

**STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS
USED IN THE REGIONAL REPORTS**

**Abbreviations used in
place names:**

In most regions, place names given in italic type are counties.

Other abbreviations:

Cr	Creek
Ft.	Fort
Hwy	Highway
I	Island or Isle
Is.	Islands or Isles
Jct.	Junction
km	kilometer(s)
L	Lake
mi	mile(s)
Mt.	Mountain or Mount
Mts.	Mountains
N.F.	National Forest
N.M.	National Monument
N.P.	National Park
N.W.R.	National Wildlife Refuge
P.P.	Provincial Park
Pen.	Peninsula
Pt.	Point (not Port)
R.	River
Ref.	Refuge
Res.	Reservoir (not Reservation)
S.P.	State Park
W.M.A.	Wildlife Management Area

**Abbreviations used in the
names of birds:**

Am.	American
Com.	Common
E.	Eastern
Eur.	European or Eurasian
Mt.	Mountain
N.	Northern
S.	Southern
W.	Western

**Other abbreviations and symbols
referring to birds:**

ad.	adult
imm.	immature
juv.	juvenal or juvenile
sp.	species
†	means that written details were submitted for a sighting
*	means that a specimen was collected
♂	male
♀	female
CBC	Christmas Bird Count

THE WINTER SEASON

December 1, 1990–February 28, 1991

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ATLANTIC PROVINCES REGION

Ian A. McLaren

The weather in the Region was not so oppressive as last winter's, generally remaining moderate until January, when cold snaps and more snow spoiled it for some. Although mainland Nova Scotia remained relatively open, Newfoundland and northern New Brunswick were at times snowed under. Again the Region was a focus for vagrants from all quarters, producing fully confirmed first provincial records of Tufted Duck, Eurasian Curlew, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and Fieldfare. There was some agonizing over rare geese. Also of interest were large numbers of Dovekies inshore in Nova Scotia, a big incursion of Northern Shrikes, species asynchronies among winter finch fluctuations, and locally variable declines in House Sparrows. Again, use is made of "unofficial" Christmas Bird Counts that will not be published in *American Birds*.

Abbreviations: S.P.M. (*Saint-Pierre et Miquelon*). Place names in *italics* are counties.

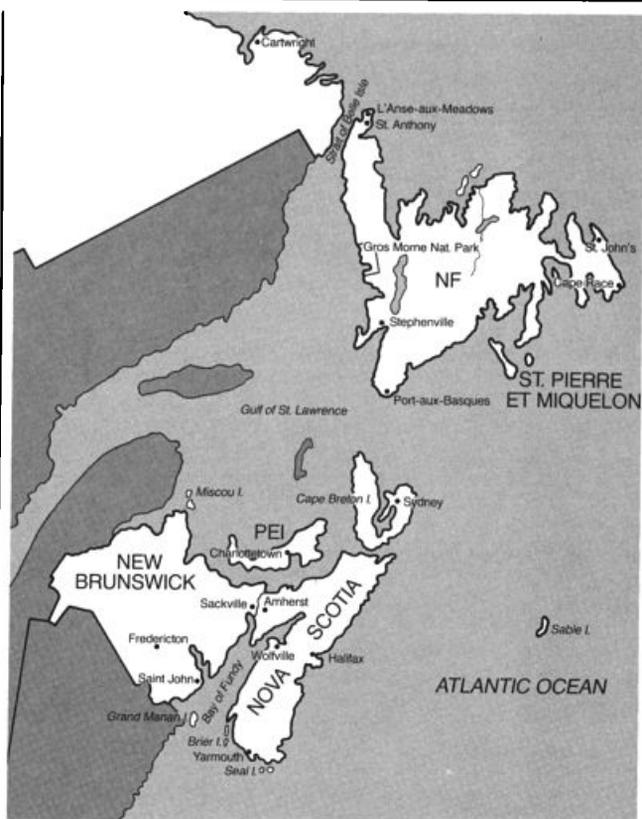
LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A report of a possible **Yellow-billed Loon** by 2 experienced observers (John & Shirley Cohrs) was noteworthy. The bird was observed Dec. 2 for 5 minutes in Halifax Harbour,

NS, and, although plumage description was brief (suggesting an incompletely molted, alternate adult), its bill was stated to be "heavy, ... bright yellow in strong sunlight...decidedly upturned...[with] culmen straight" (original emphasis). It drifted seaward and was not found by subsequent searchers. Evidently no Pied-billed Grebes lingered past December. There were substantial early-winter counts of regular grebes, including 57 Red-necked off Brier I., NS, Dec. 18 and 101 Horned along a 12-mi shore near Halifax Dec. 2.

While N. Fulmars are routine off Nova Scotia in winter, 42 off S.P.M. Feb. 22 were noteworthy (RE). A Greater Shearwater with N. Fulmars Feb. 5 on Browns Bank, NS (*vide* RB), was not unprecedented. A few Double-crested Cormorants were spotted during December off S.P.M. and the Maritimes, and two lingered near Sydney, NS, through January (A & CM). As usual, a few Great Blue Herons wintered in Nova Scotia, but one at Cocagne, NB, Jan. 20 (ST) was less routine.

