

woodpeckers come from the regional editor in Florida.

Interesting behavioral attributes were seen in the Northern Saw-whet Owl responding to a beeping cordless telephone in Minnesota, and the Killdeer which, having to tolerate the crowded turf at a Bronco football game, had at least picked one of the few localities in Denver not covered by snow.

A report from the West Indies Region of American and Caribbean coots breeding in mixed pairs and of individuals ex-

hibiting intermediate color and shape of the frontal shield is additional evidence of the difficulty involved in identifying "Caribbean" Coots in North America.

Encouraging is the continued increase in reports of Black-shouldered Kites in Arizona and Louisiana and Mississippi. Black Vultures continue to spread north in New Jersey. Eastern Bluebirds continue to do well in the Hudson-Delaware and Middlewestern Prairie regions. On the other hand, some eastern regional editors are expressing concern over the

decline in numbers of Brown Thrashers.

Lastly, some sort of prize should be given to the people in two states who implemented original bird-feeding strategies. At Key West, two apparently wild Broad-winged Hawks were hand-fed cockroaches, and in Oklahoma a Barred Owl dined nightly on the offering of five or six trapped starlings.

—P.O. Box 1061,
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CONTINENTAL SURVEY

The Winter Season

December 1, 1983—February 29, 1984

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, ø: 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

/Richard S. Heil

The climatological axiom that a mild November is usually followed by a mild winter was for the most part true this season. Overall the winter was very wet and slightly on the mild side, with the first part of December and most of February averaging exceptionally mild. February, in fact, was the second warmest in 114 years in Boston. However, frigid conditions did set in just prior to Christmas and lasted, with brief exceptions, throughout most of January. The first major snowfall for most of the Region occurred January 10-11, and was followed by similar storms January 18, and January 31-February 1. A heavy rainstorm on February 15 swelled lakes and rivers and contributed to one of the wettest winters in recent years.

A remarkable number of genuinely rare and unseasonable species was noted this winter, of a magnitude perhaps not achieved by any previous winter season in the Northeast. Illustrating this point were reports of no fewer than seven species of rails, twenty-two species of shorebirds, and sixteen species of warblers, some of which were noted well into or completely through the season.

The word "new-found-land" has acquired renewed meaning as observers in that province documented a mini-fallout of European shore-



birds including the first American Ornithologists Union area record, outside of Alaska, for Common Greenshank, and also witness the exhilarating results of a reverse migration of warblers and other passerines at St. Johns that first began to unfold in mid-November.

LOONS, GREBES — Numbers of Red-throated Loons were still migrating Dec. 4 when 83 flew past Sandy Neck, Barnstable, Mass., in 2 hrs (BN). Above average loon concentrations around the islands s. of Cape Cod included 288 Red-throateds and 341 Commons at Nantucket I., Jan. 1 and 527 Commons at Martha's Vineyard Jan. 2 (CBCs). Red-necked Grebes were locally common along the Maine coast in December where the best counts were of 150 on the Biddeford-Kennebunkport CBC, Dec. 18 and 414 on the Machias Bay area CBC, Dec. 31. A single bird inland at the Quabbin Res., Mass., Jan. 8 was notable, especially for that late date (SS). Single W. Grebes, all dark morphs, were present in December and January at Georgetown, Me.; Nantucket I., Mass., and Provincetown, Mass.

PELICANS, CORMORANTS, HERONS — An **American White Pelican** said to be suffering from cataracts grounded itself at W. Springfield, Mass., Dec. 9, was captured and subsequently flown to Florida and released (*vide SK*). Situated at the center of the Great Cormorant's winter range, the Newport-Westport, R.I. CBC, Dec. 17 counted 1378 birds, representing an all time, North American CBC high. One wonders what are the critical factors that have allowed for the continued success and increase of the Double-crested Cormorant as both a breeder and winterer in the Region. The New London, Conn. CBC, Dec. 31 recorded a Regional high of 99, while double figures were encountered on at least 3 Massachusetts CBCs. A survey of Boston Harbor Jan. 11 noted 27 "summer cormorants," and Nova Scotia one bird survived until at least Feb. 3 at Halifax Harbour (*vide RGGB*). Lingering herons, abetted by a very mild early winter included three Great Egrets: at Moonstone Beach, R.I., Dec. 10, Chatham, Mass., Dec. 18, and Clinton, Conn., Jan. 5 (NSP). The only Snowy Egret was found at Fairfield, Conn., Dec. 18 (*vide DV*), while two Little Blue Herons at Plum I., Mass., Dec. 3 (RSH) dropped to one, last seen Dec. 16. Another Little Blue was present at Orleans, Mass., Dec. 13-19 (BN). Finally, single Cattle Egrets in Massachusetts were observed at Marshfield Dec. 3 (WRP) and at Nantucket I., in late December.

WATERFOWL — Due to their sheer numbers and high visibility waterfowl often attract the greatest measure of attention from the coastal birder during the winter months. It was therefore fortunate that at least some of its members were present in unusual abundance this season. Somewhat of an invasion of Tundra Swans ensued nearly Regionwide beginning in late November when seven birds were first seen near Yarmouth, N.S., which was soon followed by reports of 17 others in that province, including a flock of 12 far offshore at Sable I., and an adult that spent the entire winter at Glace Bay Sanctuary (*vide CRKA*). Three swans in New Brunswick in mid-December were the first there in nearly 20 years (*vide DSC*). Farther s., both Maine and Massachusetts recorded four birds, while 2-4 were noted in Rhode Island, all during December. The **Greater White-fronted Goose** at Rochester, Mass., was last seen Dec. 19 (*vide RHS*). Contradictory reports of bill color leaves subspecific determination of this bird unresolved. Scarce winterers in the Region, 35 Snow Geese on the Litchfield Hills, Conn. CBC, Dec. 18 were unexpected, but not quite as surprising as the single bird that appeared at Pubnico Harbor, N.S., Feb. 27 (*vide CRKA*). A Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife survey, in conjunction with CBC data, tabulated 21,704 Canada Geese in the state Dec. 16-Jan. 1. Up to 83 Wood Ducks counted in late December at the Rippowam R. feeding station in Stamford, Conn., was probably the largest winter assemblage ever noted in the Region. A ♂ Cinnamon Teal x *Anas* sp. with a green patch through the eye was pondered over at Ipswich, Mass., Dec. 3-5 (RSH *et al.*). At least nine Eur. Wigeons were present in s. New England, a figure well above average for winter. A curiously plumaged imm. ♂ **Tufted Duck**, with a short crest and a pale back, present at New Haven, Conn., Jan. 28-Feb. 10, was felt by most observers to contain some scaup genes in its lineage (*vide DV*). A Barrow's Goldeneye was near its s. limit at that same locality during January (*vide DR*). Common Eider totals at 2 traditional locations included 17,152 in Duxbury Bay, Mass., Dec. 26, and 19,289, Dec. 18 on the Cape Cod CBC. Peak counts of Harlequin Ducks were of 23 at Moose I.-Jonesport, Me., Dec.

19 (CBC), a max. of 25 at Martha's Vineyard in January (*vide BN*), and 18 at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Feb. 26 (DLE). That the health and productivity of the waters of Nantucket Sound is of prime importance to wintering seabirds in the Region is evidenced by the 8765 White-winged Scoters, and nearly 10,000 Red-breasted Mergansers recorded on the Martha's Vineyard CBC, Jan. 2. Other sizable counts of Red-breasted Mergansers were of 3088 at S. County, R.I., Dec. 26 (DKL), and 3000+ at Provincetown, Mass., Jan. 8 (BN). Ruddy Ducks were especially numerous this winter prior to the holiday freeze-up, after which apparently few were found. On Dec. 17, 93 were counted on the Quincy, Mass. CBC, and some 495 individuals were noted at three Rhode Island localities (*vide DLE*). A total of 171 Ruddy Ducks on Connecticut CBCs represented a 10-year high for that state (*vide FCS*).

DIURNAL RAPTORS — A Turkey Vulture on the Buzzards Bay, Mass. CBC, Dec. 17, and three in Rhode Island in mid-December were not too surprising considering the increase at winter roosts in Connecticut in recent years. Single Ospreys, exceptional anywhere in the Region beyond late November, were observed at Great Meadows N.W.R., Concord, Mass., Dec. 3 (*vide RHS*), on the Litchfield Hills, Conn. CBC, Dec. 18 and during the Quinipiac Valley CBC count period (*vide DR*). Bald Eagle numbers drew positive comments from Nova Scotia to Connecticut. In E. King County, N.S., a peak of 76 (39 ad., 37 imm.) occurred Feb. 21 (*vide IAM*), while at the Mooschorn N.W.R., Me., an eagle feeder attracted at least 61 different eagles this winter (*vide WCT*). An apparently resourceful Red-shouldered Hawk was observed visiting a suet feeder (!) at Concord, Mass., Jan. 26 (*vide RHS*). Two unambiguous imm. **Broad-winged Hawks** observed in Nova Scotia in December included a crippled bird with a broken wing at Sidney Dec. 16 (*vide IAM*) and another photographed at E. Laurencetown on the Halifax East CBC, Dec. 17 (IAM). The Sidney bird spent the winter rejuvenating in captivity and will be released in the spring. Both Red-tailed and Rough-legged hawks were present in above average numbers. Golden Eagles were seen in the Salisbury-Canaan, Conn. area periodically throughout the winter (*vide D. Rosgen*), at Errol, N.H., Dec. 31 (DJA *et al.*), and two were present at the Quabbin Res., in January and February. Eleven Peregrines were found this winter including an imm. bird as far n. as Newfoundland, on the Cape St. Mary's CBC, Dec. 21 (BM, JW). Gyrfalcons are of regular occurrence in n. Newfoundland in winter, but of interest this year was a modest incursion of these birds into more s. sectors of the Region, beginning in early December. Gyrfalcons s. of Newfoundland included three in Nova Scotia, two in New Brunswick, and single dark-phase birds at Plum I., Mass., Dec 3-26 (D. Brown *et al.*) and at Sakonnet Pt., R.I., Dec. 17-Feb. 22 (RAC *et al.*).



Imm. Broad-winged Hawk, E. Laurencetown, N.S., Dec. 17, 1983. Photo. McLaren.

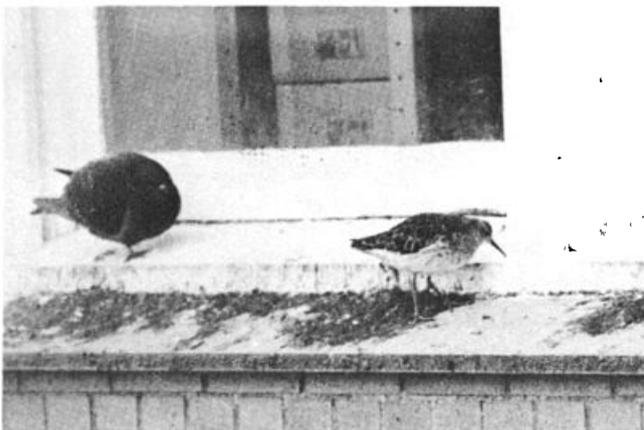
PARTRIDGES THROUGH CRANES — Gray Partridges appear to be doing more than just persisting in Nova Scotia where a total of 68 birds was observed at 3 separate localities this winter (*vide IAM*). The Connecticut population of Wild Turkeys is now estimated to be over 3500, as they continue to increase and expand in almost all parts of the state (*vide DR*). A total of eight Clapper Rails was found on coastal Connecticut CBCs while singles were seen on the Cape Cod CBC, Dec. 18 and at Middletown, R.I., Feb. 27 (*vide DLE*), the latter apparently an

overwintering individual. The only King Rail was one noted on the Greenwich-Stamford, Conn. CBC, Dec. 18, having been present since late November (*vide* TB). Nothing less than remarkable were reports of **four Purple Gallinules**; one at Middleboro, Mass., Dec. 28 (KSA) has the distinction of landing on the same lawn as Massachusetts' first Marbled Murrelet in September, 1982. One landed on board a fisheries ship off Cape Breton I., N.S., Jan. 10 and succumbed, then the next day another alighted on a trawler 50 mi s. of Newfoundland (*vide* BM). The last wandering individual was seen at Sidney, N.S., Feb. 7 (IAM). It is significant that the appearance of both the December and January birds was preceded by S gales. Two Sandhill Cranes graced the Region, at Chatham, Mass., Dec. 18-20 (*vide* BN), and in the Westport, Conn. area Dec. 31-Feb. 20 (R. Winkler *et al.*).

SHOREBIRDS — It is not a typical December in the Northeast that accrues observations of 22 species of shorebirds, but apparently a milder than usual November and December caused many to linger.

S.A.

Another reason for the shorebird diversity this winter was a limited incursion of Palearctic species in e. Newfoundland. Observers in that province were treated to both a **Northern Lapwing**, present near St. Johns Dec. 3-26 (BM, SIT, JW *et al.*), and the first North American record outside of Alaska for **Common Greenshank**, at Riverhead, Conception Bay Dec. 3-11 (John Pratt *et al.*), that was seen by 32+ observers and identifiably photographed (BM). The most bizarre report of all was of the **Ruff** that survived the Newfoundland winter with a flock of Rock Doves at St. Johns Nov. 23—at least early March (*vide* BM). Throughout January the Ruff was seen roosting on window ledges with the Rock Doves in the evening and flying around and foraging with them at a local shopping mall during the day! How it survived is a mystery, with daytime highs on several days reaching only -10°C . and up to 18 in of snowcover at times. Ruffs have wintered in California, Florida and at least once as far n. as Long Island, N.Y. (AB 33:269), but this was apparently a first for Canada at this season. Although there were some moderate NE and SE winds at St. John's in late November, there were no extraordinary weather conditions that might help explain the appearance of European shorebirds. MacTavish, however, correctly pointed out that it is the weather on the other side of the Atlantic, the presumed area of origin, that is the more important issue. A check of other likely e. Newfoundland shorebird habitats in early December failed to reveal a more widespread fallout.



Ruff on window ledge with Rock Dove, Memorial University, St. John's, Nfld., Feb. 20, 1984. Photo/W.A. Montevicchi.

A killdeer arrived at Orono, Me., on the very early date of Feb. 21 (NF). The presence of two Am. Oystercatchers on Nantucket I., through December was not unexpected in light of their continued increase in s. New England. Lesser Yellowlegs were found on both the New Haven CBC, Dec. 17, and the Greater Boston CBC, Dec. 18. Single Spotted

Sandpipers observed on the Bath, Me., CBC, Dec. 17 and on the Portland CBC, the same day were perhaps the same errant individual. A briefly but accurately described **Whimbrel** seen on the New Bedford CBC, Dec. 18 constituted Massachusetts' latest record for this species (D. Cosman). Of equal notoriety was a **Hudsonian Godwit** present at Westhaven, Conn., Nov. 27-Dec. 7 (*vide* DV). Although of regular occurrence in November, I am unaware of any previous December records in the Region. By far the best of several good counts of Ruddy Turnstones in New England was the 200 on the Old Lyme-Saybrook, Conn. CBC. One has to wonder if the Red Knot at Riverhead, Conception Bay, Nfld., Dec. 4-11 (BM), the latest record for the province, might have been of European origin. Single peep sp. were found at Little Compton, R.I., Dec 17 (*vide* DLE), on the Westport, Conn. CBC, Dec. 18, and most notably inland on the Quinipiac Valley, Conn. CBC (*vide* FCS). Lingering White-rumped Sandpipers in Newfoundland, where it is a more common fall migrant than anywhere in New England, totaled seven birds in December including one as late as Dec. 21 seen on the Cape St. Mary's CBC (*vide* BM). Three calling Long-billed Dowitchers were encountered at Plum I., Mass., Dec 14 (RSH). An estimated 75 phalarope sp. noted off Campobello I., N.B., Dec. 26 were almost certainly Reds (NF, WCT).

LARIDS — The distribution of all bird species is invariably and ultimately linked to their food source, dispersing from where it is lacking and concentrating where it is plentiful. In s. New England it is the inshore invasions of the American Sand Lance (*Ammodytes americanus*) which appears to be the single most important determinant of coastal seabird concentrations. Of larids, it is the smaller species which appears to benefit the most from these incursions. Bonaparte's Gulls totaled 7608 on the Buzzards Bay, Mass. CBC, Dec. 17, 3687 on the Nantucket I. CBC, Jan. 1 and 1191 were counted at S. County, R.I., Dec. 26 (DKL). Observers on the Cape Cod CBC, Dec. 18 tallied an amazing 29,360 Black-legged Kittiwakes while 9500 were observed on the Buzzards Bay CBC. Unprecedented numbers along the Rhode Island coast included 560 at S. County Dec. 26 (DKL). To the n., the Eastport, Me. CBC, Dec. 26 also noted an impressive 14,132 kittiwakes.

Six late Pomarine Jaegers were observed at Eastham, Mass., Dec. 5 (*vide* BN) while a well-described immature was seen on the Nantucket I. CBC, Jan. 1. Laughing Gulls lingered well into the winter season in s. New England. Small numbers were present along the Rhode Island coast throughout December (*vide* DLE), ten were counted on the Buzzards Bay CBC, and one was present at Gloucester, Mass., Dec. 23 (RSH). The only unusual count of Little Gull was of a record nine on the Coastal New Hampshire CBC, Dec. 17. Good numbers of Com. Black-headed Gulls were found. The wintering population at St. Johns, Nfld., which are heavily dependent on a sewer outlet, numbered 45-50 (BM), while counts farther s. included 12 at Watchemoket, R.I., Feb. 29 (*vide* DLE) and six seen on the Greater Boston CBC. The ad. **Mew Gull** first found Nov. 30 at Provincetown, Mass., was last seen there Jan. 15 (BN *et al.*). A record high 16,898 Ring-billed Gulls were found on Connecticut CBCs this winter (*vide* FCS), while one that overwintered at St. Johns, Nfld. was a provincial rarity (BM). Thayer's Gulls were reported from Galilee, R.I., where a second-winter bird was identified Dec. 26 (RAC), and from Campobello I., N.B., where a first-winter bird Dec. 26 constituted a second provincial sight record (WCT *et al.*). A common gull in Newfoundland, Iceland Gulls in St. Johns harbour numbered 1000+ individuals December-mid February (BM), while the only significant count in New England was of 81 on the Nantucket I. CBC, Jan. 1. A total of nine Lesser Black-backed Gulls from Newfoundland to Connecticut was well below that of recent winters, with the maximum being three at Nantucket Dec. 31 (*vide* GWG). A flurry of observations of late terns, all made Dec. 17, were due in a large part to CBC effort on that date. Common Terns were recorded at Acoaxet, Mass. (DLE), and most unexpectedly at Conrads Beach, Lawrencetown, N.S. (ELM). A Forster's Tern was seen on the Buzzards Bay CBC while at least one, perhaps as many as three were encountered on the Portland, Me. CBC.

ALCIDS — Dovekies were said to be "common inshore this winter" in Nova Scotia but remained scarce in New England waters following a light sprinkling of birds in November. Razorbill was again the commonest alcid in Massachusetts where major concentrations developed and apparently fed heavily on sand lance in the waters around Cape Cod in December and January. The maximum counts were of 2920 on the Cape

Cod CBC, Dec 18, 4700+ at Provincetown, Mass., Jan 22 (BN) and 737 at Nantucket Jan 1. Only a single Razorbill was reported from Nova Scotia all winter, while no concentrations of Thick-billed Murres were reported anywhere in the Region. Unprecedented numbers of Black Guillemots were present at Provincetown, Mass., this winter and peaked at 267 Jan. 17 (*vide* GWG), a figure more than double the previous state high. In Maine, 179 guillemots on the Moose I.-Jonesport CBC was a figure well above average.

OWLS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS — Common Barn-Owls were typically restricted to extreme s. New England. This winter two were found at Martha's Vineyard Dec. 17 (*vide* GWG) where the species is resident, and four were noted at Middletown, R.I., on that same date (*vide* DLE). Certainly E. Screech-Owl is one of the commonest raptors in s. New England. Thirty-one in Newton, Mass., Dec. 12 (*vide* GWG) within 10 mi of downtown Boston was a remarkable count for an "inner suburban" environment. Connecticut CBCs, with great effort from nocturnal birders armed with flashlights and tape recorders tabulated an impressive 327 E. Screech-owls with the Quinipiac Valley CBC leading the pack with 51. It was only an average winter for Snowy Owls in the Region. Ten Regional Great Gray Owls shadowed what was rumored to have been a much larger invasion to our n.w. in Ontario and Quebec. The first vanguards appeared in Maine in mid-December where eight comprised the bulk of the flight in the Northeast. Elsewhere, single Great Gray Owls were present near Glassville, N.B., Jan. 7-8 (*vide* DSC) and at Hadley, Mass., Feb. 10-28 (m.ob.). Following the sighting of a **Boreal Owl** in downtown Boston in early November, a second Boreal Owl, likewise far s. of its usual haunts, was struck by an auto at Chatham, Mass., Jan. 16 (*vide* RAF). The bird, which suffered a broken clavicle, now resides at the Buttonwood Zoo in New Bedford, Mass. A little closer to home, one or two birds were reported from Terra Nova N P, N.B., in mid-February (*vide* H. Deichmann). Six E. Phoebes, all in s. New England, included one that survived well into the post-holiday deep freeze at Needham, Mass., Dec. 25-Jan. 8 (*vide* RHS). Late W. Kingbirds in Massachusetts, perhaps left over from the strong November flight, were seen at Rockport Dec. 4 and at Eastham Dec. 18 (*vide* RHS).

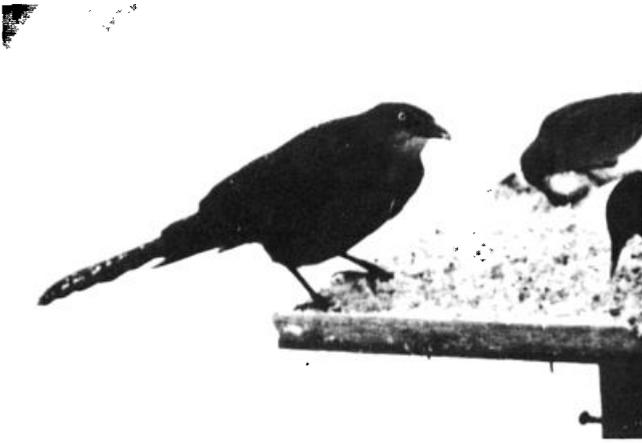
SWALLOWS THROUGH SHRIKES — Tree Swallows lingered strikingly late into the season, and were in fact recorded somewhere in the Region during every month this winter. In Nova Scotia, a maximum of six was observed Dec. 14-16 at Lower W. Pubnico (*vide* JSC). A flock present at Martha's Vineyard which peaked at 21 individuals Dec. 26 but dwindled to four birds last seen Jan. 8 (*vide* BN), were presumably heavily dependent upon bayberry. Four Tree Swallows induced to migrate during the unusual February warm spell clearly showed bad judgment in arriving about a month ahead of schedule at Baldwinville, Mass., Feb. 26 (*vide* RHS). The only Gray Jay reported s. of its usual range was at Petersham, Mass., Dec. 17 (*vide* RHS). It would be an understatement to say that Am. Crows were conspicuous on the Hartford, Conn. CBC, this year where 47,784 shattered previous records and will probably constitute a North American CBC high for the 1983-84 season. The Nantucket **Jackdaw** that was last seen April 4, 1983 was rediscovered at the original location Dec. 31 (D. Brown *et al.*) and seen again Jan. 2.

Black-capped Chickadees continued to be seen in good numbers, following a strong fall movement, especially in s. New England where an unprecedented 14,697 were counted on Connecticut CBCs. It was by no means a major Boreal Chickadee winter s. of the breeding range. Reports were scarce and of few individuals in s. New England while numbers were said to be below normal in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Very good numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported throughout s. portions of the Region. A total of 692 determined a new high for Connecticut CBCs while other substantial counts included 60 at S. County, R.I., Dec. 26 (DLK) and 92 on the Millis, Mass. CBC, Dec. 17. To the n. numbers were 50% below last year on Maine CBCs (*vide* WCT), "scarce due to an absence of conifer seeds in New Brunswick" (*vide* DSC), and "drastically down" in Nova Scotia. From this information it seems reasonable to conclude that the exceptional numbers in s. portions of the Region can be directly accounted for by a withdrawal from Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Divulging the continued success of E. Bluebirds was a record total of 510 on Connecticut CBCs (*vide* FCS). Newfoundland's first **Townsend's Solitaire** found

Nov 24 was last seen Jan 9 "before disappearing into the backyards of St. Johns forever" (*vide* BM). Late thrushes included a Swainson's Thrush photographed with a Hermit at Greenwich Pt., Conn., Dec. 26 (D. & J. Brown) and single Wood Thrushes at Salem, Mass., Dec. 2 (RSH) and on the Hartford, Conn. CBC. Single Varied Thrushes were present at feeders in Massachusetts at S. New Salem Dec. 17-Feb. 28, and Buckland Jan. 2-Feb. 28 (*vide* SK), and in Connecticut at Wilton Dec. 24-Jan. 20 (*vide* DV) and Kent November-late January (*vide* DR). Early suggestions of a truly major and widespread flight of Bohemian Waxwings were never fully realized. In Maine, which is usually the center of abundance for this species in the Region, it was an about average showing with the best count being 100+ at Orono all winter (*vide* NF). Bohemians were most abundant in Nova Scotia this season where at least 900 birds were reported in January and February, while peripheral reports elsewhere were of 1-20 at Athol, Mass., Feb. 2-20 (*vide* SK) and of four at St. Johns, Nfld., throughout February (BM). A modest influx of N. Shrikes into the Region brought at least two birds as far s. as Connecticut and one at Fiskeville, R.I., Feb. 24 was the first in that state in several years (*vide* DLE).

WARBLERS — Many of the so-called "late" or "lingering" warblers (as well as many other migratory passerines) in November and December are actually more likely to be reverse migrants that ride unseasonable S winds generally opposite their intended direction. Strong S airflows in mid-November, as noted in the fall migration report, and perhaps others in early December were apparently responsible for much of the diversity of warblers that were still being seen throughout December, particularly in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The following are the most interesting of the extraordinary 16 species that were observed in the Region this winter: an Orange-crowned was at Crichton P., Dartmouth, N.S., Jan. 7 (*vide* PRD). Three Nashville Warblers in Massachusetts included two different individuals seen on the Greater Boston CBC, Dec. 18 and another frequenting a Stoneham backyard until at least Dec. 14 (RSH). A fourth regional Nashville was noted on the Westport, Conn. CBC (*vide* FCS). Most surprising were single **Yellow Warblers** at St. Johns, Nfld., Dec. 1 (BM, SIT), and a uniformly olive bird believed to be of the Alaskan race on the Coastal New Hampshire CBC, Dec. 17 (DJA, PDV). A Cape May Warbler was unique at Halifax, N.S., Dec. 13 (Cohrs). Newfoundland's first **Townsend's Warbler**, discovered at St. Johns Nov. 16, was last seen there Dec. 13 (*vide* BM). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** present and photographed at Ben Eoin, Cape Breton I., N.S., Dec. 14-17 (*vide* PRD) furnished apparently only a 2nd winter record for the Northeast. Pine Warblers have become almost regular in Nova Scotia in winter where three or four birds were found this season (*vide* PRD), but two birds in Newfoundland, the latest to Dec. 26 at St. Johns, were the island's only records (*vide* BM). Prairie Warblers were seen at Wells, Me., Dec. 19 (R. Cote *et al.*) and at St. Johns, Nfld., Nov. 16-Dec. 2 (*vide* BM). Although it is one of the later fall warblers to migrate, Blackpolls are seldom reported in December, so one described at Carolina, R.I., Dec 3 (*vide* DLE) was interesting. Newfoundland also had a monopoly on Black-and-white Warblers where three were present at St. Johns in December, and where one persisted until Jan. 3 (*vide* BM). A total of five Ovenbirds in New England in December included one that survived the entire winter (into March), away from feeders, at Brunswick, Me. (T. Skaling *et al.*). Wilson's Warblers were encountered at Cumberland, R.I., Dec. 3 (*vide* DLE) and on the Coastal New Hampshire CBC, Dec 17 (DJA, PDV). Finally, two Yellow-breasted Chats were unusual in Nova Scotia in December, but four on the Buzzards Bay, Mass. CBC, Dec. 17 were typical.

TANAGERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — The only W. Tanager recorded was present at Plymouth, Mass., Dec. 28-Jan. 9 (RAF, RSH). There was little mention of and apparently no significant expansion or contraction of N. Cardinals in the Region this winter. In Connecticut single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were observed at Cos Cob Dec. 3 (*vide* TB) and on the Lakeville CBC. An intriguing report of a Blue Grosbeak present at Dartmouth, N.S., until Jan. 5 (*vide* PRD), submitted without details (at least to this editor), cannot be fully accepted. Dickcissels were well reported compared to recent winters. Three were noted in New England, one was seen at Halifax, N.S., Jan. 24 (*vide* PRD), and another successfully wintered at a St. John's, Nfld. feeder (*vide* BM). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** that spent the winter with a flock of about 20



Great-tailed Grackle, near Annapolis Royal, N.S., Dec. 3, 1984. Photo/I. McLaren.

Field Sparrows at Orleans, Mass., Dec. 18-Feb. 22 (D. Clapp *et al.*) was rare, but was overshadowed by the one that wintered at a St. Johns, Nfld. feeder, Nov. 15 into March (P. Linegar *et al.*). Field Sparrows persisted in large numbers throughout s. New England including a record 1218 on Connecticut CBCs. A Lark Sparrow was an unusually late visitor at a W. Dennis, Mass. feeder Dec. 17-31 (*vide* BN). "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrows were unusually common at a number of sites along the New England coast in December. Twenty-one were counted at Plum I., Mass., Dec. 3 (RSH), 16 were seen on the Cape Cod CBC, and seven were recorded on the Marshfield, Mass. CBC, Dec. 28. A total of five on coastal Connecticut CBCs was a record high (*vide* FCS). The only Grasshopper Sparrow reported was located on the Salmon River, Conn. CBC (*vide* FCS). "Nelson's" Sharp-tailed Sparrows, identified by their bright ochre-orange face triangles, obscurely streaked breasts, and very bold white back lines, were observed at Cole Harbour, N.S., Jan. 15 (ELM, IAM) and two were seen at Newbury, Mass., Dec. 26 (RSH). Reports of four Lincoln's Sparrows were exceptional this winter, being seen at Wellesley, Mass., Dec. 9-Jan. 5 (*vide* RHS), E. Falmouth, Mass., Dec. 17 (RSH, BN), on the Old Lyme-Saybrook CBC (*vide* DSC), and an injured bird, barely capable of flight was

present prior to and during the Eastport-Campobello CBC, Dec. 26 (*vide* DSC). An impressive count of 450 White-throated Sparrows at S. County, R.I., Dec. 26 (DKL) was indicative of its abundance in many south-coastal areas this winter. One of the rarest sightings this season was of the **Bobolink** that was present at Concord, Mass., Dec. 11-17 (*vide* RHS), a first winter record for the state and one of few for the Region. Four regional Yellow-headed Blackbirds included an imm. male as far n. as St. Johns, Nfld., Dec. 12 (*vide* BM). The first Regional occurrence of **Great-tailed Grackle** in the Northeast involved a female present and amply photographed at Annapolis Royal, N.S., Nov. 17-Feb. 8 (ELM, IAM). The bird's bill, head shape and plumage coloration were all consistent with this species which was not completely unexpected in the Region in light of its continued expansion in the Midwest.

FRINGILLIDS — The "winter finches" presented a mixed picture in the Region with most species being generally scarce or limited to n. areas. The only widespread exceptions were Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins of which the former was much more numerous. Both species of crossbills were scantily reported everywhere except in e. Newfoundland where a heavy spruce cone crop attracted large flocks in which White-winged Crossbills predominated about 5:1 (*vide* BM). Although much better than last year, it was still not a good Com. Redpoll winter with the best count by far in New England being 150 at Cutler, Me., Feb. 5 (NF). No Hoary Redpolls were reported. Pine Siskins were common in some areas, lacking in others, with most located near feeders by mid-winter. The Bangor-Bucksport CBC counted 789 siskins Dec. 31. Evening Grosbeak was the major story again this winter, especially in interior, w. sections where they were most abundant. Maine CBCs totalled 6903 compared to 2363 last year and the Athol, Mass. CBC, recorded an impressive 1461.

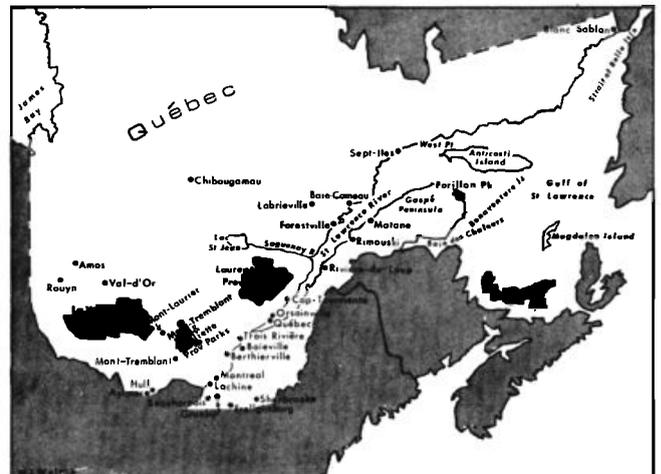
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QUEBEC REGION

/Yves Aubry and Richard Yank

Temperatures in December were well below normal and precipitation was heavy, reaching record high levels at many locations. January weather was very cold with light snowfall. A period of unseasonably mild temperatures in mid-February brought a number of early migrants, particularly waterfowl, into southern Quebec.

GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL — Despite rather severe weather, several grebes were found to have lingered: a Pied-billed present at LaSalle until Jan. 1 (PB), a record late Horned at Valleyfield the same day (BB, MM), three Red-neckeds seen at Pointe-Saint-Pierre Dec. 28 (RB, FF) and two at Hull Jan. 2 (RD, EB). Single Red-necked Grebes at Beauharnois Feb. 12 (PB) and Magog Feb. 25 (JPB, LM) were unusually early. Four Double-crested Cormorants at Cap-des-Rosiers Feb. 5 (MT, MC) were remarkable, providing the Region's first mid-winter record. A Great Blue Heron noted at Sherbrooke Jan. 4 & Feb. 4 (FS) may have wintered along the Saint-François R., while a Black-crowned Night-Heron at Quebec City Dec. 2 (CV) established a record late departure date. A **Mute Swan** of unknown origin was first seen at Côte-Sainte-Catherine P., Dec. 10 and was found dead Dec. 30 (*vide* ND). A second, locally escaped bird was at Vaudreuil Dec. 27-30, when it was shot (*vide* GH). Two **Barnacle Geese**, shot at Repentigny Dec. 9, showed no signs of captivity (*vide* YA—N.M.N.S.). Five Can-



ada Geese and as many Wood Ducks over-wintered at Saint-Armand (JS), subsisting on grain intended for a flock of feral ducks. Three pairs of Redhead off I. Perrot Feb. 25 (*vide* PS) were unprecedentedly early. A ♀ Lesser Scaup near Laval to Feb. 12 (MJ) and one at Aylmer to Jan. 29 (DSH *et al.*), may have remained until the end of the period. Also



A Great Gray Owl flies away with the tuque (and the mouse that was on it) of former Regional Editor Michel Gosselin. Ile des Soeurs, Que., Jan. 14, 1984. Photo/N. Breton.

noteworthy were the following mid-winter duck sightings: a ♂ Greater Scaup at the mouth of the Manicouagan R., an Oldsquaw at Hull Feb. 18 (RD) and a White-winged Scoter at Rimouski Feb. 17 (YG). Three Bufflehead were at Godbout and a ♂ Hooded Merganser was at Baie-Comeau, all Feb. 4 (CD, SM, GCy). A Ruddy Duck at Rimouski Dec. 5 & 9 (CBa, YG) was both late and locally rare.

RAPTORS THROUGH DOVES — An ad. Turkey Vulture was observed near Havelock Jan. 29 (RW, *fide* PS); this represented the only January record for Quebec, although there have been several February sightings in recent years, and coincides with an exceptionally high deer population in the area. In addition to the now annual winter occurrence of Bald Eagles in the Upper Ottawa valley (*AB* 33:265), two adults frequented Manic-2 power dam on the Manicouagan R., Feb. 3-29 (GCh). Early N. Harriers were sighted at Dundee Feb. 17 (DG) and Melocheville 2 days later (PB). Reports of Cooper's Hawk consisted of one at Philipsburg throughout the period (*fide* PS), one at Dundee Jan. 5 (DG) and another at Hull Jan. 29 (DSH *et al.*); contributors in s.w. Quebec reported N. Goshawks in above average numbers. A Red-shouldered Hawk was seen at Philipsburg Jan. 14 (CC, RG); there are very few January sightings for the Region. The only Merlin to be reported was at Betsiamites Feb. 4 (AM, AB, DM, RT), while Peregrine Falcons were in evidence: up to four frequented downtown Montreal this winter (RG), and in January, single birds were noted at Hull (DD, DSH, ML), Rimouski (DR) and Mont-Louis (RM, GL). It was an average year for Gyrfalcons with six sighted in s. Quebec.

A lone Ring-necked Pheasant at Dundee in February (DG) was of unknown origin, while one at Havre-aux-Maisons (*fide* PF) was of captive origin, as were most likely a pair of Northern Bobwhite that frequented a feeder s. of Montreal until late December (*fide* ND).

The Pointe-au-Père Red Knot, first reported in the fall, was seen again Dec. 9 (YG) and an early Com. Snipe was at Beauport Feb. 25 (PL). New late departure records were established by Laughing Gulls at Manic-1 dam Nov. 27 (GCy), Beauharnois Dec. 3-4 (BB, MM, MG) and LaSalle Dec. 17 (BB). Although Ring-billed Gulls did not over-winter this year, the first arrival was of a very early adult at LaSalle Feb. 11 (PB, RY). An imm. Thayer's Gull visited Beauharnois Dec. 27 (BB, MM) and a Great Black-backed Gull spent the season at Rapides-des-Joachims (*fide* MG), a rare event away from the St. Lawrence R. An impressive group of seven Ivory Gulls (5 ad., 2 imm.) appeared at Pointe-Lebel Dec. 18 (CBo, FB, AH).

Stocked feeders encouraged Mourning Doves to over-winter in small flocks at Philipsburg, Hudson and Montreal.

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A dead E. Screech-Owl was collected at Grand-Remous Jan. 28 (RE), at the n. edge of the species' range. Two N. Hawk-Owls were at Cap-à-l'Aigle (JMC) and singles were located at Aylmer (*fide* RBI), Laval (m.ob.), Grand-Mère (CH), Deschambault (RL, GMr), Rimouski (*fide* DR) and Carleton (RC). Northern owls in general made a good showing, which in the case of the Great Gray Owl was a definite understatement!

The last major incursion of **Great Gray Owls** into Quebec occurred in 1978-1979; it involved 60-70 individuals and, at the time, was termed "... apparently the largest on record since 1889-90" (AB 33:266). This year's invasion was indeed extraordinary by comparison, as at least 250 birds were reported. Following widely scattered sightings during the second half of November, the first build-up was detected at Cap-Tourmente—peaking at 17 birds Dec. 10-11 (GB), which saw a total of 34 individuals (*vide* JT). Many birds also reached the Upper North Shore during this period, with ten at Cap-à-l'Aigle Dec. 2 (JMC). While reports subsequently decreased from these areas, where the species was scarce after the first week in January, major concentrations moved into s.w. Quebec Dec. 15-20: approximately 25 & 19 in the Montreal and s. Outaouais areas respectively.

Around Montreal, numbers continued to increase until year's end; e.g., nine were near Oka Dec. 30 (KR), after which time, impressive numbers were found s. of the St. Lawrence R., particularly s.w. of Montreal I., including high counts of 17+ in the Melocheville-Valleyfield area Dec. 31-Jan. 2 (FC, m.ob.) and 15 at Dundee Jan. 15 (MJ). Only six were noted in the E. townships. Except for 16 birds in the Saguenay December-January (*vide* CCo), there were few sightings in c. Quebec—possibly owing to the paucity of observers and the predominance of forest habitat, making birds less visible. As was the case in 1978-1979, numbers decreased sharply during February and relatively few individuals remained by early March. Over one-half of the 30± reported casualties resulting from shootings.

A Long-eared Owl at La Vernière Jan. 6 (BM) was notable, as few records exist for the Madeleine Is., but the Short-eared Owl went unreported after early December. Boreal Owls were also reported in above average numbers; a total of five to seven were discovered during the period at Cap-Tourmente (YA, PP *et al.*), Beauport (PL), Jonquière (JM), Saint-Joachim (JB, *vide* PT) and Donnacona (*vide*, FL). Late Belted Kingfishers were near Laval Jan. 1 (MJ), Point-Comfort Jan. 6 (DT) and Val-Barrette until at least Feb. 13 (EB), the latter wintering at a fish hatchery. A Red-bellied Woodpecker, the Region's 11th, was at Montmagny for 2 weeks in late fall (*vide* RBa). While both species of "three-toed" woodpeckers were scarce in s. Quebec this winter, a N. Flicker at Rimouski (YG) established the most northerly over-wintering record for the province.

WRENS THROUGH FINCHES—The season's only Carolina Wren visited a Philipsburg feeder Dec. 4-Jan. 14 (*vide* GMo). A Winter Wren appeared in the same area Jan. 29 (PM) and one (possibly two) was believed to have successfully wintered on I. des Soeurs (*vide* PS). Quebec's 8th **Townsend's Solitaire** was seen at Neufchâtel Dec. 18-20 (JG, m.ob.). A Loggerhead Shrike at Dundee until Jan. 10 (DG) would have been the latest ever; unfortunately, no supporting details were submitted. Considering the relatively harsh weather in December, it was not surprising that few late warblers were to be found; exceptions were Yellow-rumped Warblers at Barachois near Percé Dec. 17 (AF), Bonaventure Dec. 30 (SA), Havre Aubert I., Jan. 15 and Havre-aux-Maisons I., Jan. 16 (PF,LL). Northern Cardinals outside their somewhat restricted range included singles at Grande-Mère Dec. 18 (*vide* FL), Quebec City Dec. 31-Jan. 1 (PF), Sainte-Blandine (RJ) and Chandler (PPo) to the end of the period.

Extralimital Rufous-sided Towhees were again reported this winter: one at Murdochville Dec. 18-Jan. 25 (ML) and one of the w. forms at Montmagny to the end of February (RLa, *vide* RBa). A Chipping Sparrow at a Hull feeder Jan. 28+ (RF) constituted a rare winter record. Song Sparrows successfully over-wintered at Rimouski (DR) and Pointe-Lebel (DM, RT). Two White-throated and a White-crowned sparrows spent the season at a Montreal feeder (MJ); the latter species also wintered at Hull (CB) and one was found at Sherbrooke Feb. 25 (JPB, LM). Notable Dark-eyed Juncos involved one at Pointe-Lebel throughout the period (DM, RT) and 7 sightings in the Madeleine Is.: two on Havre Aubert I., Jan. 14, one on Havre-aux-Maisons I., Jan. 23 & 29 and three on Cap aux Meules I., Feb. 11 (PF, LL). Several

noteworthy reports of wintering blackbirds were received: a Red-winged Blackbird at Saint-Anaclet (ABO), a Rusty Blackbird at Quebec City (CV), a Com. Grackle at Pointe-Lebel (DM, RT) and four Brown-headed Cowbirds—one on Havre Aubert I., Jan. 15 (*vide* PF), and three on Cap aux Meules I., Jan. 29 (PF). A few Pine Grosbeaks and Com. Redpolls reached s. Quebec following their near total absence last year. House Finches were regularly seen at feeders in Saint-Lambert (GD) and Hampstead (*vide* MA), but were absent from their Phillipsburg stronghold until mid-February (CC), suggesting that they had wintered farther s. The distribution of redpolls appeared spotty however, as they failed to turn up in the Quebec City area but were common in the Saguenay. Pine Siskins were in evidence at feeders in s.w. Quebec throughout the period.

ERRATA—The Franklin's Gull reported from La Malbaie, AB 37:159 was actually at Les Escoumins. The Hooded Warbler pictured in AB 37:850 was photographed at I. des Soeurs May 10.

NOTE—Following the publication of the "Harlan's" Hawk photograph in AB 37:282, one reader expressed doubts about its identification. Consequently, we have asked for opinions from hawk experts, and have met with mixed results—some strong statements favoring the Rough-legged Hawk. Although the build and behavior of this bird were those of a Red-tailed, its plumage was closely matched by some Rough-legged Hawks. Readers are thus urged to disregard this report as an unquestionable distributional record of Harlan's Hawk. This episode, however, shows the importance of publishing adequate notes and photographs and the importance of careful readership.

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Common Eider. Drawing by Georges Dremeaux.

HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION

/William J. Boyle, Jr., Robert O. Paxton and David A. Cutler

The winter season was one of striking contrasts in weather, producing similar differences in the variety and abundance of birds. The warm, wet weather of the late autumn continued through the middle of December and led to far above normal numbers of late stragglers and half-hardy migrants, especially on the Christmas Bird Counts of December 17-18. Reports from the Region included 10 species of herons and egrets, 20 species of shorebirds, various wrens, thrushes, vireos and 13 species of warblers, all during the early part of the season.

This balmy spell was abruptly broken by a record-breaking cold wave during the last two weeks of the year that resulted in the demise or departure of most lingerers, and an influx of waterfowl frozen out of northern waters. January was cold and dry, with a second bitterly cold period during the middle of the month, as temperatures fell below -20°F over much of the Region on the morning of January 22. Conditions moderated considerably toward the end of the month and led into a warm, wet February that averaged seven degrees above normal in New York City.

Most observers commented that the season was unusually dull, especially after the December cold wave set in. A few rarities occurred to brighten some of the bleak days of January, but the anticipated invasion of winter finches failed to materialize. As a result, inland birding was very unproductive; even along the coast, the hoped-for winter specialties were generally absent, with the single exception of Red-necked Grebes on Long Island, New York.

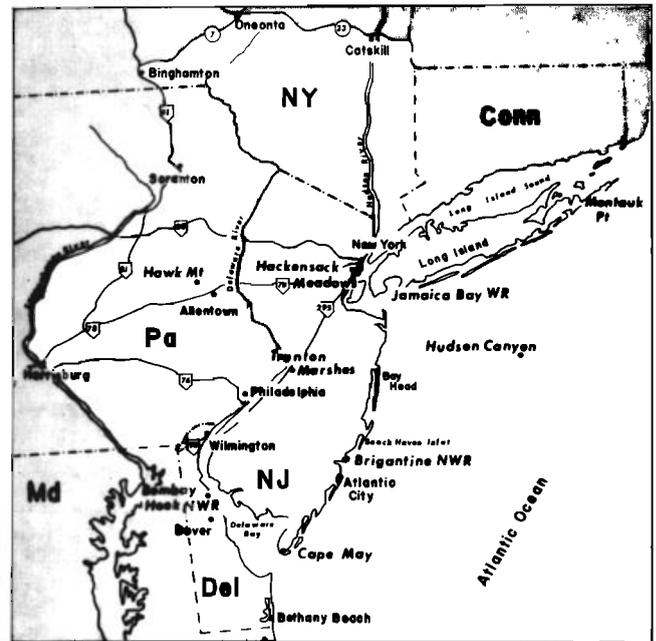
LOONS THROUGH IBISES — A late flight of loons led to big numbers on coastal CBCs and a few on some of the inland counts; mid-winter concentrations were more normal. After several years of drastic decline, Horned Grebes took a marked turn for the better, at least along the coast. A count of 740 at Montauk Pt., Feb. 4, was impressive (TWB), and even more were there 2 weeks later, although the fog made censusing difficult (THD). Following a poor autumn showing, Red-necked Grebes continued to be scarce through December and January (only 7 reports), despite big counts in New England. Then, in February, they arrived on e. Long Island in numbers not seen in 30-40 years. Single day totals of 40-100+ were received from many observers, especially Feb. 18 (THD, JDI, ROP, GSR). Surprisingly, the invasion did not reach New Jersey or Delaware. Among the hundreds of grebes at Montauk Feb. 18, was one **Eared Grebe** (A. Morris).

Large flocks of N. Gannets lingered off the New Jersey and Delaware coasts through December, and small numbers were present for the remainder of the season. A **Brown Pelican**, perhaps a scout for the flocks that have invaded the s. part of the Region the past 2 years, was seen along the Delaware coast Feb. 28 (MA). Four of the five Great Cormorants discovered in November at Andalusia, Pa., on the Delaware R., just n. of Philadelphia, were still present in early January, and at least one stayed until Feb. 12 (F. Windfelder *et al.*). One was seen at Tincum I., s. of Philadelphia Dec. 17 (JCM), and another on Delaware Bay provided a first for the Bombay Hook CBC. Elsewhere, they were present in above average numbers, as were wintering Double-crested Cormorants.

Most of the Regional herons and egrets were found on one or more coastal CBCs, sometimes in large numbers, prior to the cold wave. Only the Least Bittern and Cattle Egret escaped detection, and one of the latter was at East Marion, L.I., Dec. 5 (T. Crowley). A Green-backed Heron at Cape May Dec. 1, was late (CS), but more so was one on the Smithtown, L.I., CBC Dec. 27. Also noteworthy were two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on the Cape May CBC, Dec. 18.

WATERFOWL — Tundra Swans are increasingly common in migration in inland locations in Pennsylvania and n.w. New Jersey as well as on Long Island, where they were previously rare. Large flocks occur in Delaware and s. New Jersey from November through March. These swans are even attempting to winter in cranberry bogs in the New Jersey pine barrens (1000+ in mid-January), where they incur the wrath of farmers for destroying many plants; the farmers are in turn agitating for a hunting season on Tundra Swans (see *New York Times*, Jan. 25, 1984).

An imm. Greater White-fronted Goose was on the Lower Bucks



County, Pa., CBC, another visited a Hunterdon County, N.J., pond with a large flock of Canada Geese for about a week in late February (J. Jens, m.ob.), and an adult of the Greenland race returned about the same time to Loantaka Brook P., Morris Co., N.J., where it was present in October (H. Johnson, m.ob.). A flock of Snow Geese at Middle Creek W.M.A., Lancaster Co., Pa., Feb. 19, consisted almost entirely of the blue morph, a form that used to be uncommon in the Region (C. Gamber). The only other unusual goose was a Brant of the w. race *nigricans* at Oceanside, L.I., Jan. 2 (E. Levine *et al.*).

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Midwinter Waterfowl Survey (hereafter, M.W.S.), conducted in early January, found numbers of ducks and geese comparable to last year's and about 20% above the 10-year average. Although the severe weather during the last 10 days of December froze many of the inland lakes and some coastal bays, it served to bring more birds to the Region than it drove out. Numbers of Brant wintering on the Atlantic Coast increased slightly to 127,300, with 75% of them in New York and New Jersey. While the data from the M.W.S. are gathered by flying consistent routes year after year, and are designed to show long-term trends, they should not be taken as absolute numbers. This year's survey on Long Island (Jan. 3-9), for example, missed 97% of the 32,000 Brant found on the S. Nassau County CBC, Jan. 2.

Regional populations of Am. Black Ducks on the M.W.S., have increased substantially in the past few years to over 110,000, but the species' future is still viewed with alarm by wildlife biologists. The bag limit for hunters this winter was one Am. Black Duck. Mild weather was presumably responsible for the presence of six Blue-winged Teal at 3 spots in New Jersey Dec. 17-18. Eight Eur. Wigeon wintered on Long Island and six were in New Jersey, including one previously reported from inland Spruce Run Res. (m.ob.).

In Delaware, 125 Ring-necked Ducks were on a pond at Gravel Hill, Sussex Co., all winter (WWF), and 100 were at Thousand Acre Marsh, New Castle Co., Feb. 22 (APE, DMcK). A ♂ Tufted Duck returned to Central P., New York City, for a 2nd winter and stayed until Feb. 26 (m.ob.); he was not present Mar. 1, but a female was (S. Safire).

Diving ducks were generally well distributed along coastal bays and estuaries. Noteworthy concentrations were of 10,000 Canvasbacks on the Manasquan and Metedeconk rivers, Ocean Co., N.J., 60,000 scaup at Raritan Bay-Sandy Hook, and 2500 Ruddy Duck on the Delaware R., off Pennsauken, N.J.

Eiders were in short supply this winter. A ♂ Com. Eider at Cape Henlopen until Dec. 7 (WWF), and four Commons on the Cape May CBC, were the only ones of that species. A King Eider was at Holgate, Ocean Co., N.J., Dec. 4 (JDo) and another made the Cape May CBC; two at Montauk Pt., during the winter were the only others reported. Harlequin Ducks likewise were scarce, with three in Delaware, three in

New Jersey and about 11 on Long Island. Most noteworthy was a drake at Brighton Beach, Brooklyn Jan. 15-17 (J & RB). An above average tally of four Barrow's Goldeneyes included the aged drake from Shark R., N.J., back for his 15th winter. In New York State, a female was at Montauk Dec. 26 (HMcG), a male was at Huntington Harbor Jan. 15 (A. McKay *et al.*), and another female was at Kingston Pt., Ulster Co., where the species has become almost annual, on Feb. 19 (RT).

RAPTORS — The fall migration of raptors at Cape May continued into the winter season, as it has in past years. Following a particularly slow November, there were a few excellent flights in early December. The Dec. 1 count of 117 included a season's high 27 Red-shouldered Hawks, while two imm. Bald Eagles Dec. 10 brought the seasonal total for that species to a record 27 (CS).

The number of diurnal raptors wintering in the Region was about average, except for Rough-legged Hawks, which were down, and accipiters and eagles which were up slightly. The New Jersey Raptor Association's annual winter census, held Jan. 28-29, turned up 3271 birds, a slight increase from the previous year with slightly increased coverage. As usual, 4 species, Turkey Vulture, N. Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk and Am. Kestrel, accounted for 90% of the sightings.

Black Vulture numbers are gradually increasing; a roost in the Delaware R., at Kingwood Station, Hunterdon Co., held 25 on Jan. 5, a record count for the species in New Jersey (GHa). Other reports came from c. and s. New Jersey, Delaware, and Montgomery County, Pa.; the usual large population in Lancaster County, Pa., produced 120 for the s. Lancaster CBC. Turkey Vulture continues to do very well in the Region, as evidenced by a count of 635 on the S. Lancaster County, CBC, and a roost of 600 on the Maurice R., Cumberland Co., N.J., Jan. 7 (CS). One at Mattituck, Suffolk Co., Feb. 21, was noteworthy for a species rare on Long Island (PBe).

Four late lingering Ospreys were found in December, including two inland; one was at High Bridge, Hunterdon Co., N.J., Dec. 8 (EP), and another was at Muddy Run, Pa., on the Susquehanna R., Dec. 16-17, narrowly missing the S. Lancaster County CBC (RMS). About 80 Bald Eagles wintered in the Region, almost one-half of them immatures. This was a slight increase from last year, and reflects a continuing long-term improvement in the local status of this species. As usual, most of the birds were on the Sullivan-Ulster cos., N.Y., reservoirs (31), the upper Delaware R., between New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and the Delaware Bayshore of New Jersey (27 est., CS), but there were also about 10 reports from the Susquehanna R., and its tributaries in Pennsylvania.

Accipiters were widely reported this winter, including many at feeders. About 25 N. Goshawk reports were received, emanating from all parts of the Region. A detailed account of an ad. Broad-winged Hawk seen perched near Millville, Cumberland Co., N.J., Feb. 3, by a veteran hawk-watcher and birder, appeared to be one of the rare valid, mid-winter records (RBa). We have tended to agree with the observer's comment that he "personally never believed reports of Broad-winged Hawks in n. latitudes in winter . . .", but his description clearly rules out Red-shouldered Hawk. About ten Golden Eagles wintered in New Jersey, mainly on the Delaware Bayshore; a noteworthy inland sighting was at Rosedale P., Mercer Co., Jan. 8 (RJB, G. Comrie).

American Kestrels were much in evidence, with 591 recorded on the N.J.R.A. census (*vs.* 494 last year). Merlin numbers were about average for recent years, with all sightings on or near the coast. The Regional population of Peregrine Falcon continues to grow, as the progeny of the birds from the reintroduction program spread out to seek territories of their own. One Peregrine took up residence under the Tappan Zee Bridge across the Hudson R., this winter, and was seen by several observers. It seems likely that all of the major bridges in the Region will soon have their resident pair of falcons. Notable inland sightings that may not be from the coastal population were at Round Valley, N.J., Dec. 18 (S. Vayda, S. Jerzewski); Wyalusing, Pa., Dec. 26 (DG); and Vincentown, N.J., Jan. 28 (KT). A white Gyrfalcon at Bake Oven Knob Dec. 7, was a late fall migrant (SS), but the gray one at Shelter I., L.I., Dec. 30 (GSR) was presumably wintering, as was a similar bird at Brigantine I., N.J., Dec. 17-mid-January (J. LaVia, BT *et al.*).

TURKEY THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — The Wild Turkey population is booming, as restocking programs have succeeded everywhere in the Region except Delaware, where a new effort is underway. Four lucky observers flushed first one, then a second Black Rail at Tobay,

L I., Dec. 11 (C. Ward, A. Wollin, S. Schiff, R. Kurtz). The location, in the saltmarsh of South Oyster Bay, is about 6 mi from the only known Long Island breeding site. There have been similar late fall-early winter sightings in New Jersey on occasion, and one wonders how many of these elusive little birds winter undetected in the coastal saltmarsh. A **Sandhill Crane** was discovered near Allentown, Pa., Dec. 17, and was seen and photographed for about 10 days (E. Montgomery, SS). One local resident, a non-birder, confided to a frustrated searcher that the bird had been in the area for a year and a half (*vide* WR).

The presence of 20 species of shorebird in the Region during December was indicative of the mild weather that characterized the late fall and early winter. Three Am. Oystercatchers lingered at Floyd Bennet Field, Brooklyn to Jan. 7 (J & RB), and another three wintered at Stone Harbor (PD). Four Am. Avocets remained at Bombay Hook Dec. 10, but departed before the Christmas Bird Count (*vide* APE). Two Willets at Bombay Hook did stick around for the CBC. More unusual was a Spotted Sandpiper on the Cape May CBC, Dec. 18, and another far inland at Kutztown, Berks Co., Pa., on the amazing date of Feb. 7 (C. Elwell). Unfortunately, the information on hand does not rule out Com. Sandpiper in either case. Ten Marbled Godwits stayed at Brig., as late as Dec. 14, but could not be found on the CBC 3 days later; one was on the Cape May CBC the next day, however.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Three ad. Pomarine Jaegers were highlights of the pelagic trip out of Cape May Dec. 3., while several Parasitic Jaegers and a few unidentified jaegers were seen on Long Island and from Sandy Hook during December. Numerous late Laughing Gulls were noted from around the Region, but the most remarkable were a pair of immatures at Holtwood Dam on the Susquehanna R., Pa., for about 10 days in mid-January (RMS *et al.*). Nine reports of the Little Gull was about average for recent winters, still a far cry from the big counts in the mid-1970s. A similar number of Com. Black-headed Gulls was a little better than the past few years.

Most noteworthy among the small gulls was the big inland invasion of Bonaparte's Gull. This influx was detected at many lakes, reservoirs and rivers, but especially on the lower Susquehanna R., where 700 Bonaparte's were found on the S. Lancaster County CBC, a new species for the count! A Bonaparte's Gull was found dead Feb. 19, in the New Jersey Aud. Sanct., in Bernardsville, at a small pond surrounded by acres of deciduous woodland (B. Dreesin, *vide* RKa).

Two reports of Thayer's Gull were received, one an adult seen on 3 occasions by 2 parties along the Raritan R., Middlesex Co., N.J. in mid-January (WW, TP, C. Lincoln, R. Sargent). The supporting details provided an acceptable description, but we are still lacking photographic documentation for the species in the Region. Below average counts of the Iceland Gull were noted, but six in sight at one time at Croton Pt., N.Y., Dec. 14, was an unusual event for the lower Hudson R. (BW). Two were on the lower Susquehanna R., at Muddy Run, Lancaster Co., Pa., Jan. 10-11 (RMS).

At least 17 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found, mainly in New York and New Jersey, but winter sightings of this species are becoming so routine that some observers do not bother to report them. Glaucous Gulls were scarce, but one was at Safe Harbor Dam on the Susquehanna R., Lancaster Co., in early January (E. & J. Witmer).

Forster's Terns lingered along the coast in large numbers into December, and managed to make the Captree, L.I., and Cape May CBCs (31 on the latter, a new count record). The last to head S from a flock of 150 at Indian R. Inlet, Del., in mid-December was a pair noted Jan. 10 (WWF). The Razorbill was the only alcid seen from land this winter one at Indian R. Inlet Dec. 17 (MB); one at Tobay Beach, L.I., Jan. 2 (TWB); and one at Montauk Pt., Jan. 14-Feb. 18 (GSR *et al.*).

OWLS THROUGH CROWS — It was not a Snowy Owl year, two each were reported from Delaware and New Jersey, and only about three wintered on Long Island. The owl of the season was the one or two **Great Gray Owls** that wandered a 15-mi stretch of n. Long Island in late winter. The first one was found at Upper Brookville, Nassau Co., Jan. 25 (R. Cioffi, A. Bell); 4 days later, birders searching for it found a Great Gray 15 mi e. at Ft. Salonga, Suffolk Co. (T. Kaggiano, E. Mudge *et al.*). The next day, Jan. 30, one was discovered at Huntington, about half way between the 2 previous sites (B. Kolodnicki *et al.*). Two days later, a Great Gray was found at Caumsett S. P. (M. Hemmerick), a few miles n. of Huntington and the spot where one spent much of the

winter in early 1979 Unlike the 1979 bird, however, these owls were not easily relocated One was seen in Upper Brookville Feb 25 and again in early April. In view of the tendency of Great Grays to remain in a limited area once they arrive at a wintering site, it seems likely that at least two different birds were involved.

The Red-headed Woodpecker influx noted in the fall continued through the winter. Davis called it a population explosion, as eight wintered in Forest P., Queens Co., and many other reports came from all parts of Long Island, where it is normally rare (*vide* THD). In n. New Jersey, 47 were found on the Great Swamp CBC, compared to a previous high of one. These birds remained into the spring, and it is hoped that they will stay to nest and add to the slowly increasing Regional population.

Single *Empidonax* flycatchers were found on 3 CBCs. One was at Gardiner's I., for the Montauk Pt. CBC, Dec. 17 (PBe), another was at Assunpink W.M.A., for several weeks through Dec. 21, including the Christmas Bird Count day of Dec. 17 (G. Wenzelburger, S. Brady, BP, WW), and another was on the Glenolden, Pa., count the same day (BS, PG *et al.*). None was positively identified, but the most likely species at this season are probably Least Flycatcher or one of the w. *Empidonax*, such as Hammond's Flycatcher, which has been collected in the Region once in Lehigh County, Pa., Dec. 23, 1966 (Heintzelman, D.S.; *Auk* 1968, 85, 582). A half-dozen E. Phoebes were not unexpected, but four W Kingbirds in December were more than usual. Three of them were in Delaware: two at Lewes Dec. 10-15 (D. & T. Projector), and another on the Seaford CBC, Dec. 17. The last one made the Cape May CBC, Dec. 18

It is difficult to discern whether Fish Crows are becoming more common or are simply being noticed more in winter by birders; we suspect that it is the former. Fish Crows were reported from many places in the Region, including areas far inland and away from major rivers. Most of the accounts were from the vicinity of an important waterway, but one at Wyalusing, Bradford Co., Pa., on the upper Susquehanna R., Dec 26, was well beyond the normal range of the species (J. Hoyson, K. McGuire). More than 100 Fish Crows took up residence in the n.e. corner of Trenton, N.J., where they were seen and heard daily, sitting on rooftops and competing for food in backyards and streets after heavy snows (RJB).

CHICKADEES THROUGH SHRIKES — The Boreal Chickadee noted in the fall from Liberty S.P., N.J., remained for the entire winter; the only other one reported was on the Upper Bucks County, Pa., CBC, Dec 18. More than a dozen House Wrens were found in December, mainly on CBCs, but none were still around after the first of the year. Winter Wren continues to be a source of concern; although a few were seen on Christmas Bird Counts, many observers commented on the declining frequency with which this species is noted, especially compared to 10-20 years ago. Four Sedge Wrens were found in 3 different places in s. New Jersey in January and February; this secretive species may winter more commonly in the Region than the few records would suggest.

Four Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were found, including two on the Cape May CBC, and one on the Raritan Estuary CBC, Jan. 2, after the prolonged spell of cold weather. The prospects for E. Bluebird look more encouraging every year. Dozens were reported on CBCs, with a Regional high of 210 on the S. Lancaster County CBC; many wintered in their normal breeding areas, such as Dutchess County, N.Y., where the R.T. Waterman Bird Club maintains a productive bluebird trail.

Three Varied Thrushes, all males, were more than usual. One was seen in the Great Swamp, Somerset-Morris cos., N.J., Dec. 23 & Jan. 15 (J. Hoagland, J. Collins, R. Sabin); a second at Elizabethtown, Lancaster Co., Pa., Jan. 3-Feb. 29 (L. Coble *et al.*); the third was in Forest P., Queens Co., Jan. 7-11 (G. Dadone, RKe, THD *et al.*). A small flight of N. Shrikes just reached the n. parts of the Region, with one in Bergen County, N.J., and six in s. New York. Five Loggerhead Shrikes was also a good showing, including one in Delaware, one wintering at the Galeville airport, N.Y., for a 2nd year, and three in New Jersey (the annual Rosedale P., Mercer Co., bird was present all season)

VIREOS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — A White-eyed Vireo on the Staten Island CBC, Dec. 17, provided the first Regional winter record in recent years (W. & N. Siebenheller *et al.*). Also unexpected was a

Solitary Vireo at Cape May the next day (K. Seager) The 13 species of warbler found during December may well be a seasonal high for the Region. In addition to the more expected species, Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow-rumped, Pine, Prairie, Palm and Black-and-white warblers, Ovenbird, Com. Yellowthroat and Yellow-breasted Chat, there were three Cape May Warblers, a ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler at a Moorestown, N.J., feeder Dec. 16-19 (W. Schipper), and two ♂ Wilson's Warblers. One Wilson's was at Tinicum Nat'l Environmental Center, Pa., Dec. 10 (T. Reeves) and another was in Middletown, Del., Dec. 30 (APE, WJW). A ♂ Audubon's (Yellow-rumped) Warbler was found on the S. Lancaster County CBC.

S.A.

The ability of patches of greenery in an urban setting to attract numbers and variety of birds is well known in our Region, with places like Central Park (Manhattan), Forest Park (Queens Co.) and Carpenters Woods (Philadelphia). To these can be added a tiny (one-eighth acre) patch of vegetation on the campus of Rutgers University in Newark, containing a greenhouse and its adjacent lawn with Red Maples, surrounded by a fence that supports bittersweet and wisteria. Located near the center of the city, this plot is an island in a sea of buildings. Student Ted Proctor found a late N. Waterthrush here Nov. 2, an Ovenbird Nov. 17 and a Gray Catbird Dec. 1.

His frequent visits paid off Dec. 2, when he discovered a Wood Thrush feeding on the bittersweet berries, along with several Hermit Thrushes. The thrushes were seen on subsequent days, and Dec. 9 were joined by a Yellow-breasted Chat; the next day a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and a Cape May Warbler appeared. The assemblage was expanded Dec. 14 by the addition of a 2nd Wood Thrush, and an Ovenbird that came walking out the door of the greenhouse. Over the next few days, these birds gradually disappeared, especially after the bitter cold wave struck Dec. 19. The two Wood Thrushes were last seen alive Dec. 20, and the next day one of them was found dead. It is now in the Am. Mus. of Nat. His., where it is the only winter specimen for the New York City area; there are about 8 reliable sight records for this season (TP, F. Verrecetti).

