jan. 7, & Feb. 9 provided c. Utah with records for all three winter months for the first time (MW). Killdeer observations declined on the Front Range, but at Eureka, Nev., one arrived Feb. 11, 1-3 weeks early (JE). An early Spotted Sandpiper caught a small fish at Davis Dam Feb. 9 (VM). Southern Nevada saw small flocks of Least Sandpipers several times throughout the winter (VM). A Least Sandpiper at Gunnison Feb. 26 was remarkable (KC).

GULLS — Reddall, on Jan. 1, discovered an imm. **Great Black-backed Gull** in a park adjacent to an Englewood garbage dump. The bird remained with the hundreds of gulls



First-winter Great Black-backed Gull, Centennial Lake Park, Englewood CO. January, 1980. Photo/ Bruce Webb.

attracted to the dump until Jan 30 (D F O , CB, m.ob.; ph.). A handful of Thayer's Gulls occurred along the Front Range and in s. Nevada throughout the winter (JR, CB, VR, ML, VM). Late California Gulls occurred at Dubois Dec. 1 (MB) and Denver Dec. 24 (VR, J&JC). By Feb. 12 a mixed flock of 1000 gulls, Californias mixed with Ring-billed, had reached Washoe L., near Reno. A Black-legged Kittiwake at Davis Dam Feb. 12 led to the conclusion that they may occur regularly there (CL).

DOVES, OWLS, POOR-WILLS — Mourning Doves wintered throughout the Region, with flocks of 20-60 from Denver to Rocky Ford, Durango, Zion and Las Vegas. One wintered in the mountains, at a feeder at the Bluebird Motel in Grand L., Colo. (DJ). Wyoming had rare winter records in December and February at Sheridan, Lovell, and Jackson. A pair of Burrowing Owls "which raised a brood last summer has remained at the nest all winter, and appears to be nesting at the end of the period." (VM). Besides the injured Boreal Owl found in R.M.N.P., during CBC week (RAR), one was seen at Stillwater Campground in R.M.N.P., Jan. 25 (†DD). The CBC record of a Poor-will at Ruby Lakes N.W.R., Dec. 19 was the Region's only winter record; it flushed from a road after sunset (FWC).

KINGFISHERS, WOODPECKERS — A Belted Kingfisher visited Ryder's yard repeatedly Dec. 16-22. "It seemed to be trying to catch small birds (especially siskins), as they went to roost. The kingfisher flew into our spruce, our daughter heard a squeak, and the kingfisher flew out, possibly with a bird." Compared with last year, CBCs recorded a few more Com. Flickers (.79/party-hour) and the same number of Hairy and Downy woodpeckers (.09 and .14/party-hour respectively), both down from the 7-year average. A Red-bellied Woodpecker visited Boulder Jan. 19-Feb. 9 (D.F.O., B.A.S.). An early Red-headed Woodpecker was at Loveland, Colo., Feb. 19 (F.A.C.). A Lewis' Woodpecker Dec. 3 was 2 1/2 months later than the previous late date at Sheridan (HD). Lewis's wintered in unusual numbers in Durango and the Front Range.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — Black and Say's phoebes wintered near Zion N.P. (LE) and a Say's occurred Dec. 10 at Durango (EF). Newsletters reported two early migrants, but without details: an E. Kingbird at Ft. Collins Feb. 19 and a W. Wood Pewee at Boulder Jan. 8 (F.C.A.S., B.A.S.). The kingbird observer later supplied a description (PH). Las Vegas reported early swallows, two Violet-greens Feb. 18 and 13 Rough-winged Feb. 2 (VM). Davis Dam had normal numbers of Tree Swallows wintering—1200± counted on each of three trips (VM).

JAYS TO THRASHERS — Blue Jays may have wintered at Logan (KA). The Blue x Steller's hybrid did winter at Grand L., and cruised among feeders at least 3 mi apart (DJ). CBCs reported the lowest-yet counts of Steller's Jays at .57/party-hour, half the 7-year average. At 2.94/party-hour, Black-billed Magpies were down a little from the 7-

year average. The White-necked Raven in Denver Feb. 10 (WF, BRi, DS) continues the sporadic appearances of a species which has retreated before civilization. In Denver's early days they ranged regularly into the frontier town, but with irrigation and the advent of the urban forest, they have retracted their range during this century and Com. Crows have replaced them. At Ridgway, Colo., two possible White-necked Ravens were observed Feb. 27 (JRG). Pinon Jay numbers dropped (ME, JRG, SB, LE, SH) although small flocks occurred at Laramie and Lovell (JP, BO). Black-capped Chickadees showed average CBC tallies (1.13/party-hour) while Mountain Chickadees had 1.11/party-hour compared with a 1.40 average. This drop, however, is tied to dips on two counts—Boulder and Pikes Peak—which may reflect a change in coverage rather than a drop in numbers. A few Mountains did descend to some plains and valley towns. Jarbidge, Nev., had its first Bushtit in 6 years Feb. 15 (EB). Pygmy Nuthatches rarely leave ponderosa pine habitat, so that a small flock Feb. 27 in cottonwoods at Fountain, Colo., was a surprise (PA). Many Brown Creepers left their usual conifer haunts for the towns of Gunnison, Grand L., Fountain, Boulder, and Provo. House Wrens out-of-season, appeared at Reno Jan. 23 (IH) and Silt, Colo., Feb. 28 (†RP). A Canon Wren wintered in a garage and woodpile w. of Loveland, Colo. (MHe). A Mockingbird wintered at Berthoud, Colo. (CCu), and they were seen in January and February in Zion, Ely, Nev., Loveland, and Big Horn, Story, and Sheridan, Wyo. (LE, SS, IS, HD). An early Sage Thrasher reached Castlewood State Park, Colo., Feb. 2 (D.F.O.).

THRUSHES TO WAXWINGS — A Varied Thrush wintered at Laramie (AB,ph.), and one banded at Ogden, Utah Nov. 22 was recaptured Feb. 10 (MLK). Other observations came from Logan and Las Vegas in December (KA, VM). A Hermit Thrush wintered on the Brigham Young Univ. campus in Provo (MW). A Swainson's Thrush stayed Jan. 5-16 in a Wheat Ridge, Colo., yard (PE). The winter saw hundreds of Bohemian Waxwings flocking throughout w. Wyoming, w. Colorado, and Utah s. to Provo. The only Nevada report was of three at Jarbidge Jan. 1 (EB). Eastern Colorado, which had few Bohemians, did have fairly good numbers of Cedars—e.g., flocks of 50-100 in Boulder, and 209 reported vs. 121 last year from the Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area (F.A.C.). Reno, Ely, Zion, Cedar City, Cheyenne, and Torrington, Wyo., had a few small flocks. Oakleaf reported N. Shrikes all over Wyoming, twice as many as in the last two winters.

WARBLERS, BLACKBIRDS — The Region reported an unprecedented six species of warblers. Four were rarities on CBCs—MacGillivray's at Hotchkiss, Colo., Pine at Denver, Com. Yellowthroat at Ruby Lakes N.W.R., and a N. Waterthrush walking on an icy stock pond at Kanab, Utah (??). Although they do occur in extreme s.w. Utah, an Orange-crowned Jan. 19 gave Zion its first record (JG). Nevada CBCs had half as many Yellow-rumpeds this year as last, and Las Ve-

gas and Davis Dam had far fewer through the winter, but pairs wintered at Zion and Durango. By late February early migrants had reached c. Utah (MW, SH) and n. Nevada (MP, BP). The Pine Warbler found Dec 15 on the Denver CBC was found again Dec 19 (MJS, RS, †TM), and is about the 15th record for Colorado. The W. Meadowlark at Jackson Feb. 25 provided a first winter record (GR). Large blackbird flocks at Las Vegas Jan. 14 and Zion Jan. 19 included 50 and 10 Yellow-headed respectively (VM, LE). Small flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds wintered in a number of Colorado mountain valleys, and a very large flock fed through the winter in corn fields at the Hanna W.M.A., at Fountain, Colo. (PA). A N. Oriole appeared Jan. 1 in Colorado Springs and reappeared about a month later (†BPe). Common Grackles wintered in Ft. Collins (RAR) and Sheridan (HD), and a few others occurred on the Front Range.

FINCHES — A pair of Cardinals visited a Lakewood, Colo., yard Jan. 2-12 (F&JJ *et al.*). The *Pyrrhuloxia* on the Henderson CBC gave Nevada its first record (PL,ph.) Reported without descriptions, four Black-headed Grosbeaks purportedly came to feeders in Ogden Jan. 14 (*vide* JN) and one near Loveland Jan. 28-30 (*vide* IS). Reports of Evening Grosbeaks declined. Purple Finches wintered in Ft. Collins and Sheridan, and a female occurred in Colorado Springs Feb. 20 (PA). In parts of the Mountain West, Cassin's Finches moved out of the mountains. Many Front Range feeders within 10 mi of the foothills had 10-100 regularly (m ob), Zion and Cedar City reported more than usual (LE, SH), and at Jarbidge 1-2 wintered, with up to 50 by mid-February (EB). Loveland and Cheyenne reported the only Com Redpolls, Cheyenne's a flock of 40 Feb 1 (AA). A Green-tailed Towhee wintered in Glenwood Springs, Colo. (RP). The Region's first winter **Lark Buntings** persisted around Ft. Morgan, Colo.: one Dec. 13 and three Jan. 7, feeding with meadowlarks and Horned Larks (JCR).

SPARROWS — Two Vesper Sparrows arrived at Las Vegas Feb. 24 (VM). Wintering Sage Sparrows dropped at Cedar City and Las Vegas; s. Nevada's CBCs recorded only a third of the numbers found in 1977 (42 cf 113). Juncos counted on CBCs spurted way up—8.8/party-hour (a total of 22,628)—vaulted from a previous high of 6.06/party-hour. On the other hand, CBC Tree Sparrows plummeted to only .96/party-hour, from an average of 2.8 and a prior low of 1.86. A Chipping Sparrow wintered at a Durango feeder (†FW). White-crowned Sparrows apparently wintered n. of their usual range CBC totals hit record highs, at 3.56/party-hour, almost three times the average of 1.26, 20 out of 22 counts reported them up. In Nevada, 2 counts had high numbers, and one had particularly low numbers. Reno reported three Golden-crowned Sparrows in December (JA), and Zion's Golden-crowned Dec 16 was out of range (E&MM). White-throated Sparrows wintered at feeders in Big Horn, Wyo., Ft. Collins, and Boulder (HD, RAR, B.A.S.). Zion had its second Snow Bunting, one in mid-January (JD).

CORRIGENDUM — Colorado reported three Yellow-throated Warblers altogether last spring, one each at Pueblo, Eleven Mile Res., and Longmont (not three at Pueblo plus two more; *AB* 33:795).

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SOUTHWEST REGION

/John P. Hubbard, Janet Witzeman, and Kenn Kaufman

Mild autumn temperatures and low precipitation into December and later in the Region, and individuals of several species lingered past normal departure times—or even wintered. Among the more notable examples were Long-billed Curlews, Franklin's Gulls, White-winged Doves, nighthawks, and gnatcatchers in southern New Mexico—plus House Wrens, Mockingbirds, Lark Buntings, and Lark Sparrows there and farther north. In southern Arizona the species affected included Olivaceous Cormorant, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, and White-faced Ibises. Both states also featured straggling individuals of other species, e.g., Pectoral Sandpiper, Sabine's Gulls, Solitary Vireo, and Wilson's Warbler in New Mexico and Short-billed Dowitcher and Eastern Kingbird in Arizona. On the other hand, in the latter area there was a dearth of the usual "warm weather" warblers, such as Orange-crowns and Yellow-rumpeds.

Mildness and dryness aside, some boreal or montane species still made their normal appearances in the Region—but also in numbers and/in areas not normally observed. These included Oldsquaws, Pine Grosbeaks, and Cassin's Finches in both states, White-fronted Geese in Arizona, and Goshawks, Yellow-shafted Flickers, Northern Shrikes and Snow Buntings in New Mexico. On the other hand, Bald Eagle numbers were down in the latter state, perhaps owing to mild conditions north of there. Fringillid numbers were low for most species in the grasslands of southeastern Arizona, apparently owing to lack of seed crops following sparse summer precipitation.

Rarities included Arizona's first verified records of Kiskadee Flycatcher and Field Sparrow, and a belated report of Greater Scaup for New Mexico.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — Two Arctic Loons remained at Painted Rock Dam at least until Jan. 27 (DSz *et al.*). A small dark grebe at San Simon Cienaga, N. Mex., Dec. 2 and probably Nov. 29 (†RMo *et al.*) was thought to have been a LRMo, a species unverified in the state. White Pelicans are rare in winter away from the Lower Colorado

Valley (hereafter, L.C.V.), so notable were two at Picacho Res., Jan. 12 and eight at Painted Rock Dam Jan. 13 (DT), and one at Prescott Dec. 3-13 (CT). Two winter records of Olivaceous Cormorant from Arizona were: one at Mittry L., L.C.V., where extremely rare, Dec. 14 until at least Jan. 4 (KVR, AH, ST), and one at L. Patagonia (BH). A few White-faced Ibises again wintered at Cibola N.W.R. (RM).

WATERFOWL —

Nine Whistling Swans were present near Douglas Dec. 8 (DD); the species is uncommon in s.e. Arizona. Notable goose records were: one White-fronted at Nogales all winter—with five there Feb. 17 (BH)—and a Ross' at San Simon Cienaga Dec. 10-Jan. 1 (RM.). Black-bellied Whistling Ducks are rare in Arizona in winter, but five spent the season at Tucson (DSz *et al.*). A ♂ Black Duck at the Phoenix Zoo in January and February (LD, ST, GM *et al.*) was free-flying and quite wild, but its origin is not known. A hybrid ♂ Eur. X Am. Wigeon at Mammoth Feb. 3 (DSz) was a different individual from one there last spring. An ad. ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye at Imperial Dam Jan. 31 (ST) provided the farthest s. record for the species in the L.C.V., and probably the world. Only 15 ± were below Davis Dam during December, January, and decreased to two in February; two were below Parker Dam Feb. 3, and one was 5 mi. s. of Parker during the winter (RM). Barrow's Goldeneye was also recorded again at Prescott—2-4 males were at Watson L., Dec. 26-Feb. 22 (CT). Two ♀ Oldsquaws remained at L. McMillan, N. Mex., at least into January (WHO, ph. D&SH); single females were also at Bosque del Apache N.W.R., Dec. 22 († J. H. Epler), and below Davis Dam from late December to at least Feb. 6 (VM, RM). Unusual was a White-winged Scoter at Bluewater L., N. Mex., Dec. 2-18 († AMc).



RAPTORS THROUGH GALLIFORMS

— A few Goshawks wandered to lower areas of New Mexico, including singles near Stanley Feb. 5 (WS), Bitter Lake N.W.R., in December († MA *et al.*), and one near Cliff Dec. 29 (Ralph Fisher *et al.*). Only 140 Bald Eagles were counted in New Mexico during January, compared to 273 in January 1979. The actual decrease overall cannot be gauged, because coverage this year was lighter. However, in eight areas equally covered in the 2 years, there was a decline of 29.6% from 1979 to 1980, i.e., 114 vs 162 (*vide* JPH). In Arizona 59 Bald Eagles were counted in two aerial surveys during January (DT). Merlins were conspicuously present in New Mexico, with notable records at Bosque del Apache N.W.R. († RLT *et al.*) and singles near Artesia Dec. 4-18 and Loving Dec. 22 († WHO *et al.*). Very early was a pair of Am. Kestrels feeding young at Mesa, e. of Phoenix, Ariz., Feb. 22 (GR, WHO). Wild Turkeys are not now verified in the lower Pecos Valley, but a bird that may have been one was seen w. of Loving Jan. 18 (SW).

CRANES THROUGH GULLS — Worth noting were 28 Sandhill Cranes Dec. 18 at San Simon Cienaga (RM.), where not regular. Long-billed Curlews are rare in winter in New Mexico, but 87 were present e. of Artesia Dec. 5 and one s.e. of there Dec. 9 (WHO *et al.*), plus another s. of Malaga Jan. 27 († SW). A first verified New Mexico winter

Pectoral Sandpiper was collected at L. McMillan Dec. 5-6 (WHO—*to A.S.U.); the bird appeared to be healthy and in good condition. Previously unknown in winter two Short-billed Dowitchers were present at Nogales Jan. 27 (BH). The late autumn flight of Franklin's Gulls persisted in the lower Pecos Valley with ten birds at L. McMillan Dec. 5 and seven at Bitter Lake N.W.R., Dec. 10; most extraordinary was an immature at L. McMillan Feb. 1-2 & Feb. 18 (WHO *et al.* ph.MA). A **Sabine's Gull** at White Sands Missile Range Jan. 4 († LM) provided a first winter record for New Mexico.