"Stop press" information on a release during fall 1989 of unbanded, unopinioned waterfowl from a collection on an islet off Grand Manan I., NB, nullified some of this winter's most unusual goose records (detective work by BD). Three orange-billed Greater White-fronted Geese around Grand Manan I. through winter (BD), and one (race?) near Sackville, NB, Jan. 5 (Gilles Daigle, ph.) might have been suspect, except that the waterfowl collection apparently did not include that



species. A Snow Goose in Yarmouth, NS, from Jan. 23 through February (H & HH), and two during February in *Shelburne*, NS (J. Czapaly) were not extraordinary, but the Yarmouth bird was thought (IM, Eric Mills) to be a "Lesser," much less likely as a winter laggard. However, the released Snow Geese are believed to have remained in the vicinity of Grand Manan I. A Bar-headed Goose in Nova Scotia in spring 1990 is probably accounted for. Finally, one of 2 pairs of Barnacle Geese that stayed in the release area produced four young with which they disappeared in late summer. This seems to eliminate the listability of the family (2 ad., 4 juv.) that arrived on Cape Sable I., NS, in early September, however apt for their normal Greenland departure time. The family was wary at first, roosting on an islet and feeding at sea, but soon habituated to being fed with a small local collection of semi-wild and pinioned waterfowl, including Canada Geese. They had become quite tame when found by birders on the local CBC, but disappeared Jan. 8 after a hard freeze (v.o.; details, Randall Ross). Read the New England Region report for



Female Eurasian Wigeon at St. John's, Newfoundland, January 6, 1991. Photograph/Bruce Mactavish.

the next episode.

Wintering Canada Geese were perhaps down slightly in Nova Scotia, and sparse elsewhere, except at Grand Manan I., where Brian Dalzell speculates that feral Canadas are causing a decline in the Region's only substantial wintering Brant flock. As usual, many dabbling ducks were being fed in urban parks and ponds. A Regional scattering of wintering Green-winged Teal included a drake "Eurasian" at St. John's (BMct). In New Brunswick, Am. Black Ducks and Mallards stayed in larger numbers than usual (DSC) and there were also more Blacks than usual in n.e. Nova



Five Barnacle Geese (of six present) on Cape Sable Island, Nova Scotia, January 5, 1991. See text for the explanation why these were not "countable" wild birds. Photograph/Ian McLaren.

Scotia (PP). One of last fall's Eur. Wigeons was a nice study through winter in St. John's, NF (BMct).

Canvasbacks, rare in the Region, staged a definite event. In Nova Scotia, the first was in Yarmouth Dec. 17 (H & HH), followed, beginning late December, by at least six in the Halifax area, two in Yarmouth, and a male near Pictou. Also arriving in late December were up to five in and near Saint John, NB (*fide* BD, DSC). Finally, Prince Edward Island's share was a male at Vernon Bridge in early January (*fide* DM). Where did they come from this late in winter? A single Redhead again wintered in Sydney, NS (A & CM). Most exciting were the Region's first **Tufted Ducks** outside Newfoundland. The two previously reported females in St. John's, NF, grew proper tufts by late December, and disappeared Jan. 11 after hard weather (BMct). An obscure, almost tuftless female discovered (FL) Jan. 13 in Dartmouth, NS, was savored by many through the reporting period. Elsewhere in Nova Scotia, a well-tufted first-winter female appearing at N. Sydney Jan. 19 (D. McCorquondale *et al.*) and a probable ad. female found at Yarmouth Jan. 20 (J. Kearney *et al.*, ph.), both stayed through February. Finally, an ad. male was reported at W. Lawrencetown, NS, Feb. 9 (Ada Hines, *fide* PP).

Common Eiders were again displaced by hunting from speedboats around S.P.M., with up to 1500 along the east coast of Miquelon through the season (RE). They were rated particularly abundant in New Brunswick this winter (DSC). Less common sea ducks included two King Eiders in New Brunswick, a gratifying 9 reports of some 22 Harlequin Ducks in Nova Scotia (but not elsewhere), and Barrow's Goldeneyes totalling about 20 in Nova Scotia, 12 in Prince Edward Island, and 50 in New Brunswick. Buffleheads were especially common in s. New Brunswick in early winter (DSC).

DIURNAL RAPTORS

A Turkey Vulture was enticed to a "feeder" stocked with fish discards at Sand Lake, Cape

Breton I., Jan. 13–Feb. 7 (A & CM). Two others were in Nova Scotia during February. Bald Eagles again concentrated at artificial and natural food sources. A record count of 72 immatures and 76 adults was tallied Feb. 3 in w. Kings, NS, mostly around poultry farm offal (*fide* JWW). A group of about 20 near Yarmouth, NS, included individuals banded in Prince Edward Island and New York State (Peter Austin-Smith). A gathering in mid-February of up to 114 near Antigonish, NS, exploited natural fish die-offs (v.o.). The 73 birds on New Brunswick CBCs included 28 being fed by a lightkeeper at Blacks Harbour (DSC). Northern Harriers were widely reported from the Maritimes, and an individual Jan. 4 provided the first winter record for S.P.M. (CM). A N. Goshawk at Petite Rivière, NS, broke windows of a shop on entering and exiting, with "no apparent damage to the hawk!" (Nellie Snyder).

A Red-shouldered Hawk at Yarmouth, NS, Feb. 4 (Jerome D'Eon) furnished a 2nd winter record for the province. Once again, young Broad-winged Hawks missed their cues. This winter in Nova Scotia there were one on the Halifax East CBC (IAM *et al.*, ph.), up to three near Yarmouth in late December (H & HH), and one near Wolfville Jan. 21 (Mike Dadswell). The usual buteos were in usual numbers, but two almost white Red-tailed Hawks near Wolfville, NS, caused some excitement.