The only W. Tanager was at Montauk Dec. 9 (P. Gillen). A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was on the Bethlehem, Pa., CBC, Dec. 26, and a female was at a Yonkers, N.Y., feeder Jan. 16-22 (W. Reynolds) Despite a good flight in the fall, only two Dickcissels were found, one each on the Pinelands, N.J., and Smithtown, L.I., CBCs.

Chipping Sparrows were noteworthy additions to a number of CBCs, with a high of 30 at Salem, N.J., where they occur annually; an immature wintered at a Dutchess County, N.Y., feeder (FG). Eight Vesper Sparrows were far above normal; all but one were on CBCs, however, and none were found after Jan. 2. A Lark Sparrow on the Pinelands CBC was the only representative of this annual winter visitor. More unusual was a well-described Grasshopper Sparrow at Harrisonville, N.J., Dec 30; it was found near one of this species' few breeding sites in s.w. New Jersey (JSt, J. Powell). A Lincoln's Sparrow in Brooklyn Dec. 17 was also noteworthy (TS).

The bird of the season in New Jersey was the ♂ **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, New Jersey's 2nd, discovered in a flock of Snow Buntings at Sandy Hook Jan. 14 by Dowdell. Difficult to find at first, the longspur and buntings were attracted to a plowed parking lot after a snowfall, where offerings of birdseed were readily accepted. Hundreds of birders saw and photographed the bird before it departed sometime in mid-February (JDo, m.ob.). Snow Buntings were generally scarce along the coast, but there were big flocks inland in Pennsylvania and New York, including 1000+ at McGhee Hill, Dutchess Co., Jan. 13 (P. & T. Haight).

For the first time in many years, not a single Yellow-headed Blackbird was reported. There were at least 13 N. Orioles, however, mainly on CBCs; a female of the Bullock's race was at a Princeton Jct., N.J., feeder Dec. 14-28 (A. Harvey, RJB).

FINCHES — Despite the anticipation created by reports in the late fall, the winter finch flight failed to materialize. There were a few

scattered reports of Pine Grosbeak, and a number of small flocks of Red Crossbills in the New Jersey Pine Barrens (KT), but the only White-winged Crossbills were a pair at Dallas, Pa., Dec. 18 (WR). Common Redpolls were similarly scarce, with only 4 reports of one to six birds, mainly late in the season. Pine Siskins were fairly common in the s. part of the Region, but were spottily distributed elsewhere.

ABBREVIATIONS frequently used are: Bombay Hook, Bombay Hook N.W.R., near Smyrna, Del.; Brig., Brigantine N.W.R., Atlantic Co., N.J.; J.B.W.R., Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York City; CBC, Christmas Bird Count; L.I., Long Island, N.Y.

OBSERVERS — (Subregional compilers in boldface): John Askildsen, Marta Atchinson, Pete Bacinski, Robert Barber (RBa), Maurice Barnhill, Seth Benz, Paul Bernath (PBe), **Irving Black** (n.e. NJ: Eagle Rock Village, Bldg. 26, Apt. 8B, Budd Lake, NJ 07828), **R. J. Blicharz** (n.c. NJ: 827 Pennsylvania Ave., Trenton, NJ 08638), J. & R. Bourque, Kate Brethwaite, P.A. Buckley, Joe Burgiel, **T.W. Burke** (Westchester Co., NY: 235 Highland Ave., Rye, NY 10580), **T.H. Davis** (s.e. NY, L.I.: 94-46 85th Road, Woodhaven, NY 11421), John DeMarrais, **R.F. Deed** (Rockland Co., NY: 50 Clinton Ave., Nyack, NY 10960), Joe DiCostanzo (JDi), Rich Ditch, Jim Dowdell (JDo), **Peter Dunne** (coastal NJ: CMBO, Box 3, Cape May Pt., NJ 08212), **A.P. Ednie** (New Castle and Kent Cos., DE: 21 N. Wells Ave., Glenolden, PA 19036), Fran File, Bill Fintel, Frank Frazier, **W.W. Frech** (Sussex Co, DE: Carr, Rt. 3, Box 1144, Lewes, DE 19958), Gary

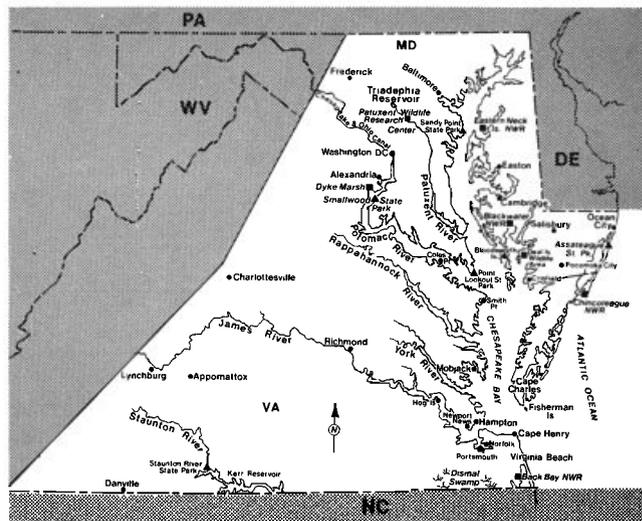
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MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

/Henry T. Armistead

November was a mild month, especially the latter half, and this warm weather continued through the first half of December, with rainfall also being well above normal. This all changed dramatically with the arrival of the "Big Chill" or "Siberian Express" on December 23 when temperatures plunged to 1° to 10°F with northwest winds of up to 43 m.p.h. Christmas Day saw readings range from lows of -7°F in northwest sections to highs of 12°F at Norfolk. After the record lows of Christmas, unusual cold continued until almost the end of January. By contrast February was unusually mild. Precipitation, little of it snow, was above average during the entire winter. Fish kills and ice concentrated some birds, pushed others south of the area. The cold made for poor winter reporting of herons, shorebirds and birds that had lingered until mid-December but rather good for many waterfowl and gulls. Northern irruptive species had still another dull year.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — Bitter cold moved most loons out of the Region except in the extreme s.e. where there were 617 Red-throats and 248 Commons Dec. 29 at Back Bay N.W.R., CBC, vs. only six and 17 respectively the next day at Cape Charles CBC (PWS, HTA *et al.*) and six and 11 respectively at Mathews, Va. CBC, Jan. 1 (MP *et al.*). However, a mild February induced some to drift N and a single group of 176 Commons were flying up the Bay Feb. 25 at Cape Charles (GWC, GLA, HTA). Between Feb. 16-20 the first spring Pied-billed Grebes arrived with one at McKee-Beshers W.M.A., near D.C., Feb. 16 (PwD), one at Balt. (RFR) and four at Black (HTA) Feb. 19 and one at Piney Run P., Carroll Co., Md., Feb. 20 (RFR). The Horned Grebe continues to manifest a near spectral presence with highest counts being of 157 at Newport News, Va. CBC, Dec. 17 (WPS *et al.*) and 150 at nearby Craney I., in Portsmouth Feb. 20 (TK *et al.*). Of interest were 18 in the Piedmont on L. Anna, Va. CBC, Jan. 1 (*fide* FRS) and 29 in D.C., Dec. 8 (DC). Red-necked Grebes were in Maryland at Pt. Lookout (EMW, MH) and Sandy Pt. S.P. (Job) Jan. 13, at Ocean City Feb. 18 (MO) and in Columbia Feb. 24 (SWb) and one was at Cape Henry, Va., Feb. 11 (RLA, NS), a slightly better than average showing. The star grebe was an Eared at Back R., near Balt., Jan. 16 (RFR). There were no pelagic trips but 421 N. Gannets were off Back Bay Dec. 29



(CBC, PWS *et al.*). An Am. White Pelican was at Lynnhaven Inlet, Va., Dec. 31-late January (PWS, GW, HCI *et al.*), a species one is almost tempted to take for granted somewhere in the Region each season. Two late Brown Pelicans were at Back Bay Dec. 3 (HCI *et al.*) and one was reported in Hampton, Va., Jan. 5-8 (D & MM). Great Cormorants made an excellent showing with two at Ocean City Dec. 31 (WS, MO), 15 on Lower Machodoc Cr., Va., Dec. 2 (JEJ, SJ), 12 on C.B.B.T., Dec. 30 (RHP *et al.*) and 26 at Pt. Lookout Jan. 23 (EMW, MH), the latter possibly an all-time Regional high. Little Cr., Va. CBC, had 14 plus 450 Double-crested Cormorants Dec. 31 (PWS *et al.*) and at Fisherman's I., 2000 Double-crested Feb. 25 was a count more typical of mid-spring and very early for such a concentration (HTA *et al.*). Other good CBC counts were 220 at Newport News Dec. 17 (WPS *et al.*) and 148 at Williamsburg Dec. 18 (BW *et al.*). The lower Bay is certainly the premier area for both species in winter.

The best winter heron totals invariably come from CBCs at Chinc., Cape Charles and Back Bay, all Va. This year's "Big Chill" at Christmastime made even these counts rather anemic with these respective

totals: Great Egret (16,1,1), Snowy Egret (9,1,0), Little Blue Heron (0,1,0), Tricolored Heron (2,5,1), Black-crowned Night-Heron (24,7,1), very low numbers. At Deal I., eight Am. Bitterns and 100 Black-crowned Night-Herons Dec. 4 were excellent totals (SHD) and 60 Great with 28 Snowy egrets were also reported there Dec. 14 (DMt) as were three very early Glossy Ibises Feb. 25 (DM). Lingerers included four Cattle Egrets at Back Bay CBC Dec. 29 (BP *et al.*), one at Wachapreague, Va., November through about Dec. 20 (GR, HTA *et al.*, ph.), and single Green-backed Herons on CBCs at Salisbury, Md. (*vide* CRV), Chinc. (*vide* FRS) and Newport News (MAB, GW). A Snowy Egret on Lower Kent County, Md. CBC, was most unusual for the upper Bay Dec. 18 (JG). The big January freeze resulted in fish kills at several spots and concentrated Great Blue Herons with 169 on the Little Creek CBC Dec. 31 (PWS *et al.*) and 125 on Rowland I., in the Susq. R., Dec. 24 (RFR, EB). Also at Rowland I., was a Great Egret Jan. 8 (RMS, RFR *et al.*), the latest ever for the Maryland Piedmont. Great Blues were seen repairing their nests as early as Feb. 16 n.e. of Richmond at Mechanicsville (FRS).

WATERFOWL — Mild February weather induced large numbers of Tundra Swans and Canada Geese to migrate in the latter half of the month, *e.g.*, 2000 swans at Deal Feb. 25 (RFR *et al.*). A Greater White-fronted Goose was again at Creswell, Harford Co., Md., Dec.-Feb. 24 (DK) and an unprecedented six were at Black., Dec. 17 (RLAk), probably an all-time Regional high. The biggest Snow Goose groups were in Maryland with 20,000 near inland Denton, Md., Jan. 2 (SW, *vide* AJF) and 50,090 on the Ocean City CBC Dec. 28 (CSR *et al.*) including what was considered conservatively as 32,000 at Jenkins Pond. An unusual number was recorded in the greater Balt. area, such as 14 at Piney Run P., Feb. 20 (RFR), notable for the Piedmont. Blue Geese were seen in larger numbers than usual in areas where normally they are uncommon but were lower in their strongholds, such as 300 near Hopewell, Va., Jan. 15 (FRS) and 350 at Black., Jan. 29 (HTA). The origin of a Barnacle Goose in the Jamestown-Hog I., Va. area, Jan. 25-Feb. 13 (TA, FD, RLA) one can only speculate on. On the Hopewell CBC, Dec. 17, 414 Wood Ducks was so-so for this woodie hot spot (FRS) but 114 on the D.C. CBC, the same day eclipsed the previous high of 49 (EMW *et al.*). A Green-winged (Com.) Teal was at Chinc., Dec. 3 (GR). Eurasian Wigeon turned up at Deal where two were seen Dec. 7 with 5000 Am. Wigeon (DMt) and in Surry County, Va., from late February with three seen Mar. 5-11, which ties 2 previous Virginia highs (FRS, BT *et al.*). A single was still at Deal Feb. 25 (RFR *et al.*), where 250 N. Shovelers and 550 Gadwall were reported Dec. 14 (DMt), fine Maryland counts. Excellent also were these Maryland groups on the w. side of the Bay: 11,586 Canvasbacks, 20,099 Greater Scaup, 3577 Com. Goldeneye and 1019 Buffleheads at Jug Bay CBC, Dec. 28 (JAG *et al.*) and 15,569 Canvasbacks on Annapolis CBC, Jan. 1 (*vide* ER). Jetty ducks were conspicuous this winter, especially Harlequin Ducks, with seven at Ocean City CBC, Dec. 28 (*vide* CSR), a new Maryland high count, and four on C.B.B.T., Feb. 19 (*vide* TK). A King Eider was present on C.B.B.T., Dec. 26-March (TK, CPW, RHP, m.ob.) and a Com. Eider was at Rudee Inlet, Va., Dec. 31-March (RLA, TRW, m.ob.). At Cape Charles CBC, Dec. 30, 32 waterfowl species were seen including one each of the 2 eiders and a Harlequin Duck swimming together at the base of the old Smith I. light (CP, HTA *et al.*). Notable counts on the Susq. were of 101 Com. Goldeneyes Feb. 1 (RMS) and 225 Com. Mergansers at Port Deposit Dec. 21 (RFR, EB). At Little Creek CBC 248 Hooded Mergansers were counted Dec. 31 (CBC, PWS *et al.*) and the high for Ruddy Ducks was 2380 at Mathews CBC, Jan. 1 (MP *et al.*).

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — On Feb. 11, 123 Black Vultures were seen on the rocks at Susq. (RMS), and 80 were at Hog I., Surry Co., Va., Dec. 30 (RHP *et al.*). The latest Osprey was at Swift Creek Res., near Richmond Dec. 8 (FRS) and two very early ones were at Jug Bay, Patuxent R., Md., Feb. 19 (JAG). One at Smith I., Md., Mar. 3 was still very early (RT, *vide* BP). Unprecedented Bald Eagle concentrations were seen in January, some attracted to fish kills resulting from the sudden temperature drop in late December, many probably Canadian birds. At Aberdeen Proving Ground, Harford Co., Md., 107 in late January drew press coverage. A record 41 were on the S. Dorchester County CBC, Dec. 30 (CSR *et al.*) but in mid-January 45 were on the Black. section of the count alone with 23 in sight at once there Jan. 29



Northern Goshawk, Hog Island S.W.R., Va., Jan. 15, 1984. Photo/T. Armour.

(HTA). An early January survey in Virginia, mostly by plane, found 217 (135 ad. and 82 imm.) best ever for there (*cf.*: 171 in 1983) and probably a conservative count since dark immatures are easy to miss from a moving airplane (MAB *et al.*). One of eight on the Susq., Dec. 9, an immature, had been banded June 10, 1983 at Mt. Desert I., Me. Sharp-shinned Hawks were in high numbers on the CBCs with 27 at Cape Charles, 16 at Chinc., 13 at Hopewell and 15 at Annapolis (v.o.), some of these record or near so highs. Single imm. N. Goshawks were in Virginia at Dyke Jan. 6 (JMA) and Hog I., Surry Co., Jan. 13-Feb. 18 (TA, TK, BW *et al.*, ph.). Golden Eagles were reported only at Black., Dec. 30-Jan. 29 (CSR, HTA) and Lower Kent County, Md. CBC, Dec. 18, where a record 18 Bald Eagles were also seen (JG *et al.*). In Balt., a pair of "Cornell" derived Peregrine Falcons laid their first egg Feb. 27 (JB, *vide* RFR).

A record 31 Wild Turkeys, seen by 5 parties, were at Hopewell CBC Dec. 17 (FRS *et al.*). Weber observed 16 N. Bobwhite in Loudoun County, Va., feeding on locust seed pods in the tops of trees Jan. 24. Clapper Rails were very hard to find due to the cold with nine at Cape Charles CBC, Dec. 30, an all-time low, six at Chinc. CBC, and three at Crisfield, Md. CBC, Dec. 29, where 20 King and 62 Virginia rails were also recorded in this area of prime brackish marshes (CVR *et al.*). But the prize rail was a rare Piedmont King Rail at Lilypons, Frederick Co., Md., Feb. 12 (DHW *et al.*), a fine record for winter.

SHOREBIRDS — As usual records of non-CBC waders were few and even those on CBCs were usually below average, especially after Christmas. At Hart & Miller Is., e. of Balt., six Black-bellied Plovers and a Ruddy Turnstone were very late Dec. 10 for so far up the Bay (RFR *et al.*). Two Semipalmated Plovers were at Lynnhaven Inlet Feb.



Baird's Sandpiper, Hart-Miller Impoundment, Baltimore Co., Md., Dec. 10, 1983. Photo/R.F. Ringler.

26 (RLA) At Craney I., still much depleted of its former superb shore-bird habitat, seven Am. Avocets Dec. 2 were a pale reflection of the hundreds that used to be found there (FRS, JWD) and four were there Feb. 19 (CZ *et al.*). Warm February induced some birds to drift N such as two to six Greater Yellowlegs at Black., Feb. 18-24 (RFR, DH, MO) and at Mockhorn I., Feb. 25, 59 Marbled Godwits and 75 Willets were seen (GWC, GLA, HTA), up from the 17 and 47 recorded respectively on Cape Charles CBC, Dec. 30 in this same area. At Wachapreague CBC, Dec. 17, 45 Marbled Godwits and 61 Willets were seen n. of Folly Cr. (GR, HTA) but the most unusual Marbled was one at Back Bay CBC, Dec. 29 (CP), for a first for there. Record late Maryland records were an exceptional Baird's Sandpiper at Hart & Miller Is., Dec. 10 (RFR *et al.*) and a White-rumped Sandpiper at Northeast Cr., Baltimore Co., Dec. 3 & 10 (RFR, EB, PW). Rare Bay Purple Sandpipers were singles at Chesapeake Beach, Calvert Co., Md., Dec. 11 (RFR) and one at Annapolis CBC, Jan. 1 (HLW). More Least Sandpipers were present than usual and overwintered in at least 4 sites in the Hopewell area (FRS, DPK *et al.*), four were at Chinc., Dec. 10 (KS, KHW) and 19 on Little Creek CBC, Dec. 31 (*vide* PWS). The cold snap concentrated Am. Woodcock on the Virginia Eastern Shore. Chincoteague CBC had 31 on Dec. 29 and 221 were at Cape Charles the next day, the 2nd highest ever there (272 in 1980). CBC highlights were 207 Ruddy Turnstones and two Least Sandpipers at Ocean City Dec. 28 (*vide* CSR), 320 Am. Oystercatchers, six Willets, one Marbled Godwit, 21 Red Knots and one Least Sandpiper at Chinc. (FRS *et al.*), two Spotted Sandpipers, two Long-billed Curlews, two Whimbrel at Cape Charles Dec. 30 (TK, KHW *et al.*). Both yellowlegs were in very low numbers on the CBCs (v.o.).

GULLS AND TERNS — Mild weather induced abnormally large numbers of Laughing Gulls to linger late such as 1186 at Newport News CBC, Dec. 17 (WPS *et al.*) in company with four Royal and 571 Forster's Terns, the previous high for the latter being 145. At Back R., e. of Balt., as many as 200 Laughings were still present Dec. 10. Portlock found 3000 Laughings still at Norfolk Dec. 6 but the "Big Chill" effectively ended lingerers and only six, seven, zero, and one were found on CBCs at Little Creek, Back Bay, Cape Charles and Chinc., respectively. Maryland's latest ever Franklin's Gull was at Back R., Dec. 1 (EB, RFR, CPW, JO, ph.). An imm. Little Gull was at Pleasure I., e. of Balt., Dec. 10 (RFR *et al.*), an adult at Ocean City Dec. 31 & Feb. 18 (MO), and on C.B.B.T., one Dec. 30 (RHP *et al.*) and two Feb. 26 (DPK, DPT, RLA, FD). Common Black-headed Gulls were at C.B.B.T. (2 on Dec. 27—RLK *et al.*, *vide* AFJ), Chinc., most of the period with two Feb. 25 (RFR *et al.*), one in Norfolk Dec. 6 (BP) and one at Annapolis CBC Jan. 1 (*vide* HLW). Ringer found 500 Bonaparte's Gulls at Balt., Dec. 10. Abbott reported a California Gull from Ft. Hunt, Va., Feb. 18. Czaplak photographed an imm. Thayer's Gull in D.C., Feb. 12. Iceland Gulls made a better than average showing with records from 7 localities, among the more unexpected being one at Swift Creek Res., Jan. 14 literally playing tag with a Bald Eagle (FRS, ca 4th Virginia Piedmont record) and one near Crisfield Dec. 29 (CSR), this species being very rare on the Maryland Eastern Shore. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen at a minimum of 8 localities with four in D.C., Feb. 4 (DC), four at Laytonsville Landfill in Montgomery Co., Md., during the period (HLW) and five on the Susq., Jan. 7 (RFR, m ob.). This species is now usually the 6th most commonly seen species of gull in this Region. Glaucous Gulls were only reported from 4 places, all in Maryland (v.o.). Great Black-backed Gull was another species attracted by fish kills this winter including three at inland McKee-Beshers W.M.A., Feb. 15 (PWd). At D.C., 340 were seen Dec. 23 (DC). Black-legged Kittiwakes were at 3 Virginia sites: one at Chinc. CBC, Dec. 29 (JMA), an immature from C.B.B.T., Feb. 25 (TK, HTA *et al.*) and one at Back Bay Feb. 26 (RLA).

In spite of these many gull records of interest the most compelling news came from the Susq. R., where Schutsky *et al.* made 15 censuses Dec. 9-Feb. 22. Here Laughing Gulls were seen Jan. 4 (1), Jan. 6 (1) and Jan. 7 (2), notably late and also rare on the Piedmont at any season. The "Big Chill" chased most Bonaparte's from here after Christmas and the peak was 200 on Dec. 14. The highest Ring-billed estimates were 14,900 Dec. 9 and 27,400 Feb. 8, with Herring peak totals of 24,000 Jan. 4 and 20,000 Jan. 20 (but only 17 on Feb. 22!). Single Thayer's Gulls were reported Jan. 4, 6, & 26. Iceland Gulls were present on 11 census dates with four on both Jan. 6 & Feb. 8 plus five

Jan. 7 Glaucous Gulls were seen on 4 dates with four Jan. 6 and three Jan. 7 Great Black-backed Gulls peaked at 1100 Dec. 9 but fizzled down to 300 Jan. 4, eight on Jan. 20, 28 on Feb. 8 and 45 on Feb. 22. Five imm. Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported Dec. 31 and an adult Jan. 5 but supporting details are lacking for what would be a most unexpected Piedmont species. The maximum number of gull species seen in one day was 9 on Jan. 4. Schutsky's observations here these past 2 winters have focused attention on an area birders barely even knew existed in previous years. Many of these counts are unprecedented for fresh water and Piedmont areas or, for that matter, anywhere else in the Region. For an interesting summary of the increase of some gulls in inland areas in Britain see *Enjoying Ornithology* ed. by Ronald Hickling (Buteo, 1983, p. 120-121). The same thing seems to be happening here. Two Royal Terns were at Chesapeake Beach Dec. 11, very late for the Maryland Bay (RFR).

DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES — Mourning Doves were in high supply on many CBCs with 548 at Newport News, 799 at D.C., and 860 at Little Cr. A **Common Ground-Dove**, extremely rare in the Region in winter, was at Chinc. CBC, Dec. 29 (JMA). In D.C., a pair of Com. Barn-Owls, always erratic nesters, had two young at Catholic Univ., Dec. 17 (DP *vide* DC). Single Long-eared Owls were at Easton Jan. 28-Feb. 21 (DMt), on Assateague I., Dec. 28 (WK, *vide* HLW) and three were at McKee-Beshers W.M.A., along with a N. Saw-whet Owl in late December-early January (GD *et al.*), these all in Maryland. A N. Saw-whet was found in D.C., Dec. 30 (DC). This was not a notable winter for Short-eared Owls but up to four were present at the unusual locality of Greensboro in inland Caroline County, Md., in January (SW *et al.*) and a group of seven was on Cedar I., Va., Dec. 17 (GLA, CB, HTA). A **Whip-poor-will** at Cape Charles CBC, Dec. 30 provided the first Regional winter record (PO), flushed at close range from a holly thicket. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were in record numbers on some CBCs, such as 32 at Annapolis and 17 at Cape Charles, but in average abundance in many other areas. Large groups of Horned Larks were reported from Loudoun County, Va., where 500 were present Jan. 15 (KHW, KS) and along New Design Rd., Montgomery Co., Md., where 300 were seen Jan. 21 (MO). Tree Swallows were seen in their usual hit or miss style on coastal CBCs, including a hefty 581 at Chinc., Dec. 29, and were still migrating in early January (GR, GW). The first spring arrivals were at Black., Feb. 19 (HTA) and Chinc., Feb. 25 (RFR). The Black-capped Chickadee flight fizzled out after December and although never attaining the proportions of the one in 1975-1976 it attracted much attention, especially from banders and resulted in a fine identification article by Wilds with excellent illustrations by Michael O'Brien (*Atlantic Naturalist News*, Feb. 1984, p. 11). Most Black-capped stayed above 39°N and 300 ft of elevation (DB). The truly phenomenal numbers of birds that can be seen by a well-staffed CBC are shown by totals of 1229 Carolina Chickadees, 486 Tufted Titmice, 128 White-breasted Nuthatches, 82 Brown Creepers and 570 N. Mockingbirds at D.C., Dec. 17 (EMW *et al.* 120 others). With the exception of some coastal areas Red-breasted Nuthatches had another lackluster flight. Both Sedge and Marsh wrens were in very low numbers this winter (*cf.* CBCs). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen on at least 4 Virginia CBCs such as three at Hopewell where they have been seen 4 of the past 5 years (*vide* FRS). Eastern Bluebirds were in good numbers on most CBCs although 289 at their stronghold in Mathews, Va., Dec. 17 was quite low (MP *et al.*).

VIREOS THROUGH NORTHERN FINCHES — A Solitary Vireo at the Nat'l Arboretum in D.C., Dec. 10 (DC) was very late but two each at Back Bay Dec. 29 (GW, BP) and also Little Creek Dec. 31 (DdH) CBCs were more to be expected. An Orange-crowned Warbler was at a suet feeder at Northwest R. Park, Chesapeake, Va., mid-December-late February (GW) and six were at Little Creek CBC, Dec. 31 (PWS *et al.*) Extraordinary winter warblers were seen only on CBCs with a Cape May and a Wilson's (both by DC) plus an Ovenbird (DMI) all at D.C., Dec. 17 (*vide* EMW), a Black-throated Blue Warbler at Cape Charles Dec. 30 (PGD) and a Black-and-white Warbler at Chinc., Dec. 29 (PGD). A migrating Pine Warbler was on C.B.B.T., Feb. 25 (TK *et al.*) and as early as Feb. 19 some were singing at Sparta, Va. (BP). After the "Big Chill" Com. Yellowthroats were nearly completely absent in the Region, even on CBCs (v.o.). At Williamsburg a Black-headed Grosbeak was seen in January (RB, FB, *vide* BR, BW) and possibly the same bird was at Hog I., Surry Co., Va., Feb. 19 (JWD, BR *et al.*), only

about the 9th state record(s?). A whopping 1096 N. Cardinals were counted on the D.C. CBC, Dec. 17 (EMW *et al.*). The only Dickcissel reported was at N. Bend Rd., Talbot Co., Md., Dec. 23 (LC), a dismal showing. Chipping Sparrows were in low numbers and Am. Tree Sparrows in slightly higher than normal numbers—both probably due to the extreme cold (v.o.). Near maximal counts were of 21 Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrows at Ocean City CBC, Dec. 28 (*fide* CSR) and 22 at Cape Charles Dec. 30 (HTA *et al.*). One of the oddities of the season was the abysmal number of Swamp Sparrows such as 11 at both D.C., and Newport News CBCs Dec. 17 (EMW, WPS *et al.*), 108 at Ocean City (lowest since 1951) and 27 at Jug Bay CBCs, Dec. 28 (CSR, JAG *et al.*), three at Caroline County, Md. CBC, Dec. 17 (AJF *et al.*) and 148 at Cape Charles CBC, Dec. 30 (lowest ever—HTA *et al.*). Outstanding was a Harris' Sparrow near Hampstead, Carroll Co., Md., ca. Dec. 17—period's end, seen by 100+ thanks to Ringler's tact as an intermediary between the property owner and an anxious birding community. Up to eight Lapland Longspurs frequented New Design Rd., Frederick Co., Md., in January and February in company with small numbers of Snow Buntings (BC, JOB, EMW *et al.*). The high for Snow Buntings was 68 at Cape Charles CBC, Dec. 30 and 15 in D.C., Jan. 8 were unusual (DC). Rare blackbirds included a Yellow-headed in St. Mary's County, Md., Feb. 25 (BC) and more than the usual number of reports of Brewer's: one at Beltsville, Md., Dec. 19 (WS), one on Back Bay CBC, Dec. 29 (RHP), two at Cape Charles Dec. 31 (PGD, PAD), one on the Annapolis CBC, Jan. 1 (SD, *fide* ER), and one in D.C., Jan. 6 (DC). A Com. Grackle flock estimated to be at least one million was seen passing over Potomac, Md., during most days of January (GD). After a winter of very high numbers last year, Purple Finches were scarce in 1983-1984 (v.o.). House Finches continue to increase and expand with numbers such as 200+ banded at Atlantic, Va. (JHB), 458 on Salisbury CBC, Dec. 18 (CRV *et al.*), 314 on the Caroline County CBC, Dec. 17 (AJF *et al.*) and 100+ at Hampton, Va. (first winter ever in such numbers—TK) plus 353 at Annapolis CBC, Jan. 1 (HLW *et al.*)—these all rather southern-coastal plain locales. Aside from scattered individuals on CBCs the only Red Crossbills were six in Talbot County, Md., Dec. 1 and two there Dec. 6 (JKE). All n. finches were almost universally regarded as scarce with small numbers of Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks, mostly in December and again in late January and in February. Highs for these 2 species were 50 siskins at Hopewell CBC, Dec. 17 (GW) and, what for this winter was a truly exceptional count of 251 grosbeaks on this same CBC (FRS *et al.*). The populous D.C. CBC, with many feeder watchers reported only one siskin and 27 grosbeaks plus 464 House Finches Dec. 17 (EMW *et al.*).

ABBREVIATIONS: Balt., Baltimore; the Bay, Chesapeake Bay; Black., Blackwater N.W.R., Md.; C.B.B.T., Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel, Va.; Chinc., Chincoteague N.W.R., Va.; D.C., Washing-



Chestnut-collared Longspur, Sandy Hook, N.J., Feb. 5, 1984. Photo/S. Hopkins.

ton, D.C.; Deal I., Deal Island W.M.A., Md.; Susq., Susquehanna R., Md., between Conowingo Dam and I-95.

OBSERVERS — J.M. Abbott, R.L. Ake (RLAk), R.A. Anderson, R.L. Anderson, G.L. Armistead, Tom Armour, Claudia Bagwell, John Barber, K.H. Bass, Ruth Beck, Eirik Blom, Fred Blystone, Peggy Bohanan, L.D. Bonham, S.A. Briggs, J.H. Buckalew, M.A. Byrd, Danny Bystrak, G.W. Chaplin, Les Coble, Barry Cooper, David Czaplak, Gus Daniels, Fenton Day, J.W. Dillard, Sam Droege, P.A. Dumont, P.G. DuMont, S.H. Dyke, J.K. Effinger, Ethel Engle, A.J. Fletcher, R.B. Fletcher, J.A. Gregoire, James Gruber, Alex Hammer, Margaret Hawk, Dan Heathcote, Mark Hoffman (MHn), D.F. Holland, David Hughes (DdH), H.C. Irving, J.E. Johnson, Sylvia Johnson, A.F. Jones, Teta Kain, Dennis Kirkwood, R.L. Kleen, M.K. Klimkiewicz, Wayne Klockner, David Mehlman (DMI), Don Meritt (DMt), Debbie Mignogno, Dorothy & Mike Mitchell, Paul Nistico, John O'Brien (JOb), Michael O'Brien, Paul O'Brien, Jom Orgain, F.L. Parks, Dwight Peake (DPk), R.H. Peake, Carl Perry, Darrell Peterson (DPt), Don Peterson (DPn), Bill Portlock, David Powers, Mary Pulley, George Reiger, R.F. Ringler, C.S. Robbins, Eleanor Robbins, Betsy Roszell, Kurt Savoie, R.M. Schutsky, F.R. Scott, W.P. Smith, Nick Stavros, Wally Sumner, Byron Swift, C.E. Swift, P.W. Sykes, Brian Taber, Craig Tufts, Robin Tyler, C.R. Vaughn, D.H. Wallace, Peter Webb, K.H. Weber, J.S. Weske, Steve Westre, Steve Whitcomb (SWb), H.L. Wierenga, C.P. Wilds, Bill Williams, Gary Williamson, E.M. Wilson, T.R. Wolfe, Paul Woodward (PWD), Charles Ziegenfus.—HENRY T. ARMISTEAD, 28 E. Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

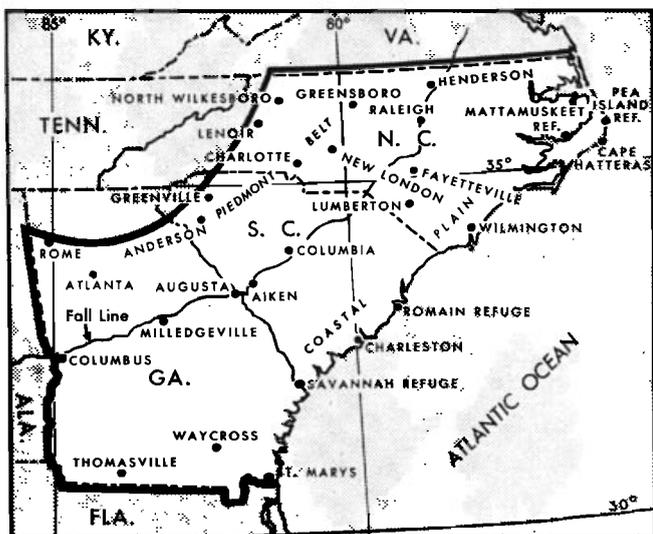
SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION /Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.

Although the average temperature for the winter as a whole was near normal or slightly above normal, what will be remembered about the season was the absurdly cold weather during the Christmas holidays. It was, by far, the coldest Christmas Day ever for the Region, and most places had *highs* in the *teens* on this day, and in the twenties for the next several days. January was about normal, but February was rather mild. One or two moderate snowfalls seemed to have little effect on the birds, but the Christmas freeze, which kept many lakes and ponds frozen solid for several weeks, had a profound effect on bird populations for the remainder of the winter.

Observers had fairly exciting birding in late December and early January, as the cold wave sent an excellent number and variety of waterfowl and gulls into the Region, and most of the "northern" waterbirds (such as eiders and alcids) appeared along the coast. It was a reasonably good winter finch season, and feeder watchers had a number

of noteworthy finds. Georgia birders produced a number of rarities. The highlights were several productive pelagic trips off Georgia and an incredible concentration of gulls of 12 species at Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina, during the holidays.

DECLINES — Two weather-related factors were responsible for the scarcity of a number of species often common in winter. The very wet spring (of 1983) apparently promoted plant growth, at the expense of flower production; the result was a poor crop of berries and acorns during the fall. The relative scarcity of Cedar Waxwings, and an unprecedented drop in Blue Jay numbers (down over 90% in some areas from previous winters, based on CBCs), can presumably be explained by the poor food crop. As expected with such bitterly cold weather, many insectivores became noticeably uncommon in January and February. Brown Thrashers showed an alarming decline, and there was concern of a major population calamity. Most warblers showed decreases, as typically occurs after cold weather, and kinglets were hit hard. Ruby-crowned Kinglet numbers by late January were probably down 75% or more from those in late December. Whereas the waxwings and Blue



Jays probably found food elsewhere, insectivores were likely not as fortunate.

LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS — Forsythe suggested that the scarcity of loons and grebes along the c. South Carolina coast this winter might be due to shad fishermen, who have taken large numbers of diving birds in their nets in the last 2 or 3 years. Good inland counts for the severely declining Horned Grebe were 42 at L. Keowee, S.C., Jan. 22 (DM) and 50-100 during the winter on L. Juliette near Forsyth, Ga. (TJ). Always notable were two Red-necked Grebes each at Jordan L., N.C., Jan. 1 (AT, TS) and Folly Beach, S.C., Jan. 2 (PN); whereas singles were at Sapelo I., Ga., Dec. 4 (BP) and Cape Hatteras point, N.C., Dec. 27 (AB). Even rarer were two Eared Grebes inland at Woodlake, near Vass, N.C., Dec. 18 (TH). Essentially all **Northern Fulmar** records for the Region are for spring and fall (not in winter as would be expected); thus, very unusual were five fulmars Feb. 8 seen 38 mi e. of St. Catharines I., Ga. (RM) for that state's 2nd sight record. Haney continued his excellent field work off the Georgia coast; he found that state's first winter **Black-capped Petrels** Dec. 3 (six seen 90 mi e. of St. Catharines I.), plus its fourth **Manx Shearwater** on the same date and location. Two more Manxes were found 45 mi e. of Jekyll I., Ga., Feb. 18 (TM, CH *et al.*). Although they were probably just late fall stragglers, 55 Audubon's Shearwaters Dec. 1-3 and 17 more Dec. 8 off the Georgia coast (CH) may have been that state's first in winter; whereas 600 N. Gannets Feb. 1 off Sapelo I., was an outstanding Georgia count (CH). The Am. White Pelicans that wintered for the past few years at Charleston, S.C., were nowhere to be found, but along the North Carolina coast were birds at Hatteras Inlet from fall—Dec. 29 (m.ob.), and at Atlantic Beach Dec. 10 (RE, JF, HHA). The Region's first convincing inland record for **Great Cormorant** was of an immature on a small lake near Albany, Ga., mid-November-Feb. 29+ (G & CV *et al.*). A few Greats were also seen on the coast of both Carolinas, with the best count being of three in flight amid large flocks of Double-crested Cormorants Feb. 2 at Folly Beach, S.C. (PN, JH).

WADERS, WATERFOWL — Rare inland in mid-winter in North Carolina were Am. Bitterns at Winston-Salem Dec. 1-mid-January (CF, BPa, RS) and near Fayetteville Jan. 5 (PJC), as well as Green-backed Herons in s.e. Chatham County Dec. 31 (BR) and at Ft. Bragg, Cumberland Co., Jan. 6 (PJC, JC). Unusual and out of habitat was a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron on the steps of a motel in Hatteras, N.C., at dawn Dec. 27 (GW)!

There were many notable records of Tundra Swan, including scarce Georgia birds at Eufaula N.W.R., Dec. 11 (two—LM, TK, JGo) and Augusta most of the winter (eight—AW). Greater White-fronted Geese were reported thrice, all inland—eight at Jordan L., N.C., Dec. 10 (AC), three at Santee N.W.R., S.C., Feb. 12 (SG *et al.*), and 15 at Eufaula Ref., Feb. 17-19 (JG, CA). Two Mottled Ducks observed Feb. 27 at Santee Coastal Reserve, S.C. (DS, RSc) were probably introduced, as there was just one previous Regional record (Georgia) and (to the best of my recollection) the species has apparently been stocked as a

game bird in this area. Late on the Durham, N.C., CBC, Dec. 18 were two Blue-winged Teal and a N. Shoveler (*vide* MS); whereas the rare Eur. Wigeon was detected most of the winter at Santee N.W.R. (BB *et al.*) and at Sunset Beach, N.C., Jan. 29 (PJC *et al.*). The Atlanta, Ga. CBC, area had a good season for divers, notable being 19 Canvasbacks and 25 Redheads at nearby Sweetwater Creek S.P., Feb. 27 (D & PMcC). Respectable inland totals for Greater Scaup were five at Winston-Salem Dec. 31 (RH, FH, HH) and six at Falls L., near Durham Jan. 29 (HL); and excellent counts included 1000 Ring-necked Ducks at Jordan L., in late February (BW, MW) and 42,000+ Lesser Scaup in the surf in the Charleston area Jan. 28 (DM *et al.*). Despite the bitter cold in late December, each eider was reported only once—an *adult* ♂ Common Dec. 27-Feb. 25 at Hatteras Inlet (MT *et al.*) and an imm. ♂ King at Oregon Inlet, N.C., Dec. 28 (MT, CP). The two **Harlequin Duck** reports were record-breakers; Georgia's first ever was a male at Tybee I., Feb. 18-29+ (ph., DKR *et al.*), and a probable Regional high five (two males) were seen at and under a pier at Rodanthe, N.C., Jan. 22 (CL, SL). Sea ducks infrequently found inland included a ♀ Oldsquaw n. of Raleigh Jan. 15 (HL), a Surf Scoter and two White-winged Scoters near Dublin, Ga., Dec. 23 (TKP), and another White-winged at Rum Creek W.M.A., near Forsyth, Ga., Feb. 1 (TJ). Common Goldeneyes became widespread (although uncommon) inland following the Christmas freeze, but the best counts were of just seven, each at Marietta, Ga., Dec. 18 (*vide* TM) and nearby Sweetwater Creek S.P., Jan. 22 (D & PMcC). However, the deep freeze produced a major movement of Com. Mergansers: highlights were 13 on Roanoke Rapids L., N.C., Jan. 1 and 21 on the following day (ML, KM) and 32 tallied on the Jordan L. CBC, Jan. 1, including 25 by one party (ACa *et al.*).

HAWKS THROUGH CRANES — Late Ospreys occurred inland at Augusta, Ga., Dec. 10 (AW) and Raleigh Dec. 17 (*vide* RJH); another at Smyrna, Carteret Co., N.C., in January and February (NG *et al.*) provided a rare overwintering record for that state. Bald Eagles occur inland mainly in migration, but far from the coast were singles in North Carolina near Vass and Chapel Hill, in South Carolina at L. Jocassee, and in Georgia on Lakes Oconee and Juliette. There were 3 reports of **Northern Goshawks**; surprisingly, all were from Georgia, providing the 2nd through 4th state records. Each was an immature; one was seen in Winder Dec. 30 (JV), another was noted at Athens Jan. 12-26 (CH, RTD), and one was shot in Morgan County in early January and taken to the Univ. of Georgia for recuperation (*vide* CH). A pair of ad. Broad-winged Hawks seen and heard, and well-described, perhaps defy belief in Union County, N.C., Feb. 20. More believable was a carefully studied Rough-legged Hawk near Kings Mt., N.C., Jan. 8 (DW, PH) that was the sole report for the winter. Other notable raptors were an imm. Golden Eagle in Crawford County, Ga., Jan. 28 (RW) and an injured Peregrine Falcon near Winston-Salem Jan. 27 (*vide* RS) that was taken to Cornell Univ. for treatment.

For the 2nd consecutive winter a Yellow Rail was flushed at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston—Jan. 27 (TR). Rare in n. Georgia were a King Rail seen at Commerce L., Dec. 3 (JP, JCa) and a Virginia Rail seen near Atlanta Jan. 2 (EH). The fall Sandhill Crane flight through Georgia occurred mainly in December, highlighted by 144 on the Atlantic CBC, Dec. 18 (TM *et al.*). Other notable cranes in Georgia were two that lingered along the Chattahoochee R., n. of Atlanta to Jan. 7 (JV), five near Brunswick Dec. 4 (PM, TM), and a flock at Piedmont N.W.R., Dec. 29 (RL, JTH, WG). Another was quite rare near St. Matthews, S.C., Dec. 10 (BG, ATi, TAS).

SHOREBIRDS — What was probably the Region's first mid-winter record of **Lesser Golden-Plover** was a bird in partial breeding plumage at Sullivans I., S.C., Jan. 27-28 (RWa, CBC). Notable near Augusta were a Lesser Yellowlegs Dec. 23-24 (AW) and Spotted Sandpipers Dec. 23 & Feb. 18 (AW). Other inland Spotted were noted near Rocky Mount, N.C., Jan. 2 (LF) and near Atlanta Dec. 17-Jan. 28 (PB). Whimbrels are rather rare in winter on the North Carolina coast, so interesting were one most of the season at Beaufort (JF), at least three Jan. 29 near Cape Lookout (JF), and one at Sunset Beach Dec. 27 (MO). One to several Long-billed Curlews probably spend the winter in each state, although South Carolina had this season's only reports—five on Cape I., Jan. 29 (*vide* DMF) and one in late January at Folly Beach (DB). Long overdue were first winter records of the Least Sandpiper for the Atlanta area (one in Clayton County all winter—PB) and the North

Carolina Sandhills (one near Vass Dec 18—TH), whereas seven was a good count for Dublin, Ga., Jan. 11 (TKP). An early Pectoral Sandpiper was noted near Eufaula N.W.R., Feb. 25 (BP). Probably a first winter record for the Piedmont was a Long-billed Dowitcher carefully studied near Raleigh late November-Dec. 17 (JW, RJH, JF). Why is it that most recently published field guides and references on pelagic species fail to acknowledge that Red Phalaropes winter off our coast, often in very large numbers? Any doubts should now be dispelled—Haney saw 12 to 1000+ on each of his 5 trips off Georgia, including 1250 Feb. 1. Also, Forsythe had 445 off Charleston Feb. 19. Although there are a few previous winter records for the Region, remarkable numbers of **Red-necked Phalaropes** were found by Haney *et al.*, off Georgia: 16 on Dec 2, ten Dec. 8, 240 on Feb. 1, and one Feb. 8. Observations from future trips will be needed to determine if this species is regular in winter (at least in Georgia waters).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Both Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers are regularly seen in December, but they generally disappear after the CBCs. Post-December sightings involved single Pomarines off the Georgia coast Feb. 18 (CH *et al.*) and off Charleston Feb. 19 (DMF), a Parasitic at Cape Lookout, N.C., Jan. 29 (JF, RE), and five Parasitics off Georgia Feb. 18 (CH *et al.*). The Christmas freeze was the direct cause of a major kill of menhaden along the North Carolina coast. The millions of dead fish did not go unscavenged; an estimated 650,000 gulls were at Hatteras Inlet Dec. 26-29 (MT, HL, JoW, AB). A breakdown of this concentration included 500,000+ Ring-billeds, 100,000+ Herrings, and a large handful of rarities—15+ Lesser Black-backed, five+ Glaucouses, two or three Icelands, two Com. Black-headed (HL, MT, HA), a Black-legged Kittiwake (MT, HL), a **Thayer's Gull** (MT, BL), and a **Mew Gull** (BL)! The Thayer's and the Mew (the North American race) were both first-winter individuals seen Dec 27; both provided also 2nd state and Regional sight records. Besides the 12 gull species at Hatteras Inlet, a Little Gull, the only one reported for the season, appeared at Bodie I., N.C., Dec. 28 (GP). Normally uncommon inland in winter, Bonaparte's Gulls were quite common at a few lakes—400 at Blewett Falls L., N.C., Dec. 22 (DM), 105 on L. Hartwell, S.C., Dec. 18 (*fide* PBH), and 31 at Falls L., N.C., Dec 18 (*fide* MS). Ring-billed Gulls continue to increase on inland lakes, and they are now being seen in quadruple digits at some sites where counts of 10 or 20 would have been usual a decade ago. Peaks inland were 5000 at a landfill near Lexington, S.C., in mid-January (SC) and 2500+ at Beaverdam Res., n. of Raleigh Jan. 8 (HL). However, the best inland count of Herring Gulls was just 34, at Jordan L., Jan. 1 (*fide* BR). In addition to those at Hatteras Inlet, Iceland Gulls were found elsewhere only in North Carolina, near Newport Jan. 13-21 and again Feb. 4 (JF *et al.*) and at Ocracoke Feb. 12 (JF). An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull was very rare offshore from Jekyll I., Ga., Feb. 18 (TM *et al.*), and a few others were seen in coastal North Carolina away from Hatteras Inlet. Surprisingly, no Glaucous Gulls were reported away from this inlet, though an adult Dec. 24 (R & JY) & 29 (HL *et al.*) was notable. It may have been the best winter ever for the Black-legged Kittiwake: Haney saw up to ten on each of his 5 trips off Georgia, and 40-50 were seen Feb. 9 off that state (RM). Adding to the few South Carolina records were singles at Huntington Beach S.P., Dec. 27 (DMF, DC;* C.M.) and Myrtle Beach Feb. 27 (DS, RSc). Most unusual from shore were 46 kittiwakes at Cape Lookout Jan. 29 (JF, RE).

Five Sandwich Terns were late at Folly Beach, S.C., Dec. 3 (PN *et al.*), whereas unusual in winter were inland Forster's Terns in Georgia at Sweetwater Creek S.P., Dec. 6 (D & PMcC) and near Dublin Dec. 23 (TKP). There was a definite flight of alcids into the Region—Georgia's 3rd and 4th records for **Razorbill** were of five Feb. 1 off Ossabaw I. (CH) and four Feb. 18 off Jekyll I. (TM *et al.*). Observers in the Carolinas fared less well, although in North Carolina a Dovekie was found on a road in Buxton Dec. 23 (*fide* CP) and large alcids (sp.?) were noted on pelagic trips off Hatteras Dec. 27 (CP) and off Beaufort Inlet in February (LD).

OWLS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS — A belated report of a Short-eared Owl seen July 9 near Wanchese, N.C. (DW, JW) was most interesting, as the species is not known to breed in the Region. A Whippoorwill seen at Carolina Beach S.P., N.C., Jan. 10 (MLD) was notable because it somehow managed to survive the bitter cold in late December. The Ruby-throated Hummingbird seen at Gainesville, Ga.,

was last noted Dec 24 (JP), however, there were no other reports of the species. Another holdover from late fall was the **Rufous Hummingbird** at a Sumter, S.C., feeder until Christmas Day (KMal, SC; ph., ED). Although there are perhaps a half-dozen previous state records, a ♂ **Vermilion Flycatcher** in Colleton County, S.C., Jan. 5 (MH) was one of only a few Regional reports in the last decade. One of just several winter records of Great Crested Flycatcher for North Carolina was one studied carefully (to rule out other *Myiarchus* species) at Beaufort Dec 18 (AB *et al.*), and on the same day a lingering W. Kingbird was near McClellanville, S.C. (DMF *et al.*).

SWALLOWS THROUGH VIREOS — Definitely out of season was a Barn Swallow Jan. 28 near McClellanville (SC). Fish Crows, rare in midwinter in the Piedmont, were notable at Clemson, S.C., Jan. 6 (DM) and Raleigh Jan. 30 (GWh). Red-breasted Nuthatches were surprisingly scarce nearly everywhere, and even the most active observers saw only a couple all winter. On the other hand, White-breasted Nuthatches were much more common than usual, at least in North Carolina. What was the cause of this major influx? The Bewick's Wren seen in November at Pendergrass, Ga., was detected off-and-on all winter (JP, TM). The late December freeze made it difficult for marsh species to overwinter inland, so a Marsh Wren near Fayetteville Feb. 13 was a good find (PJC). A White-eyed Vireo was somewhat n. of its range on the Peachtree City, Ga. CBC, Dec. 17 (*fide* TM) and for the 3rd straight year this vireo was found on the Cape Hatteras CBC (PS, GW, HL); follow-up observations in late January or February are needed to determine if the species actually winters at the Cape. Somewhat late, and slightly inland from the usual winter range, were Solitary Vireos in the last half of December in North Carolina at Crowders Mountain S.P. (PH) and Gastonia (PH) and nearby South Carolina locales at Six Mile (DM) and Clemson (CW).

WARBLERS — Rare in January were Orange-crowned Warblers near Durham (ME) and Fayetteville (PJC, RC) in North Carolina and Pendergrass (JP) in Georgia. One of the few Regional winter records for **Nashville Warbler** was one carefully studied near Augusta Dec. 24 (AW, VW). Almost as rare was a late Nashville near Townville, S.C., Nov. 27 (SG, CW). Cape May Warblers were excellent finds near Newport, N.C., Dec. 18 (RD) and at a feeder in Sumter, S.C.; Jan. 14-February (KMal, ED), as was a **Black-throated Green Warbler** Dec 27 at Buxton (HL), which has seldom if ever been found in North Carolina at this season. Prairie Warblers winter sparingly in coastal South Carolina, but a count of six in s. Jasper County Jan. 3 (RWa) was certainly unexpected. Nearly unknown in winter in North Carolina a few years ago, Ovenbirds were detected again in Buxton Woods Dec. 27 (PS, GW) & Jan. 1-2 (*fide* CP); as with the White-eyed Vireo, it is uncertain whether the species overwinters regularly here. Quite surprising were two Yellow-breasted Chats on the Raleigh CBC, Dec. 17 (AB), the only report for the season.

TANAGERS; EMBERIZID FINCHES — Feeder birds included a W. Tanager in early December at Sumter (KMal, ED, SC), an Indigo Bunting near Raleigh (no date—EA, *fide* RJH), and Painted Buntings in St. Charles, S.C., Jan. 10-February (DCo) and in c. Carteret County, N.C.; mid-December-Jan. 8 (CHo). Another Indigo was very rare, away from a feeder, on the Cape Hatteras CBC, Dec. 27 (JF, CP). At the n. edge of their winter range were a Bachman's Sparrow in Hoke County, N.C., Dec. 18 and three nearby in n. Scotland County Feb 1 (JHC). Although one to several Am. Tree Sparrows are generally reported each winter in North Carolina, many have questionable or no details and are seen by inexperienced birders. No problems exist for one seen at Falls L., in s. Granville Co., Dec. 11 (RD) and another (or the same) a few miles to the w. at the same lake Feb. 5-16 (RD, JF, AB). A **Lark Sparrow** Jan. 6 near Kings Mt., N.C., was casual in winter in the Piedmont (CWa, HW). Lapland Longspurs were seen only inland, and only at locales where found in previous winters: in North Carolina near Roanoke Rapids (HL *et al.*), Mangum (DM), and the Laurinburg-Maxton airfield (DM); in South Carolina near Townville (SG, MLe); and in Georgia at Gainesville (JP). There was certainly no flight of Snow Buntings along the coast, the only ones being two Dec. 18-Jan. 7 at Ft Macon S.P., N.C. (JF *et al.*). On the other hand, one was most unusual on Barrett Mt., far inland near Taylorsville, N.C., Dec. 11 (DCa)

ICTERIDS, CARDUELINE FINCHES — Well to the e. of its range was a ♂ Brewer's Blackbird near Cherry, Washington Co., N.C., Feb. 26 (RD), whereas a good count from within the winter range was of 100 at Eufaula N.W.R., Feb. 25 (BP). Records of N. (Bullock's) Oriole are slowly multiplying for North Carolina, and this winter saw a male at a Raleigh feeder Dec. 19 (MB, *vide* RJH) and a ♂-bird at Fayetteville Jan. 14+ (RC). Purple Finches were fairly common in most places, but a mysterious flight passed through tidewater Oriental, N.C., in late February, with 4000+ Feb. 26 alone (DF). House Finches were probably more common than ever before and are being seen throughout the Region except the lower Coastal Plain of South Carolina and Georgia; notable totals were 924 banded at York, S.C., late October-early March (BH), 40-50 at feeders in Florence, S.C. (*vide* ED), 15-20 in Mt. Olive, N.C., Feb. 23 (BHo), and 56 near Marietta, Ga., Dec. 18 (*vide* TM). The rarer winter finches stayed to the n.—there were no reports of White-winged Crossbills, just one Red Crossbill report (one near Atlanta Feb. 6—BP), one questionable feeder sighting of a Pine Grosbeak, and 2 feeder reports of Com. Redpolls in North Carolina that may or may not have been correctly identified. Pine Siskins had a good year; they were reasonably common in much of the Region, especially in the w. Piedmont. Likewise, Evening Grosbeaks were fairly common on the whole, but surprisingly, they were more numerous in Georgia and South Carolina than in much of North Carolina, contrary to the usual pattern in an invasion year.

OBSERVERS — Elizabeth Albritton, Carole Anderson, Harry Armistead, Dana Beach, Michael Beggs, Patrick Brisse, Bill Brokaw,

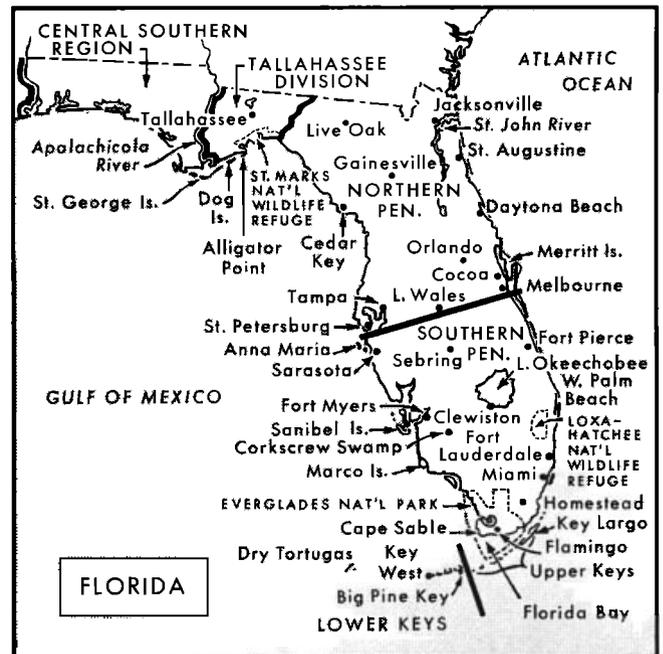
Allen Bryan, Angelo Capparella (ACa), Carolina Bird Club, Derek Carrigan (DCa), J.H. Carter III, Jack Carusos (JCa), David Chamberlain, Charleston Museum, Ruth Chesnut, Steve Compton, Anson Cooke, Drayton Cooper (DCo), Jim Crutchfield, P.J. Crutchfield, Evelyn Dabbs, R.T. Damian, Lloyd Davidson, Ricky Davis, M.L. Dunn, Ross Earnest, Marc Eisdorfer, Lou Fink, D.M. Forsythe, Dorothy Foy, Charles Frost, John Fussell, Sidney Gauthreaux, Norman Gillikin, Jim Godwin (JGo), Joe Greenberg, Ben Gregg, William Guthrie, Henry Haberyan (HHa), R.J. Hader, P.B. Hamel, Chris Haney, Paul Hart, J.T. Hicks, Fred Hill, Julia Hill, Bill Hilton Jr., Marion Hines, Bob Holmes (BHo), Hop Hopkins, Carolyn Hoss (CHo), Royce Hough, Tom Howard, Eileen Hutcheson, Terry Johnson, Tommy King, Rob Lee, Harry LeGrand, Mike Lennartz (MLE), Bob Lewis, Merrill Lynch, Charlie Lyon, Stephanie Lyon, Kathleen Mallard (KMal), Lorne Malo, Robert Manns, Karen Masson, Dennie & Pam McClure (D & PMcC), Douglas McNair, Peggy Moore, Terry Moore, Perry Nugent, Mark Oberle, Barbara Page (BPa), John Paget, T.K. Patterson, Grayson Pearce, Carl Perry, Billy Pulliam, Tom Reeves, D.K. Rogers, Barbara Roth, Mike Schultz, Ray Schwartz (RSc), Tony Shrimpton, Dave Sibley, Ramona Snavelly, T.A. Snyder, Paul Sykes, Ann Timberlake (ATi), Mike Tove, Andy Towle, Gregory & Carmen Valpey-Toussignant, Joel Volpi, Bill Wagner, Margaret Wagner, Clare Walker (CWA), Heathy Walker, Jeff Walters, Ron Warner (RWa), Anne Waters, Vernon Waters, Gail Whitehurst (GWh), Richard Whittington, Gary Williamson, Charlie Wooten, David Wright, Jill Wright (JWr), John Wright (JoW), Ruth & Jerry Young.—HARRY E. LeGRAND, JR., 331 Yadkin Dr., Raleigh, NC 27609.

FLORIDA REGION /Wayne Hoffman

Florida, like most of the country, experienced two severe cold spells in late December. The first, Christmas weekend, brought temperatures into the teens and even lower over most of the Region. Around Tampa, for the first time in years, a whole day (actually more than 40 hours) passed without temperatures reaching as high as 0°C. Many normally evergreen trees were defoliated. The three exotic trees that have become pests in Florida (Australian Pine, *Casuarina*; Punkwood, *Melaleuca*; Brazilian Pepper, *Schinus*) were defoliated, and many were killed at the northern extremes of their ranges. Even native vegetation showed severe freeze damage. In Tampa Bay, White Mangroves were defoliated, and most were killed; Red and Black mangroves were damaged, but fared much better. Relatively few effects of this weather were detected on bird populations or survival. The weather did not push "irruptive" northern species into the Region in numbers; Pine Siskins, Evening Grosbeaks, Dark-eyed Juncos, and Purple Finches were present, but in low numbers. Wintering "odd" warblers were much less evident than last year, but were less evident before the freezes as well as after. Sea duck counts were low, so these birds apparently were not pushed into Florida by the weather. The freezing of the Brazilian Pepper may have caused the bulk of the wintering robin population to move farther down the peninsula than usual.

During January and February the weather was quite normal, with cold fronts at intervals of several days, interspersed with mild sunny weather. In the Tampa area, Yellow-rumped Warblers were common, but seemed less abundant than in most recent years. At Casey Key, however, the Steadmans banded only two this winter, in contrast to 574 last year. Ovenbirds and Solitary Vireos seemed more common than last year, but White-eyed Vireos and Hermit Thrushes were harder to find.

LOONS, GREBES, SHEARWATERS — An Arctic Loon was described carefully at Wards Bank Dec. 26-27 (HPL *et al.*). Common Loon numbers appeared down some places along the Gulf Coast, but the effects of last spring's dieoff were not obvious. Eared Grebes have been considered rare visitors to Florida, but the Clear Springs Phosphate mine, Polk Co., attracted an incredible 20 individuals by Feb. 11 (PF, HPL). Three other Eared Grebes were reported, two at the Occidental



Chemical Company mine, Hamilton Co. (hereafter, Oxy Mine) Feb. 19 (JML), and one at St. Marks Light Dec. 17 (TE).

CORMORANTS, SULIDS — Two Brown Boobies, rare in winter, were found on the Biscayne Bay CBC, Dec. 21 (HPL, OLB). The only N. Gannet report from the Gulf of Mexico was of a single immature off St. George I., Feb. 3 (HMS) but just after the end of the period sightings were numerous off Anclote Key. Great Cormorants strayed farther into the state than usual, with individuals seen at Delray Beach Jan. 21-Feb. 29+ (PWS, BH, m.ob.), Waukulla Springs Dec. 20-Feb. 15 (m.ob., *vide* HMS) and even Key West Jan. 24 to early February (JT, FH).

HERONS, IBISES — Two Great White (white-phase Great Blue) Herons were found nesting in heronries near the s. end of Tampa Bay Jan. 6 and Feb. 3 (RP). Each was the only white-phase bird in its heronry; at least one and probably both were paired to Great Blue Herons. Both nests failed. These provided the northernmost nesting attempts known for white-phase birds since 1906. Rich Paul counted 454 Glossy Ibises in an evening flight to roost at Alafia Bank Feb. 18, a notable prebreeding concentration.

WATERFOWL — Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were reported from locations across the Region (Tallahassee and Oxy Mine to Biscayne Bay); 1400 at Loxahatchee Nat'l Wildlife Ref. (henceforth L.W.R.) Jan. 14-Feb. 22 were notable (PWS). Two imm. Tundra Swans were in Hickory Mound Jan. 21-Feb. 16, then two (thought to be the same birds) were at St. Marks Light Feb. 26-March (JEC, m.ob.). Two others were at Oxy Mine Feb. 10 (JML, KMa), and another was on Payne's Prairie Feb. 20 (CWJ). Three Greater White-fronted Geese were near Tallahassee Feb. 28-29 (HMS, JEC). A (white) ad. Snow Goose was at Jacksonville Dec. 2 (PCP), a blue one was at Okecheelee P., West Palm Beach Jan. 17-Feb. 29+ (JS, m.ob.). Two white-phase birds were at St. Marks Light with one blue-phase goose through the period. Single Brant were reported from Jensen Beach Jan. 3 (CSH) and East Cape Sable, Everglades Nat'l Park (hereafter, E.N.P.) Feb. 8 (BA). A Canada Goose wintered at a sewage treatment pond in Venice (S & AS) and two were at Merritt I., Feb. 4 (H & WD). A ♂ Cinnamon Teal was at St. Marks Light Jan. 8 (JEC, CN). An Oldsquaw was at the Melbourne Beach water treatment plant Jan. 1-26 (H & WD), and two were at Oxy Mine Jan. 12 (HDC). Black Scoters were unreported after the major incursions of the previous 2 winters. The only scoters reported were single ♀ White-winged Scoters at Oxy Mine Jan. 11 (HDC) and Jacksonville Jan. 21 (MCD), and a Surf Scoter at St. Marks Light Jan. 14 & 21 (RFN). Masked Ducks are regular but notoriously difficult to see in s.e. Florida, so a pair on a small pond in Highland P., Polk Co., were notable not only for their location, but for their visibility. They were observed by hundreds of birders from across the country Dec. 30-Feb. 15.



Ferruginous Hawk, Zellwood Farms, St. Petersburg, Fla., Dec. 28, 1983. Photo/L. Hopkins.

HAWKS, FALCONS — A Black-shouldered Kite was reported Jan. 14 along Interstate 95, s. of Vero Beach (CSH *et al.*). In recent years one or two have been reported/winter in the Region. High counts of Bald Eagles at St. Marks Light (RFN) and along the Apalachicola R. (WWB) suggested a possible population increase in that area. This was an exceptional winter for *Buteos*. Broad-winged Hawks are uncommon in migration and regular in winter in Florida, but this year an unusual number remained in the state. A census Feb. 1 in the Lower Keys found 21 (MB). Frances Hames reported that in Key West two "wild, free birds were being hand fed all winter . . . Their favorite food is the cock roach." Elsewhere, adults were observed on the St. Petersburg CBC, at Archbold Biological Station Jan. 13 (DS), and in the Green Swamp Feb. 26 (HH, PH, ES). An immature wintered at Tierra Verde Golf Course (m.ob.). Swainson's Hawks winter regularly in South Florida but individuals at St. Marks Light Feb. 9 (ph. to Fla. Records Comm.) and Zellwood Jan. 7 were exceptional. About five Short-tailed Hawks were found wintering on Big Pine Key (MB) and the species was very evident in the E.N.P., through the period (OLB). Two reports were received of

Krider's Red-tailed Hawks; one from N.W. Orange County Dec. 26 (DF) and one from near Immokalee Dec. 31 (DS). Two imm. **Ferruginous Hawks** at Zellwood Farms Dec. 19-Feb. 16 (ph. and details to Fla. Records Comm.) confirmed the first Florida records of this w. species (BeK, DF, m.ob.). They behaved much differently from the Red-tailed Hawks in the area, invariably perching on the ground and staying out in the fields away from any high vegetation. About 25 reports of Peregrine Falcon were received from throughout the Region, with the majority from coastal areas.

CRANES, GALLINULES — Reports from several observers suggested that migratory Greater Sandhill Cranes (subsp. *tabida*) were more widespread this winter than usual. Large flocks in winter are more likely Greater than the resident Florida Sandhills (subsp. *pratensis*), and were reported from the Green Swamp (200+ birds Feb. 26—HH, PH, ES) Putnam Hall marshes (100+ Dec. 24-25—MJW), Keystone Heights (100+ Feb. 26—MJW), field s. of Lake Istokpoga, (150+ Jan. 15—KMa, DS), and the Oxy Mine (277 flying N Feb. 26—JML), as well as the usual concentrations on Payne's Prairie. Seventy-one Purple Gallinules in a 0.25-mi rectangular impoundment at L.W.R., was a notable count (PWS). Three early broods of Com. Moorhens were found at L.W.R. in late February (PWS).



Curlew Sandpiper, Flamingo, E.N.P., Dec. 6, 1983. Photo/M. Brown.