PIGEONS THROUGH NIGHTJARS — White-winged Doves, are rare in winter in New Mexico away from Las Cruces, but one was present at Alamogordo December-February (*vide* LM) and three in Carlsbad Dec. 30 (Jim Cheek *et al.*). A single freshly dead Saw-whet Owl was found near Bill Williams Delta Dec. 21 (SG), and two birds were seen near Wenden Feb. 6 (BM). The species is rare and irregular in the lowlands of w.c. Arizona in winter. Quite unusual was a **Lesser Nighthawk** w. of Malaga Dec. 12 († SW), as were two nighthawk sp.—probably this species—at Las Cruces Dec. 15 († TM *et al.*).

WOODPECKERS — More than the usual number of Yellow-shafted Flickers showed up in New Mexico including singles at Farmington Dec. 15 (AN, H. Putnam), Espanola Dec. 30 (Burt Lewis *et al.*), and in Albuquerque Jan. 30 and Feb. 27 (HS). Two Gila Woodpeckers were at Portal in late December (*vide* SSpf); the species is unusual in the Chiricahua Mts. Williamson's Sapsuckers generally remained upslope, but there were singles near Bluewater L., Jan. 13, at Albuquerque Dec. 29 (Jim Karo *et al.*), and Jan. 23 (AMc) and at Nogales Jan. 20 (BH). A Hairy Woodpecker also moved down to San Simon Cienaga Dec. 18 (RMO), where unusual.

FLYCATCHERS — Arizona's second report and first documented record of **Kiskadee Flycatcher** were provided by a bird at Canoa Ranch, s. of Tucson Dec. 27 to at least Feb. 27 (Georgia Porter *et al.*, †ST, ph. LD). An E Kingbird s. of Poston, L.C.V., Dec. 20 (EF) was probably the same one recorded near there in the fall. Late were single Cassin's Kingbird at San Simon Cienaga Dec. 9 (RM) and near Portal in late December (*vide* SSpf). Seven individual E. Phoebes in scattered localities in s. Arizona and the L.C.V., was about the normal number for this scarce winter visitant. The W. Flycatcher is rare in winter in the Region, so notable were reports of two at Cibola N.W.R., (SG, RM) and another at Cook's L., Feb. 3 (DSz).

CORVIDS THROUGH THRUSHES — Blue Jays persisted into winter at Ft. Sumner with two there Jan. 13-15, while two were seen in Artesia Jan. 28 (WHO). Common Ravens s. and e. of their known New Mexico range included ten at Ft. Sumner Jan. 13-15 and 1-4 at Sturgeon Ranch, Chaves Co., Feb. 4-8 (WHO). Somewhat unexpected were 60+ calling White-necked Ravens coming off a roost in evergreen woodland n. of Silver City Jan. 31 (JPH). The numbers of Com. Crows

wintering at Cibola N.W.R., this year increased to > 1000 in December, decreasing to 200± by Feb. 29 (*vide* RM).

Winter movements of Dippers into New Mexico nonbreeding areas included one in the Sandia Mts., Dec. 15 & Mar. 7 (RLT *et al.*) and two on Centerfire Cr., near Luna Jan. 1-20 (Dan Campbell). A Brown Thrasher was at the Sonoita Cr. Sanctuary from mid-December at least to Jan. 20 (BH) more unusual was one along the Rio Magdalena in n. Sonora Jan. 14 (ST,GR); the species is a rare straggler to Mexico.

SHRIKES THROUGH PIPITS — Gnatcatchers persisted in the s.e. portion of New Mexico into December, including the areas of Roswell, Alamogordo, and Carlsbad; these are all areas where the Black-tailed is unverified and therefore gnatcatchers sighted would likely be Blue-grays; the situation there deserves detailed study. Sprague's Pipit is unusual in far w. Arizona, although a few have been noted in the L.C.V. during the past two winters; this year 2-3 wintered in Dome Valley, e. of Yuma (*vide* RM). In New Mexico, only one was detected in the southeast, near Artesia Dec. 10 (WHO)—where frequent last autumn; one or more probably this species at Las Cruces Dec. 15 († TM *et al.*) represented a new winter locality for the state. While not staging a major invasion, N. Shrikes did penetrate far S in New Mexico, *i.e.*, an immature at Pleasanton Jan. 2 († JE, RSk) and an adult n. of L. McMillan Dec. 9 († WHO).

VIREOS, WARBLERS — A *plumbeus*-type **Solitary Vireo** was seen at Las Cruces Jan. 21 († WB, M. Delasantro); the species is rare in winter in New Mexico. A second winter record of Olive Warbler near Glenwood was of a male and two females Dec. 29 († RSk, Kate Skaggs). The only Black-and-white Warblers of the winter were one at Cibola N.W.R., Dec. 22 (SG), and two at Bill Williams Delta Dec. 21 (*vide* KVR). A **Cape May Warbler** near Tucson Jan. 26-Feb. 24+ († Woody Hopf *et al.*) furnished Arizona's fourth ever and second wintering records. Also a second winter record was of a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** in Garden Canyon, Huachuca Mts., throughout the period (RS). Unusual was a Chestnut-sided at Tucson Dec. 22 (GB,AB). A Palm Warbler found at Phoenix in November was seen again Feb. 10 (KVR,GR); about half of the state records for this species have been in winter. A **Wilson's Warbler** at Carlsbad Caverns Dec. 27 († SW) represented the second winter report from the state. Four Painted Redstarts—including one banded that returned for the seventh winter!—were present at Portal (WS,SSpf).

ICTERIDS — A Streaked-backed Oriole was present along the Rio Magdalena, n. Sonora, Mex., Jan. 14 (ST,GR); the species is probably as rare in n. Sonora as it is in s. Arizona. Also present there on that date was a N. "Baltimore" Oriole (ST,GR)—a surprising occurrence and a form not as yet known in winter in Arizona. Two Rusty Blackbirds at Bell L., Lea Co., N. Mex., in late November (Granger Ward) and Dec. 2 (D&SH, ph.) constituted the only report.

FRINGILLIDS — A ♀ *Pyrrhuloxia* near Cliff Dec. 28 († JE,AMc) was only the second record for the area; a Cardinal at San Simon Cienaga Jan. 1 (RMO) was in an area where it is of infrequent occurrence. Cassin's Finches put in a good appearance in both states, at least in and near highland areas. Pine Grosbeaks moved S to several areas where infrequent: up to 25 around Snow Bowl Ski Lodge near Flagstaff in December (GLa,DRP)—with one there Feb. 8 (CB); two near Bluewater Dec. 15 († AMc) for the first record from the Zuni Mts., and 20 in the Sandia Mts., Dec. 15 (RLT *et al.*). Brown-capped Rosy Finches were also present in the Sandias in early January (D&SH).

Most unexpected were **Abert's Towhees** in the upper San Simon drainage, with one n. of Rodeo Jan. 1, and two at the Cienaga Jan. 2 († RMP *et al.*); birds were also present in the Nogales area during the winter, indicating that the species is continuing to advance up the Santa Cruz R. (BH). Seven Brown Towhees at L. McMillan Dec. 5 (WHO) seem to represent a winter incursion into the area. Two Grasshopper Sparrows were found at Cibola N.W.R. (one * to A.S.U.) in early December (RD); the bird is rare in the L C V. Notable winter Cassin's Sparrows were one 4 mi e. of Loving Dec. 22 († WHO) near Rodeo Dec. 29 (Robert Scholes), and one at Phoenix Dec. 7 (ST,GR); the species is quite rare in c. Arizona and in winter in New Mexico. A Yellow-eyed Junco was reported Dec. 23 in Clanton Canyon, Peloncillo Mts., N. Mex. (D&SH), where not previously recorded. Arizona's first record of **Field Sparrow** was provided by a bird at a feeder in Ganado Jan. 10-17 (ph. WL, *vide* GM). A Golden-crowned Sparrow at Glenwood Feb. 14-29 († Dick Nelson) constituted the only New Mexico report and a first for the area. Rare in the L C V. two ♂ Lapland Longspurs were present s. of Poston Dec. 1-Dec. 19+ (RD,SG). A flock of 150 Chestnut-collared Longspurs n e of Flagstaff Jan. 20-26 (JC,CB,CH) was the first local record in some time. A flock of 33 probable Snow Buntings w. of Roswell Dec. 15 († SW *et al.*) represents an exceptional report of a species very rare in New Mexico and unknown s. of Las Vegas.

ADDENDUM — New Mexico's first verified **Greater Scaup** was taken at Hayden L., Rio Arriba Co., Oct. 25 (Wayne Prentice, *vide* and ph. JPH).

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Abbreviations: †, written details on file with the New Mexico Ornithological Society or Arizona Bird Committee; ph., photo, *, specimen; L.C.V., Lower Colorado Valley; N.W.R., National Wildlife Refuge.—**JOHN P. HUBBARD, 2016 Valley Rio, Santa Fe N.M. 87501; JANET WITZEMAN, 4619 E. Arcadia Lane, Phoenix, AZ. 85018; KENN KAUFMAN, Tucson, AZ.**

ALASKA REGION /D.D. Gibson

A normally cold December and January gave way to a milder-than-usual February. Precipitation was below normal in many areas. Winter 1979-1980 was widely described by observers as an uneventful one for birds.

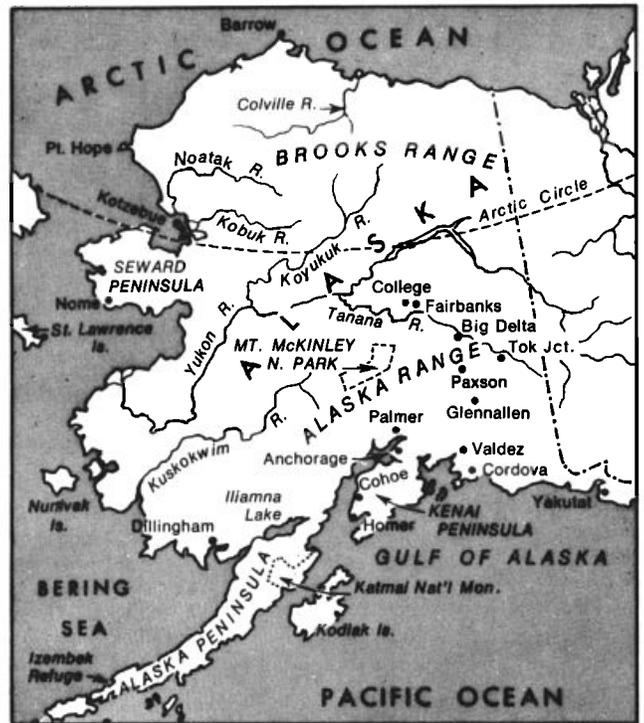
CORMORANTS, WATERFOWL — At least one **Red-faced Cormorant** studied in late February at Sitka (MEI, others) provided the first Southeast Alaska record of this species, which underwent an explosive increase in Southcoastal Alaska during the last decade. A Brant present with Greater Scaup at Womens Bay Dec. 16+ (RAM) and one with King Eiders in Ugak Strait Feb. 26 (JBA) represented the third and fourth winter records of this bird at Kodiak. A ♂ Eur. Wigeon observed at Bartlett Cove, Glacier Bay Nat'l Mon., Jan. 23 (BBP) and several pairs in the Sitka area in February (MEI, others) were of interest, as the species is casual in winter in s.e. Alaska, although it occurs regularly at this season in the Aleutians farther s. Four Redheads again wintered at Womens Bay, Kodiak; four were present at least through Dec. 22 (WED) and one male was seen Feb. 2, none thereafter (RAM). A pair of Tufted Ducks was found at Eyak L., Cordova in late December (MEI), and the male was present there at least through early February (GJT & MMT). A pair of Lesser Scaup and a Bufflehead overwintered on heating plant cooling ponds at Eielson Air Force Base (ATD), 25 mi s.e. of Fairbanks, providing the first winter records of these species in the Interior. The first winter record of scoters in upper Cook Inlet was established Dec. 4 when one Black and 5-6 White-wings were seen at the Kasilof R. mouth (MAM). *Sixteen* Hooded Mergansers at Gustavus Dec. 20 (BBP) was a new high count for the State; elsewhere in Southeast, six were observed at Petersburg Dec. 31 (JHH).

HAWKS, FALCONS — Bald Eagles were

reported on the increase on the Kenai Pen. (MAM). Reports of a runt eagle in the Kasilof area over the past 2 years were confirmed Feb. 13 when an ad. bird "not much larger than a Com. Raven" was seen (MAM). There were a few records of Sharp-shinned Hawks at Kodiak this winter, max. three Dec. 22 (CBC), and there were two records of Marsh Hawk there, singles at Kalsin Bay Dec. 2 (RNT) and at Viokoda Bay Dec. 18 (EH). Both species appear to be annual there in winter in very small numbers. A Rough-legged Hawk reported Dec. 12 near Soldotna (MAM) was most unusual; there are very few winter records of this species in Alaska. Two Gyrfalcons were seen at Anchorage Dec. 13-17 (RA). Peregrines and Merlins, both rare but regular in winter along the Alaska Pacific coast, were seen at intervals at Kodiak (RAM, others) and at Anchorage (RA, others) during the period.

COOTS, OWLS — Up to 15 Am. Coots were seen at Blind Slough, near Petersburg Dec. 3-31 (JHH), one of the highest counts ever of this species in Alaska. A road-killed Screech Owl was found on N. Douglas Hwy., Juneau area, Jan. 12 (*vide* RHA), and at least two birds were reported from Sitka during the period (WLF, *vide* MEI). These records were of particular interest because, although confined to the s.e. part of the State, where there have been scattered, active observers for many years, this species has remained the least well-known resident owl in Alaska. Single Pygmy Owls were observed at Gustavus Feb. 10 & 17 (BBP); the observer noted that local vole populations were at a low.

JAYS, NUTHATCHES, THRUSHES, PIPITS — Up to three Steller's Jays were present Dec. 23-Jan. 23 in Anchorage (RA, others), where irregular in winter (see Autumn, 1979). More unusual was a Gray Jay in Juneau Dec. 15-18; perhaps the same bird was seen there as early as Nov. 5 (RBW). I am not aware of any other Southeast Alaska record of this bird since winter 1969-1970. Gray Jays were unaccountably scarce on the n.w. Kenai Pen., well within the normal range, this winter (MAM). At least three Red-breasted Nuthatches overwintered at Anchorage (RA, GJT), where they occur irregularly; elsewhere, the species was recorded at Juneau Dec. 12 (RBW). Varied Thrushes were generally uncommon at Kodiak this winter (RAM), despite 58 birds on the Dec. 22 CBC—"...as with many wintering passerines...[it] was probably less common after very cold weather in January." Two Townsend's Solitaires at Anchorage, different



birds Dec. 9 & 15 (RA), provided only the second winter record of this species in Alaska (see AB 31:363, 1977). And a Water Pipit observed at Middle Bay, Kodiak Dec. 22 (GJT,MMT,BQ) numbers among very few Alaska winter records of the species, the second such at Kodiak. The same observers watched a Merlin pursue and capture the pipit.

STARLINGS, FINCHES, SPARROWS — Following the first Kodiak record in autumn 1978 (AB 33:206, 1979), Starlings returned in fall 1979, when three were present as late as Dec. 13, but not thereafter (RAM & WED). Five were seen in Anchorage Dec. 15 (CBC) and 26 in Palmer Dec. 29 (CBC). Apparently none attempted to overwinter in Fairbanks this year.