Bruce Mactavish was more excited by a "fabulous code 10" white Gyrfalcon in St. John's,



Gyrfalcon at Riverview, New Brunswick, February 9, 1991.
Photograph/Stuart Tingley.

Dec. 26–30, than by seven to nine dark birds seen by him during a bird tour to n. Newfoundland Jan. 16–20. Birders at Moncton, NB, were content with what some thought to be a single bird, and others up to three dark gray individuals.

Spruce Grouse totals of 13 in Nova Scotia and 11 in New Brunswick were more than usual on CBCs. Eight dead Willow Ptarmigan found in early March on the ice of the Oro-mocto R., near Fredericton Junction, NB, had apparently been shot, but their origin is mysterious (DSC). Two Ruffed Grouse were drumming at 10:30 p.m. Dec. 2 in Fundy N.P., under a full moon at 32°F (ST).

RALLIDS TO ALCIDIS

An errant Sora was at Custletts, Placentia Bay, NF, Dec. 22 (BMct *et al.*), and one at Saint-Pierre, S.P.M., Feb. 18 (CM), was even sillier. As usual, an Am. Coot overwintered in Dartmouth, NS.

A few Black-bellied Plovers and Killdeers survived winter in Nova Scotia; a Black-bellied was more at risk Jan. 7 at Ferryland, NF (ST). Apparently one of three well-identified Lesser Yellowlegs on the Halifax East CBC overwintered, for one was seen in the vicinity in early March (FL, Bev Sarty). The most exciting shorebird find (ST) was a meticulously described (BMct) and identifiably photographed **Eurasian Curlew** at Ferryland, NF. Discovered Jan. 7, the bird was subjected next day to the first hard freeze of winter, and disappeared before more than a few local birders saw it. Half-hardy Calidris were not reported beyond December, except for small flocks of Sanderlings on Sable I., NS (v.o.), and a surprising 48 Dunlin at Matthews L., NS, Feb. 21 (David Young). A Com. Snipe was at Saint-Pierre, S.P.M., Jan. 22 (NB).

Five Little Gulls were a good find at Deer I. Pt., NB, Dec. 1 (ST *et al.*). After severe early-January weather, only 25–30 Com. Black-headed Gulls stayed in St. John's, NF, while numbers remained normal in Nova Scotia. One at Deer I. Pt., Dec. 1 (ST), was unusual for

New Brunswick. Large numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls in s. New Brunswick left after December (DSC), but the usual handful stayed in Nova Scotia. Mew Gulls, all identified as *L. c. canus*, continue to increase. In St. John's, NF, there were an adult through winter and three first-year birds until Jan. 10 (BMct). In Nova Scotia, an adult Dec. 18 at Amherst (ST) supplied a first record outside the Halifax area, where there were at least one first-winter, one 2nd-winter, and one adult through the reporting period (v.o.). A 2nd-winter Herring Gull at St. John's, NF, was believed to be a north European *L. a. argentatus* (BMct). Compared with our *smithsonianus*, it was paler on head and underparts, and had more sharply checkered wing coverts, contrastingly paler inner primaries, and a strikingly narrower dark tail band. Among the usual "Kumlien's," one bird during February in Halifax was thought to be a satisfactory Thayer's Gull (v.o.). Wintering Lesser Black-backed Gulls included three adults in St. John's, at least three adults and two near-adults around Halifax Harbour, and adults near Lockport and N. Sydney, NS.

Dovekies were in their usual hordes off s.e. Newfoundland (BMct), perhaps somewhat more common than usual off S.P.M. (RE), and probably underreported from New Brunswick. They were strikingly abundant in Nova Scotia from early December to early February. A few were "wrecked," but most were found feeding in bays all along the Atlantic coast, sometimes at stream mouths. Other alcids seemed present in usual numbers.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

Mourning Doves rebounded after the severe 1989–1990 winter, and were widespread and common at feeders in the Maritimes. It was an off year for Snowy Owls, with reports of only one in s.e. Newfoundland, two on S.P.M., one in Nova Scotia, one on Prince Edward Island, and two in New Brunswick. Three N. Hawk Owls in New Brunswick, where nesting has recently been confirmed, included one readily

found near Shippagan through the reporting period. A weakened Boreal Owl was nurtured and released in St. John's, NF, another was found dead on Saint-Pierre, S.P.M., and the total of four (one rehabilitated) in New Brunswick was "unusual" (DSC).

Ten post-CBC Belted Kingfishers were more than usual in Nova Scotia, and one at Gowan Brae, PEI, Feb. 7 (*vide* DM) was quite unexpected. None of three Red-headed Woodpeckers in New Brunswick and one in Nova Scotia were noted after early January. Last fall's small incursion of the rarer Red-bellied Woodpecker was amplified by birds that arrived and stayed later; there were wintering individuals at 2 localities in New Brunswick and 3 places in Nova Scotia, and a Red-bellied Woodpecker at New Glasgow, PEI (Rory Francis), was a first for the province. For the first time more Three-toed (six) than Black-backed woodpeckers (three) were reported on New Brunswick CBCs, perhaps because "the budworm-stressed trees of the '70s and early '80s are gone now" (DSC). A N. Flicker was unusual Jan. 1 at Saint-Pierre, S.P.M. (Bruno Letournel), and a record 16 post-CBC birds were noted in Nova Scotia. Two at Cocagne, NB, Jan. 20 were apparently being sustained on bayberries (ST).