SHOREBIRDS — Single Solitary Sandpipers were seen at L.W.R., Jan. 14 & 22 (PWS, BH, HPL). Several area editors commented that Whimbrels were more numerous than usual along the coasts; a count of 46 on the Coot Bay CBC was exceptional. Red Knots are common in winter on the Gulf Coast but are extremely rare on Atlantic beaches, so the 2 records this winter are noteworthy. One was at Air Force Beach, Palm Beach Co., Jan. 22-Feb. 17 (HPL, GH) and 16 were at Ft. Pierce inlet Jan. 24 (H & WD, JB). A Purple Sandpiper was found Dec. 18 at Port Everglades, and remained through February (WG). A **Curlew Sandpiper** photographed at Flamingo Dec. 6 (MB) furnished the first record for the E.N.P., and may be the first winter record for Florida. The only Red Phalarope reported was seen off Elliott Key, Biscayne Bay Dec. 21 (OLB, HPL).

JAEGERS, GULLS, TERNS —

S.A.

With the closing of the Toytown and Wells Brothers Landfills in May (Pinellas County now incinerates its garbage), one of the largest concentrations of gulls in Florida has been displaced. Landfills in adjacent counties have experienced compensatory increases for the common species, Laughing, Ring-billed, and Herring gulls (SRP). These landfills gave the St. Petersburg CBC the alltime high CBC count of Lesser Black-backed Gulls in 1983 (9), and in 1980, 1981, and 1982 St. Petersburg tied with Nantucket for yearly high counts. This year the CBC recorded only two Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Records elsewhere in Florida increased, however, with singles seen at Hillsborough Heights Landfill Jan. 17-20 (SRP), Little Talbot I. (n.e. Florida) Dec. 10 (CWH) and at least four birds at the St. Lucie Landfill Dec. 14-Jan. 24 (H & WD).

The only jaeger reported was a Parasitic seen Dec 29 in Florida Bay (SS). This was a quiet year for gull watchers, with a Glaucous Gull at Melbourne Feb. 28 (WR) the only white-winged gull reported.

One ad. Franklin's Gull was at Hillsborough Heights Landfill Dec. 7 (SRP) but at the St. Lucie Landfill two adults and at least four to six immatures were seen Dec. 1-Jan. 27; most sightings were in early and mid-December (H & WD).

The 500 Forster's Terns at Alligator Pt., Dec. 3 (RFN) was a very high winter count, but perhaps they were migrating S. A **Black Tern** photographed by H & WD Dec. 31 at St. Lucie Inlet (Stuart CBC) constituted an exceptional winter record.

PARROTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — The three Red-crowned Parrots in Sarasota in late January and early February (EVM) and the Rose-ringed Parakeet in Ft. Pierce Feb. 12 (H & WD) were more likely recent escapees than dispersers from the populations established in the Miami area. In any case, the parrot fauna of Florida grows apace, with new species appearing almost yearly, and the established species appearing in new localities continually. So far, the parrots and parakeets seem to be remaining in urban and suburban habitats and feeding on exotic plants, but the date that one of them discovers an agricultural crop cannot be too far off.

Two Short-eared Owls were reported in Florida this winter, one at Flamingo, E.N.P. (P & MB) and one at McKay Bay Jan. 2 (LH *et al.*).

Chuck-will's-widows and Whip-poor-wills both winter in Peninsular Florida but are very difficult to locate. Thus a Chuck at Ft. Desoto just after sunset Jan. 14 (WH, JD) and a Whip-poor-will in n.w. Hernando County Jan. 18 (WH) were notable. The Steadmans banded a Whip-poor-will on Casey Key Dec. 1. An imm. *Selasphorus* hummingbird (presumably Rufous, but Allen's has not been eliminated—HMS) spent the season at a feeder in Tallahassee.

A Golden-fronted Woodpecker was reported in Altamonte Springs Jan. 21-22 (CT, BK, DF, YL). Most such reports in Florida and elsewhere in the East are of xanthic Red-bellied Woodpeckers (individuals deficient in red carotenoid pigments) but on this bird the central rectrices were black and unbarred, so it may have been legitimate.

FLYCATCHERS — Western Kingbirds and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers are rare in winter in Florida, and uncommon in migration. Single W. Kingbirds were seen Dec. 20 near St. Marks Light (CSG, RW) and Dec. 10-12 at Tenoroc State Reserve, Polk Co. (CG, TP). A Scissor-tailed was on Hypoluxo I., Dec. 5 (HPL, PWS) and another was in Key West Jan. 12 & 17 (FH). The Vermilion Flycatcher reported at Flamingo in the Fall Report remained through the winter. A Brown-crested Flycatcher was reported on the Gumbo Limbo Trail, E.N.P., Feb. 18 (RM, DT). Langridge again found Least Flycatchers wintering in Palm Beach County (20 this year). Someone needs to do a careful survey of similar habitat elsewhere in the peninsula.

SWALLOWS THROUGH THRUSHES — Normally only Tree Swallows winter in Florida, but a Barn Swallow and several N. Rough-winged Swallows were at St. Marks light Dec. 3 (RFN) and a Purple Martin was seen Jan. 10 in Homestead (WB). Purple Martins are the earliest summer residents to arrive back in Florida, and appeared in the Tampa area during the first 10 days of February, as usual. Rich Paul counted 20,000 Fish Crows flying to roost at Alafia Bank, Tampa Bay, Feb. 18. Near Delray Beach, PWS and BH estimated 274,000 Robins flying into a roost Jan. 29.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — A Bell's Vireo was described carefully Jan. 18 near Boynton, Palm Beach Co. (HPL *et al.*). Valid Florida records are very rare. Peninsular Florida usually has a scattering of the warblers that winter in the Neotropics, but this year numbers were unusually low. An imm. Tennessee Warbler was seen at Jacksonville Dec. 5 (CWH) and another was on the Coot Bay CBC. Three Magnolia Warblers were seen in Palm Beach County (*fide* HPL) and two were on the Biscayne Bay CBC. Cape May Warblers were seen twice in Palm Beach County and one was on the Coot Bay CBC. Hypoluxo I., had a Black-throated Blue Warbler Dec. 5 (PWS). Sarasota had a ♂ Am. Redstart (EVM). A ♂ Wilson's Warbler appeared for the 3rd year in a row in s. Jacksonville (JPC), and one was at Mahogany Hammock,

E N P, Feb 3 (TM) Yellow-breasted Chats were found in 3 places, Dunedin (LH), Wellington (HPL), and Zellwood Farms (CT, TR)

BLACKBIRDS, TANAGERS, GROSBEAKS — A Bronzed Cowbird appeared through December at the Speedway in Pinellas Co., but none were reported elsewhere. Single Yellow-headed Blackbirds were in Seminole County Dec. 1 (BP, EB), Jupiter Dec. 22-Feb. 23 (SG), Big Pine Key Feb. 17 (MB *et al.*), Casey Key in late December (S & AS) and two were at Myakka Valley Ranches Dec. 16. A ♂ W. Tanager was at Gainesville Jan. 5 (ASH) and a female or imm. male was there Jan 20 (MS). A ♀ Blue Grosbeak at Alligator P., Feb. 24 was at least a month early for migration, so may have wintered (RLC). A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in Gainesville Jan. 1 (CAL) and an Evening Grosbeak was there Jan. 25-27 (JLL). Two Dickcissels were at L.W.R., Jan 11-23 for the first refuge records (m.ob.).

SPARROWS, LONGSPURS — A Lark Sparrow was at the Oxy Mine Feb. 19 (JML) Single Henslow's Sparrows were seen at Tenoroc State Reserve Jan. 22-28 (BC, m.ob) and in Seminole County Dec 3-8 (BP, GM). Two Clay-colored Sparrows were at L.W.R., Jan. 19-21 and one remained to Jan. 24 (HPL, GH, BV). Wellington had seven Lincoln's Sparrows in December and January (HPL). Clearly this secretive species is more regular here than recognized. Two Lapland Longspurs were seen Dec. 26 at the Leon County Spray-field (HMS) for a first Leon County record.

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ONTARIO REGION

/Ron D. Weir

This season's weather was more typical of an old-fashioned winter. The warm conditions of early December, that encouraged some late waders and warblers, surrendered to intense cold mid-month that persisted to mid-February. Observers noted a poor winter for waterfowl, gulls, and winter finches and other songbirds. Spring came to most of Ontario in mid-February causing influxes of swans, ducks and blackbirds that were greeted by a major snowstorm at season's close.

Nevertheless it was an exciting winter for owls. Few observers could not be impressed by the staggering numbers of Great Grays that invaded. Boreals were in possible record numbers south of range and Barreds irrupted. On Amherst Island near Kingston, eight owl species were seen regularly along with two other species occasionally. The vast supply of Meadow Voles there held these owls all season giving an estimated 2000 observers an opportunity for viewing. Other gems in the province were Great Cormorant, Tufted Duck, Black Vulture, Varied Thrushes and the rarest of all—a Siberian Rubythroat.



While it is usual not to make obituary notes in a seasonal account, an exception is warranted for George W. North of Hamilton who died November 27, 1983 at age 73. A long-time compiler of the Hamilton CBC and contributor to this journal, George wrote "The Changing Seasons" for the winter of 1967-68, one of the few Canadians to be so honoured. A dauntless and cheerful field companion he will be remembered for his meticulous identifications, his encouragement of young people, and his fierce pride in the rich and diverse bird life of his native Hamilton.

Christmas Bird Count (hereafter, CBC) records were omitted unless they were of over-riding significance. Place names in *italics* denote counties.

ABBREVIATIONS — A.P.P. (Algonquin Provincial Park), M.I. (Manitoulin I.), Pelee (Point Pelee N.P.), P.E. Pt. (Prince Edward Point), Rondeau (Rondeau P.P.).

LOONS TO HERONS — Single Red-throated Loons were seen respectively Dec. 11, 17 & 24 at Burlington, the Credit R. mouth and Kettle Pt. (RC, DP, AHR). Another at Kapuskasing Dec. 5-9 landed on a highway, but was rescued and freed in open water (*vide* ERA). The only report of an Arctic came from Pelee Dec. 26 (TH). Of the 8 sightings of Red-necked Grebe, two were away from the Great Lakes on the Green R., Washago, Jan. 4 (RLB) and at Ottawa Jan. 8 (BMD). Single Eared Grebes lingered at Sarnia to Dec. 10 (DFR) and Humber Bay, Toronto to Dec. 14 (*vide* BDP) raising the year's total to 13, a record high for Ontario. A Great Cormorant, always very rare on the Great Lakes, was off Corner Marsh, Pickering, Feb. 1 (JMS, D. Marven) The last Double-crested sighting was at Burlington Dec. 19 (RC). An early Am. Bittern arrived at Mt. Brydges, *Middlesex* Feb. 24 (WRJ).

SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS — The February mild spell brought a surge of migrants that included Tundra Swan throughout the s.w., N. Pintail at Long Pt. Feb. 17, and Redhead at Erieau Feb. 19, Ring-necked Duck at Hamilton and Greater Scaup at Ottawa Feb. 23, Mallard and Red-breasted Merganser at Pelee Feb. 24 & 29 and Am. Wigeon at Long Pt., Feb. 26. The Canada Geese at Cochrane Feb. 14 were well n. for the early date (EAC).

Single Wood Ducks wintered successfully at Sarnia (DFR) and Kitchener (SRK). A ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal appeared in the Dundas Marsh Feb. 11-23 (DG) and two Am. Black Ducks visited a backyard feeder in Pickering Jan. 27-31 (D. Borchet). A healthy Blue-winged Teal and N. Shoveler spent the entire period in Kitchener (*vide* SRK) while some 501 Gadwall were tallied on the Toronto waterfowl inventory Jan. 8 (T.O.C.). Ontario's 3rd and 4th sightings of ♂ **Tufted Duck** came from Rondeau Dec. 15 (PAW) and Hamilton Dec. 26-Feb. 29 (RC

et al) The three King Eiders at Ottawa Dec. 17-20 (RAF *et al*), Wolfe I., Dec. 18 (MHE *et al*) and Thornbury Jan. 6-7 (GKP) were average numbers for early winter. The traditional Harlequin Duck was back in Humber Bay to Feb. 26 (BDP, J & JT), perhaps the individual that appeared at Oakville Jan. 28 (DG). Other singles were in Ottawa Dec. 4 (RAF), their 4th ever, P.E. Pt., Dec. 17 (BM, RDW), Niagara Falls Jan. 29 (*vide* RFA) and Sombra (St. Clair R.) in late January (*vide* DFR). The 300-400 White-winged Scoters at Burlington Jan. 1 & 8 (RC, JBM *et al*) was a large concentration for the dates. Six Barrow's Goldeneyes were more than usual. Three males were near Washago Dec. 25-Feb. 10 (*vide* WZ, RLB), Niagara Falls Dec. 4-Jan. 28 (AGC, RFA), upriver from Ottawa Dec. 3 (BMD) and three females at Ottawa Dec. 1-Feb. 29 (BMD), Sarnia-Kettle Pt., Dec. 16-17, Feb. 25 (DFR, AHR) and Thornbury Jan. 16 (GKP). The 30 Hooded Mergansers in A.P.P., Dec. 3 were late departing (RGT). Tragedy in thick fog beset 1000+ divers, mainly mergansers, that plummeted over Niagara Falls Jan. 16. Estimates put the numbers killed at 500 minimum and 500 injured birds were stranded on the ice below (*vide* RWK). At Nanticoke to late January, about 10,000 Com. Mergansers basked in the warm outflow from the Ontario hydro generating station (L.P.B.O.).

VULTURES, HAWKS — The **Black Vulture** in Long Pt. P.P., Feb. 16-17 (DS, TW *et al*) was Ontario's 6th ever and first in winter. Turkey Vultures arrived at Pelee and Grimsby Feb. 15 & 23 (TH, GM) and the one at Simcoe Feb. 1 (TW) may have wintered. A late Osprey lingered at Vineland Dec. 1-13 (KMCK). The 49 Bald Eagle sightings (19 ad., 21 imm., 9 u.) were over double last winter's record in their increased winter numbers noted since 1978. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were double their normal numbers at 36 and 34 respectively, while the high total of 42 N. Goshawks reflected last autumn's irruption. The Rough-legged Hawks were concentrated around Nanticoke (L.P.B.O.) and on Amherst I., their peaks were 100 in December, 86 in January and only 25 in February as many moved N with mild weather. The five Golden Eagle records were in Petroglyphs P.P., Dec. 29-Jan. 12 (1 ad., 1 imm.—DCS), Kingston Jan. 7 & 21 (ad., K.F.N.), Appin-Melbourne in January and Hawk Cliff in February (WRJ). The Am. Kestrel at Sudbury Feb. 12 was very early (LC). Six Peregrines were reported at Pelee Dec. 3 (TH *et al*), Arnprior Jan. 7 (MR), Port Hope-Cobourg Feb. 4-5, 10 (ERM), Cranberry Marsh Feb. 19 (BDP, JCB) and Wheatley Feb. 19 (JB). A gray-phase imm. Gyrfalcon was banded at Sudbury Dec. 4 (CTB, JGL). A white-phase bird was on M.I., Dec. 18 (DBF, BW) and a gray bird in Ottawa Jan. 14 & 20 (FB, ED).

GROUSE THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Gray Partridges were in high numbers at Ottawa (BMD) and one appeared at Eganville Jan. 1 (DFB). Ruffed Grouse continued scarce everywhere and the only N. Bobwhite were from *Middlesex* (DM).

A Virginia Rail was killed on the road at Harwood Dec. 11 (ERM) and the Sora at Gore Bay, M.I., Dec. 16 was a surprise (CTB) as the previous latest was Sept. 22. Mild autumn conditions encouraged a number of late waders including Lesser Golden-Plover on Amherst I., Nov. 27 (PM, JHE), Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpiper Dec. 1, Least Sandpiper Dec. 2, Pectoral Sandpiper Dec. 1-3, all at Wheatley (TH, AW) and Dunlin at P. E. Pt., and Rondeau Dec. 17 (BM, RDW, PAW *et al*). The remnants from last autumn's heavy Purple Sandpiper flight were singles at Warton Dec. 15 (JWJ), P. E. Pt., Dec. 17 (BM, RDW) plus one and two at Erieau Dec. 4 & 16 (KJB, PAW). The Red Phalarope on Toronto Is., Dec. 3 (AJ) was the only report. The first Killdeer reached Pelee and w. *Elgin* by Feb. 13 (TH, DM) and Kingston by Feb. 19 (K.F.N.), and the two in St. Catharines Jan. 12 wintered (*vide* RFA). Associated with this migrant wave was an Am. Woodcock in Sarnia Feb. 19-23 (DFR) and another was found freshly dead at Pelee Feb. 19 (JB).

GULLS — Wintry conditions forced up to 50,000 gulls off L. Huron in the Sarnia-Kettle Pt. area around Dec. 17 (AHR) and most had disappeared from the Great Lakes by early January leaving observers to comment on a poor overall season for gulls. Up to five Little Gulls were at Niagara-on-the-Lake in early January, last seen Jan. 7, when an ad Com. Black-headed was also present (AGC *et al*). Heavy Bonaparte's migration involved 467 passing Adolphustown Dec. 17 (K.F.N.) and 1657 migrating off L. Huron at Sarnia Dec. 18 (DFR). Early northbound

Ring-billed were at Ottawa Feb. 17 (BMD) and Georgian Bay Islands N.P., Feb. 19 (BH, BF) and a Herring at Atikokan Feb. 20 (PJW). About 3000 Herrings arrived in 3 hours at P.E. Pt., Feb. 26 (JHE, RDW). Sightings of Thayer's numbered 21 made up by nine along the lower Great Lakes, eight at Sarnia, two at Ottawa and singles at the dump in Orillia Dec. 4 (WZ) and Brighton Dec. 5 (AGC). Glaucous Gulls outnumbered Icelanders by two to one as normal numbers of white-winged were reported. Five Lesser Black-backed were seen. An adult was at Niagara Falls Dec. 4 and the same or another was there in early February (AGC, IS *et al.*). Also present were a second-year bird in Hamilton Dec. 23 & Feb. 5 (RC, KMCL), an adult at Presqu'île P.P., Feb. 26 (DAS), both *graellsii* race, and a first-winter bird at P.E. Pt., Jan. 29 (RKE, KFE). Great Black-backed were scarce, the most by far being the 125 at Cornwall Jan. 25 (B. Morin). Four Black-legged Kittiwakes were at Burlington Dec. 11 (RC) and another was at Niagara Falls Dec. 25 (*vide* RFA).

OWLS—Two E. Screech-Owls seen in Peterborough Jan. 15 & Feb. 2 were the unusual red-phase (DCS). At Ottawa in January, four gray-phase birds were found in a weakened condition, two of which died (BMD). Four of the eight admitted to the Owl Research and Rehabilitation Foundation are releasable (KMCK). As part of the big push of n. owls S were four Great Horneds, *subarcticus* race. One spent the entire winter on Amherst I. (K.F.N.), singles were in Ottawa and Kanata during January and February and an ad. ♀ injured badly at Barrie Feb. 5 had to be put down (KMCK). The widespread Snowy Owl flight was light and as usual Kingston hosted the most, peaking at 13 on Wolfe I., Dec. 18 and 15 on Amherst I., through the period (K.F.N.). Sudbury held their N. Hawk-Owls as late as Jan. 8 when four were seen (JCN), but the birds were thought to have moved out along with the Great Grays. However, only five were found elsewhere at Mountain View, Prince Edward Dec. 15 (SL), Amherst I., Dec. 17 (FP), Owen Sound Jan. 11 (*vide* JWJ), Merrickville Jan. 15 - Mar. 12 (RH) and near Kingston Mar. 5 (JCB). Some 61 Barred Owls were sighted pointing to a major irruption of this normally sedentary species. They appeared in

Table 1. Number of different Great Gray Owls in southern Ontario—Winter 1983-84

	First Date	Last Date	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<i>Timiskaming*</i>	Oct 7	Feb 26	3	1	2	8
<i>Nipissing</i>	Dec 18	Jan 1	5	1	—	5
<i>Sudbury</i>	Dec 2	Feb 29	20	12	2	25
<i>Manitoulin I.</i>	Dec 11	Feb 29	4	4	2	6
<i>Bruce</i>	Jan 2	Feb 15	—	1	1	1
<i>Muskoka</i>	early Dec	Feb 28	?	?	?	22
<i>Simcoe</i>	Dec 31	Feb 8	?	?	?	26
<i>York</i>	Jan 1	Feb 4	—	8	2	7
<i>Haliburton</i>	Dec 9	Dec 31	2	—	—	2
<i>Peterborough-</i>						
<i>Victoria</i>	Dec 1	Feb 18	28	52	27	91
<i>Durham</i>	Jan 11	Jan 31	—	3	—	3
<i>Northumberland</i>	Dec 23	Jan 29	1	6	—	6
<i>Hastings</i>	early Feb	—	—	—	1	1
<i>Lennox &</i>						
<i>Addington</i>	Dec 28	Feb 29	6	20	15	27
<i>Frontenac</i>	Dec 11	Feb 29	12	29	18	51
<i>Renfrew</i>	Nov 28	Feb —	9	7	4	15
<i>Lanark</i>	Dec 17	—	1	—	—	1
<i>Leeds and</i>						
<i>Grenville</i>	Dec 2	Feb 29	7	18	10	32
<i>Ottawa-Carleton</i>	Dec 8	Feb 24	25	29	17	46
<i>Prescott &</i>						
<i>Russell</i>	Dec 15	Jan 29	4	1	—	5
<i>Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry</i>	late Dec	Feb 2	5	14	5	19
Totals			132	206	106	399
						8
						407

*plus 8, taxidermist in Matachewan

S.A.

The Great Gray Owl irrupted into s. Ontario in its largest incursion ever recorded. South of Sudbury Regional Municipality—*Timiskaming*, considered the separation with n. Ontario, there were at least 407 different Great Grays tallied, which exceed the 334 thought to have appeared in all of e. North America during their record 1978-1979 irruption. The owls appeared to have migrated SE through Sudbury, *Nipissing* and around Georgian Bay, although the one at Miller L., on the upper *Bruce* Jan 2 probably crossed from M.I. A line from n. *Simcoe* to Peterborough and Kingston marked the s. boundary of the large numbers, s.w. of which there were isolated sightings. Whether owls came in from Quebec is unknown. By late December, they reached the L. Ontario shore, but numbers in the s.e. counties did not peak until January. Observers at Ottawa noted another influx of new owls around Feb. 7. Coincident with the warm spell in February, their numbers dropped virtually everywhere. Whether they had departed or had retreated out of sight into heavy woods is uncertain. At the same time, observers noted less diurnal and more nocturnal activity. Permanent territories were set up in many localities and Great Grays could be seen defending these throughout the winter. Most of the birds appeared healthy and as expected some were killed crossing highways and a few shot by 'brave' gunslingers. The greatest numbers were detected in Kingston with 99 different owls across the s. edge of 3 counties, in *Peterborough-Victoria* 91 and Ottawa 46. These are conservative counts obtained by mapping the sightings. The accompanying Table contains data mainly by county, some of which had few owl reports probably due to a dearth of observers rather than an absence of owls.

Sightings in n. Ontario were few. One was found dead near Moosonee along the rail line Dec. 14 (KFA) and the only report from Cochrane was of one caught in a trap n. of L. Abitibi in January (ERA). Others included five at Thunder Bay Nov. 26-Feb. 14 (MJM), three in Atikokan Jan. 6-Feb. 16 (SFP), singles at Vermillion Bay Dec. 27 and Kenora Feb. 7 (SRM) which brings the season's total to an impressive 419.

cities during daylight beginning in late December. There were 14 birds at Peterborough, 13 around Toronto, 11 at Kingston and individuals penetrated SW to the Hamilton area, Guelph, Waterloo and Long Pt.

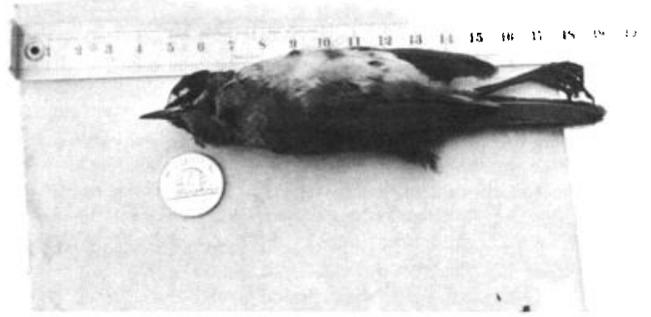
Not to be outdone, the Boreal Owl moved S in numbers exceeding their heavy flight of 1968-1969 and possibly 1922-1923, although it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons with a time when there were so few observers. Some 17 were well s. of their normal range, but sadly six of these were found dead and another was very badly injured in a collision at Unionville Feb. 8 (KMCK). The dead were at Yarker, Peterborough (2), Eganville, Pembroke and Innisville Jan. 1-Feb. 25. The four on Amherst I., feasted all winter on a bountiful Meadow Vole supply (K.F.N.). Singles were at Douglas, Peterborough, Pickering, Dundas and two at Renfrew. Were the species as obvious as the Great Gray, how many would have been found? Northern Saw-whets were reported mainly from the s.w., but one was in North Bay Feb. 10 (GFC) and 12+ wintered on Amherst I. (K.F.N.).

KINGFISHERS THROUGH WRENS—Of a dozen wintering Belted Kingfishers, one on M.I., was farthest n. (JCN). Excluding the CBCs, there were 33 reports of wintering Red-bellied Woodpeckers. The one at Peterborough provided the area's 3rd winter record (DCS). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was in Wiarton Dec. 18 (JWJ) and another wintered in Toronto (BDP). Numbers of Downy and Hairy woodpeckers were lower especially in A.P.P. (RGT). Not a single three-toed was reported and Black-backed were also scarce. The 4 out-of-range reports were of singles at Dorcas Bay and Oshawa Dec. 15 (PMi, MJB), Petroglyphs P.P., Dec. 31 (PHo *et al.*) and Gananoque Feb. 7 (RDM). Four wintering N. Flickers each at Peterborough and Kingston were unusual numbers for the northerly locations (DCS, K.F.N.).

Two out-of-range Gray Jays were in the Barrie area for the first week of December (CJM) and singles were at Tobermory Dec. 15 (PMi) and Kingston Feb. 16 (W. Wong). Four nests were under construction in A.P.P., Feb. 25 (RDS). A Black-billed Magpie wintered at the Kenora



Boreal Owl, Amherst I., Ont., Mar. 10, 1984. Photo/B. Spencer.



Siberian Rubythroat, Hornby, Ont., Dec. 26, 1983. Photo/A.D. Brewer.

dump (SRM) and 7000 Am. Crows were using a St. Catharines roost in January (RWK *et al.*). Fifty Com. Ravens were found roosting in Sudbury Jan. 1 along the flues leading to INCO's giant smokestack (JGL). Following last autumn's Black-capped Chickadee irruption along the lower Great Lakes, their numbers were low in A.P.P., but high in Niagara, Thunder Bay, Kenora and Moosonee. Up to six Boreals lingered at Peterborough to Jan. 15 (DCS), three in Kingston to Feb. 4 (K.F.N.), and three and two all winter respectively, at Utterson and Bracebridge (WW, DW). The 23 Tufted Titmice reported was an encouraging number. They wintered at 5 locations in Niagara, 3 sites in Hamilton and at another in Oakville. Red-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers were very scarce, but the 11 Carolina Wrens suggested a rebound. Singles wintered n. to Kingston, Ottawa and Owen Sound. An early Winter Wren arrived at Kingston Feb. 18 (KFE) and three Marsh Wrens were last seen in Pelee Dec. 13 (TH, AW) before the intense winter cold set in.

KINGLETS THROUGH WARBLERS — The only Ruby-crowned Kinglet reports were of singles at Pelee Dec. 14 (AW) and Kortright Jan. 15 (*vide* BDP). The rarest bird of the period was the ♂ **Siberian Rubythroat** found dead at Hornby Dec. 26 (ML) which was a first for Canada and a first s. of the Aleutians. The specimen is now in the R.O.M. Late E. Bluebirds were eight at Effingham to Jan. 6 (MEF, LG) and four near Simcoe to Jan. 15 (*vide* L.P.B.O.). The only Townsend's Solitaire seen was at Presqu'île P.P., Feb. 12-15 (D. & F. Drew, RDM). The seven Hermit Thrushes wintering away from the extreme s.w. were more than normal. Nine Varied Thrushes, mainly at feeders, equals the record in the same period November 1977-February 1978. Birds were at Dorset Dec. 9-29 (RJP, *et al.*), Gravenhurst Dec. 11 (PT *et al.*), Aberfoyle Dec. 26-Mar. 11 (*vide* ADB), Brantford Dec. 28 (KER), Beeton in early January (MPW), Whitby Jan. 31-Feb. 29 (AGC *et al.*), Tobermory Nov. 19-Feb. 5 (*vide* JWJ) and Rondeau Jan. 14 & Feb. 28 (DK, KJB). The 19 reports between 1962-77 compare with 41 for 1977-83 suggesting a change in their winter status in the province. Late Gray

Catbirds were in Rondeau and Richmond Hill Dec. 17 (TH *et al.*, *vide* BDP). For reasons that are not apparent, Brown Thrashers stayed in unusually large, perhaps record, numbers. Eight remained throughout the winter at feeders in Burlington, Whitby, Kingston, Ottawa (3), Arnprior and Renfrew. Ten others were noted for shorter periods as far n. as Tobermory and Delta. Bohemian Waxwings invaded e. Ontario in numbers. Noteworthy flocks included 882 at Carleton Place Dec. 31 (BMD) and 1500 at Peterborough Jan. 15 (DCS) and hundreds were in Ottawa all winter. Some reached s. to Kingston and Whitby. The late Orange-crowned Warbler at Niagara-on-the-Lake Dec. 3 was thought to have been injured (RDM *et al.*). Ottawa's 2nd January Pine Warbler stayed at a feeder Dec. 15-Jan. 20 (DFB, ph.). Other Pines reported were singles at Fonthill and St. Catharines Dec. 18 & 21 (*vide* RWK) and two at a Fort Erie feeder Dec. 18 & 31, one of which stayed to Jan. 22 (HHA). Also unusual were the two Ovenbirds at feeders in Kingston Dec. 4-18 (EG *et al.*) and Providence Bay, M.I., Dec. 10-17 (CTB *et al.*). The one at Kingston probably perished in the intense cold.



Pine Warbler, Ottawa, Ont., Jan. 17, 1984. Photo/D.F. Brunton.

TOWHEES THROUGH GROSBEAKS — Six Rufous-sided Towhees wintered n. to Ottawa and Peterborough. Two Chipping Sparrows lingered at Rondeau to Dec. 18 (TH) and another stayed at a Cobourg feeder through January (ERM). Four Field Sparrows survived the winter at feeders on M.I., Kingston, Cambridge and Vittoria and a late Lincoln's Sparrow was at Rondeau to Dec. 17 (TH *et al.*). A Dark-eyed Junco, *oreganus* race, appeared at an Oakville feeder Jan. 8 (*vide* BDP). Peak numbers of Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings occurred on Wolfe I., with 231 & 4000 on Dec. 18 & Jan. 7, respectively (K.F.N.). Red-winged Blackbirds and Com. Grackles arrived in numbers in mid-February over wide areas s. of Sudbury only to be hit hard by heavy snow and cold. Two grackles wintered successfully at feeders in Virginiatown (PWR). A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was still at Pelee Dec. 7 (AW) and two late Brewer's tarried at Rondeau Jan. 3 (KJB, PAW) and the male in Melbourne Feb. 25 was early (DM). Pine Grosbeaks were reported everywhere except in the extreme s.w., although a few reached

Port Rowan (HKD) and Pinery P.P. (DFR). Highest numbers in the s. occurred in December-January and perhaps their increase in the Cochrane area in late February reflected N migration. Low numbers of Purple Finches were reported. The first confirmed House Finches in *Bruce* visited an Owen Sound feeder Dec. 14-Jan. 16 (DF) and Ottawa's first wintering pair were at a feeder (BMD). Crossbills were true to form and kept out of sight. A few of both species were in Ottawa. Reds included a pair near Sudbury Dec. 30 (JCN), eight and a single in A.P.P., respectively Jan. 17 & Feb. 21 (RGT, RDS) while single White-winged were at P.E. Pt., Dec. 17 (BM, RDW), Oshawa Dec. 27 (*vide* BDP) and eight at Moosonee Dec. 3 (KFA). Common Redpolls remained scarce in the s., but large numbers appeared at Kenora in February (SRM). They were virtually absent from the James Bay coast at Moosonee as well (KFA, CR). Only in Cochrane were Pine Siskins common through the winter (ERA). The strong showing by Evening Grosbeaks faded early in the new year and the birds remained scarce everywhere.

CORRIGENDA — The Warbling Vireo assigned to Pelee Apr. 12, 1983 (AB 37:866) should be deleted (AW) and the three Willow Flycatchers noted at Huntsville in summer 1983 (AB 37:984) were Alder Flycatchers (RLB).

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NIAGARA-CHAMPLAIN REGION

/Douglas P. Kibbe and Cheryl M. Boise

Intense cold in December and January was followed by a long February thaw that lured back many early returnees and belied the fact that the severest winter storms were yet to come when the period closed. Snow cover through the period was modest, except in the Great Lakes' snowbelts, much of the precipitation coming in the form of ice storms. The latter however, were probably more devastating to small passerines than is snow. Early season temperatures were well below average, later soaring to the sixties.

Observers waited in vain for an influx of northern finches but were rewarded instead by a smattering of Great Gray Owls. Early winter ice storms eliminated most half-hardy species and observers succeeded in turning up few rarities at feeders. Gulls, the salvation from the birding doldrums in recent winters, returned to their normal assortment and only the early thaw saved many observers from sheer boredom. Two of the season's greatest rarities were "discovered" only after being photographed and departing. This summary suffered from a dearth of Christmas Bird Count (hereafter, CBC) reports received.

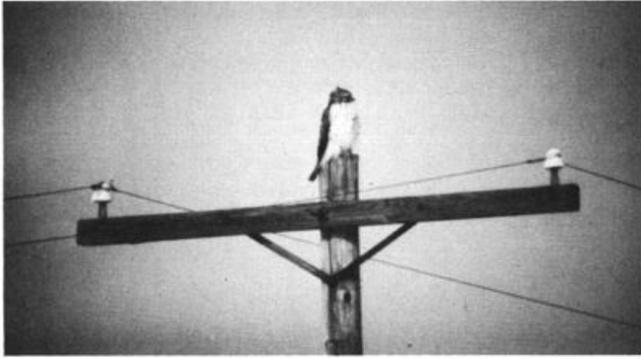
LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Wintering loons were scarce as intense cold kept open water at a premium. Although Red-throated Loons are outnumbered by Com. Loons at least 4:1 in winter, observers should not automatically assume any loon seen during this season is a Common. Pied-billed and Horned grebes were in low numbers although decreased open water caused local concentrations. A N flight of Red-necked Grebes started in mid-February. No convincing reports of Eared Grebes were received. The early season cold made lingering herons noticeably scarce; supposedly none survived past the new year. A prolonged mid-February thaw brought swans, geese and ducks back in record numbers. Peak Tundra Swan counts came as usual from extreme w. New York. Mute Swans were noted at 4 locations, at least some of these sightings representing migrating birds. Snow and blue-phase Snow Geese were widely reported accompanying the massive flocks of Canadas in New York. A Greater White-fronted Goose on the Ferrisburg CBC provided only the 2nd state record. Other waterfowl in the news included over 1000 Com. Mergansers swept over Niagara Falls in heavy fog Jan. 16. This disaster exceeds in magnitude a similar incident involving several hundred Whistling Swans in 1928. The mid-February "false spring" brought representatives of most puddle ducks back weeks ahead of schedule. Harlequin Ducks and Barrow's Goldeneye



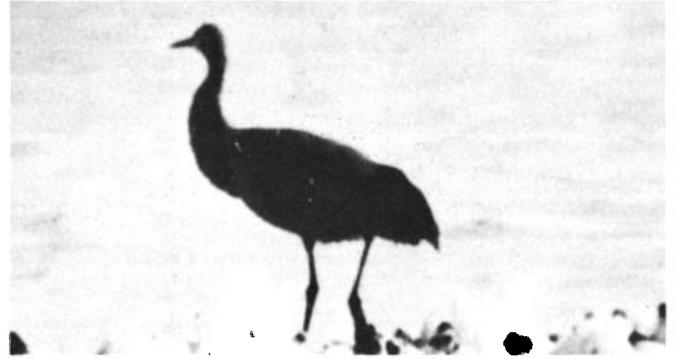
were found as usual at Niagara Falls and up to four Harlequins were spotted at Braddock Bay. The appearance of a Harlequin on the Burlington waterfront Jan. 15, was more notable (TR), this being the first Vermont sighting since 1966.

HAWKS THROUGH GULLS — Although Turkey Vultures have previously been reported from the Region every month, the sightings Dec. 17 at Perch River W.M.A. (SB, NL, *vide* LC), two Jan. 1 on the Thousand Island CBC and another Jan. 22 at Herietta, N.Y. (KM) and two Feb. 19 at Westminster, Vt. (AK, *vide* DC) were noteworthy nonetheless. The latter pair was the first of many early migrants. Bald Eagles were widely noted but it is unknown what proportion were regionally hacked birds. The best sighting, seven on the Thousand Island CBC (*vide* KC), exceeded usual seasonal totals only a few years ago. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were present in usual numbers. Cooper's Hawks are banded at Webster by a raptor enthusiast who maintains a barnful of pigeons as bait. At one point, three Cooper's pursued quarry into the barn at once! Banded birds are treated before release with antibiotics to control respiratory fungal infections which these birds contract from domestic pigeons (JC, *vide* RS). The potential ramifications of such a disease reservoir are obvious and deserve further investigation. Northern Goshawks staged, at best, a modest influx.

Merlins, very rare in winter, were sighted Dec. 17 & Jan. 7 (MD *et al.*) near Rochester, N.Y. and Peacham, Vt., Feb. 6 (EM) and a single Peregrine was reported. American Kestrel and Rough-legged Hawk numbers were down in most areas, probably reflecting limited prey availability. Snow cover, while not exceptional, was hard crusted. A Broad-winged Hawk photographed at Letchworth S.P. (DB) to become



Imm. Broad-winged Hawk, Castile Entrance, Letchworth S.P., Jan., 1984. Photo/W. Hammond.



Sandhill Crane, Stickney Farm, Pleasant Valley Rd., Rockingham, Vt., Dec. 28, 1983. Photo/E. Pelkey.

the Region's first unequivocal winter record, remained there throughout January. Red-shouldered Hawks, slightly less rare in winter, were reported mid-winter from 2 areas in addition to early migrants noted in mid-February.

Ring-necked Pheasants are now exceedingly scarce in c. and w. New York where they were considered common only a decade ago. Although 63 Gray Partridges were recorded on the Watertown CBC, the species was reportedly down in numbers in the St. Lawrence Valley (LC) and unreported in the Champlain Valley. A Sandhill Crane on a manure pile near Rockingham Dec. 28 astonished everyone including the original photographer who assumed it to have been a Great Blue Heron, but fortunately allowed others to look at his prints a week or 2 later. Hard crusted snow in the e. one-half of the Region must have stressed Ruffed Grouse and Wild Turkey populations although the latter did not frequent feeders widely as they have occasionally in past years. Killdeer and Am. Woodcock returned prematurely to several areas during the mid-February thaw and a woodcock seen in late December at Island Cottage (KG) was apparently trying to overwinter. Several Com. Snipe were found throughout the season and a hardy Red Phalarope spent Dec. 2-17 in Dunkirk Harbor (LB, FR, m.ob).

Many observers who count heavily on the appearance of one or another rare larid to pull them through the winter were sorely disappointed this season. "White-winged" gulls were widely reported but in unimpressive numbers. Only Rochester, with Little Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and Black-legged Kittiwake, could boast an assortment. Two imm. Thayer's Gulls at Fulton, another near Oswego (FS), and a kittiwake at Niagara Falls were the only other notables in this group. Great Black-backed Gulls continue to increase in all areas and now equal or exceed Herring Gull numbers in winter on the St. Lawrence R. (KC).

DOVES THROUGH PIPITS — Mourning Doves continue to overwinter in increasing numbers that cannot be explained by the prevalence of bird feeders. Wintering individuals frequently have toes frostbitten off and one wonders how advantageous such hardness can be. The only N. Hawk-Owl sighted helped itself to a Blue Jay at an Arlington, Vt. feeder in mid-February before departing (M & LPB). An influx of Great Gray Owls rivaled that of 1979. The invasion was limited to the n. portion of the Region with 30 in St. Lawrence County (concentrated in the Massena-Postdam area) six in Jefferson County, one in Lewis County (*vide* KC) and a total of five in Vermont.

At least several of this winter's sightings were at or very close to areas occupied during the last invasion, raising the questions of how and why a handful of the same and/or different individuals, select the same areas occupied by them and/or their predecessors. Other n. owls were in short supply indicating the movement of Great Grays was determined by factors, in large part at least, independent of those influencing Snowy, Long-eared and Short-eared owls. Although all 3 species were widely reported, concentrations were unremarkable. Northern Saw-whet Owls were well reported but provided no clue as to their status. Do more reports equal more knowledgeable observers or more owls? In any event, one photographed in Smoke Swamp in c. New York later proved to have been a Boreal Owl (*vide* PD).

Belted Kingfishers were largely forced S of the Region by the cold, and Red-headed Woodpeckers were present in lower than usual numbers

in c. New York due to a poor acorn crop (RS). Sightings in Vermont and one near Watertown, N.Y., however, were n. of normal wintering areas. Red-bellied Woodpeckers clung to their n. New York frontier with a pair at Henderson (LC), and we speculate that they will soon be added to Vermont's list of breeding birds.

A Three-toed Woodpecker, already out of range at Brownsville, Vt., acted out of character by visiting a suet feeder briefly in December (AK). Most Boreal Chickadees stayed close to home, with a suet feeder attendee at Belmont, N.Y., throughout January and February (D & LPB) being the most notable exception.

This winter's best concentration of Com. Ravens, at least 60, gathered on Island Pond's island (FO). Two other concentrations of 40 were noted at Wolcott (*vide* FO) and Randolph, Vt. (SL, MS). Although winter raven roosts are a recurring phenomenon in the Region they show little constancy as to location, a fact which raises the question of what factors influence their occurrence.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were uniformly scarce: Carolina Wrens were either better reported or on an upswing but all sightings were limited to New York. Golden-crowned Kinglets were nearly impossible to find at n. elevations following December sleet and ice storms. One-eighth inch of ice is as effective as a glacier in covering this tiny passerine's food resources. Half-hardy thrushes of any description were in short supply despite fair to good berry crops in many areas. Two Varied Thrushes were seen in North Lansing, N.Y., in January (BC, *vide* CBC) and Cavendish, Vt. in December (BD).

Gray Catbirds and Brown Thrashers appeared briefly at a few feeders but generally succumbed or departed shortly. Northern Mockingbirds, more inclined to winter through, may have fared poorly under the icy frigid conditions which prevailed early in the season. Water Pipits lingered until Dec. 9 at Dunkirk Harbor and reappeared at 2 c. New York locations during the February thaw. Although considered a rarity during the winter at our latitude, the species is hardy, regularly wintering n. to Virginia and because of its uninspired choice of habitat may be overlooked more frequently than not.

WAXWINGS THROUGH FINCHES — Small flocks of Cedar Waxwings often accompanied by a few Bohemians were fairly common at the onset of the season but rapidly decreased in occurrence as winter progressed. Best numbers of Bohemians came from Vermont, a flock of 200 at Brandon (EB *et al.*) being the top tally. Northern Shrikes were scarce while the single report of a Loggerhead Shrike, reportedly seen in the town of Aurora Jan. 1 (*vide* B.O.S.) lacked accompanying details. Perhaps the most startling sighting of this season was a White-eyed Vireo found at Fulton, N.Y., Dec. 18 (FS), a record late date. Lingered half-hardy warblers and sparrows fared poorly under the onslaught of early winter and were unremarkable. Several N. Orioles were noted, one at Colton, N.Y., being present, remarkably, in February (JW, *vide* KC). Northern Cardinals are thriving and judging from a recaptured bird at least 9 years old at Alfred (EB), leading long lives. Only one Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported, Dec. 11-12 at the Carlson's feeder in Fredonia (*vide* L.E.B.C.). Northern finches were uniformly poor for at least the 2nd year throughout the Region. White-winged Crossbills went unreported. Even locally breeding species, *i.e.* Purple and goldfinches, seemed to have forsaken us. House Finches, however, were much in evidence. Winter site fidelity is an intriguing phenomenon warranting

much greater attention than has been directed towards it in the past, particularly as it is exemplified by w. strays and n. raptors which reappear with unusual regularity at certain points. This year's award for fidelity goes to a 9-year-old Am. Tree Sparrow recaptured at Alfred (EB).

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APPALACHIAN REGION

/George A. Hall

It was a winter of contrasts—some of the coldest weather in recent years, and some of the mildest. Most of the reporters felt that the birding was only fair for the season, but even so there were a number of interesting events.

The season started with some very mild weather in early December, and there was one moderate snowfall. At Christmas, however a period of intense and even record cold set in, with temperatures below zero even in the south. At Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the month was 147 day-degrees below average, and rainfall was 1.88 inches above average. January was also colder than normal but much drier than normal. Early February turned quite mild with temperatures soaring to the low seventies in places. The latter part of the month turned colder, however. Snowfall for the whole season was well below normal, and the only heavy snows came in the north in late February.

With the mild early December there were many reports of late migrants. Waterfowl were quite common, and a number of "half-hardy" stragglers were present. Those areas that took their Audubon Society Christmas Bird Counts before the advent of the bitter cold weather, and the general freeze-up had very successful counts. Area after area reported long lists of species in record high numbers. With the cold weather, after December 23 birds were much scarcer and with the freeze-up of most of the lakes, waterfowl disappeared. At Lake Erie the number of waterfowl dropped from over 6000 to fewer than 200 (JM).

The mild weather in February initiated an early migration for many species including some waterfowl (that found open water scarce and hence were likely to be concentrated) and blackbirds.

The only northern species to come south in any numbers were Evening Grosbeaks which were generally distributed and Pine Siskins which were locally distributed. There was a modest invasion of Northern Shrikes.

Place names in *italics> are counties. CBC refers to Christmas Bird Count.*

LOONS, GREBES, CORMORANTS — The only report of the Red-throated Loon came from State College, Pa., in December (MK & TS). On Dec. 10 at least 1500 Horned Grebes were at Pymatuning L., Pa., but only 24 remained for the CBC on the 18th (RFL). There was a minor storm-induced fall-out of Horned Grebes at Presque Isle S.P., Pa. (hereafter, P.I.S.P.) in late December with 240 counted Dec. 17 (JM). Two Red-necked Grebes were reported on the Morgantown, W.Va. CBC, Dec. 17 (*fide* PM), one was seen at Conneaut L., Pa., Dec. 18 (RFL), and one was seen at Chattanooga, Tenn., Dec. 17 (DB).

Double-crested Cormorants were reported from Pymatuning L., Pa., Dec. 3 (RFL); P.I.S.P., Dec. 10 (JM), the Chattanooga CBC, and the L. Chatuge, Tenn. CBC (*fide* RS), Boone L., Tenn., Dec. 30 (RK), and up to 10 at Watts Bar L., Tenn., throughout the period (WJ).

HERONS AND WATERFOWL — An Am. Bittern was reported on the Chattanooga C.B.C. (*fide* RS). It was an unusual year for Great Blue Herons. There was a high count of 292 on the Hiwassee L., Tenn. CBC (*fide* RS), but numerous other stations reported record high numbers and many remained through the winter even as far n. as Warren, Pa. (TG, JD). Green-backed Herons were also more numerous than usual. A



rather late Black-crowned Night-Heron was at P.I.S.P., Dec. 3 (DS).

During the early part of December waterfowl were in good numbers and most CBCs showed high numbers, but after the cold in late December, at which time most of the lakes froze, there were few around. The N migration had not started to any degree by the end of the period.

A few Tundra Swans remained in the Region in early December with 210 seen at Pymatuning L., Pa., Dec. 10 (RFL) and one remained on the New R., in West Virginia through January and February (JP). The N migration came early with a few birds seen as early as the first week in February. Four Mute Swans were in the Johnson City, Tenn. area Dec. 30-Feb. 29 (GE), six were seen on the Ohio R., at Gallipolis, O., Jan. 28 (GR), four were on the Ohio R., at Belleville, W.Va., Feb. 12 (LB) and three at Coolville, O., Feb. 19 (JC).

Greater White-fronted Geese were reported from Pymatuning L., Pa., Jan. 7 (JM) & Feb. 19 (JB) and one was at Oak Ridge, Tenn., Feb. 21 (WJ). A Eur. Wigeon was seen at Parrott, Va., Jan. 14 (SB). There were seven Snow Geese (6 white and one blue) at Pymatuning Dec. 18 (RFL), but Jan. 7 there were six blues and four whites (JM *et al.*). Snow Geese were also reported from Mosquito L., O., Dec. 18 (CB), Salem, O., (NL); Blacksburg, Va., in January and February (DJ, CK); and one was at Oak Ridge, Tenn., Feb. 22-24 (LF & BM). Six Brant were seen at P.I.S.P., Dec. 8 (JM). Canada Geese seemed to have wintered throughout the Region, wherever there was open water. Flocks of several hundred were present throughout the length of the Ohio R. Earlier about 2000± were listed on the Hiwassee CBC (*fide* RS); 7800 at Pymatuning L., on the CBC (RFL); and 16,000 at Mosquito L., O., on the Turnbull CBC (CB).

It was a great season for all 3 scoter species, usually uncommon in this Region. The Black Scoter was also in *Columbiana*, O. (NL) and one was at Chickamauga L., Tenn., Dec. 17 (LD). The rare Surf Scoter was at P.I.S.P., Dec. 17 (JB), *Augusta* Jan. 17 (YL) and *Columbiana*, O. (NL). White-wingeds were found at Pymatuning L., Dec. 18 (a CBC

first—RFL), at P I S P , Dec 5, Feb 5 & 19 (JM, SS), Wheeling, W Va., Jan 17 (P & FT), Shenandoah L., Va., Jan 16-17 (R B C), Boone L., Tenn., Jan. 22-29 (MD & RK); *Hamilton*, Tenn., Dec. 3 (RS), Chickamauga L., Tenn., Dec. 17 (JP), and *Jefferson*, Tenn., Jan. 20 (MDa). The 2 duck records of the season were of two **Harlequin Ducks** shot by hunters at Norris L., Tenn., Jan. 8, for the first Tennessee records (CN), and a **Barrow's Goldeneye** at P.I.S.P., Feb. 26 (GW & JH). Oldsquaws were reported from Donegal, Pa., Dec. 4 & 20 (RCL); Bald Eagle S.P., Pa., Dec. 11 (PS); Huntington, W.Va., Dec. 17 (TI); and Guilford L., O. (NL).

RAPTORS — The e. Tennessee mid-winter count listed only 19 Bald Eagles which is perhaps 30-40% below normal (WJ) but this may have been because the species was spread over a far wider range than usual. There were too many reports to give individual details. Besides the usual wintering places such as Pymatuning L., Pa., Warren, Pa., and Mosquito L., O. and the e. Tennessee lakes, reports came from the full length of the Ohio R., in the Region, as well as many other inland localities throughout the Region. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks seemed to be doing well with good numbers reported. At Lock Haven, Pa., the CBC counts were the highest on record (PS), but at Powdermill Nature Reserve, Pa. (hereafter, P.N.R.) (RCL) and at Knoxville (CN) both species were reported in lower than normal numbers. There were reports of N. Goshawks from the Mendota Tower, Va., hawk lookout Dec 17 (NL); Cambridge Springs, Pa., Jan. 21 & Feb. 4 (RFL); State College, Pa., in early February (MO). Rough-legged Hawks were in lower than normal numbers in the Pymatuning L., Pa. area (RFL), the L. Erie shore (JM) and elsewhere in the n., but perhaps this represented a movement farther s. than normal since reports came from many more places than usual, with records as far s. as Chattanooga, e. Kentucky, *Scott*, Va., and n. Georgia (TM).

Golden Eagles were reported from: Shenandoah Mt., Va., Dec. 5 (LT), Pigeon Mt., Ga., Jan. 28 (JPa) and Chattanooga in January (*fide* RS), *Marion*, Tenn., all period (DJ); *Highland*, Va., Jan. 6 (R.B.C.); State College, Pa., mid-February (MO); *Avella*, Pa., Feb. 6 (*fide* JBu); and Huntington, W.Va., several times in January and February (*fide* TI)

Merlins were reported from Russell, Pa., Dec. 5 (WS); *Botetourt*, Va., Dec. 18 (m.ob.); the Hiwassee area, Tenn. CBC, Dec. 31 (*fide* RS), and *Indiana*, Pa., Dec. 31 (M & RH). Peregrines were reported from Fairview, N.C., Jan. 19 (RW); *Broadway*, Va., Feb. 10 (RF); and there were 4 sightings near *Blacksburg*, Va., in February (*fide* JMu).

A Gyrfalcon was shot in *Rockingham*, Va., in late January. The wounded bird was brought to a rehabilitation center, where its wounds were treated, although it may never be possible to release it. This constituted the first record s. of New Jersey and Pennsylvania (YL).

CRANES, SHOREBIRDS, GULLS — There were several mid-December records of the Sandhill Crane in the n. Georgia region (HD) and at Chattanooga 60 were seen on the unusual date of Jan. 20 (JBo). Northward migration started in the 3rd week of February and n. Georgia and s. e. Tennessee localities reported many sightings during that period. Least Sandpipers and Dunlins were seen at *Ooltewah*, Tenn., Dec. 3 (RS), Dunlin at P.I.S.P., Dec. 16 & 17 (DSt, JM), were late. Killdeer and Am. Woodcock arrived in the n. by Feb. 20, early in both cases.

December might well have been called the month of the gulls, since before the general freeze-up Bonaparte's and Ring-billed gulls were unusually numerous almost everywhere. At P.I.S.P., the total gull numbers built up to 45,000 by mid-December, and this was somewhat lower than normal (JM), reflecting the great dispersion into other areas. At Linesville, Pa. (Pymatuning L.) the CBC listed 3000 Bonaparte's and 2700 Ring-billeds (RFL). Flocks of 100-300 Ring-billeds were common on all the major rivers, and inland localities had record numbers of Bonaparte's. As expected, these flocks disappeared in the n. when the lakes froze but numbers remained high through the period on the s. lakes and the ice-free rivers. The gull record of the year was a **Glaucous Gull** at Pymatuning L., Pa., Feb. 11 (RFL & ML), the first w. Pennsylvania record away from L. Erie. On L. Erie, P.I.S.P. produced the usual reports of the rarer gulls: Glaucous Dec. 23-Feb. 25 (SS); Iceland Feb. 19 (SS), and Little Jan. 8 (SS). Of more interest were the three (at least) Thayer's Gulls seen there Dec. 8-Jan. 22 (JM, SS), the 2nd winter in a row for this species at that location. Noteworthy, also was an apparent Glaucous x Herring Gull hybrid at P.I.S.P., Dec. 4 (JM, SS).

PARAKEETS, OWLS, WOODPECKERS — A Monk Parakeet was seen travelling with a flock of Evening Grosbeaks at Moorefield, W Va., Dec. 8 (AC).

The only report of a Snowy Owl came from Hungtingdon, Pa., Jan 22 (LBr). Two Long-eared Owls became traffic casualties in *Augusta*, Va., Dec. 26 & Feb. 7 (*fide* RSn). Another Long-eared survived a car collision at P.N.R., Jan. 7, the 3rd local record (RCL). Short-eared Owls were reported from L. Arthur, Pa., Dec. 4 (DF); Roanoke, Va., Dec. 17 (NM) & 19 (BK); Weyer's Cave, *Augusta*, Va., throughout the period; *Conneaut L.*, Pa., Dec. 21 (RCL & ML); and P.I.S.P., Feb. 19, where it was consorting with gulls (JM). Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported from Warren, Pa., Feb. 5 (JS) and from the Cranberry Glades, W.Va., Feb. 26 (JP).

The Red-headed Woodpecker, which is almost gone from this Region, was listed at 8 different localities from Jersey Shore, Pa. (PS) to s.e. Tennessee where eight were listed on the Chattanooga CBC (*fide* RS) and at least seven in the Knoxville area (CN). Red-bellied Woodpeckers again showed numerous records in the n. part of the Region with 4 reports from Erie (JM), two on the Linesville, Pa., CBC (RFL), one from *Harmonsborg*, Pa., Feb. 25 (LWi), *Tidioute*, Pa. (AE), and *Irvine*, Pa. (DD), and several records from the Lock Haven, Pa. area (PS) Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers seemed more common than in some winters Most remarkable were five Red-cockaded Woodpeckers in 2 groups in Great Smoky Mountains N.P., Feb. 4 (CN, MDa).

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS, TITMICE — There was a number of late December records for E. Phoebe: *Rockingham*, Va., Dec. 8 & 17 (R.B.C.); *Parkersburg*, W.Va., Dec. 17 (LR) and on the *O&A*, W.Va., Huntington, W.Va. (TI), and the *Wise*, Va. (RP) CBCs. A mid-winter record came from *Cave Run L.*, Ky., Jan. 6 (FB), but the only early spring arrival date was in *Rockingham*, Va., Feb. 22 (R.B.C.)

The only arrival of Purple Martins by the end of the period was from *Murray*, Ga., Feb. 10 (HD). A most remarkable occurrence was that of a Barn Swallow in *Erie*, Pa., Feb. 21 (JM).

The fall invasion of Black-capped Chickadees remained much in evidence. They were common as far s. as *Blacksburg* and *Roanoke*, Va. Several places in the n. had record CBC totals, and in the n. part of the range of the Carolina Chickadee, Black-capped often outnumbered the s. species. Two Carolina Chickadees were at P.N.R., in December but not later (RCL) and this species is increasing in the Pittsburgh area (PH) Boreal Chickadees were reported from *Allegheny*, Pa., where one was coming to a feeder Dec. 11-Feb. 29+ (m.ob.) and from Warren, Pa., Jan. 19-Feb. 29+ (RR). The Tufted Titmouse was another species reported in record numbers on many CBCs.

NUTHATCHES, CREEPER, WRENS — Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread and in numbers above those of an average winter, but the influx could hardly be called a major invasion. The 24 listed on the Linesville, Pa. CBC (RFL) was typical. Brown Creepers were also in unusually large numbers with several record high CBC totals.

A Carolina Wren was at a feeder near P.I.S.P., Dec. 17 (DS) and at least three were present in *Warren*, Pa., throughout the period. Farther s in w. Pennsylvania and n. West Virginia the numbers were good going into the cold weather in late December, and most of these birds seemed to have survived. This may well be due to the lack of heavy snowfalls with the low temperatures. The only report of Bewick's Wren came from *Whitfield*, Ga., Dec. 17 (K & JSa). House Wrens were reported from *Allegheny*, Pa., Dec. 17 (JBa) and from *Wise*, Va., on the CBC (RP). A Marsh Wren was seen in *Allegheny*, Pa., Dec. 17 (DF).

KINGLETS, THRUSHES, MIMIDS — Golden-crowned Kinglets were in low numbers and Ruby-crowneds were barely mentioned

Eastern Bluebirds were in unusually good numbers at most places. A very late Swainson's Thrush was banded at P.N.R., Dec. 9 (RCL) and one was reported on the *Wise*, Va. CBC (*fide* RP). The best thrush reports of the season came from the Hermit Thrush which were in well above normal numbers throughout the Region. There were the usual number of wintering Am. Robins, and the first migrants of the spring arrived before the end of January.

A Gray Catbird was listed on the *Wise* CBC (RP) and one was seen at Morgantown Dec. 14 (GB). There were the normal number of reports of N. Mockingbirds n. of the usual range in mid-winter. From four to seven Brown Thrashers wintered in the Elizabethton, Tenn. area (GE), and

one made it through the season at East Liverpool, O (NL) There were January records for Huntington, W Va , and Mason, W Va (TI) and several were listed on the Knoxville CBC (CN).

PIPITS, WAXWINGS, SHRIKES — The Hiwassee, Tenn. CBC listed 184 Water Pipits and there were several other records in the Chattanooga area (RS). Flocks of several hundred were seen near Huntington, W. Va., in January (TI). Other records came from Caldwell, O., Jan. 13 (JSt), and from *Augusta*, Va., in mid-January (RSn). Cedar Waxwings were unusually scarce at most places.

The N. Shrike staged a good invasion in the n. part of the Region. There were 6 records for *Erie*, Pa., Dec. 3-Feb. 23 (*vide* JM); Beech Creek, Pa., Dec. 30 (PS & CH); Raccoon Creek S.P., Pa., Dec. 18 (NK); *Butler*, Pa., Dec. 23 (DF); Mosquito L., O., Dec. 18 & Jan. 15 (CB); and P.N.R., Jan. 29 (MM). The reports of Loggerhead Shrikes were more encouraging than in recent seasons. It was felt that there were some 30 birds in the *Rockingham-Augusta* area of Virginia (R.B.C.); the nine listed on the Knoxville CBC were above average (CN); three to five wintered near Elizabethton, Tenn. (GE); two were listed on the *Whitfield*, Ga. CBC, Dec. 17, and four on the Chattahoochee N.F., CBC, Dec. 18 (HD). One was at Kenova, W. Va., Feb. 25 (TI), but they were absent from the Powell Valley in *Wise*, Va. (RP).

WARBLERS THROUGH SPARROWS — For the 2nd straight year an Orange-crowned Warbler was present at a feeder at Elizabethton, Tenn., Jan. 13-Feb. 29+ (BW). Yellow-rumped Warblers were less common than usual, but Pine Warblers were widely reported through the s part of the Region. Palm Warblers were reported on the Knoxville CBC (CN), and in *Whitfield*, Ga., Dec. 17 (HD). More unusual were the two Black-and-white Warblers at Winchester, Va., and one in *Clarke*, Va., Dec. 17 (RSi), and the Com. Yellowthroats at Hinton, W. Va. (CBC, *vide* JP) and Jonesboro, Tenn., Jan. 14 (RK).

Dickcissels were seen at Franklin, W. Va., in late December (VB), on the Charleston, W. Va. CBC (NG) and at State College, Pa., Jan. 10 (KJ).

At Lock Haven, Pa. a CBC total of 225 Am. Tree Sparrows was an all-time high (PS), and this species was found on the Great Smoky Mountains N.P. CBC, for the first time (CN), and also as far s. as Hiwassee R. Area, Tenn. (RS). However, over most of this Region the Am. Tree Sparrow has been accountably absent for several years, and this year was no exception as they were in low numbers or missing at most places.

Field Sparrows were not commonly reported; White-throated Sparrows were unusually abundant almost everywhere, with only Lock Haven, Pa. (PS) and *Rockingham*, Va., reporting lower than normal numbers, and White-crowned Sparrows were essentially unmentioned. Fox Sparrows wintered at Shenandoah N.P., Va. (DC) and several areas reported early migrants in late February. There was an unusual number of December reports of both Lincoln's and Swamp sparrows.

Lapland Longspurs were reported only from n. Pennsylvania: P I.S.P., Dec. 10 & 16 (DS, JM); Jersey Shore Dec. 27 (PS), Pymatuning L., Jan. 2 (RFL & ML); and State College in January and February (KJ). About 2500 Snow Buntings were seen in *Erie*, Feb. 11 (JM); 20 were at Jersey Shore, Pa., Dec. 27 (PS); up to 40 seen at Pymatuning L., Pa., Dec. 3-Jan. 25 (RFL). Snow Buntings were also found at Franklin, W. Va., on the CBC, for one of the southernmost records for the state (*vide* GP).

BLACKBIRDS AND FINCHES — The only large concentration of wintering blackbirds was reported from Milton, W. Va., where about 100,000 Com. Grackles were roosting (LW & TI). Red-winged Black-

birds, grackles and Brown-headed Cowbirds arrived about 2 weeks earlier than normal in the n. Most unusual were the reports of Brewer's Blackbirds from Marietta, O., Jan 23 (RPi); *Rockingham*, Va., Feb 8 (R.B.C.); Waynesboro, Va., Feb. 26 and Stuart's Draft, Va., Mar 2 (DH). A N. Oriole was at Norton, W. Va., in early December (*vide* JP) the only report of this sometimes straggler.

The only reports of Pine Grosbeaks were from Butler, Pa., where six were seen Dec. 27 (FP) and from *Indiana*, Pa., where four were seen Dec. 31 (R & MH).

Purple Finches were moderately common except at those places that had large numbers of House Finches. The latter have now become quite common throughout the entire Region.

Red Crossbills are now permanent residents on Shenandoah Mt , Va (R.B.C.) and they were found all winter in the Blacksburg, Va area (JMu). There was no general influx of crossbills and the only other records came from *Botetourt*, Va., Dec. 18 (TK), Chattahoochee N F , Ga., Dec. 18 (JPa) & Feb. 1 & 15 (HD); and from Slippery Rock, Pa , Feb. 20-22 (GW), where a flock of six was accompanied by two White-winged Crossbills, the season's only report of this species.

Pine Siskins were abundant in e. Tennessee, and n. Georgia and at Ona, W. Va. (LW) but e. and n. of these locations they were in very low numbers or were absent completely. American Goldfinches were likewise very spotty in their distribution, but no regularity was apparent.

Evening Grosbeaks were in good numbers throughout the Region although a few areas had very few. An Evening Grosbeak seen and photographed at Warren, Pa., lacked all dark (melanin) pigment and so was a bright yellow bird with a large white wing-patch.

CORRIGENDUM — In the report for the Summer 1983 season (AB 37:988) the first sentence under "Flycatchers—" should refer to Willow Flycatchers and not Alder Flycatchers.

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WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

/David J. Powell

This winter was one of extreme contrasts with record cold in December and near record warmth in February. As always, Minnesota seemed to get the worst of the weather. Record lows were set in all three states with temperatures well below 0°F even in the extreme southern regions of the state. Temperatures reached -40°F December 19 and 20 in Isabella, Minnesota, and December 23 the high at Duluth was -18°F. In addition to the cold, snowfall was above average, particularly in the last half of December. The first part of January provided a much needed respite with temperatures near freezing and above, even in northern Minnesota. The deep freeze returned in mid-late January with temperatures well below 0 again. Fortunately, this cold snap did not last long, with temperatures rising above freezing by the end of the month. February was very warm (in the forties) with very little snow in Michigan and Wisconsin. Minnesota was quite warm, but had two quick-hitting blizzards—one February 5-6 and the other February 18. The blizzard of February 5-6 came so quickly and with such little warning that several people were stranded on the highways and actually froze to death.

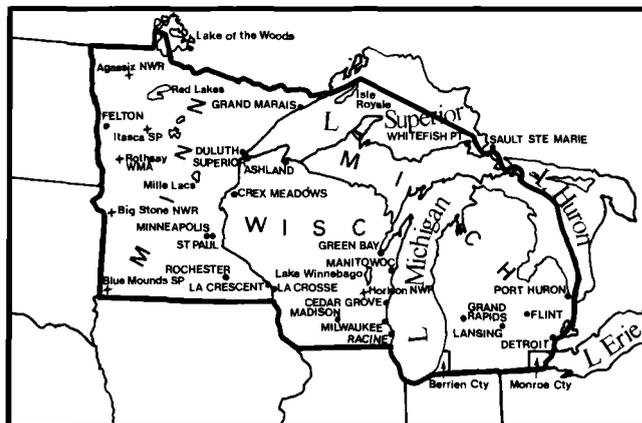
Most observers found the season quite boring. Only birders in north-eastern Minnesota had an exciting winter with the tremendous Great Gray Owl invasion. Other winter birds were found in average to poor numbers. Rarities were few and far between, but the two best birds, Minnesota's and the Region's first Brambling and Michigan's first Rosy Finch were seen by many birders. With the mild weather in February, blackbirds flooded back into the Region, along with small numbers of waterfowl.