A Brambling seen in Cordova Jan. 26 & Feb. 2 (MEI, RA) provided the second winter record at that location. Pine Grosbeaks, redpolls, siskins, and crossbills were present in some areas in small numbers, absent in others. All observers commented on their scarcity this winter. There were disparate observations of sparrows, on the other hand. Dark-eyed Juncos were numerous at Kodiak this season, but not Juneau, where normally-numerous-in-winter "Slate-colored" were asked after (RBW). One "Slate-colored" Junco at a Coho feeder through early January (CL & FL, MAM) furnished a first local winter record, but the species is not uncommon at Homer in winter. Three imm. White-crowned Sparrows banded at Juneau in mid-December and present there through the period (RBW) were regarded as unusual there, but White-crowned, Golden-crowned, and Fox sparrows were reported at Kodiak, as usual, this season (RAM). An imm. Golden-crowned Sparrow at an Anchorage feeder Dec. 6-Feb. 29+ (DFD) and one at a Kasilof feeder (JS) Feb. 29+ were unusual occurrences. Tree Sparrows were less common than usual at Kodiak this season, but were present at Juneau following their "regular

pattern" there (RBW). Two Lincoln's Sparrows were found Dec. 22 at Kodiak (RAM & JBA), still the only locality in Alaska where this species has been found in winter (see AB 33:305). A few Snow Buntings were recorded at intervals in Anchorage this winter (GJT,MMT,RA) and at Palmer (RA); five at Kaslof Jan. 30 provided the only record there this season (MAM). A McKay's Bunting reported at Homer Dec. 16 (MEI, others) was, following last winter's Kodiak records, a most interesting find.

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NORTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Philip W. Mattocks, Jr. and Eugene S. Hunn

The winter in southwestern Oregon was several degrees warmer than usual throughout the season, and with only 76 percent of the average rainfall, based on the Medford weather station. Coincident with this were overwintering Tree Swallows at Medford, a high count of Western Bluebirds, first winter records for Oregon of the Long-billed Curlew, Ruff, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Bobolink, plus several Turkey Vultures, Northern Orioles, and other typically more southerly species.

Farther north, December was the wettest month in western Washington history. Up to 40 inches of rain were recorded at stations on the west slope of the Olympics, and Seattle received exactly twice its December norm. Freezing weather and snow arrived in Seattle and Portland January 6-10, with more below-freezing weather Jan. 27-29.

The first state records of the Red-shouldered Hawk, Black Phoebe, and Scott's Oriole (all southerly species) occurred in Washington, and of the McKay's Bunting (a northerly species) in Oregon. White-tailed Kites and Bald Eagles were censused especially thoroughly, and there appeared to be a late February movement of large shorebirds.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — The 15 Yellow-billed Loons reported this season were a few more than usual. The one at Yaquina Bay, Oreg., Jan. 15+ (RB *et al.*) was the farthest s. Arctic Loons were either very scarce off Vancouver Island (hereafter, V.I.) this season or were not reported. The high count was 93 rather than a few thousand (*fide* VG). The expected few Eared Grebes were found scattered throughout the Region, after

being almost unreported here last fall. There were fewer W. Grebes found than usual in w. Oregon (*fide* HN), but there were somewhat higher counts off V.I. this winter with 10,000+ in Saanich Inlet and Satellite Channel Jan. 31 (VG). Other loon and grebe species were reported in their normal numbers.

A dark-phase N. Fulmar was seen 3 ± mi off Oak Bay, V.I., Dec. 10 (JA, *fide* VG). Eleven (two white phase, nine dark) were found dead on the n.w. Oregon beaches up to Jan. 13 (HN). Single Sooty Shearwaters were seen Dec. 7 & Jan. 6 from the Ocean Shores jetty, Wash. (G&WH,EM) and Dec. 8 from Clover Pt., Victoria (JWi, AMd, *fide* VG). The only Short-tailed Shearwater reported was one Dec. 17 off Dupont, Wash., in lower Puget Sound (BHT). Also found dead on the n.w. Oregon beaches were a Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel Dec. 15 at Bayocean (HN), and a very small dark storm-petrel Jan. 13 at Sunset Beach (*HN). This bird is definitely *not* a Leach's, but rather had measurements of either a Least or Galapagos Storm-Petrel. Fewer Brandt's Cormorants than usual were reported from s. V.I. (*fide* VG), while more Pelagic Cormorants than usual were found around Olympia in lower Puget Sound (CC, BHT).

Green Herons apparently wintered in about normal numbers. There were 14 on the w. Oregon CBCs, six on the Washington CBCs, with five of these in Olympia, and no reports from British Columbia. One was found dead Jan. 31 at Sequim, Wash. (KK). Cattle Egrets were found during December in w. Oregon in "every major coastal meadowland" (DI). The high count was a flock of 31 at Lakeside, n. of Coos Bay, Dec. 13-14 (JMc, ST, *fide* AMc). The farthest n. was one at Campbell R., V.I., Dec. 5 (HT). A single individual stayed in Sooke, V.I., Dec. 23-Jan. 8 (EK, *fide* VG), and groups of 2-4 stayed at Pitt Meadows and Reifel I., B.C., until Jan. 5 & 6 (*fide* WW), at Satsop, Wash., until early January (NDo), and at Phoenix, Oreg., until Feb. 21 (MaM, OSw). The movement of Great Egrets did not involve as many birds as previous years and did not extend as far n. as that of Cattle Egrets. A single bird wintered at Olympia, Wash. (BHT *et al.*). There were no reports from British Columbia. The highest counts were 27 at Coos Bay Dec. 16 (CBC) and 24 nearby between Myrtle Pt., and Coquille Jan. 18 (DF, TL). For about the fifth year in a row Snowy Egrets wintered in the Region with two to three at Pony Slough, in Coos Bay, and one at Bandon, Oreg. (AMc, DF, TL). An ad. Black-crowned Night Heron was found on Cortes I., near Campbell R.,



Feb. 3 (†GDo) and two adults were at Olympia throughout the period (BHT *et al.*). An immature was on Westham I., B.C., Jan. 27 (DJ, *fide* WW) for the second-ever winter record for the Vancouver area. Sixteen were found on w. Oregon CBCs. A single *Plegadis ibis* was observed on the Tillamook CBC Dec. 15 (WC *et al.*, ph.) for the first winter record for the Region.

WATERFOWL — Mute Swans wintered in normal numbers on V.I. (*fide* VG). The only mainland report was of one that flew into a power line Feb. 27 at Barney I., e. of Mt. Vernon, Wash. (MA). The high count of 3820 Whistling Swans on Sauvie I., near Portland, Dec. 23 reflected the generally good numbers of this species throughout the Region. Trumpeter Swan reports were widespread in w. Washington and s. British Columbia. The first migratory movement noted of Black Brant was on the s. Oregon coast at Coos Bay Feb. 21 (KJ, *fide* AMc). The one Emperor Goose reported stayed at Ridgefield N.W.R., Wash., Jan. 25+ (*fide* SS). The usual few White-fronted Geese wintered, with 10 on the Corvallis CBC the high count.

Single Black Ducks were found in Seattle through the winter (m.ob., †AR) and in Victoria Feb. 22 (†RS). These are presumed to be from one of the introduced populations, at Reifel I., B.C., or near Everett, Wash. Three "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal were noted: single males at Chimacum, Wash., Dec. 25 (KK), in Saanich, V.I., Feb. 12-16 (RMG, RS, *fide* VG), and in Seattle Feb. 19+ (†AR *et al.*). A hybrid ♂ Eur. X Am. Wigeon was found Feb. 23 in Lincoln City, Oreg. (JGi, DI, OSw, TC). The regular wintering flock of Redheads at Coos Bay numbered 425 on Dec. 16. Outside of w. Oregon the high count was seven Jan. 13 at Pitt L., B.C. (DW, *fide* WW). DF & TL intensively surveyed scaup populations in w. Oregon this season. On sev-

eral sewage ponds, both in the Willamette Valley and on the coast, they found Lesser Scaup most numerous by about 40:1. Otherwise Greaters were somewhat more abundant than Lessers both coastally and in several Willamette Valley locations. The 500 Barrow's Goldeneyes at Lighthouse P., Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 23 (WW) and 134 at Duncan, B.C., Dec. 15 (JC *et al.*) were large concentrations. The 20 in e. Linn County, Oreg., Feb. 8, and 15 s. of Roseburg Jan. 17 (both DF, TL) were also considered quite high counts (HN). Counts of 250-300 Oldsquaws were recorded from several n. Puget Sound locations. Single birds were widespread elsewhere as usual, s. at least to Port Orford, Oreg., Dec. 22 (AC, SG).

RAPTORS — That a few Turkey Vultures are found here in winter is now normal. This winter there was one at Eugene Dec. 30 (DHy), two around Reifel I., near Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 23 - Feb. 29 (m.ob., *vide* WW), and one near Sooke, V.I., Jan. 19 (*vide* VG) Migrants appeared Feb. 23 near Corvallis (A&Eca, *vide* E&EE) and Feb. 24 at Shelton, Wash. (J&AD *et al.*).

S.A.

Recently this column has indicated that based on reports received, White-tailed Kites are "consolidating", or "in decline from peak numbers" in w. Oregon. In response to this DF & TL surveyed topographic maps for likely habitat and then searched each of those this season for kites. Their findings together with those of the CBCs indicated about 50 White-tailed Kites present this winter in w. Oregon. This is about 40% higher than previous winter estimates. Interestingly, only the Tillamook area indicated any recent increase in numbers over previous years. The increase statewide came from new pairs located in coastal s.w. Oregon by DF & TL. Most of the 50 kites were paired and apparently on territory in suitable breeding habitat. There were no reports from Washington or British Columbia.

Reports of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were somewhat fewer than usual. An ad **Red-shouldered Hawk** was found Dec. 20-Feb. 23 at the Niqually N.W.R., Wash., for the first state record (DHa, †EH, †AR, †MD). Two **Red-shoulders** again appeared in the Eugene area Dec. 29-30 (LM), and others were seen at Coos Bay Dec. 30 (*vide* HN) and near Cottage Grove, Oreg., Feb. 23 (SG). **Rough-legged Hawks** were in normal numbers in the Vancouver area (WW), but were still fewer than usual farther s. There were seven **Golden Eagles** on San Juan I., Wash., Feb. 9 (DP, JEr). The mid-winter **Bald Eagle** survey in Washington tallied 935 adults and 633 immatures (RK). This count is up considerably from last year. Preliminary results available from s. British Columbia indicate a drop in the censused population there (DW, *vide* A&JGr).

That a few **Ospreys** are reported during the season has become normal. This year one was in Olympia, Wash., Dec. 22 (*vide* BHT) and not far away near Elma Jan. 12 (B&GRA, KB). Early migrants appeared Feb. 24 e. of Seaside, Oreg. (DI) and Feb. 27 near Ladner, B.C. (RPh *et al.*). At least six **Gyrfalcons**

were reported: three in C. Saanich Dec. 15+ (M&VG, m.ob.), at least two near Reifel I., B.C., Dec. 6+ (G&WA, m.ob.), and one on the Skagit flats, Wash., Jan. 13 (B&PE). Several **Prairie Falcons** were found, as usual, in the Willamette Valley through the season. Another was seen on the coast at Tillamook Dec. 15 (†JGi, OSc, DA) and Jan. 4 (DF, TL). **Peregrine Falcons** and **Merlins** were reported in the same numbers as for the past several years. One well-watched **Peregrine** spent the winter on a bank building in Tacoma, Wash. (BGo, TB *et al.*).

GROUSE THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — The 14 **Ruffed Grouse** at Campbell R., V.I., Dec. 16 (HT) was a high count, as was 15 along the Hoh R., Wash., Feb. 16 (J&MWn). The flock of **Sandhill Cranes** on Sauvie, I., Oreg., numbered 85 on Dec. 23 (JGi *et al.*), and fewer than that thereafter. The 150 there Feb. 23 (JGa, *vide* HN) were considered migrants. Five **Sandhill Cranes** wintered near Sedro Woolley, Wash. (TW). A few **Virginia Rails** survived the early January freeze. Singles were at Reifel I., B.C., Jan. 20 (WW *et al.*), in Renton, Wash., Jan. 26 (EH), and at the Skagit flats Jan. 27 (JWn *et al.*). The only **Sora** reported was at Reifel I., Jan. 1 (†MF, AGr, MP).

Eight Semipalmated Plovers were still at Grays Harbor Dec. 15 (*vide* BHT) and one remained at Coos Bay to Jan. 18 (DF, TL). **Snowy Plovers** stayed at least through December at Coos Bay (DF, AMc). Sixteen were at Bayocean beach Jan. 23 (HN) and one was on Sunset Beach Feb. 23 (HN). A single **Am. Golden Plover** w. of Coquille, Oreg., Jan. 18 & 23 (†DF, TL; E&EE *et al.*) may have wintered and was thought to be of the *fulva* race. Single **Long-billed Curlews** wintered at Yaquina Bay (JGi, TC *et al.*) and at Delta, B.C. (†AN, JI, †DK *et al.*). Each was a first wintering record, for Oregon and the Vancouver area, respectively. Then Feb. 23 15 **Long-billed Curlews** were found at Tokeland, Wash. (G&WH), where a mid-February flock had appeared last year also.

Lesser Yellowlegs are most unusual in the Region during the winter. This season one was found at Port Angeles, Wash., Dec. 7 (†WS), two near Coquille, Oreg., Jan. 18 (†DF, TL), and one at Esquimalt Lagoon, V.I., Jan. 21 (LR, *vide* VG). A few **Willetts** wintered as usual at Bandon, Coos Bay, and Yaquina Bay, Oreg., and at Willapa Bay, Wash. A **Red Knot** Dec. 8 at Newport was late (RPa), and 2044 **W. Sandpipers** still at Coos Bay Dec. 16 (TL *et al.*) was remarkable. A few **W. Sandpipers** wintered elsewhere in Oregon and Washington, and one was at Blackie Spit, B.C., Dec. 29 (JaW). Single **Marbled Godwits** were at Tillamook Dec. 15 (CBC) and Newport Jan. 19 & 27 (FR; E&EE). A flock of 75 **Marbled Godwits** was found Feb. 23 with the **Willetts** at the North R., mouth on Willapa Bay (G&WH). A large flock of **Marbled Godwits** wintered last year at this same location. A **Ruff** found with other shorebirds in a flooded pasture near Coquille, Oreg., Jan. 18 (†DF, †TL) provided the first winter record for the Region. This follows the nine recorded in the Region last fall, including the first records for Oregon. **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Least Sandpipers**, and **Long-billed Dowitchers** wintered in their

usual haunts in their normal small numbers.

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS — The usual 25+ **Glaucous Gulls** were reported, with records s. to Eugene and Coos Bay. **Hybrid Glaucous-winged X W. Gulls** were noted at Seattle, Grays Harbor, Portland, and Eugene throughout the season. **Ring-billed Gulls** were more numerous this winter than usual in w. Oregon. Counts of 2000+ were made in Eugene Dec. 30 (*vide* DF) and on Sauvie I., in late January (DI). The high count of **Mew Gulls** was 6355 at Tillamook Bay Dec. 15, down from 10,000 in November, and of **Bonaparte's Gulls**, the 881 at Victoria Dec. 15, down from 20,000 in November. A **Heermann's Gull** in Discovery P., Seattle Dec. 13 was late (DHu), as was an ad. **Sabine's Gull** off the S.J.C.R., Dec. 15 (DI). Ten **Black-legged Kittiwakes** Dec. 1 at the S.J.C.R. (HN) was the high count. Elsewhere mostly single birds were reported, with one in s. Puget Sound at Tacoma Dec. 28-30 (B&GR, EH, AW). A very late **Black Tern** reported on the Astoria CBC Dec. 16 follows one found nearby at Tillamook Nov. 23.

The 7518 **Com. Murres** at Campbell R., Dec. 16 was the highest-ever count for the CBC there (*vide* HT). There were two reports of **Thick-billed Murres** for Washington. One was off San Juan I., Dec. 6 (TW, *vide* DP), and two were seen off the Ocean Shores jetty Dec. 15 (†DP). The fall influx of **Ancient Murrelets** continued well into the winter. High counts were the 200 off Nisqually in lower Puget Sound Dec. 11 (BHT), and 500 seen Jan. 1 along the Oak Bay-Victoria waterfront (MS, DMr). Many more **Rhinoceros Auklets** than usual were reported this season in lower Puget Sound. Several CBCs there had all-time high counts, but the species was found in normal numbers elsewhere. Five **Horned Puffins** were found dead on n.w. Oregon beaches Jan. 26-Feb. 23 (HN, JGi *et al.*). At one of these, Sunset Beach, three **Tufted Puffins** were found dead Jan. 13 & Feb. 23 (HN).