FLYCATCHERS TO WARBLERS

An *Empidonax* in Halifax in early December was critically, but disappointingly, assessed as a Least Flycatcher (BD, FL, BM). There were two late W. Kingbirds near Halifax (one until Dec. 5) and a slightly later one near Canso, NS (Nancy Peters *et al.*). The Eur. Jackdaw failed to return to Halifax this winter. Numbers of Am. Crows remained elevated all winter in New Brunswick (DSC), and civic concern was expressed about huge roosts in Kentville and Halifax, NS. Among the woodland gleaners, numbers of Black-capped Chickadees on CBCs were "comparable to last year's highest-ever level" in New Brunswick (DSC), and Brown Creepers "seemed positively abundant" in Nova Scotia (RS). Beginning mid-December,

there was another incursion (*cf.* 1988-1989) of Carolina Wrens to New Brunswick: two at Fredericton, two at Saint John, and one at Yoho Lake, most staying at feeders through the reporting period. The only post-CBC Winter Wren was at Quispamsis, NB, Jan. 28 (JL). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was unexpected near Cape St. Mary's, NF, Dec. 22 (BMct); one lived through January in Dartmouth, NS (James Taylor). The latest of last fall's reverse-migrant Blue-gray Gnatcatchers was in Halifax until Dec. 7 (BD), but more surprising was one that struck a window Dec. 6 at Charlottetown, PEI (Dorothy MacLeod).

A Townsend's Solitaire appeared at Quispamsis, NB, Jan. 5 (JL). Caraquet, NB, hosted the Region's first wholly satisfying Fieldfare outside New-



Fieldfare at Caraquet, New Brunswick, January 25, 1991. First fully documented record for the province. Photograph/Stuart Tingley.

foundland (4 NF occurrences; also 2 ill-documented sightings in Nova Scotia 1971-1972 and a mid-1960s report for New Brunswick). It arrived Jan. 23 at Edith Robichaud's feeder and stayed through the reporting period. Mlle. Robichaud had thoughtfully kept quantities of frozen mountain-ash berries, hoping to attract waxwings. Her catch was widely publicized, bringing resupplies of wild berries and many birders from near and far. American Robins were common throughout the Region in early winter. They dwindled and were "in rough shape" around St. John's, NF, with the disappearance of berries after January (BMct); interestingly, hundreds appeared on S.P.M. at about the

same time (RE). A Varied Thrush came to a feeder at Whites L., NS, from mid-January through February (v.o.). Northern Mockingbirds were the "most ever reported" on New Brunswick CBCs (DSC), and "there were plenty" in Nova Scotia (RS).

Bohemian Waxwings were again abundant, with record high CBCs in New Brunswick, and flocks of hundreds in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. Cedar Waxwings, which do not always winter in the Region, were also moderately common throughout. Last fall's large influx of N. Shrikes was sustained through winter in New Brunswick (a record 71 on CBCs; DSC) and Nova Scotia (ca. 80 post-CBC birds reported; RBS), but very few remained in Newfoundland and S.P.M.

As in other recent winters, wood warblers continued to astonish. An Orange-crowned Warbler Dec. 2 at Mary's Pt., NB, produced a latest provincial record (ST). About six were noted in Nova Scotia, the latest in the Wolfville area to mid-January. A Nashville Warbler at suet near Yarmouth, NS, to Jan. 10 (H & HH) was the latest on record for the province. A Yellow Warbler Dec. 16 at St. John's (BMct) was the latest ever in Newfoundland, and another at Rothesay until Dec. 29 (Stephen Clayden) was the first for winter in New Brunswick. A Townsend's Warbler in Halifax was a some-



Townsend's Warbler, probably a female, at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on December 25, 1990. Third provincial record. Photograph/Ian McLaren.

what embarrassing family monopoly. My wife, without optics, had identified it tentatively near our home Dec. 21. It reappeared at our doorstep Christmas morning, to be spotted by my daughter, identified

by my son, and hurriedly photographed in dim light. Although there was quick response to a bird alert, it apparently became breakfast for a shrike, leaving no share for others of this 3rd provincial occurrence.

During December about 16 Pine Warblers were noted in Nova Scotia and four in New Brunswick; one survived through February at a feeder in W. Pubnico, NS (LD). Four Black-and-white Warblers were not seen beyond Dec. 2 in St. John's, NF, in spite of mild weather (BMct, v.o.). A Com. Yellowthroat at Carequet in late December was a first in winter for n. New Brunswick (*vide* DSC), while one Jan. 23 on Cape Sable I. (G. & J. Tufts) was the latest recorded in Nova Scotia. Two Wilson's Warblers lingered in St. John's, NF, until Dec. 1 (JW), and a bright (western?) bird in Halifax, NS, was last seen Dec. 2 (v.o.). An Ovenbird was in St. John's, NF, Dec. 24-26 (JW). Two Yellow-breasted Chats in Halifax-Dartmouth, NS, and two in s.e. Newfoundland were not seen after early to mid-December.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A Western Tanager visited Robert Trivers' feeder at S.W. Port Mouton, NS, Nov. 29-Dec. 11. The high New Brunswick CBC total of 24 N. Cardinals included a record seven in Fredericton (DSC). Twelve in Nova Scotia were more widespread than usual (RBS). A feeder Dickcissel at Lamèque, NB, lasted until Dec. 27 (G. Benoit), while two at W. Pubnico, NS, made it through February (LD). An unusually large number of wintering Rufous-sided Towhees included three in Newfoundland, four in New Brunswick, two in Nova Scotia and one in Prince Edward Island. One present through January at Marble Mountain, Inverness, NS, was said to be of one of the "spotted" western races (Wendy MacDonald).