In the following account, the place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — The only Red-throated Loon of the season was an individual at Metrobeach, *Macomb*, Mich., Dec. 14-17 (AR, JF, DL). A Com. Loon Jan. 8 in *Otter Tail*, Minn. (S & DM) was very late for n. Minnesota. Red-necked Grebes were found in all 3 states, with one Feb. 1 on L. Superior near Grand Marais, Minn. (BRo). An Eared Grebe Dec. 18 & 21 and Feb. 23 in *Berrien*, Mich. (RS, WB) furnished only the second winter sighting for Michigan. Western Grebes were found in *Lake*, Minn., Dec. 9-10 (m.ob.) and in Minneapolis Feb. 2 (m ob.), for only the 2nd and 3rd winter records for Minnesota. Two Am White Pelicans managed to survive the winter at Albert Lea, Minn. (m ob.), for the 2nd winter record for Minnesota. Interestingly, the first record also was of two surviving the winter at Albert Lea in 1978-1979. Double-crested Cormorants lingered in all 3 states and overwintered at Green Bay (EC, BC). Great Blue Herons overwintered in 3 Michigan and one Wisconsin counties, but the bird at Minnesota's *Mahnomen* Feb 22 (MH) was considered an early spring migrant. A Green-backed Heron on the Petoskey, Mich. CBC was the first sighted on a Michigan CBC in 10 years. Black-crowned Night-Herons overwintered in 2 Michigan counties.

WATERFOWL — Unlike last winter, most waterfowl throughout the Region were frozen out by harsh weather. Tundra Swans were much less common than last winter, with most departing by mid-December. The only reports after that were of birds Feb. 12 in *Jackson*, Minn. (KL) & Feb 22 at Rochester, Minn. (JB, BE) that were either overwintering individuals or early migrants. A Greater White-fronted Goose lingered to mid-December on the Rochester, Minn. CBC. An individual among the Canadas at Mud Lake W.A., *Columbia*, Wis., Feb. 25 (DT) was an early returnee. Snow Geese remained until January at Milwaukee and returned to both Michigan and Wisconsin in late February. Canada Geese appeared throughout the Region Feb. 12-14 with large numbers present by Feb. 22-25.

Several species of ducks returned to the Region in late February with reports of small numbers of most regular species reported. A N. Pintail at Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., Feb. 25 (DP, BB, DS) apparently was an overwintering bird, extremely unusual for Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Lingered Blue-winged Teal were reported from one Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations. Northern Shovelers overwintered at Madison, Wis., and Fergus Falls, Minn. (G & MO). Canvasbacks were present in large numbers on the Anchor Bay, Mich. CBC (10,000+) and at Pt. Mouillee, *Monroe*, Mich., Feb. 11 (5000) (JR). The largest Redhead



flock reported was 7600 on the Anchor Bay CBC. Lesser Scaup overwintered in 7 Wisconsin locations. The only King Eider of the period was a female on the St. Mary's R., *Chippewa*, Mich. (MK). A Harlequin Duck was found Jan. 1 at Sheboygan, Wis. (BV) and a pair was seen at Port Washington, Wis., in mid-January (RH), with the male being seen intermittently thereafter for the remainder of the period. Apparently it spent its time on L. Michigan, except during bad weather when it took refuge in the harbor. The warm February weather allowed L. Superior to open up earlier than normal. Oldsquaws were seen moving around Whitefish Pt., Mich., Feb. 26 (DP, BB, DS). Oldsquaws were reported inland in December in both Michigan and Wisconsin. The only Black Scoter was seen Dec. 17 on the Anchor Bay, Mich. CBC. Surf Scoters were reported from 3 Wisconsin locations. Surprisingly, three Barrow's Goldeneyes were sighted in Minnesota, all males: early December in Minneapolis, Jan. 7 and during February at Black Dog L. (m.ob.), and in early February at Elk R. (GS, TS). A Ruddy Duck survived until Jan. 3 at Grand Marais, Minn. (K & MH), where its occurrence is unusual even in migration.

RAPTORS — Turkey Vultures returned both to Michigan and Wisconsin in February, with a bird Feb. 24 at *Monroe*, Wis. (EE), the earliest ever for that state. Northern Harriers moved into the Region in mid-February, with the earliest, one at *Mahnomen*, Minn., Feb. 10 (MH). Accipiters were found in good numbers in both Michigan and Wisconsin. Very few Rough-legged Hawks were seen Regionwide until mid-late February when the N migration commenced. Golden Eagles were found at one Michigan, one Wisconsin and 6 Minnesota locations with at least 14 total birds present. American Kestrels were in reduced numbers this winter in Michigan. Merlins were found at one Michigan, one Wisconsin and 4 Minnesota locations. Peregrine Falcons were reported from four Michigan and 2 Minnesota locations. For the 5th consecutive winter, a Gyrfalcon was present in the Duluth-Superior harbor. As best can be determined, a different bird has been present each of the 5 years. Other Gyrfalcons in the Region were in Wisconsin's *Taylor* Dec. 22 (SR) and in Michigan's *Muskegon* Jan. 8 (JP, GW *et al.*). The Prairie Falcon has become a rare-regular species in Minnesota. One was present all winter at Rothsay W.M.A., *Wilkin* (S & DM).

GROUSE THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Gray Partridge numbers were down in Minnesota as a result of the snow and cold. Ring-necked Pheasants were found in higher numbers on Michigan's CBCs, but thereafter they were scarce. Spruce Grouse were surprisingly easy to find in Minnesota's *Lake*, Jan. 15-Feb. 11 when m.ob. found them at 4 locations (max. eight individuals—KE *et al.*). Ruffed Grouse were reduced in numbers statewide in both Michigan and Wisconsin. Northern Bobwhites were up slightly from last winter on the Michigan CBCs. Despite the severe cold, Virginia Rails were found at 3 Michigan and 3 Wisconsin locations, with one individual surviving until at least Jan. 28 at Madison, Wis. (WH *et al.*). A Sora was found Dec. 17 on the Madison CBC, but not thereafter. Two Sandhill Cranes were found on the Marshall, Mich. CBC. Cranes returned to Michigan's *Berrien* on the record early date of Feb. 13 (CN) and to Wisconsin's *Sauk*, Feb. 24 (KLa), a near-record early date. A Black-bellied Plover in *Berrien*, Mich., Dec. 15-18 (RA, RS) provided the first winter sighting in the state. Killdeers were very scarce on Michigan CBCs with the fewest

reported in more than 18 years. A few individuals moved back into the Region in late February. A Sanderling was found on the Berrien Springs, Mich. CBC, Dec. 18 (RA). A Dunlin lingered at Milwaukee until Dec. 10 (DT).

LARIDS — Because of the cold weather, gulls were not plentiful during most of the winter; however, the diversity was quite good with 10 species reported. Michigan observers found most of the rarities. A Little Gull was in Michigan's *Houghton* in mid-December. A Com. Black-headed Gull was found in a parking lot in Dearborn, *Wayne*, Mich., Dec. 4-5 (JF, DW). Ring-billed Gulls returned to Duluth at the very early date of Feb. 12. Two California Gulls were in Michigan: one Dec. 3 at Metrobeach, *Macomb* (AR, DL); and one Dec. 13 at Pt. Mouillee, *Monroe* (PY). Herring Gulls all but deserted the Region in mid-December as exemplified by the situation at Pt. Mouillee. On Dec. 13, Young had 25,000 gulls; just 11 days later, Fowler had only five. At Duluth, there were no gulls late December until early February (KE). Herring Gulls were noted moving up the St. Mary's R. and into L. Superior in a steady stream Feb. 25 (DP *et al.*). Thayer's Gulls were found at 3 Minnesota and one Michigan location, about average numbers. Iceland Gulls were reported from 4 Michigan locations, but none elsewhere. Fewer Glaucous and Great Black-backed gulls were present, but up to three were found in *Muskegon*, Mich. (BB, JP *et al.*), where they are uncommon.

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A very good season for owls in the Region although Minnesota had by far the best of it. Common Barn-Owls were found unusually far n. in both Minnesota and Wisconsin: one found dead in a barn near Duluth in early January was the first occurrence in the Duluth area since 1960; and one found in late November near Chili, Wis., survived until late December when it was found dead, apparently of starvation. Great Horned Owls were up in Minnesota for the 2nd consecutive year. Snowy Owls were scarce Regionwide. Minnesota had a very good winter for N. Hawk-Owls with at least ten individuals. Barred Owls staged one of their biggest "invasions" ever in Minnesota with many observers in Duluth and Minneapolis/St. Paul reporting birds in residential areas.

S.A.

The event of the winter was the record Great Gray Owl invasion. This was the largest invasion into the Region ever with at least 119 different individuals in Minnesota, 15-20 in Michigan (with rumors of up to 38) and one in Wisconsin. The first birds showed up in mid-October with the main influx clearly beginning in early December. New birds continued to show up until mid-January. By February, many owls could still be seen, but almost all were repeat-sightings and during the last half of February hardly any owls could be found. The Great Grays were concentrated in the n.e. quarter of Minnesota and in Michigan's *Chippewa*. Only four individuals were found s. of these areas, three in the s. one-half of Minnesota and the Wisconsin bird. Minnesota's *Lake of the Woods*, n. *Beltrami*, n. *Aitkin*, Duluth, and e. *Cook* were the most productive.

Unlike previous invasions, where an owl once found, remained in a given location, this winter's birds were scattered around and generally did not remain long the same location. Apparently small mammals were not abundant, so the owls kept moving around in search of prey. However, they must have been successful because only four were reported dead in Minnesota (There were more such reports in previous invasions.) (*vide* KE). Michigan's birds behaved similarly with one extremely unfortunate exception. Several of Michigan's owls were found on the outskirts of Sault Ste. Marie in January. Sometime between Feb. 7 and 14, five birds were found shot to death. The Michigan State Department of Natural Resources has offered a reward for information leading to the conviction of the individual(s) responsible, but as of early April, the culprit had not been apprehended.

Long-eared Owls were extremely scarce in both Michigan and Wisconsin, as were Short-eared Owls. Boreal Owls made a good showing with seven reports from Minnesota and three from Wisconsin. The three Wisconsin reports, *Dodge* (HM), *Vilas* (*vide* BR), and *Washburn* (PK) were the most in years, perhaps ever for a winter season (DT). Reports

of N. Saw-whet Owls were above average with eight from Minnesota and two from Michigan.

A report from the Hoffmans in *Cook*, Minn., indicated that a birder trying to find Saw-whets might consider abandoning a tape recorder in favor of a cordless telephone. It seems that on Feb. 17 their neighbors were experimenting to see how far from the house their cordless telephone would work; at one point, as the phone started beeping, a Saw-whet flew into the yard, "answered the call," and continued to call for several minutes in an imitation of the sound of the beeping phone!

Belted Kingfishers were down in Michigan and Wisconsin. Red-headed Woodpeckers were up in both states. A Red-bellied Woodpecker in *Pennington*, Minn., Feb. 4 (K & SS) was far n. of usual. Three-toed Woodpeckers were reported from *Staples*, Minn., Jan. 9 (RH) and *Chippewa*, Mich., Jan. 14 (MK), and on the Sault Ste. Marie CBC.

LARKS THROUGH KINGLETS — Horned Larks were much more common this winter than last on Michigan CBCs. Amazingly, Barn Swallows lingered until Dec. 16 in Michigan's *Berrien* and until Dec. 17 at Michigan's *Emmet*. Both individuals survived at sewage treatment plants. Black-billed Magpies were noted extraliminally at 3 Minnesota locations. Tufted Titmice were seen in very good numbers in Minnesota, where this species is marginal with reports from 5 locations, including one unusually far n.w. in Gaylord, *Sibley*, Dec. 20 (RJ). Red-breasted Nuthatches were common in only the n. one-third of Wisconsin, but statewide in Michigan. Brown Creepers were extremely scarce in Michigan. Carolina Wrens were reported from 3 Michigan locations and from *Cook*, Minn. (*vide* K & MH), the first record n. of Duluth. Winter Wrens were very scarce in both Michigan and Wisconsin. Surprisingly, a Marsh Wren survived until at least Jan. 1 at Metrobeach, *Macomb*, Mich. (DL). In contrast to last winter, Golden-crowned Kinglets were few and far between in Michigan and Wisconsin, and only two Ruby-crowned Kinglets were found, both in Michigan.

BLUEBIRDS THROUGH WARBLERS — Eastern Bluebirds were up in Michigan in December and overwintered at Mankato, Minn. (m.ob.). Early migrants were in Wisconsin's *Green Lake* Feb. 15 (TSc) and Minnesota's *Wabasha* Feb. 27 (JB). Townsend's Solitaires were reported from 3 Minnesota and one Wisconsin location. American Robins presented a contrasting picture with Michigan observers reporting fewer than last year, while Wisconsin observers reported record or near-record numbers throughout the s. one-half of the state. There were 23 Varied Thrush reports, 15 in Minnesota, five in Wisconsin and three in Michigan. The only Gray Catbird report was of one that remained at a Duluth feeder until Dec. 10 (MN). Northern Mockingbirds were down in Michigan with only 5 reports; one was found dead in *Washington*, Minn., Dec. 27 (JD) and one survived until Dec. 21 in Wisconsin's *Taylor* (SR).

Brown Thrashers were reported from 3 Michigan, 9 Minnesota and 2 Wisconsin locations with two of the Minnesota birds surviving the winter, including one at Duluth. Water Pipits lingered until Dec. 7 at Eagle, Wis. (JBi) and until Dec. 18 at *Genessee*, Mich. Bohemian Waxwings were up Regionwide, with only s. Michigan not reporting any. They remained in Michigan's Upper Pen. throughout the winter, but they usually depart after mid-December. Northern Shrikes were below average in both Michigan and Wisconsin. The only Loggerhead Shrike was one found on the E. Lansing, Mich. CBC. A Black-throated Blue Warbler survived until Dec. 2 at a Hastings, Minn. feeder (m.ob.). Not surprisingly, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers were at a low ebb in Michigan. Single Com. Yellowthroats were reported on the Anchor Bay, Mich. CBC and on the Madison, Wis. CBC.

FINCHES AND BLACKBIRDS — Northern Cardinals were n. of usual in both Michigan and Minnesota. After last winter's 7 reports, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were at a more usual level with only one report, a bird during the count period for the Hudsonville, Mich. CBC. Amazingly late was a ♀ **Painted Bunting**, that flew into a garage Nov. 27 in *Door*, Wis. (R & CL), for the 4th or 5th state record. A Rufous-sided Towhee remained at a *Cook*, Minn. feeder until Dec. 13 (K & MH). Towhees are unusual there at any time of the year. Another successfully overwintered in *Marquette*, Mich. (NI). American Tree Sparrows presented a contrasting picture with Michigan observers finding them in near record numbers, but Wisconsin birders noted them in



Brambling, Owatonna, Minn., Feb. 20, 1984. Photo/O. Johnson.



Rosy Finch, Romeo, Mich., Mar. 10, 1984. Photo/B. Bouton.

poor numbers statewide, with the exception of the s. border counties. The usual few Chipping Sparrows were found on Michigan and Wisconsin CBCs. Field Sparrows were quite scarce with Michigan reporting their fewest in 18 years, not too surprising in light of the weather. One at Two Harbors, Lake, Minn., Dec. 18 (AB), was not only very late, but probably furnished the first North Shore record. The only Vesper Sparrow reported was one which lingered until Dec. 3 in Minnesota's *Wabasha* (BL/SL). The latest-ever Wisconsin sighting of Sharp-tailed Sparrow was of one at a Kenosha feeder Dec. 2-18 (HB). Fox Sparrows were seen in above-average numbers, particularly in Minnesota where there were 7 reports, including a bird which survived the winter at Duluth (at the same feeder as the Brown Thrasher), as opposed to the more normal "none" (*vide* KE). Despite the winter weather, Song Sparrows were up from last year in Michigan. Early returning birds were in Minnesota's *Olmstead* and *Steele*, Feb. 11. A Lincoln's Sparrow was found on the Ann Arbor, Mich. CBC, for only the 3rd in 18 years. Swamp Sparrows were down sharply in Michigan. Unusually, one was found Jan. 23 in *Le Sueur*, Minn. (HC). White-throated Sparrows were above average in both s. Michigan and s. Wisconsin, as were White-crowned Sparrows in s. Michigan. A Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco spent the winter at a Bloomington, Minn. feeder (m.ob.). If this were still a full species, it would have constituted the 4th Minnesota record. Lapland Longspurs were in low numbers in Wisconsin, but Michigan observers found them more common than last winter.

The winter blackbird picture was mixed, with Michigan reporting Red-winged Blackbirds at last winter's level, but reduced numbers of cowbirds and grackles. Wisconsin observers reported reduced numbers of Red-wingeds, but the usual number of wintering grackles and cowbirds. All 3 species arrived in the Region in mid-February with large numbers in both s. Michigan and s. Wisconsin and small numbers into s. Minnesota and mid-Michigan and mid-Wisconsin. Eastern Meadowlarks were very scarce with almost none wintering (only four were found on the Michigan CBCs), and only a few returning late in February. Yellow-headed Blackbirds again were found on Michigan's Anchor Bay CBC. Rusty Blackbirds returned early to all 3 states, and two managed to overwinter in Duluth (*vide* KE). A N. (Baltimore) Oriole lingered until Dec. 31 at Kalamazoo, Mich. (*vide* RA).

The outstanding rarity of the season was Minnesota's and the Region's first **Brambling**. Although not entirely unexpected, the occurrence of this species at a Owatonna feeder from mid-January into March was still an exciting event for Minnesota birders, particularly because it almost was not recorded. It started coming to the feeder (which was in an ordinary yard in a newer, relatively treeless part of town) in mid-January, but the residents had no idea what kind of bird it was; they casually mentioned its presence to several interested persons; and T. Savaloja, who is experienced with Bramblings from his trips to Alaska, had recently moved to Owatonna, and finally heard about this "mystery bird" Feb. 6. He then saw and identified it. Several prompt birders saw it Feb. 7, but then the bird disappeared and no one saw it for over a week. Then, it reappeared Feb. 17, after which time it was seen and photographed by many observers. During this period, however, the bird apparently spent most of its time at another feeder, because it was seen just once or twice/day at the original feeder (*vide* KE).

Almost as exciting was Michigan's first **Rosy Finch**, one of the gray-crowned varieties, which appeared in a Romeo, *Macomb* feeder Feb. 26 and remained into March (R & SK). This bird also was present for almost 2 weeks before the identification was confirmed by Cox and Carhart; it subsequently was seen and photographed by many observers. The circumstances leading to the finding, identifying and sharing of rarities often involve events such as the previously mentioned accounts. One has to wonder how many such occurrences go unrecorded because we ignore someone's comment about a strange bird, or it shows up at a feeder of someone who does not know to tell others about the sighting.

Pine Grosbeaks were found in higher numbers than last year, but very few wandered S of any of the 3 states. Purple Finches were down Michigan, but present in good numbers in Wisconsin. House Finches continue to spread in the Region. Michigan observers found the most ever on their CBCs, with 93 found spread over 11 counts. Minnesota had its 2nd and 3rd acceptable sightings of **House Finches**: a male seen and photographed at a Minneapolis feeder Dec. 9 (WBr), and a female seen briefly on 4 days, Dec. 3-8 at a Mankato feeder (MF). Crossbills of either species were exceedingly scarce Regionwide, with only about 20 reports of Reds and about 12 reports of White-winged. Common Redpolls were up from last year's abysmal numbers, but were still below average except in Minnesota. A few Hoary Redpolls were seen in the n. part of Region, a total of 10-15 birds. Pine Siskins were up from last year, but were quite localized in Michigan and Wisconsin. Observers in both Michigan and Wisconsin reported good numbers of Evening Grosbeaks in the n. with smaller numbers in the c. portion of each state, and very few in extreme south.

CORRIGENDUM — The Rufous Humminbird seen at Anoka (AB 37:991) should be deleted.

CONTRIBUTORS — This editor wishes to thank the many individuals who submitted records for this summary. The nature of the summary precludes listing every individual who sends in reports; therefore, only those individuals with cited records are listed below.

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MIDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

/Bruce G. Peterjohn

This winter's weather was characterized by extremes. It was one of the coldest Decembers in history with temperatures averaging 7-16 degrees below normal in all states. The most severe weather occurred around Christmas when temperatures plummeted to -35°F in Iowa, -25°F at Chicago and -7°F at Louisville. Snowfall was well above normal in the western states and northern Illinois. The sustained cold temperatures and snow cover produced an exodus of most half-hardy birds and contributed to excessive mortality of some less tolerant species.

A brief warming trend during early January was followed by more cold weather. Although temperatures were not as extreme as during December and averaged 0-6 degrees below normal, another arctic blast during the third week of January brought sub-zero readings to all states. Precipitation was well below normal. A significant warming trend began during the second week of February, bringing 60-70°F readings to most areas. These mild temperatures averaged 6-15 degrees above normal and remained throughout the month. They initiated an early start to migration with numbers of waterfowl, hawks, Killdeer, crows, black-birds and other early migrants returning to all states. However, a massive snowstorm struck the Region during the last days of the month and signaled a return to winter conditions.

In most areas, it was a fairly dull winter season. Northern invaders were scarcely evident except for a substantial Northern Goshawk movement and modest numbers of Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks. Rarities included a Black-billed Magpie in Indiana, Chestnut-collared Longspur in Missouri and Rosy Finch in Ohio but were overshadowed by the unprecedented appearance of a Slaty-backed Gull along the Mississippi River near St. Louis. This cooperative gull received national media attention and may have been the most widely observed bird ever recorded in this Region.

In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, only the most exceptional Christmas Bird Count (hereafter, CBC) observations were incorporated into this summary. As usual, all extraordinary sight records must be thoroughly documented at the time of observation. All documented records have been denoted by a dagger (†). Italicized place names are counties.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Migrant loons were widespread during December but departed by the end of the month. Single Red-throated Loons were noted at L. Vermilion, Ill., Dec. 3 (†BS, †SB) and along L. Erie. Flocks of 35-39 Com. Loons were unusual along L. Erie during mid-December. As many as 72 Pied-billed Grebes remained during December but smaller numbers wintered including groups of 17-18 in w. Kentucky and s. Illinois plus scattered singles n. to L. Erie. Horned Grebes remained low while scattered January observations possibly represented late migrants or wintering birds. The only Red-necked Grebes appeared at Horseshoe L., Ill., Dec. 8-14 (†RG, m.ob.) and in Lucas, O., Feb. 20 (*TK). Migrant Eared Grebes were reported from s. Illinois during December and s.w. Missouri in February while a winter record from Merom power plant, Ind., Feb. 4 (DJ) was unexpected. One of the fall W. Grebes remained at Horseshoe L., Ill., through Dec. 14.

The only Am. White Pelican wintered just across the state line in Kansas City, Kans. Small numbers of migrant Double-crested Cormorants were widely reported through Jan. 2 while singles at Pekin, Ill., Jan. 12 (KR), Joliet, Ill., Jan. 26 (JMi) and Gibson, Ind., Jan. 29 (DJ) may have attempted to overwinter. Early spring migrants returned to s.w. Missouri by Feb. 15. Few lingering herons were reported except for the normal small numbers of wintering Great Blues. A Great Egret remained at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., through Dec. 14 (JR). Black-crowned Night-Herons lingered at a total of 4 sites in Illinois and Ohio during December while 30-40 wintered at the usual Toledo, O. location and three to seven at E. St. Louis, Ill. (BR, JR, m.ob.).

WATERFOWL — Most fall migrants passed through the Region by early December and wintering numbers were normal wherever open water was available. Tundra Swans remained scarce. Except for 25 on a Kentucky CBC, fall migrants were restricted to the normal migration corridor. Scattered singles appeared in n. Ohio and n.e. Indiana during January while a wintering swan near Cincinnati was unexpected (JRu *et*



et al.). Small numbers of spring migrants returned to the w. Lake Erie marshes Feb. 12. Extralimital migrants appeared at Brookville Res., Ind., Feb. 15 (TL *et al.*) and two near Morehouse, Mo., Feb. 23 (JW). The feral Mute Swan population continued to expand. They were most numerous in n. Illinois and n. Indiana with scattered reports in other locations w. to Alton, Mo.-Ill. A few Greater White-fronted Geese are found each winter. This year, one wintered at Rockford, Ill. (DW) and one to three were noted at 2 s.w. Indiana lakes Feb. 5-12 (DJ). Wintering flocks of 1000-5000 Snow Geese in w. Kentucky and s. Illinois were normal. Returning flocks of Snow Geese harbored the expected small numbers of Ross' Geese with one report from s.w. Iowa and three in w. Missouri. The only Brant was discovered in Michigan City, Ind., Dec. 21 (KB). Wintering Canada Geese totaled 100,000 in w. Kentucky and 180,000 in s. Illinois, normal numbers for both areas.

Only small numbers of most puddle ducks returned by late February. As usual, a few wintering Wood Ducks were scattered across the n. states while Blue-winged Teals remained through Dec. 18 in s.e. Missouri. A wintering flock of 150 Gadwall at Joliet, Ill., was rather large (JMi). On the other hand, divers were well represented as wintering birds and February migrants. The only wintering Canvasback concentration was of 1500 at Oregon, O. (JM). As expected, small numbers of Greater Scaup were discovered at scattered inland locations with maxima of 20 at Carlyle L., Ill., Jan. 29 (SR) and 12 at Louisville. Three in s.w. Missouri at Springfield Feb. 5 were locally unusual (AS, †LC *et al.*). Surprisingly, Harlequin Ducks were only reported from inland sites where they are exceptionally rare. One was found at Dayton, O., Dec. 18 (†N *et al.*) while a pair was discovered at Springfield, Ill. (hereafter, Spfld.), Jan. 7 (DOe, †H). Oldsquaws were fairly scarce along the Great Lakes although 300 appeared at Chicago Feb. 4 (JL). Inland singles were reported from one Missouri and 2 Illinois locations s. to Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., Dec. 18-Jan. 18 (TF). Small numbers of Black and Surf scoters were restricted to the Great Lakes during December. Wintering White-winged Scoters peaked with 760 at Wilmette, Ill., Feb. 4 (JL). Inland sightings at 6 locations included 3 Kentucky reports with 10 on the Ohio R., at Mehl Dahl Dam Feb. 4 (*vide* W). Common Goldeneye were universally abundant with maxima of 1500 on the Great Lakes and 400-500 inland. An ad. ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye was discovered in a large goldeneye flock at Lorain, O., Jan. 7-10 (†AT, †D & JH, m.ob.). Common Mergansers were also fairly numerous; Great Lakes concentrations of 1500 were normal while a similar flock at Barkley L., Jan. 28 was remarkable for Kentucky.

DIURNAL RAPTORS — Small numbers of wintering Turkey Vultures were scattered across s. areas while 100+ roosted at Turkey Run S.P., Ind. (AB). Migrants were widely reported after mid-February and returned n. to Chicago by the end of the month. Wintering Bald Eagle populations continued to improve. Record high January survey totals reached 209 in Kentucky and 1391 in Missouri while 207 were counted at Davenport, Ia., Jan. 4 (*vide* P). Northern Harriers received mixed reports without any Regionwide trends. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were widely reported, reflecting their continued recovery. Good numbers of N. Goshawks were observed for the 2nd consecutive winter. They were most numerous in the w. states with one to four in 10 Iowa counties, 12 Missouri reports and at least 28 Illinois sightings of one to five hawks. One or two appeared at 3 Indiana and 5 Ohio locations. This flight extended S to Cincinnati and Springfield, Mo.



Slaty-backed Gull, St. Louis-Alton area, Mo., Dec. 20, 1983-Jan. 29, 1984. Photo/D. Ulmer.



Band-tailed Pigeon, Marshall, Mo., Nov. 27-Dec. 10+, 1983 (see AB 38:209). Photo/H. Hoey.

Red-shouldered Hawks remained stable in s. areas while increased reports from n. states may have indicated a modest population increase. An unusual display of roosting behavior was exhibited by 53 Red-tailed Hawks near Jefferson City, Mo., during January (JW). Casual in the w. states, an injured Ferruginous Hawk was recovered near Springfield, Mo., Jan. 12 (*PP). Wintering Rough-legged Hawks were rather scarce in many areas. Reports of Golden Eagles have also increased with January survey totals of 10 in Kentucky and eight in Missouri. Elsewhere, one to two were reported from 2 s. Illinois locations, singles appeared at 3 Iowa sites and an adult at Cleveland Feb. 19 (VF) was locally unusual. A few wintering Merlins and Peregrine Falcons were reported without adequate details. Casual anywhere in the Region, a gray-phase Gyrfalcon was discovered at Sangchris L., Ill., Feb. 25 (†H). Prairie Falcons have become the most numerous wintering large falcon in the w. states. This year, single birds wintered near Jefferson City, Mo. (JW) and in Lawrence, Ill. (LHa) and appeared in Dallas, Ia., Dec. 28 (†KH) and St. Joseph, Mo., Jan. 20+ (KJ, m.ob.).

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Two Gray Partridges in Scott, Ia., Feb. 23 (P) were unusual for e. Iowa. However, they may be increasing in adjacent n. Illinois. A Greater Prairie-Chicken in Osceola, Ia., Jan. 2 (†RS) was thought to have wandered S from Minnesota. Few N. Bobwhites were reported from the n. states while the small populations in s. areas may have suffered appreciable mortality during December's extremely cold weather. The only winter rail observations consisted of a single Virginia at Rockford, Ill., Dec. 28-Jan. 28 (DW, DD) and a Sora at Willow Point W.M.A., O., Jan. 16 (JP). Migrant Sandhill Cranes were noted in Indiana, Kentucky and 4 s.w. Ohio locations through Dec. 21. Very unusual during winter, single imm. cranes were discovered near Pickerington, O., Jan. 1-7+ (†JF, m.ob.) and at Baldwin L., Ill., Feb. 2-17 (VH, †m.ob.). Early migrants returned with the mild February weather, appearing at Louisville Feb. 15 (*fide* SK) and in Indiana by Feb. 21.

Most shorebirds departed with the advent of harsh weather. A Lesser Yellowlegs remained through Dec. 1 at Magee Marsh W.M.A., O. (JP) while a Least Sandpiper lingered through Dec. 18 on an Indiana CBC. Purple Sandpipers appeared at 2 L. Erie locations where one wintered at Avon L., O., for the 2nd consecutive winter (J). An early Am. Woodcock returned to Murray, Ky., Jan. 22 (RE). Other early migrants appeared at Cincinnati (BC) and Jackson, Ill., Feb. 12 (TF) and n. to Chicago (JL) and Tippecanoe, Ind. (DA) by Feb. 19.

GULLS — Interest in gulls reached an all-time high this winter, in part due to the presence of a much publicized Asiatic stray. This interest produced a wealth of information, only a small portion of which can be summarized below.

Still considered unusual in Kentucky, a Franklin's Gull was discovered at Kentucky L., Dec. 3 (DN, BP). Little and Com. Black-headed gulls were unreported. As was mentioned during fall, Bonaparte's Gulls were scarce along L. Erie where the large December flocks never materialized. Normal numbers appeared along L. Michigan and fairly good inland maxima of 200-500 were reported from scattered lakes. All Bonaparte's Gulls departed by early January. Ring-billed Gulls were also less numerous than usual along L. Erie during December but concentrations of 1000-5500 were widely reported from inland lakes. By

January, inland birds had largely departed except for 3500-5000 at the w. Kentucky lakes while normal numbers congregated along the Great Lakes. The warm February weather dispersed the Great Lakes concentrations and brought back the large flocks to the inland lakes. An ad. California Gull at Lorain Jan. 1 provided the 3rd record for Ohio (†J, JM). Herring Gulls did not become numerous until late December but remained abundant until the February thaw. Concentrations of 2000-10,000+ were reported from the Great Lakes while the largest inland flocks were centered on the Mississippi and lower Ohio Rivers where 1000-5000 wintered from the St. Louis area to the w. Kentucky lakes. Thayer's Gulls were associated with these flocks. Daily counts of one to three were regular along the Great Lakes. Inland, at least 16 frequented the Mississippi R., between St. Louis and Alton (RG, m.ob.) and six plus were found at the Kentucky-Barkley-Smithland Dams in w. Kentucky Jan. 7-Feb. 4 (†BP *et al.*). One also appeared at Spfld., Feb. 23 (H). Iceland Gulls had a similar distribution but were less numerous than the Thayer's, especially inland. Between one to three per day were fairly regular along L. Erie while scattered singles were encountered along L. Michigan. Inland sightings consisted of an adult at Alton, Ill.-Mo., Jan. 21-29 (BR, †RG) and a first-year bird at Louisville Dec. 27-Feb. 6 (DN, †BP *et al.*). Lesser Black-backed Gulls are still a novelty except along L. Erie where three plus wintered at Lorain. Inland adults were also discovered at Carlyle L., Ill., Dec. 14-17 (†SR, †PS, m.ob.) and Alton Feb 11-12 (BR, †RG, m.ob.). Without a doubt, one of the most remarkable birds ever discovered in the Region was an ad. **Slaty-backed Gull** which frequented the St. Louis-Alton area Dec. 20-Jan. 29 (BR, †RG, †PS, m.ob., ph.). Glaucous Gulls were most numerous along the Great Lakes where maxima of 11 and four were reported from L. Erie and L. Michigan, respectively. Inland, small numbers were scattered along the Mississippi R., s. from Davenport, Ia., with at least 11 in the St. Louis-Alton area (RG, m.ob.). In addition, one to three were discovered at 4 locations near the Illinois R., Ill., and 5 sites on the Ohio R., in Kentucky. Great Black-backed Gulls were relatively scarce along L. Erie after early January where daily maxima seldom exceeded 25. They were more numerous than usual along L. Michigan where there was a total of 13 reports (†m.ob.). They are normally quite rare inland where a total of 5 at St. Louis-Alton this winter was remarkable (RG, †m.ob.) and an adult appeared at Carlyle L., Ill., Jan. 29-30 (SR, RH). Lastly, Black-legged Kittiwakes staged a noticeable inland movement during December. In addition to one L. Michigan sighting, single first-year birds appeared at Columbus, O., Dec. 14-16 (†JM) and C.J. Brown Res., O., Dec. 18 (DO, JG) while *adults* were recorded at Kentucky L., Ky., Dec. 3 (†DN, †BP, ph.) and L. Jacomo, Mo., Dec. 7 (†CH, AH). A remarkable *three* including a second-year bird, were discovered at Carlyle L., Ill., Dec. 9-18 where one remained through Jan. 14 (†BR, m.ob.).

PIGEONS THROUGH SWALLOWS — The Band-tailed Pigeon mentioned in the previous report wintered at Marshall, Mo. (†HH, m.ob., ph.). A Com. Barn-Owl recovered near Sioux Center, Ia., Dec. 4 was unusual (* *fide* DH). Elsewhere, single owls were reported from

one Ohio, one Illinois and 3 Missouri locations. Snowy Owls were relatively scarce with only 11 reports from the n. states. While one to five Long-eared Owls were discovered at 10 Illinois locations, they were unusually scarce in the other states where only three were noted. Short-eared Owls received mixed reports although as many as nine were scattered across all states except Kentucky. Small numbers of N. Saw-whet Owls were discovered at 15 locations in all states including a Kentucky CBC, representing a normal number of winter reports for recent years.

Woodpeckers received few comments although several observers thought populations might be declining. Red-headed Woodpeckers were noticeably reduced throughout Missouri, the result of a poor mast crop. Normal numbers were noted in the other states. The latest E. Phoebe lingered at Cumberland Falls S.P., Ky., through Jan. 4 (JE). An early migrant returned to St. Louis, Mo., Feb. 7 (RC) although most did not appear in s. areas until the end of the month. Horned Larks were fairly numerous with concentrations of 350-1000 reported from most states. Reflecting the mild February weather, a remarkably early Purple Martin returned to Springfield, Mo., Feb. 18 (AS) while Tree Swallows were found at Magee Marsh W.M.A., O., Feb. 13 (JP) and Mingo N.W.R., Mo., Feb. 25 (BRe, SD). A late Tree Swallow remained at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., through Dec. 8 (TF).

JAYS THOUGH SHRIKES — Blue Jay numbers were also reduced in Missouri as a result of the poor mast crop. An imm. **Black-billed Magpie** wandered to Warren, Ind., Dec. 4 (†WR, ph.). The only large Am. Crow roost supported 5000 in Danville, Ill. (MC) and 1500-9000 at Springfield, O. (VF). Red-breasted Nuthatches were widely distributed in all states but numbers were not exceptionally large as 12-20/day comprised the largest concentrations. Wintering Brown Creepers were noticeably reduced in many areas.

In early December, Carolina Wrens were thought to be improving and small numbers were even returning to n. areas as exemplified by 4 reports from Iowa. However, the extremely cold weather during December and January apparently caused excessive mortality in Illinois and Missouri. Similar population reductions were not reported from the other states. A House Wren lingered until a n. Ohio CBC, while the latest Marsh Wren was noted Dec. 8 in the w. L. Erie marshes. Numbers of kinglets were thought to be reduced from last winter and the scarcity of reports after December may have indicated excessive mortality this year. A late gnatcatcher was reported from Tiffin, O., Dec. 10 (*vide* TB). These late gnatcatchers should be carefully identified; while they may prove to be lingering Blue-grays, the possibility of a s.w. stray must be seriously considered.

Eastern Bluebird populations were quite good in early December. While some mortality was reported following the severe weather, they apparently fared better than during the extremely cold winters of the 1970s. Wintering Hermit Thrushes were more numerous than usual in Ohio and Kentucky where daily counts of 9-16 were reported during December. With the exception of s.w. Ohio and portions of Kentucky, Am. Robins were fairly scarce this winter. Following last winter's absence, single Varied Thrushes appeared at Spencer, Ia., Dec. 1-21 (E & LH, †MB *et al.*), Davenport, Ia., Dec. 3-Feb. 18 (†GW *et al.*), Reynoldsburg, O., Dec. 31-Feb. 29+ (JRy, †JF, m.ob.) and Wellman, Ia., Jan. 10-18 (†BH *et al.*). The status of N. Mockingbirds should be watched as several observers cited declines following the cold weather. Regular small numbers of the other mimids were reported this winter. Small numbers of Water Pipits lingered through Dec. 31 in Kentucky. Casual anywhere in the Region, a Bohemian Waxwing was photographed at Bettendorf, Ia., Jan 14 (ES, *vide* P). Cedar Waxwings were locally common without any apparent Regionwide trend. A noticeable influx during February brought flocks of 40-125+ to all states. The total of 13 N. Shrike sightings was slightly below normal for the n. states. One wandered S to Atterbury W.M.A., Ind., for the 2nd consecutive winter (BG). Loggerhead Shrikes have remained stable in Kentucky while 6 reports from the n. states was normal for recent winters.

WARBLERS — Despite the relatively mild late autumn, surprisingly few warblers lingered into December. The strange assortment of late warblers that seem to be annually attracted to the unique microhabitat on the Chicago CBC will not be repeated here. Other lingering warblers included a Yellow at Cleveland Dec. 7 (JEm, †DC) and a Cape May at Chesterton, Ind., Dec. 3-4 (KB, SG). Yellow-rumped Warblers were

generally scarce in all states except Kentucky where they were widely distributed. In addition to CBC reports, a Pine Warbler at L. Cumberland, Ky., Feb. 13 may have wintered (BP) while a Palm Warbler at Ft Wayne, Ind., Dec. 4 was probably a late migrant (TH). An Am. Redstart at Chicago Dec. 10 was exceptionally late (JL).

SPARROWS, BLACKBIRDS AND FINCHES — The only lingering finches this winter were ad. ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at Champaign, Ill., Dec. 7 (†GS) and Chicago Dec. 18 (PD). As usual, sparrows received mixed reports depending upon local habitat conditions. Many observers considered Am. Tree Sparrows to be plentiful, especially in Illinois where concentrations of 500-1600+ were found during late December and early January. The only documented Chipping Sparrow was discovered in Kent, O., Jan. 31 (†LR); one or two seem to be satisfactorily reported each winter. Field Sparrows were scarce in several areas while the only Vesper Sparrow was found in s.w. Missouri. Small numbers of Savannah Sparrows were found at scattered wintering locations n. to c. Illinois and c. Ohio. Unusual anywhere during winter, a Grasshopper Sparrow was banded at Crane Creek S.P., O., Dec. 14 (†JP). The expected small numbers of wintering Le Conte's Sparrows were reported from Missouri, s. Illinois and s.w. Indiana. Fewer Fox Sparrows were reported this winter while the only Lincoln's Sparrow appeared on a Kentucky CBC. Good numbers of White-throated Sparrows were noted in many areas while White-crowned Sparrows received mixed reports. Wintering Harris' Sparrows were scarce in w. Missouri while single birds appeared e. to Belvidere, Ill. (RGU) and LaPorte, Ind., Dec. 18+ (KB). It was a good winter for Lapland Longspurs, especially in Iowa and Illinois. An estimated 50,000 between Cherokee and Sac City, Ia., Feb. 27 (DB) was exceptional; largest flocks in the other states were 200-1000+. The flock of 1000 in *Mississippi*, Mo., Feb. 1 was unusual for s.e. Missouri (BRe). A Smith's Longspur appeared on an Iowa CBC while a flock of 100 migrants was discovered in Clay, Mo., Feb. 25-26 (CH). Associated with this longspur flock was Missouri's 3rd **Chestnut-collared Longspur** (MR, †CH). Snow Buntings were numerous in Ohio and Illinois while smaller numbers appeared in the other states. Except for 2000 in Marion, O., Jan. 8 (TB), maximum numbers were generally 100-400 in the n. states.

Blackbirds were relatively scarce in most areas with the only large roosts reported from Kentucky. Wintering W. Meadowlarks were reported from 2 Illinois and one s.w. Indiana locations. A Yellow-headed Blackbird appeared in Dayton, O., Dec. 11 (†HB) while one to two apparently wintered in the w. L. Erie marshes. Most noteworthy of the scattered Brewer's Blackbird reports was a flock of 50 at Homer, Ill., Dec. 2-4 (JS) and one to two at 2 Louisville sites during the winter (DN, S). As many as 30 Great-tailed Grackles wintered near Mud L., Buchanan, Mo. (MM, L); they are casual in n.w. Missouri during winter.

This fall's promise of winter finches largely went unfulfilled as numbers of most species were modest at best. By far, the most unusual finch was a "Gray-crowned" **Rosy Finch** photographed near Whitehouse, O., Feb. 6-7 for the 2nd state record (JC, ph.). A Pine Grosbeak was documented at Denver, Ia., Feb. 11-12 (RW, †FM *et al.*). After last winter's abundance, Purple Finches were fairly scarce in most areas. Daily maxima were generally fewer than 30 except for 300 in Murray, Ky., during December (RE). House Finches have nearly conquered Indiana where the largest flocks totaled 24-25 this winter. They seem to be on the verge of a major push through Illinois where one to four were found at 6 locations, mostly in the e. portion of the state although one wandered W to Spfld. Crossbills were virtually nonexistent with only one to four Reds at single locations in Ohio and Indiana and no records of White-winged. Common Redpolls were slightly more numerous than last winter but numbers remained low. As many as 10 appeared at 10 sites in the n. states while three appeared in Murray, Ky., Dec. 18-20 (RE) and two in Kansas City during December (*vide* CH). Pine Siskins invaded in modest numbers at best. They were widespread but erratically distributed in all states. Flock size was generally fewer than 25 except for several reports of 100+ and 200 in Independence, Mo., during December (*vide* CH). Evening Grosbeak was probably the most numerous winter finch although they were also sporadically distributed. Largest flocks were generally 40-100 although 170+ were found in n.w. Ohio during December.

CONJECTURAL OBSERVATIONS — In most of the country, winter Swainson's Hawks are generally dismissed as misidentifications

This year, an adult was convincingly photographed in *Ottawa*, O., Feb. 14. Upon close examination, the photo apparently shows the bird had several broken primaries on one wing which may indicate it had been kept in captivity. However, this bird's origins will probably never be conclusively established. Hence, I offer this sighting for its speculative value.

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CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

/Mac Myers and David P. Muth

Widespread lingering by a variety of birds, including the twenty species of warbler found on Louisiana CBCs, reflected the mildness of the fall and early December. Although Birmingham was inundated with a record 10 inches of rain December 3, and by the middle of the month much of Arkansas was under a sheet of ice and snow, Christmas week brought the first severe weather to much of the Region. Indeed, the polar blast brought some of the worst cold much of the area had ever endured. record lows were widespread: in Birmingham it read 2°F Christmas Day; Mobile reached 8°F, and the upper bay froze over for only the second time in history; and New Orleans reached 14°F, while even in the delta below the city, the mildest area of the Region, brackish bayous froze from bank to bank. A second front of almost equal intensity followed a week later.

Ground-feeders such as Horned Larks and Lapland Longspurs were driven all the way to the coast, while waterfowl, apparently seeking open water, were dispersed widely outside their normal range. Bird species that either suffered from the cold or moved south included Hermit Thrush, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and, especially Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Cedar Waxwing. Paradoxically, the number and variety of lingering birds found in January and February was striking. Irruptives, including Rough-legged Hawk and winter finches, were widespread; Red-breasted Nuthatch, however, was scarce. Although last fall's migration had little western flavor, many of the winter's more spectacular finds were western vagrants, including Tropical Parula and six species of western hummingbird.

No records were received from north and central Mississippi.

LOONS THROUGH TUBENOSSES — The only Red-throated Loons noted were from Alabama; one at Alabama Pt., Dec. 30 (GDJ, CDC), and one at Ft. Morgan Jan. 14 (RAD, RSD). Common Loons were scarce in the Tennessee Valley and Birmingham areas of Alabama (TAI). Near the mouth of Perdido Bay, Ala., there were counts of 85 on Dec. 8 (TAI), 350 Dec. 19 (CDC), 300 Jan. 15 (CDC), and 35 on Feb. 20 (TAI). Imhof felt numbers were low owing to the 1982-83 die-off. In n.w. Florida, Kingsbery noted that although Com. Loon numbers were lower than just before that die-off, they were higher than in several of the last 10 years. Horned Grebes were unusually common in inland Alabama, with 24 on Jan. 1 at Waterloo, and 25 on Jan. 14 there (GP); the max. near Birmingham was 16 on Mar. 3 (TAI). In Carroll County, Ark., 70 Horned Grebes Jan. 4 was a high number for w. Ozarks (JN, RS). Eared Grebe was widely reported both coastally and inland. Imhof regards Alabama as part of its regular winter range, and it was recorded at 3 sites there. One at Pensacola Beach Jan. 20 was considered rare (DB, RB). In Hancock County, Miss., where it is considered rare, a max. of seven was found Dec. 1 (JT, GM, DK), and two stayed through the period; two others were found Jan. 26 (JT, GM, EJ). In Arkansas, one in Washington County Dec. 1 (KS, JN), singles on the Pine Bluff



and Little Rock CBCs, and two on the Fayetteville CBC were noteworthy. A **Manx Shearwater**† was closely studied at Alabama Pt., Dec. 19 (DMB, CDC), for Alabama's first. It was directly compared with three **Audubon's Shearwaters**†, for only the 3rd Alabama record of that species!

SULIDS THROUGH HERONS — In Louisiana, where the N. Gannet is seldom reported, 20 were seen over the gulf in Cameron Parish Feb. 4, and two more were nearby Feb. 5 (DBC, SH). An Am. White Pelican on the Mena, Ark., CBC was noteworthy. Three Brown Pelicans Jan. 10 in Jackson County and one in Harrison County, Miss., Jan. 14 were considered unusual winter records (JT, EJ, JS). In n.w. Florida, that species is regarded as making a gradual comeback (RL, HP, RP). The only Great Cormorant reported this season was one immature at Ft. Morgan Jan. 15 (CDC, TT). A Double-crested Cormorant in Benton County Dec. 27 (KS, JN) was the latest ever in w. Ozarks. One at Waterloo, Ala., Dec. 11 was considered rare (GP). In December on Mud L., Tenn.-Miss., small numbers remained from the 1500 present in November. Thirty at the Duck R. Unit, Tennessee N.W.R., Dec. 13 was considered a high number. And at Reserve, La., numbers were up (RJS). In St. Tammany Parish, La., one Anhinga was near Slidell Dec. 1, and two were at Mandeville Feb. 4 (JH). An Am. Bittern at Cross Creek N.W.R., Tenn., Dec. 11 (SJS, BHS, ARH) was considered rare. Fifty Great Blue Herons were there Jan. 8 (CGD, DRJ). In Benton County Great Blues returned to nest sites by Feb. 24, 12 at Osage Cr.,

11 at Illinois R (JN, NE) Two Great Egrets at Duck R Unit Dec 12 were unusual A Reddish Egret Jan 19 at New Orleans was a rare find (DPM), as was a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Gauthier, Miss., Dec. 6 (JS).

WATERFOWL — A Fulvous Whistling-Duck in Santa Rosa County, Fla., Feb. 22 provided the 5th n.w. Florida record (ph., BM). Tundra Swans were reported from Birmingham, Wheeler Ref., and several sites near Guntersville, Ala., Dec. 15-Feb. 13 (m.ob.), with a max. of 34 at Wheeler Ref. (*vide* TZA). In Tennessee, records spanned Dec. 1-Feb. 20, including singles at Cross Creek N.W.R. and Bear Creek W.M.A., up to three at Old Hickory L., and four at Ashland City (DWB, CGD, m.ob.). One at Wappanocca N.W.R., Ark., on several dates in January was considered rare (JRW *et al.*). Two Mute Swans in a remote swamp outside Lutchter, La., Jan. 10 into February were of puzzling origin. Nine Greater White-fronted Geese seen Feb. 28 in Oklahoma just 2 mi w. of Ft. Smith were unusual (JN, BB, RS). One in Santa Rosa County Feb. 17-29 (ph., BM) provided the 2nd record for n.w. Florida. Canada Geese dispersed widely and were found in areas where they are rarely seen, including Hancock County, Miss.; Waterloo, Ala.; several places in s.e. Louisiana; and several sites in n.w. Florida. All of these records came after the big Christmas freeze. Impressive concentrations included 40,000 at Wheeler N.W.R., the most in 15 years; 25,000 at Wappanocca N.W.R. (HP, MP); and 1000-5000 in the Memphis area Nov. 30-Feb. 14 (*vide* BBC). A "Hutchinson's" Canada Goose was at Hendersonville, Tenn., Jan. 22 (DC, PC). A **Ross' Goose** Dec. 18 in Cameron Parish furnished one of the few Louisiana records (JVR). On Jan. 8 there were 10,000 Am. Black Ducks and 40,000 Mallards at Cross Creek N.W.R. (CGD, DRJ). Two Blue-winged Teal on the Jonesboro, Ark., CBC were unusual. The Cinnamon Teal found on the Creole, La., CBC was still there Dec. 25 (DBC). Much rarer was one in Oklahoma 2 mi w. of Ft. Smith Feb. 28 (BB, JN, RS). A Eur. Wigeon was at Cross Creek N.W.R., Dec. 30-Jan. 8 (DWB, CGD, DRJ), the 2nd such in 2 years. Many observers commented on increased numbers of Redheads: there were 1000 near Destin, Fla. Feb. 20 (CLK); 27 were on the Pine Bluff CBC; 80 were in Hancock County Dec. 1 (JT, GM, DK). Ring-necked Duck records included 305 on the Hancock County CBC, and up to 200 wintered at Radnor L., Tenn. (ATT). The 15,000-25,000 scaup sp? in s. Mobile Bay Jan. 14 (RAD, RSD, LD) were perhaps some of the 100,000 scaup seen in Bon Secour Bay Dec. 28 (OEF). A 6-mi long flock of Lesser Scaup in Jackson County, Miss., Jan. 10 was estimated at 500,000 (JT, EJ)! Ten Canvasbacks were at Percy Priest Dam, Tenn., Jan. 17 (CGD), and 13 were at Radnor L., Feb. 15-29 (ATT). Oldsquaws made an impressive flight, being seen at 4 different Alabama sites Dec. 22-30. One was in Stewart County, Tenn., Dec. 10 (DWB, CGD), and another was in Baton Route Feb. 25 (JH, JFH). A Black Scoter at Guntersville Dec. 22 furnished the 5th inland Alabama record. Two Surf Scoters in Jefferson County, Ala., Jan. 23 were unusual (TAI, LNT), as were 12 at Alabama Pt., Feb. 20 (TAI, FD'A). One was in Lafourche Parish Jan. 2 (NN, RDP, DPM). White-winged Scoters included one in Franklin County, Tenn., Dec. 3 (TJW), one at El Dorado Dec. 13-16 (KLS, HHS), and three at Porter L., Ala., Jan. 23-Mar. 14 (TAI, m.ob.); one was on the Hancock County CBC; and one was at Baton Route Dec. 28 (TS). January reports of Com. Goldeneyes included up to 390 in n.w. Alabama, 47 in the w. Ozarks, and 15 in coastal Mississippi. Common Mergansers were on 3 Arkansas CBCs; one was at L. Fayetteville Feb. 19 (TH, LH); up to five were at L. Porter Dec. 28-Jan. 28 (TAI, m.ob.); one was on the Hancock County CBC; and one was at Baton Route Dec. 28 (TS). Two Red-breasted Mergansers in Benton County, Ark., Dec. 27 (KS, JN) were unusual. Both Stein in Reserve, La., and Touns in coastal Mississippi reported Ruddy Duck numbers up.

DIURNAL RAPTORS — The 308 Black Vultures and 267 Turkey Vultures on the Hancock County CBC were "all time coastal highs" (JT). An Osprey wintered in Mandeville, La. (m.ob.); Hancock County CBC and White River CBC had one each. An Am. Swallow-tailed Kite at Gulf Breeze, Fla., Feb. 27 was early (RB). Black-shouldered Kites continue to increase in Louisiana and Mississippi. The Hancock County CBC found a total of seven at 3 sites; by season's end only two could be found, but hopes were high for nesting again this year (*vide* JT). Louisiana records included one at Abita Springs Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 (JH); one at Peveto Woods, Cameron Par., Jan. 2 (MJM, CR); one w. of John-

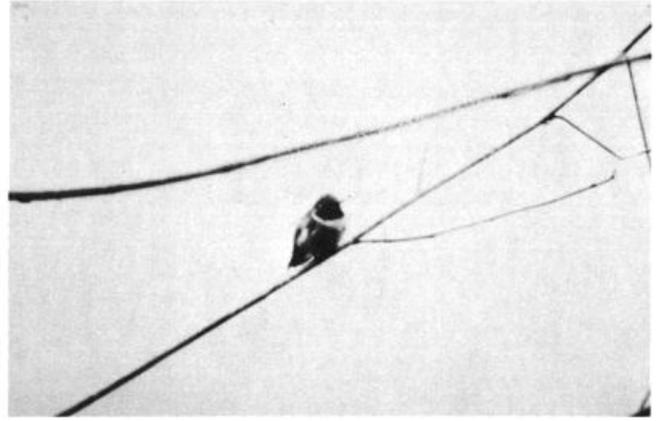
son's Bayou, Cameron Par., Feb. 4 (DBC, SH), and two at Holmwood, Calcaesteu Par., Feb. 11 (DTK, CG). Bald Eagle reports included Mississippi: one adult Harrison County Jan. 13 (KC); Louisiana: three (1 ad., 2 subad.) Jan. 1, 2, & 29 at Morganza Spillway (DWG); a nesting pair with two young at White Kitchen near Slidell, La.; Arkansas: 44 on 9 CBCs; 51 (16 ad., 35 imm.) in Benton County Jan. 6 (JN *et al.*), Tennessee: 71 at Dale Hollow L., in early Jan. (*vide* RCH); Alabama one adult at Bankhead L., Dec. 23 (DAR, BBr); one imm. Dec. 17 in Baldwin County (RAD, PT *et al.*); 20 at Guntersville Res., Jan. 19 (DCH, JJ); and two at Lock 17 w. of Birmingham Dec. 30 to the end of the period (TAI, m.ob.); members of the T.O.S. saw up to six in December and January in w. Tennessee, n. Mississippi, and e. Arkansas. The Hancock County CBC 40 N. Harriers was an "all time coastal high" (JT). Nelkin and Purrington reported Sharp-shinned Hawk numbers low in s.e. Louisiana. Stein felt Cooper's Hawk numbers were at or below normal at Reserve, La. Small numbers (normal?) of both were reported from coastal Mississippi (JT, m.ob.). A Cooper's Hawk in Colbert County, Ala., Jan. 1 (GP) was unusual. A N. Goshawk in Henry County Jan. 8 (MT, WT) furnished the 3rd record for w. Tennessee. An imm. Broad-winged Hawk at Grand L., La., Jan. 22 (RDP, ME, DPM) called repeatedly. A dark Swainson's Hawk was reported from Hancock County Feb. 22 & 29 (JT *et al.*), but no details were received. Red-tailed Hawk numbers were high in Alabama, Arkansas, coastal Mississippi, and Tennessee, where some fed on starlings at a roost. A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was in Natchitoches Parish Jan. 15 (ME, GR, TS), another was reported without details from Hancock County Feb. 29 (JT, GM); three were in Benton County Dec. 6 (BC, JN). It was a good year for Rough-legged Hawks with 9 reports totalling 16 individuals from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee. One imm. Golden Eagle was at Guntersville Dam Jan. 21 (TAB, JMH, BF); one immature was in Benton County Dec. 6 (BC, JN); and eight were seen on 3 Arkansas CBCs. The Hancock County CBC had 49 Am. Kestrels. Single Merlins were at Huntsville Jan. 20 (TAB), Birmingham Jan. 28 (TAI, m.ob.), Pickett County, Tenn., Feb. 5 (LK), and Jonesboro and Lonoke, Ark. CBCs. The species was absent from New Orleans after November. Single Peregrines were at New Orleans Feb. 22 (DPM), Baldwin County, Ala., Dec. 17 (CDC); Pope County, Ark., Jan. 14 (EH, HH *et al.*); and Jackson County, Miss., Jan. 10 (JT). The **Prairie Falcon** in Vermilion Parish Dec. 25 (DBC) was near where one was seen in February, 1983; its origin may be suspect.

GROUSE THROUGH CRANES — The Ruffed Grouse on the Buffalo R. West CBC represented a population of birds reintroduced in their historic range which are now reproducing (*vide* JN). A Yellow Rail in Pickett County, Tenn., Dec. 8 (CHA, RCH) was a rare find. Two Virginia Rails wintered at Birmingham where the species is rare but regular (TAI). The Sandhill Crane flock at its regular wintering area near Cheneyville, La., numbered 75 on Jan. 14 (DPM, RJN *et al.*). One crane near Daphne, Ala., Dec. 19 (CDC, TT, SHa) was away from the usual area near Gulf Shores where 18-20 were seen Dec. 29-31 (CDC, GDJ). In December cranes migrated through Tennessee in normal numbers (*vide* SJS).

PLOVERS THROUGH TERNS — Three Lesser Golden-Plovers at Biloxi Feb. 22 were early migrants. The 30 Piping Plovers at Waveland, Miss., Feb. 22 was a high number (JT, EJ). Both Touns in coastal Mississippi, and Stein in Reserve, La., found Killdeer numbers high. The three to five Spotted Sandpipers at El Dofado Nov. 8-Jan. 16 (KLS, HHS) were rare for the season. A Solitary Sandpiper Feb. 20 in Jackson County, Miss., was the earliest ever (JS). A Willet wintered in New Orleans, where it is rare (DPM); 250 at Pascagoula Jan. 10 (JT, EJ) was a high number. A Long-billed Curlew at Pensacola Dec. 9 (PT) provided the 7th n.w. Florida record and the 2nd for winter. A Purple Sandpiper in Cameron Parish Jan. 12 furnished the 2nd record for Louisiana (*JVR *et al.*). A Wilson's Phalarope near Fairhope, Ala., Feb. 4 (AZ, OEF, CLK, m.ob.) was the state's first in winter. A Pomarine Jaeger seen Jan. 29 at Ft. Morgan (CDC, TT) confirmed Alabama's 7th record; probably the same bird was there Feb. 19 (RAD, RSD, OEF). One in Gulf County, Fla., Dec. 12 (JSt) was the area's 1st in winter. Two ad. Parasitic Jaegers at Ft. Morgan Jan. 15 (CDC, TT) probably included the one seen there Feb. 15 (DB, CS). Franklin's Gulls, rare in winter, were found: Florida: three at Ft. Walton Dec. 9-15 (RAD); Mississippi: three at Waveland Dec. 1-13 (JT, GU, DK); and



Possible ad. Thayer's Gull, Almonaster City Dump, New Orleans, La., Feb. 4, 1984. Photo/D.P. Muth.



Black-chinned Hummingbird, Mobile, Ala., Jan. 15, 1984. Photo/G.D. Jackson.

Alabama: one at Gulf Shores Dec. 1-31 (TAI *et al.*); and one at Bon Secour Dec. 31 (ALM, HW). The 108 Ring-billed Gulls in Benton County Jan. 1 (JN, BL) were good numbers for the w. Ozarks. A possible ad. Thayer's Gull at New Orleans Feb. 4 (MB *et al.*) was photographed (RDP); analysis by experts still pending. Controversy still rages over the identification of the one-footed, dark-mantled gull seen in Alabama, and Florida, for several years. It was seen at Pensacola Naval Air Station Dec. 9 (TZ). A Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen at Cape San Blas, Fla., Jan. 21 (JSt); an adult was at Dauphin I., Dec. 9 (RH); and an adult at Gulfport (ph., JT *et al.*) remained through March; analysis of photographs still pending. An imm. Glaucous Gull was at Ft. Morgan Jan. 15 (CDC, TT), and one was in Escambia, Fla., Jan. 1 (BM). An ad. Great Black-backed Gull at Destin Dec. 9 (RAD) was there for the 10th consecutive year; a 2nd-year bird was on the Dauphin Island CBC. An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake in Stewart County, Tenn., Dec. 10-11 (DWB, m.ob.) was a good find. Three Com. Terns at Waveland Dec. 13 were considered "rare" (JT, DR).

CUCKOOS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS — A Yellow-billed Cuckoo(*) found during the Sabine CBC Dec. 17 was one of fewer than 10 winter records for Louisiana. Four Greater Roadrunners together in Beauregard Parish Dec. 30 (BO) was a large winter congregation. As usual, Groove-billed Anis were widespread in s. Louisiana: 46 individuals on 5 CBCs. Four on the Hancock County CBC, Dec. 19 were more unusual. A Com. Barn Owl was n. on the Jonesboro, Ark. CBC, Dec. 17. Nesting Great Horned Owls in Benton County, Ark., Feb. 17 (JN, NE) and Washington County Feb. 27 (JN), were utilizing abandoned Red-tailed Hawk nests. Burrowing Owl numbers in Louisiana seemed down—only one was found on 3 Cameron Parish CBCs—but one was near Reserve Dec. 1 (RJS), and another was in the same culverts in New Orleans occupied each winter since 1979. Two on the Venice CBC, Dec. 29 were unexpected. A Long-eared Owl was in a patch of Live Oak in Cameron Parish where at least one has roosted each winter since 1981; it was found, still clutching the branch it died on, Feb. 11, by L. Hargas. A reason for its apparent starvation could not be determined (*vide* GR, L.S.U.M.Z.).

A Com. Nighthawk at Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 5 (JCA), was very late. Six Chuck-will's-widows were on 3 s. Louisiana CBCs before or during the Christmas freeze, but one at Venice, La., Feb. 25 (DPM, ME) had inexplicably survived. A Whip-poor-will in Plaquemines Parish Dec. 4 was late, but a bird found on the Sabine CBC was attempting to winter.

HUMMINGBIRDS — An incredibly diverse but relatively small hummingbird invasion began in late November and (with few exceptions) ended with the big freeze: 7 of 8 species known to have occurred in Louisiana were documented. (Only Anna's failed to appear.) Seven Buff-bellieds were found at 4 Louisiana locations, including two in Cameron where there was only one previous record. Two Ruby-throats, much rarer in winter than Black-chinneds, were banded by N. Newfield at her Metairie feeders Nov. 13 and Dec. 24. Black-chinneds were at 2 Reserve locations, with one surviving until at least Jan. 6 (MW, NLN, RJS). Alabama's first record of **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was in Springhill, Mobile Co., Jan. 15 through the end of the

period (ph., GDJ, m.ob.). Louisiana's 3rd record of **Calliope Hummingbird**(*) (an. imm. ♂), was in Baton Rouge Nov. 25-Dec. 21 (PMc). (see the Fall 1983 report.) A **Broad-tailed Hummingbird**(*) arrived at the feeder of M. & G. DeSoto in Franklin, La., in late November. Attempts to capture it proved fruitless, but on Christmas Day, Mrs. DeSoto watched as a Loggerhead Shrike snatched it from a feeder. Mr. DeSoto's quick pursuit was rewarded with the state's 3rd record and first specimen (*vide* NLN). Unbelievably, another Broad-tailed, also believed to have arrived in late November, was banded by Newfield at the Baton Rouge home of S. & K. Hope Feb. 23. This 4th Louisiana record survived temperatures that reached 12°F and several days of freezing; it departed, in partial ad. ♂ plumage, Mar. 13. A *Selasphorus* sp. was in El Dorado, Ark., Nov. 8-Dec. 24 (EGK *et al.*) where the genus is rare. Fourteen Rufous Hummingbirds were banded by Newfield statewide; one remained despite the cold, moulting into ad. ♂ plumage by Mar. 1 (MW). Another apparent survivor was a male at a more unexpected location, St. Tammany Parish, La., Feb. 7 (DH, NLN). Finally, an imm. ♀ **Allen's Hummingbird**, was banded and measured at Weber's feeder by Newfield Dec. 10.

WOODPECKERS THROUGH WRENS — Record high numbers of Red-headed Woodpeckers in Tennessee marked the season (BBC, SJS), but few continued S to the coast (JT). A pair of Com. "Red-shafted" Flickers in Memphis was a Tennessee first Dec. 18 (JRW, JG). An E. Wood-Pewee(*) in Plaquemines Parish, La., Dec. 4 (DPM) was extremely late. Two Least Flycatchers(*) on the Sabine CBC bolstered the species' status as the most likely of its genus to winter in the Region. Vermilion Flycatchers were unreported outside Cameron in Louisiana, but one was in Harrison County, Miss., Dec. 8 (JT) where it is rare. A Brown-crested Flycatcher(*) found on the Sabine CBC was a first for s.w. Louisiana; 9 previous records were all from s.e. Louisiana. A second individual, thought to be this species, was at Lafayette in s. c. Louisiana Dec. 18. A W. Kingbird in Hancock County, Miss., Dec. 13 (DR, JT) was a winter rarity.

Horned Larks followed the Christmas cold fronts deep into Louisiana, reaching Cameron, St. Charles, St. Tammany, and Orleans parishes, where they have been rarely recorded. Purple Martins were generally late returning and in low numbers. A flock of Fish Crows was n. in Pulaski County, Ark., Feb. 11 (WS). Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce Regionwide except in the w. Ozarks (*vide* JN). Louisiana's first **Rock Wren**(*) was in New Orleans Dec. 19-Feb. 4 (MM). Alabama's 3rd **Rock Wren** found Feb. 4 (PB, m.ob.) was, like its predecessors, at Dauphin I., a known vagrant trap., casting doubt on published speculation that Rock Wrens travel E by railroad. A House Wren was late in Washington County, Ark., Dec. 12 (BS).

THRUSHES THROUGH WARBLERS — A Veery(*) on the Sabine CBC (GR) furnished Louisiana's first winter record. Gray Catbirds lingered in Washington County, Ark. to Dec. 17 (KM, EN); in Memphis to Dec. 18 (RP); and one was in Lawrence County, Tenn., Dec. 29 through in mid-January (LC). Cedar Waxwings made a brief showing at Christmas, but had largely vanished by mid-January. the 2nd winter White-eyed Vireo for n.w. Louisiana was on the Shreveport CBC Dec.



Rock Wren, New Orleans, La., Dec. 21, 1983-Feb. 4, 1984. Photo/R.D. Purrington.

18 (HHJ *et al.*). The first winter record of Yellow-throated Vireo(†) for s.e. Louisiana was on the Grand Isle CBC (GD). A Red-eyed Vireo(†) Louisiana's 2nd winter record, was on the Sabine CBC. (DBC).