OWLS THROUGH CORVIDS — Reports were received of only about 13 **Snowy Owls** this winter. Up to eight were in the Skagit flats area through Mar. 2 (DMc, B&PE, DP), and up to four in the Vancouver area through Feb. 12 (JaW, WW *et al.*). One at Ocean Shores Dec. 29 was the farthest s. (LL). Single **Barred Owls** were seen and heard at Burnaby Mt., B.C., about Jan. 10 (GB, *vide* WW) and at Bacus Hill, near Sedro Woolley, Wash., Dec. 8 & Feb. 9 (EH). A ♂ **Costa's Hummingbird** appeared at a feeder in Florence, Oreg., Feb. 9+ (CW) for the sixth record for Oregon. **Anna's Hummingbirds** continue to be reported from new localities, and were thought to be more numerous than ever in w. Oregon. (JGi, m.ob.). Four wintered n. to Campbell R., V.I. (HT). A ♂ **Rufous Hummingbird** shared a feeder in Saanich, V.I., with a pair of **Anna's** Dec. 14-Feb. 29 (JSo, *vide* VG) for the only wintering record this season. **Male Rufous Hummingbirds** at North Bend, Oreg., Feb. 3, were a few days earlier than ever (AMc). **Females** arrived there Feb. 18. A ♂ **Allen's Hummingbird** had arrived at Bullard Beach S.P., near Bandon, Oreg., by Feb. 24 (BB, JMo, *vide* HN).

One each of the "Red-naped" and the "Red-breasted" **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**

were seen in the same tree at the Nisqually N.W.R., Feb. 24 (†MiM). Earlier in the season only the usual wintering "Red-breasted" had been observed there. The migrations of the e. form of this sapsucker through this Region have not yet been elucidated. A **Black Phoebe** was seen on driftwood at Moclips Beach, Wash., Feb. 27 (†R&HO) for the first well documented record for the state. Three Say's Phoebes were found in Portland Feb. 18 (MH, *fide* HN).

About a dozen Tree Swallows were seen throughout December and January along the Rogue R., near Medford, Oreg. (OSw, MaM). Two were also found at Fern Ridge Res., near Eugene Dec. 29 (*fide* DF). The first large flocks of Tree Swallows appeared as usual in mid-February. The small coastal colony of Scrub Jays near Port Orford, Oreg., was reported to be thriving (AMc, J&DR). Reports of Black-billed Magpies w. of the Cascades continued from last fall. There were 7-10 along the Cowlitz R., near Morton throughout the period (RR), and others were found in Squamish and Burnaby, B.C. (WW *et al.*).

THRUSHES THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

— Single Mockingbirds were found at Ocean Shores (JWn) and Tillamook, both Dec. 15, and at Port Orford Feb. 8-26 (J&DR). Varied Thrushes were scarce on s. V.I., but were well reported elsewhere. A thrush with clearly visible buffy eyering and face, thought to be a Swainson's Thrush, was found Dec. 15 on Mt. Prevost near Duncan, V.I. (JWo, BP, *fide* JC). Western Bluebirds were widely reported to be in better numbers in w. Oregon than for many years. The count of 553 on nine CBCs there is up 30% from the 426 on the same counts last year. Furthermore, for the combined Medford, Eugene, Corvallis, and Salem counts, held yearly since 1963-64, this year's total was the fourth highest for those 16 years. Migrants appeared in w. Washington and on V.I. in mid-February.

A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was found in Salem Dec. 22 (BL, ph.) for the first winter record for the Region. Several flocks of 30-50 Bohemian Waxwings were in Bellingham until Feb. 10 (TW). Otherwise they were almost unreported. Northern Shrikes were back to their usual numbers in w. Oregon this winter after being noted as scarce last year (HN). Three single Loggerhead Shrikes were reported in w. Oregon: n. of Port Orford Dec. 22 (BGr, SC, J&DR *et al.*), near Brownsville, e. of Corvallis Jan. 5 (HTa, DME, *fide* E&EE), and at Fern Ridge Res., throughout the season (DF, TL, LM).

Another Black-and-white Warbler was found in Coos Bay Feb. 19 (NB, *fide* AMc) for the fourth recent record in the area. Single Nashville Warblers were found Dec. 17 in Salem (TC) and Dec. 30 in Eugene (CBC). A Black-throated Gray Warbler was in Forest Grove, Oreg., Jan. 23 (JEV, *fide* HN). A ♂ Wilson's Warbler was found in Saanich, V.I., Dec. 15 (NL, GS, *fide* VG), and another ♂ Wilson's was at Boundary Bay airport, B.C., Dec. 29 (GRy, *fide* WW). Two Am. Redstarts were near North Bend, Oreg., Jan. 1 (AMc). Reports of Townsend's Warblers from Washington and Oregon were more numerous than usual. Twenty of the 25 on the Grays Harbor CBC Dec. 15 were in the

Hoquiam cemetery alone (EH). The six on the Seattle CBC Dec. 29 was the highest count in 17 years, and Jan. 15 DF found 22 in Eugene. Four Palm Warblers were found Dec. 15 & Feb. 10 at the mouth of the Wilson R., near Tillamook (JGi *et al.*). Two were at Grays Harbor Dec. 15 (*fide* BHT). Singles were found in the Coos Bay area Dec. 16, Jan. 18, & Feb. 1 (J&DR, DF, TL), near Port Orford Dec. 22 (Feb. 19 (J&DR, LT), and in Victoria Dec. 29 and Jan. 4 (J&RS).

Two **Bobolinks** were found at Myrtle Point, s.w. Oregon, Dec. 10 (FW, *fide* CW), following the several extraordinary records in the area this fall. Single ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found at Pitt Meadows, Delta, and Westham I., near Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 8, Jan. 1 & 6, and Feb. 29 (†WW, A&JGr, DK *et al.*) and a female was at Sandy Pt., w. of Bellingham, Wash., Jan. 19 (EH). An imm. ♂ Hooded Oriole stayed around a feeder in Coos Bay Dec. 16+ (GV, AMc, DF, TL *et al.*). An ad. ♂ **Scott's Oriole** frequented a feeder in Chehalis, Wash., Feb. 11+ (C&ND) for the first record for Washington. Documentation is on file (†AR, †EH, PM-ph.). Immature ♂ N. Orioles were found at Lakeside, n. of Coos Bay Dec. 2 (ST, AC *et al.*) and at Eugene Dec. 30 (*fide* HN). An ad. male was in s.e. Portland Jan. 9 (DI). Following the several records of Rusty Blackbird this fall, there was one male found Jan. 31 in Goldstream P.P., w. of Victoria (VG).

FINCHES AND SPARROWS

— Two ♂ Pine Grosbeaks were seen Jan. 29 in View Royal, w. of Victoria (RF, *fide* VG), and one was on Sea I., s. of Vancouver, B.C., Feb. 21 (JMi, *fide* WW). The only Gray-crowned Rosy Finch reported was one of the gray-cheeked "Hepburn's" form at Boundary Bay, B.C., Jan. 16 (RPh *et al.*). Pine Siskins, Am. Goldfinches, and Red Crossbills were found in low numbers throughout the Region, and were reported absent from many areas. An exception to this was the 250+ Red Crossbills seen Feb. 17 near La Push, on the n.w. Washington coast (J&MWn). No Redpolls or White-winged Crossbills were reported.

A ♂ Rufous-sided Towhee in Eugene Feb. 2 with a complete lack of white spotting on the back was thought to be from eastern North America (†RPa). A few Savannah Sparrows were found n. to s.w. British Columbia up to Jan. 1 (MF, GRy). None were found there after the freeze of early January (*fide* WW). However, three were seen in c. Saanich Jan. 27 (AMd), and two were there Feb. 17 (*fide* VG). A Vesper Sparrow wintered at Alton Baker P., in Eugene (DF, TL). A **Sage Sparrow** was found in Seattle Feb. 17-19 (†B&PE *et al.*) for the third w. Washington record, all three of which are coincident with the mid-February arrival of this species on its breeding range in e. Washington. There were about a dozen Tree Sparrows found in the Vancouver, B.C., area during the season (G&WA, GRy *et al.*), two were at Cowichan Bay, V.I., Jan. 18 (†VG), and one was on the Skagit flats Jan. 27 and Feb. 9 (BT, RT; EH). There were no reports from w. Oregon. Two Chipping Sparrows spent the season at a Roseburg, Oreg., feeder (FP) and at least one wintered in Eugene (DF, TL). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** found at Nehalem

meadows, n.w. Oregon Jan. 5 (DF, TL) stayed Feb. 29+ for Oregon's first winter record (JGi-ph., m.ob.).

As is usual, about nine Harris' Sparrows were reported, from Roseburg, Oreg., to Campbell R., V.I. Two White-crowned Sparrows Dec. 29 near Sayward, n. V.I., were quite far n. and constituted the first winter records for the area (HT). Reports of 12± White-throated Sparrows in w. Oregon was near normal; only one other was noted, in Wilkeson, Wash., Dec. 15 (BRo). Lincoln's Sparrows wintered in good numbers n. at least to Saanich (NL) and the Vancouver, B.C., area (†PW, †IR, †CR, *fide* WW). About 30 were found regularly in Alton Baker P., in Eugene (DF, TL). A **Swamp Sparrow** Dec. 27-28 and Jan. 5 on Reifel I., provided the first documented record for the Vancouver area (†WW, DK, DMr, GDa, TW). Five Swamp Sparrows were noted in w. Oregon this season: two at Tillamook Dec. 15 (JGi *et al.*), one at Fern Ridge Res., Eugene Dec. 29 (LM), one in Medford Dec. 29 and Jan. 11 (DE, LS, OSw), and one at Ankeny N.W.R., Jan. 27 (TC).

A few Lapland Longspurs were scattered through the Region, with the 45 at Leadbetter Pt., Wash., Dec. 29 the high count (SA). Particularly since last winter the scattered Snow Bunting flocks have received special attention. This year on Feb. 23 at the S.J.C.R., a **McKay's Bunting** was picked out of a flock of about a dozen Snows (†HN). The bird was seen through at least Mar. 2 for the first record for Oregon (†TC, †A&DMA, JGi-ph, *et al.*). Controversy continues as to whether a second large bunting, not quite as cleanly white, was a hybrid or another McKay's

ESCAPEES — An Am. Flamingo survived from November to at least Feb. 9 at Mud Bay, between Crescent Beach and Delta, s. of Vancouver, B.C. (WW *et al.*). Three Monk Parakeets were nest-building in s.e. Portland in late February (HN, LT). Two birds spent the winter of 1977-78 in the same area, but had not been reported since.

CITED OBSERVERS and abbreviations (Sub-regional Editors in boldface). Dave Anderson, John Anderson, Gerry & Wendy Ansell, Scott Atkinson, Maynard Axelson, Range Bayer, Brent Berg, Thais Bock, George Brad, Ken Brown, Nancy Brown, Wilson Cady, Art & Elizabeth Carlson (A&Eca), Chris Chappell, John Comer, Alan Contreras (AC), Tom Crabtree, Gary Davidson (GDa), Jack & Ada Davis, Norm Donaldson (NDo), Michael Donahue, Gilean Douglas (GDo), Cliff & Neva Dunn (C&ND), David Easterlea, Elsie & Elzy Eltzroth, Jim Erckmann (JEr), Joe Evanich (JEV), Bob & Pat Evans, **David Fix**, Mike Force, Ralph Fryer, John Gatchet (JGa), Jeff Gilligan (JGi), Margaret & Vic Goodwill, Bill Goodwin (BGo), Steve Gordon, Al & Jude Grass (A&JGr), Sayre Greenfield, Rob Mackenzie-Grieve (RMG), Barbara Griffin (BGr), **Bill Harrington-Tweit** (BHT), Dave Hayward (DHa), Glen & Wanda Hoge, Mike Houck, David Hutchinson (DHu), Dan Hyerly (DHy), John Ireland, David Irons, Karen Jackson, Dale Jensen, Erich Kellner, Rick Knight, Ken Knittle, Doug Kragh, Nancy Lovett, Bob Lucas, Lauren Lucke, Tom

Lund, Alec MacLeod (AMd), Dave Mark (DMr), Arnie & Debbie Martin (A&DMa), Joy McDowell (JMc), Alan McGie (AMc), Dick McNeely (DMc), Larry McQueen, Don Menefee (DMe), Ed Miller, Jack Milstead (JMj), Marjorie Moore (MaM), Mike Moore (MiM), Joe Mosky (JMo), **Harry Nehls**, Adeline Nicol, Robert & Hera Owen, Richard Palmer (RPa), Fred Parker, **Dennis Paulson**, Roy Phillips (RPh), Barry Powell, Mike Price, Bob & Georgia Ramsay (B&GRa),

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Wang, Peter Ward, Clarice Watson, **Wayne Weber**, Francis Whitaker, Jack Williams (JaW), Doug Wilson, Jim Wilson (JWi), John & Marilyn Wingfield (J&MWn), Joe Woodcock (JWo), (†) = written description on file, * specimen, S.J.C.R. = South jetty of the Columbia R., Ore., — **PHILIP W. MATTOCKS, JR.**, Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of Washington, Seattle, Wash. 98195, and **EUGENE S. HUNN**, 1816 N. 57th St., Seattle, Wash. 98103.

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Stephen A. Laymon and W. David Shuford

"Unseasonably warm and unmercifully wet" was how one contributor (PM) succinctly characterized this season's weather. Except at mountain and Great Basin locations, very few nights reached freezing, and even lakes in those areas remained free from ice much longer than usual. Rain was recorded on most days from December 19 through January 17, with the heaviest rain December 24 and 25 and January 9, 12 and 13. Another series of storms accompanied by heavy rains and high winds swept through the Region February 13-22. Flood waters cleared waterfowl from normally favorable stretches of inland rivers. The storm systems caused wild fluctuations in waterfowl populations and may have driven seabirds inland. Warm weather was probably instrumental in the occurrence of several first and second regional winter records and more-than-usual numbers of wintering warblers along the coast.

LOONS THROUGH STORM-PETRELS — A Yellow-billed Loon was at Pt. Richmond, Contra Costa Co., Feb. 17-29 (Hans Johansen, m.ob.). More than the usual num-



Yellow-billed Loon, Pt. Richmond, CA, Feb. 17, 1980.

ber of Arctic Loons was found inland with five at L. Almanor Dec. 19 (SAL, KC), one at Greenhorn Res., near Yreka Dec. 27-Jan. 10 (MR, RE), one at Lewiston L., Trinity Co., Dec. 28 (SAL, KC), and one at Stockton Jan. 29 (DEI). Red-throated Loons also were in unusually high numbers inland with one at Spring Lake Park, Sonoma Co., Dec. 16 (DEI), one at L. Almanor Dec. 19 (SAL, KC), one near Pleasanton, Alameda Co., Jan. 6 (AE), one at Clifton Court Forebay, Contra Costa Co., Jan. 20 - Feb. 29+ (DE), and two at Alpine L., Marin Co., Feb. 26 (DS). A remarkable 2369 Eared Grebes were on L. Almanor Dec. 19 (SAL, KC).

One of our rarer regular birds, a Laysan Albatross, was found on Monterey Bay Jan. 26 (DRo). Northern Fulmars were numerous in Monterey Bay and at Cordelle Banks to mid-February. They were reported as scarce off Humboldt County, with only one seen (BS). Flesh-footed Shearwaters are very rare in winter. Three were at Cordelle Banks Dec. 8 (JP), and one Jan. 26 in the surf at N. Beach, Pt. Reyes Nat'l Seashore (hereafter P.R.N.S.) (JH). A *Pterodroma* petrel of the Stejneger's or Bonin Is. variety was seen from the Farallon Is. (hereafter, F.I.), Jan. 13 (P.R.B.O., Bob Boekelheide). The bird was seen for only a short time as it flew by the island, and could not be identified to species with certainty.

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — A White Pelican at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Feb. 24 (MR, RE) either wintered or was an exceptionally early migrant as it was one month earlier than the normal first arrival. Seven Double-crested Cormorants at Copco L., and two at Iron Gate Res., Siskiyou Co., Jan. 12 (MR, RE), were surprising. A Magnificent Frigatebird at Sea Ranch, Sonoma Co., Dec. 31 (†Leonard & Marjorie Roth) represented only the second winter record for the Region.

A Little Blue Heron was at San Jose Dec. 16 (*vide* WBo). Cattle Egrets continue to increase with 700 reported for the period. They were concentrated in the mid-San Joaquin Valley and at coastal locations. Seven Great Egrets wintered at Lower Klamath N.W.R. (SS); they are usually absent from the Great Basin in winter. Seven Snowy Egrets at Red Bluff Jan. 15 (KC) were unusual as they are rare in the n. third of the Sacramento Valley at any season.