American Tree Sparrows were thought to be relatively scarce in New Brunswick (DSC) and Nova Scotia (DAC). A Clay-colored Sparrow in w. Hants, NS, Dec. 22

(BM, FL), and another at Ferryland, NF, in early January (Roger Burrows, *vide* BMct) added to a developing Regional pattern. Photographs (BMct) suggest that a sparrow at Ferryland, NF, Jan. 7 was a darkish "Ipswich" rather than a pale "mainland" Savannah Sparrow; this follows last winter's first Newfoundland record.

The usual woodland sparrows, except juncos, were deemed scarce in Nova Scotia (DAC), but about average in New Brunswick CBCs (DSC). A Lincoln's Sparrow in Dartmouth, NS, Dec. 2 (BM) was late. Four lingering White-crowned Sparrows in New Brunswick were not reported after December. Lapland Longspurs were unusually frequent in Nova Scotia (DAC),

while 11 at Miquelon, S.P.M., Dec. 15 provided a first CBC record (RE), and 20 at Moncton, NB, Feb. 2 were "a little surprising" (ST). Snow Buntings were also widely reported in good numbers.

The usual feeder icterids were generally scarce in both New Brunswick (DSC) and Nova Scotia (DAC). Three Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Nova Scotia feeders survived at least through January, but a few laggard N. Orioles did not.

Abundant Pine Grosbeaks diminished (with the waxwings and robins) after January in s.e. Newfoundland (BMct), but elsewhere few were seen throughout winter. Purple Finches were "fairly common" around St. John's, NF (BMct), but scarcer else-

where. House Finches were up slightly in New Brunswick, with 22 on CBCs (DSC), but only six were reported in Nova Scotia, where they seem "stalled." It was generally an "off year" for crossbills and redpolls in all parts of the Region. In Nova Scotia, where observers have been urged to note such matters, 50 "large-billed" (Newfoundland?) Red Crossbills were seen in Halifax Dec. 21 (FL). By contrast, Pine Siskins and Am. Goldfinches were common at feeders almost everywhere, the latter even reaching e. Newfoundland where they are "usually absent" (BMct). Evening Grosbeaks obviously recovered from last winter's slump, and were "crowded" at feeders around St. John's, NF (BMct), increasingly common

through winter in Nova Scotia (DAC), and "back up to levels of 1987-1988 and 1988-1989" in New Brunswick (DSC).

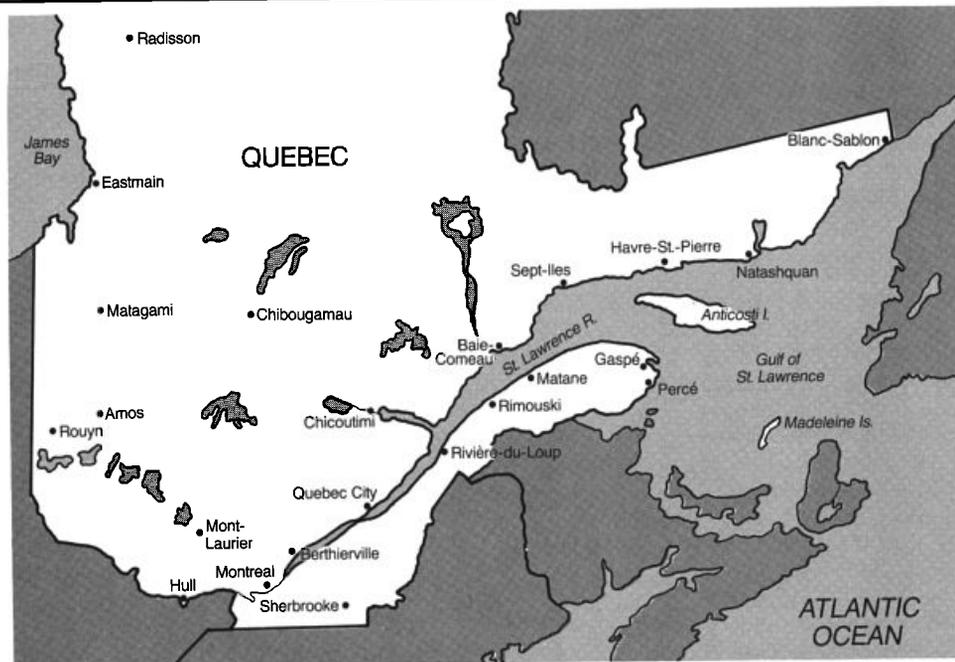
Observers: (subregional editors in boldface) — **Richard G.B. Brown**, **David S. Christie**, **David A. Currie**, **Brian Dalzell**, **Lisette D'Entremont**, **Roger Etcheberry**, **Keith Keddy**, **Helen & Hubert Hall**, **Ken Knowles**, **Fulton Lavender**, **John Lavigne**, **Bruce Mactavish** (BMct), **Blake Maybank**, **Dan McAskill**, **Christian Moullec**, **Alan & Cathy Murrant**, **Peter Payzant**, **Francis Spalding**, **Richard Stern**, **John Wells**, **Jim W. Wolford**. — **IAN A. McLAREN**, **Biology Department, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS B3H 4J1.**