The following warblers, all found in Plaquemines Parish, La., Dec. 4 (JVR, TAP, DPM), constituted a remarkable wave of late migrants: two Tennessees, a Yellow, three Black-throated Greens, an imm. ♀ Blackburnian(*), a Bay-breasted, four Ovenbirds, and two N. Waterthrushes; one each of the last 2 species was found after Christmas on the Venice CBC. A Nashville Warbler, very rare in winter, was seen on the Sabine CBC (NN, MM, DPM). It popped into view in the same patch of brush as an imm. ♀ Tropical Parula(*) Dec. 17-18 (DPM, m.ob.), the first United States record outside of s. Texas. The species joins a long list of birds which have drifted up the coast from n.e. Mexico into Louisiana. A Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler in St. Tammany Parish, La., Jan. 17 was a good find (JH). A Townsend's Warbler(†) on the Johnson Bayou CBC Dec. 18 (to Dec. 23) (RM, DP, m.ob.) furnished Louisiana's 2nd record. A Yellow-throated Warbler in New Orleans Jan. 22, was a freeze survivor (JW). A Palm Warbler in Colbert County, Ala., Jan. 2 (GP) was n. Three Prothonotary Warblers(†) on 2 Louisiana CBCs were unprecedented. Common Yellowthroats lingered in Arkansas and Tennessee, but a Yellow-breasted Chat in Memphis Dec. 15-29 (BBC, LCC) was exceptional.

TANAGERS THROUGH LONGSPURS — A Summer Tanager in Harrison County, Miss., Jan. 3 (JT) and one in New Orleans Feb. 3 (MB), already winter rarities, were more remarkable for the weather they had endured. The same could be said for a W. Tanager in New Orleans Feb. 23 (AS). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Plaquemines Parish Dec. 4 (TAP) was very late. Black-headed Grosbeaks were at feeders in Jackson County, Miss., Jan. 15 (ph., PaMc) and Mobile, Ala., Jan. 6 (LD, m.ob.). A Blue Grosbeak (ph.) on Dauphin Is., Feb. 11 (HK, JF), provided Alabama's first winter record. Six Indigo Buntings were on 4 Louisiana CBCs, and in coastal Alabama and Florida, but one at a feeder in Birmingham Jan. 14 (FD) furnished only the 3rd inland winter record for Alabama. Seven (!) Painted Buntings were on 4 Louisiana CBCs, but a Painted Bunting in Baldwin County, Ala., Jan. 25 (CB, MN, VF), provided the state's first winter record. Dickcissels were at 2 Memphis feeders Jan. 20-Feb. 7 (JL) and Jan. 28-Feb. 5 (RT).

American Tree Sparrows invaded Arkansas and Tennessee, but few penetrated farther s. A Clay-colored Sparrow(†) found on the Venice CBC (JR), provided s.e. Louisiana's first winter record. Another was reported without details from Escambia County, Fla. Lark Sparrows were reported from 3 states, with one on the Little Rock CBC the most interesting. Harris' Sparrows reached the coast in Louisiana, where unexpected, but true rarities were at Reelfoot L., Tenn., Dec. 17 (D & GMa), and at Fort Morgan, Ala., Mar. 4 (CDC, TT). Lapland Longspurs were widespread in Arkansas, Tennessee, and Louisiana, but remarkable were six at Alabama Pt., Ala., Dec. 29 (GDJ) and two in

Escambia County, Fla., Jan. 1 (CDC), n.w. Florida's 3rd record. Smith's Longspur was reported only from the Ozarks: two in Benton County, Ark., Jan. 1-15 (JN, m.ob.). A Snow Bunting at Cross Creek N.W.R., Tenn., Dec. 30 (DWB, CGD) was a rare find.

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH FINCHES — A singing W. Meadowlark(†) in Baton Rouge Mar. 2 (PMC) was a good find of a species whose distribution in Louisiana is mysterious. A Yellow-headed Blackbird at Fort Morgan, Ala., Dec. 20 (DMB) may have been one present since October (*vide* TAI); another, spotted in an evening flight of thousands of blackbirds, brightened an otherwise routine spectacle in Vermillion Parish, La., Jan. 12 (JVR). Regionwide, blackbirds generally were noted as being in greater than normal numbers. Noteworthy were two Brewer's Blackbirds(†) in Colbert County, Ala., Feb. 12 (GP, TD). Bronzed Cowbirds have been present in s.e. Louisiana since 1971, and definitely breeding since 1978 but a flock of 18 in New Orleans Dec. 11 (AS) was a noteworthy winter concentration. Northern Orioles of both forms were widespread in s. Louisiana before, during, and after the freeze.

Purple Finches made a good showing Regionwide. House Finches were everywhere in mid. Tennessee and n. Alabama, but an orange variant House Finch at Gulf Breeze, Fla., Dec. 30 (RAD), was n.w. Florida's first and furnished Florida's 2nd record. A yellow variant reported from Baton Rouge Feb. 25 (JH, JFH) will be reviewed by the L.O.S. Bird Records Committee; although there are at least 2 previous reports from Louisiana, no record has been reviewed by the committee. A Com. Redpoll in Birmingham Dec. 20 (TAI, MH) was Alabama's 7th record and the earliest; the 8th was found during the Birmingham CBC Dec. 26 (AM). Although large numbers arrived late, Pine Siskins were everywhere by mid-January. The Evening Grosbeak invasion was impressive, if spotty; Louisiana birders were treated to the spectacle of 300+ visiting the feeders of the Fairchilds in n. Baton Rouge.

ADDENDA — These records were inadvertently omitted from the fall report: four Bridled Terns were seen 12 mi s.e. of South Pass, La., Sept. 2 (RDP). Louisiana's 4th fall record of Cape May Warbler(*) was in Cameron Parish Oct. 15; the 5th, first for s.e. Louisiana, and latest, was at Grand Isle Nov. 13 (DPM, NN, RDP).

CORRIGENDUM: In AB 37:996 it was reported that a clutch of Brown Pelican eggs was taken by a Corps of Engineers biologist. In fact, one broken egg and one intact egg, both abandoned and 50 yards from the active nests, were taken and submitted to the U.S.F. & W.S. for analysis.

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PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION

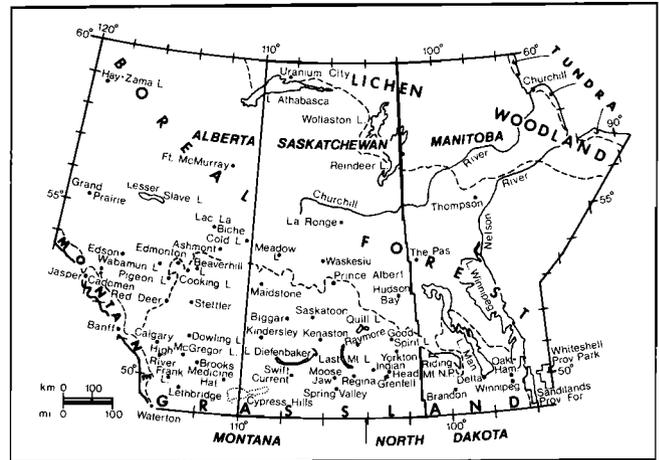
/J. Bernard Gollop

Temperatures were 8 to 10°C below normal (the coldest in the south being -43°C at Swift Current) and many communities recorded their coldest December ever. About ten Horned Larks and Snow Buntings were found near Spring Valley in December (FB). Two Evening Grosbeaks and a Purple Finch were found dead in Moose Mountain Provincial Park, Saskatchewan (RD). Stragglers that survived December had a relatively cozy two months afterwards. January was about 6°C above average in the southern Prairies and February was 8 to 10°C above normal, with monthly temperatures averaging 0 to -4°C. Many communities had their warmest and second warmest February on record.

Precipitation each month was below normal by 40% and 50% in many areas south of 54°.

LOONS THROUGH DUCKS — The only wintering Com. Loon was a repeat at the e. end of L. Diefenbaker Jan. 15 (SS). A Horned Grebe flying near Raymore Dec. 1 was particularly late and one in Saskatoon Dec. 26 furnished the first wintering record (WH, SL, BG). One of the few December records for Great Blue Herons in Manitoba was a single in Spruce Woods P.P., Dec. 6 (WM). Lone, particularly late Tundra Swans were seen at Delta Dec. 8 and 9 and e. of Saskatoon Dec. 9; the latter was found dead the next day with freezing injuries to feet, wings and tongue (DC, GBo, GWo). Canada Geese remained as late as Dec. 6 (9 birds) near Raymore and Dec. 18 at Delta (WH, JH); a flock of 15 on Feb. 6 over Estevan suggested wintering birds (HP). Other late occurrences near Raymore were 250 Mallards Dec. 1 and 11 on Dec. 3, a N. Pintail Dec. 1, an Am. Wigeon Dec. 2 and 14 Com. Goldeneyes Dec. 2 (WH, SL). A surprising 250 ± Mallards were on L. Diefenbaker Jan. 15 (SS). Wintering Com. Mergansers were again noted at Calgary (15 on Jan. 2), on L. Diefenbaker (20 on Jan. 15) and at Rivers and Pointe de Bois, Man. (ES, SS, NS).

EAGLES THROUGH OWLS — What may have been a wintering Bald Eagle was noted in the Seven Sisters-Pinawa, Man., area in mid-December and Feb. 10 (PeT, R & CH). Singles Feb. 25 near Craik and Mar. 1 near Edmonton may have been early migrants (VL, JMc, RE). Northern Goshawks were reportedly down in s. Manitoba, up around Raymore (with as many as three birds Feb. 1) and probably average in the Calgary area (RK, WH, DC). The only Rough-legged Hawk reported from Saskatchewan and Manitoba was a bird at Spring Valley Dec. 1 (FB); six singles were reported from the Calgary area in the 3 months (*vide* DC). American Kestrels were reported only from 4 localities in Manitoba, down from last year (*vide* RK). Merlins were reported from 2 areas in s. Manitoba, from 8 areas in Saskatchewan and from Calgary. There were reports of Gyrfalcons from 16 localities across the Prairies, usually single birds on one date. Winnipeg had a record 595 Gray Partridges Dec. 17 (RK). Another good count was of 75 birds in 29 km near Spring Valley Jan. 26 as was 88 Sharp-tailed Grouse there Jan. 3 (FB). December 4 was a record late date for Sandhill Cranes in Saskatchewan (17 at Raymore) and for a Killdeer there Dec. 2 (WH, SL). Eastern Screech-Owls were reported only from Manitoba; in Winnipeg, a gray-phase at Brandon Jan. 23 and a red-phase at Lyleton Jan. 19 (CC, JMu). Great Horned Owls were nesting near High River Feb. 25 and Webb, Sask., Feb. 26 (RS, CH). Evidence indicated a Great Horned killed two domestic geese near White Bear Dec. 30-Jan. 1 (SJ). Snowy Owls were scarce, about the same as last year. The only concentrations were of 14 in 73 km s. of Rosetown, Sask., Dec. 18 and nine in 48 km s. e. of Moose Jaw Feb. 7 (CH, S & GWa). Northern Hawk-Owls were



down around Grande Prairie but were up in s. Manitoba with nine birds reported, including four banded (KL, HC, RN). Bob Nero and Herb Copland banded 59 Great Gray Owls e. of L. Winnipeg and saw many more, more than twice the sightings of last winter. Seven Short-eared Owls were reported from 4 localities in Saskatchewan and the Calgary area.

WOODPECKERS THROUGH WAXWINGS — As usual Manitoba had Red-headed Woodpeckers; two through the winter at Stonewall and two near Kleefeld (JV, MS, KG, DF). Downy Woodpeckers were reported down in Saskatchewan at Foam L., White Bear and Raymore (WN, SJ, WH). Large numbers of three-toed woodpeckers were reported 100 ± km n. of Lesser Slave L.: 13 Three-toeds Feb. 1 and 15 Black-backed Jan. 31 (JP). In spite of the mild weather, Horned Larks arrived on schedule about mid-February. There was at least one Steller's Jay in Calgary through the period (RP, AS, LG). Near White Bear 60 Black-billed Magpies were trapped on one farm (SJ). Single Am. Crows wintered successfully in Edmonton and Moose Jaw (RE, M & GZ). What may have been an early migrant was seen near Saskatoon Feb. 15 (GBe, HG). Common Ravens were apparently more common at Raymore, Saskatoon and Edmonton; on Dec. 1, 209 were counted at Calgary (WH, BG, RE, CH). Record numbers of Black-capped Chickadees—376—were counted in Winnipeg Dec. 17 and of Red-breasted Nuthatches—27—at Pinawa, Man., Dec. 30 (RK, PeT). A Boreal Chickadee provided an "accidental" record for Moose Jaw Jan. 21-Feb. 21 (EKi) as did a Veery as late as Dec. 6 (S & GWa). Boreals were much more common—8 localities—than last year in s. Manitoba (RK). A Townsend's Solitaire was an accidental at Pinawa, Man., Dec. 4 (HR). The number of Am. Robins dropped from seven in December to one since then in Winnipeg (HC); elsewhere there were no January-February robins reported. One Varied Thrush was not reported after Dec. 14 in Winnipeg but another survived until at least Feb. 22 near Souris, Man. (DK, RK, HB). Bohemian Waxwings appeared in early December and, for the most part, became rare in late January, *e.g.*, none at Saskatoon or Raymore after Jan. 23 (MGi, WH). Numbers were probably about the same as last year in s. Alberta but were higher in s. Manitoba and Saskatchewan, *e.g.*, 6000 ± in Saskatoon Dec. 26 compared to 1000 ± on the same date last year (JS, HC, SH). Two Cedar Waxwings were found in Grande Prairie Dec. 28 (KL). Northern Shrikes were down in s. Manitoba and s. Saskatchewan (4 birds) but probably similar to last year in s. Alberta (8 birds) (RK, WH, RS)

WARBLERS THROUGH GROSBEAKS — A Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler was described in Calgary Dec. 6 & 7 (JT). A ♀, ♂ and possibly a third Rufous-sided Towhee visited an Edmonton feeder Jan. 29-February (RT). Single Am. Tree Sparrows were present at Raymore until Dec. 7, at Calgary Feb. 19 and remained at a feeder in Grande Prairie through January and February (WH, SL, LG, KL). The only January-February records for White-throated Sparrows were lone birds at Saskatoon Jan. 1, Calgary, Jan. 15 and Grande Prairie the entire month as well as all of February (PO, MD, KL). Single Harris' Sparrows survived the period until at least Feb. 19 at Elma, Man., and through February at Saskatoon; both birds were at feeders (PeT, RK, BG). The only late winter records for Dark-eyed Juncos were at Raymore and Grande Prairie — one bird in each case through January and February — and a single at Moose Jaw Feb. 3 & 18 (WH, KL, S & GWa). At least two Lapland Longspurs Jan. 26 apparently wintered near Glenora, Man. (CC). Snow Bunting numbers were similar to last winter. There was the usual scattering of wintering icterids. Three ♀ and two ♂ Red-winged Blackbirds feeding on a road near Irricana, Alta., with four Rusty Blackbirds Jan. 7 was not usual (JS). There was another Rusty through the winter near Raymore and a Com. Grackle there until December 12 (WH, SL). Manitoba reported a Brewer's Blackbird Dec. 17 at Dauphin and a grackle throughout the period in Winnipeg (AB, RK). The only W. Meadowlark was reported around a haystack s.w. of Moose Jaw through December (EKe). Rosy Finches strayed N and E of their usual winter range. There was one at a feeder in Ft. McMurray throughout the period; the first record for one near Govan, Sask., Jan. 31, and the 2nd record for Saskatoon—14 on Feb. 4 (JG, WH, MGo). Pine Grosbeaks were reported in small numbers from each province, probably similar to last winter. There were a few January-February Purple Finches: fewer than last winter in s. Manitoba and three at Moose

Mountain P.P., Sask., (RK, RD). The first **Cassin's Finches** for Edmonton were a male and female banded Jan. 27 by E.T. Jones (RE). The only Red Crossbills were five from 2 areas in s. Manitoba and nine on 3 dates in Saskatoon (CC, RK, CE, PhT, MGi). White-winged were only found at Saskatoon Jan. 22 and Quinton Dec. 20, Sask., (2 birds each) and in the Calgary area (2-30 birds on 4 dates) (SS, WH, JP, ES, RS). Common and Hoary redpolls were down from last year with very few being reported from each province. Pine Siskins successfully wintered only in Edmonton (small flock), Moose Mountain P.P. (6), and Winnipeg (4); 12 were reported Dec. 29 at Cypress R., Man. (RE, RD, RK, KD). Goldfinches were down drastically from last year in s. Manitoba (RK). Evening Grosbeaks were few in number, probably fewer than last winter; the only increase was from 0 last winter to 50-100/day at Moose Mountain P.P. (RD).

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NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

/Craig A. Faanes

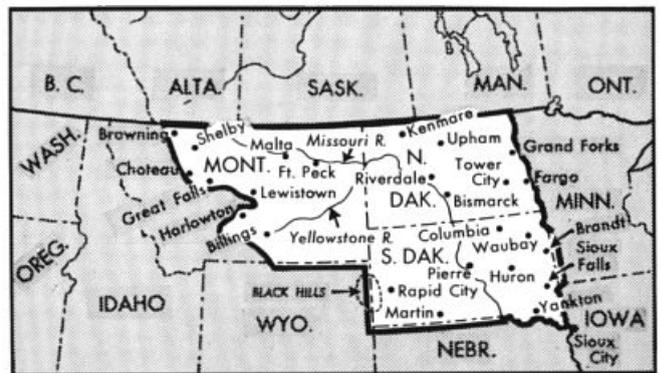
Weather was a major factor affecting birds and bird watchers this winter. Early December was characterized by near-normal temperatures and snowfall. However, a cold spell began December 17 and continued past Christmas. Many record low temperatures were set during this period; wind chill factors of -100° to -105° F were common. Except for one week of below zero temperatures, near normal conditions existed in January. In contrast to December which was the coldest December on record, February was the second mildest February on record in western North Dakota, with average temperatures in the upper twenties.

Many observers commented on the general scarcity of birds after the Christmas period; no doubt related to the harsh weather conditions. The only excitement in the bird world was the "invasion" of Boreal Chickadees across North Dakota, and a cooperative flock of Rosy Finches at a New Town, North Dakota feeder.

The death last year of P.D. Skaar created a serious gap in the compilation of bird distribution data in Montana. One of the first benefactors of the new nongame tax checkoff in Montana will be the continuation of Skaar's state latilong study. An editorial committee of three will oversee the effort and a network of compilers will be established to aid in data gathering.

GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWLS — A lone W. Grebe on L. Sakakawea, N.D., Dec. 4 was in the same location as one last year Dec. 5 (RM, GB). Seven were observed at the Yellowtail Afterbay on the Bighorn R. Mont. (hereafter, Y.T.A.), Jan. 7. Two Trumpeter Swans near Scenic, *Pennington*, S.D., Feb. 29 were unusual at that location (RP). Snow Geese in *McCook* Feb. 14 and *Minnehaha* Feb. 15 tied the early arrival date records for South Dakota (LA). About 1500 Canada Geese were at Garrison Dam, N.D., Dec. 4; 3375 were on the Yellowstone R., Mont., Dec. 13, and 1899 on the Bighorn R., Mont., Dec. 14. By Jan. 3-4, only 18 were on the Yellowstone and 490 on the Bighorn. Egress of these birds was undoubtedly related to cold weather.

Peak Mallard numbers included 13,200 on the Bighorn R., and 7184



on the Yellowstone R., Dec. 13-14. A ♂ Mallard x N. Pintail was at Y.T.A., Jan. 6 (Y.A.S.). First migrant N. Pintail were in *Meade*, S.D., Feb. 28 (DB). Two Am Wigeon at Garrison Dam Dec. 20 were exceptionally late. A pair in *Turner* Feb. 17 provided the earliest South Dakota spring arrival record (LA). Canvasbacks Feb. 17 and Lesser Scaup Feb. 16 at Yankton were early arrival records for South Dakota (WH). A ♂ Oldsquaw wintered at Garrison Dam (DNS, GB), and two males were at Y.T.A., Jan. 6 (Y.A.S.). A ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye was at Canyon L., Rapid City, S.D., for the 5th consecutive winter and 17 were at Y.T.A., Jan. 6 (Y.A.S.). Three Hooded Mergansers Jan. 6 at Y.T.A., were quite unusual for that location in winter. Two ♀ Red-breasted Mergansers in the Garrison Dam area Dec. 4-20 were among the few winter records for North Dakota (DNS, RM, GB).

EAGLES THROUGH KILLDEER — Bald Eagles wintered across South Dakota; 53 were reported from e. Montana; 11 were at Garrison Dam Feb. 12, and two were found in e. North Dakota. Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported in "unusual" numbers from 7 South Dakota counties (BH). Northern Goshawk reports included 17 on 10 dates from w. North Dakota; 13 from 8 South Dakota locations; two in e. North Dakota, and two near Miles City, Mont. Seven Am. Kestrels through

the period near Fargo were a surprise considering the severe weather. Fourteen Merlins were reported from the Dakotas. Carlson observed a Merlin being attacked by a Prairie Falcon near Ft. Peck Dec. 26. One Gyrfalcon was near Ft. Peck Jan. 21 (CC). Another Gyrfalcon near Ft. Pierre Feb. 4 was the first c. South Dakota record since 1978. Prairie Falcons were widespread, including a single in Grand Forks, N.D., for the 2nd consecutive winter (DL).

A flock of 18 ♂ Sage Grouse near Ft. Peck was becoming territorial Jan. 21. At U.L. Bend N.W.R., Mont., 262 Sage Grouse were in the early stages of strutting activities Feb. 8 & 9. Considering the cold weather, a wintering Killdeer at Sturgis, Meade, S.D., was surprising (EM)

GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A Franklin's Gull at Yankton Dec. 14 was the latest ever in South Dakota (WH). A winter-plumaged Bonaparte's Gull at Garrison Dam Dec. 4 provided one of few North Dakota winter records (GB, RM). A Thayer's Gull at Garrison Dam Dec. 4 & 11 furnished the 5th state record for North Dakota (GB). Glaucous Gull reports included 2 first-year and one third-year birds at Garrison Dam Dec. 4-20, and one at Ft. Peck Dec. 31-mid January. Seventeen E. Screech-Owls were found on 6 dates in w. North Dakota. A poor flight of Snowy Owls included only 18 birds across the Region. A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** at Lewistown, Mont., Jan. 6 provided the first winter record for latilong L30 (LM). The Barred Owl in Roberts, S D., Jan. 1 was unusual (DRS). Northern Saw-whet Owl reports included two at Fargo and one in e. South Dakota. A Red-bellied Woodpecker wintered at Fargo.

CHICKADEES THROUGH WAXWINGS — Up to seven **Boreal Chickadees** were in the Minot, N.D. region through the winter. Six were near Rugby, N.D., in early January, one was in the Turtle Mts., Jan. 31, two were near Denbeigh, N.D., in late November, and one was at Grand Forks in February. This was indeed a large scale "invasion" with at least 16 birds involved for a species with only 2 previous records of single birds in North Dakota! Nineteen Mountain Chickadees were near Lewistown, Mont., Jan. 6 (LM). Red-breasted Nuthatches were present almost everywhere conifer trees were found. Three Brown Creepers wintered at Minot (MK). The Winter Wren in Lawrence Dec. 11, finished the 4th winter record for South Dakota (DP). Seven Townsend's Solitaires were found in w. North Dakota, and one was in *Pembina*, N.D., Dec. 20; only two were reported from e. Montana.

American Robins were unusually abundant at Hot Springs in the

Black Hills (RR) About 40 were at St. Xavier, Mont., Jan. 6 and 11 were at Bowdoin, Mont., Dec. 3. Considerable mortality among Am. Robins was reported from the N. Unit of Roosevelt N.P. (SS). The only Varied Thrushes reported were at Fargo Dec. 2-16 (FC *et al.*) and Malta, Mont., Dec. 16 (*fide* DP). A Gray Catbird at Billings Dec. 17 provided a new winter record for Latilong L41 (Y.A.S.). A good movement of Bohemian Waxwings was reported in North Dakota and Montana, but numbers were considered poor in South Dakota.

SPARROWS THROUGH CARDUELINE FINCHES — A ♂ N. Cardinal was present all winter in Grand Forks (DL, MW). One White-throated Sparrow was at Waubay, N.W.R., S.D., through the winter (BH, JK). The only Fox Sparrow report was of one at Fargo Dec. 30-Feb. 4, and two there Feb. 4 (DC). Snow Buntings made a dismal showing across the Region, as did Red-winged Blackbirds. Rosy Finch observations included 30 in the South Dakota Badlands Feb. 18, 40 near Terry, Mont., Feb. 22, 125 in *Shannon*, S.D., and 250 at Lewistown Feb. 22. A flock of about 150 descended on Bernice Houser's feeder in New Town, N.D., Dec. 11, and remained throughout the winter providing observers an excellent opportunity to view this species with ease.

Single Pine Grosbeaks were at Grand Forks Dec. 23 & 26. Purple Finches were reported intermittently across the Region. A House Finch Jan. 22-28 at Lewistown was unusual there. Two Cassin's Finches were in Rapid City Feb. 18 (JB). Few Red Crossbills were reported away from the Black Hills. Only two Com. Redpolls were reported from e. Montana. In general the number of Com. Redpolls was disappointing across both Dakotas. Two to four Hoary Redpolls were in Fargo Jan. 21-Feb. 29 (LF). Numbers of Pine Siskins, Am. Goldfinches and Evening Grosbeaks were considered poor across the prairies.

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SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

/Frances Williams

The National Weather Service at Omaha said of December, 1983, "In our records, the combination of continuous snow cover and extended cold, coming so early in the season, has not been equaled in the past 100 years of records." Many people in Omaha reported finding dead birds, some even under or near feeders. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission reported losses among game birds due to heavy snow and ice cover. In Kansas, record cold temperatures produced an incredible lack of birds "as if someone had taken a giant feather duster and swept Kansas clean".

At Tulsa, temperatures remained below freezing for 17 days continuously in January with night temperatures below zero for a number of those days. Bald Eagles flew south to find open water and the waterfowl that remained moved to free flowing parts of the Arkansas River which were not frozen. In Norman, Oklahoma, there was a 14-day period when the temperature exceeded 11 degrees only once, but Bewick's and Carolina wrens and Yellow-rumped Warblers showed no ill effects. Longspurs and Savannah Sparrows disappeared when ice and snow covered the ground, but reappeared when the cold abated.

At Nacogdoches, Texas, winter residents were present in normal numbers after the record breaking freeze, evidently finding adequate food sources during the period. Waterfowl concentrated in unprecedented

ed numbers on the open water left in east Texas reservoirs. At Waco, in central Texas, birds were present in such numbers and variety to produce the comment, "Best winter birding for a long time." In western Texas extended arctic chill followed a year of drought which had produced no wild food crop and birds almost disappeared.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — The big freeze pushed Com. Loons S into Texas, where most reservoirs hosted one or two. A congregation of 55 was counted on Lake O' the Pines Jan. 5, while 18 were on Buchanan L., Llano, Dec. 15. A Horned Grebe at Keith, Neb., Feb. 28 was an early spring migrant (RCR). In n. Texas, Horned Grebes outnumbered Eared Grebes and were found as far s.w. as Buchanan L. A Red-necked Grebe was discovered in *Crosby*, Tex., Feb. 5-12 (ML, m.ob.). Four W. Grebes at Waco, Tex., Feb. 19 were the first at that locality in over 30 years (LMB). A single W. Grebe stopped briefly at Lubbock Dec. 14 (CS). An apparently healthy Am. White Pelican remained in *Wyandotte*, Kans., until late January (m.ob.). In *Panola*, Tex., a flock of 12 Am. White Pelicans Dec. 30 gradually diminished to two by Feb. 4, while five at Waco Feb. 19 were early N migrants. Since most ponds and lakes in n.e. Oklahoma were frozen, Great Blue Herons gathered in the Arkansas R., below Keystone L. dam. By Feb. 24, 93 were present (E & GL). A Great Egret remained in Grand Prairie, Tex., until Dec. 12. A Snowy Egret appeared in *Hudspeth*, Tex., on the early date Feb. 18 (BZ, JD). More than 60 Cattle Egrets wintered at El Paso. At Lubbock, 11 Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen Dec. 23.



WATERFOWL — The only Tundra Swan reported was at Lubbock Dec. 24 and Jan. 27 (ML). Either Ross' Geese are becoming more numerous or observers are learning to find them among the masses of Snow Geese. Ross' Geese were discovered in *Lancaster*, Neb., Feb. 17 (BG), Sequoyah N.W.R., Okla., Jan. 28 & Feb. 12 (JeM), Lubbock Jan. 22 (ML), Sherman, Tex., Jan. 15 (GG), *Hudspeth* Feb. 4-18 (BZ, m.ob.) and Hagerman N.W.R., Tex., Dec. 3 (KN, m.ob.). Many more Canada Geese wintered in the Region than usual, feeding in wheat, corn and milo fields where they were easily observed from roadsides. "Incredible" numbers were noted in *Pawnee*, *Rush*, and *Ness*, Kans. One Canada Goose that found its way to far s.w. Texas lived with the calves in a stock pen throughout January (JoM). A single Wood Duck was seen in *Colfax*, Neb., Jan. 25 (BJR). At Tulsa, an Am. Black Duck was found Feb. 21. Four Mottled Ducks visited Waco Jan. 4. Cinnamon Teal were observed in *Linn*, Kans., Feb. 19 (MC) and Ft. Worth Feb. 4 (m.ob.). Spectacular flocks of Ring-necked Ducks concentrated on reservoirs in the piney woods area of e. Texas, with a peak of 850 at L. Murvaul, *Panola* Jan. 1-2 (DW, SC). Small groups of Greater Scaup wintered on these same reservoirs and were also seen at Lubbock, Tulsa and Dallas. Oldsquaws were discovered in *Sequoyah* and *Mayes*, Okla. A White-winged Scoter was on L. Murvaul Jan. 22 & Feb. 4 (SC). A **Barrows' Goldeneye**(*) in *Comanche*, Okla., Jan. 14 provided a first documented state record (RR). When small lakes and ponds froze, Hooded Mergansers gathered on larger lakes. It was astonishing to see 100 of this species at once. On Wilson Res., *Russell*, Kans., 9778 Com. Mergansers were counted Dec. 17. Red-breasted Mergansers were found in *Mayes*, Okla., Jan. 28 (JAG, JST), Dallas Jan. 2 (KN), *Hudspeth* Feb. 4 (BZ) and *Rains*, Tex., Jan. 29 (RK *et al.*).

RAPTORS — The only Ospreys reported were at *Palo Pinto*, Tex., Dec. 4 (KN) and *Comal*, Tex., Feb. 9 (E & KM). Black-shouldered Kites visited *Comanche*, Okla., Dec. 12, 17 (KM, JA) and Richardson, Tex., Feb. 2 (SM). Bald Eagles visited lakes where they are rarely seen, feeding on fish brought to the surface by hundreds of mergansers, as well as on stranded ducks. At Buffalo Lake N.W.R., Tex., which was dry because of the extended drought, an imm. Bald Eagle scavenged on a dead cow (KS). In Nebraska, N. Goshawks were found in *Sarpy*, *Douglas* and *Saunders*. At Lubbock, a Com. Black-Hawk had returned to the nesting area by Feb. 12 (KW, *vide* CS). A Harris' Hawk near El Paso was incubating Feb. 25. A Red-shouldered Hawk at Two Rivers State Recreation Area, Neb., Jan. 2 & 8 was unusual at that date (BJR, L & BP). Merlins were sighted at 8 localities. Peregrine Falcons, rare in winter, were noted in *Douglas*, Neb., Jan. 2 (BJR), *Colfax*, Neb., Jan.

15 (TH), Keene, Tex., Feb. 17 (CE). Prairie Falcons were abundant in the w. and were seen in n.e. Kansas and n.e. Oklahoma. A **Gyr Falcon** remained in *Lancaster*, Neb., through January (m.ob.) and three other Gyr Falcons were found in neighboring counties.

QUAILS THROUGH GULLS — Populations of both N. Bobwhites and Scaled Quail were very low throughout w. Texas. At Omaha, bobwhites have become increasingly scarce in recent years and the extreme cold this winter further reduced their numbers. Considering the frozen marshes, Virginia Rails were surprising at *Garden*, Neb., Jan. 6 (RCR), Ft. Worth Jan. 15-Feb. 24 (RDC *et al.*) and Lubbock Jan. 22 (ML). It was not surprising that one found its way to the warm waters of Big Bend N.P. (m.ob.). A Com. Moorhen wintered at Lubbock and two were located on a mostly frozen pond near Livingston, Tex., Dec. 30. Killdeer were scarce throughout the Region. An Am. Avocet in *Hudspeth* Feb. 18 was very early. The shorebird species which normally winter in the Region did not this year. A Dunlin was discovered at El Paso Feb. 4 (BZ *et al.*). At Muskogee, Okla., three Am. Woodcocks engaged in their courtship display Feb. 25 (JN).



Lesser Black-backed Gull, Lake Hefner, Oklahoma City, Okla., Feb. 7, 1984. Photo/J. Shackford.

Bonaparte's Gulls were widespread in December, but left the Region when the blast of arctic cold arrived. Oklahoma City lakes hosted an amazing selection of gulls. Four Glaucous Gulls were present Jan. 6-Feb. 14 (JGN). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was photographed to provide a first state record Feb. 3-11 (JSh, WI). A Thayer's Gull was studied carefully Feb. 11 (JAG *et al.*). A Black-legged Kittiwake was photographed in *Douglas*, Neb., Dec. 1 (BJR).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — The cold drove all Mourning Doves out of Nebraska and Kansas, and they were very scarce in w. Texas. Burrowing Owls which normally winter in w. Texas also departed when the cold descended. At Ft. Gibson, Okla., a Barred Owl visited a patio every day during January. The owner of the patio trapped starlings for the owl, which ate five or six every evening (CW). Most Long-eared Owl and Short-eared Owl roosts in the Region were deserted, or inhabited by only one or two birds. At Big Bend N.P., Com. Poorwills had returned by Feb. 14 (AB, BMcK). White-throated Swifts could be seen at El Paso and the Davis Mts., Tex., all winter. Hummingbirds remained at El Paso through December. A possible hybrid Golden-fronted x Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen at Midland Feb. 24. Its crown and nape were red, but there was yellow feathering above the bill (ME, RMS). Two Golden-fronted Woodpeckers visited *Tarrant*, Tex., e. of their normal range Jan. 22-26 (SWI, RDC). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were scarce at Omaha, Bartlesville, Amarillo and El Paso. Seltman found several frozen N. Flickers in *Pawnee*, Kans., and very few live ones. Populations of this species in w. Texas were also very low. A Pileated Woodpecker was located in Fontenelle Forest, *Sarpy*, Neb., Jan. 25 (TB, BP).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH NUTHATCHES — A Black Phoebe visited *Medina*, Tex., Feb. 23 and a Say's Phoebe appeared in *Llano*, Tex., Dec. 15 (E & KM). An E. Phoebe in *Hudspeth* Feb. 4 was

unusually far w. At the end of December, 6000 Horned Larks swarmed the plowed fields near Hagerman N.W.R. headquarters. A few Horned Larks were discovered in far e. Texas, where they remained until the weather abated in January. The earliest Purple Martins appeared Jan. 24 at Waco and Sam Rayburn Res., Tex. Tree Swallows arrived at El Paso Feb. 18, while N. Rough-winged Swallows reached El Paso Feb. 5 and Lubbock Feb. 25. Cave Swallows swooped over the Rio Grande at McNary, Tex., Feb. 18 and were building nests under an IS 10 culvert near McNary by Mar. 4 (BZ *et al.*). A Clark's Nutcracker was reported in Kearney, Neb., Dec. 26 (GB). A Black-billed Magpie was discovered in Dallam, Tex., Dec. 27 (ML). A few Red-breasted Nuthatches were present in the Region in early December, but they all disappeared when the arctic blasts began. They were even scarce in the piney woods of e. Texas. A White-breasted Nuthatch spent the winter at a Ft. Worth feeder (HE).

WRENS THROUGH WARBLERS — A Cactus Wren was e. of the range of the species in *Palo Pinto*, Tex., Dec. 4 (KN). The only Winter Wren found after the first week of December was one in Guadalupe Mountains N.P., Jan. 5 (JDo). In n.c. Texas, Golden-crowned Kinglets were more numerous than Ruby-crowned Kinglets. The latter species was absent or very scarce throughout the Region. In the Bartlesville area of n.e. Oklahoma, E. Bluebirds were seen in good-sized flocks all winter, and a few were nest building by Feb. 29. Other than CBC observations, only one Townsend's Solitaire was reported in the Region—in *Scott*, Kans., Jan. 7 (SS). A Hermit Thrush visited an Omaha yard Dec. 9-18 (TB). A Wood Thrush appeared at an El Paso residence Feb. 28-Mar. 11 (DT, BR, m.ob.). Small flocks of Am. Robins remained in *Pawnee*, Kans., through the most severe weather with no mortality observed. A Brown Thrasher wintered in Omaha, visiting feeders regularly. A Water Pipit at Ft. Gibson, Okla., Jan. 22, was noted as the best find of the winter in that area (JH, JeM). Sprague's Pipits were discovered at Hagerman N.W.R. Dec. 1 & 8 (*vide* JHB) and one was seen in Kaufman, Tex., Feb. 8 (FB, TG). The only Bohemian Waxwing reported visited a feeder in Minden, Neb. (AN). The only N Shrike was in *Lancaster*, Neb., Jan 5-Feb. 25. A Phainopepla made a brief appearance in Midland Feb. 1 (JME, FW). The scarcity of wintering warblers was not surprising. Nashville Warblers were found at Nacogdoches, Tex., Jan. 7 (DW) and *Llano*, Tex., Dec. 15 (E & KM). In Oklahoma, observers were surprised to see Yellow-rumped Warblers in *Comanche* Jan. 7 and *Nowata* Jan. 4. Black-and-white Warblers were sighted at Dallas Jan. 7 (EM) and Big Bend N.P., Dec. 8 (CSi). Near El Paso, Com. Yellowthroats were present throughout the period. Others were noted at Nacogdoches Jan. 12 and *Bandera*, Tex., Jan. 12. A Wilson's Warbler in Big Bend N.P., Feb. 25 was probably an early spring migrant (RS).

CARDINAL THROUGH SNOW BUNTING — In *Delaware*, Okla., N. Cardinals were seldom found except near feeding stations. At Bartlesville, M. Droege noted she could always tell when the pipes were going to freeze—if 25-45 Cardinals gathered at her feeders late in the afternoon, temperatures would fall below zero that night. Pyrrhuloxias wintered at Lubbock, and two were found in *Llano*, Tex., Dec. 15. Two Black-headed Grosbeaks arrived in Big Bend N.P., Feb. 21 (BMcK). Rufous-sided Towhees were very scarce or missing everywhere. In n.c. Texas, Am. Tree Sparrows were abundant but numbers were low in Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle. At many localities, the only sparrows seen were those which visited feeders as none could be found in the countryside. A White-throated Sparrow at a feeder in Chadron, Neb., Dec. 4 provided a first winter record for the Nebraska Panhandle (DJR & RCR). Another was seen at El Paso Jan. 28. A **Golden-crowned Sparrow** at Big Spring, Tex., Dec. 19-29 provided a first area record (GW *et al.*). "More longspurs than we have seen for years" wrote observers in Waco, Tex., and it was a good longspur winter at many

localities. Numbers cited included 15,000 Lapland Longspurs in *Dallam*, Tex., Dec. 28, 4000 McCown's Longspurs on the *Lubbock-Crosby* line Jan. 19, 200 Smith's Longspurs at Norman in late December. But only small numbers of Chestnut-collared Longspurs were reported anywhere. Near Larned, Kans., Jan. 11, a 100-acre wheat field was covered by Lapland Longspurs. When they flushed the noise was deafening (SS). Snow Buntings were present at Chadron Dec. 16-Jan. 6, the largest flock comprising 50 birds. A single bird was seen in *Lancaster* Jan. 14.

MEADOWLARKS THROUGH EVENING GROSBEAK — Good numbers of E. Meadowlarks wintered near El Paso and Midland. Yellow-headed Blackbirds visited Sioux City, Neb., Dec. 30 (BH) and Tulsa Feb. 4 (VE). Rusty Blackbirds were seen in *Comanche*, Okla., Dec. 25, Jan. 15 (JaM). The wintering flock of Great-tailed Grackles in Amarillo comprised 400 birds this year, and one in Great Bend, Kans., included 200 birds. A N. "Baltimore" Oriole remained at Dallas Dec. 24-Feb. 14 (MR, LS). There were scattered reports of small groups of Purple Finches—definitely not an invasion year. A ♂ House Finch visited a feeder at Oklahoma City Feb. 20-29, providing a first record there (MO *et al.*). This species continues to fill in gaps in its range expansion in w. Kansas where it provided a new county record in *Lane* Jan. 7 (SS). About 25 House Finches fed at the Rosches' feeders in Chadron Dec. 15-Feb. 29. Red Crossbills moved into the ponderosa pine country of n.w. Nebraska in January and were well into their breeding cycle by late February (RCR). Four Red Crossbills were discovered in the Guadalupe Mts., Jan. 4 (JDo). The only Com. Redpolls reported were at Alliance, Neb. (DTh). Except at a very few locations, this was the year of the Pine Siskin. More than a thousand were observed daily through January feeding on pine seeds in *San Augustine* and *Jasper*, Tex. (BO). Thistle feeders throughout drew 20-70 birds daily. Pine Siskins generally outnumbered Am. Goldfinches, but in *Delaware*, Okla., Mrs. Baumgartner banded more than 900 Am. Goldfinches.

The most exciting news of the winter was the Evening Grosbeak invasion in e. Texas. Strangely, very few were reported in more n. portions of the Region. The first were seen in *Marion*, Tex., Dec. 14. In January they appeared at Nacogdoches and Carthage, and in February were found in *Jasper*, *Tyler* and *Walker*. Most flocks comprised fewer than 30 birds. In Oklahoma, Evening Grosbeaks visited Ft. Gibson, Bartlesville and Tulsa, with fewer than 12 birds at each locality. None were reported from Kansas. In Nebraska, five remained in Fontenelle Forest Dec. 1-27. In the Nebraska Panhandle, Evening Grosbeaks were quite common in towns and cities by the end of February.

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SOUTH TEXAS REGION

/Greg W. Lasley and Chuck Sexton

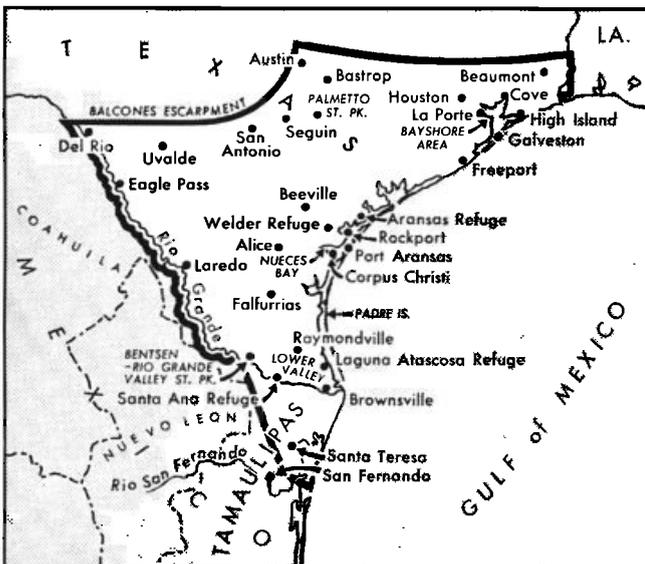
Weather patterns seemed normal for early December, giving no hint of the hardship to follow. Frigid air moved into Austin December 15 and reached the Lower Rio Grande Valley (hereafter, L.R.G.V.) by December 19. Temperatures remained 8° to 35° F below normal for the rest of the month, the coldest December ever throughout the Region. The coldest day was December 25 with a low in Austin of 10° and an all-time record low of 11° in Houston. Temperatures remained below freezing in Austin for seven straight days from December 21-27. The hard freeze did not spare the L.R.G.V.; Brownsville recorded a 50-hour sub-freezing period December 24-26.

The cold air wrought major ecological damage throughout the Region. Green vegetation was killed everywhere: Introduced tropical and exotic plants in towns and native habitats were especially hard hit. Even some hardy native evergreens were frozen back. Ice several inches thick piled up in Texas bays. A massive fish kill was observed all along the coast; a floating mass of dead fish two miles wide and 40 miles long was observed in the Laguna Madre, providing a temporary feast for fish-eating birds. Most of coastal Texas' small but ecologically valuable stands of black mangroves (*e.g.*, at Boca Chica) were killed or severely damaged by the cold. Vast areas of citrus trees in the L.R.G.V. were killed. The ecological effects of such events will be felt for several years.

January was also substantially colder than normal but not a record-breaker. February had near normal temperatures and was even a little warm in Austin. Most of the Region suffered through the December cold with only sporadic glazing precipitation or none at all. Rainfall was near normal or above in January with heavy rains in the L.R.G.V. February rains were sparse everywhere except on the Upper Texas Coast (hereafter, U.T.C.). Interior south Texas (*e.g.*, Frio County) still suffered prolonged drought conditions.

An excellent wild food crop in the eastern part of the Region from the summer and fall probably helped to sustain avian populations through the hard freezes. Common resident birds in suburban areas that had disappeared inexplicably last fall returned to backyard feeders in normal numbers with the advent of the cold weather. The general impression of most observers was that the smaller insectivorous birds such as wrens, gnatcatchers, kinglets, and warblers were hardest hit by the freeze. Hummingbirds were devastated, as the account below will detail. The season lacked significant shifts of western species to the east or invasions of northern species.

With this report, the present editors assume the responsibility of writing the South Texas Regional Report from Fred S. Webster, Jr. After 25 years, Fred steps down and looks forward to more free time. His shoes will be hard to fill. This column is dedicated to the late Velma Geiselbrecht, a long-time South Texas contributor from Beeville who passed away March 1, 1984.



LOONS THROUGH IBISES — A Red-throated Loon was at the Texas City Dike Dec. 26 (DD), and Arctic Loons were reported there Jan. 29 (†CH) and at Sabine L., Jan. 21 (WG). Up to 1000 Eared Grebes were noted at various San Antonio locations during January (WS). Two rare Audubon's Shearwaters were reported off Port Aransas Feb. 14 (DS). Small numbers of N. Gannets were seen regularly in January and February at Galveston, Freeport, and Port Aransas. Despite the harsh December weather, Brown Pelicans wintered on the c. coast in somewhat higher numbers than in recent years (CC, KM, C & HK). White and White-faced ibises occurred in good numbers on the c. coast; one White-faced at San Antonio Jan. 7 was noteworthy (WS, B & JR).

WATERFOWL — In general, geese numbers were well above average on the U.T.C., and the c. coast. Observers counted 600,000 Snow Geese in w. Harris County Jan. 7 (RPi *et al.*). At least 15 Ross' Geese near Tivoli Feb. 11 was a notably high count (CC). A few Wood Ducks wintered as far s. as Santa Ana N.W.R., and Falcon Dam (DS, DW). Most duck species remained in good numbers through the cold weather Regionwide; however, most were concentrated on rivers and streams when ponds and lakes froze in late December, an event most area observers had never witnessed before. Greater Scaup and Oldsquaws remained more widespread than usual, a trend first noticed in the fall. Sekula counted 200 Hooded Mergansers at San Antonio Jan. 22; and 12 Com. Mergansers were seen on the Colorado R., near Bastrop Dec. 31 (CA *et al.*).

RAPTORS — Hawk numbers were very good during the period in most areas. Ospreys were numerous on the c. coast (KM), and Hook-billed Kites were reported at appropriate brush patches in the L.R.G.V. A very late Mississippi Kite was well described in Houston Dec. 12 (†BH, DWi). A newly-hatched eaglet was visible in the traditional Bald Eagle nest near Tivoli Feb. 11 (CC, PR). Several Harris' Hawks occurred in Austin (GP *et al.*) and on the U.T.C., during January, areas normally outside their range. Gray Hawks remained at scattered locations throughout the L.R.G.V., during the period (m.ob.). Eighteen White-tailed Hawks congregated near a prairie fire burning out of control at Attwater Prairie Chicken N.W.R., Feb. 5 (JM, R & MB). The hawks were observed snatching grasshoppers in mid-air and feeding on the wing in a manner similar to Mississippi Kites.

S.A.

Recent sightings of Zone-tailed Hawks may indicate a small wintering population in the Region. The first record occurred in February 1979 when an individual was photographed at Bastrop S.P. (Webster, F. 1979. *AB* 33:296.). From 1980 through 1982, at least 5 additional sightings were reported during winter months between Austin and Columbus, roughly following the Colorado R. This winter's first record was Dec. 31, when a Zone-tailed was seen soaring with Turkey Vultures near Bastrop (†G & BL, RP, RH, JB). There was another observation in the same area Feb. 5 (†GP, RF), and a 3rd sighting 70 mi away at Attwater Prairie Chicken N.W.R., on the same date (†JM, R & MB). The season's final observation was in Austin Feb. 11 (WSt).

Red-tailed Hawks were in higher than normal numbers throughout. Ferruginous Hawks continued, as in autumn, to be more widespread and common than usual. The editors received a belated report of a probable Aplomado Falcon at Laguna Atascosa N.W.R., Feb. 6, 1983 (†JH, HF). At San Antonio, an ad. Peregrine Falcon was first discovered Dec. 23 (WS) and was seen regularly thereafter by m.ob. Prairie Falcons were noted at the King Ranch Jan. 23 (J & PS) and near Tivoli Jan. 26 (EB, VG).

RAILS THROUGH SANDPIPERS — Virginia Rails were reported on several occasions at Santa Ana N.W.R., during January (*vide* SL). A total of 75 Whooping Cranes (68 ad., 7 imm.) wintered at Aransas N.W.R., up four over last year's population (TS). A possible Spotted Redshank was seen by a single observer in w. Harris County, Jan. 8 (†Man). This is the 3rd Texas report of the species, which remains hypothetical in the state. Pectoral Sandpipers, a species not expected in



Reeve, San Antonio, Tex., Jan. 5, 1984. Photo/S. Hanselmann.

winter, were observed at 2 locations. Arvin noted one in Austin Dec. 5; three were in San Antonio Jan. 29 (WS). Stilt Sandpipers typically winter in small numbers at freshwater locations in the L.R.G.V., but 110 at Corpus Christi Dec. 18 were unexpected (*vide* CC). A **Reeve** was discovered at Mitchell L., near San Antonio Jan. 2 (ph., †WS, SHan) and was seen through the end of the period. Eight Am. Woodcocks at Aransas N.W.R., Dec. 28 was considered a high number for the area (TS, CC), and a pair of woodcocks was seen in courtship display at Driftwood near Austin Jan. 29 (G & BL).

LARIDS — Parasitic Jaegers were observed at Port Aransas Dec. 25-26 (WP) & Feb. 14 (DS). Another was at Freeport Feb. 16. Franklin's Gulls in small numbers were arriving at scattered locations in the Region by late February. A **Little Gull** was well described at Freeport Feb. 16 (†DS), a first U.T.C. record if accepted. A Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Port Aransas Feb. 17-29 (ph., TA, *vide* CC) and a Glaucous Gull was at the same location Feb. 29 (TA). The Great Black-backed Gull at Kemah remained through the period, and an imm. bird of the same species was at Galveston Jan. 24 (†MH). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake was seen near Aransas N.W.R., Feb. 11 (GB).



Lesser Black-backed Gull, 2nd winter, Mustang I., Gull Beach, Tex., Feb. 19, 1984. Photo/A. F. Amos.

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Red-billed Pigeons were seen regularly again this winter near Zapata, and a White-winged Dove at San Marcos Feb. 18+ was n. of its usual range (BO). A White-tipped Dove netted near Alice Jan. 4 represented a first Jim Wells County record, 80 mi n. of its regular range (KA). A few Green Parakeets and Red-crowned Parrots of uncertain origin continued to be seen over Brownsville (JA *et al.*). Eastern Screech-Owls were apparently hard hit by the December freeze on the U.T.C.; Dauphin noted the species seemed to vanish from several areas where they are usually common. Single Long-eared Owls were in Houston Dec. 7-14 (LF, NP), and at Bentsen Rio Grande S.P., Jan. 29. Numbers of Short-eared

Owls were down in the Austin area; more frequent sightings were reported from the c. coastal area (WP *et al.*). An early Com. Poorwill was seen in Frio County, Feb. 18 (CS).

S.A.

No species were harder hit by the December freeze than the hummingbirds. Winter began with a good diversity of hummingbirds throughout the Region. The U.T.C. boasted six species into mid-December including an Anna's and seven Buff-bellieds. Anna's were also noted in Kingsville, and Rufous Hummingbirds were fairly common Regionwide. When the temperatures bottomed out Dec. 25, many observers commented on the aggressiveness and persistence of hummers at feeders. Palmer noted an Anna's being severely harassed by several Rufous at a feeder in Kingsville. The Anna's was eventually found on the ground barely able to move. Palmer tried in vain to save the bird. Hummingbirds were "frozen to perches and feeders" in Kingsville, Houston, and the L.R.G.V. Several were found frozen solid to cement driveways. Labuda commented that apparently all hummingbirds and their food plants were frozen in the L.R.G.V. Almost no hummingbirds were reported after Jan. 3, but at least one Buff-bellied survived in Brownsville where Arvin saw one Jan. 10.

The Williamson's Sapsucker first reported in Austin in the fall report was seen occasionally into February (*vide* EK).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRASHERS — A probable Least Flycatcher was seen at High I., Dec. 17 (†WH). The Black Phoebe spent its 2nd winter in Austin and was seen as late as Jan. 28 (TM). Eastern Phoebes were less common than normal after December. Late Barn Swallows were at Santa Ana N.W.R., Dec. 9 (JA) and at Falcon Dam Dec. 26 (MG). An early migrant of the same species was noted in Floresville Feb. 18 (WS).

The "corvid gap" of the coastal bend area seems to be gradually closing. Single Blue Jays remain in residence in Kingsville (PP) and Pearsall (CS, DSc), while Green Jays are now reported as plentiful in Kingsville (PP) and Alice, and regular at L. Corpus Christi (KM).

Only two Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported, both in Austin during mid-December (SW, CS). Brown Creeper numbers were drastically reduced after the freeze Regionwide and were absent in many areas. Reports on Winter Wrens varied; some observers felt they had decreased, but the species was "easy to find" in trees and brush felled last fall on the U.T.C., by Hurricane *Alicia* (MH). Ruby-crowned Kinglets decreased after late December as did Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. A Clay-colored Robin was at the McAllen Botanical Gardens in late December (JA, TP); another was reported in Brownsville (FC). American Robins were abundant in the Austin area where berry crops were excellent even after the freeze. The species was scarce, however, in the drought-ridden brushlands of interior s. Texas. A single Sage Thrasher was at Rancho Santa Margarita Dec. 30 (JD). Brown Thrashers were reported low Regionwide.

VIREOS AND WARBLERS — The 2 usual wintering vireos, White-eyed and Solitary, remained in stable numbers through the period with the latter species described as common in the L.R.G.V. (SL). As with hummingbirds, there was a large diversity of lingering warblers into mid-December, after which reports dropped off drastically. Especially notable were the following: Chestnut-sided in Austin Dec. 6 (JRo), Magnolia at High I., Dec. 17 (†WH), a ♂ **Cape May Warbler** at Palmetto S.P., Dec. 24 (†G & BL), Black-throated Blues at High I., Dec. 9 (RK), and Bolivar Dec. 21, plus a Prairie Warbler in Austin Dec. 11 (RH, JB). A Golden-crowned Warbler was well described at Santa Ana N.W.R., Jan. 1 (†MG).

TANAGERS THROUGH SISKIN — A ♀ Hepatic Tanager was at Bastrop S.P., Feb. 4 (RH) for the 3rd Austin area record, and a ♀ Summer Tanager fed on rotting oranges in Brownsville Jan. 10 (JA). A scattering of W. Tanager reports in the Region included a ♂ at Austin Jan. 7 (JO). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported in Corpus Christi during late January (*vide* KM), and a Black-headed Grosbeak visited a

feeder in the hills w of Austin Jan 23 (BB) A ♂ **Blue Bunting** was seen sporadically at Bentsen Rio Grande S.P., Jan. 24-Feb. 7 (fFC *et al*) This represented the 4th Texas and 5th United States records. A ♀ Lazuli Bunting at Corpus Christi Jan. 30 (CC, GB) furnished the first area winter record and the 3rd winter record for the Region. Small numbers of White-collared Seedeaters were reported again at San Ygnacio by m.ob. Although this location remains the only regular area for the species, a lone seedeater was seen near Falcon Dam Dec. 30 (JD). A Brewer's Sparrow near Falcon Feb. 20 was unusual (RS). Most wintering sparrows remained in normal numbers during the season. Reports of a species leaving one area were countered by its appearance elsewhere, suggesting considerable population shifts during the period as the species presumably searched for seed crops. A Baird's Sparrow was a good find near Garner S.P., Feb. 19 (EK *et al.*), and Sharp-tailed Sparrows seemed in higher than normal numbers on the U.T.C. (WG). Lapland Longspurs were seen regularly in the Austin area in late December and early January by m.ob. The species was also numerous on the U.T.C. Chestnut-collared Longspurs, casual on the U.T.C., were at Houston Dec 11 and at Bolivar Flats Feb. 4 (BW). A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird at Kingsville Feb. 29 (PP) was probably an early migrant. Rusty Blackbirds were more common in the Austin area than in recent years (CA, GL, RH *et al.*), and five Rusties at L. Alice Dec. 3 furnished a first Jim Wells County record (RA). Greenwald counted 4500 Bronzed Cowbirds at Edinburgh in the L.R.G.V., Dec. 28, a distressingly high number. Pine Siskins were generally more common than normal, reach-

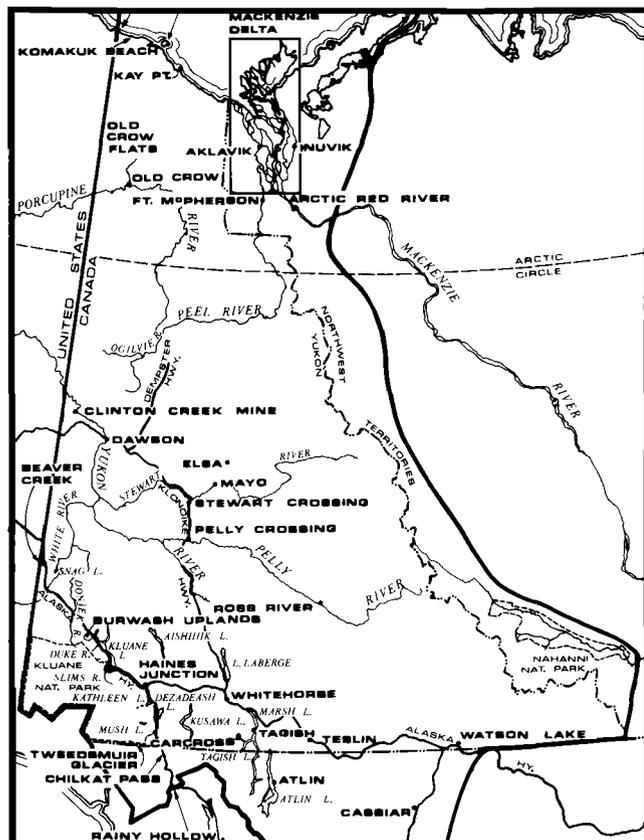
ing the U T C , and L R G V , in small numbers The species was common at several Austin locations near feeders, but reports in other areas were patchy (CS, GL).

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NORTHWESTERN CANADA REGION /Helmut Grünberg

In this winter report, the occurrences of the permanent resident birds of our northern climate will be assessed and summarized. Those birds that stay occasionally or others that "should have" left our area will be reported as well. There may be a good reason for certain birds to have

stayed this winter because it was very mild in January and February with no major cold spells. The only really cold weather occurred in December when temperatures dropped below -30°C for two weeks in the Whitehorse area causing the average temperatures of December to be considerably lower than the long-term average. The precipitation, on the other hand, was so low in December that it was almost negligible. In January, precipitation was normal again. A similar weather pattern was observed in Fort St. John, British Columbia. At least 52 species were reported, which was amazingly high considering the harsh northern climate.



GREBES THROUGH FALCONS — The first winter observation for the Yukon and the Region of a **Horned Grebe** was reported from the "very frozen" Teslin L., s. Yukon Feb. 6 (D & PD). This is one of the species that "should not have been here". About 30 Mallards stayed throughout the winter in an open pond below the Takhini Hotsprings near Whitehorse (hereafter, Whse.). The birds apparently were fed by local residents (HG, TMc). A flock of about 20 Mallards was observed on the Peace R., at Hudson Hope, Fort St. John area (hereafter, F.S.J.) Feb. 19 (CS). Indications were that these birds also were fed At -37°C , an imm. ♀ **King Eider** was found at Yellowknife airport where it was seen being forced to the ground by two ravens about Dec. 9. It was alive and in relatively good shape when it was examined (RB). Goldeneyes were reported throughout the season in small numbers by 10 different observers in 5 areas (2 places on the Yukon R., Tagish narrows, Teslin R., Peace R.). Several males were identified as Com. Goldeneyes. One female with a completely yellow bill was possibly a Barrow's Goldeneye, but according to Bauer and Glutz (Handbuch der Vogel Mitteleuropas, Vol. 2, 1968) this characteristic rarely occurs in Com Goldeneyes as well (HG). Small numbers of Com. Mergansers were observed in the same 5 areas as the goldeneyes mentioned above (m.ob.).

Bald Eagles were reported 3 times from the F.S.J. area (CS). A N Goshawk was observed at the N. Klondike R., c. Yukon Jan. 11 (RF), and one was noted at Tagish, s. Yukon Jan. 3 (HM). Northern Goshawks were recorded 5 times in the F.S.J. area (CS). A Rough-legged Hawk was seen three times in the same field in the F.S.J. area: Dec 3, 10 & Feb. 18 (CS). A Golden Eagle was observed in Whse., Dec 26 (JH, *vide* DM). Golden Eagles were unusually rare in the F.S.J. area as only one was seen Jan. 15 (CS). The only Gyrfalcon noted was one at Yellowknife Dec. 18 (KM, NM, *vide* RB).

GROUSE THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Of the 7 grouse species that are resident species in our Region only Spruce Grouse, Willow

Parmigan, Ruffed Grouse and Sharp-tailed Grouse were reported, the others having been either rare or inaccessible in winter. Generally, the grouse populations seem to be still low. Two ♂ and one ♀ **Spruce Grouse** were photographed 95 km n. of F.S.J., for a first winter record. Three imm. Glaucous Gulls were observed repeatedly in Yellowknife Dec 1-18 (RB *et al.*). Up to 150 Rock Doves were seen daily in Whse. (m ob.), and a flock of 50 wintered in F.S.J. (CS).

Great Horned Owls seemed rare this season. A few were observed at the Klondike R., and at Flat Cr., c. Yukon (RF, JF), and one was seen near F.S.J., Dec. 10 (MF, CS). There were 31 records of Snowy Owls in the F.S.J. area with a maximum of seven in one day (CS). In late January, a N. Hawk-Owl was observed chasing a Snowshoe Hare on a trapline by the Stewart R., c. Yukon (M & PBe). Another one was seen near Teslin, s. Yukon Jan. 9 (D & PD). Boreal Owls seemed to have been fairly common as they were reported by 6 observers in several areas. This includes one found dead in a lynx trap 115 km n. of F.S.J., an area where this owl is quite rare (CS).

Downy Woodpeckers are relatively rare in most parts of the Region but appeared regularly at feeders in winter. They were seen in Whse. (TMc, LS), at Graham Inlet, Tagish L., B.C. (MBr), in the F.S.J. area (CS) and in Fort Smith, N.W.T. (JT). Hairy and Three-toed woodpeckers were common in all areas (m.ob.). A **Pileated Woodpecker** was seen Feb. 19 near F.S.J., for the first winter record of this locally rare species (CS).

LARKS THROUGH DIPPER — Two **Horned Larks** were photographed near F.S.J., Jan. 21, establishing the first winter record for the Peace R., B.C., area (CS). Gray Jays were common in all parts of the Region visited (m.ob.). Two Steller's Jays frequented a feeder throughout the season (DJ, *vide* CS). This was the 2nd Peace R. record of that species. Up to three Blue Jays were recorded Jan. 1, 14 & Feb. 26 in the F S J area (CS). Black-billed Magpies were common near human settlements in the s. Yukon and n. British Columbia (m.ob.). A rare **American Crow** was seen in the company of ravens in Yellowknife Dec 21 (RB). Common Ravens were abundant throughout the Region (m ob). In Yellowknife, 549 were counted Dec. 18 (*vide* RB), and Whitehorse had 417 ravens Dec. 26 (*vide* DM).

Black-capped Chickadees were common in most parts of the Region (m ob), but uncommon in the c. Yukon (RF). Two Mountain Chickadees were observed in Tagish in December (WH), and one or two were recorded at a feeder in Whse.-Porter Cr., throughout the season (RC, LS). Boreal Chickadees were commonly observed throughout the Region (m.ob.). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was noted in Whse., Dec. 26 (*vide* DM). This species wintered in the Peace R. area for the first time: six were seen Jan. 1 while two or three were heard Feb. 26 (CS). A rare **White-breasted Nuthatch** was reported in the F.S.J. area for the 3rd Peace R. record and the first winter record Dec. 11 (CS). American Dippers were seen regularly at open stretches of creeks and rivers from c. Yukon to northern British Columbia (m.ob.).

NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN-INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

/Thomas H. Rogers

The extremely cold weather in mid-late December froze practically all standing water and some rivers, which mostly had not thawed by the end of the period, although January and February had above normal temperatures over much of the Region. December also brought much precipitation, mostly as snow but January and February were dry in most localities. This and mild temperatures produced an open winter, except for eastern Oregon, southern and central Idaho and adjacent Montana, where continuing cold made for a long, hard winter and greatly reduced bird numbers.

LOONS, GREBES — One or two Arctic Loons stayed near Okanagan Landing, B.C., through December and one was on Mabel L., n.e.

WAXWINGS THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW — A flock of Bohemian Waxwings was observed in Whse., in early December (RC). This species became scarce after that: one was noted near Marsh L., s. Yukon Dec. 18 (RC), and three were feeding on berries in Whse., Dec. 26 (HG, WH). Up to 32 Bohemian Waxwings were reported from the F.S.J. area on 3 different dates (CS). Northern Shrikes were reported only once from the Yukon: one in Whse., in late December (*vide* DM). They were also rare in the F.S.J. area as only two were seen Jan. 15 & 20 compared to the 14 records of the previous winter (CS). The only Eur. Starlings observed in the Region were two that were seen in F.S.J., Dec. 11, Feb 4 & 16 (CS).

An Am. Tree Sparrow was identified in Whse., Dec. 28 for the 2nd winter record of this species in the Yukon (HG). One to six Dark-eyed Juncos were observed in downtown Whse., Dec. 24-Feb. 12 (RC, HG, WH), and four to six were noted in Whse.-Wolf Cr., in mid-February (HM). This species has now been seen in Whse., during 3 consecutive winters. Snow Buntings were reported only once in the Yukon: about ten were seen at Haines J., Feb. 4 (TMc). Yellowknife had 22 on Dec 18 (*vide* RB) while 15 were seen in Fort Smith Feb. 24 (JT). They were widespread but uncommon in the F.S.J. area, the largest flock consisting of 250 birds Dec. 3 (CS). Pine Grosbeaks were common throughout the Yukon and n. British Columbia (m.ob.) but remained unreported in Yellowknife. Three were seen in Fort Smith Jan. 10 (JT). A pair of Red Crossbills was observed n.w. of Whse., Feb. 24 apparently attempting to nest (GJ, CM). This species was surprisingly rare in view of the large cone crop this winter which attracted large numbers of White-winged Crossbills (m.ob.). Redpolls were also very common this winter. Few identifying details of these redpolls were given by Yukon observers although some were definitely Com. Redpolls. In Yellowknife, six Hoarries were identified Dec. 18 (*vide* RB). A detailed study of these 2 species in the F.S.J. area by CS yielded 14 flocks of Com. Redpolls, often mixed with Hoary Redpolls. The largest number of Com. Redpolls recorded at one time was 45. Hoary Redpolls were seen 13 times, the largest number being 20. For the first time, **Pine Siskins** were reported in winter in the Yukon and in the F.S.J. area. A few were noted in Tagish in early December (WH), and one was seen near Haines Jct., Feb. 5 (TMc). At least five were observed near F.S.J., Feb. 26 (CS). Up to seven Evening Grosbeaks were encountered in 2 different groups in the F.S.J. area (CS). A flock of 60 House Sparrows was observed through most of the winter in F.S.J. (CS), and an amazing 256 birds were counted in Yellowknife Dec. 18 (*vide* RB).