One thousand Black-crowned Night Herons at Creighton Holding Ponds, w. Tulare Co., (JR) was the largest concentration reported in recent years. The first Regional winter sighting in several years of Least Bittern was of one at Gray Lodge Dec. 20 (MR, *vide* BED). American Bitterns were found in higher-than-usual numbers along the coast, with 13 reported (m.ob).



WATERFOWL — The mild winter produced high waterfowl populations in the Klamath Basin with birds both staying later into the winter and wintering in higher-than-normal numbers (SS). The winter storm pattern produced rapid and spectacular shifts in the populations in the Central Valley (hereafter, C.V.); e.g., a million ducks at Gray Lodge disappeared overnight with the onslaught of the series of late January storms (BED).

Six Whistling Swans wintered at Pt. Reyes Station, Marin Co. (JL *et al.*) and three more at Abbott's Lagoon Jan. 7 (DS). Fifty-two Canada Geese at Elkhorn Slough Monterey Co., Jan. 2 (PM) was an unusual concentration for the outer coast. "Black" Brant were reported to be in lower-than-usual numbers (PM, JE). Nine White-fronted Geese were reported from three coastal locations and three Snow Geese were at two coastal locations. Two Snow Geese at S. Lake Tahoe Jan. 30 (SG) were at an unusual location. A Ross' Goose was at Arcata Bottoms Jan. 17 (Ken Irwin).

A "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal was at Oakland Dec. 16 (*vide* SFB). Cinnamon Teal believed to be early migrants included two at Valley Ford, Sonoma Co., Jan. 6 (GP, Lynn Stenzel), and two at Limantour Jan. 8 (DS). Thirty-five Eur. Wigeon were reported during the winter — more than ever before. American Wigeon numbers were reported to be higher than normal at inland locations but lower than normal towards the coast. An unusual concentration of Ring-necked Ducks was 3000 at East Park Res., Colusa Co., Jan. 7 (BED). They were reported to be more com-

mon than usual at Pt Reyes and at San Francisco (hereafter, S.F.) areas (JE,DM). A remarkable concentration of 3000 Canvasbacks at Corcoran Irrigation Dist., Kings Co., Feb. 12 (JR) must have been a migratory flock. Further evidence of migration movement was a jump from three at the Red Bluff Diversion Dam Jan. 30 to 120 Feb. 1 (KC). Six single ♂ Tufted Ducks were reported as follows: Muddy Hollow, P.R.N.S., to Jan. 12 (CSw, JE), Coyote Hills Regional Park Jan. 26-Feb. 12 (JM), Abbott's Lagoon, P.R.N.S., mid-January-Feb. 7 (DS,JE), Richardson Bay Feb. 10 (JM), Berkeley Aquatic Park Feb. 17 (JM), and Cape Mendocino Feb. 23 (Gary Fredrickson). Barrow's Goldeneyes were in much below normal numbers after last winter's invasion. Buffleheads were at record numbers at many inland locations and were lower-than-average near the coast.

Harlequin Ducks were reported in normal numbers with the exception of 16 in one day near Crescent City Jan. 20 (GS). White-winged Scoters were noted to be significantly more numerous than in any of the past 10 years in Monterey Bay, outnumbering Surf Scoters 9:1 (BE). The S.F. Bay Aerial Waterfowl Survey Jan. 3 & 20 yielded 36,144 Ruddy Ducks, twice the five-year average (CSw). Up to 30 Hooded Mergansers wintered at Five Brooks Pond, P.R.N.S., (m.ob.), for the largest concentration reported. Normal numbers occurred elsewhere.

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — Turkey Vultures are known to migrate N into our area by late January to mid-February. One observer speculates that they migrate back into the Fresno area by late December. The first ones seen since October appeared Dec. 26 & 27 (RH). White-tailed Kite numbers seem to be approaching pre-drought levels, at least in most areas (m.ob.), although their cyclical population fluctuations and poorly understood patterns of movement make it difficult to assess their status. They still appear to be declining in the Salinas-Monterey area (BE) but were in highest numbers ever at Pt. Reyes and Fresno (JE,RH). A remarkable roost of 150 kites was found near Yuba City Jan. 15 (Randall Gray). The only Goshawk reported was an immature at Hopland Field Station, Mendocino Co., Feb. 10 (OJK). Sharp-shinned Hawks were recorded in normal numbers while Cooper's seemed to be up to one-third higher than in recent years (JE,RH, SAL).

A Red-tailed Hawk which closely fits the description of the *kriderii* subspecies was seen near the San Joaquin R., Merced Co., Jan. 17-31 (†RH). If the bird was actually a Krider's Red-tailed and not just an abnormal plumaged *calurus*, it is a remarkable sighting. Four Harlan's Red-taileds were found in the C.V., and another was at Fortuna, Humboldt Co., Dec. 29 (DE *et al.*), notable since there are few coastal records. Two Swainson's Hawks on Blossom Rd., San Joaquin Co., Feb. 24 (Elmer Aldrich, JM *et al.*) were early spring migrants, being a month earlier than the average first arrival date. There seemed to be more Rough-legged Hawks in valley and coastal locations this year than last but it was not a true "invasion" year. Ferruginous Hawks were at an all-time high level with > 70 individuals reported after last year's record low numbers. The norm is 25-40. Califor-

nia Bald Eagle wintering populations were lower than last year's with 768 recorded on the mid-winter census; of these only 33% were immatures. (Phil Detrich). About 90 were censused between Pine Cr. and Paynes Cr., Tehama Co., in January and February (SAL,KC), making this wintering ground possibly second only to the Klamath Basin in importance in the Region.

Marsh Hawks were more common in the C.V. this winter than they have been since before the drought (SAL,JS). A new high was set for this species on the Pt. Reyes CBC with 83, the previous high was 77 recorded in 1971 (JE). Fifteen wintering Ospreys from both coastal and inland locations were more than are normally recorded. Sixty Prairie Falcons reported are many more than the normal 15-20. This is probably a result of both a real influx into the heavily birded coastal areas and better coverage at favorable inland sites. Peregrine Falcons were reported in the usual low numbers, with 15 individuals. Merlins were recorded nearly 50% above average numbers for recent years.

A Virginia Rail was found being stalked by a cat in the middle of a shopping center parking lot in downtown Chico, miles from the nearest marsh Feb. 24 (*vide* KVV). The bird was captured and later released. Black Rails were well reported with up to six throughout the period at Corte Madera, Marin Co. (m.ob.), and single birds at Benicia State Recreation Area Dec. 30 (JRi) and Palo Alto Baylands Jan. 16 (Ted Chandik).

SHOREBIRDS — An excellent concentration of 400 Black-necked Stilts was found along Santa Fe Grade Rd., Merced Co., Jan. 25 (SAL). Two Am. Avocets at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Feb. 24 (MR,RE) were exceptionally early spring migrants. Flocks of migrant Killdeer were found in the Honey L. valley as early as Feb. 10 (DAA). Normal numbers of Snowy Plovers were found along the coast, with 100+ at Hayward Salt Ponds Feb. 14 (CSw) being the largest concentration. Three at the Wilbur Flood Area, Kings Co., Jan. 10 (JR) provided only the second inland winter occurrence for the Region. Mountain Plovers were reported in good numbers with 300-400 at Panoche Valley, San Benito Co., Feb. 25 (PBP *et al.*) being the largest concentration. Forty on a dried mudflat at Turlock Res., Stanislaus Co., Dec. 18 (BED), on the e. side of the C.V., were at an unusual location. More than normal numbers of Am. Golden Plovers were reported, with 14 from the Pt. Reyes area and 14 on the coast below S.F. Three inland near Sebastopol, Sonoma Co., Dec. 16 (LCB,BDP) were noteworthy.

A flock of 22 Marbled Godwits on Santa Fe Grade Rd., Merced Co., Jan. 25 (SAL) was a large concentration in an area where few regularly winter. A Wilson's Phalarope was at Dumbarton Bridge Feb. 20 providing the first Regional winter record (CSw,SFB). A N. Phalarope at Tomales Bay Dec. 15 (*vide* JE,CSw) furnished one of few winter records for the Region. The Red Phalarope invasion of the late fall continued through the first week in January, when the numbers dropped off rapidly. The only February sightings were of two birds brought into L. Merced, S.F., by a storm Feb. 23 (DM). Four Long-billed Dowitchers at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Feb. 24

(MR,RE) were one month early for a Great Basin location. A flock of seven Dunlin at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Jan. 5 (SS,MR,RE) was also unusual.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Fewer Pomarine Jaegers than normal were found this winter. One at Coyote Pt., San Mateo Co., Dec. 20 (PM) and another at Tubbs I, Solano Co., Jan. 20, both well inside S F Bay were unusual. California Gulls not present in Honey L. valley Feb. 10 had returned by Feb. 23 when 150 were found at the Johnstonville Dump (DAA). An ad. Mew Gull was at Thermalito Forebay, Butte Co., Jan. 15 (SAL). An ad. Black-headed Gull was found again this year at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Feb. 4 (JLa) and stayed to Feb. 29+. The only Franklin's Gull reported was a probable one at Bolinas Sewage Ponds Jan. 20 (PBP). Bonaparte's Gulls were again found at L. Almanor this winter with 27 there Dec. 18 (SAL,KC). An ad. Little Gull at Stockton Sewage Ponds Feb. 4 - Feb. 29+ (JLa) was probably the bird there last spring. Two imm. Heermann's Gulls were at Crescent City Feb. 16 (SS *et al.*), and one remained to Feb. 29+. There are no previous late winter records for the n. coast. A Forster's Tern at S. Humboldt Bay Dec. 29 (CSw) was the first reported in winter from the n. coast.

Four Marbled Murrelets, casual inside S F Bay, were at Berkeley Pier Dec. 20 (JM,JL), two remained until Jan. 6 (SFB). The exceptional numbers of Ancient Murrelets from the fall invasion remained through December. Numbers declined in January and February, but they could be found throughout the period at many locations. The largest total reported was 170 at Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf Dec. 16 (SG). Very unusual were up to 16 at Berkeley Pier Dec. 20 (JL). Cassin's Auklets had not returned to the F.I. by mid-December when 50,000 are usually present and were still not involved in breeding activities by Feb. 29+ (P.R.B.O.). A Horned Puffin was seen at the mouth of Salmon Cr., Sonoma Co., Dec. 26 (*vide* CHO) and another was found dead at Moonstone Beach, Humboldt Co., Jan. 19 (*vide* BS).

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Band-tailed Pigeons were reported in "low" numbers in most areas, but were common in flocks of 100-200 at Springville, Tulare Co., in December (MEM). Mourning Doves returned to the Honey L. basin Feb. 23 (DAA). Eleven Pygmy Owls in the vicinity of Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co., Dec. 26 (DEI) showed how common this species can be in the Coast Range. Seven Spotted Owls reported from scattered locales was normal (m.ob.). Long-eared Owls continued in exceptional numbers on Pt. Reyes through the period with ten at Muddy Hollow (JE) and up to 35+ at Home Bay (JRi,m.ob.). The latter birds were roosting in a dense stand of Monterey pines and the actual number of owls could have been much higher. Short-eared Owls were reported in high numbers in many areas with five roosts ranging 11-21 birds each (m.ob.) with a peak of 55+ in the Livermore Valley, Alameda Co., Jan. 13 (AE *et al.*). Single Poor-wills were near Bolinas Jan. 5 (GP) & 21 (P.R.B.O.). Although rare, this

species is sighted regularly along the California coast in winter, however its winter distribution is not well known; hibernating individuals are surely overlooked.

Single Costa's Hummingbirds were at Pt. Pinos Dec. 27 (RS) and at Alamo, Contra Costa Co., Jan. 23-Feb. 20 (JRi). The first noted migrant Rufous Hummingbird was also reported from Alamo Feb. 18 (JRi). An early Allen's Hummingbird was in Inverness Jan. 17 (RS), with numbers building to eight at a feeder by Feb. 7. Lewis' Woodpeckers were generally in low numbers in most of the Region with the only reported concentration being 50 at the n. end of L. Berryessa and in Pope Valley, Napa Co., Jan. 20 (BDP,JP). An imm. *varius* form of the **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was observed at Nicasio, Marin Co., Dec. 18 (†RS) for only the second confirmed Regional record. Surprisingly, two ♂ Williamson's Sapsuckers were seen in the East Bay; one at Tunnel Rd., Oakland Dec. 9-Jan. 5 (JM *et al.*) and one at Redwood Regional Park Dec. 16-18 (DM,DE). The only report of a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker came from s. Lake Tahoe Feb. 2 (SG).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH NUT-HATCHES — An impressive four Eastern Phoeebes were found as follows: Alameda Golf Course Dec. 16 (AE *et al.*); near Muddy Hollow, P.R.N.S., Dec. 29 (†Ed Shaefer, *vide* WBO); Britto Rd., Merced Co., Jan. 26 (SAL); Santa Cruz Feb. 24-29 (SG). An *Empidonax* flycatcher was observed at Dog I., Tehama Co., Jan. 30 (†KC); the description most closely describes a Dusky, and represents only the third Regional winter record of any *Empidonax* other than a Western. A W. Flycatcher at the Pajaro R., near Watsonville Jan. 1 (SG,†PM) provided the Region with its seventh winter record. Six Horned Larks at S. Lake Tahoe Feb. 1 (SG) were of interest as their status in the Sierra in winter is poorly known.

The first apparently migrant Violet-green Swallow was at Five Brooks, P.R.N.S., Feb. 6 (JE). Tree Swallows were present at Limantour Estero throughout the period (JE); although a regular winterer in our Region few reports document the duration of this species' presence at one site. The first returning Rough-winged Swallow coastally was at Bolinas Lagoon Feb. 29 (DS); one at Los Banos W.M.A., Feb. 26 (PBP,Joe Buchanan) was probably a migrant too, but one seen there on the CBC Dec. 28 (KH *et al.*) provided a rare inland winter sighting. The first reported Barn Swallow was at Palo Alto Yacht Harbor Feb. 26 (PM). A very early Cliff Swallow was at Los Banos W.M.A., Feb. 3 (DG *et al.*).

A Yellow-billed Magpie was a straggler to Belmont, San Mateo Co., Dec. 29 (PM). Seven Mountain Chickadees were at 1000 ft in Auburn Feb. 28 (Jim Booker, *vide* MA) after heavy snowfall in the higher mountains. Two Chestnut-backed Chickadees were seen in Davis Feb. 6 (Dean Jue), being rare in the C.V. Above-average numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches spent the winter in the C.V., and coastal strip after last fall's notable invasion. Indicative of this was the report from Palomarin, P.R.N.S. (P.R.B.O) which showed this species "resident in small numbers throughout the period, with a peak of 12 on Jan. 28 . . . in contrast to last year's zero recordings."

WRENS THROUGH STARLINGS — A House Wren was found near L. Earl, Del Norte Co., Dec. 16 (PS); this species is quite rare on the n. coast in winter. Noteworthy Sage Thrasher sightings were: one at F.I., Jan. 25 (P.R.B.O.); one at Yosemite L., Merced Co., Feb. 18-25 (RJB); and "small numbers" throughout the period at Lava Beds N.M. (RE *et al.*) where they were found wintering last year. A late Hermit Thrush was at Tule L., Dec. 2 (SS). A high count of 50 Mountain Bluebirds was reported from Little Panoche Rd., San Benito Co., Feb. 3 (JRi) and 45 were on Hogsback Rd., Tehama Co., Jan. 17 (SAL,KC). Of seven sightings of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers the most notable was one Jan. 20 at Muddy Hollow, P.R.N.S. (CHO); this species becomes very rare in winter on the coast of S.F.

The only Bohemian Waxwings reported were 51 at S. Lake Tahoe Jan. 31-Feb. 5 (*vide* Sheryl Lanier,SG). Cedar Waxwings were generally in "low" numbers for the season. Two Phainopeplas Jan. 6 in s. central Shasta County (KC) were near the n. limit of the species' range. The only N. Shrikes reported were in Hicks Valley, Marin Co., and two near the Sutter Buttes, Sutter Co., Jan. 10 (SAL) Jan. 19 (RS). Loggerhead Shrikes were considered up in the C.V. (JS,JH); 17 on a 50 mi census route in Butte County compared to five last year (JS). An individual of this species was at F.I., through the period for a first wintering record there (P.R.B.O.). From Dec. 4-18, Starling flocks in "the hundreds of thousands, perhaps one million" were present in the Napa Valley (MRI). Hopefully this was only due to unusual concentrating factors and does not indicate further significant population increases in this persistent pest species.