QUEBEC REGION

*Yves Aubry,
Michel Gosselin, and
Richard Yank*

The wet fall extended into December; in southern Quebec, where temperatures were above normal, much of the precipitation fell as rain—precipitation records were broken at Montreal and on the Magdalen Islands. This meant plenty of open water and a good variety of lingering waterfowl. January was cold by comparison, with locations in northern and eastern Quebec averaging as much as 9° C below average. Northern Quebec experienced a consistently cold winter with heavier than normal snowfall in December, but light thereafter. Early February soon brought above-freezing temperatures back to southern Quebec, but more normal conditions prevailed during the last half of the month.

An almost complete absence of finches characterized the season, but other northern species (including Gyrfalcon, Willow Ptarmigan, and Northern Hawk Owl) did move south in appreciable numbers. Townsend's Solitaires and Varied Thrushes added a dash of western spice, while Tufted Titmice served up a hearty helping of southern fare.



GREBES TO WATERFOWL

A Pied-billed Grebe was still present at LaSalle on the record-late date of Jan. 13 (PBa). As occurs every now and then, there was a late movement of N. Gannets up the St. Lawrence R., with one at Beauport Dec. 1 (PC, NC), another at Lachine Nov. 30 (*vide* DCu), and possibly the same bird at the Beauharnois dam Dec. 16-26 (JMB, v.o.); as is most often the case, all were immatures. Uncommon along the Upper St. Lawrence, lone Great Cormorants reached Saint-

Romuald-d'Etchemin Dec. 2-3 (PBr, LR) and Côte-Sainte-Catherine Jan. 5-7 (DD *et al.*). Mild weather and open water allowed Double-crested Cormorants to tarry longer than usual. Singles were reported at Hull Dec. 16 (DSH, MA), Côte-Sainte-Catherine Jan. 5 (DD *et al.*), and Beauharnois the next day (PBa); only one previous January record existed for the Region. Great Blue Herons were also in evidence in s. Quebec, including singles at I. Perrot Jan. 1 (PBa), Laval Jan. 6 (JMG), Granby Jan. 25 (*vide* VL), Magog Feb. 3 (FL), and

Philipsburg Feb. 5 (JGP).

A flock of 400 Snow Geese still remained at Philipsburg Dec. 2 (DD), while an immature furnished the first wintering record for the province—feeding among exotics at the Hemmingford zoo (PBa). One hundred wild Canada Geese also freeloaded at the zoo, while a flock of 139 birds was late on L. Magog Jan. 3 (LC). Rarely encountered in mid-winter, 10 Green-winged Teal were sighted on the Châteauguay R. Jan. 8 (DD *et al.*), while four Gadwall successfully overwintered for the first time in the Lachine rapids

(PBa). A Ring-necked Duck observed at Aylmer until Jan. 20 (EA *et al.*) was also unusually late. The only Harlequin Ducks reported this season were single males at Jonquière Dec. 16–24 (CG, MS) and Baie-Comeau Feb. 9 (GCy *et al.*).

RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS

Good numbers of Rough-legged Hawks spent the season in s.w. Quebec, but one at Saint-Bruno, L. Saint-Jean, Jan. 4 (CG, MS *et al.*) was exceptionally late so far north. Falcons provided their share of excitement this winter. The most northerly Merlin was at Chicoutimi Jan. 27 (CG) and six or more were observed farther south, at least one wintering at Saint-Lazare (BB, MM). It was the best winter for Gyrfalcons in s. Quebec since 1981–1982; possibly 11 different birds were seen s.w. of Quebec City, including eight around Montreal, and good numbers were also reported along the Lower St. Lawrence.

As predicted last year (see AB 44:234), Willow Ptarmigan staged a major irruption. The first birds appeared along the North Shore of the St. Lawrence, with one at Mingan Nov. 2 (*fide* SP) and up to 15 at Manic-5 dam Nov. 19 & 29 (CF). Flocks were subsequently encountered all along the n. shore of the Estuary, as far west as Saint-Siméon where three birds were reportedly shot Jan. 12 (*fide* RO). Large numbers also reached L. Saint-Jean and the Upper Saguenay. Hundreds were found n. of L. Saint-Jean in early December and by mid-month they had reached many localities around the lake, as far south as Lac-Bouchette; this wave spread eastward to Sainte-Rose-du-Nord on the n. shore of the Saguenay R. and to La Baie on its s. shore (*fide* GS). The invasion was rather short-lived, as most of the unwary birds were wiped out by hunters within a few weeks of their arrival.

Wild Turkeys appear to be doing well along the U.S. border, as evidenced by a flock of 24 at Hemmingford Feb. 21 (GZ) and three in February at Dunham, a new locale for this species (RM, BH). The oddest report of the season was of a

Com. Moorhen at a Dorval shopping center for about one month until Dec. 10, surviving on popcorn fed to it by moviegoers (*fide* JA, m.ob.).

Extremely early was a Killdeer seen at Laval Feb. 22 (JMG), while a Dunlin was quite late at Beauharnois Dec. 1 (DD, PBa). Two Com. Snipe wintered at Beauport (SBl, m.ob.) and also at Tracy (PBa *et al.*), while singles were found at Plessisville Jan. 5–Feb. 24 (AC) and La Pocatière Jan. 29 (CA). These birds were all at well-established wintering sites, along open streams where one would normally expect to find Am. Woodcock. The latter do not overwinter, but one at Aylmer Dec. 16 (GDe, CD, RP) did tie the 110-year-old late departure record.