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of Vernon, B.C., Jan. 15 (JG). One was at Malheur N.W.R., Burns, Ore., Dec. 4 for the 2nd record there and s.e. Oregon's 3rd (*vide* CDL) and two were with Com. Loons at Richland, Wash., Feb. 18 (REW). A Com. Loon was on the s. arm of Kootenay L., B.C., Jan. 26 (PRS) and one stayed on a small spring at Malheur Nov. 26-Dec. 9, apparently unable to take off until assisted by strong winds. At least one Yellow-billed Loon wintered at Okanagan Landing; three were seen there Jan 13 (PR). An unusual winter record was of a Red-necked Grebe on L. Koocanusa n.e. of Libby, Mont., Jan. 28 (*vide* D & DH). Late Eared Grebes were one-two near Libby in February; one at Rupert, Ida., until late December; one at Bend, Ore., Dec. 1-8, and 16 at Malheur Dec. 17.

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — Highly unusual were sightings of Am. White Pelicans on the Columbia R., near the Snake R. mouth, two birds Jan. 21-Feb. 19; three at Cold Springs N.W.R., Hermiston, Ore., Jan. 14 and one on Frenchman Hills Wasteway s.e. of George, Wash., Feb. 15. Malheur had three-six Double-crested Cormorants



through December and a Feb. 5 observation there was the earliest return ever by a month. The Columbia R., in the Wenatchee, Wash., vicinity had sightings of one-two Dec. 18-Jan. 22 and 21 were found at McNary N.W.R., Burbank, Wash., Feb. 5. Single late-lingering Am. Bitterns were at Ellensburg, Wash., Dec. 22 and at Malheur Dec. 19. Malheur had a Great Egret Jan. 3. Black-crowned Night-Herons apparently wintered at College Place, Wash., the top count 53.

WATERFOWL — Tundra Swans were around the Yakima R. mouth, Richland and Umatilla N.W.R., Ore., areas in higher than usual numbers and also at Bend and Sunriver, Ore. The Dec. 11 waterfowl survey over n. Idaho found 219 of the birds and seven were on the Yaak R., Lincoln Co., Mont., Jan. 7. A few lingered past mid-December at Malheur, where the birds broke by 5 days the record for early return Jan. 29. Migrating Tundras totalled nearly 1000 in the Marlin-Wilson Cr. area, Wash., in February but the birds returned to Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, Ida., Feb. 14, 2 weeks later than last year. In the Klamath Basin in s. Oregon 7000 were counted Jan. 27. Kahlolus, Wash., an unusual locality for them, had 150 Feb. 25. Trumpeteer Swans at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., Lima, Mont., varied between 160-265. Malheur's high was 54 Dec. 17. Single swans at Yakima, Wash., Dec. 13 (Y.A.S.) and La Grande, Ore., Nov. 24-27 were believed to be Trumpeters (JE, m.ob.) as were six on the Columbia R., near Wenatchee Jan. 25-28 (N.C.W.A.S.). Last year's three ad. Trumpeters and one cygnet returned to Turnbull N.W.R., Cheney, Wash.

Greater White-fronted Geese arrived at Malheur Jan. 31 and a flock was in reverse migration there Feb. 28, repelled by lingering winter conditions. A single bird was on Priest Rapids pool of the Columbia R., e. of Yakima Feb. 18 (RL). Snow Geese at Malheur reached 15,000 at the close of the period. Ross' Geese established a new early record there, thanks to Leap Year, with five arriving Feb. 29. About 2500 Canada Geese wintered at Malheur; early February saw the first spring migrants there, one with a white collar indicating an Aleutian Canada. The n. Idaho waterfowl survey Dec. 11 counted 3856 Canadas; Toppenish N.W.R., Toppenish, Wash., had a peak of 1500 Jan. 23, and Columbia N.W.R., Othello, Wash., a peak of 10,000 Jan. 31. "Thousands" were reported at McNary N.W.R., Burbank, Wash., and at the Walla Walla R. mouth.

Wood Ducks on a gravel bar in the Clearwater R., Lewiston, Ida., reached a surprising total of 61 and eight wintered at Bend for the first wintering record there. Mallard numbers at Columbia N.W.R., reached 30,000 in December and Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, Ida., had 6000 that month. As part of a major effort to reduce waterfowl concen-

trations in Morrow and Umatilla cos., Ore., and Benton County, Wash., and redistribute the birds more equitably throughout the Columbia Basin propane-powered noise-producing cannon were used at Carty Res., Boardman, Ore., starting Nov. 22 when 145,000 ducks, mostly Mallards, had gathered. Duck numbers there dropped below 10,000 until spring migrants brought them up to 46,000. Northern Pintail numbers built up to 500 at Turnbull at February's end. Metcalf N.W.R., Stevensville, Mont., had a peak of 18,000 ducks in early December. The extremely cold weather in December drove most of the waterfowl out of the Columbia Basin in Washington and few wintered at Malheur and Turnbull. The N. Idaho survey Dec. 11 counted over 19,000 ducks, down somewhat from previous December counts. Gadwall again appeared on that count at 535 and notable were 1575 Canvasbacks, apparently the highest ever there, and Com. Mergansers at 1200. The January count over n. Idaho included 8380 Redheads, 6145 Lesser Scaup and 1594 Com. Mergansers.

For rarities, single Eur. Wigeon were sighted at Walla Walla (CS) and on the Columbia R., s. of Wenatchee (N.C.W.A.S.) in February. Klamath Falls had up to three Greater Scaup and a White-winged Scoter (SS) and one of the latter was in Bend for the 2nd county record (TC, CM). Another White-winged was shot at Metcalf N.W.R., and an Oldsquaw was sighted there (RT). A ♂ and a ♀ Oldsquaw were with goldeneyes at La Grande Dec. 10-13 (JE, RDP, BB, MH). Seven sightings of Harlequin Ducks were obtained in Trail, B.C. (ME).

VULTURES, HAWKS — Two Turkey Vultures were reported at Naches, Wash., Feb. 12 (Y.A.S.) and two near Kahlolus Feb. 25 (B.M.A.S.). Bald Eagles were conspicuous as they were mostly concentrated along rivers and larger bodies of water, as other waters were frozen. About 250 were found on the January count in e. Washington Umatilla N.W.R., had 96 Jan. 3 and up to 32 were in the Boardman area. The birds were common along the Yellowstone and Gallatin rivers in s.c. Montana but the famous gathering on McDonald Cr., Glacier N.P., Mont., had only half its usual number. Libby Dam had 32 birds through the winter and others were elsewhere in Lincoln County. Four Bald Eagles marked in Glacier N.P., in the fall wintered in the Missoula, Mont. valley (RMCC). In Idaho, Am. Falls Res., had 44 Jan. 7 and Camas N.W.R., Hamer had up to 80. Northern Goshawk sightings were up in the Walla Walla area, in the Okanogan Valley and at Helena, Mont. A very few appeared elsewhere. Single "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawks were sighted at Sunriver (TC), La Grande (JE, DA *et al.*) and Richland (WO, REW) in January. Two Ferruginous Hawks wintered at Klamath Falls (SS) and singles were sighted in early January at Sunriver (TC) and Fort Rock, Ore. (KW). One was n.w. of Heppner, Ore., Jan 2 (C & MC); one was at Malheur Feb. 10 (FI); two were sighted near Enterprise Feb. 19 (MK), and one appeared Jan. 1 near Lowden, Wash. (JT, SM). Rough-legged Hawk numbers were in general quite high. A dark-phase Rough-legged was seen at Sunriver, where that phase is rare (CM). Low jackrabbit populations in s.e. Oregon resulted in a scarcity of Golden Eagles. Sixteen Merlin and 2 Peregrine Falcon sightings were reported. Of the 12 Gyrfalcon sightings, an unusual number, some were likely duplications. One was legally captured for falconry in Idaho.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS — Three sightings were made of Sharp-tailed Grouse near Wycliffe, B.C.; the birds have become very scarce in that area. Ten Wild Turkeys were seen near Almo, Ida., Jan. 6 (WHS) and 23 were counted near Trout Cr., Saners Co., Mont., Feb. 6 (CW). The Wild Turkeys reintroduced into the Salmon area last summer made it through the winter.

RAILS THROUGH CRANES — A Virginia Rail hit a window in Bend Dec. 1, was rehabilitated and released (DD, KW). One of the species wintered at Vernon (PMcA) and two were found at the Enterprise, Ore. fish hatchery Dec. 18 (PS, WHE, CV, MK). Selah, Wash., had two Jan. 12 (HV). North Idaho's Dec. 11 waterfowl count came up with 9000 Am. Coot. Large numbers of these birds arrived at Malheur in February. Food was scarce there and many died, apparently of starvation, while others presumably succumbed to fowl cholera. Greater Sandhill Cranes arrived at Malheur Feb. 8, an early date. One seen there through Jan. 1 was not confirmed as wintering. A Sandhill at Hayden L., Ida., in early December was apparently sick or injured (BM). No Lesser Sandhills were noted at Malheur as their usual habitat was snow-covered.

SHOREBIRDS, GULLS — A few Greater Yellowlegs appeared in the Clarkston-Asotin, Wash. vicinities Dec. 4-Feb. 24, the most remarkable being seven at the mouth of Asotin Cr., Jan. 7 (C.B.). An exceptional find was of two Least Sandpipers at the Lakeview, Ore., Hot Spring Pond Jan. 4—two were also seen there Dec. 24, 1982 (KS). Two very late Long-billed Dowitchers were at La Grande's sewage ponds Dec. 10-14 (JE, RDP, BB).

An extremely late Bonaparte's Gull was at La Grande Dec. 10-14 (JE, DP, BB). Richland had an ad. Mew Gull Jan. 15 & Feb. 4-5 (REW) and two of the species were at Penticton, B.C., Jan. 26 and two near Vernon Jan. 8 (SRC). Highly out of place were 13 Ring-billed Gulls along the only unfrozen section of the Deschutes R., in Bend Christmas Day, the temperature -15°F . Returning California Gulls at Kootenai N.W.R., numbered over 100 at the period's end, attracted by a perch kill. An ad. Thayer's Gull, very rare in the Okanagan, appeared at Penticton Jan. 26 (WW) and one was along the Link R., Klamath Falls Dec. 30-Jan. 2 (SS). A Glaucous Gull at Klamath Falls Dec. 31-Jan. 2 was the first for the county (SS). A first-year and a subadult Glaucous Gull were at Richland in January (REW, WO).

PIGEONS THROUGH PARAKEETS — Highly unusual was the appearance of a Band-tailed Pigeon Dec. 23 at Richland. It fed on skimmia berries for a few minutes before disappearing (REW). A lone Mourning Dove at Windermere, B.C., Dec. 25 was noteworthy (LH). Four **Monk Parakeets** appeared at Boise Dec. 14 for the Region's first record (MRC).

OWLS — Ten injured Great Horned Owls, all apparently hit by autos, were brought in for treatment in w. Montana during the very cold December spell. Supposedly they were driven by hunger to road kills. Snowy Owls were sighted in moderate numbers in the Columbia Basin of Washington with three the highest one-day count (JA, RF). A slightly injured Snowy picked up at Libby was released 2 days later and three were seen in the Yaak R. area (CW). No others were reported. Several N. Pygmy-Owls were calling e. of Tetonnia, Ida., in February; they are rarely found there (CHT, DT). A Barred Owl was discovered in riparian habitat along the Snake R., s. of Swan Falls, Ida., Dec. 18 (JHD, RTR) and one was seen near Asotin for several days in February (R & GD, m ob.). Heron, Mont., had one at a feeder Feb. 22 (*vide* D & DH). More to be expected were one near Ainsworth, B.C. (PRS) and one at Vernon (JG). Red Rock Lakes had a Great Gray Owl Dec. 5 (TMcE) and three pairs were found near La Pine, Ore., one with a broken wing from colliding with a ski rack on a passing car (DD, EF). A Long-eared Owl was in the Salmon area for a first there (HR). A Boreal Owl was found dead on the highway n. of Vernon Jan. 9 (PR) and one was sighted at Libby Dam Feb. 16 (*vide* D & DH). Northern Saw-whet observations were of one or two in the Pack River area n. of Sandpoint, Ida. (PRS), and one that hit a window while chasing a chickadee in Vernon (JB). Mimdoka N.W.R., Rupert, Ida., had three sightings of the species (*vide* WHS). All owls were scarce in the Malheur area, presumably because of low rodent populations.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Four Anna's Hummingbirds visited a feeder in Vernon Dec. 3+; two survived until the onset of very cold weather Dec. 20 (JG). Eastern Oregon had 3 reports of hummingbirds, presumably Anna's, late January-mid-February

A Lewis' Woodpecker apparently wintered near Payette, Ida. (JSM). A few White-headed Woodpeckers wintered at suet feeders in Sunriver and one visited such a feeder at Meadows, Ida. One was noted in the Yakima area Feb. 12. A "yellow-shafted" N. Flicker appeared at Kalispell, Mont., Mar. 3 (*vide* EJ) and one was at Spokane Jan. 1 (JA). Say's Phoebes were arriving in February in the w. part of the Region. A pair near Bend Feb. 4 was 3 weeks early (ES). Tree Swallows arrived at Malheur Feb. 8, 11 days ahead of the previous early date.

JAYS THROUGH WRENS — One, possibly two Blue Jays wintered at Fortine, Mont. (WWE); another wintered in the Orchard Homes section of Missoula, Mont. (WH), and at least one apparently wintered at Kalispell (EJ). The only Scrub Jays reported were one-two near Odell and three s. of Hood R., Ore. (DA). Up to 11 Bushtits were sighted 14

m n.n.e. of Weiser, Ida., in January and February (JSM) and 55 were seen near Frenchglen Dec. 17. Bewick's Wrens were still increasing in the Walla Walla area and several were reported resident at Lewis and Clark S.P., near Dayton, Wash. (SM). One appeared at Albion, Wash., Dec. 3 (GD). A Winter Wren, rare in Lake County, Ore., was seen in Lakeview Dec. 17 (KS). A Marsh Wren at Hood R., Feb. 5 was apparently the first ever reported there (DA). Ruby-crowned Kinglets wintered in "good numbers" in the Walla Walla area and two were seen near Asotin Jan. 7 & 28. Frenchglen had 18 wintering Mountain Bluebirds. Walla Walla was "inundated" by Am. Robins during the winter, one field trip yielded several flocks in excess of 1000 there. Mountain Home, Ida., had an invasion Jan. 11 with "large flocks everywhere" and Malheur had 1862 at Frenchglen Dec. 17. Varied Thrushes were in invasion numbers "all over e. Oregon" including Bend, Lakeview and Klamath Falls and more than usual wintered in the s. Okanagan of British Columbia. Notable were one w. of Bruneau, Ida., Dec. 14 (TCO); one at Mountain Home Jan. 11 (KBP); one at Rupert Dec. 21 (WHS) and one at a feeder and heated bird bath near Helena Dec. 8-10 (A & RK). Two Wrentits were in Klamath Falls Dec. 31-Jan. 31. The species is very rare e. of the Cascades (SS).

THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — A Brown Thrasher frequenting a Fruitvale, B.C. feeder Dec. 18-Feb. 29 was photographed for the province's first winter record (G & VI, m ob.). Bohemian Waxwing numbers were apparently below average at most localities. At least 500 were in the Bend area at February's end, however, and Rupert had flocks of 100-200, the first there in 2 years. At Mountain Home numbers were up from 1983. A flock of 25 Cedar Waxwings at Fortine Feb. 4 was unusual (WWE) and a flock of 30+ waxwings at Pullman, Wash., Jan. 14 consisted of all Cedars but two (IP). The Frenchglen area had six Loggerhead Shrikes Dec. 17 (*vide* CDL) and Helena's CBC had one. A W. Tanager visited a Kamloops, B.C. feeder Dec. 14-16, was photographed but disappeared after the temperature dropped to -15°F (RH). Malheur had eight Yellow-rumped Warblers Dec. 17 and another late one was at Terrebonne, Ore., Dec. 13 (PK). Lewiston had one Dec. 19 and the Asotin vicinity one Feb. 24 (LL, MK, CV).

GROSBEAKS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — Most surprising was a ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak in sub-adult plumage photographed at Mountain Home Dec. 2 (KBP). A few Fox Sparrows were noted at Yakima in December and January and one was found Jan. 6 at Bend, where any sparrow other than Song Sparrows is rare in winter (TC, CM). Bend also had a White-crowned Sparrow in late December and on the CBC, and a Golden-crowned in mid-January (JM). Yakima had a White-throated Sparrow Jan. 29 (Y.A.S.) and Klamath Falls one Dec. 20-Jan. 6 & Feb. 19 (SS). One used a La Grande feeder Dec. 30-Jan. 9 (OS, JE, DA). The species appears to have become a quite regular although scarce winter visitor at Richland (REW). Two of the species wintered at Columbia Falls, Mont. (CY) but one at Missoula was not seen after Christmas (PLW). One-two Golden-crowns were sighted in Richland and Hermiston (CC, WO) and at Yakima and Toppensish (Y.A.S.). Walla Walla reported "thousands" of White-crowned Sparrows in December and January. Harris' Sparrows seem also to have become regular although scarce in winter at Richland and Hermiston (REW). Single birds also appeared in the Walla Walla area (RLE, CS), at Weston, Ore. (PD); near Klamath Falls (SS); near Madras, Ore. (G & WL), and near Parkdale, Ore. (DA). Single birds visited a Pocatello and a Rupert feeder (CHT, WHS). At Missoula three wintered at one feeder and one at another (WH, KL) and two were at Livingston, Mont. feeders through the winter (CBL). Snow Bunting sightings mostly consisted of small numbers. Exceptions were 500-1000 near Harrington, Wash., 200+ in the Enterprise vicinity and several hundred near Arco, Ida. Unusual were three Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Potholes Res., Moses L., Jan. 9 (Y.A.S.). Sightings of a ♂ Brewer's Blackbird at Windermere Dec. 25 (LH) and one in the Libby area Feb. 19 (*vide* D & DH) were noteworthy. Common Grackles were back in Bozeman, Mont., Feb. 18 and one was sighted at Driggs, Ida., Feb. 12 for the first winter record there (CHT).

FINCHES — The Region was treated to 2 sightings of single **Bramblings**. One visited feeders and was photographed in La Grande Dec. 9-mid-February for e. Oregon's first and the state's second record (JE, DE, TC, OS) and a meticulously described bird came to a Kamloops

feeder Dec. 4-6 for apparently interior British Columbia's first (RH). Rosy Finches were "unbelievably abundant" in the foothill-rimrock areas just s. of Union, Ore., and a few even visited La Grande feeders (MH). Three or four flocks of 100-500 appeared in the Grand Coulee s. of Coulee City, Wash., and two flocks of 200-300 were seen near Kahlotus. The Sun Valley, Ida. area had two flocks of 150-200. The only Purple Finch reports were of a male at Umatilla for supposedly the first county record (C & MC) and a female at La Grande Dec. 13 (JE, KC, DI, MKo). House Finches appear well established at Helena where 30 frequented a single feeder in January (AS). Unusual were several at a Salmon feeder Dec. 15 (HR). Extremely few Red Crossbills were reported. The only White-winged Crossbills reported were in the Rupert area Jan. 3 (WHS). Common Redpolls were virtually unreported. "Astronomical numbers" of Pine Siskins wintered in the mountains n.e. of Vernon. Road kills in the area were numerous. In Revelstoke N.P., e.g., a truck killed 208! Except for 30 wintering at a Rupert feeder, the birds were scarcely reported elsewhere. American Goldfinch sightings were few; however, up to 41 visited a Kootenai, Ida. feeder and 50+ using a Missoula feeder was a much higher than usual number there. Evening Grosbeak sightings were spotty. Their numbers were down in the Vernon area, up at Rupert and Kootenai reported up to 80 at a feeder through the winter. Except for extreme s.e. Washington, very few were reported elsewhere.

ADDENDA — American White Pelicans were observed 6 mi e. of Sandpoint May 4, 1983 (EAC, *fide* WT). A Barred Owl was heard in July, 1983, in the Council, Ida. area (HS, *fide* JHD).

Results for the bluebird trail w. of Spokane are (first number, 1982; second, 1983): total nest boxes, 73, 61; fledged: W. Bluebird, 96, 198; Mountain Bluebird, 6, 22; Tree Swallow, 15, 4; Violet-green Swallow, 0, 3; Mountain Chickadee, 10, 0. In 1982, 283 House Wren and 10 House Sparrow eggs were removed; in 1983, 174 and 9 were removed. This removal is believed mainly responsible for the large increase in

bluebird fledglings in 1983. Some 1982 boxes that produced no bluebird fledglings were removed and other relocated to more favorable habitat (DP).

CORRIGENDA — The Band-tailed Pigeon sighting (AB 37:1008) was the latilong's 3rd, not the first. Nesting of Caspian Terns at Malheur N.W.R. (AB 37:1008) was not the first but the first since 1960.

OBSERVERS CITED — James Acton, Dave Anderson, John Baum-brough, Barb Bellin, Blue Mountain Audubon Society (B.M.A.S.), Steve R. Cannings, Canyon Birders (C.B.), Earl A. Chapin, Kent Coe, Mark R. Collie, Thom Cook (TCO), Craig & Marion Corder, Tom Crabtree (TC), Dave Danley, Priscilla Dauble, Rick & Gay Demmer, John H. Doremus, Maurice Ellison, Doug Eustace, Joe Evanich, Eric Forsman, Ron Friesz, James Grant, Larry Halverson, Mark Henjum, Winnie Hepburn (WHe), Dick & Della Hermsmeyer, Willis Heron (WH), Rick Howie, George & Vera Ironmonger, David Irons, Frank Isaacs, Elinor Jones, Pat Kelly, Merlene Koliner, Mark Koninendyke (MKo), Arnold & Rae Kuenning, Klaus Lackschewitz, Gay & Walter Lantz, Louise La Voie, Ruth Lepiane (RLe), Carroll D. Littlefield, Roger Lloyd (RL), Cary B. Lund, Pat McAllister, Riley McClelland, Terry McEneaney, Jeffrey S. Marks, Judy Meredith, Craig Miller, Bill Moe, Shirley Muse, North Central Washington Audubon Society (N.C.W.A.S.), Winifred Orcutt, Richard D. Palmer, Ian Paulsen, Dave Plemons, Kerry B. Provance, Phil Ranson, Hadley Roberts, Owen Schmidt, Ann Scofield, Connie Sherer, W. H. Shillington, Paul R. Sieracki, Kevin Spencer, Herb Stolz, Ed Styskel, Paul Sullivan, Steve Summers, Dan Taylor, Jim Todd, Ward Tollborn, C. H. Trost, Randy Trujillo (RTr), Robert Twist (RT), Carole Vande Voorde, H. Vredenburg, Wayne Weber (WW), Winton Weydemeyer (WWe), Carl Wolf, Kim Wollter, Robert E. Woodley, Philip L. Wright, Yakima Audubon Society (Y.A.S.), Chet Yost.—**THOMAS H. ROGERS, E. 10820 Maxwell Ave., Spokane, WA 99206.**

MOUNTAIN WEST /Hugh E. Kingery

Snow Buntings and Bramblings highlighted this rugged winter, along with Rosy Finches and Bohemian Waxwings. Wyomingites termed it a "dreary, cold" winter, a "long arduous ordeal." Rather than the weather itself, the effect of snow and cold on habitat, food, and food-finding apparently caused large numbers of birds to move around. Throughout the Mountain West severe cold made lakes and reservoirs freeze early and stay frozen; it turned the November snows into extensive, season-long snow cover. This drove out ducks and geese and ground feeders, and probably spurred the arrival of northern birds onto the prairie. It affected other groups of birds differently. Small raptors moved into the cities. White-crowned Sparrows absented themselves from Denver

south to New Mexico and were scarcer than usual in southern Utah; yet they were numerous in Front Range cities north of Denver (L/L/B/L, Fort Collins). Well-adapted to snow and cold, primary seedeaters irrupted in response to an excellent cone crop in the mountains in Boulder County, Colorado—but not 25 miles south in Evergreen.

Record-keeping suggested that total numbers did not change much (excluding waterfowl). "The statistics surprised me. I had felt that the number of birds was down considerably, but the actual totals came within reason of previous years' records" (JC, referring to the F.A.C. records for L/L/B/L). Note also the Bald Eagle survey—numbers average but geographical dispersion differed from normal.

Not all of our extensive Region suffered through a woeful winter; southwestern Utah and southern Nevada enjoyed mild weather and an average winter.

PRAIRIE INFLUX — Prairie birds which typically feed on the wind-swept fields and prairies flocked south into Colorado in unusual numbers, probably because of the weather's effect on their usual winter habitat: crusty snow blanketed the northern prairies from November to March. Some observers saw high numbers of Horned Larks—possibly because extensive snow cover brought them out to the plowed roads. Champion report in this category was the 15,580 counted January 18 at Pawnee National Grassland, Colorado, including 13,500 in one flock (LH). In southwestern Wyoming mid-winter found very few (CK, FL); at the same time southern Utah experienced a big influx, e.g., 10,000 Jan. 13 at Cedar City (SH). Lapland Longspurs flocked over the Pawnee Grassland by the thousands in late December—"the biggest year I recall" (RAR). They flocked south to Pueblo (VT) and Monte Vista January 17-20 (JJR, ph.), west to Grand Junction and Delta, Colorado, Logan and Promontory, Utah, and one straggled s.w. to Las Vegas January 14 (MK).

Impressive numbers of Snow Buntings spread over the Region, although not as many as in 1977-1978. They flocked far south of their usual bleak and wind-blown fields in Wyoming. Observers reported



over 900, plus those found on CBCs. They came to 3 new latilongs in Colorado, 2 in Utah. Nevada had its first photographed Snow Bunting, found January 1-2 (J & MC) and immortalized by 2 photographers (MK, CL). In Colorado, the main influx spread east to Pawnee Grassland and Crook (1st Lat, D.F.O.), south to Pueblo (six on December 27) and Monte Vista (one to two January 17-20; 1st Lat, JJR), west to Delta and Grand Junction. They streamed into the mountains: ten, feeding on a mine tailings pile at Caribou, west of Boulder, Colorado, set the high altitude record—10,000 feet—January 10. In Utah the numbers did not approach those of 1981-1982 (where 200 wintered on Antelope Island, now closed to access by the high waters of Great Salt Lake), but Jensen had 50 February 19 (1st Lat, E & RS). In Wyoming their distribution and numbers seemed more normal.



Snow Bunting, Lake Mead Fish Hatchery, Clark Co., Nev., Jan. 2, 1984. Photo/C.S. Lawson.

LOONS TO EGRETS — Lake Powell, a little-explored, huge reservoir on the Colorado R., in s.e. Utah, sported Utah's second **Red-throated Loon** Feb. 26 (†E & RS). This winter's only Arctic Loon dove and fed Jan. 21 in the most s. point in the Region—non-arctic Davis Dam, Nev. (VM). Horned Grebes may have wintered at a power plant lake in Boulder, Colo., with four Dec. 18, one Jan. 10, and two Feb. 5 (LH, B.A.S.). By Feb. 6 Denver had one to report (D.F.O.). Nevada's 5th and 6th Red-necked Grebes visited Las Vegas Dec. 9-11 (VM, MK) and Davis Dam Jan. 28 (MK). Lake Mead, 8-10 years ago, hosted 50,000-100,000 wintering W. Grebes; this year the peak, a mere 900 Dec. 4, dwindled to ten Feb. 11. A clue to their whereabouts may come from 200 mi upstream from L. Mead on the Colorado. Reportedly L. Powell harbors large numbers of them wintering, thousands in the countless side canyons of that sprawling, remote lake. A count Feb. 25, on a wind-racked exploratory boat trip, found only hundreds, but better traveling conditions promise greater numbers (E & RS). A handful (10-20) stayed to Jan. 15 on that power plant lake at Boulder (B.A.S.), and one remained at Denver Jan. 7-14 (KC, LH). Single Am. White Pelicans wintered at Las Vegas (VM), Pyramid L., Nev. (JB), and Logan, Utah (apparently uninjured; "the epitome of camouflage: a white pelican on a snowbank" (MT). The Double-breasted Cormorant at Pueblo Jan. 7 did not stay for the rest of the Colorado winter (DJo). A Great Egret probably wintered at Fish Springs, N.W.R., Utah (JMA), and the count of 16 at Las Vegas Dec. 10 was unusual (VM).

WATERFOWL — Watters reports that the rising waters of Great Salt L. (see last fall's report) have caused evacuation of Bear River N.W.R. by refuge personnel. Thus the Region's premier refuge will conduct no biological surveys this year and possibly not for several years, depending on the high water. "Until things become manageable again at the refuge, we're going to be pretty much out of commission." Under normal conditions the refuge hosts half a million migratory waterfowl and 25,000 nesting ducks, as well as another half a million migratory shorebirds.

In n.e. Colorado the cold temperatures dropped already low waterfowl counts from 53,133 Dec. 13-14 to 21,280 Jan. 3 (JD). The San Luis Valley, s.c. Colo., reported 10,500 wintering ducks, about average

(JK). Unsurprisingly, Bear R. had few; a December peak of 8954 ducks, geese, and swans (508 Tundra Swans, 6040 Mallards, 1200 Com. Goldeneyes). Scattered January reports of Tundra Swans included 10 wintering at Burbank, Utah (LN), one through Jan. 10 at Cedar City, Utah (SH), and three wintering at Durango, Colo (EF). They began their return journeys in early February with plentiful numbers at Reno and three to six seen at St. George, Utah and Loveland, Colo. (SH, F.A.C.). Plausible reports of Trumpeter Swans came from e. and w.: six Dec. 1-19 at Penrose, Colo. (†RB, WM, RW, ph.), one Jan. 9 at Salt Lake City (†E & RS), and seven Feb. 5 at Carson City (*vide* JB). Several thousand Snow Geese wintered in s.e. Colorado. To the n., Jan. 7 was a day for Snow Geese: four at Cheyenne, Wyo., and one each at Longmont and Louisville, Colo. A surprising count of 17 Ross' Geese was at Las



Ross' Geese, Mormon Farm, Clark Co., Nev., Dec. 26, 1983. Photo/M. Kasprzyk.

Vegas Dec. 26 (MK, ph.); one stayed to winter and a second possibly wintered at Glendale, Nev., 60 mi e. of Las Vegas (VM). Other reports included ones at Ft. Collins, Colo., Dec. 3 (SV, *vide* RB) and two Feb. 25 at Grand Jct., Colo. (A.S.W.C.). The C.D.W. count of Canada Geese in n.e. Colorado dropped from 59,944 Dec. 13-14 to 30,373 Jan. 3 (JD). Migrating Canadas seemed confounded by the high Colorado Rockies: Dec. 4 at Loveland Ski Basin (10,500 ft), four crossed the Continental Divide and headed down valley (PP); the night Feb. 27 at Eldora ski area (9500 ft and lighted for night skiing), three flew in confused circles just above the tree tops and "eventually lit on a ski run where they were alertly noticed and duly recorded by DH" (MF). For the 3rd straight year à Eur. Wigeon wintered at a hotel pond in St. George, Utah (SH, VM). Single Greater Scaup spent January in Denver, Las Vegas, and Davis Dam, and two to three visited Grand Jct., Feb. 20-26. An Oldsquaw wintered at Denver (D.F.O.); reports of singles came from Boulder Jan. 7 (LH) and Gunlock, Utah Feb. 25 (SH). A Surf Scoter stopped at Ruby Lake N.W.R., Dec. 6 (SB), and two different birds were at Davis Dam Jan. 21 & Feb. 8; both Arizona and Nevada claim the latter bird (VM, J & MC). Of two White-winged Scoters at Ruby L., Dec. 2, one stayed for the CBC and the other was collected (SB). An ad. male stopped at Pueblo Dec. 11, and one at Delta, Colo. "survived the hunters by flying low, just over the water" (‡MJ *1st Lat*). For the first time in several years, a sizable flock (ranging 14-55) of Barrow's Goldeneyes wintered at Davis Dam (VM). They also wintered on their usual mountain rivers, although fewer wintered in c. Colorado (DJ, VZ). Groups of one to seven Hooded Mergansers wintered in 7 Utah and Colorado locations; one was at Alcova, Wyo., Feb. 4-5 (JH).

RAPTORS — The discovery of nesting California Condors at Porterville, Calif., in March gives credence to a report of a soaring condor at Ash Meadows, Nev., Feb. 23, 150 mi e. of Porterville (†MBu); the condor rehabilitation center had not replied, by deadline, to my request to review the report. An Osprey stayed at Springdale, Utah Dec. 14-Jan. 3 (JG). The mid-winter Bald Eagle survey turned up 482 (334 ad., 139 imm.) in Wyoming and 535 (349 ad., 169 imm.) in Colorado, both typical numbers (BO, C.D.W.). Distribution in Colorado varied from

normal, however, because the n e had about 50 fewer and the s w about 50 more. The number of wintering N. Harriers dropped throughout the Region; e.g., the San Luis Valley's 2 refuges each had 20—half the usual count (JK). Accipiter observations increased: Sharp-shinned and N. Goshawks up by one-third, Cooper's up by two-thirds over 8-year averages. This probably reflects displacement of accipiters to the urban habitats of our observers. The pattern of Red-tailed Hawk reports showed a modest increase. Wintering Rough-leggeds through most of the Region dropped substantially. At Reno the ratio of Red-tailed to Rough-legged usually runs 5:1 but this year it was 19:1, because of a scarcity of the latter. Observers in Utah, Wyoming, and the Colorado mountains consistently reported Rough-leggeds way down, although Casper and L/L/B/L had modest increases. The 170 observations of Am. Kestrels at Zion N.P., evidenced abundance there (LP). The 53 Merlin reports doubled any previous winter's Regional total. Sheridan had its usual wintering Gyrfalcon (†HD, MC). Falcons came to town: in Ft. Collins kestrels competed with accipiters in dining on finches and siskins at feeders; Merlins raided backyard birds in Casper and Denver; and in downtown Casper a Prairie Falcon perched on a church alcove while feeding on a pigeon.

TURKEY TO GULLS — Although 143 Wild Turkeys were counted at Sheridan Dec. 31, they fared poorly during severe cold: at Arvada, Wyo., near Sheridan, a few froze on their roosts during a night that went to -63° (HD). By Feb. 15, 8000 Sandhill and eight Whooping cranes reached the San Luis Valley, an early arrival (JK), and 1000 Sandhills had by Feb. 25 reached Lund, Nev. (VM).

Do you keep a television list? A Killdeer, Dec. 4, made an appearance 10 yds from the line of scrimmage during a Denver Bronco game (RB). The football field was probably one of the few places in Denver where snow did not cover the grass. The Am. Avocet Jan. 11 gave s. Nevada its first winter record. Greater Yellowlegs wintered in 2 places in Las Vegas (VM), Fish Springs (6-12—JMA), and for the 3rd year in a row, along a 2-mi stretch of Clear Cr., in Denver. Las Vegas had a late Red-necked Phalarope, Dec. 9 (MK). Bonaparte's Gulls remained in Pueblo to Dec. 18 (30 on Dec. 11), attracted by a high shad population in Pueblo Res. (VT). Tove discovered Utah's first **Mew Gull**, an immature which moved among ponds near the Salt Lake City dump and airport Feb. 9-23 (†MT, †E & RS, †MBr, ph.). Logan had a notable count of 25 Herring Gulls Feb. 9 (MT). Tove, who found Utah's first one last year, found and described the state's second **Thayer's Gull** in Logan Dec. 10. He also reported one in Salt Lake City Dec. 17 and four Feb. 9 (#); Salt Lake also had another reported Jan. 21-24 (E & RS). About five wintered in the Denver/Boulder area. A Glaucous Gull wintered at Salt Lake City (†MW, E & RS) and one was at Bear L., Utah Dec. 18 (†CK). A Black-legged Kittiwake stopped at Pueblo Dec. 1 (†VT).

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS — Observers reported 2 groups of mid-winter Mourning Doves: one at Ft. Morgan, Colo. Jan. 1 (LH) and six at Provo, Utah Jan. 21 (MW). Denver's Monk Parakeet survived, although not by the beneficence of the feeder where it visited last fall; it paid only 2 winter visits to that feeder; Dec. 24 (-16°—AL) & Feb. 28 (UKi). Observers found a surprising number of wintering Com. Barn-Owls: six at Reno, one at Fish Springs, one to two at Grand Jct., one at Pueblo, and two at Niwot, Colo. One at Logan, found frozen Feb. 2 perched upright in a snowbank, probably had intended to winter. Undeterred by the winter, Great Horned Owls had hatched young at Reno Feb. 26 (JB). Did the Com. Poorwill found dead Feb. 27 at Las Vegas (VM) spend the winter or migrate early? A ♀ hummingbird (Black-chinned?) wintered at a Las Vegas feeder (CT#) and one Anna's, down from last year's two to three wintered at Red Rocks Rec. Area, near Las Vegas (VM, J & MC). A Red-bellied Woodpecker wintered at Lafayette, Colo. (M & SJ, ph.). A hybrid Red-breasted × Red-naped Sapsucker visited a Reno yard Dec. 15 (HV).

FLYCATCHERS TO NUTHATCHES — A Say's Phoebe seen at Delta, Colo., to Jan. 12 apparently did not winter (MJ). Early W. Kingbirds reached Zion Feb. 25 & 28 (LP). Davis Dam had 650 Tree Swallows Jan. 21, but none Feb. 8-11 (VM). It had 15 N. Rough-winged Swallows Jan. 21 and 25 on Feb. 11, and Las Vegas had 10 on Feb. 8-11 (VM). The Cliff Swallow at Davis Dam Feb. 7 had arrived very early (VM).

Stokes found a Blue Jay in his Logan yard Dec. 17 in Wyoming and w. Colorado, Clark's Nutcrackers forsook the high country for the valleys and their feeders; yet the subalpine forest of the Indian Peaks w. of Boulder attracted a significant irruption where none wintered last year (MF). Spotty distribution characterized Red-breasted Nuthatches. Up in the Indian Peaks, especially in the spruce/fir forest, they also came to plains feeders in Casper, Laramie, Cheyenne (50 Jan. 8—FL), and Colorado Springs, but not in between.

WRENS TO THRUSHES — A Winter Wren responded to a N. Pygmy Owl tape at Delta Feb. 28, for the first w. Colorado record (†MJ, 1st Lat). Ruby-crowned Kinglets lingered at Laramie, Wyo., to Dec. 20 (very late—DM), Boulder to Dec. 23 (PC), Loveland, Colo., to Jan. 9 (JC), and one to Jan. 10 at Glenwood Springs, Colo. (VZ). Three E. Bluebirds were at Niwot, Colo., Dec. 19 (LH). Western Bluebirds began their N return by arriving Jan. 14 at Carson City, Nev. (BP, JW) and Jan. 29 at Baker, Nev. (LN); yet 140 mi s., Zion's first report did not come until Feb. 23. Twenty percent more Mountain Bluebirds wintered at Cedar City (10/day seen—SH); they also wintered in Baca County, Colo. (100+ Jan. 24—PP). Further n. observers look for Mountain Bluebirds to herald spring; most were disappointed this year ("In spite of Leap Year and its extra bonus day, this is the first time in 18 years that everyone [in Evergreen, Colo.] missed Mountain Bluebirds in February"—WWB). The Region reported only 22 northward bound, five Feb. 13 in Cheyenne; the rest Feb. 21-29 at Gold Hill, Colo., Cheyenne, Delta, and Grand Jct. Townsend's Solitaires burgeoned in the mountain valley towns like Logan, Radium, Colo., Glenwood Springs, Casper, Cheyenne, and the foothills w. of Boulder. Solitaires did not become as common as usual in the Colorado Front Range cities. A Hermit Thrush was reported at Ft. Morgan, Colo., Dec. 18 (JRe), both Zion and Las Vegas had several reports. Inconsistent describes Am. Robin distribution: few in Casper, Ogden, Denver (except 100 Jan. 2—WWB); many in Ft. Collins, Radium, Indian Peaks, L/L/B/L. None wintered in Glenwood Springs, but they were common daily 100 mi s. at Ridgway, Colo., and 75 mi w. at Grand Jct. Single Varied Thrushes occurred at Logan Dec. 1-Jan. 15 (MT), Provo Dec. 20 (MBr), and Colorado Springs Dec. 17-26 (DW, †WM, RB).

THRASHERS TO WARBLERS — Laramie's Gray Catbird, reported last season, stayed Nov. 22-Dec. 3 (DM). Northern Mockingbirds wintered at Reno and Niwot (JB, LH) and an early one appeared at Monte Vista, Colo., Feb. 4 (JRR). A hardy Brown Thrasher wintered at Cheyenne (D & EH). West of its range at Provo, Utah Dec. 23, one scratched through snow to forage for food (MBr). About 3000-4000 Water Pipits, double the usual number, wintered at St. George (SH). January pipits occurred at Grand Jct., Delta, and L/L/B/L. This year Bohemian Waxwings flocked S in large numbers. They skipped n w. Wyoming and Casper, although in n.c. Wyoming, Sheridan had 3000 Jan. 27-Feb. 23 (a good fruit crop). They moved down the Colorado Front Range to Boulder (2000 in L/L/B/L and Ft. Collins), but none occurred in w. Colorado. Farther w., they flocked into Evanston and Green R., Wyo., S to Provo, Cedar City, and straggled all the way to Las Vegas (three Dec. 7, one Jan. 3; the only Nevada reports—VM, MK). Smaller flocks of Cedar Waxwings regularly roamed all sectors of the Region. Even the Eur. Starlings left Jackson for the winter, but L/L/B/L reported 5134 observations during the winter (1322 last year). When Eyre returned to Eureka, Nev., Feb. 24 from a 2-month trip, she found hundreds roosting in her garage and droppings 3-4 ft deep, a neighbor suffered a similar invasion. The Black-throated Blue Warbler reported last season at Las Vegas Nov. 20 was seen again Dec. 7 (VM). A Yellow-throated Warbler stayed at Ft. Collins Dec. 6-22 (†PO, RAR, CC). A Com. Yellowthroat lingered Dec. 1-7 at Mesquite, Nev. (MK).

CARDINAL TO SPARROWS — Casper's N. Cardinal (see Fall Report) apparently wintered; observers saw it all 3 months (JH). A Black-headed Grosbeak came daily to a Logan feeder Dec. 19-Jan. 1 (†MD, KD). An errant Green-tailed Towhee showed up at a feeder in Jackson Feb. 12-22 (J & BG, ph.). Along the Colorado Front Range, s. to Boulder, Am. Tree Sparrows arrived in impressive numbers, particularly at feeders. L/L/B/L counted 486 cf. 114 last year. CBC numbers there also shot up, to 1453 from 214 last year. A Field Sparrow wintered at a Colorado Springs feeder (EW). Zion reported four Lark Sparrows Jan. 14 and one Feb. 26 (LP). Single Fox Sparrows wintered at Dubois,

Wyo, and McCoy, Colo (†PA, ME), but one at Ridgway, Colo, left after Jan. 1 (JRG). Single Golden-crowned Sparrows visited Zion in December (LP) and Ft. Collins Dec. 5-17 (RAR, KC). The Region reported nine winter White-throated Sparrows and 33 Harris' Sparrows, including one in Reno Jan. 16 (HV). L/L/B/L reported a 60% increase in Dark-eyed Juncos; Cedar City had a 300% increase (F.A.C., SH).

BLACKBIRDS — Most W. Meadowlarks leave the Region for the winter; the single one observed at Evanston Dec. 10-17 was unprecedented, as was the count of 115 at Delta Feb. 1 (CK, MJ). Denver had one Yellow-headed Blackbird Dec. 23 (WF) and L/L/B/L reported 12 on Dec 30 and one Jan. 20 (F.A.C.). A handful of Rusty Blackbirds came in two at Casper Jan. 1-8, the 3rd in 36 years (†VH, JH), one at Boulder Dec 19, two at Ft. Morgan Jan. 21 (LH, JRe), two at Colorado City, Colo, all winter (DS), and one at Ridgway, Colo., Dec. 5 (†JRG, *1st Lat*) January Com. Grackles occurred in Sheridan (as usual), Ft. Collins, Denver, Walden, and Lamar, Colo. Four Brown-headed Cowbirds remained into December, at Ridgway, Ft. Collins, Denver (1st CBC record), and Hygiene, Colo. (The last, Dec. 30). A ♂ Hooded Oriole wintered at Las Vegas, feeding from a hummingbird feeder (CT).

The Region enjoyed a charm of **Bramblings**. After the fall bird at Colorado Springs 9 (*AB 38: 230*), three more appeared. Stewart discovered one at her feeder in Logan for Utah's first; it alternated between her feeder and another 6 blocks away—operated by her daughter! It stayed Dec 12-26 (†MT, ph.). Then Truan found Colorado's 2nd record along the shore of Pueblo Res., Dec. 16-19; seen with juncos, it was never tame and was the only one of the four which did not visit a feeder. Finally, an accommodating one seen by about 100 observers patronized the Foland's feeder in suburban Boulder Dec. 17-Mar. 3+. This one disappeared during balmy weather, and returned during the periodic snowstorms (†BJ, ph.). The plumage differed enough from the Colorado Springs bird that it could not have been the same bird. One wonders how many Bramblings we missed.

FINCHES — Rosy Finches descended in droves and to locations not previously graced by their pink beauty. Wyoming cities reported hundreds: estimates reached 500 in Rock Springs and Sheridan, 2500-5000 in Casper (where they had not appeared before) and comparable numbers in Cheyenne. In Colorado they paid first visits to Monte Vista, Pueblo, and Crook (*1st Lat*). More visited plains locations (150 Dec. 27 and 187 Jan. 18 on the Pawnee), but their numbers in the Colorado mountains and in Utah seemed more typical.

Figgs developed a theory about the relationship between Pine Grosbeaks and Red Crossbills. This winter the grosbeaks declined in the spruce/fir forest of the Indian Peaks while Red Crossbills irrupted (434 counted on 40 different days). (The spruce/fir forest had a very good cone crop.) Concurrently, Pine Grosbeaks descended into the foothills (not much of a cone crop) and even a few into cities like Boulder, Logan, and Reno (Feb. 14—EK). The Indian Peaks CBC counted an all-time low of 11 Pine Grosbeaks; Boulder, 15 mi e. but 3000 ft lower, had 79, a high count. CBC records show similar patterns in Ontario and Saskatchewan. He suggests that the 2 species may compete for the cone crop, with the crossbills more dominant.

Reporters who ventured into the mountains of Wyoming and Colorado reported fair numbers of Red Crossbills. At Sheridan the 34 counted on a riparian survey Jan. 28 included a female carrying nesting material with the male nearby (HD). The Red Crossbill irruption occurred from Casper and Laramie to Colorado Springs and W to Grand L, but very few w. of there. The Indian Peaks also attracted small numbers of White-winged Crossbills; 11 counted on 5 days in January, plus 26 on the CBC.

Pine Siskins seemed largely missing except in the n. Front Range cities from Ft. Collins to Longmont. Based on trapping and banding Ryder estimated 300-400 wintering in his Ft. Collins yard, including one banded in 1982 at Edmonton, Alta.; L/L/B/L reported 1054 counted cf, 747 last year, most at feeders. They were absent from w. Wyoming and n. Utah, although Cedar City had 20/day in December. Forty Lesser Goldfinches, and ten Americans, wintered at a Carson City feeder (BP), Zion reported 20 Lessers Jan. 20 (LP), and two to three Lessers spent Jan 26-Feb. 11 at Glenwood Springs (VZ). Evening Grosbeaks bestowed their voracious appetites for sunflower seeds on feeders in Logan, Rock Springs, Jackson, Cody, Casper, Glenwood Springs, Boul-

der, and L/L/B/L, more than those cities usually expect Zion had its first flock, five Jan. 26, in 2 years (LP).

CORRIGENDA — The "new" colony of Black Swifts reported in *AB 37:1012* was first mentioned by Knorr in 1961 (*Wilson Bull 73:158*). This fascinating article recounts the adventures of locating colonies of a mystery bird. Inspired by the article, Martin traced some of the Knorr sites, including this one which he visited in 1982.

ABBREVIATIONS — †: written description on file with Reg. Ed.; ‡: written description to C.F.O.; #: no written description; ph.: photographed; &: details to be published elsewhere; L/L/B/L: Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, Colo.; *1st Lat.*: first record in a Latitude (the area bounded by one degree of latitude and longitude).

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SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona, Sonora

/Janet Witzeman, David Stejskal

The winter was mild and the driest on record. The usual January rains did not materialize.

Northern Arizona had an invasion of boreal species—Red-breasted Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Bohemian Waxwings, Cassin's Finches, Red Crossbills and Evening Grosbeaks. The ponderosa pine crop was outstanding. The berry crops—mistletoe and juniper—were locally abundant and attracted large numbers of Townsend's Solitaires, bluebirds, American Robins, Hermit Thrushes, Sage Thrashers and Cedar Waxwings.

Much of the streamside brushy thicket type habitat over Arizona was destroyed during the fall floods and probably was a contributing factor in the lower than usual number of Lincoln's and White-crowned sparrows.

Although none of the rare southward wandering Siberian species reached Arizona, a visitor from far north arrived just in time to be added to Arizona's new state checklist.



LOONS THROUGH IBISES — The only Arctic Loon reported for the period was one below Davis Dam Jan. 21-28 (VM, RN). Common Loon is uncommon in winter away from P.R.D., and the lower Colorado River (hereafter, L.C.R.); one was at Phoenix for a first local record Dec. 19 (RW). The first **Yellow-billed Loon** for the state was found at Painted Rock Dam (hereafter, P.R.D.) Jan. 15 where it remained at least to Feb. 11 (DSj, CB, RF, ph., JW). It was very far s. and one of only a handful of inland records, although recent Colorado occurrences had led Arizona birders to be on the lookout for this species.



Yellow-billed Loon, Painted Rock Dam, Ariz., Jan. 16, 1984. Photo J. Witzeman.

Two Horned Grebes at Prescott in January and February were unusual as the species does not normally appear before March there (CT). Other Horned Grebes away from the L.C.R., were one at Chandler Jan. 20 into March (D & MS *et al.*) and one on Saguaro L., e. of Phoenix Feb. 17 (TC). A **Red-necked Grebe** on L. Mohave Jan. 18 (†MK) was only the 2nd for the state. Western Grebe is uncommon in winter in n. and s.e. Arizona; one was at Prescott during January and February (CT) and two (one light-phase and one dark-phase) were at McNeal, s. of Elfrida Dec. 2-5 (ph., AM).

A Red-billed Tropicbird was seen from shore at Puerto Penasco, Sonora Feb. 20 (TG *et al.*). An Am. White Pelican was present at Phoenix in early January and another one was at Show Low Jan. 6 (DT); the species is uncommon in winter away from the L.C.R., and P.R.D. An emaciated Brown Pelican was picked up in s.w. Phoenix in early December (DT) and another late individual was at P.R.D., Dec. 4 (D & MS).

A Great Blue Heron at an almost frozen lake in the White Mts., Jan. 6 was unexpected (DT). Three individual egrets, all rare in the s.e. in winter, were recorded: at McNeal, a Great Egret Dec. 29-Jan. 3 and a Cattle Egret Dec. 2-3 (AM *et al.*), and at Tucson, a Snowy Egret Dec. 22-Jan. 15 (m.ob.). A Green-backed Heron was unusually far n. at Page Springs during the period (A. Green, JC). A flock of 16 White-faced Ibises remained through the period at Cibola N.W.R. (DK), one was at Willcox Jan. 9 (TC) and one at Casa Grande Jan. 21 (JS).

WATERFOWL — Tundra Swans were recorded in the n. and n.e. again during January and February: one on L. Mary (B. Syderman), five

at lakes in Prescott (CT *et al.*) and 34 at Little Ortega L., near Concho (BH, DT). Individual Snow Geese, uncommon in n. Arizona, were on Lower L. Mary Feb. 11-27 (RF, JC) and at Prescott all winter into March (CT). In addition to the ten Ross' Geese at Cibola N.W.R., through the period (DK) there was one in Phoenix Dec. 3-mid-January (DSj, TC *et al.*), one at Casa Grande Jan. 21-Feb. 6 (JS, PB) and one n.e. of Prescott into March (CT). Canada Geese (especially Lessers) were abundant n.e. of Prescott (CT) and 1000 were counted on Anderson Mesa s. of Flagstaff Jan. 9 (DT).

Numbers of Wood Ducks continued to increase n.e. of Prescott; at least 40 were present through the period (CT). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon was recorded again (as was one last winter) at McNeal Jan. 28 (AM *et al.*). More Greater Scaup that usual were recorded: two at Benson in late December and one at Portal Jan. 1 (FS), one at McNeal Jan. 2 (FS, JS), a male at the Bisbee/Douglas sewage ponds Jan. 28-Feb. 11 (AM, TD) and a male at Chandler Feb. 26 to late March (DSj *et al.*). A ♀ Oldsquaw, rare away from the L.C.R., spent the winter at a pond in Chandler Dec. 13-Mar. 25 when it was found dead (†D & MS *et al.*).

Most of the scoter records in the state have been in late fall, so unusual were the two Surf Scoters at Davis Dam Feb. 8, one since Jan. 21 (VM, GM) and a White-winged Scoter on L. Mohave Jan. 15 (G. Mueller). A ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye at Prescott Jan. 7 was the 4th for that area (CT). The species was back at Davis Dam in large numbers again—increasingly steadily from late November to early February when 52 were counted (GM *et al.*); four were below Parker Dam Jan. 7 (D & MS). High numbers of Bufflehead (25-35) wintered at Prescott (CT).

Hooded Mergansers away from the L.C.R., are uncommon, and when present occur only in ones or twos, so unusual were the six at Prescott (CT *et al.*) and six at 2 lakes in Tucson (BD *et al.*) during the period. A Com. Merganser, uncommon in s.e. Arizona, was at McNeal Dec. 24 (AM).

RAPTORS — Records of Black-shouldered Kites continued to increase in s.c. Arizona: one at Arlington, w. of Phoenix Dec. 29-Jan. 15 (ph., DT *et al.*), one to two at Gila Bend Jan. 7-Feb. 2 (RF, A. Guenther *et al.*), two in Chandler Jan. 28+ (BA, PB *et al.*) and one along I-10 n. of Picacho Feb. 10 (*fide* TG). In s.e. Arizona one was near Douglas Dec. 4 (AM *et al.*) and one in the San Rafael grasslands Feb. 24 (B. Sutton, L. Dombrowski).

Wintering Bald Eagles were found more commonly in the s. than usual: one near Douglas Dec. 12 (R. Hayosteck), one at McNeal Jan. 2 (†FS, JS), six in the San Rafael grasslands Feb. 4 (GP *et al.*), one at Cibola N.W.R., during the period (DK, KC *et al.*) and at least one in n.w. Phoenix in December (DT, TC). The annual mid-winter survey in the n. recorded 211 individuals, an increase of 25% over last year; the population shifted W to lakes in the Flagstaff area as the lakes in the White Mts., were frozen this winter (DT).

A banded Harris' Hawk at Parker Dec. 4 & 5 and again Feb. 9 (KC, LL) was probably from the recent re-introduction effort on the L.C.R. A Zone-tailed Hawk e. of Phoenix Jan. 29-Feb. 10 (M. Carpenter, M. Axelrod) represented one of the few winter records for the state. High numbers of Ferruginous Hawks were wintering in s.e. Arizona—53 were counted between Bisbee and Willcox Jan. 29 (AM, TD).

Individual Crested Caracaras, uncommon away from the Papago Indian Reservation, were observed at Tucson Dec. 21 (AM) and n. of Oracle Jct., Feb. 2 (ph., MJ).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS — A Black-bellied Plover in Chandler Dec. 9-Jan. 21 represented only the 2nd winter record for the state. At least 85 Mountain Plovers were found wintering near Elfrida (AM *et al.*), a high number for this species that was not found wintering there before 1978, and since then only in small numbers. American Avocets are uncommon in the s.e. in winter; one was at the Bisbee/Douglas Airport ponds Dec. 4 (AM), one at McNeal Jan. 11 at least to Feb. 2 (AM, T & DC) and 15 at Willcox Feb. 15 (GM). Individual Long-billed Curlews, uncommon in winter, were at Chandler Jan. 28 (BA) and at McNeal Feb. 13 (AM, GM). A Dunlin, rare in winter in the s.e., was at Willcox Feb. 15 (GM). A Wilson's Phalarope at Willcox Feb. 15+ represented the first mid-winter record for the state (GM *et al.*).

Bonaparte's Gull is an uncommon winter visitor in low numbers, so unprecedented were the 75-100 at P.R.D., Jan. 28 (DSj *et al.*) and the seven at McNeal Dec. 2 (AM). There are few winter records of Califor-

nia Gull away from the L.C.R., one was far e., at McNeal Jan. 2 (†FS, JS) and one at P.R.D., Feb. 11 (DSj *et al.*). A Forster's Tern at P.R.D. Jan. 28 (DSj) was one of only a few winter records for the state.

OWLS THROUGH SAPSUCKERS — Our knowledge of Spotted Owl in the n. is spotty, so of interest was one heard and seen n. of Oak Cr. Canyon Feb. 25 (D & MS). A White-throated Swift at Prescott Dec. 18 and six there Feb. 5 (J. & M. Cherry, CT) furnished the first winter records there.

A Violet-crowned Hummingbird visited a feeder in Douglas Dec. 26-Feb. 16 (B. Smith, AM, ph., D. Dispatch); there have been only 2 previous winter records. A ♂ Blue-throated Hummingbird remained at a Portal feeder at least to Feb. 19 when it was joined by a female and a second male (RM, S & WS). Magnificent Hummingbirds remained at Portal feeders until late December and one at Ramsey Canyon feeders until Dec. 21 (D. Collazo). A Black-chinned Hummingbird returned to Portal feeders on the early date of Feb. 26 (RM). A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird, rare in the s.e., was at a Portal feeder Feb. 4 and another of the same was at the Southwest Research Station the same day (S & WS). An early ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird was at a Portal feeder Feb. 13 (RM).

Winter records of Elegant Trogon are few: one was in Sycamore Canyon, w. of Nogales Dec. 26 (SM *et al.*) and one in Garden Canyon, Huachuca Mts., Feb. 7 (RS). A juv. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*S.v. varius*) was in Ehrenberg Dec. 4-5 (†DK, JJ).

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A Greater Pewee, a sparse winter resident, was present w. of Phoenix at least from Feb. 22-Mar. 12 (PB, TC *et al.*). Individual W. Flycatchers, uncommon in winter, were at Ehrenberg Dec. 10 (DK) and n.w. of Phoenix Dec. 28 (RBr *et al.*). Four individual E. Phoebes were reported: at Prescott Dec. 18 into March (CT), at Reddington Pass, e. of Tucson Jan. 18 (CdeW) and Patagonia Sanctuary Jan. 24 (JB, CdeW, GM); one e. of Tucson Nov. 28-Jan. 28 had been banded there Jan. 27, 1983 (C. Corchran, P. Walters). A Thick-billed Kingbird in the Bill Williams Delta Dec. 22 furnished the 4th winter record for the L.C.R. (*fide* KVR). At least one, and possibly two, Rose-throated Becards in Harshaw Canyon, Patagonia Dec. 18 (NK) represented the first winter record for the state.

Indicative of the mild winter were the three N. Rough-winged Swallows that overwintered in Tucson (GM *et al.*) and the Tree Swallows far e., at McNeal—eight in December and three still present in February (AM *et al.*). An early Cliff Swallow was at Davis Dam Feb. 7 (GM).

CHICKADEES THROUGH WAXWINGS — The Mountain Chickadee is an uncommon winter visitor to the lowlands, especially on the L.C.R.; one was at Cibola N.W.R., Dec. 14-Feb. 21 (DK, LL). A Brown Creeper, also uncommon on the L.C.R., was at Ehrenberg Dec. 10 to late January (S. Anderson).

A **Sedge Wren** at El Golfo, Mex., Dec. 4 (PP, SH) was the first for Sonora. In addition to the Golden-crowned Kinglets around Prescott, one was at Globe Dec. 16-19 (M. McKusick) and one at Cibola N.W.R., Dec. 2 (DK, KC). Black-capped Gnatcatchers were found in Chino Canyon in winter for the first time; a pair plus another male were observed there in mid-January and Feb. 11 (KG, SG).

There was a small invasion of Varied Thrushes: individuals were seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 4-11 (DSj), at Beaver Dam Wash, n.w. Arizona Dec. 9 (MK) and at Quitobaquito, Organ Pipe Cactus N.M., Jan. 19 at least to Feb. 2 (KG *et al.*). There were two Brown Thrashers—one at Patagonia through the period (m.ob.) and one near Elfrida Jan. 2-Feb. 21 (AM *et al.*). Crissal Thrasher had not been recorded w. of the Growler Mts., and Papago Well in w. Pima Co, so of interest were eight seen w. of there near Tule Well Dec. 20 (S. Russell).

A Sprague's Pipit, sparse winter resident on the L.C.R., was seen n. of Ehrenberg Jan. 21 (†DK). A major invasion of up to 100+ Bohemian Waxwings occurred in Flagstaff from early February into March (JC *et al.*), the first of any consequence since February 1979.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — A Gray Vireo at Catalina State P., Tucson Jan. 8 (GM) was well away from the species' usual wintering areas in s.w. Arizona and coastal Sonora. Five Hutton's Vireos in 3 locations in Oak Cr. Canyon in late January and early February were n. of the species' winter range.

The N. Parula at Patagonia Dec. 18 (*fide* NK) was probably only a late migrant, but one in Tucson Feb. 25 into March (C. Williamson *et al.*) may have wintered; there was only one previous true winter record for the state. In the past it has not been unusual for one or two Chestnut-sided Warblers to be recorded in late December in s. Arizona lowlands, but unprecedented were the seven or more recorded this winter: one at Palominas, s.e. Arizona Dec. 3 (DD, †AM), two at Phoenix Dec. 4 with one remaining at least to Jan. 1 (DSj *et al.*), two in Tucson in late December (m.ob.), a late individual along the Verde R., e. of Phoenix Jan. 29-30, that may have wintered (CH, PB), and at least one at Boyce Thompson Arboretum all period into March (†D & MS, DSj) represented only the 2nd true winter record for the state.

A Louisiana Waterthrush found at Patagonia Dec. 18 (RS) was seen there again Mar. 13 (TC). There have been about 10 previous state records. Two MacGillivray's Warblers were recorded in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 19 (†KR, †RW), one of which was present Dec. 11 into early January (DSj). There were only about 4 previous December records.

A few Yellow-rumped Warblers were present all period in Flagstaff where they are not usually found in winter (JC *et al.*). Ten **Palm Warblers** (w. race) observed Dec. 4 at El Golfo, Mex., at the n. end of the Gulf of California (PP, SH) represented the first record for Sonora. There are a number of winter records for Arizona. Two Black-throated Gray Warblers were observed in the Sierra Pinta Dec. 20 (JB, GM *et al.*); the species is uncommon in winter in s.w. Arizona.

A Black-and-white Warbler and two Am. Redstarts were present in s.w. Phoenix through the period (DSj *et al.*). A second Black-and-white Warbler was at Cibola N.W.R., Dec. 9-Jan. 19 (†DK, KC) and an Am. Redstart was there until Dec. 10 (KC, DK). A N. Waterthrush and a Yellow Warbler were at Phoenix from November into early January (DSj); two Yellow Warblers were at Parker Dec. 21 (*fide* KR) and three at Arlington Dec. 30 (*fide* J. Shipley).

SPARROWS, BLACKBIRDS, FINCHES — An Am. Tree Sparrow (a sparse winter resident in n. Arizona) frequented a feeder in Flagstaff Jan. 24-Feb. 3 (G. Bateman). Two Clay-colored sparrows were carefully studied in the Atascosa Mts., Dec. 26 (S. Mills *et al.*); the species is a rare winter resident, especially w. of Nogales. Three to four Swamp Sparrows, uncommon and irregular winter visitors, were seen at El Golfo, Sonora Dec. 4 (PP, SH). Golden-crowned and Harris' sparrows are both uncommon winter visitors. Two of each were recorded in Tucson—one Golden-crowned Dec. 23 (G. Fox) and another at Saguaro, N.M., from late December on (m.ob.); an imm. Harris' Sparrow was at San Xavier Mission Feb. 10-26 (D. Morton *et al.*) and one banded in n. Tucson remained Jan. 28-Mar. 6 (R. Chapin). Another Harris' Sparrow was at Prescott Dec. 18 (CT).

Over 100 McCown's Longspurs s. of Elfrida Feb. 15 into March (AM, GM *et al.*) was a new high number for this uncommon and irregular winter resident of s.e. Arizona. In with them was a bird that provided the first record of Lapland Longspur for s.e. Arizona—a male seen there Feb. 20 (†AM, T & DC).

Numbers of Great-tailed Grackles spent the entire winter at Page (ph., W. Gustavson, *fide* E. Sorensen); the species was not recorded in winter in n. Arizona before 1980. Records of orioles in winter are usually at feeders, but all of the Hooded Orioles and two of the Scott's Orioles were not at feeders this winter: an ad. ♂ Hooded Oriole at Ehrenberg through the period, two imm. ♂ Hooded Orioles were there in early winter and one immature there Feb. 29 (DK *et al.*). Another Hooded Oriole was at Boyce Thompson Arboretum Dec. 28 (D & MS). There were two Scott's Orioles in Ramsey Canyon Dec. 31 (DD *et al.*), the two in the Atascosa Mts., Dec. 26 were away from feeders (SM *et al.*).

Red Crossbills bred again in the Prescott area; males were singing and displaying early in the winter and juveniles were observed in late February (CT).

CORRIGENDUM — The Red Phalarope, Oct. 22-23, 1983, was at Gila Bend, not Chandler.

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New Mexico

/John P. Hubbard

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — The only loon report for the period was of a Common at Elephant Butte L., Jan. 21 (RH). A W. Grebe was at Evans L., Grant Co., Jan. 7 (RF), while a dark-phase bird was at Las Cruces mid-December-Feb. 19 (RH); the species is irregular at both localities. The numbers of Olivaceous Cormorants in the middle Rio Grande Valley continued to be rather high, with counts in the period of 15-22 at Bosque del Apache N.W.R. (hereafter, Bosque) (CH *et al.*) and 35-40 at Caballo L. (JH *et al.*). A Double-crested Cormorant and a Snowy Egret near Loving Dec. 3 (SW) were late, while a Great Egret Feb. 16 near Bernardo (WH) was n. of the usual winter range.