VIREOS THROUGH WARBLERS — Single Solitary Vireos were at Bodega Bay Dec. 1 (JRi) and at Pacific Grove Dec. 27-Jan. 31 (DRo). A very late Warbling Vireo also graced Bodega Bay Dec. 8 (JW). A ♂ Black-and-white Warbler was at Pacific Grove Dec. 27-Jan.31 (KVV,BDP,DRo) and a male was nearby at Asilomar Jan. 26 (Robert McKernan). A Tennessee Warbler frequented an orchard in Pt. Reyes Station Dec. 7-27 (DS *et al.*). Coastally the first returning/singing Orange-crowned Warbler was at Muddy Hollow Feb. 29 (Andrea Meyer).

S.A.

An impressive ten Nashville Warblers were seen coastally Dec. 14-Feb. 29+ (m.ob.). This is about twice reported totals of recent winters. Interestingly 34 Nashvilles were reported from the coast Sept.30-Nov. 29, 1979 which is 2-3 times average for this period.

Quite rare in winter, single Yellow Warblers were at Walton Square, S.F., Dec. 21-Feb. 29+ (DE) and at the Pajaro R., near Watsonville Jan. 1 (SG). A Cape May Warbler was reported from Pacific Grove Jan. 31 (Donna Dittmann, *vide* DRo). This would represent only the second Regional winter record, but unfortunately details were not submitted. Five Black-throated Gray War-

blers were about the recent average for the period. (m.ob). Of note was a Townsend's Warbler near Bald Rock, Butte Co., Feb. 11 & 28 (JS); coastally 117 Dec. 27 at Pacific Grove was a high count for a day's birding (BDP). Five Hermit Warblers near the coast were slightly fewer than expected in recent years (m.ob.). After last fall's record number of Palm Warblers at least 21 were seen coastally Dec. 1-Feb. 29+ (m.ob.). A **MacGillivray's Warbler** in Santa Cruz Feb. 24-Mar. 4 (†SG) provided the Region's fifth winter record. Wilson's Warblers were seen at Olema Marsh Dec. 12-15 (RS) and at the Pajaro R., near Watsonville Jan. 1 (SG,PM). American Redstarts were found near Bodega, Sonoma Co., Dec. 30 (Keiko Yamane, Dianne McClung) and at the Carmel R. mouth Dec. 27-Jan. 3 (DRo).

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH LONG-SPURS — A concentration of 30,000 Yellow-headed Blackbirds was estimated near Merced Jan. 26 with an amazing 100,000 Tricolored Blackbirds in the same flock (SAL). Two Tricolored Blackbirds were out of place in the Shasta Valley Feb. 15 (BED) but more unusual was one at S. Lake Tahoe Jan. 31 (†SG). A Hooded Oriole was at Pacific Grove Dec. 28-Jan. 3 (DRo). Two "Bullock's" Orioles were at Pacific Grove Dec. 27-Jan. 3 (RS,DRo) with one remaining to Feb. 24 (SFB), and one was at Elkhorn Slough Jan. 1 (RS). A ♀ "Baltimore" Oriole also appeared at Pacific Grove Dec. 27-28 (RS,DRo). A ♀ N. Oriole at Pt. Reyes Station Dec. 15 (JL,JW) could not be assigned to race. The ♀ Great-tailed Grackle that roosted at Walton Square, S.F., this fall was seen again Dec. 24-Feb. 15 (DE). An overwhelming 150,000 Brown-headed Cowbirds were estimated at Sacramento N.W.R., Jan. 17 (SAL). Single W. Tanagers were seen at F.I., Feb. 10 (P.R.B.O.); at Walnut Cr., Feb. 13-19 (Winifred Orcutt, JRi); and at Chico State Univ., Feb. 28 (SAL).

A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Azalea S.P., Humboldt Co., Jan. 1 (CSW *et al.*). Evening Grosbeaks were reported from the coast and C.V., through the period in flocks of up to 30 (m.ob.). Ten Lesser Goldfinches at S. Lake Tahoe Jan. 30 (SG) were of interest, as they are of erratic occurrence in winter in the Sierra and little is known of their status as the season progresses. Red Crossbills were reported in moderate numbers throughout the period with flocks of up to 25 (m.ob.). A Green-tailed Towhee was sighted at Pacific Grove Dec. 27-28 (RS *et al.*); coastal winter records are scarce indeed.

A Brown Towhee was again sighted at Tule Lake N.W.R., Feb. 24 indicating that a small resident population exists there e. of its previously known range (RE,MR). At least 12 Tree Sparrows were seen during the period in the Great Basin (m.ob.). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** wintered in San Rafael Feb. 14 to at least Apr. 14 (†Holly Peake,DS). This provides only the fifth winter record, the latest previous date for the season being Jan. 22. A Harris' Sparrow frequented Lafayette Dec. 24-Feb. 29+ (LF *et al.*). Six White-throated Sparrows Dec. 16 near Santa Rosa was a very high count for one day (LCB,BDP). Seven Swamp Sparrows coastally (m.ob.) is some-

what fewer than has been reported in recent years.

Lapland Longspurs were in good numbers in the Great Basin with a high count of 210 at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Jan. 15 (SS,RE,MR). Coastally the only sightings were singles at Doran Park, Sonoma Co., Dec. 14 (DS) and at Redwood Shores, San Mateo Co., Dec. 30 (Barry Sauppe, *vide* PM). More unusual was one seen Jan. 10 near Biggs, Butte Co. (SAL), since there are very few C.V. records.

ADDENDUM — A singing ♂ N. Parula was seen July 22, 1979 at Hastings Natural History Reservation, Monterey Co. (Ron Mumme *et al.*).

CORRIGENDA — AB 33:803: the White-winged Scoters at San Leandro were seen April 28, 1979. Struve Slough is in Santa Cruz County; Livermore and Pleasanton are in Alameda County, not Contra Costa County. The Short-eared Owls provided the first

nesting records for Alameda and Contra Costa counties, not the country. The Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers were in the burn area between Susanville and Eagle L. AB 33:893: there were 34 nesting Goshawks, not pairs of Goshawks in the Warner Mts. AB 33:894: the single Band-tailed Pigeons were seen June 6 and July 28. AB 33:895: the Long-billed Marsh Wren was obviously the first island not inland spring record. The Manzanita L., Hutton's Vireo was seen July 5.

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SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Guy McCaskie

This winter was wet and mild, with extensive flooding along the coast. The heavy rains appeared to have had no adverse effects on birdlife, and certainly had a beneficial effect on some species; with reservoirs filling and wetlands flourishing, waterfowl and other such species had no shortage of habitat. Warm weather throughout the period made it possible for many species not normally expected to winter in the United States, to survive through the period. This is well-illustrated by the presence of 14 species of flycatchers and 24 species of wood warblers (a record number for both families), along with large numbers of orioles and tanagers. Avian visitors from northward were scarce, and few montane species moved down to the coastal lowlands. A movement of Marbled and Ancient murrelets down the coast in December highlighted the non-passerine birding, and the presence of such rarities to California as the Olivaceous Flycatcher and Grace's Warbler added spice to an already exciting array of landbirds.

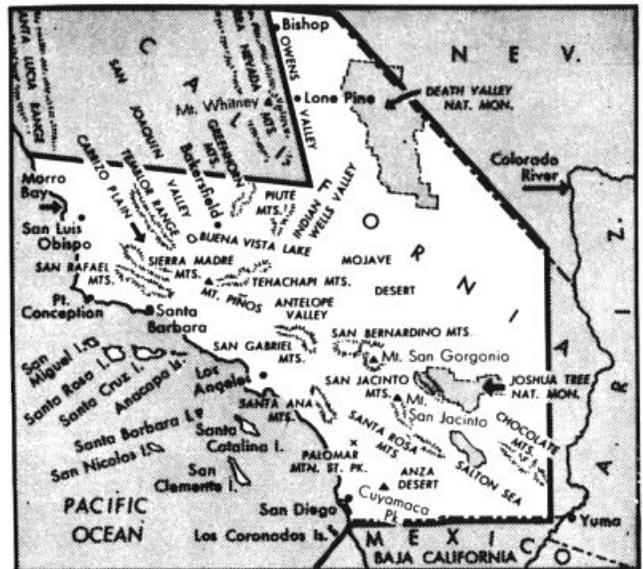
GREBES — A Red-necked Grebe, rare in s. California, was in Ventura Jan. 20 - Mar. 6 (REW), another was at Santa Monica Dec. 21-23 (AHo) and a third was in Redondo Beach Jan. 1-4 (H&NS).

SHEARWATERS — A few N. Fulmars were present offshore as indicated by 20 off Morro Bay Jan. 6 (BB), two around Ventura Dec. 17 - Jan. 6 (REW), one at Huntington Beach Dec. 5 (R&MW) and up to nine a day off La Jolla during December (DPo). Two Short-tailed Shearwaters off Morro Bay Jan. 26 (H&NS), one at Pt. Mugu Jan. 5 (REW) and another captured on Pt. Loma Feb. 26 (SD,*S.D.N.H.M.) were the only ones reported this winter. Manx Shearwaters were

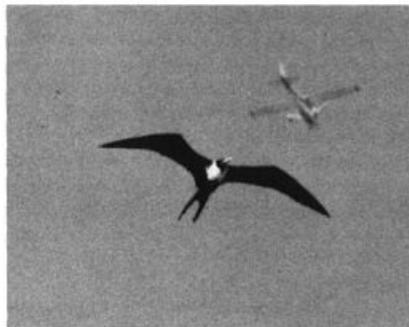
common off the s. portion of the Region during December and January, with 7000 off Laguna Beach, Orange Co., Dec. 23-25 (JAJ) and 1500 off Pt. Mugu Jan. 5 (REW) being the largest concentrations, and 200 off Morro Bay Jan. 6 (BB) being relatively far n.

PELICANS, FRIGATEBIRDS — A Brown Pelican near Lakeview, Riverside Co., Dec. 27 (DMM) was inland, and had probably arrived in that area during the fall. A ♀ Magnificent Frigatebird at Redondo Beach Jan. 4 (H&NS, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was unexpected, there being fewer than six winter records of this species in California.

HERONS, STORKS — An imm. Little Blue Heron, a rare visitor to California, was



in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., Feb. 8 (EG), another was at McGrath State Beach, Ventura Co., Jan. 1-29 (JM) and a third was near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., Dec. 14 (EC). Cattle Egrets continue to increase, with small flocks present along the entire coast



Easy and hard flight. An ad. ♀ Magnificent Frigatebird soaring over King Harbour, Redondo Beach, Jan. 4, 1980. Photo/Hal Spear.



An ad. ♀ Magnificent Frigatebird perched atop a sailboat mast, King Harbour, Redondo Beach, Jan. 4, 1980. Photo/Hal Spear.

throughout much of the winter. A Great Egret near Lancaster, Los Angeles Co., Nov. 24 - Mar. 2 (FH) may be the first to have wintered on the high Mojave Desert. Up to five Louisiana Herons were present in the San Diego area during the period, but were unrecorded elsewhere in the Region. A Least Bittern in Goleta Jan. 30 (LE) and another in San Diego Dec. 28 (JO) were of interest since few are reported on the coast in winter nowadays. The Wood Stork present in Whittier during November was still present Jan. 19 (JA).

SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS — A Whistling Swan in Escondido, San Diego Co., Dec. 29 (KW) was quite far s. Two Cackling Geese (*Branta canadensis minima*), rare visitors to the coast of s. California, were in Encino Dec. 12 (JDu) and another was near Oceanside Dec. 9-22 (DPa). More than 100 White-fronted Geese were around San Luis Obispo in February (FRT), but the fact that only 48 individuals were reported from elsewhere (primarily along the coast) within the Region shows how scarce this species has become as a wintering bird in s. California. A Ross' Goose, a rare straggler to the coast, was in Goleta Feb. 8-18 (PL), up to three were at Pt. Mugu Jan. 13 - Feb. 16 (REW), and single individuals were seen near Oceanside Dec. 9 (DPa) and Feb. 26 (EC). A ♂ Com. Teal (*Anas c. crecca*) was at Pt. Mugu Dec. 22 (REW), another was in Long Beach Dec. 4-Feb. 29+ (BD) and a third was on L. Cuyamaca in the mountains of San Diego County Mar. 16 (DPa); one or two of these birds are found in this Region each winter. At least 40 Blue-winged Teal were found wintering along the coast, indicating its relative abundance at this season. A minimum of 11 Eur. Wigeon was reported, including five males together at San Jacinto, Riverside Co., Dec. 24 (DMM) and one high in the San Bernardino Mts., on Big Bear L., Dec. 4-12 (KG). The ♂ Tufted Duck present on Quail L., near Gorman, Los Angeles Co., during November was still present Dec. 8 (BB), and what was probably the same bird was seen in nearby Cuddy Valley Jan. 15 (REW). A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye was at Salt Cr., on the Salton Sea Dec. 1 (EAC) and another was at Bolsa Chica, Orange Co., Dec. 12-Jan. 24 (SLW); this species is exceptionally rare anywhere in s. California away from the Colorado R. Valley. Thirteen Oldsquaws along the coast were about normal. The ♂ Harlequin Duck first found in Carlsbad in 1977 was still present Feb. 29 (EC). Large concentrations of Com. Mergansers gather on some of the inland bodies of water as indicated by 700 on Buena Vista L., Kern Co., Jan. 15 (KVV), 250 on Big Bear L., all winter (KG), 1500 on L. Elsinore, Riverside Co., Jan. 27 (EC) and 150 on L. Henshaw, San Diego Co., Jan. 4 (RH).

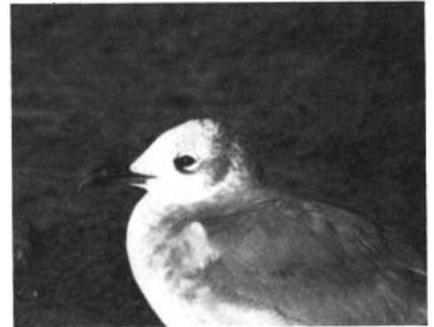
HAWKS, FALCONS — An ad. Red-shouldered Hawk at Baldwin L. (6700 ft) Dec. 12 - Jan. 20 (KG) and an immature at adjacent Big Bear L., Feb. 20 (KG) were both exceptionally high in the mountains. Four Broad-winged Hawks were reported with an adult in the Rosemead district of Los Angeles Nov. 20 - Feb. 29+ (KG), an immature in Beverly Hills Dec. 23-28 (KG), another immature near Malibu Jan. 5 - Feb. 14 (DLD), and an adult along the Santa Ana R., near

Riverside Dec. 29 - Jan. 9 (MAP); one or two of these birds are found in s. California every winter. A Swainson's Hawk near Santa Maria, Santa Barbara Co., Dec. 2 (JDu) was believed to be an exceptionally late fall migrant as it was never relocated later. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk was seen on three occasions near Vista, San Diego Co., Feb. 1-29 (F&SH); it is interesting to note that an adult has been seen in this general area during the past two winters. Rough-legged Hawks were scarce, although single birds were found as far s. as Mesa Grande, San Diego Co., Jan. 28 (RH) and near Calipatria all winter (RM). Fewer than ten Peregrine Falcons were reported, all being along the coast. About 30 Merlins were reported including a very dark individual believed to be of the race *suckleyi* at Big Bear L., Jan. 4 (KG).

CRANES, RAILS — Some 3000 Sandhill Cranes on the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo Co., and 105 near Brawley all winter (EMcM, GMcC) were at known wintering localities, but one near Santa Maria Dec. 8 - Jan. 24 (JDu) was certainly out of place. A Clapper Rail at Pt. Mugu Jan. 12 (REW) was the first seen in Ventura County since 1972, and raises hopes that this species can recolonize this fine marshland.