GULLS TO OWLS

On the Magdalen Is., Com. Black-headed Gulls peaked at 50 birds on Etang du Nord Dec. 10 (BL, GCa). Not all Ring-billed Gulls were driven south by the January cold, as three remained at LaSalle Jan. 20 (PBa), while others returned early on the heels of the February thaw, including four each on Feb. 9 at Aylmer (JD, JPA, EA, GDU) and Côte-Sainte-Catherine (PBa). One also remained at Gros-Cap, Magdalen Is., Jan. 17 (BL, GCa). An ad. California Gull reported off I. Perrot Dec. 17 (BB, MM) could unfortunately not be relocated thereafter. Not unexpected this winter was a very late imm. Black-legged Kittiwake at Côte-Sainte-Catherine Jan. 6 (DD *et al.*), but birders in search of ptarmigan at Chutes-Passes Dec. 15 were surprised to find an imm. Ivory Gull there Dec. 15 (SBo, MT, LB). Locally rare was a Black Guillemot at Neuville Dec. 30 (MDa).

It was at best an average year for Snowy Owls, but the invasion of N. Hawk Owls that began in November continued strongly with approximately 21 individuals sighted in addition to the 12 reported in the fall. Great Gray Owls staged a minor invasion by comparison, with six birds found along the n. shore of L. Saint-Jean and the Saguenay R. (*fide* GS), two at Cap-Tourmente (*fide* YA), two

at Hudson beginning Jan. 21 (GJ, m.ob.), one at Beaconsfield Jan. 24 (SS), and one at Joliette Feb. 10 (CS). An estimated 38 Short-eared Owls hunted over fields in the Montreal area in late November and early December and a few remained throughout the season, including a group of seven or eight that roosted in a residential area of Chambly from mid-January onwards (BS, GT). The species is extremely rare in winter beyond s.w. Quebec, so particularly noteworthy were singles at Havre-aux-Basques Jan. 4 (FV) and La Pocatière Jan. 19 (JFR). The only Boreal Owls detected outside their breeding range were singles at La Pocatière Dec. 20 (CA, DF), Laval Jan. 11 (HB), and Cap-Tourmente Feb. 24 (RG *et al.*). Northern Saw-whet Owls were scarce during January, unreported save for one on Mt. Royal Jan. 15 (MBI), but an evident influx occurred in early February when four appeared at 3 sites around Montreal Feb. 3–6 (*fide* PBa), one showed up at Saint-Eusèbe Feb. 5 (MBa), and dead birds were picked up at Saint-Elie-d'Orford Feb. 2 (*fide* FS) and Neuville Feb. 13 (CB).

KINGFISHERS TO SHRIKES

Single Belted Kingfishers still lingered at Valleyfield Dec. 31 (PBa, DD), and at both Saint-Jovite (LH) and Côte-Sainte-Catherine (AB) until mid-January. In view of the weather, however, it was surprising that this half-hardy species did not overwinter. The Red-bellied Woodpecker reported at Gaspé last fall remained throughout the winter (FM), a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was quite late at L. Brome Dec. 29 (IF), while also noteworthy in winter were single N. Flickers at Sainte-Louise Jan. 7 (CA), La Baie Dec. 14–Jan. 23 (JMS), and Rimouski all season (DCt, YB).

For the 2nd consecutive year two Winter Wrens apparently survived on I. des Soeurs, where they were still present Feb. 9 (*fide* PBa)—a rare occurrence in this Region despite the species' name. The first Townsend's Solitaires of the new decade were discovered on Mt. Royal from Jan. 13 onwards (PD *et al.*) and at Saint-Fulgence Jan. 19–28 (JV, m.ob.); this western

S.A.

Unprecedented numbers of Tufted Titmice invaded feeders in s. Quebec, with approximately 50 birds tallied at 17 locations since the fall. The appearance of this species in the Region is recent, with only one record prior to 1978. During 5 consecutive winters starting in 1978–1979, a total of 25 individuals was noted, with a peak of 12 birds during the winter of 1979–1980. The species returned in late 1986 after a hiatus of 3 years and has occurred annually since then, but in numbers never exceeding seven birds. This year the titmice undoubtedly originated in Vermont, since they occurred almost exclusively to the east of the Richelieu R. and to the west of L. Memphrémagog.

wanderer visited Quebec during 6 of 10 winters in the 1980s. Late Hermit Thrushes could still be found Dec. 21 at Baie-Comeau (GGa *et al.*) and Dec. 31 at Quebec City (RG), where Am. Robins were said to be common throughout the winter. The latter species drew little comment elsewhere. The appearance of Varied Thrushes is not always synchronous with that of solitaires—although both are w. frugivores with a tendency to wander east—but three Varieds were located this year: at McGregor L. Dec. 6–24 (BP, m.ob., ph.), Saint-Jérôme Dec. 19 (FO), and Mt. Royal starting Jan. 6 (*fide* PBa, m.ob.).