WATERFOWL — Presumed Tundra Swans were more widespread than usual, including 20 at Zuni Feb. 19 (JT) and one-three at Conchas L., and near Carlsbad Jan. 4 (D. Sutcliffe), Bitter Lake N.W.R., Jan. 5 (KW), one near Evans L., Dec. 31 (BH, B. Rogers), and near Radium Springs, Dona Ana Co., Jan. 15 (A. Hayes). Snow Geese reported outside the typical range included six through the winter at Maxwell N.W.R. (W. Mobley), 100 over Juan Tabo Canyon, Sandia Mts., Feb. 4 (HS), and three-four near Cliff Dec. 31 & Jan. 7 (RF *et al.*); also notable were one-two single blue-phase birds at Caballo L., Feb. 5 (RH, KZ) and at Las Cruces Dec. 17-20 (RH), plus larger than normal numbers—*i.e.*, “100s” at Bosque Jan. 23 (PI *et al.*). An ad. Ross’ Goose Dec. 17 near Bluewater village (JT), Cibola Co., was a first for the area, while counts of up to 871 at Bitter Lake N.W.R., Jan. 13 (JK) may have signaled an increase there. Canada Geese also showed up in areas where seldom reported, including on various Christmas Bird Counts (hereafter CBC)—which see; also notable were up to 437 at Zuni Feb. 19-21 (JT), 29 (including a small bird) at Las Cruces Feb. 18, and 40+ at Rattlesnake Springs, Eddy Co., Jan. 4 (RH). The Mexican (Mallard) Duck is now seldom reported—perhaps because of its submergence as a species—but this race of Mallard is still noteworthy in winter, including three-six birds at the Gray Ranch, Hidalgo Co., Dec. 15 (JH), near Rodeo Dec. 29 (RS *et al.*), and at San Simon Cienega in January (RH). Among the rarer ducks reported in the period were single, probably imm. ♂ Oldsquaws near Carlsbad Dec. 23 (*fide* E.M. Martin) and at L. McMillan Jan. 15 (SW); an ad. ♂ White-winged Scoter at Bitter Lake N.W.R., Jan. 13 (JK); and single female probable Barrow’s Goldeneyes at Clayton L., Jan. 12 (JH) and at Zuni Feb. 19 & 21 (JT). There were more reports than usual of Hooded Mergansers in the period, from the San Juan, Zuni, Rio Grande, and Pecos valleys (*v.ob.*).

RAPTORS — Late was an Osprey at Caballo L., Dec. 24 (RR). The Jan. 2-16 statewide count of Bald Eagles is still incomplete, but areas aerially surveyed showed an 18.8% decline from the average of the previous 5 years, *i.e.*, 155 birds *vs* the typical 191; the percentage of immature birds also declined, from the 5-year average of 48.2 down to 36.1. Reports of the species in areas where seldom otherwise seen included one near Rodeo (RS *et al.*), two in the Las Cruces area (KZ *et al.*), and two at L. McMillan (L. Nymeyer)—all immatures and all Dec. 17-26. Raptors were again counted in the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project area of San Juan County, with 280 road-miles covered Jan. 21; 9 Falconiformes with 281 individuals were counted—including an impressive 134 Ferruginous Hawks and 33 Golden Eagles (AN *et al.*). Northern Harriers were more common in the Sandia Mts. foothills than usual (HS), while N. Goshawks showed a minor incursion into lower latitudes and elevations. The latter included three in the Sandias (HS), plus four in the Rio Grande Valley between Albuquerque and Bosque

(*v.ob.*), of the five birds that were aged, three were adults. Red-tailed (Harlan’s) Hawks were noted somewhat more frequently than usual, mainly in the lower Rio Grande Valley (RH *et al.*) but with an adult at Las Vegas Jan. 11 (JH). Merlins were also somewhat more frequently reported than usual, with 8 records which included one on Sandia Crest (10,500 ft) Jan. 6 (HS).

RAILS THROUGH CRANES — An impressive 13-14 Sora were present at Mangas Springs, Grant Co., through the period, and three were at L. Roberts Jan. 28 (RF). Sandhill Cranes were seldom reported but included 400 at Moriarty Jan. 30 (WS *et al.*), three at the Lang Ranch, Hidalgo Co., Dec. 15 (JH *et al.*), and 30 near Alamogordo Dec. 17 (LM); 10+ at Cochiti L., Jan. 6 (JH *et al.*) were late southbound or early northbound birds. Most of the expected Whooping Cranes were accounted for in the Rio Grande Valley area, including a s. bird near Las Cruces in January (*fide* RH). A sick Whooper captured at Bosque Jan. 21 later died in Albuquerque in captivity; the cause of death was lead poisoning, apparently the result of ingesting a form of the metal that is typically found in fishing weights—not lead shot (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

SANDPIPERS THROUGH GULLS — Late were 100 Long-billed Curlews near Loving Dec. 3 (SW). North of the usual range were two Least Sandpipers at Bluewater L., McKinley-Cibola cos., Dec. 17 (AM *et al.*), while also notable were three at Bosque Feb. 2 (RT). Also worthy of mention at the latter locality were up to six Westerns there Feb. 2 (RT) and four Dunlins Feb. 11 (D. Huntington *et al.*). Ring-billed Gulls were numerous in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, with high counts of 1500+ at Caballo L., and 600+ near Hatch in January and February (RH); notable was a bird at Evans L., Jan. 7 (RF). Higher than normal numbers of Herring Gulls were reported in the state, these occurring mainly at reservoirs essentially statewide (*v.ob.*). The **Glaucous Gull** made its best showing ever in the state, with the 3rd-5th records being submitted. These were of an adult at Cochiti L., Jan. 2 & 6 (JH *et al.*) and single first-year birds at Sumner L., Dec. 29 (G. Rosenberg) and L. McMillan Jan. 15 (SW).

PIGEONS THROUGH SWIFTS — Late was a Band-tailed Pigeon near Mountain Pk., Sacramento Mts., Dec. 25 (RR), while small numbers of White-winged Doves again wintered in the Alamogordo (LM *et al.*) and Carlsbad (SW) areas.

White-winged numbers were down at Las Cruces, but birds began calling in early February; a single bird was seen at nearby Leasburg Feb. 18 (RH). Mourning Doves persisting in the n. part of the state past December included one near San Juan Pueblo Feb. 4 (LH, PI) and two at Zuni Feb. 20 (JT); also notable were five-six in the foothills of the Sandia Mts., Dec. 16-31 (HS). Four Com. Ground-Doves at San Simon Cienega Jan. 24 (RH) represented one of the few recent winter records for the state. White-throated Swifts were reported more frequently in the period, and it seems likely that the species is regularly present at that season—perhaps in a torpid state except on the warmest days. Reports included the Peloncillo and Tres Hermanas Mts., in December, 60 at Hatch Jan. 6, and 35+ at Elephant Butte L., Jan. 21 (RH); also, three were near Alamogordo Dec. 15 and others there a few weeks later (LM *et al.*), and the species was seen at Carlsbad Caverns N.P., Jan. 4 (RH).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS — Out-of-range was an Acorn Woodpecker near Caballo L., Feb. 5 (RH), while somewhat n. and e. of the usual range was a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Conchas L., Jan. 11 (JH). South of the usual range in the Rio Grande Valley was a Downy Woodpecker at Bosque Jan. 13 (RT) & 23 (PI *et al.*); the species was also present in small numbers in the period in the Sandia Mts. (HS). Hairy Woodpeckers in areas where infrequently reported included single birds at Bosque Feb. 16 and Bernardo Feb. 19 (WH), near Caballo L., Feb. 5, and at Aguirre Springs, Organ Mts., Jan. 13 (RH). A flycatcher of the Dusky/Hammond’s type was near Caballo L., Feb. 5 & 21 (KZ *et al.*), for one of the few winter records to date for the Rio Grande Valley. North of the usual winter range were two Black Phoebe near Espanola Jan. 14 & Feb. 4 (LH, PI). Also northerly for the season was a Vermilion Flycatcher near Leasburg Feb. 18 (RH).

SWALLOWS THROUGH CORVIDS — Late were two N. Rough-winged Swallows at Truth or Consequences Dec. 24 (RR), while early

for the area was one at Glenwood Feb. 25 (RWS). Two Am. Crows were at Ute L., Jan. 12 (JH), a local first and only the 2nd locality in that vicinity where the species has been reported. Seventy-five or more crows wintered in the Hatch-Leasburg area (RH), where not present every year. At Mangas Springs, the presence of 40-50 birds Feb. 2-29 (RF) suggested an expansion by the localized Gila Valley population. A Chihuahuan Raven near Nara Visa, Quay Co., Jan. 12 (JH) and five near Belen Feb. 19 (WH) were apparently winter firsts for the areas. This species also wintered in the Silver City area, where its apparently shared a night roost in evergreen woodlands with Com. Ravens (BH *et al.*)

CHICKADEES THROUGH WRENS — Mountain Chickadees were little in evidence at lower elevations in the period, as contrasted to last year, two at Bosque in December and Feb. 16 (WH) may have been local residents. Five Bridled Titmice near Caballo L., Feb. 21 (KZ) offered further indication that this species is a regular, although local winter visitor to that part of the lower Rio Grande Valley. Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers appeared to be higher than normal in areas where reported, which were largely in and near the n. mountains and s. to the Zuni and Sandia ranges (v.ob.). A Rock Wren was in the w. foothills of the Sandia Mts., where normally absent in winter, Dec. 18 & 20 (HS); a few birds also lingered in the Zuni Mts., until mid-December (AM *et al.*) North of the usual winter limits, a House Wren was at Bosque Dec. 8 (WH); another was at Mangas Springs Jan. 1 (RF). Winter Wrens were somewhat more frequently reported than usual, although in small numbers, peripheral localities were in the Gila Valley region in December and January (RF) and Truth or Consequences Dec. 24 (RR). On Jan. 8, the 2nd state specimen was obtained at Cedar Crest; it was of a w. subspecies (WH), whereas the first was of e. origin—and also taken at Cedar Crest.

KINGLETS THROUGH THRASHERS — Post CBC reports of Ruby-crowned Kinglets included one at Santa Fe Feb. 9 (JA) and two-three at Zuni Feb. 20-21 (JT). Ten E. Bluebirds were seen Jan. 4 at Ft. Sumner (WH), where apparently now resident. A few W. Bluebirds moved S in the Rio Grande Valley to the vicinity of Percha Dam, Sierra Co. (RH), but there was no massive incursion of the species anywhere. There was a similar absence of any s. influx of Mountain Bluebirds, except for a few birds on the Silver City (RF *et al.*) and La Luz (LM *et al.*) CBCs. Northern Mockingbirds at n. localities included one or two at Zuni Dec. 15 (JT) and on the Sandia Mts. CBC (K. Anderson *et al.*) and again Feb. 5 (HS). The species was little evident in Las Cruces until birds began singing in mid-February (RH). A n. Sage Thrasher was at Zuni Feb. 21 (JT), and single Brown Thrashers were reported at Ft. Sumner Jan. 4 (WH) and near Caballo L., Feb. 21 (KZ). A Curve-billed Thrasher at Santa Fe Jan. 6-Feb. 5 (JA) was n. of the usual range—especially for winter.

WAXWINGS THROUGH WARBLERS — Cedar Waxwings were rather widespread, being reported on many CBCs in the state (v.ob.). Only four N. Shrikes were reported, three in the Tres Piedras area, Taos Co., Jan. 13 & 15 (JH *et al.*), and one near Tucumcari Dec. 21 (BZ). A Hutton's Vireo was at Silver City Feb. 6 (D. Zimmerman), in which area the species is rarely reported in winter but is perhaps regular in small numbers. An Orange-crowned Warbler reported at Albuquerque Dec. 21 (RT) was well n. of where most winter records are from; single birds were recorded also at Elephant Butte L., Dec. 24 (RR) and in the Las Cruces area Dec. 17 & Jan. 14 (KZ). Up to three Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers wintered with the same number of Audubon's in a city park in Santa Fe (JH); two Myrtles were at Zuni Dec. 14 (JT) and at Sandia P., Dec. 25 (HS). A Com. Yellowthroat at the Gray Ranch, Hidalgo Co., Dec. 15 was a winter first for the area. Extraordinary was a ♂ **Wilson's Warbler** reported at Farmington Dec. 29 (A. & G. Williams, *vide AN*), almost certainly representing a late migrant rather than a wintering bird.

EMBERIZINE FINCHES — A ♂ Pyrrhuloxia at Cliff Jan. 7 (RF) furnished one of the few local records of the species; one-two were also present at Bosque Dec. 17-Jan. 23 (CH *et al.*) and probably later. Eleven Brown Towhees at Zuni Dec. 15-19 (JT) was one of the highest counts ever there, which is in an area where the species is local. There were two Abert's Towhees at San Simon Cienaga in December and six-plus in late

January—including a bird photographed (RH), this species has been reported in small numbers in the area for the last few years, well away from its nearest regular place of occurrence in the Gila Valley. One-three Cassin's Sparrows were seen in the Las Cruces area Jan. 7 & 29 (RH *et al.*); this species is rarely detected in the state in winter. American Tree Sparrows made a good showing in the state, with reports s. to the Zuni Mts. (AM *et al.*), the Socorro area (v.ob.), and Ft. Sumner (WH). Chipping and Brewer's sparrows were infrequent n. in the period, while w. of the usual range was a Field Sparrow at Socorro Feb. 2 (RT). A Sage Sparrow at Zuni Feb. 19 (JT) was n. of the expected winter range, but the species may be regular there in small numbers; 40 near Columbus Jan. 21 (RF) was a high count for the area. Also n. of the usual winter range were four Lark Buntings at Logan Jan. 12 (JH), one-two Savannah Sparrows at Zuni Dec. 14-18 & Feb. 19 (JT), and 25 Lincoln's Sparrows at Bluewater L., Dec. 17 (AM *et al.*). White-throated Sparrows were distributed in general small numbers, with most records from the Rio Grande Valley—including 20-30 near Caballo L., Feb. 21 (KZ) and "good numbers" in Dona Ana Co. (BZ *et al.*). The only reports of Golden-crowned Sparrows were of single adults in the Sandia Mts., Feb. 5 (HS) and at Glenwood (RWS). Four different Harris' Sparrows were reported, one at Farmington in late December (*vide AN*) and the others between Santa Fe and Socorro (JA *et al.*). A remarkable gathering of longspurs was noted near Carrizozo on Dec. 30, including one McCown's and 15 Laplands (RR); the former is rare in winter that far n., while the latter is infrequently reported and usually only as individuals. Six Chestnut-collared Longspurs at Zuni Feb. 19 (JT) were n. of the usual winter range.

ICTERIDS — Two E. Meadowlarks at Zuni Dec. 14-15 (JT) were n. of the usual winter range; a dozen or more were present in the period in Dona Ana Co. (BZ *et al.*). Winter records of Brewer's Blackbirds in areas where infrequently reported included up to 45 at Zuni Dec. 14-18 and 210 Feb. 19 (JT) and 150 at Logan Jan. 12 (JH). Noteworthy winter records of Great-tailed Grackles included six at Zuni Feb. 19 (JT), 31 at Bluewater L., Dec. 17 (AM *et al.*), seven near Cliff Dec. 31 (RF *et al.*), 14 in the Rodeo area Dec. 29 (RS *et al.*), and 10+ at Columbus Dec. 15-16 (JH). Brown-headed Cowbirds were somewhat more frequent in the s.w. than usual (v.ob.), while three birds near Belen Feb. 18 (WS) were n. of the usual winter range.

CARDUELINE FINCHES — Rosy Finches were more frequently reported in the state than usual, mainly in the Sangre de Cristo Mts., and Taos Plain (JH *et al.*); s. localities included 50-75 birds near Santa Clara Pueblo Dec. 17 (C. & T. Jervis) and 60 on Sandia Crest Dec. 8 & Jan. 6 (HS). Most were the Brown-capped race, but Gray-crowneds were also present at least in the Moreno Valley, Colfax Co. (JH). Unfortunately, now that all North American rosy finches have been combined into one species, details about the different forms can be expected to become less frequently submitted—as with juncos, Yellow-rumped Warblers, etc (JH). Pine Grosbeaks were again present on Sandia Crest (HS *et al.*), where perhaps now regular in winter. Cassin's Finches and Red Crossbills were present in most of the montane areas that were reported on, including the Sangre de Cristo, Zuni, and Sandia ranges and the Silver City area (v.ob.). The only Santa Fe record of crossbills was of two-plus birds Jan. 25 (JH), suggesting little dispersal below forested areas. Pine Siskins and Am. Goldfinches were relatively widespread in the period, while Lesser Goldfinches were most evident in the s.w.—with northerly occurrences of four-six at Zuni Dec. 14-18 (JT) and ten at Albuquerque Dec. 31 (J. Karo *et al.*). Evening Grosbeaks were present at Santa Fe (JH) and in the Sandia Mts. (HS) throughout the period; two were also at Zuni Dec. 16 (T. Rhoades).

CORRIGENDUM — The Black-throated Blue Warbler reported at Ft. Sumner on May 1, 1983 (AB 35[5]:901, 1983) actually was a Black-throated Green Warbler.

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ALASKA REGION

/D. D. Gibson

Winter 1983-1984 was a mixed bag in different parts of the state, e.g., Southeastern Alaska enjoyed exceptionally mild weather—the second-warmest winter on record at Juneau; at Kasilof, Kenai Peninsula, December and early January were much milder than normal, with more rain as precipitation than snow . . . coldest temperatures occurred in late January, and a series of weather fronts from the Aleutians kept a cloud cover over the area most of the season; in the central Aleutian Islands, at Adak Island, the season was almost as severe as the record-setting winter of 1982-1983; it was persistently cold from late November through early February at Anchorage; and the Interior experienced its coldest February since the record-cold one in 1979 . . . during the past 80 years only nine Februaries have been colder at Fairbanks than this one.



GREBES, WATERFOWL — Three W. Grebes in South Passage, Icy Strait, about one mi n. of Gull Cove, Chichagof I., Feb. 22 (JLT) were n. of the main wintering concentrations of this species in Alaska. The season's token record of Whooper Swan (which spends its season with us where there are few or no correspondents) was a flock of ten over Teardrop L., Adak Dec. 26 (BE, *vide* CFZ). Seven Trumpeter Swans apparently overwintered on the Coghill R. flats, Port Wells, w. Prince William Sound. They were first noted there in the first week of December (JLT & DBI) and were still present Feb. 7 (DBI & DRN). A single Emperor Goose was present in Sitka most of the period (LLJ, *vide* PI); there are few records of this bird on the Pacific coast e. of Prince William Sound, where it is rare in winter. The Izembek CBC, totaled a healthy 3337 wintering Brant, and 2600 were counted in Hook Bay, in the Cape Krenitzin area Feb. 22 (CPD). Adak's very small and westernmost wintering Canvasback population comprised two males and a female seen Feb. 11-March (CFZ *et al.*). Up to eight Tufted Ducks wintering at Adak (CFZ *et al.*) comprised the only report. Numerous Kodiak sightings of Lesser Scaup this winter probably referred to at least six individuals . . . slightly more than usual; the species winters regularly at Kodiak in very small numbers (RAM). At least three Steller's Eiders were found in Icy Strait, SE Alaska Feb. 23-25: an ad. male at Spasski Bay, Chichagof I., Feb. 23 (JLT & PS); two ad. males at Neck Pt., Chichagof, Feb. 24 (JGK & KSB); and an ad. male and a female in

that area Feb. 25 (JGK & KSB). There are very few SE Alaska records of this species, the main winter range of which extends E on the Pacific coast only as far as Kodiak and lower Cook Inlet. Three Barrow's Goldeneyes at Peterson Lagoon, Unimak I., e. Aleutians Feb. 22 (CPD) number among few ever in SW Alaska. The species is exceedingly scarce beyond tree limit. Kodiak's third annual winter Smew (see fall) was an ad. male at Buskin L., Dec. 9 & 31 (RAM *et al.*). An imm. ♂ Smew was seen with goldeneyes on Clam Lagoon, Adak Dec. 29 (CFZ).

HAWKS — A light-phase Swainson's Hawk discovered hunting the Portage flats, near Anchorage Dec. 4 (†RLS, ph.) was present at least through Dec. 25 (†TGT, †GJT *et al.*) and probably into January (*vide* DGR). The bird showed no signs of captivity, and raptor authorities contacted (DGR, RGC) stated that no one they know has kept this species in the state. The species is a scarce summer resident in e. C Alaska; a winter record in this Region, or perhaps anywhere at 60°N, is without precedent.

ALCIDS TO WOODPECKERS — An ad. ♀ Black Guillemot found dead along the North Slope Haul Road, 30 mi n. of the Yukon R. crossing Feb. 13 (*DW) provided the *third inland* Alaska record of the species—all adults and all found from November to February (see AB 37:214 and citation therein). A minimum of 150,000 Crested Auklets in several large rafts 2-5 mi off Swanson Lagoon, Unimak I., Feb. 23 (CPD) was a most impressive winter aggregation. In association with these birds were 20,000 Oldsquaws, 3000 King Eiders, 1000 murrelets, 200 cormorants, 200 Com. Eiders, 200 Red-breasted Mergansers, and 50 White-winged Scoters.

The Girdwood Anna's Hummingbird (see fall), present through Dec. 7 (WC), was followed by another Anna's caught alive but not healthy in Cordova Jan. 24. The latter bird was transported via U.S.F. & W.S., and Western Airlines to Seattle (*vide* Anchorage Daily News). (Birders in Seattle beware such lifesaving gestures made to various birds in Alaska by airlines in cooperation with government agencies . . . a few years ago an ice-trapped Steller's Eider was picked up alive at Barrow in the fall, was air-shipped to Seattle, and was, presumably, released. Ducks and hummingbirds, after all, are supposed to go south in the fall. . . .) To my knowledge there is no Alaska specimen of Anna's Hummingbird. A ♂ N. Flicker (Yellow-shafted) was seen at a Juneau feeder throughout the period, regularly appearing with a flock of Steller's Jays, which it constantly bullied (PI). The few prior Alaska winter records of flickers have all been from SE.

NUTHATCHES TO BLACKBIRDS — Red-breasted Nuthatches were "tolerably common" at Kodiak (RAM), and a few were present in the Anchorage-Girdwood area in December and January (TGT). The usually common Golden-crowned Kinglet was down in numbers at Anchorage (TGT), but the species was common again (e.g., 255 on CBC) at Kodiak this winter (RAM, JBA). A casual visitant at Kodiak, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, after a good showing there last fall, was found in unprecedented numbers this winter. Fifteen were found by 3 CBC parties Dec. 31 (JBA, RAM, DWS), and at least 3 other sightings were made during the period. The only Alaska winter records of this bird are from SC Alaska. A Yellow-rumped Warbler observed in Craig Dec. 14 (TEK) was not seen subsequently; there have been very few December records of this species in the Region. In a fine showing for a casual winter visitant along Alaska's Pacific coast, Lincoln's Sparrows were seen at Homer Dec. 5 (one—RLS), at Kodiak Dec. 13 (one—RAM), and at Craig Dec. 17 (two—TEK), and another one overwintered at a feeder in Seward (DWS, REM *et al.*)! For the second time, a Harris' Sparrow overwintered at Homer (at the same feeder); it was present at least through Feb. 15 (DE *et al.*). A McKay's Bunting was present at Valdez in a flock of up to 34 Snow Buntings Dec. 15-Jan. 17 (†GJT *et al.*). This bird provided the first Alaska record on the Pacific coast e. of the Kenai Pen., where there have been a very few records in prior winters.

A flock of 31 Rusty Blackbirds spent the period Dec. 9-Jan. 20 at the Hamilton Dairy Farm, near Palmer (MTB). There were no other wintering records this season. The ♂ Brewer's Blackbird reported at Craig, Prince of Wales I., in November (see fall) was present at a local feeder at least through mid-January (TEK, ph.). There have been previous reports

of this bird in SE, but there has been only one previous substantiated record in the entire Region. A ♀ Brown-headed Cowbird that overwintered at a *Seldovia*, Kenai Pen. feeder (SK, DWS, ph.) provided the first over-wintering record in the state, although the species has been recorded at least twice in Juneau in midwinter (RBW).

FINCHES — Pine Grosbeaks were widespread and locally fairly common in forested Alaska this winter. They heavily patronized sunflower-seed feeders in the Fairbanks and Anchorage areas all season, where maximum count reported was a flock of 250+ that spent most of the winter at a Muldoon (Anchorage) feeder (TGT), and they were more common than usual at Kodiak this season (JBA). A pair of **Purple Finches** was observed near downtown Juneau Feb. 22 (PI), and a flock of up to 11 spent most of March at a Ketchikan feeder (*REW). Specimens documented the occurrence of nominate *purpureus*, which breeds across Canada, rather than of *californicus*, which breeds to the s. of us along the Pacific coast.

There was a good white spruce cone crop throughout the Interior all fall and winter, and White-winged Crossbills were fairly common and

conspicuous all season n. of the Alaska Range (m.ob.), singing as early as mid-January (DDG). South of this area, however, crossbills were absent or nearly so until the very end of the period, when White-winged were seen at Kasilof (Feb. 24—MAM) and when both Reds and White-winged moved into the Juneau area (PI). It was not a redpoll winter in Alaska. Redpolls were present in small to fair numbers in the Interior all season, but they were essentially absent from areas s. of the Alaska Range. Pine Siskins were scarce this winter in their Alaska range.

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NORTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Philip W. Mattocks, Jr.

A severe cold snap in late December interrupted a generally warmer than usual winter. Temperatures remained below freezing through December 20-24 at the Seattle, Washington, weather station, with lows of 9°F recorded there and 8°F at Vancouver, British Columbia. Then January and February at these two stations were 3° above the long-term averages. There was slightly less rain than usual in Seattle, slightly more in Vancouver.

The season was marked by many overwintering individuals of species normally absent, by more than usual vagrants from east of our Region, notably Iceland Gull, Blue Jay, Brown Thrasher, Dickcissel, and about twice the normal numbers of eastern *Zonotrichia* and *Melospiza* sparrows, and, most excitingly, by the vagrant Asiatic passerines, an unidentifiable first-year wagtail, a Rustic Bunting, and perhaps seven Bramblings.

LOONS THROUGH NIGHT-HERONS — There were 19 sightings of possibly 14 Yellow-billed Loons. Even allowing for some wandering between potentially close localities, this was definitely more than the average of 6 sightings over the last 7 winters, and contrasts with the 2 most recent below-average years. Counts of 35+ Eared Grebes on Cordova Bay, Saanich, Vancouver I. (hereafter, V.I.), Jan. 19 (KT) and of 200+ off Gordon Head, Saanich Jan. 21 (KT) were extraordinarily large. Other loons and grebes were reported in normal numbers. All W. Grebes for which color phase was noted were the dark form.

A Dec. 3 pelagic trip out of Westport, Wash., found a seldom-seen Laysan Albatross and 60 N. Fulmars (EH *et al.*). On Dec. 4 about 30 km off Cape Blanco, Oreg., there were *eight* Laysans, a very late Flesh-footed Shearwater, and numerous N. Fulmars (RPi). Several Short-tailed Shearwaters continued to be found into late December, with the latest one seen at close range just off Seattle Jan. 1 (†DP *et al.*). Five Sooty Shearwaters seen out of Westport Dec. 3 (EH *et al.*), four in the Strait of Juan de Fuca off Albert Head, just w. of Victoria, Dec. 11 (KT), and one there Dec. 17 (M. Shepard) were the last reported. A single Sooty was seen well Feb. 5 just n. of Anacortes, Wash., for one of very few winter records (TW). An unidentified dark shearwater had been seen Jan. 31 from the Victoria-Port Angeles ferry, about 40 mi w. of Anacortes (JSk, MC). A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel was found resting on a dike road at the Serpentine Fen, s. of Vancouver, B.C., Jan. 16 (E. Sian, ph.) for one of few winter records of this species for the Region.

Following the very large numbers of Brown Pelicans farther n. than usual last fall, only a handful stayed around. Single immatures were at Ediz Hook, Port Angeles, until Dec. 10 (DP *et al.*), in Metchosin, V.I., Dec. 18-20 (J. Upton, *fide* D. Hanson), at the North jetty of the Columbia R., Dec. 18 (DI), in Coos Bay, Oreg., until Dec. 19 (M. Graybill), and in Yaquina Bay, Oreg., Jan. 30 (R. Stuart, *fide* HN).

Single Great Egrets were found n. in Washington to Bellingham Dec. 18 (CBC), at Olympia all winter (G & WH *et al.*), and on Willapa Bay Jan. 27 (J. Zarnowitz). Six Snowy Egrets wintered as usual at Coos Bay, Oreg. (BG, AM). Cattle Egrets were relatively widespread until the freeze in late December. One was at Westport, Wash., Dec. 3 (EH *et al.*), and probably the same bird was on the Nisqually N.W.R., Dec. 4 (J. Keplinger). A Cattle Egret was found Dec. 1 & 10 in C. Saanich, V.I. (KT, TZ, ph.), and 17 were noted at Tillamook, Oreg., Dec. 17 (CBC). Thereafter, one in Salem, Oreg., Dec. 27 (CBC) and five near Coquille, Coos Co., Oreg., Jan. 5 (P. Perrin, *fide* AM) were the only ones reported. An imm. Black-crowned Night-Heron wintered on Reifel I., near Vancouver, B.C. (DK *et al.*), and several wintered in Stanwood and the adjacent Skagit flats, Wash. (J. & S. Van Niel *et al.*).

WATERFOWL — About 800 Tundra Swans were counted along the Columbia R., and another 450 were on the Skagit flats. Aerial surveys throughout w. Washington during January found 559 Trumpeter Swans (MJ, Wash. Dept. of Game). Of these, 425 were in the Skagit R. valley,



59 were on freshwater lakes on the Olympic Pen., and 43 were on lakes around Willapa Bay. Comparable statewide counts may not exist for previous years, but it does appear from scattered reports that Trumpeter Swans are expanding into more freshwater lakes in w. Washington and w. Oregon.

The Emperor Goose found last fall at Yachats, s. of Newport, Oreg., stayed all winter (*fide* HN), and another appeared Feb. 15+ at Westmoreland P., Portland (D. Longworth, J. Kempe *et al.*). There were the usual 10 sightings this season of Eur. Green-winged Teal; from the Vancouver, B.C., area, Saanich, V.I., Seattle, and Coos Bay, Oreg. Two ♂ and one ♀ Cinnamon Teal, a rare species here in winter, were observed Dec. 18 at Burnaby L., B.C. (†MF, L. Koch), and three males and five females were found on Lulu I., near Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 27 (†C. Butt, PC). The first spring arrivals were seen Feb. 4 in Coos Bay, Oreg. (AM).

The ad. ♂ Tufted Duck that was seen last fall near Leadbetter Pt., Wash., reappeared there Dec. 17-31 (†RW). A sub-ad. ♂ Tufted Duck was seen and described from several adjacent localities in Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 15-24 (†MF, ph., †MP, T. Plath). Possibly another sub-ad. male was seen on the Maplewood flats, N. Vancouver, Jan. 1 (†MD), and females were reported from Iona I., Jan. 26-28 (JI, DA, DJ) and Wapato L., near Gaston, Oreg., Dec. 21-22 (J. Evanich, VT *et al.*). Two ♀ King Eiders were seen Feb. 6 in Fulford Harbor, Salt Spring I., just n. of Sidney (†DFr *et al.*) for only the 3rd record from V.I. The ♀ King Eider found Nov. 24 off Stanley P., in Vancouver, B.C., stayed to at least Feb. 19 (†WW, †MD *et al.*). Scoters, goldeneyes, and mergansers were reported in their usual numbers.

VULTURES THROUGH RAILS — Two Turkey Vultures were seen often through the season until Feb. 13 at Fisherman's Bay, Lopez I., Wash. (W. Beecher, B. Wilson *et al.*). Two were then sighted Feb. 22 over Oak Bay, V.I. (D. Ross). There were several scattered sightings of vultures through the winter in w. Oregon, with at least one known to have wintered at Corvallis (B. Altman, *fide* ME). The now-traditional Black-shouldered Kite roost at Fern Ridge Res. near Eugene, Oreg., hosted 18 kites this season (DFi *et al.*), two of which were juveniles. Four apparently wintered at Tillamook (DI, VT *et al.*), and one at Finley N.W.R., near Corvallis (M. Hunter, J. Krabbe). Other Oregon reports were absent, and 2 Washington reports were unsubstantiated.

There was an all-time Canadian CBC high count of 1396 Bald Eagles at Squamish, B.C., Jan. 2 (RCn *et al.*). Another 1373 Bald Eagles were counted to the e. around Harrison L., Jan. 8 (A & JG *et al.*). Farther s., high water levels and the lowest salmon run since at least 1968 correlated with only one-fourth the usual large number of Bald Eagles wintering along the Skagit R., Wash. (LM). Single Red-shouldered Hawks wintering at Coos Bay, Oreg. (AM), and near Coburg, Oreg. (DI *et al.*), represented fewer than average recent numbers at the n. edge of this species' range. A Red-tailed Harlan's Hawk wintered along the Green R., in Kent, Wash. (EH, GG). There were 12 sightings of Golden Eagles, with one Dec. 18 over W. Vancouver, B.C. (†T. Greenfield *et al.*) scarce in that area. There were sightings of possibly 10 Gyrfalcons, which is more than usual. However, the winter feeding range of a Gyr can be quite large (see AB 37:299, 1983) and plumage details were generally lacking for most sightings. A handful of Prairie Falcons wintered as usual in w. Oregon, primarily in the Willamette Valley.

An estimated 30+ Virginia Rails wintered in just that area of the Fern Ridge Res. marsh, near the kite roost (DFi). A Sora was found n. to the Ladner, B.C., CBC Dec. 18 (†RCn *et al.*).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH GULLS — Ten Snowy Plovers were seen Jan. 6 at Bayocean beach near Tillamook, Oreg., with nine still there Feb. 15 (HN). The by now traditional shorebird wintering area at Tokeland and the mouth of the North R., on Willapa Bay, Wash., hosted 12 Willets, 32 Long-billed Curlews, and 43 Marbled Godwits Jan. 13 (G & WH). Elsewhere there were three Willets through the season at Yaquina Bay, Oreg. (HN *et al.*), and one on Ediz Hook, Post Angeles, Wash. (MC, D & SS *et al.*). Small groups of 2-8 Whimbrels were sighted as usual during the season at several locales n. to Oak Bay, V.I. Two Ruddy Turnstones, a rare wintering species here, spent the season on Ediz Hook (JSk, GG), and two were seen at Penn Cove, Whidbey I., Jan. 22 (TW). Both locations harbored wintering flocks of Black Turnstones. A Sanderling census on Dungeness Spit, Wash., Jan.

21 found 428 individuals (D & SS). A W. Sandpiper n. to Clover Pt., Victoria, Dec. 28 (RS) provided a rare winter record there. A few others were scattered through w. Washington. A large flock of 400 Long-billed Dowitchers along the Columbia R., near Woodland, Wash., Jan. 31 could have been either locally wintering birds or early N wanderers (MJ *et al.*). The aggregation of 107 Com. Snipes near Skamokawa, Wash., Feb. 25 was more likely early migrants (A. Richards). The eight Red Phalaropes seen Dec. 11 in the Strait of Juan de Fuca off Albert Head, V.I., were the last reported of the late November movement (KT).

Seven Pomarine Jaegers well offshore Westport, Wash., Dec. 3 (EH *et al.*) and two 30 km off Cape Blanco, Oreg., Dec. 4 (RPi) furnished late records. Despite the large movement of Heermann's Gulls n. of the Columbia R., last fall, few lingered into winter here. Two adults were at Ediz Hook, Dec. 10 (DP *et al.*), and an adult was just s. of Duckabush, along Hood Canal, Wash., Jan. 7 (TB *et al.*). There was an exceptionally large number of gulls present this winter in the Willamette Valley, Oreg. (DI). Some counts were: 500+ Herring Gulls at the Portland dump Dec. 9 (DI, J. Gilligan), 750 Thayer's Gulls on Sauvie I., near Portland, Dec. 31 (CBC), and numerous flocks of hundreds of Mew Gulls throughout the Valley (DI). Over one-half of the many hundreds of large "pink-footed" gulls in that area were considered to be Glaucous-winged x Western intergrades (DI, DFi, SH, HN). Elsewhere the high counts of Thayer's Gulls were about 1000 in Saanich, V.I., Dec. 8 (KT) and 150 at the Vancouver landfill in Delta, B.C., Feb. 5 (MF, MM). About 29 Glaucous Gulls were noted throughout the Region, for a somewhat higher number than usual.

A first-winter Iceland Gull (*L.g. kumlieni*) was found at the Vancouver landfill, Delta, B.C., Jan. 21 & Feb. 5 (†MF, MP, ph., MM) for the first photographically documented report of this form for the province. These photographs and the description were examined by Michel Gosse- lin of Ottawa and Dennis Paulson of Seattle who concur with the identification. There have been several previous reports of this form in the Region (*e.g.*, AB 37:905, 1983), but identification of immatures of the *thayeri-kumlieni-glaucoides* complex is difficult. Separate publication of these descriptions, photographs, and discussion is urged.

PARAKEETS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Long-term stick nests of Monk Parakeets were still active in Portland (HN *et al.*) and at a recently discovered location in Auburn, Wash. (TB).

The three Snowy Owl reports were the fewest received in at least the last 12 years. Two of these were on the Skagit flats, Wash. (LM, EH *et al.*), and the other was along Boundary Bay, Delta, B.C. (B. Self *et al.*). Two Burrowing Owls wintering near the Eugene, Oreg., airport (T. Mickel, DFi *et al.*), and another s. of Peoria, Oreg., Feb. 25 (A & E Carlson, *fide* ME) were expected. The Burrowing Owl on Ediz Hook, Port Angeles, Wash., Jan. 2 (JSk), however, was most unusual. Barred Owls were found several times during the season in N. Vancouver, B C (PC, JI, DA), on the Univ. of Victoria campus (DFr, J & RS *et al.*), and in E. Sooke Regional P., V.I. (DFr, R. Williams *et al.*). Single sightings of Barred Owls were also made in Ruckle P.P., Salt Spring I., B C (DFr), Burnaby L., B.C. (GT), and at another N. Vancouver location (†D. Brown). The breeding pair in Discovery P., Seattle, was unsuccessfully searched for throughout the season (D. Beaudette). There were 5 scattered sightings of Long-eared Owls in the Vancouver, B.C., area Dec. 6-Jan. 21.

Anna's Hummingbirds continued to winter regularly near feeders. Reported numbers following the December freeze appeared to be down in w. Oregon (HN, DI), but unaffected in w. Washington and s. British Columbia. The first returning Rufous Hummingbirds were sighted earlier than usual Feb. 2 near Bandon (AM), & Feb. 8 near Coquille (A. Contreras), both along the s. Oregon coast. As has happened in the past, the late December freeze was coincident with a great increase in lowland and urban area sightings of Red-breasted Sapsuckers. A single Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen almost daily through the season in N. Saanich, V.I. (B. & J. Holt) for one of few winter records of this species.

Based on the arrival dates of small flocks, the spring influx of Tree Swallows proceeded up the interior valleys, and was earlier than usual. The first arrivals along the outer coast were not until significantly later. About 100+ Tree Swallows were at Fern Ridge Res., near Eugene, Oreg., Feb. 2 (DFi, SH), 36 were near Yelm, s. of Olympia, Wash., Feb. 8 (JSk, S. Herman), and seven were in Saanich, V.I., Feb. 11 (J &

RS) First arrivals at Pitt Meadows, near Vancouver, B.C., were a week earlier than the long-term average (GT). The arrival of Violet-green Swallows was at about the same time and pattern, but not in such concentrations.

JAYS THROUGH WAGTAILS — Two Blue Jays were seen Jan. 5 in Delta, B.C., where one had been seen since Dec. 19 (†DJ, JG). Two were also seen in nearby Tsawwassen, B.C., on several dates Dec. 27-Feb. 27 (m.ob., *fide* DK). Another Blue Jay was found in McMinnville, between Portland and Salem, Oreg., mid-November-Jan. 27 (Mrs. C. Brown, m.ob., ph.), and the Blue Jay seen near the s. end of L. Sammamish, e. of Seattle Nov. 2+ stayed through the season (B. Johnson *et al.*). These all are among relatively few Regional winter records.

The fall season invasion of Steller's Jays into the Victoria area held over into January, with numbers decreasing during February. The influx of Mountain Chickadees into the lowlands of w. Oregon also continued into January, with reports of ones and twos widely scattered (HN, ME). A Rock Wren was found on Protection I., off Port Townsend, Wash., Dec. 17 (DP) for the first winter record for w. Washington.

Western Bluebirds arrived on breeding territories around Puget Sound and on s. V.I., on schedule in mid-February. The 5 reports of Mountain Bluebirds were all from w. Washington, where it is rare in winter. Three of the sightings were at adjacent localities in the Bellingham area, and 2 were at sites on San Juan I. There were 12 Townsend's Solitaires reported, which was many more than usual for this scarce wintering species. All were noted after mid-January. The N. Mockingbirds found in Portland in mid-November and in Seattle in mid-August stayed into December, but neither was seen after the late December freeze. The only other mockingbird report was of one at Finley N.W.R., near Corvallis, Oreg., Feb. 4 (M. & M. Dembrow, *fide* ME). A **Brown Thrasher** resided in a backyard in Colton, s.e. of Portland, Oreg., Dec. 2-April (J. & K. Cooper, m.ob., ph.) for the first record for w. Oregon.

On Jan. 14 a first-year **Black-backed/White Wagtail** was found on the shores of Crockett L., Whidbey I., Wash., for the 2nd record of this form for the state (GG, ph.). Thereafter the bird was found almost daily through February, was tape-recorded (H. Vander Pol), and extensively photographed. Observers were watching closely for any sign of molt into a more definitive plumage.

WAXWINGS THROUGH BUNTINGS — Flocks of 16 Bohemian Waxwings at Dungeness, Wash., Dec. 17 (MC), and of 15 at Pt. Roberts, Wash., Dec. 27 (MD, K. Bell) were the only reports of this scarce winter visitor. Northern Shrikes were widely reported and in good numbers.

Three flocks of Townsend's Warblers, totaling about 50 birds, were closely monitored in Eugene, Oreg., and were not detectably affected by the December freeze (DFi). A single Hermit Warbler was seen Jan. 11 with a dozen Townsend's in Corvallis, Oreg. (ME), and a probable hybrid Hermit x Townsend's was also in that flock Jan. 11-14 (†ME). A Palm Warbler was in Renton, Wash., Dec. 1 (†J. Flynn) for the 2nd record for King County. The only other Palms reported were from their more usual coastal locales. Singles were at the North jetty of the Columbia R., Dec. 18 (DI *et al.*) and on the lower Sixes R., near Port Orford, Oreg., Dec. 28 (BG). A **Northern Waterthrush** was seen Dec. 10-11 at Reifel Ref., B.C. (†H. Hosford, RPh) for the 2nd winter record for the Vancouver area. A young ♂ **Common Yellowthroat** was discovered Jan. 1 in Seattle (E. Spragg *et al.*). It was seen thereafter Jan. 28 (M. Hatheway *et al.*) & Feb. 18-21 (P. Okano) for the 2nd winter record for Washington. A ♀-plumaged Com. Yellowthroat was seen Feb. 19 at the base of the Coburg Pen. (KT) for the first winter record for V.I. Single ♂ Wilson's Warblers, rare here in winter, were noted Dec. 3 at River Jordan, w. of Victoria (KT, TZ), and in Victoria Dec. 17 (CBC).

A ♂ **Dickcissel** appeared Dec. 23+ at a feeder near Cathlamet, along the Columbia R., Wash. (G. Exum, C. Carver, m.ob.) for the 2nd record for Washington. Comparison of photos of this bird and of that one found last November at Forks (135 mi to the n.) has not yet been made, but they certainly could have been the same individual. A Clay-colored Sparrow, rare here in winter, came to a feeder in North Bend, Oreg., Dec. 11 (AM).

The 13 Swamp Sparrows reported was more than double the number of any previous winter in the Region. Two were on the Goldstream flats,

w. of Victoria, V.I., Dec. 7 (DFr), and one was seen Dec. 11+ at River Jordan, on the w. side of V.I. (JI, B & MM *et al.*). An adult spent January-February in Oaks Bottoms, Portland (DI *et al.*). There were three other individuals found on V.I., two in the Vancouver, B.C. area (†J. & H. MacKenzie, †GT), and four others in Oregon. Several dozen White-throated Sparrows were reported. Most were found in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, but many were also on s. V.I. About 14 Harris' Sparrows spread throughout the Region was double the average of the last 5 years. The winter-plumaged **Rustic Bunting** found Nov. 25 (M & VG) at River Jordan, about 35 mi w. of Victoria, V.I., was seen regularly there with a large flock of juncos to at least February 20 (R. Howie, m.ob., ph.).

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH FINCHES — Single Yellow-headed Blackbirds Jan. 7 in Olympia, Wash. (D. Martin), & Feb. 5 on Sea I., B.C. (RPh), were the only reports of this occasional winter visitor. An imm. ♂ Rusty Blackbird noted Dec. 6 in C. Saanich, V.I. (J & RS) and a female found Feb. 12 in Metchosin, V.I. (KT), were likewise the only reports of this winter visitor. A N. Oriole was present near a feeder in Aberdeen, Wash., from late December through February (R & FC, †B. Morse *et al.*) for one of very few winter records for Washington. An unidentified oriole was seen Jan. 15 just w. of Stanwood, Wash. (†F. Brown).

A ♂ and a ♀ **Brambling** visited a feeder in Queen Charlotte City, Queen Charlotte I., Nov. 20-Jan. 7 (M. Morris, B. Eccles, A. Gray). At the same time a Brambling was seen near Sooke, V.I., Nov. 20 (†KT). Next, a ♀ Brambling found a feeder near Tenino, s. of Olympia, Wash., Jan. 11-18, and was banded (JSK, PM *et al.*). Then, another female was seen Jan. 19-Feb. 25 at a feeder on W. 45th St., Vancouver, B.C. (J. Husted, †RCn, †WW, †B. Kautesk *et al.*), a male was seen Jan. 21-28 in Ladner, B.C. (†C. Runyon, RPh), and a male was seen briefly Feb. 12 on W. 1st St., Vancouver (†MP). These were the 3rd-7th records for B.C., and the 3rd for Washington, of this small Asiatic visitor. The actual first record for Washington was of a previously unidentified individual that spent the winter of 1968-1969 in Aberdeen (R & FC, ph.).

Red Crossbills were numerous only on s. V.I. (*fide* VG). Elsewhere, there were sightings of 1-7 individuals at a few Puget Sound locations, and the species was unreported from w. Oregon. Large flocks of Pine Siskins were spread throughout the Region. Three Lesser Goldfinches stayed in Portland to Dec. 3 (DI), and a handful wintered near Corvallis (ME).

CORRIGENDA (All from AB 37:329-332, 1983) — The ♂ Cinnamon Teal seen Jan. 16, 1983, in s. B.C. was at Burnaby L., not Boundary L. There were about 600 gulls present along the Willamette R., in Eugene last winter, not 2-3000. The Long-eared Owl on Sea I., Dec. 5 & 19, 1982, was photographed by Jim & Edie Goble.

INITIALED OBSERVERS, with Sub-Regional Editors in boldface — Dave Aldcroft, Thais Bock, Richard Cannings (RCn), Ralph & Florence Carlson, Mike Carmody, Pascal Cortez, Mark Daly, Merlin Eltzroth, **David Fix** (DFi), Mike Force, David Fraser (DFr), George Gerds, Margaret & **Vic Goodwill**, Al & Judith Grass, Barbara Griffin, Steve Heint, Glen & Wanda Hoge, **Eugene Hunn**, John Ireland, **David Irons**, Dale Jensen, Martha Jordan, **Doug Kragh**, Alan McGie, Barb & Mike McGrenere, Libby Mills, **Harry Nehls**, **Dennis Paulson**, Roy Phillips (RPh), Robert Pitman (RPi), Michael Price, Joy & Ron Satterfield, Jeff Skriletz (JSK), Dory & Stan Smith, Keith Taylor, Verta Teale, Glen Thomson, **Terry Wahl**, Wayne Weber, Tim Zurowski.—**PHILIP W. MATTOCKS, JR., Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195.**



MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION
/Ron LeValley and Kenneth V. Rosenberg

This winter could almost be considered two seasons as the wettest December on record was followed by the driest January in history. The only storm of ornithological interest was a strong windstorm in the San Francisco Bay area December 3, that blew many Red-throated Loons and Red Phalaropes away from their normal coastal haunts. Ocean surface temperatures cooled to near normal towards the end of the period but the legacy of El Niño persisted in the form of lowered seabird populations, especially in Monterey Bay (AB).

The grounding of many passerines by the December 3 storm and the arrival of a migrant wave on the Farallon Islands December 16, were further evidence that many birds are still in passage through our Region well into the winter season. The combined effects of the spring-like January and the widespread blooming of eucalyptus and other ornamental trees promoted the successful wintering of a widespread variety of migrants and vagrants. The bird list from Golden State Park, San Francisco could be more befitting of a Mexican town square, and after identifying several rare warblers, tanagers and grosbeaks, observers at Inverness counted 409 individual warblers leaving a single eucalyptus tree at dusk!

ABBREVIATIONS — C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee, C.V. = Central Valley; F.I. = S.E. Farallon Island; P.R.B.O. = Point Reyes Bird Observatory; S.F. = San Francisco; † = description on file; ph. = photo on file. All observations at Palomarin (near Bolinas) and F.I. should be credited to P.R.B.O. References to the *GULL* refer to Golden Gate Audubon Society's publication, whose observations column is written by S.F. Bailey. Italicized names refer to counties.



LOONS THROUGH TUBENOSES — The above-mentioned Dec. 3 storm deposited Red-throated Loons all over the S.F. Bay area and at a few inland localities. Exceptional records included one found dead at Jameson Canyon, *Napa* Dec. 5 (MRi); one to two at L. Shastina, *Siskiyou* from mid-December to mid-January (RE, MR *et al.*); and one reported near Monticello Dam, *Solano* Jan. 28 long after the storm (*fide* TM). An impressive inland concentration of Arctic Loons was on L. Shastina in late December when up to ten were present (RE, MR *et al.*). Another was at Anderson Marsh, *Lake* Dec. 16-17 (ES). As usual a few Horned Grebes were detected on inland waters but much less expected were Red-necked Grebes at the following locations: one to two at Anderson Marsh, *Lake* Dec. 17-20 (ES); one n. of Hwy 37, Vallejo Dec. 31

(JL), two on Lake of the Pines, *Nevada* Jan. 1 (JML *et al.*), and one at Cader Lane Ponds, *Sonoma* Feb. 25 (*fide* GULL). Camanche Res., hosted 1500+ W. Grebes Feb. 11 for a notable inland concentration (T & AM).

A **Short-tailed Albatross** photographed 40 mi w. of Pt. Sur Dec. 2 or 4 (R. Pitman, *fide* GULL) was one of the more exciting sightings of the winter. Single Laysan Albatrosses were sighted Dec. 7, 15 mi w. of Crescent City (GL) and near F.I., the latter furnishing the first island record (P.R.B.O.). Northern Fulmar numbers declined steadily through the winter off Monterey after last Fall's notable numbers (AB, DLS). A **Cook's Petrel** found dying in a Santa Cruz backyard Nov. 17 was the first California specimen (DLS, *fide* GULL). An extremely late Buller's Shearwater was well-described from off the Klamath R., Dec. 20 (GL). The fall invasion of Short-tailed Shearwaters continued through the winter providing the highest numbers since at least 1966 in Monterey Bay (AB, SFB, DR *et al.*). The peak was Jan. 8 when 130 were counted and 60 were still present Feb. 26 (AB, DLS). Ashy and Black storm-petrels lingered very late into the winter when five Ashies were found among 600 Blacks off Moss Landing Dec. 29 (SFB, KHai) and ten Blacks were induced to stay by the warm waters until Jan. 8 (AB, DLS).

PELICANS THROUGH IBISES — Brown Pelicans were present in moderate numbers in much of the Region: 200 wintered in Monterey Bay (AB); 100 wintered around F.I.; 25 were off Abbott's Lagoon Dec. 17 (LCB) and 60 were near Hayward Dec. 18 (HLC). These are impressive winter concentrations for recent years and are likely associated with the warm waters, although we may be witnessing the return of pre-pesticide "normal" winter numbers. A nighttime roost of Double-crested Cormorants s. of Elk Grove, *Sacramento* had a peak of 445 Jan. 1 (B & HK). The cormorants began using the roost in August with numbers building until November and remaining steady through the winter period.

Cattle Egrets staged the best show in recent years as observers throughout the Region reported flocks of 30-100 birds. Following 2 years of slightly declining numbers, this winter has raised the question of whether this species has finished its invasion of the W. and is exhibiting "normal" fluctuations or had merely experienced a temporary slowdown of its expansion. Our normal winter locations for White-faced Ibises produced 100 at Colusa N.W.R., Dec. 29 (BED) and 125 at Merced N.W.R., Feb. 17-18 (RJB, BE). Away from its normal haunts was a juvenile at Elkhorn Slough, *Monterey* Jan. 1 (BW, DR).

WATERFOWL — A Fulvous Whistling-Duck at Merced N.W.R., Feb. 1+ (RJB) was either a wintering bird or a very early migrant as most spring arrivals are in May. A **Whooper Swan** discovered by K. Zediker one mi n. of Grimes, *Colusa* Jan. 17 accompanied 1400 Tundra Swans and apparently left with them after Jan. 19 (†TB, BED, †RAE, †RS *et al.*). Although the possibility that this individual was an escapee cannot be eliminated, its occurrence correlates with this year's unprecedented "Asian invasion" (see Brambling and Rustic Bunting below). If accepted as a wild individual by the C.B.R.C., this would constitute the first record for California and w. North America s. of Alaska. As has been the case for the last few winters, a few each Greater White-fronted Geese, Snow Geese, and Ross' Geese were detected at coastal locations. Blue-phase Snow Geese were found in small numbers among large flocks in the C.V., and, as observer awareness increases, the blue-phase of the Ross' Goose was reported from Gray Lodge W.A., with singles Jan. 1 (†JML *et al.*) & 14 (CY) and from Merced N.W.R., with two Feb. 11 (AB, †BW) and one Feb. 28 (RS). A single Emperor Goose was at the n. limit of the Region on Hunter Rock Jan. 13-16 (*fide* PS) and on nearby Prince I., Feb. 25 (*fide* JAR). A max. of 101 Aleutian Canada Geese wintered for the 2nd year near San Pablo Res., *Alameda* (RWL).

Birds with characteristics of the Eur. Green-winged Teal were found at Sacramento N.W.R., Jan. 21 (†SE) and along Santa Fe Grade, *Merced* Feb. 11 (JRI). A large and notable concentration of 4364 Gadwall was found at the Mountain View Sewage Plant Jan. 25 (HLC, RWL). Aerial mid-winter surveys of diving ducks in the s. S.F. Bay found 14,860 Canvasbacks and 93,075 scaup of both species; their numbers were up significantly over last years counts (RWL). A Ring-necked Duck gathering of 2000-3000 at Marsh Creek Res., *Contra Costa* Jan. 26-28 (JRI) was a large number. A possible Tufted Duck x Lesser Scaup hybrid spent Jan. 16-28 on a farm pond near Clements, *San Joaquin* (†DY, †JML, SS). Descriptions of this bird are being

evaluated by the C B R C A ♀ Tufted Duck was reported near the Hyde St Pier, S F, Feb 13 (*vide GULL*) Inland Greater Scaup, always unusual, were reported as follows: two Dec. 20, Fall R., *Shasta* (B & CY), one Dec. 27, Folsom L. (*vide JML*); one Dec. 27, Los Banos (BBar, BL); and a female with the above mentioned Tufted Duck x Lesser Scaup near Clements Jan. 22 (DY). A ♀ **King Eider** was at the Berkeley Pier Dec. 18 (KFC) for the 2nd consecutive year. Single ♂ Harlequin Ducks wintering at Moss Landing and in the Pacific Grove area of Monterey (DR *et al.*) and around F.I., were the only ones reported s. of known haunts along the *Del Norte* coast. Oldsquaws were reported from 12 locations including an imm. male Dec. 15-26 at the unlikely inland location of the Stockton Sewage Ponds (DY). Two ♀ White-winged Scoters were inland at L. Hennessey, *Napa* Feb. 27 + (BDP). Over 700 Com. Goldeneyes near Outer Ravenswood Slough, *San Mateo* Jan. 25 (HLC) were part of the healthy 1435 counted in s. S F Bay during the mid-winter census (RWL). A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye at Elkhorn Slough, *Monterey* Jan. 1 + (DR) was out of place. The Smew was back for the 3rd winter in Foster City. This year it arrived Dec 19 (WB) and was last seen Jan. 22 (KHai). Notable concentrations of Com. Mergansers were 76 on Lake of the Pines, *Nevada* Jan. 2 (JML *et al.*) and 500 at L. Almanor Jan. 31 (DAA). Inland Red-breasted Mergansers were at Clearlake P., *Lake* Dec. 26 and at the O'Neill Forebay, *Merced* Feb. 26 (ALE+).

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — More than the usual number of Ospreys were found wintering in the Region; one at Stone Lagoon, *Humboldt* Jan. 8 (GL, GS, RAE) was the most n. and an extraordinary 13 were at L. San Antonio, *Monterey* and L. Nacimiento, *San Luis Obispo* at the s. border of the Region Jan. 7 (*vide AB*). A Black-shouldered Kite was at the margin of its range at Lower Klamath N W R., Feb. 4 (CSt, RE). Bald Eagles were widely reported from nearly every county in the Region but 52 from the above mentioned Lakes San Antonio and Nacimiento deserves special mention. This may be the largest wintering area for Bald Eagles in the contiguous Pacific states outside of the Klamath Basin. AN. Goshawk photographed at Ancil Hoffman, *Sacramento* Jan. 12 (EH *et al.*) constituted one of the few records for the floor of the C.V. Elsewhere another was near Elk Creek, *Glen* Feb. 7 (JL) near the s. limit of their distribution in the coastal mountains. A very rare dark-phase Broad-winged Hawk at the Marconi Cove Marina, *Marin* Dec. 1-9 (*vide GULL*) was unfortunately seen by only a few people. Light-phase individuals were found at L. Merced Dec. 21-Jan. 20 (*vide GULL*) and in Carmel Valley Dec. 30 (JML). A dark-phase ad. **Swainson's Hawk** was described near Thornton, *San Joaquin* Dec. 17 (†DY). Although North American winter records for this species are virtually unknown away from s. Florida and Texas, there is an adult specimen from Merced December 2, 1932 (see Browning, *AB* 28(5):865-867). Although we agree that winter records should be viewed skeptically, the supporting details of this sighting are intriguing. A Red-tailed Harlan's Hawk was near Manson and Pass Rds, *Sutter* Jan. 14 (B & CY). Ferruginous Hawks were well-reported from typical locations throughout the winter while Rough-legged Hawks were scarce away from the n.e. corner of the Region. An impressive 1500 Am. Kestrels were estimated wintering in the Livermore Valley—Altamont Pass area (ALE *et al.*). Our other regular falcons were reported in typical small numbers throughout the Region.

Several of 11 + Wild Turkeys near Hwy 162 n.w. of Elk Cr., *Glen* Jan 20 showed much white dorsally suggesting that these introduced birds are interbreeding with domestic stock (JL). Sixteen Black Rails counted at the Petaluma R. Marsh, *Sonoma* Jan. 18 were considered to be only a fraction of the local population (JE). The S.F. Bay Bird Observatory has color-banded 186 Clapper Rails in the s. S.F. Bay in an effort to monitor the movements of this endangered subspecies. Persons observing color-banded Clapper Rails are encouraged to report sightings to the S.F. Bay Bird Observatory or the s. S.F. Bay N.W.R. A small marsh along Lone Tree Rd., Anderson, *Shasta* carefully surveyed for rails Jan. 6 yielded 18-22 Virginia Rails and four to six Soras (BY, BV). An Am. Coot "exactly resembling the Caribbean Coot" was studied at L. Merritt Feb. 11 (JM) casting further doubt on the specific status of that form. The Sandhill Crane at Inverness, *Marin* was still present at the end of the winter period (JE, JW) while another was reported on Pt. Reyes Feb. 27 (*vide GULL*).

SHOREBIRDS — Black-bellied Plovers regularly winter in the s.

C V, but 100 at the Davis Sewage ponds Dec 29 (JML) and 35 in the Sutter Bypass, *Sutter* Jan 27 (BED) were high numbers for the n C V. Two lesser Golden-Plovers wintering at the Lodi Sewage ponds were at a location where one wintered last year. Good concentrations of Mountain Plovers were found along Little Panoche Rd., *San Benito* where 471 were counted (BS) and w. of Davis where 289 were present Feb 5 (JML). Black-necked Stilts and Am. Avocets winter in small numbers between Colusa and Sacramento N.W.R.s (BED) but are considered rare elsewhere in the n. C.V. Eight Am. Avocets w. of Davis Dec 29 (JML) were therefore noteworthy and two stilts at Gray Lodge W.A., Feb. 6 and 15 more at El Macero, *Yolo* on the same day (EH) were thought to be spring migrants. The first Regional winter record for **Solitary Sandpiper** was discovered Jan. 22 near Inverness, *Marin* (†DS, JE, RS, ph.) and was present at least through Feb. 29. A Willet at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Feb. 4 (CSt) was certainly out of place for the winter season. A Wandering Tattler on the n. jetty of Humboldt Bay Feb. 19 (KVR) was probably wintering where few do; spring migrants usually appear in late March. A partial albino Surf-bird frequented a Pacific Grove shoreline near where an identical bird was seen on December 30, 1981 (AB). Two Sanderlings at the Stockton Sewage ponds Dec. 21 (DY) were passing through but what of 60 reported from the Hollister Sewage ponds, *Monterey* Feb. 4 (K & KVV)? Ten W. Sandpipers 8 mi n. of Sacramento Dec. 4 (T & AM) were very late for migrants and possibly wintering; 20 wintered at Merced N.W.R. (RJB) Western Sandpipers do not winter annually in the interior portion of our Region. Rock Sandpipers were found at Crescent City Harbor Dec. 18 (MR, RE); Bodega Head Dec. 18 (JW); Princeton Harbor, Half Moon Bay Dec. 1-Feb. 16 (BS, PJM, HG); and Pebble Beach near Pescadero Dec. 29 + (BS). Red Phalaropes were present onshore by the Dec 3 storm with one at Stockton sewage ponds Dec. 4 (DY) the farthest from the coast. They were present in Monterey Bay until Jan. 8 (AB) and an oiled individual was at Stone Lagoon, *Humboldt* Jan. 15 (RLeV).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Up to 12 Pomarine Jaegers were in Monterey Bay Feb. 4-26 (KHai, AB, JM, DLS). Both adults and immatures were represented in this good winter showing. A single Parasitic Jaeger, rare in winter, was on Monterey Bay Jan. 21 (AB, DLS). The only Franklin's Gull of the season was last seen at the Stockton sewage ponds Dec. 10 (JM). Both the Little Gull and the Com Black-headed Gull were present throughout the winter at the Stockton sewage ponds (DY *et al.*). An imm. Little Gull was present for only one day near Ferndale Jan. 1 (GS, GL). Heermann's Gulls were present around F.I., in higher than normal numbers with a peak of 17 on Feb 28. Mew Gulls, always unusual inland, were reported as follows: 47 in s. Sacramento Dec. 18 and 40 in w. Sacramento on the same day (T & AM); one at the Sacramento City dump Dec. 22 (T & AM); one near Johnstonville, *Lassen* Dec. 29 (T & AM); one found dead at Merced N.W.R., Jan. 17 (RJB); one in w. Sacramento Feb. 20 (T & AM); one at the Hollister sewage ponds Feb. 27 (RS); and two in Sacramento Feb. 28 (T & AM). Topping all these reports though were an estimated 10,000 at L. Hennessey, *Napa* Feb. 25 (*vide GULL*). Two Thayer's Gulls at Lake of the Pines, *Nevada* Jan. 2 (JML) were in an area from which there are few records. A W. Gull at the Yolo landfill Dec. 18 (†BWB) added another to the extremely few inland records for this species. At least nine Glaucous Gulls reported from the Region were highlighted by two adults; one at Freshwater Lagoon, *Humboldt* Nov. 29 + (GS, RAE *et al.*) and another at the Sacramento City dump Dec. 22 (TM, BWB) Black-legged Kittiwakes were present in very small numbers through most of the winter until 130 were found in Monterey Bay Feb. 26 (AB, RS, DR). Their influx correlated with cooling ocean water temperatures (AB).

An extremely late Elegant Tern was at Millerton, *Marin* Dec. 14 (RS). Also very late were an ad. Com. Tern at Tomales Bay Dec 2 (GW) and an immature at the Salinas R. mouth Jan. 4 (†PJM). Forster's Terns are uncommon on the coast n. of *Sonoma* so 75 at Bodega Bay Dec. 3 (BDP) were noteworthy as were nine at Arcata Feb. 9 (KVR) Perhaps even more surprising was one at Port of Sacramento, *Yolo* Feb 20 (T & AM) as they are essentially unknown as winter visitors inland Rhinoceros Auklets were considered below their pre-El Niño numbers in Monterey Bay this winter (AB) but 2500 were seen leaving the Bay at dawn Feb. 27 (RS).

PIGEONS THROUGH OWLS — The only mid-winter concentra-

tions of Band-tailed Pigeons reported were flocks of 50-120+ in berry-producing chaparral on Mendocino N.F., in mid-January (SE). This species returned to the n. counties by late February. Twenty-one Mourning Doves on the Crescent City CBC, Dec. 18 was a high winter count for *Del Norte* (*fide* RAE), likewise 50+ at Inverness Feb. 17 (JE) were notable. Both live and dead Com. Barn-Owls were reported in high numbers from C.V. locations.

Intriguing was the news that all radio-collared Spotted Owls on a study area in *El Dorado* (including six ads.) "migrated" to foothill regions (700-2500 ft) in November and returned to their 4000-5000 ft breeding range in early March (SAL). Crescent City's Barred Owl began calling again Feb. 17 (RAE *et al.*), and at Salyer, *Trinity*, two birds were calling simultaneously in late February (C. Sisco.). Yet another individual of this recent Regional resident was heard in Willow Cr., *Humboldt* in late February (*fide* J. Mattison). Aside from a small roost in *Sutter* the only Long-eared Owls found were singles in S.F. Jan. 4 (LCB), Coyote Hills Reg. Park Jan. 16-28 (SFB) and throughout the period at Pt. Reyes (*fide* JE). There is no doubt that Short-eared Owls are much reduced from the large numbers noted in this Region only a few years ago. This winter a total of 13 birds was reported from 6 specific locations, and many active observers emphasized that they saw none all season. However the presence of 50+ near the Oregon border at Lower Klamath N.W.R., in late November (RLeV) raised the question of whether populations are actually decreasing or if they are merely shifting their winter distribution away from heavily birded coastal and C.V. areas.

NIGHTJARS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — As usual, five to six Com. Poorwills at Palomarin emerged from hibernation on warm days to feed, especially in late February. The same phenomenon may explain the presence of 2 flocks (30-35 birds each) of Vaux's Swifts n. of Orick, *Humboldt*, seen foraging over redwoods off and on throughout the period (GS, RAE *et al.*). Elsewhere, two to four were seen with swallows at Pescadero Marsh Jan. 12-14 for the 3rd consecutive winter (PJM, T & AM). White-throated Swifts were more numerous than usual on the c. coast, with a notable concentration of 200 at Pescadero Marsh Jan. 12 (PJM). There were 2 Costa's Hummingbird reports without details: a male at San Rafael Dec. 3-31 (*fide* GULL), and one at Los Banos in late December (*fide* KFC). A ♀ Rufous Hummingbird banded Feb. 18 was among the earliest ever at Palomarin, although two reached Orick by Feb. 20 (DY). For the 3rd consecutive year an Alamo, *Contra Costa* feeder hosted a ♂ Allen's Hummingbird on the early date of Jan. 13 (JRI) and eight Allen's at L. Merced Jan. 31 was a notable early count (PJM).