SHOREBIRDS — Two Black Oystercatchers at Port Hueneme, Ventura Co., all winter (REW), three at Cabrillo Beach Dec. 28 (BD), three more at Pt. Fermin Feb. 10 (RIW) and two on Pt. Loma Jan. 17 (DPa) were all away from areas of normal occurrence. Up to 37 Mountain Plovers near Santa Maria during December and January (PL), 28 near Pt. Mugu in December (REW) and about 100 near Imperial Beach to early January (EC) were the only flocks suspected of wintering along the coast; this species formerly occurred in much larger numbers as a wintering bird of the coastal lowlands. A flock of 25 ± Am. Golden Plovers spent the entire winter near Santa Maria (LB), up to five were at Pt. Mugu throughout the period (REW) and one was at Playa del Rey all winter (BB); all were believed to be of the Asiatic race *fulva*. A group of 23 Lesser Yellowlegs at Pt. Mugu Jan. 20 (REW) was an unusual concentration for winter. Totally unexpected was a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Pt. Mugu Jan. 19-Mar. 2 (REW) establishing the first winter record for North America. A flock of 25 ± Stilt Sandpipers at the s. end of the Salton Sea (hereafter, S.E.S.S.) Jan. 28 - Feb. 9 (EC) were at a known wintering locality, but the one at Pt. Mugu Nov. 18 - Mar. 2 (REW) gives us the first winter record for a coastal locality in California. Three Ruffs were in the vicinity of Pt. Mugu with a male present Jan. 19 - Feb. 29+ (REW), a female there Jan. 21 - Feb. 29+ (DLD) and another male Jan. 27 - Feb. 29+ (REW). Red Phalaropes were quite common offshore into early January, as indicated by 1000 ± off Morro Bay Jan. 6 (BB), with small numbers occurring on the coast through January, and one at Pt. Mugu Feb. 16 (REW) being the latest. Six Wilson's Phalaropes spent the entire winter near Imperial Beach (GMcC); one or two are found in this area nearly every winter. As usual a flock of N. Phalaropes wintered near Imperial Beach, but ten was the largest number counted.

LARIDS — As usual a few Pomarine Jaegers spent the winter offshore as indicated by one off Morro Bay Jan. 26 (H&NS) and three off La Jolla Jan. 21 (DPo), but single birds on the coast at Pt. Mugu Jan. 5 & 12 (REW) were more interesting since the Parasitic Jaeger is the expected bird close to shore. The only Glaucous Gull found this winter was one at Redondo Beach Dec. 5-9 (H&NS, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). An imm. Glaucous-winged Gull at S.E.S.S., Dec. 1 - Feb. 17 (EAC) and another at Salton City Feb. 9 (DPa) were the only two found far inland. Interesting were two W. Gulls (Yellow-footed) at S.E.S.S., all winter (EC) and another at Salton City Feb. 9 (DPa) since the species is rare here in winter. A Mew Gull at S.E.S.S., Jan. 7 (EC) was far inland, although small numbers regularly move inland to such localities as Ojai and Sweetwater Res., in the coastal lowlands. There was an evident influx of Laughing Gulls along the coast with one at Malibu Feb. 3 (TC), one at Newport Dec. 30



A first-winter Laughing Gull, that remained in Carlsbad, Oceanside, CA, Jan. 23 - Feb. 4, 1980. Photo/ Paul Lehman.

(GLT, ph. S.D.N.H.M.), another at Carlsbad Jan. 23 - Feb. 4 (MT, ph. S.D.N.H.M.), single birds in San Diego Feb. 1 (ME) and Feb. 1-6 (ME), and a seventh near Imperial Beach Feb. 12 - Mar. 1 (TM); this nearly doubles the number of birds recorded along the coast of s. California. A Franklin's Gull in San Luis Obispo Dec. 1 (FRT), another at Malibu Dec. 5 (TC) and a third in Redondo Beach Dec. 2 (H&NS) were all late fall migrants, but one on L. Hodges near Escondido Nov. 10 - Jan. 5 (CGE) and another in Carlsbad Jan. 1-23 (MK) appeared to be wintering locally. Very much out of place was an ad. Heermann's Gull far inland on L. Henshaw Jan. 18 (RH). Black-legged Kittiwakes were exceptionally scarce with only a handful of individuals reported.

A Gull-billed Tern at the n. end of the Salton Sea Dec. 1 (EAC) was somewhat late. An imm. Com. Tern off La Jolla Feb. 25 (DPo) was the only one reported this winter. An Elegant Tern at Port Hueneme Dec. 17 (REW) was the last of the fall birds to be reported. A Black Tern at S.E.S.S., Dec. 1 (EAC) was a late fall migrant. Some 40 ± Black Skimmers on San Diego Bay all winter now appears normal.

ALCIDS — Common Murres pushed S to the Mexican border with 23 found off La Jolla Feb. 25 (DPo).

S.A.

Marbled Murrelets moved much farther S than previously recorded, with two off the Santa Maria River mouth Jan. 24 (PL), one at Goleta Dec. 18 (REW), one in Santa Barbara Dec. 17 (REW) and two more there Dec. 29 (BS), single birds at Port Hueneme Dec. 17 (REW) and Jan. 6 (PL), three at Malibu Dec. 16 (JDu) with additional individuals there Dec. 20 (KG) and Jan. 1 (SS), one in San Pedro Dec. 11 (GSS), single birds in San Diego Nov. 29 (SD, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) and Dec. 3 (TM), and two at Imperial Beach Dec. 15-16 (GMcC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) along with large numbers around Morro Bay (see CBC). Specimens from around Santa Barbara in 1886 and 1910, along with sight records from Los Angeles County in 1958, established the previous southernmost records, so the Imperial Beach birds extend the s. limit for winter movements by about 150 mi.



Two Marbled Murrelets at Imperial Beach, Dec. 16, 1979, established the southernmost record for the species. Photo/ Tim Arnböm.

A Xantus' Murrelet off Morro Bay Jan. 26 (H&NS) gave us another winter sighting. Ancient Murrelets staged a major invasion in s. California waters, with large numbers along the San Luis Obispo and n. Santa Barbara county coastlines (e.g. 40± off Morro Bay Jan. 6 (BB) and 17 at the Santa Maria R. mouth Dec. 1-2 (PL)), ten in Goleta/Santa Barbara area during December and early January (PL), three found in Ventura County (REW), 15± in Los Angeles County (KG), one off Newport, Orange Co., Jan. 4 (JAJ), at least six in San Diego Dec. 10-12 (DPo), up to five at Imperial Beach Dec. 15-23 (EC) and five near the Los Coronados Is., off n. Mexico Feb. 24 (WA); virtually all were seen during December with one at Pt. Mugu Feb. 23 (REW) and the Los Coronados Is., birds being the only ones reported after the first week of January. A Tufted Puffin off Morro Bay Jan. 6 (BB) was one of very few ever reported in s. California waters in winter.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A White-winged Dove in Goleta Dec. 1

(KB) was a late fall straggler; one in Serra Messa, San Diego Co., Feb. 3 (DPo) was the only wintering bird found away from e. San Diego County. A Screech Owl in Brawley Dec. 17 (JDu) was one of very few seen in the Imperial Valley in recent years. A roost of 40± Long-eared Owls at Harper Dry L., San Bernardino Co., during February (PR) was a good concentration. It is hard to say whether a Vaux's Swift at Malibu Dec. 5 (TC) and another near there Dec. 9 (KG) were late fall migrants or attempting to winter, but one over Goleta Feb. 11 (EG), up to 150 around Oceanside throughout the entire winter (CGE), one near Escondido Jan. 22 (JO) and five near San Diego Jan. 15 (JZ) were all clearly wintering locally. A ♀ Black-chinned Hummingbird in San Diego Dec. 15 - Feb. 2 (LB) was only the second ever to occur in California in winter. Costa's Hummingbirds regularly winter along the coast s. of Los Angeles; four found in coastal Ventura County during the period (REW) along with one in Goleta Feb. 7-26 (PL) suggest wintering birds may occur regularly at least as far n. as the Santa Barbara area. The ♀ Broad-billed Hummingbird at Gaviota remained to Feb. 3 (LRB), a male was in Ventura Dec. 21 - Feb. 17 (REW) and the male in San Diego was still present Feb. 29 (CGE). Six Com. (Yellow-shafted) Flickers were reported from along the coast with one at S.E.S.S., Dec. 29 (EC) to give us an average number for a winter. An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker near L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., Dec. 5 - Feb. 10 (JDu) and a male in Garden Grove, Orange Co., Jan. 5 (GLT) were both of the nominate form *varius*. A ♂ Williamson's Sapsucker on Cuyamaca Mt., San Diego Co., Dec. 5-31 (RF) was at the s. extreme of the species winter range in California. A Hairy Woodpecker near San Diego Feb. 26 (CGE) and another near Imperial Beach Dec. 15 - Jan. 26 (EC) were both close to the coast and away from areas of normal occurrence.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A Tropical Kingbird at Pt. Mugu Jan. 12 - Feb. 29+ (REW) was wintering locally. Cassin's Kingbirds were found wintering in small numbers along the entire coast with two in San Luis Obispo Dec. 16+ (FRT) and two more at nearby Pismo Beach throughout the period (EVJ) being the northernmost. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Corona, Riverside Co., Jan. 6 - Feb. 3 (MAP, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was one of fewer than a half-dozen ever found in California in winter. Ash-throated Flycatchers are rarely found along the coast



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher present near Corona Jan. 6 - Feb. 2, 1980. Photo/ Paul Lehman.

in winter; hence, one in National City, San Diego Co., Dec. 15 - Feb. 3 (JO), another near Imperial Beach Jan. 31 - Feb. 2 (DPa) and a third on San Clemente I., Jan. 3 (PJ) were unexpected. California's fifth Olivaceous Flycatcher was in Irvine Dec. 30 - Feb. 10



Olivaceous Flycatcher found wintering in Irvine. Photo/ Paul Lehman.

(CC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). We had more E. Phoebes than expected with one at Morro Bay Dec. 1 - Feb. 29+ (FRT), one near Santa Maria Dec. 11-23 (LB), another at Pt. Mugu Feb. 2-23 (LRB), one near Corona Feb. 4-29+ (MAP), one near Oceanside Dec. 22 - Mar. 1 (EC), one in San Diego Dec. 15 (MP), another at nearby Sweetwater Res., Jan. 19 (CGE) and an eighth near Imperial Beach Nov. 24 - Feb. 2 (DPa). The Willow Flycatcher found in Arcadia Nov. 2 was still present into March (BCoh) and would appear to be the first ever to winter in the United States. A Gray Flycatcher near Santa Maria Dec. 23 - Jan. 1 (JDe), two in Arcadia all winter (BCoh) and four around San Diego during the period (EC) were more than reported in recent winters. A W. Flycatcher in Carpinteria near Santa Barbara Nov. 24 - Feb. 29 (PL), one in Lompoc, Santa Barbara Co., Feb. 23 (TSt), another in Arcadia Nov. 4 - Feb. 23 (BCoh), one near Escondido Dec. 28 - Mar. 3 (CGE) and another in Coronado, San Diego Co., Dec. 12 - Jan. 9 (EC) gave us five during the winter. The Coues' Flycatcher found in Los Angeles Nov. 7 was still present at the end of the period (KG) and another was at Leo Carrillo State Beach, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 16 - Feb. 11 (TC); most records for California involve wintering birds. An Olive-sided Flycatcher, only the third found in California in winter, was in Los Angeles Nov. 28 - Feb. 29+ (RL). Only six Vermilion Flycatchers were reported in the coastal lowlands with one in Fillmore, Ventura Co., Nov. 5 - Jan. 15 (REW) being the northernmost. A Bank Swallow at Pt. Mugu Jan. 5 (REW) was one of a very few ever seen along the coast in winter. Six Rough-winged Swallows at Valley Center, San Diego Co., Jan. 2 (AF) were unexpected, winter records coming primarily from the vicinity of the Salton Sea and Colorado R. Valley.

NUTHATCHES, WRENS, THRASHERS, THRUSHES — Red-breasted Nuthatches were relatively scarce after the moderate influx of the fall. Three Pygmy Nuthatches remained in Santa Barbara, away from any area of regular occurrence, through the winter (PL). A Winter Wren in National City Dec. 12 (CGE) was far s., and somewhat unexpected considering the paucity of these birds in s. California this winter. A Brown Thrasher, a rare straggler to California, was

at a feeder in Goleta Dec 8 - Feb 29+ (PL) A Bendire's Thrasher in San Pedro Dec. 24-27 (HF) gave us another coastal record of this species. A Curve-billed Thrasher, a casual straggler to s.e. California, was at S.E.S.S., Dec 20 - Feb. 4 (GMcC). A Sage Thrasher in San Luis Obispo Feb. 14 (FRT), one in Santa Barbara Feb. 17 (DE) and a third in Arcadia Jan 27 (CH) were all in the coastal lowlands where now considered quite rare. Only three Varied Thrushes were reported, indicating that very few reached s. California this winter. A Swainson's Thrush in Coronado Dec 15-16 (GMcC) was the latest ever recorded in California, but it was missing one foot and had a damaged wing indicating that it many not have been capable of long-distance flight.

KINGLETS, WAXWINGS, VIREOS — Ten Golden-crowned Kinglets on Mt. Palomar all winter (RH) and five on Cuyamaca Mt., Dec. 31 (CGE) were quite far s. considering how scarce the species was along the coast. A Bohemian Waxwing in Long Beach Jan 14 (JA) had wandered s. More than the average number of Solitary Vireos was found this winter with one in Goleta Jan. 24 - Feb. 14 (REW), a gray bird of the *plumbeus* race in Ventura Jan. 25 (REW), another of the same race near Encino Feb. 28 (KC), one in Riverside Dec. 20 (DW), another in Vista Dec 19 (MT), a gray bird near Escondido Dec 29 - Jan. 5 (KW), single birds at widely separated localities in San Diego Jan. 17 (DPa) and Feb. 24-26 (CGE) and a ninth in National City Dec. 16 - Feb. 3 (EC) along with about ten reported on CBCs. A Warbling Vireo in San Diego Nov. 28 - Dec. 14 (PU) and two in San Luis Obispo Jan. 5-6 (FRT) could all have been very late fall migrants since they could not be relocated later in the winter.

WOOD WARBLERS — A Black-and-white Warbler in Santa Barbara Dec. 25 - Jan. 12 (REW) and another in Carpinteria Jan. 20 - Feb. 29+ (PL) were the only ones found this winter. As now appears normal, a few Tennessee Warblers remained to winter along the coast with one in Goleta Feb. 14 (PL), another in Carpinteria Feb. 17 - Feb. 29+ (KVV), one in Ventura Jan. 19 - Mar. 4 (JM) with additional birds present there Jan. 23 (REW) and Feb. 1 (REW). Some 25 Nashville Warblers scattered along the coast were more than expected. Most unusual was a Virginia's Warbler in San Luis Obispo Jan. 5-6 (FRT), another in Fillmore Jan. 15 - Feb. 6 (REW) and a third near Imperial Beach Feb. 17 (JO) since very few have ever been found in California during the winter months. Remarkable were four Lucy's Warblers with one in Ventura Dec. 22 - Jan. 22 (LB), another in San Pedro throughout the period (MH), one in Coronado Dec. 15-20 (REW) and the fourth near Imperial Beach Dec. 15-25 (GMcC) since winter records are virtually nonexistent. A N. Parula in Niland near S.E.S.S., Dec. 20 - Jan. 16 (DLD) gave us another winter record for this vagrant to California.

At least 23 Yellow Warblers were found along the coast with one near Santa Maria Jan 5 (PL) being the farthest n. Unexpected was a Cape May Warbler in Goleta Dec. 29

-Feb 29+ (MP) and another on Pt Loma Nov. 10 - Jan. 6 (JO), there being only one previous winter record for the Region. Black-throated Gray Warblers were more numerous than usual with 30± reported during the season. A ♀ Black-throated Green Warbler near Imperial Beach Jan. 26 (DPa) is believed to be the same individual present here a year ago (AB 33:316, 1979). The only Hermit Warblers reported were three around Santa Barbara all winter (PL) and one near Ventura Feb. 21 (REW). Remarkable was a **Grace's Warbler** in Santa Barbara Jan. 6 - Feb. 29+ (LB, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) and another in nearby Carpinteria Feb. 24 - 29+ (PL) for there are only 4 previous records for the coast of California (all fall), and there may be no documented winter record for anywhere n. of Mexico. A Chestnut-sided Warbler at S.E.S.S., Dec. 20 - Feb. 28 (KG) was the first to have remained through the winter in California, although there are four late December sightings. A Prairie Warbler, a rare fall vagrant to California, was near L. Cachuma Dec. 2-5 (PH) and another was in Coronado Dec. 15 - Jan. 6 (REW, *S.D.N.H.M.). About 20 Palm Warblers were reported from along the coast, but most were during December and early January, with one in Carpinteria Feb. 24 (PL), one in Oxnard Jan. 21 - Feb. 2 (DLD), two at Pt. Mugu Jan. 26 - Feb. 1 (REW), one in Oceanside Feb. 10 (JD) and two near Imperial Beach through March (PU) being the only ones found later. A warbler at McGrath State Beach Jan. 5 (KC) and another near Imperial Beach Jan. 6 (EC) were both brightly-colored **Yellow Palm Warblers** (*Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*), an accidental straggler to California.

A N. Waterthrush near Imperial Beach Jan. 26 - Feb. 29+ (DPa) and another nearby through March (DPa) were the only two found wintering. A ♂ MacGillivray's Warbler, very rare in winter, was in Goleta Dec. 28 - Feb. 29+ (REW). As usual a few Wilson's Warblers remained to winter along the coast with 30± reported. Three or four Am. Redstarts around S.E.S.S., all winter (GMcC) along with one near Vidal on the Colorado R., Jan. 12 (DPa) were in areas of normal occurrence in winter, but one in Goleta Jan. 23 (PL) was on the coast where rare at this time of the year. A Painted Redstart, an exciting bird to find in California, was in San Diego Dec. 2-16 (GMcC).

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, TANAGERS — A ♂ Tricolored Blackbird near Calexico Mar. 3 (EC) was only the second to be found in the Imperial Valley. A ♀ Orchard Oriole was in Santa Barbara Jan. 27 (BS), a male was in Carpinteria Jan. 20 - Feb. 27 (PL), another male was in Ventura Jan. 21 (REW), one more male was at a feeder in Santa Monica Jan. 23-25 (JD) giving us four during the winter period. Hooded Orioles are scarce in winter, one in Santa Barbara Feb. 27 (PL) and two more in Carpinteria Feb. 11 - Feb. 29+ (NC) being the only true wintering birds reported, four found in December being considered late fall stragglers. Four Scott's Orioles seen around San Diego in early December were of interest, being along the coast, but were probably late fall stragglers rather than wintering individuals. Nine N. (Baltimore) Orioles were found along the

coast along with 100± N (Bullock's) Orioles; introduced flowering eucalyptus support small flocks of these birds every winter. A Rusty Blackbird was in Goleta Jan. 4 (EG), another was in Carpinteria Jan. 13 - Feb. 17 (PL), a third was at Pt. Mugu Jan. 29 - Feb. 15 (LB) with another there Feb. 17 (REW), this species was formerly regarded as a casual fall straggler to the coast of s. California, but is now being found here each winter.

Western Tanagers were more numerous than usual with 35± reported along the coast; like N. Orioles, these birds frequent flowering eucalyptus at this time of the year. A ♂ Hepatic Tanager in Oceanside Feb. 9-24 (EC) was undoubtedly the same bird present here last winter. A Summer Tanager was in Santa Barbara Jan. 6 (LRB), one was near Oceanside Jan. 23 (MT), another remained in San Diego Dec. 7 - Feb. 21 (CGE), one was on Pt. Loma Feb. 8-11 (CGE) and one more was seen in Coronado Dec. 20 (EC) giving us five for the season.

FINCHES, SPARROWS, LONGSPURS — Five Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported with one at a feeder in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co., all winter (FRT), one in Del Mar Feb. 8-21 was joined by a second on Feb. 14 (BCM), another was in San Diego Dec. 2 (PU) and an ad. male was in National City Nov. 24 - Dec. 21 (EC). Black-headed Grosbeaks are normally scarcer than Rose-breasteds at this time of the year, hence three in Santa Barbara Jan. 7 - Feb. 29+ (NC) and one in San Diego Jan. 1 (DPa) are of interest. A Blue Grosbeak in National City Dec. 12 (CGE) was certainly out of season, only three having been recorded in this Region during the winter period. An Indigo Bunting in Long Beach Jan. 2 - Feb. 29+ (BD) would appear to be only the fourth recorded in this Region in winter. The only Evening Grosbeaks to be reported were four in Santa Barbara Dec 5-25 (PL) with additional individuals there on Jan. 27 (LB) and Feb. 24 (PL), five at Baldwin L., Jan. 18 (KG) and one on Mt. Palomar Jan. 15 (RH). Eight Red Crossbills on Mt. Pinos Jan. 15 (REW) and 25 around Big Bear L., during December and January (KG) indicates a few were in the higher mountains of s. California; one in Santa Barbara Jan. 7 (PL) was on the coast.

As usual a few Green-tailed Towhees wintered in the s.e. corner of the Region and along the coast s. of Los Angeles, with one at Valermo, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 23 (KG) and another in Ventura Dec. 26 - Feb. 17 (REW) being at the n. limit of the winter range. Twelve Gray-headed Juncos were reported, all being in the s. portion of the Region as expected. A Pink-sided Junco near Burbank Feb. 21 (JDu) was of interest, since few are recorded along the coast. An unprecedented number of Clay-colored Sparrows was found wintering, with one at Pt. Mugu Nov. 22 - Dec. 30 (REW), one in Arcadia Nov. 23 - Mar. 1 (BCoh), another in Long Beach Nov. 25 - Feb. 29+ (DPa). Harris' Sparrows were exceptionally scarce with two at Furnace Cr. Ranch in Death Valley Dec. 9 (LLN), one in Goleta all winter (PL) and another in Santa Barbara Jan. 19 - Feb. 29± (LB) being the only four reported. The number of White-throated Sparrows (10 reported) appeared low. Swamp Sparrows were rela-

tively numerous with 25 ± found during the period. The McCown's Longspur found near Santa Maria Nov. 30 remained through Feb. 18 (PL) to give us the first winter record for coastal California. A Lapland Longspur was found on the Carrizo Plain Feb. 10 (EMcM), one was near Santa Maria Dec. 2-8 (LB), and single birds were at Pt. Mugu Dec. 22 - Jan. 27 (REW) and Jan. 12 - Feb. 10 (REW); this species is much rarer in s. California in winter than in fall. Six Chestnut-collared Longspurs at Baldwin L., Dec. 1 - Jan. 20 (KG) appeared to be wintering locally until the area was covered by heavy snow.

CORRIGENDUM — To avoid unnecessary duplication, all birds seen and reported only on Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) have been omitted. This should not detract from the validity of those records, but is meant to conserve space for records other than those on CBCs.

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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

/C. John Ralph and Robert L. Pyle

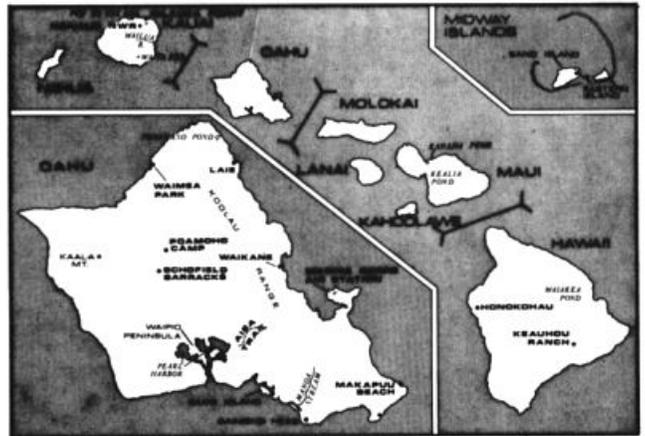
Rains were relatively light through the season, as the trade winds slackened, except during January 7-10 when a major winter storm swept through the islands leaving 7.7 inches of rain on Oahu. Severe winds, especially on Oahu, caused extensive damage. In all, wetlands remained well watered through February.

ALBATROSSES THROUGH EGRETS — As has been the case for several years, a single Short-tailed Albatross was present this season on Midway Atoll. More exciting was another in mid-January at Tern I., F.F.S. (SS,RS). The fledgling Laysan Albatross colonies on Kauai I. are falling on bad times because of a lack of protection. As many as 20 adults were at Kilauea and perhaps another 20 at Barking Sands; three eggs were produced at each site. But in 5 of the 6 cases, either the adult or the eggs were eaten by dogs. The sixth hatched, but died of unknown causes (VB,TT). Fish and Wildlife officials and the Nature Conservancy are working toward establishing a refuge in the areas, but have been frustrated by local interests. The vagrant Cattle Egret, first seen on Sand I., Mi., last March was still there alive and healthy Feb. 1 (GG).

BRANT THROUGH SWANS — The (Black) Brant, despite its affection for marine environments, is extremely rare in the islands. One was seen Dec. 8 (MO,RLP), and a pair remained Dec. 14 through at least Feb. 24, at Kii Pond, O. (DS,H.A.S.,GC *et al.*). Another individual was at Lihue, Kauai Dec. 15 (*vide VB*). There is always debate when an observer in Hawaii sees a Mallard. Is it wild or an escape? It was comforting to know that at least some probably reach the islands on their

own, (although not for the individual bird involved) as a single female in emaciated condition was on Midway Dec. 7 (GG). This seemed to be the year for Gadwalls, as the species had been virtually unseen for many years. One was at Kii Pond, O., Dec. 14 and three were on Sand I., Mi., Nov. 28-Dec. 11 (GG,EKn, MN). Two Garganeys were at Waipio, O., Nov. 4 & Dec. 2 (MO,RLP *et al.*). A ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal was present Feb. 21 with two drakes of the American race at Midway I. (GG), for one of the very few records for the islands. European Wigeons are very rare, so one at Waipio, O., Nov. 4-Dec. 2 (RLP,MO), and four good drakes Jan. 19 (DS) at Kii Pond, O., were a surprise. The Kii birds were last seen Feb. 24 (RLP). Tufted Ducks have been reported only about half a dozen times in the state, so two drakes and probably two more hens at Kii Pond (DS,RLP) Dec. 8-14 were an outstanding event. A single Hooded Merganser was also there Dec. 8 (MO,EK) & 14 (DS). A (Whistling?) Swan was seen alive on Sand I., Mi., Nov. 7, but the bird died, and its carcass was found Dec. 22. At the U.S. Nat. Mus. it awaits final species confirmation for the first record for the islands, whatever the species.

FALCONS THROUGH TERNS — A well-described Peregrine Falcon was mobbed by many White Terns and White-capped Noddies Jan. 16 at Tern I., F.F.S. Another large hawk, probably the same bird, was seen



Feb. 5 & 14 (GG). A Whimbrel at Bellows Air Force Base, O., enlivened a rather dull shore-bird season when it turned up Feb. 7 (PB). An extremely rare Spotted (Common?) Sandpiper remained through the season at Tern I., Mi. (VB,TT,RS,SS). Ruffs are beginning to be quite regular, with two and three present at Waipio, O., for most of the season (PD,CJR,CPR,RLP *et al.*), and another at Waimea, K., Dec. 17 (DS). Glaucous Gulls are extremely rare in Hawaii. However, one was seen Jan. 11 & 18 at Tern I., F.F.S. (VB,TT,SS,RS), another at Paiko Lagoon, O., Feb. 18 through the season (DS *et al.*), and still another was found dead Mar. 1 at Puupepe Cove, Lanai (PC). A Glaucous-winged Gull was well described from Barking Sands, K., Feb. 1 (TT,VB). Another was at Sand I., Mi., Feb. 1 & 10 (GG). A Laughing Gull is rarely well-documented on the islands, thus it was good to have excellent photographs of one near Hanamaulu, K., Dec. 15 (J&OM). The Caspian Tern continued to grace Oahu at Kaneohe, as it was seen through the season (PD,DS,JS *et al.*).

AUCKLETS THROUGH BUNTINGS — The **Parakeet Auklet** first and last occurred in a "wreck" during the winter of 1962-63. This season three individuals were found dead on the beach at Midway Feb. 5-6 & 15 (GG,HR, TP). The regular occurrence of Short-eared Owls in the n.w. islands during winter, such as the four+ Feb. 11 & 21 at Midway (GG), lends credence to the thought that the gene pool of the native race (the Pueo) may well be continually diluted by Asiatic and North American migrants. A Belted Kingfisher, the first record for Maui I., was seen offshore fishing in the waters of Hana Bay Feb. 3 (BT,CH). The Warbling Silverbill apparently continues its spread on the island of Hawaii as one was seen at Bird Park in Hawaii Volcanoes Nat'l P., Dec. 15 (KW).

S.A.

Passerines from the n. are very rare in Hawaii, and interestingly enough the only records are from the Northwest Is., where habitat is scarce and the birds more obvious. This season, a **Snow Bunting** turned up at Tern I., FFS, Nov. 9-15 (VB,TT, RS,SS), for probably the fourth state record. Many such immigrations must have occurred in the past, some being successful. It is amazing that more did not take hold, as our native passerine avifauna is apparently the result of relatively few successful colonizations, probably fewer than five.

ISLAND ABBREVIATIONS — (K.)

Kauai Is., (M.) Maui Is., (Mi.) Midway Atoll, (O.) Oahu Is., and (F.F.S.) French Frigate Shoals.

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DISTRIBUTION, IDENTIFICATION

The Greenland Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa*) in North America

Bertel Bruun

WHILE TAKING A CASUAL stroll through my bay-side garden in Westhampton, New York, before the inevitable departure for New York City on Sunday, October 16, 1977, I came upon a Wheatear. During the next hour I had ample opportunity to watch it closely and photograph it, both as it sought food on the rough lawn and flew about avoiding my approaches. The bird was not observed during the week, but was present again on the following weekend, October 22 and 23. It was not seen again after the latter date.

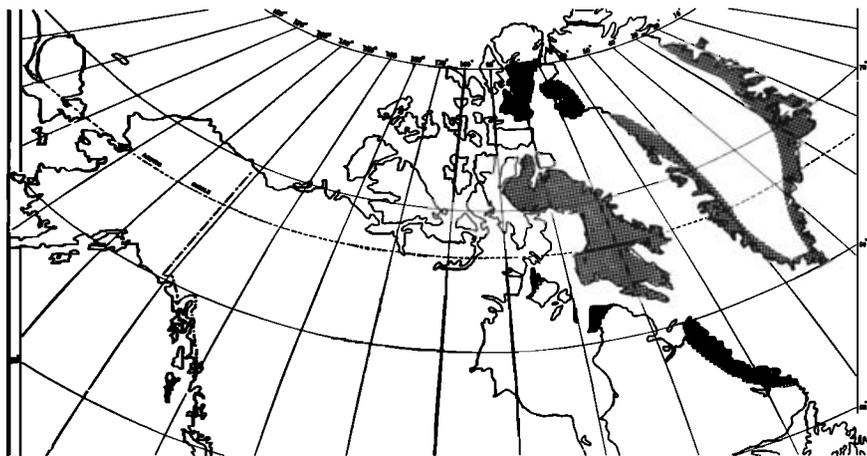
Being familiar with both the Greenland Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa*) from Iceland, and the nominate race (*O.o. oenanthe*) from Europe, it was clear that the Westhampton bird belonged to the former subspecies. It appeared quite large, the breast was rather deeply colored, and the stance was more upright than that of the continental race. Furthermore, it had the habit of frequently perching on houses, fences and bushes as well as on other rather tall structures in the area. The nominate race only rarely exhibits this peculiarity and prefers to perch closer to or on the ground. The Greenland Wheatear apparently shows this behavior only during migration (Witherby 1945). Interestingly enough, both the records from the Caribbean, with which Dr. K. H. Voous

kindly supplied me, refer to this behavior: "First recorded 4 Nov. 1962 at Malpais, Curaçao when a solitary and rather tame bird carefully avoided being captured and ringed by repeatedly perching on top of a mist net rather than flying into the net (P. A. van der Werf). Another bird was seen and photographed 18 Dec. 1975 on a horizontal branch of a Wabi tree (*Acacia tortuosa*) at Amboina Plantation, Bonaire, N.W.I. (Brother Candidus)."

In the hand, wing measurements provide the best guide to the subspecies. The measurements for the nominate race are 92-100 mm for the male and 90-96 mm

for the female, whereas the Greenland Wheatear measures 99-110 mm (male) and 96-105.5 mm (female) (Svensson 1975). The Greenland Wheatear is also relatively long-legged, the tarsus measuring 27-33 mm, whereas that of the nominate race measures 25-27 mm (Witherby 1943).

Because of the brown rather than black lores and ear coverts and the creamy-white rather than white eye-stripe, the Westhampton bird could be identified as either a female or an immature. As the inside of the mandible, which is yellow in the immature, black in the adult (Svensson 1975) was not seen,



Map 1. Breeding distribution of Greenland Wheatear (*P.l. leucorrhoa*) after Godfrey 1966 and Salomonsen 1974.