Lewis' Woodpeckers were numerous in foothill and valley regions from *Tehama* to e. *Santa Clara*, with the largest count being 81 at Red Bluff Dec. 19 (B & CY). An ad. ♂ "Yellow-bellied" Sapsucker (*S. v. varius*) made a very rare appearance at Napa Jan. 10 (*fide* GULL); there are fewer than 10 records of this form in our Region. The "Red-naped" form (*S. v. nuchalis*) appeared at Phoenix L., *Marin* Dec. 31 (*fide* GULL) and Sacramento Feb. 26 (†T & AM), and the one found in November at Golden Gate P., S.F. remained through the winter (LCB *et al.*). A Red-breasted Sapsucker was unusual in winter at 4000 ft in Yosemite Valley Jan. 15 (JE). A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker with the Red-breasted (JE) and a male at 4500 ft at L. Almanor, *Plumas* Jan. 21-29 (DAA) added to our scanty knowledge of this species' winter distribution. About five pure "Yellow-shafted" and two intergrade flickers were reported.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — *Monterey's* E. Phoebe returned to Estero Cemetery for its 4th winter Nov. 27-Mar. 12 (DR *et al.*). A great surprise was the discovery of a **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** at Arcata Jan. 13-Mar. 12. (M. Higley, ph., KVR, †RAE, †RLeV). This represented the northernmost occurrence for this species and joined a flurry of fall-winter sightings farther s. A Cassin's Kingbird at Los Banos, *Merced* Dec. 27 (KFC) was recorded there for the 2nd consecutive winter.

Tree Swallows wintered in small numbers throughout the lowlands, n. to *Butte* in the C.V., and *Humboldt* on the coast. As usual, a few Violet-green Swallows also wintered, establishing first such records at Los Banos Dec. 27 (KFC) and Palomarin Jan. 18. More exceptional were three Barn Swallows at Pt. Reyes Jan. 10 (†DC, KCo), and another



Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Arcata, Calif., Jan. 13-Mar. 12, 1984. Photo/K.V. Rosenberg.

at Bolinas Jan. 22 (DS). Four N. Rough-winged Swallows were early at Sacramento Feb. 8 (*fide* TM), as were 75 in Fresno Feb. 4 (S. Shubert).

JAYS THROUGH CREEPER — Mixed flocks of Clark's Nutcrackers and Steller's Jays moving through conifers in Yosemite N.P., Jan. 14 were an interesting association to observe (JE). Also intriguing was a nutcracker with a bill twice the normal length and decurved, that resourcefully harvested pine seeds from beneath the snow at Chester, *Plumas* Dec. 30 (DAA). The status of a Black-billed Magpie in residential Concord, *Contra Costa* Jan. 15-Mar. 11 (†JRI *et al.*) was certainly questionable, but the possibility that this unworn individual arrived on its own cannot be ruled out. Twelve Com. Ravens at Sacramento N.W.R., Feb. 16, and two at Knights Landing, *Yolo* Feb. 5 (JML *et al.*) were rare C.V. floor occurrences.

After their mini-invasion last fall, Mountain Chickadees lingered in coastal *Del Norte* with up to seven birds accounted for in December, one until Jan. 23 at Requa (all RAE *et al.*), and one until Feb. 17 at Klamath (JML *et al.*). On several occasions, 3 species of chickadees were observed in the same bush! Other lowland Mountains of note were 30 at Honey L., *Lassen* Jan. 29 (B & CY), three at Summit City, *Shasta* Feb. 26 (BV), and an extreme individual reaching Stockton Dec. 17 for a first *San Joaquin* record (DY).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were widely reported from *Sonoma*, *Monterey*, *Santa Clara*, and *San Joaquin*, and were considered "ubiquitous" at the same time at 4000-7000 ft in Yosemite N.P. (JE). A White-breasted Nuthatch at Smith R., Dec. 18 (GL) furnished a first winter *Del Norte* record. Another visited a Hayward yard Jan. 24 (HLC) and a stray Pygmy Nuthatch appeared in urban Santa Clara Dec. 18 (*fide* WB). A few Brown Creepers wandered to lowland sites in *Shasta*, *Sutter* N.W.R., and Sacramento, while remaining common at 4000-7000 ft in Yosemite N.P.

WRENS THROUGH THRUSHES — A Rock Wren wintered at Pacific Grove Jan. 12+ (AB, DR *et al.*). House Wrens wintered in small numbers in the C.V. n. to *Colusa* and on the coast of S.F. An individual on F.I., all season, had been banded there Sept. 29. Of local interest were Winter Wrens on the C.V. floor at Sacramento Dec. 18 (3) & Feb. 28 (T & AM), and *Sutter Bypass* Jan. 27 (BED), as well as singles above their usual wintering elevation at Yosemite Valley Jan. 15 (JR) and Grover Hot Springs S.P., *Alpine* Jan. 8 (EH).

As with other montane species, Golden-crowned Kinglets spread into lowland areas in moderate numbers while remaining common at Yosemite N.P., and on the n.w. coast. Most lowland reports were from *Yolo* to *Merced* and w. to *San Mateo*. About nine Blue-gray Gnatcatchers wintered on the coast n. to *Marin* and inland at L. Solano.

Western Bluebirds do not wander to the lowlands in any numbers, and Mountain Bluebird reports from their usual wintering stations were mostly of single males or very small flocks. Five Mountains on Skyline Blvd., established a first *San Mateo* record Feb. 3 (BS). Noteworthy Townsend's Solitaires included three at F.I., Jan. 27, two at Moss Landing Jan. 14-Feb. 19 (AB, DR *et al.*) and Pacific Grove Jan. 27 (AB), and one near Fresno Jan. 24 (RG). Seven Hermit Thrushes were

part of a late migrant wave on F I , Dec 16

Highlighting the menagerie of vagrant and lingering passerines in Golden Gate P., S.F., Dec. 21 was the Region's second Wood Thrush (†JM, pH., AGh, †HG, †KHai *et al.*). Having chosen a hedgerow of ornamental shrubs as its winter home, this bird remained until Feb. 4, undaunted by the frequent gaze of birders on their hands and knees. One wintered at Phoenix, Arizona in 1972 but there are no previous winter records for California. This was a flight year for berry-loving Am. Robins and Varied Thrushes. The majority of these avoided the n. coast, where migrant flocks were noted last fall, and settled from *Marin* to *San Mateo*, e. to *Sacramento* and *Merced*. Most notable among the many reports were 50 robins arriving with other migrants on F.I., Dec. 16, a single Varied Thrush near Fresno Feb. 25 (RG) and both species in Yosemite N.P., Jan. 12-16 (JE). Both species also frequented chaparral habitat in Mendocino N.F., until late January when numbers declined sharply (SE).

MIMIDS THROUGH VIREOS — A Sage Thrasher wintered at Walnut Creek, *Contra Costa* Dec. 1-Jan. 31 (†JRi, JM *et al.*). A California Thrasher at Yosemite Valley Jan. 15 was not surprisingly a local first (JE).

The only reports of Bohemian Waxwings were in *Lassen*: ten recognized by call at Honey L., Dec. 29 (EH) and a single bird with 200 Cedars Jan. 27 at Susanville (BY, BV). Cedar Waxwings joined the robins and thrushes in invading the c. coast and valleys in large numbers. A group of seven joined the other arrivals on F.I., Dec. 16. Phainopeplas were widely reported from foothills around the C.V., but of special interest were singles on the valley floor at Sacramento Feb. 3 (S Hayes) and 8 mi n. of there Dec. 4-18 (T & AM).

Besides 8 Great Basin reports (low) and about 7 on the n. coast, a N. Shrike reached Chico, *Butte* Jan. 1 (T & AM) and another was in burned chaparral 5 mi e. of Alder Springs, *Glenn* Feb. 16-22 (†SE). The only Loggerhead Shrike reported from the Great Basin was at Honey L., Jan. 27 (BY, BV). A Solitary Vireo lingered at Pt. Reyes Dec. 17 (*fide GULL*) and a singing Hutton's Vireo was surprising at Sacramento Feb. 26 (T & AM).

WOOD WARBLERS — Seventeen species of warblers occurred in the period, although many individuals were evidently still migrating in December. Nonetheless, several species wintered in larger than usual numbers, and a single tree in an Arcata yard hosted 6 species in January and February. Of eight Tennessees, one was a late arrival at F.I., with other migrants Dec. 16, and only two were seen in January. Of 19 Nashville Warblers on or near the coast, about eight remained through the winter n. to Arcata. Ten Yellow Warblers, including three together in Golden Gate P., S.F., Dec. 21-Jan. 31 (†PJM) and three different birds near Ferndale, *Humboldt* Dec. 10-Jan. 28 (JST *et al.*) were unprecedented winter numbers. A ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler at Carmel, *Monterey* Dec. 30-Feb. 4 (†JML, DR, LCB) furnished only the 2nd Regional winter occurrence. Similarly, a Hermit Warbler on the Centerville CBC, Jan. 1 established a first *Humboldt* (and n. coast?) winter occurrence; this species is regular in winter only in a narrow coastal strip from Pt. Reyes to Monterey. Among the late migrants associated with storms Dec. 3 was a Prairie Warbler at Bolinas (RS). A total of 55 Palm Warbler reports reflected good coverage of the outer coast, one was inland at Elkhorn Ferry, *Yolo* Dec. 28-Jan. 21 (†T & AM).

Other rare-but-regular warblers included 14 Black-and-whites distributed along the entire coast, six Wilson's n. to Pt. Reyes, and two Am. Redstarts. Much more unusual, if documented, was the Worm-eating Warbler seen in S.F., Jan. 17 (*fide GULL*); there are 3 previous Regional winter records, but none after December. Three different N. Waterthrushes were also unprecedented for winter: one at Monterey Dec. 1-Feb. 4 (LCB, DR), one at Pescadero Marsh, *San Mateo* Jan. 1-12 (PJM), and one discovered late at Crescent City Mar. 6 (GL, RAE) for a 2nd *Del Norte* record. Lastly, a Com. Yellowthroat was at Arcata Jan. 13 for a rare n. coast winter occurrence (M. Higley).

TANAGERS THROUGH LONGSPURS — A ♂ Summer Tanager wintered at Golden Gate P., S.F., Dec. 3 through January (*fide GULL*) and was joined by a female Dec. 21 (LCB). At least 13 W. Tanagers were located in December near the coast n. to Sebastopol, *Sonoma*, and

inland at Sacramento. There was only one later report Feb. 4 at Monterey (LCB). Similarly, of about four Black-headed and seven Rose-breasted grosbeaks on the c. coast in December, only three Rose-breasteds lingered to mid-January.

A Brown Towhee at Los Banos, *Merced* Dec. 27 had dispersed from the foothills to an area with no previous records (KFC). Rufous-crowned Sparrows were in high numbers in usual haunts and one was along Skyline Blvd., n. *San Mateo* Dec. 21 (RS) where very rare. American Tree Sparrows were well reported from Great Basin locations with 17 being a high count at Honey L., Jan. 27-29 (T & CY, BV). Elsewhere, singles established a first winter record for F.I., Jan. 8, a 2nd *San Mateo* record at Pescadero Marsh Jan. 12 (PJM), one was near Loleta, *Humboldt* Jan. 1 (T. McKay), and two reached Watsonville, *Santa Cruz* Jan. 2 (PJM). Chipping Sparrows near Orick, *Humboldt* Dec. 1 (GS) and Santa Rosa Dec. 18 (LCB) were late, and a Clay-colored Sparrow near Ferndale, *Humboldt* Jan. 1 provided one of very few Regional winter records (LD, RLeV).

A high count of Vesper Sparrows was 40 on Little Panoche Rd., *San Benito* Feb. 12 (JRi *et al.*) and highest ever counts of Sage Sparrows were obtained on several CBCs. One Sage Sparrow strayed to Merced N.W.R., Feb. 1-3 (RJB). A lone Lark Bunting wintering on W. Butte Rd., *Sutter* Dec. 21-Feb. 8 was variously reported as a male and a female (m.ob.). Sharp-tailed Sparrows appeared at their favorite sites with two at Bolinas, *Marin* Dec. 31+ (one with a band) and one at Palo Alto Baylands, *Santa Clara* Jan. 16-18 (all. *fide GULL*).

Fox Sparrows were considered more common and vocal than usual in many areas; one bright rusty bird (*iliaca*) was at Watsonville, *Santa Cruz* Jan. 2 (†PJM). At least 30 Swamp Sparrows were on the c. coast in December, with small numbers seen all winter at traditional locales. Farther n., about five wintered in coastal *Humboldt* and one was near Smith R., *Del Norte* Dec. 18-19 (RAE *et al.*). Roughly 35-40 White-throated Sparrows were reported, including four in the Sacramento area and one at Snelling, *Merced* (RJB). Two or three identical leucistic White-crowned Sparrows in a flock of 100 at Pt. Reyes Dec. 17 were presumably from the same brood. Near Arcata, a hybrid White-crowned x Golden-crowned Sparrow was studied and photographed Feb. 6-8 (JSt). This winter's Harris' Sparrows were at F.I., Dec. 4, Santa Rosa Dec. 7 (LCB), Pebble Beach, *Monterey* Nov. 24-mid-December (*fide DR*), Smith R., *Del Norte* Dec. 18 (RAE), Honey L., *Lassen* Dec. 30 (EH), S.F. Zoo in mid-January (*fide GULL*) and Carmel Valley Jan. 21-Feb. 12 (JML, DR *et al.*).

A Gray-headed Junco furnished a first *San Joaquin* and only a second C.V. record at Stockton Dec. 13 (†DY). Southerly Lapland Longspurs included several wintering at Hayward, *Alameda* (JRi *et al.*) and one at Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* Dec. 2 (BS).

S.A.

This winter's "Asian invasion" brought 2 new passerine species to California. An uncooperative **Rustic Bunting** at Stone Lagoon, *Humboldt* Jan. 7-8 (†GS, †RAI, †GL *et al.*) was seen by only 8 people but photographed for the first definite record for the lower 48 states. Another individual apparently wintered on Vancouver I. (see Northern Pacific Coast Region, this issue) but previous North American records outside of Alaska (November 1965, San Bernardino County, California and October 1971, Queen Charlotte I., British Columbia) have been considered questionable (Roberson: 1980, "Rare Birds of the West Coast"; Garrett & Dunn: 1981, "Birds of Southern California"; A.O.U.: 1983, "Check-list of North American Birds"). A tip to the local press mushroomed into a full scale media event as newspapers across the country mentioned the sighting.

In contrast to the Rustic Bunting, a **Brambling** at Crescent City Feb. 5-Mar. 28 (†JAR, †RAE *et al.*) was seen by hundreds of people and came as a great relief to those with some sense of California pride. Several nearby states had previous records and this winter provided sightings throughout the West (see this issue).

ICTERIDS THROUGH FINCHES — A total of 30,000 Tricolored Blackbirds was estimated from *Glenn*, *Colusa*, *Sutter*, and *Butte* (BED) Away from their normal wintering area in the C.V., three different

Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at S.F. area lakes in January (*fide GULL*). A ♀ Rusty Blackbird discovered Nov. 30 near Orick, *Humboldt* remained throughout the period (*GS et al.*) establishing the first winter record for the n. coast.

Very rare in winter were three Hooded Orioles in *Santa Clara*: different males at San Jose Dec. 18 & Jan. 5, and a female at Palo Alto Dec. 29 (all, *fide WB*). Three N. (Baltimore) and one N. (Bullock's) orioles shared a eucalyptus tree with three W. Tanagers at Pacific Grove Dec. 29-30 (LCB, BDP). Elsewhere, two "Bullock's" were in S.F. (LCB, RAE *et al.*), two others were at Orange Memorial P., *San Mateo* (RS), and one wintered at Arcata (*fide JSt*).

Red Crossbills did nothing drastic this winter; the few reports came from Yosemite N.P., Golden Gate P., S.F., and several other coastal locations. Pine Siskins were numerous in the C.V., but scarce on the coast at Palomar. A concentration of 400 Lesser Goldfinches with 100+ siskins along W. Butte Rd., *Sutter* Jan. 7 illustrated their potential abundance in the C.V. (KHai). Forty-five Evening Grosbeaks along Gazos Creek Rd., Dec. 29 was a large group for *San Mateo* (BS). Elsewhere, this species was scarce or absent in most areas, perhaps because 1000+ were vacationing at South L. Tahoe, *El Dorado* in February and early March (CSw, RS).

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SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION /Guy McCaskie

Rain during the first half of December was the only significant precipitation of the season, leaving us with one of the driest winters on record. The best incursion of Short-tailed Shearwaters in recent years was the highlight among waterbirds, and an exceptional variety of flycatchers and wood warblers made for excitement among landbirds.

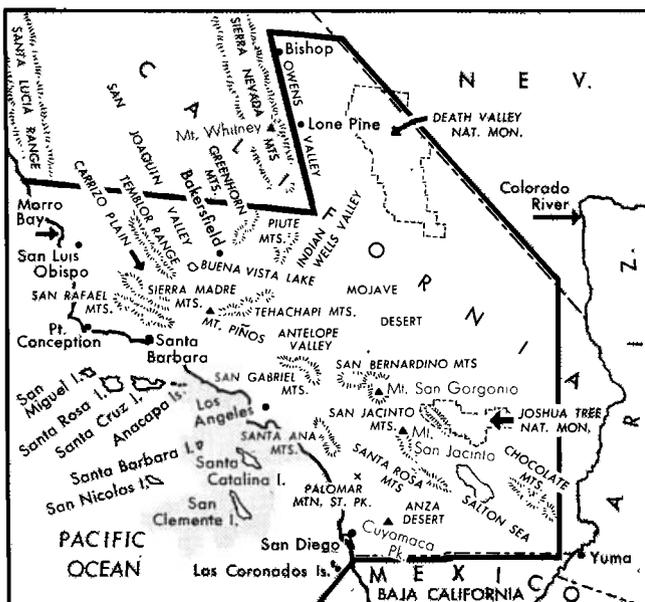
Certain erratic frugivorous species were present in above-average numbers with American Robins and Cedar Waxwings being the most conspicuous. Most observers commented on the abundance of American Robins, and 5000 using a roost in Redlands January 21 (RMcK) is just one of a number of such reports documenting the influx. Varied Thrushes were also numerous along the coast and well up into the mountains, with counts of up to 50/day made in areas of mature oak woodland such as in Placerita and Topanga Canyons, and pushed all the way south to Orange and San Diego counties. Cedar Waxwings were

abundant, especially after early February, with large flocks throughout the Region, including the southeast portion where frequently absent. Purple Finches were present in the southeast part of the Region where rarely found with a count of 60± made in the Brawley/El Centro area on February 4-5 (REW). Pine Siskins were relatively numerous along the coast to Los Angeles, but scarce south of there.

ABBREVIATIONS — N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.B.C.M. = San Bernardino County Museum; S.D.N.H.M. = San Diego Natural History Museum; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary, Ventura Co.; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. As virtually all rarities found in southern California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file for all rarities listed in the report. Records of birds seen only on days of Christmas Bird Counts have been omitted from this report to save space (they all appear in the CBC issue).

LOONS, GREBES — Red-throated Loons were more numerous than usual on inland bodies of water close to the coast, with some venturing as far inland as w. Riverside County as indicated by one to two on L. Evans in Riverside Jan. 6-15 (EAC), eight on L. Mathews Jan. 21 (EAC), and one on L. Skinner Mar. 3 (RMcK). An Arctic Loon, casual inland, was on L. Mathews Jan. 3 (JLD). Totally unexpected was an imm. **Yellow-billed Loon** on L. Perris Dec. 20+ (SCa, ph., S.D.N.H.M.), this being only the fourth to be found in s. California and the first inland anywhere in the State. As expected, small numbers of Horned Grebes were found wintering on some of the larger inland bodies of water the 30+ on L. Perris throughout the period (SCa) being the largest concentration. A Red-necked Grebe in Redondo Beach, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 6-Feb. 1 (BE) was unusually far s., another at Balboa, Orange Co., Feb. 13-Mar. 3 (BED) was only the fourth to be found along the coast s. of Los Angeles, and one on L. Perris Dec. 20-Jan. 20 (SCa) was only the second from a true inland locality in s. California.

ALBATROSSES, SHEARWATERS, STORM-PETRELS — An imm. **Short-tailed Albatross** at 35°30'N, 122°11'W (60 mi. w. of Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co.) Dec. 2 (RLP, LS; ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was only the second reported in s. California waters this century, but with continued breeding successes (see *Am. Birds* 36:806-814, 1982) it could once again become a common bird along the coast. Northern



Fulmars were relatively common offshore during the first half of the winter with 30 ± off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC), but numbers started to diminish after January with very few reported during February. Three Pink-footed Shearwaters, rare in winter, were off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC). Short-tailed Shearwaters continued to be seen along the coast into February with a high count of 75 off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC), but five found dead along the beach at Morro Bay Dec. 14 (MHa), up to eight/day seen off Redondo Beach Jan. 16 + (KLG) and five off Newport Beach, Orange Co., Feb. 12 (LRH) illustrated how numerous and widespread these birds were. Black-vented Shearwaters were also numerous with 3000 off Redondo Beach Feb. 12 (FH), 300 + off Corona del Mar, Orange Co., Feb. 17 (V & WG) and 500 off San Diego Jan. 1 (CGE) being examples of their abundance. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, casual in s. California waters, was well seen near Santa Cruz I., Jan. 10 (RW) Five Black Storm-Petrels off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC) were exceptionally late, this species being unrecorded in California waters in February and March.

DARTER — A ♀ *Anhinga* was present at Lee L., near L. Elsinore, Riverside Co., Jan. 29 + (DCH, ph., S.D.N.H.M.); 2 previous records of this species in s. California have been considered "possibly valid"; although the more recent is considered by some to be an escapee from captivity, a check of local zoos and wild animal parks revealed no source for an escapee as the species is evidently very rare in captivity.

HERONS, IBISES, STORKS — Two or three Little Blue Herons were present around San Diego, where now evidently resident, through the period (EC). A Tricolored Heron on Los Penasquitos Lagoon, San Diego Co., Jan. 8 (DKi) and two or three on s. San Diego Bay/Tijuana R Estuary throughout the period (EC) were the only ones reported. An ad. Reddish Egret, very rare in s. California, on s. San Diego Bay Jan. 18-Mar. 15 (EC) was likely the same bird present here last winter. Two White-faced Ibises in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., Feb. 15-20 (GS) and 35 seen flying N along the coast in Corona del Mar, Orange Co., Jan. 5 (SJR) were away from the few remaining locations where this species still occurs regularly in winter. Two ad. Wood Storks at Whalen L., near Oceanside, San Diego Co., Dec. 4-Jan. 10 (TM) and at nearby L. O'Neill Feb. 12-26 (M & MJ) were more than likely the same two seen on L. Hodges in October.

WATERFOWL — A flock of 115 Tundra Swans near Big Pine, Inyo Co., Feb. 2 (BT) were in the Owens Valley where such numbers regularly occur each winter; along the coast, where decidedly rare, groups of up to four were reported, with one to two around Escondido, San Diego Co., Dec. 11-Mar. 18 (KW) being the farthest s. An ad. Snow (Blue) Goose accompanied by two young at Whalen L., near Oceanside Dec. 3-Jan. 16 (REW) were the first of this morph of the Snow Goose to be found in s. California away from the S.E.S.S. At least 26 Ross' Geese were found along the coast during the period, including a group of 11 at Whalen L., near Oceanside Jan. 15 (GMcC), and it appears this species is becoming more common in this area than formerly. A ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal, very rare in s. California, was in Goleta Nov. 13-Mar. 9 (GS) and another was in Huntington Beach, Orange Co., Jan. 31 + (BED). An obvious Cinnamon Teal x N. Shoveler near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., Mar. 1 (EC) was an unusual hybrid. Twenty-five Blue-winged Teal at Bolsa Chica, Orange Co., Jan. 14 (NBB) was the largest concentration reported, although individuals were present along the entire coast as expected. Eurasian Wigeon were present in about normal numbers with 20 ± reported, including seven to eight at San Jacinto, Riverside Co., during December and January (RMcK). Also present with the 10,000 + Am. Wigeon at San Jacinto were at least two ♂ Eur. x Am. Wigeon during December and January (GMcC), a ♂ Mallard x Am. Wigeon Dec. 22 (GMcC) that was most likely the same bird seen here Jan. 23, 1983, and a most bizarre looking bird felt to be a ♂ N. Pintail x Am. Wigeon Nov. 26-Feb. 13 (AS, ph., S.D.N.H.M.). A ♂ Tufted Duck on L. Perris Nov. 25-Mar. 5 (SCa) was undoubtedly one of the two present here last winter, and another on Quail L., at the w. end of the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 29-Mar. 7 (JM) was probably the same bird present here during the winters of 1978-79 and 1979-80. An imm. ♂ Harlequin Duck in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara Co., Nov. 25 + (LRB) was s. of the species' normal range. Oldsquaws were scarce with one in Long Beach, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 10 (BED)

and one to three on s. San Diego Bay Dec. 13-Jan. 29 (DP) being the only ones reported. Black Scoters were also scarce with one in Goleta Dec. 3-28 (JF), another at Carpinteria Feb. 5 (LRB) and one to four at Huntington Beach Jan. 13-28 (R & MW) being the only ones reported. A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye, casual along the coast, was near San Simeon, San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 4-9 (JMCD).

HAWKS, FALCONS — An imm. Bald Eagle at S.E.S.S., Jan. 28-Feb. 5 (REW) was in an area where now considered casual-to-accidental. Two Red-shouldered Hawks near Blythe, Riverside Co., all winter (SCI) were well to the e. of the species' normal range in California, and appeared to be courting at the end of the period. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk near Bonsall, San Diego Co., Dec. 10-Feb. 14 (M & DH) and another near Fallbrook, San Diego Co., Feb. 5 (AP) were undoubtedly the same two individuals that wintered in these 2 localities a year ago; a third adult seen at L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego Co., Feb. 25 (BF) was undoubtedly a migrant. Rough-legged Hawks were generally scarce, but did get as far s. as San Diego County with one at L. Henshaw Dec. 29 (RH) and another at nearby L. Wohlford Feb. 12 (RH). A Merlin at Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 8 (CM) and another in Carpinteria Feb. 18 (LRB) were both of the black form *suckleyi* from coastal British Columbia. The increase in Peregrine Falcon sightings from along the coast must in part be due to the success of the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Project and the number of birds released

COOTS — A banded Am. Coot in Goleta throughout the winter of 1982-1983 and again this winter (JBo), had been banded on a nest near Flagstaff in n.e. Arizona in July 1981, and was also present there during the summer of 1983, illustrating the distances this species regularly migrates.

PLOVERS THROUGH SANDPIPERS — Wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers, all believed to be of the Asiatic form *fulva*, included one near San Simeon Jan. 21 (GPS), up to 11 near Santa Maria, Santa Barbara Co., throughout the period (BS) and one near Imperial Beach all winter (EC). An Am. Oystercatcher at Fraser Pt., Santa Cruz I., Feb. 26 (PEL) was at a locality where one to three have been present since at least November, 1966. Six Sanderlings, very rare inland in winter, were at Salton City on the Salton Sea Feb. 5 (REW) and undoubtedly wintered locally. A Reeve near China, San Bernardino Co., Feb. 3-11 (SJR) was felt to be the same bird present in this area last winter, and a male was on s. San Diego Bay Jan. 19-Mar. 23 (DA); one or two of these birds are now found in s. California every winter. A Wilson's Phalarope, very rare in winter, on s. San Diego Bay Feb. 11 (MHe) undoubtedly wintered locally.

GULLS, TERNS — A first-winter Laughing Gull off Redondo Beach Feb. 1 (BE) was unexpected as this species is casual anywhere along the coast. A second-winter Mew Gull on L. Perris Dec. 22 (REW) and an adult there Jan. 16-Feb. 13 (SCa) were relatively far inland, but nonetheless still on the coastal plain where small numbers regularly occur each winter. An ad. Yellow-footed Gull at Otay, San Diego Co., Feb. 25-26 (GMcC) was only the fifth to have been found along the coast of California; at the Salton Sea numbers were about the same as last winter with up to 15 being seen in a day. A second-winter W. Gull, accidental inland, at Salton City Feb. 5 (REW) was judged to be of the n. race *occidentalis*. Four first-winter Glaucous Gulls along the coast with one around Morro Bay Jan. 24-Feb. 29 (CM), one at S.C.R.E., Dec. 29-Jan. 25 (BE), a third off San Diego Feb. 18 (CGE) and another at Otay Feb. 25 (EC) was about average. An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake inland on L. Perris Dec. 20-Jan. 14 (SCa) was most unusual considering how few were along the coast. Two imm. Sabine's Gulls in Redondo Beach Dec. 4-7 (NS) were exceptionally late fall migrants. A Com Tern on San Diego Bay all winter (REW) was the only one reported

AUKS — Two Marbled Murrelets off Ragged Pt., San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 7 (JMCD) were in an area where undoubtedly regular. Five Xantus' Murrelets at Anacapa I., Feb. 24 (PEL) and 20 there 3 days later were believed to be birds just arriving on breeding territories.

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A dead Band-tailed Pigeon found at Caruthers Canyon in the New York Mts., e. San Bernardino Co., Feb. 29 (SCa) was far out of range. A White-winged Dove at

N E S S , Jan 21 (HEC) was unexpected, there being no previous winter records for this area, one in Goleta Dec 4 (PEL) and two to four there Jan. 15-Feb. 20 (DB) were along the coast where quite rare. The discovery of 25+ Inca Doves in Calexico, Imperial Co., Feb. 4 (REW) extends this species' known range W from the Colorado R. valley at least 60 mi into California. A Com. Ground-Dove at Castaic Jct., Los Angeles Co., Feb. 26-Mar. 11 (FH) was away from any area of known regular occurrence.

Twenty-five Long-eared Owls near Borrego Springs, San Diego Co., Jan. 24 (PU) was a relatively large winter roosting concentration. Two Lesser Nighthawks, very rare in winter, were seen in flight over Brawley, Imperial Co., during the evening of Feb. 11 (AS) and another was near Newhall, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 26 (WC). As appears normal, small numbers of Vaux's Swifts spent the winter around Oceanside with 30+ there Feb. 26 (GMcC) being the largest number reported but larger numbers were present around Los Angeles as indicated by up to 70 at Malibu Dec. 18-Feb. 27 (KLG), 35 over Culver City Dec. 27 (HMB) and 20 over Exposition P., Mar. 19 (KLG). A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird at a feeder in Santa Barbara Oct. 26-Feb. 7 (H. C. Wills, *fide* PEL) was the same bird present there last winter, and a female was in nearby Goleta Dec. 31-Jan. 18 (BED); this species is now found annually in a s. California and its status should be upgraded from casual to rare. Two Black-chinned Hummingbirds, exceptionally rare in winter, were in Long Beach Dec. 27-Jan. 3 (BED). Four Costa's Hummingbirds in the Santa Barbara area during December were at the n. extreme of this species' range in winter. A Lewis' Woodpecker on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co., Feb. 26 (REW) was along the immediate coast where very rare. A ♂ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Silverado Canyon, Orange Co., Nov. 26-Jan. 3 (BED) was the same nominate *varius* found here each of the past 2 winters. A Red-breasted Sapsucker in Santa Barbara Dec. 30 (JLD) was of the n.w. race *ruber* considered casual at best in s. California. A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker at Chilao near Pasadena, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 23-Mar. 2 (JBr) was at an unusually low elevation. An unusual, but not unheard-of hybrid was a ♀ Nuttall's x Downy Woodpecker near Imperial Beach Feb. 25 (GMcC).

FLYCATCHERS — An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Santa Barbara Dec. 13 (JLD) and another a few miles away Jan. 27 (PEL) were totally unexpected as there were only 4 previous winter records for California. The Greater Pewee found in Los Angeles' Griffith P., Nov. 10 (HMB) was still present Mar. 23, having successfully spent its 5th winter at this location. A Willow Flycatcher near Fillmore, Ventura Co., Dec. 27-Jan. 7 (PEL) was only the second ever to have been found in California in winter. The Least Flycatcher found in Goleta Oct. 29 (RAH) was still present at the end of the period, and another was near Fillmore Dec. 27-Jan. 7 (PEL); this species is more frequently reported as more observers become familiar with *Empidonax* identification. A Hammond's Flycatcher carefully identified in Morro Bay S.P., Jan. 6-Feb. 15 (CM) is one of a very few ever reported wintering in California. A bird felt to be a Dusky Flycatcher was present in Long Beach, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 2+ (KLG). The only Gray Flycatchers reported were single birds near Borrego Springs in e. San Diego Co., Dec. 21 (BW) & Jan. 24 (PU). Eleven W. Flycatchers along the coast during the period was a large number for this time of the year. An E. Phoebe at Bard, Imperial Co., Dec. 17 (RB) was the only one found. Remarkable was a **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** in Goleta Dec. 5 (PEL) and another in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 22+ (CDB) as there were only 4 previous records for the Region; however, two more were found in n. California during the fall/winter suggesting some type of movement towards the NW by part of the population. More than the expected one or two Ash-throated Flycatchers were reported with single birds in Goleta Oct. 15-Jan. 7 (DB) & Nov. 13-Jan. 10 (GS), one in Santa Barbara Nov. 13-Feb. 5 (PEL), one in Fillmore Dec. 27-30 (PEL) and another in Costa Mesa Jan. 1-Feb. 13 (JGa) along the coast, and one at Yaqui Wells in e. San Diego Co., Dec. 9-Feb. 5 (BW) and another at the Algodones Dunes in e. Imperial Co., Dec. 20 (PU) being on the desert. A Tropical Kingbird in Goleta Oct. 21-Feb. 8 (CDB) was undoubtedly the same bird present here during the past 2 winters, one was near El Monte, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 7 (CTC), another was in San Diego Dec. 11-Feb. 17 (MWG) and a fourth inland near Chino, San Bernardino Co., Feb. 4 (SJR) is certainly the bird present here during the winter of 1982-83. The **Thick-billed Kingbird** found in Peters Canyon near Tustin Nov. 26 remained through Jan. 3 (DRW).

SWALLOWS THROUGH PIPITS — Small numbers of N Rough-winged Swallows along the coast of San Diego County in December, with a high count of nine near Oceanside Dec. 16 (REW), were unexpected since this species is considered casual along the coast in winter. A Mountain Chickadee at Thousand Palms Oasis, Riverside Co., Feb. 25 (RMcK) and another near N.E.S.S., Jan. 29 (SCa) were in an area where very few indeed have ever been found. A Winter Wren, very rare-to-casual in extreme s. California, was in Silverado Canyon, Orange Co., Jan. 3 (LRH), and at least five more were found around San Diego during December and January (REW, EC) indicating more than the average number were along the coast. The Gray Catbird found on Pt Loma Nov. 7 was still present Mar. 13 (GJ), and was only the second ever to have wintered in this Region. A Sage Thrasher, rare along the coast in winter, was present along the shore of San Diego Bay Jan. 22-Feb. 27 (GMcC). The only Brown Thrasher found this winter was one in San Pedro, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 14-Feb. 2 (BED). A Bendire's Thrasher near Lancaster, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 17-Mar. 5 (JLD) chose a most unusual place to winter, and one to two more were along the coast in Goleta Jan. 11-Feb. 19 (AB) where considered casual. A Sprague's Pipit s.w. of Blythe Jan. 2 (DKr) was the first to have been reported in Riverside County.

VIREOS — A Bell's Vireo, most unusual in winter, was seen foraging in open desert scrub at Yaqui Wells Jan. 20 (BW) and another picked up dead at nearby Borrego Springs Jan. 24 (PU, *S.D.N.H.M.). Solitary Vireos were clearly more numerous than usual with 22 reported, the two found in El Centro in s.e. part of the Region Feb. 4 (GMcC, REW) were of the interior race *plumbeus* as expected, but that half of those found along the coast were also *plumbeus*, including one as far n. as Ventura Jan. 7 (JLD) came as a surprise. A Hutton's Vireo in Hart P., Bakersfield Feb. 26 (MHe) was at an unusual locality. A Warbling Vireo on Pt. Loma Dec. 23 (JML) could have been a late fall migrant, but one in Carpinteria Jan. 26 (TW), and another in San Diego Dec. 18-Jan. 24 (PEL) were clearly wintering.

WOOD WARBLERS — It was a somewhat remarkable winter for the number and variety of wood warblers present. In addition to the 4 common wintering species (Orange-crowned, Yellow-rumped and Townsend's warblers and Com. Yellowthroat), all 10 of the rare but regular wintering species (Tennessee (14), Nashville (20±), Yellow (30±), Black-throated Gray (25± including one in Brawley Jan. 28—REW), Hermit (7), Palm (6), Black-and-white (13), Am. Redstart (20± including twelve along the coast), N. Waterthrush (7) and Wilson's (25±)) were found along with 16 other species to give us an unprecedented 30 species during the period.

A Virginia's Warbler in Newport Beach all winter (SJR) was the same bird present here during the past 4 winters. A Lucy's Warbler, casual in winter, was in Ventura Dec. 15-Jan. 25 (PEL) and another was in Irvine, Orange Co., Feb. 25-Mar. 8 (DRW). A N. Parula, most unusual in winter, was in Long Beach Feb. 8-Mar. 10 (BED) and another was near Escondido, San Diego Co., Dec. 11-Jan. 7 (FD). Unexpected were four Chestnut-sided Warblers, with one in Huntington Beach Dec. 31+ (V & WG), one in Riverside Dec. 30-Jan. 30 (EAC), another near Lakeview, Riverside Co., Nov. 26+ (RMcK) and the fourth in Niland, Imperial Co., Dec. 20-Jan. 28 (JLD); there were only 2 previous winter records for the Region. The second Yellow-rumped x Townsend's Warbler to be found in the Region was a female in San Diego Dec. 20-23 (REW) following closely behind the first found in the fall. A ♀ Black-throated Green Warbler, a species now being found each winter, was in Los Osos Dec. 17+ (DRW) and another was in Costa Mesa Dec. 2+ (LRH). A ♂ **Yellow-throated Warbler** in Needles Feb. 28 (DLD, *S.B.C.M.) was of the race *albilora*, and only the second ever to be found in California in winter. A Grace's Warbler in Santa Barbara Sept. 28-Mar. 14 (AB) and another in Carpinteria Oct. 22-Mar. 27 (PEL) were both spending their 5th winters at these localities. Remarkable was a ♂ **Pine Warbler** in San Luis Obispo Jan. 9+ (CM, ph, S.D.N.H.M.), another on Pt. Loma Dec. 12-23 (REW) and a female in San Diego Mar. 18 (GMcC) as only 7 previous records existed for the entire state. A Bay-breasted Warbler in Goleta Dec. 17 (AB) and another in Coronado, San Diego Co., Dec. 17-21 (REW) could well have been late fall vagrants, but one in San Diego Dec. 30-April 10 (T & GQ) was only the second unquestionably wintering bird for California. A

Worm-eating Warbler, only the fourth to be found in s. California in winter, was in Goleta Dec. 23-Mar. 11 (TW) and another was in Zuma Canyon, Los Angeles Co., Oct. 15-Dec. 18 (KLG). An Ovenbird on Pt. Loma Dec. 23 (JML) may have been a late fall migrant, but could also have been wintering locally. Another totally unexpected bird was a ♀ **Kentucky Warbler** in Goleta Dec. 16-Mar. 16 (RAH) and a male in Corona del Mar. Dec. 19-Mar. 6 (CM), these two being the first to have been found wintering in California. A MacGillivray's Warbler, casual in winter, was in San Pedro Jan. 27-Feb. 10 (BED). The ♀ Hooded Warbler found at L. Sherwood Nov. 28 was last seen Dec. 10 (LC) suggesting it was a late fall migrant. A Painted Redstart frequented a hummingbird feeder in Chatsworth, Los Angeles Co., Nov. 25-Feb. 3 (HH); one or two of these birds are now found each winter. A Yellow-breasted Chat in Los Osos Jan. 26 (CM) would appear to be only the third ever to have been found in winter in California.

TANAGERS, BUNTINGS — More than the average number of Hepatic Tanagers were present this winter with a male in Santa Barbara Nov. 25-Mar. 30 (BZ) successfully spending its 2nd winter at this location, a male at Vogel Flat in Big Tujunga Canyon, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 7+ (LF), a female in Banning, Riverside Co., Dec. 31-Feb. 1 (SM, ph., S.D.N.H.M.) and a male on Pt. Loma Nov. 8-Feb. 21 (BJ). Twelve Summer Tanagers and 75 ± W. Tanagers along the coast during the period appeared about average. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Santa Barbara Dec. 9-27 (PEL), one in Santa Paula Feb. 27-29 (KS), one in Huntington Beach Feb. 25 (PE) and single birds around San Diego Jan. 8 (GMcC) & 23 (REW) were about as expected, but eight Black-headed Grosbeaks in the same general area came as a surprise, as this species is normally rarer than its e. counterpart in California in winter.

SPARROWS — A Green-tailed Towhee in Costa Mesa Jan. 11-29 (LRH) was unexpected. A Black-chinned Sparrow, exceptionally rare in winter, was at Santiago Oaks Regional P., Orange Co., Dec. 6 (SJR). A handful of Lark Buntings were scattered about the Region with one at L. Ming near Bakersfield Jan. 13-21 (MHe), two on the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo Co., Dec. 8-Feb. 5 (MW), one near Blythe Dec. 26 (GMcC), two near Lakeview Feb. 3 (GMcC), and two to three near Niland Dec. 20-Feb. 26 (PEL). A Grasshopper Sparrow near Morro Bay Feb. 5 (EVJ) and small numbers found at 4 locations around San Diego throughout the period (CGE) suggested this species is commoner than thought in winter. The Sharp-tailed Sparrow found on Morro Nov. 19 was not seen after Dec. 4 (CM). Reports of 20 ± Swamp Sparrows and 35 ± White-throated Sparrows suggested that both of these species were present in about average numbers. The only Harris' Sparrows reported were one to two at L. Ming near Bakersfield Jan. 25+ (MMcQ) and four more along the coast. A McCown's Longspur, quite rare in winter, was on the Carrizo Plain Jan. 2 (CM), another was in the Lucerne Valley Feb. 11 (SCa), and two more were near Ripley s. of Blythe Feb. 5 (DKr). The only Lapland Longspurs to be found were single birds near Blythe Dec. 24 (JLD), in the Lucerne Valley Feb. 11 (SCa), near Lakeview Jan. 14 (BK) and at L. Henshaw Dec. 3-22 (RH). Three Chestnut-collared Longspurs near Blythe Jan. 21 (WCH) were in an area where small numbers undoubtedly regularly winter, and concentrations of 30 ± in the Lucerne Valley Feb. 11 (SCa) and up to 60 near Lakeview Jan. 14-25 (RMcK) are undoubtedly not as unusual as would at first appear.

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, FINCHES — A Yellow-headed Blackbird in Goleta Jan. 10 (PEL) was in an area where considered very rare in winter. A ♀ Rusty Blackbird, exceptionally rare in winter, was in Carpinteria Feb. 4-21 (MHa). A Great-tailed Grackle in Corona Feb. 2 (SJR), one in Santee, San Diego Co., Dec. 3+ (CGE) and another near Imperial Beach Nov. 17+ (EC) were w. of the species' known range. As usual, a few Orchard Orioles were found along the coast with six in the Santa Barbara area Nov. 9-Feb. 25, one in Ventura Jan. 7 (JLD), and three in the San Diego area Feb. 9-29+. Hooded Orioles are normally most unusual in winter, thus nine along the coast, a female in Riverside Jan. 15-16 (SCa) and ad. males in Brawley Jan. 28-Mar. 7 (GMcC) & Feb. 5 (GMcC) were far more than expected. At least 12 N. (Baltimore) Orioles were among the 100 ± N. Orioles found wintering along the coast. Up to three Scott's Orioles in Santa Barbara Dec. 23-Feb. 13 (JEL), two around O'Neill Regional P., Orange Co., all winter (DRW),

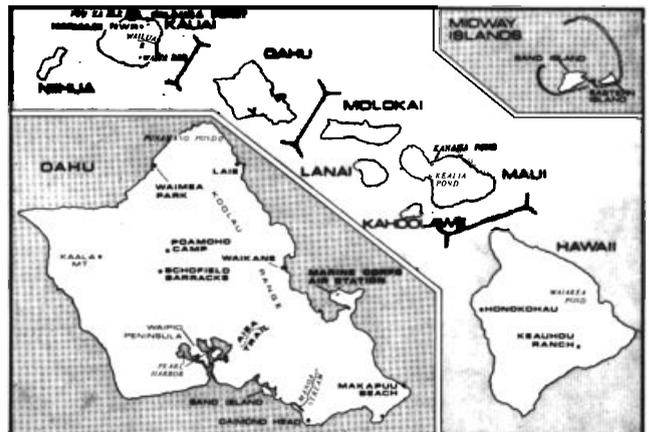
one at nearby Santiago Oaks Regional P., throughout the period (SJR), one at L. Jennings, San Diego Co., Jan. 13 (CGE), another in Fallbrook Jan. 31 (JGi) and a ninth on Pt. Loma Dec. 23-Feb. 12 (JML) were all in the coastal lowlands where rare, and a male in Banning Jan. 16 (SCa) was at the w. edge of the desert where small numbers may regularly winter. A flock of seven Cassin's Finches in Hart P., near Bakersfield Jan. 7 (MOC) was at an unusual locality.

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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

/Robert L. Pyle

For the record, rainfall at Honolulu Airport in December through February amounted to only 1.33 inches, or 13% of normal. This continues the precipitation deficit which has resulted from only 27% of normal rain falling at the airport in the 16 months since November 1982. Conditions in the forests at higher elevations have been much less severe, although still drier than normal. Hawaii also had its share of cold weather. A cold snap under clear skies December 17-18 brought new



low records for the date on Kauai and Maui, and set an all-time low December temperature of 52° at Maui Airport. More cold during pre-Christmas week December 22-23 dropped Honolulu's temperature to 55°F, only 3° above its all-time winter low. The effects, if any, of these climatological anomalies on Hawaii's birdlife are only conjectural.

ALBATROSSES THROUGH STORM-PETRELS — The banded Short-tailed Albatross that wintered regularly at Sand I., Midway for 11 years had not appeared this winter by Dec. 24 (SF).

Disaster befell the Laysan Albatrosses trying to nest this winter in the 2 colonies on Kauai. At the Pacific Missile Range, Barking Sands, eggs hatched successfully in 8 of 11 nests during the first week of February (TT). Military plans for bull-dozing in the area led to transplanting the eight chicks across the island to Kilauea Pt. (only three still survived there by mid-March). Then, during the night of Feb. 21-22, 30 *ad. and sub-ad. albatrosses were killed by stray dogs* in the Barking Sands colony. Possibly 20 birds survived the dog attack (TT). At the other colony along the n. shore near Kilauea, all 15 known nests with eggs were destroyed by dogs (DM, *fide* TT). In addition, DM estimates *nearly 50 adults and sub-adults were killed by dogs* in that area.

Despite this mayhem, which has occurred to a lesser extent in prior years, more and more adults seem to be coming and attempting to nest each year. Thus, to state and federal wildlife officials and interested non-professionals, it is frustrating indeed that inappropriate terrain and incompatible land ownership and utilization practices make it virtually impossible at present to provide effective protection for these noble birds against the savage depredations of roaming dogs.

In a possibly related development, several Laysan Albatrosses were seen frequently through the season in the Kahuku area at the n. tip of Oahu (four Feb. 7—DW). One of these was given to Sea Life Park and is still on display although free to leave. Another Laysan found at Kaneohe and also given to the Park was released and departed (IK). Still another was seen on the ground at the Kona Airport, H., Feb. 8 (PD, RD).

On a happier note, 1589 Newell's Shearwaters (*Threatened*) were salvaged by citizens of Kauai this fall and given to wildlife officials for banding and release (TT). As the young birds leave the mountain nesting areas at night, they are confused by coastal street lights and are found on the ground, vulnerable to autos, animals, and people. Another 119 Newell's were found dead. Other species turned in this year during the annual salvage program included 11 Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, five Hawaiian (Dark-rumped) Petrels (*Endangered*) and one dead Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (TT). Of 97 Wedge-tailed Shearwaters turned in to Sea Life Park, O., November through February, seven died and the rest were released successfully. Three Sooty Storm-Petrels were photographed in nesting burrows on Whale-Skate I., F.F.S., during December and January (BE, RH).

BOOBIES THROUGH WATERFOWL — More Brown Boobies are being reported near the other main islands s.e. of Oahu. Two were seen 4 mi off Lahaina, M., Dec. 16 (RW); two immatures were at Kawaihae Harbor, H., Dec. 18 (AT), and two adults and an immature were near a fish accumulation buoy off n.e. Molokai Dec. 20 (RD). One Red-footed Booby was with the Browns at Kawaihae. A **Great Egret** observed well near Kilauea, K., Jan. 20 (NP) provided only the 3rd record for the state. The Brant at Aimakapa Pond, H., and the Snow Goose at Midway were still there Feb. 8 (PD, RD) & Dec. 23 (SF) respectively. One and later two **Garganeys** in female plumage were at Kii Pond, J.C.N.W.R., through the fall and winter. A drake in handsome plumage appeared with one female Feb. 23 (PD) and was seen by numerous observers into March.

OSPREY THROUGH NODDIES — One Osprey remaining from the fall influx was reported at Kanaha Pond, Kealia Pond and elsewhere on Maui through at least late December (CK, RD *et al.*). A Peregrine Falcon (*Endangered*) observed well for several minutes as it circled over the peak of Diamond Head Feb. 10 (JE *et al.*) followed reports of several other Peregrines on Oahu since October. N. Bobwhites were seen Feb. 10 (one) and 11 (three) near Lanai City, L., where they had recently been released for field trials (PC). This species has never established wild population in Hawaii.

Three Hawaiian (Black-necked) Stilts (*Endangered*) were found in brackish ponds just n. of Anaehoomalu on the Kona coast of H., Dec. 28

(AT), an interesting locality for the species. Rare shorebirds reported this winter were a **Killdeer** seen well near Lihue, K., Jan. 29 (WD), a Greater Yellowlegs studied at length at Paiko Lagoon, O., Feb. 14 (RLP) and one possibly this species at Waipio about Mar. 2 (PD), and a Red Phalarope observed from a whale-watching boat 4 mi off Lahaina, M., Dec. 16 (RW). A Bristle-thighed Curlew (very rare in winter) was reported at Kahului Airport, M., Jan. 13 (NP), and single snipe, probably Commons, were flushed at Honouliuli unit, P.H.N.W.R., Jan. 10 (JE) and at Kii Pond, J.C.N.W.R., Feb. 20 (WD) & 23 (PD). The state's first Semipalmated Sandpiper reported last fall at Kii Pond was seen regularly through the winter until at least Mar. 1 (PD). A Glaucous Gull in first-winter plumage was at Nuupia Pond, O., Jan. 8 (VB *et al.*) Two days later the same observers, well-experienced with this and similar species in Alaska, found what was probably the same individual 35 km away at Kii Pond. It remained there and was seen by several observers through at least Feb. 23. About 20 Black Noddies were seen a few miles off n.w. Molokai I., Dec. 20 (RW).

DOVES THROUGH OWLS — Mourning Doves were reported twice this winter: one near Keaau, H., Jan. 15 (NP) and four upslope from Mauna Kea Beach resort Feb. 12 (PB). These doves are confined to very restricted localities on Hawaii I., and are seldom observed. A Com Barn-Owl was sighted on Kure Atoll Dec. 20 (SF), and a Short-eared Owl was captured and photographed at Sand I., Midway Dec. 22 (SF). Another Short-eared Owl had a roost on Tern I., F.F.S., Dec. 26-early March. The roost area was littered with large numbers of tern carcasses, primarily Sooty and White terns and Black Noddies (BE, RH).

SWALLOWS THROUGH GRACKLES — The most startling report this season was of a **Barn Swallow** watched foraging over lava near Wahaula Visitor Center, Hawaii N.P., H., Jan. 17 (NP). The only previous records of swallows in the state were a specimen and some sightings of Barn Swallows during the mid-1960s at Kure and Midway. Eight Hawaiian Thrushes were in full song Jan. 15 near dusk at Thurston Lava Tube, Hawaii N.P., H. (NP). The very rare Kauai race of Hawaiian Thrush was reported seen again on Pihea Tr. near Kilohana Tr., Jan. 19 (JT). The same observer submitted detailed notes on an extended observation of a Puaiohi (Small Kauai Thrush) deep in the Alakai Jan. 23. Three Melodious Laughing-thrushes and two Red-billed Leiothrix, found together along Old Waimanalo Rd., on the Honolulu CBC, Dec. 18, are species seldom reported now on Oahu. The ♀ Great-tailed Grackle was seen again at Waipio Dec. 26 on the Waipio CBC.

HAWAIIAN HONEYCREEPERS THROUGH ESTRILDIDS — Maui Parrotbill (*Endangered*), one of the super-rare Hawaiian honeycreepers, was reported twice this season. One was watched closely Jan. 15 below Hosmer Grove, M. (NP) near the w. end of its restricted range, and another was mist-netted in Kipahulu Valley about Feb. 29 (MS), near the e. end of its range. Single 'Akiapola' au (*Endangered*) were reported at Puu Laau, H., Jan. 16 (NP) & Feb. 6 (MM), both under excellent observing conditions. A few small flocks of Kauai Creepers were found along Pihea and Kilohana trails Jan. 19 (JT) & 22 (NP). Several 'Apapane, Lanai's last remaining native forest species, were seen in Kaiholena Gulch above Lanai City Jan. 9, and also above Soule's Beach Jan. 11 (PC). Common Waxbills were reported in 3 new localities on Oahu in late December: at Makakilo (BJ), Pearl Ridge (PD) and Aiea Tr. (PD). Java Sparrows also continued to expand on Oahu. Reports this winter included one at Pearl Ridge feeder in c. Oahu (PD), 15-20 regularly in a yard in Kahuku at Oahu's n. tip (PB), up to 15 at a feeder for the past year in Hawaii Kai near the s. tip (AM), and 12-15 at a feeder in Lanikai on the s.e. coast (CM).

ADDENDUM TO FALL 1983 REPORT — Further information about some of the Fall 1983 observations has been received since last season's report (AB 38:250) was submitted. The small sandpiper at Kure Sept. 25-Oct. 11, thought to have been a Rufous-necked Stint or Little Stint, has now been identified positively as a first-year **Little Stint**, the first record of this species in Hawaii. Identification was from photographs analyzed by European experts well experienced with palearctic stints. The plover at Sand I., Midway Oct. 14-16 should be designated as a possible (not probable) Com. Ringed Plover. Another palearctic species, a first-year ♂ Ruff, was at Kure Sept. 21-Oct. 14. In addition to the other Hawaiian endemics found in the Alakai wilderness

area Aug. 12-14, the same observers also heard well an O'o'a'a, but were unable to see it. This was in the same area where other observers studied one bird last May (see Spring 1983 report), and was probably the same individual.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.F.S.: French Frigate Shoals, H.: Hawaii I., K.: Kauai I., L.: Lanai I., M.: Maui I., O.: Oahu I., J.C.N.W.R.: James Campbell N.W.R. on Oahu, P.H.N.W.R.: Pearl Harbor N.W.R. on Oahu.

WEST INDIES REGION

/Robert L. Norton

Precipitation as measured in the United States Virgin Islands during the season was about 35% above normal. The seasonal total this year was nearly twice that of last year in the Virgin Islands which was affected by the El Niño/Southern Oscillation drought at this latitude. Continental weather systems produced the expected waves of migrants through the Caribbean archipelago. However, this season was perhaps the most remarkable winter period in recent time because of its collection of international vagrants and coincidence of occurrence. Two ardeids, two anatids and two larids highlighted the season for waterbirds and pose certain questions regarding the lingering specter of the El Niño which affects climate and migration.

In the following descriptions there will be several records including two hemispheric and many Regional as well as reports breaking long absences of species whose status has been uncertain. Although several waterbird species made history, some landbird species were equally impressive in their appearances, attesting to the overall influence of weather on migration, which apparently extended into December.

The contributor response this season was widespread, impressive, and greatly appreciated with reports from Great Abaco (hereafter, G.A.) from three separate observers; Providenciales (hereafter, P.) and Grand Turk (hereafter, G.T.), Turks and Caicos; Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico (hereafter, P.R.); St. Croix (hereafter, St. C.); St. John (hereafter, St. J.); St. Thomas (hereafter, St. T.); St. Maarten (hereafter, St. M.); St. Lucia (hereafter, St. L.); Little Cayman Island (hereafter, L.C.); Barbados (hereafter, B.); Stirrup Cay, Berry Islands (hereafter, S.C.); Hispaniola (hereafter, H.); and British Virgin Islands (hereafter, B.V.I.).

GREBES THROUGH DUCKS — Least Grebes (2) were noted at S.C., Dec. 24 (RM) and at Cabo Rojo, P.R. (8) Dec. 17 (SF *et al.*) for the first time on that CBC. A Black-capped Petrel was noted at sea n. of H. (GO) Dec. 16. A well described Northern Gannet, a first-year juvenile (ESB, RM) probably wandered to S.C., in the Gulf Stream Jan. 5 & 6 for the first documented report from the Region. An earlier report

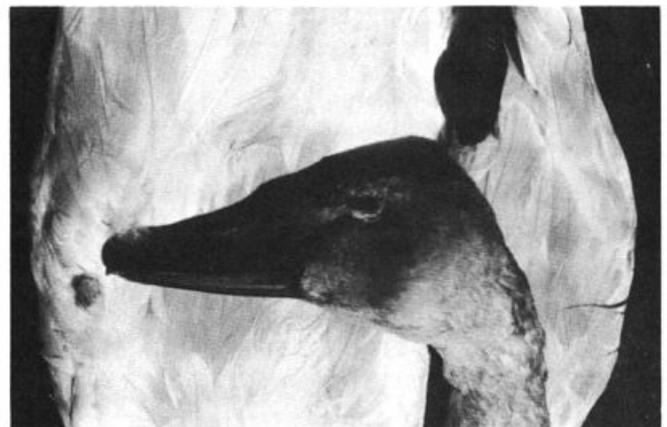
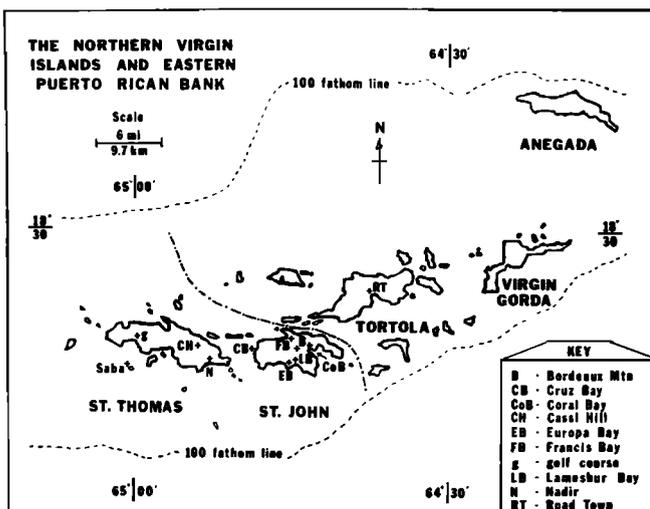
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from Cuba is questionable (Bond 1956). An Olivaceous Cormorant provided an unusual occurrence at G.T., Jan. 15 (RSL) which probably wandered NE from Gr. Inagua. Bradley reports that a ♂ Anhinga seen from mid-December-Febr. 20 furnished only the 3rd record from L.C. this century.

— S.A. —

Not one, but two **Western Reef-Herons** were reported from B. (13°N), Feb. 20 (WPS, MBH) at Graeme Hall Swamp, Christ Church Parish. This represents the 2nd record from this hemisphere and the first from the West Indies. One bird was described as a dark-phase adult with *breeding* aigrettes and the other as a brown bird, probably an immature, although many variations of the dark and light forms exist (Cramp and Simmons 1977). One begins to wonder whether there are more reef-herons in the Caribbean region disguised as Tricoloreds, imm. Little Blues or Snowies. On Jan. 20-24 a **Great (White) Egret** (*Casmerodius albus melanorhynchus*) was photographed and observed (PB) at Cayman Brac, C.I., providing the first New World report of this African subspecies. Morphological features and feeding behavior were well described and photographed. The occurrence of 2 African ardeids seen within a month of each other suggests an environmental affect causing or assisting long-distance vagrancy from the Old World tropics. The specter of the past El Niño/So. Oscillation looms as a cause and the Northeast and/or Southeast Tradewinds as trans-Atlantic vehicle. The two species share a common range in Senegal (15°N) on the western coast of Africa. More details are expected later on the occurrence of the Western Reef-Heron (PWS).

Greater Flamingos numbered seven Jan. 15 (RSL) at G.T., and ca. 100 at P. (BA) Feb. 23. West Indian Whistling-Ducks, a declining species in the Region, were reported from G.A. (one) Dec. 26 and from L.C. (4) Feb. 12 (PB). A **Tundra Swan** was seen Dec. 31 at St. T. (JL). The moribund cygnet was later captured and preserved (ph.). It provided only the 3rd substantiated record from the Region, the previous 2 were within a day of each other in December 1944 from Cuba and P.R. (Bond



Juv. Tundra Swan, St. Thomas, U.S.V.I., Jan. 2, 1984. Photo/R.L. Norton.

1956). Four vagrant **Wood Ducks**, possibly from Cuba, were noted at L.C. (PB) Feb. 12 providing the first documentation from the Caymans. Sladen reports the Feb. 5 occurrence of breeding-plumaged single ♀ and ♂ Ruddy Ducks, as well as a female found dead Dec. 9. (Should the species breed in the V.I., it would mark the first time in St. C., and perhaps since the 1940s that it nested in the V.I.).

HAWKS THROUGH SKIMMER — A vagrant, dark-phase Red-tailed Hawk was noted at St. L., Dec. 2 (JK) well s. of the species resident range in the Lesser Antilles. Loss of habitat and shooting of the so-called "chicken hawk" at other islands may force emigration of breeding birds seeking new habitat. Peregrine Falcons were noted from the Caymans (PB) s.e., to St. M., Dec. 13 (GO). Perhaps as many as four were observed on the P.R. Bank and St. C. (SF *et al.*, FS, RLN) December-February. A Purple Gallinule made its first appearance at Cabo Rojo, P.R. (SF *et al.*) in 6 years Dec. 17 and another made a debut at St. C., Jan. 29 (FS). *Fulica* spp. have been reported from many locations this season from the Bahamas (ESB, RM) to Barbados (PWS). American and Caribbean coots are breeding from December to early February in the United States Virgin Islands (RLN) in mixed pairs as well as normal pair formations which exhibit some intermediate color and shape of the frontal shield. Territorial displays between all 3 pair-types are common at least at Hart Bay Pond, St. J. (RLN).

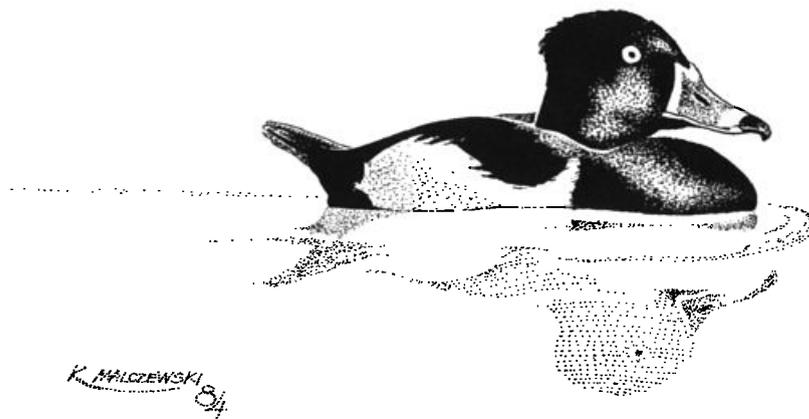
Reports of stercorariids were received from widespread areas particularly in areas of major current flows in the Gulf Stream between Florida and the Bahamas, and Florida and the Gulf of Mexico, and the N. Equatorial Current extension n. of the Greater Antilles, e.g., nine Parasitic and one Pomarine jaegers Dec. 22 (RM) between Florida and Stirrup Cay and on the return voyage to Florida a Pomarine (ESB) Jan. 5. Similarly, JRG reported two Pomarine Jaegers Jan. 2 while sailing from Florida to the Yucatan and on the return trip noted 4-8 jaegers, of which one was positively a Pomarine and another a Parasitic. A Pomarine Jaeger was observed (GO) n. of H., Dec. 16 and two Parasitic Jaegers were seen off Sombrero (GO) in the Lesser Antilles Dec. 14. **Bonaparte's Gulls** (3) were reported by 2 separate observers from G.A., Dec. 28-Jan. 3 (ESB, GO) which constitute the first records from that island. Herring Gulls made appearances in significant numbers compared to previous seasons in several locations from G.A., to S.C. in the Bahamas (ESB, RM), St. M. (GO) Dec. 13 representing the 4th record from that island, and from St. C. (FS) Jan. 2. Ring-billed Gulls were also noted in large numbers in the Bahamas; 12 Dec. 28 (ESB, RM) at G.A. and 22 Jan. 5 at S.C. (ESB, RM). As many as five **Black-legged Kittiwakes** were observed in the n. Bahamas Jan. 1-5 (ESB, RM) and all described as immatures providing the first records from G.A. and S.C., respectively and perhaps only the 2nd occurrence in the Bahamas. A salvaged ad. Black-legged Kittiwake from the waters n. of the B.V.I., Feb. 2 (DN, *vide* RLN) was the most distant specimen recorded from the Region to date. Several tern spp. were noted off the coast of S.C. (ESB, RM) Jan. 5 including Royal (39), Sandwich (49), Common (90), and Roseate (4+). Three Forster's Terns were seen at G.A., Dec. 25 (GO). Juvenile Com. Terns (2+) were noted at B., Feb. 15 (PWS). A Black Skimmer was noted at G.A., Dec. 29 (ESB, RM).

PARROTS THROUGH ORIOLES — Cuban Parrots were not reported from G.A. by 2 observers who visited December-February, although DP stated that local hunters familiar with parrot habitat there suggest a population of "2000-3000." A census would be worthwhile as endemic species and subspecies of parrots are declining in the Region. ESB reported a nighthawk sp. at G.A. airport Dec. 27 which was late for either migrant *C. minor* or *gundlachii*. Flycatchers that overwinter in s. United States and Central America were blown S and SE to the Cayman Islands and Bahamas as evidenced by **Western Kingbirds** (3+) at G.A., Dec. 24 (GO)-Jan. 2 (ESB, RM) for the first records from that island, a juv. **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** Jan. 2 (ESB, RM) at G.A., providing the 2nd record from the Bahamas, the first was from Grand Bahama in 1964, and from L.C., three **Eastern Wood-Pewees** (PB) Feb. 17 providing the first report from that island. Scaly-breasted Thrasher was not seen at B. (PWS) in February where they must be quite rare or extirpated. Six Eur. Starlings were noted by two observers at G.A. during the same period, Dec. 10-Feb. 8 (DP, GO) indicating that even a hardy generalist must escape the rigors of s. winters. However, the starling must not be allowed to expand its breeding range into the Bahamas where cavity-nesting endemics such as West Indian Red-bellied Woodpecker may become limited. Starlings are abundant breeders in Bermuda where they limit the local population of E. Bluebird (Wingate 1973). Tennessee Warblers were noted at G.A., Dec. 11 (DP) & Dec. 30 (ESB). A Chestnut-sided Warbler was noted on the n. coast of St. J., Jan. 24 (JH, *vide* TD). A **Blackburnian Warbler** was observed at G.A., Dec. 29 (ESB, RM) providing one of the few winter records from the Region. A Kentucky Warbler was noted at Cinnamon Bay, St. J. (SFi). On Jan. 1, ESB and RM observed a **Song Sparrow** at Elbow Cay, Hopetown, G.A., representing perhaps only the 3rd record from the Bahamas and the Region. Two N. Orioles were noted at G.A., Dec. 23-30 (GO, ESB, RM) for the first reports from that island.

EXOTICS — Six N. Bobwhites have apparently been recently introduced to G.A., as noted Feb. 8 (DP). Ringed Turtle Doves (40+) have also been reported by concurrent visits by ESB, RM, DP, and GO December-February at G.A., where a recent introduction or mass escape is likely. House Sparrows are also reported to be established at G.A., particularly at Marsh Harbor and Hopetown (ESB, RM, GO, DP).

CORRIGENDUM — Lighthouse residents *could* . . . rather than could not (AB 37:1020).

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Ring-necked Duck. Drawing by Christopher Malczewski.