Large numbers of Bohemian Waxwings wintered in c. Quebec. Some 1500 were sighted near Saint-Marc-de-Latour Nov. 25 (AG) and, from late December through January, 15 sightings of 1000 or more birds were made in the L. Saint-Jean area, including 2700 at Alma Jan. 13 (CG, MS, AJ) and an astounding 7000 at Chicoutimi Jan. 23 (CG, MS). A group of 4000 invaded Rimouski in early January (JRP *et al.*), and 1000 were seen at Amqui Jan. 29 (DB). Flocks of up to 1000 birds were also observed around Quebec City (*fide* LMe). Tallies were more modest farther south, with high counts of 500 at Hudson Jan. 24 (FH), 200 at Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle Feb. 6

(PBA), and 350 at Aylmer Jan. 12 (EA). Northern Shrikes were relatively common in s. Quebec for the first time since the winter of 1985–1986.

WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Despite the mild December, the only late warblers were a record-late Orange-crowned on Notre-Dame I., Dec. 15 (DD, FBI), the Yellow-throated Warbler at Buckingham until Dec. 8 (RC—see Fall report), and a displaced Prairie Warbler in downtown Montreal Dec. 4 (JM).

Extralimital N. Cardinals included a female at Jonquière until Dec. 16 (RAS), a male at Rimouski Dec. 27 (GLE), another at Saint-Elzéar-de-Témiscouata Jan. 22 (RD), a female at Sept-Iles until mid-February (FBA, LD), and another that wintered at Price (LG); the species was observed at several localities in the Quebec City region, including Saint-Pascal (*vide* LMe). The Rufous-sided Towhee reported at a Chicoutimi feeder since last fall was apparently picked off by a shrike Jan. 6 (FT, JB *et al.*), but the one at La Pocatière wintered successfully (CA), as did a female at Hudson (WG). A "pair" also wintered at 2 separate feeders in Saint-Narcisse (RB), while a female was still at Bassin Jan. 12 (GCa, BL). A



This Field Sparrow, photographed December 24, 1990, overwintered unusually far north at Maniwaki, Quebec. Photograph/Gilbert Bouchard.

Field Sparrow overwintered at Maniwaki (GB, EB), late was a Fox Sparrow on Havre Aubert I. Jan. 12–27 (GCa *et al.*), and three Dark-eyed Juncos of one of the "Oregon" races visited



Seemingly living up to its name was this Northern Oriole in the snow at Amqui, Quebec, December 1990. Photograph/Daniel Bouchard.

feeders at Granby Nov. 18–19 (MP), Aylmer Dec. 8 (RLD), and La Tuque from Dec. 13 (MDe).

Three Red-winged Blackbirds wintered at Gros-Cap, Magdalen Is. (UD), while worthy of mention among the several wintering Rusty Blackbirds was one at Sainte-Hedwige until Feb. 17 (NB) and two at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré Feb. 10 (RF). Now an annual event, up to two Yellow-headed Blackbirds were observed in and around Beauharnois Dec. 1–Jan. 6 (PBA *et al.*). Exceptional, however, was a N. Oriole that came to a feeder at Amqui Nov. 23–Dec. 9 (DB, ph.).

Flocks comprising up to 23 House Finches were reported at Quebec City (MAB, m.ob.), where the species now seems well established, and a pair wintered on the Gaspé Pen. at Price (LG). Otherwise, observers agreed on the scarcity of finches across the province. Pine Grosbeaks were found in low numbers and Purple Finches seemed totally absent—as was the case last winter—but small flocks were present on the Magdalen Archipelago. Crossbills were generally scarce, but an influx of White-winged was noted in the Saguenay region in February. Redpolls and Pine Siskins were also reported in low numbers everywhere, but Am. Goldfinch numbers were near normal, being reported as common in some areas including the Magdalens. Evening Grosbeaks were again scarce in the Upper St. Lawrence Valley, but more typical numbers were present elsewhere.

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NEW ENGLAND REGION

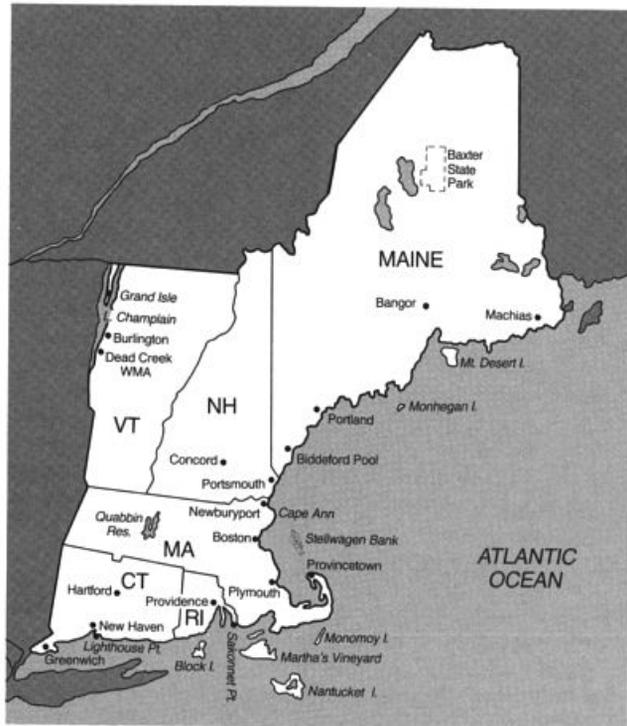
Blair Nikula

Although it was not a particularly exciting season for birders, it was, for the most part, a pleasant one to be out in the field. Temperatures for the season averaged just over 4°F above normal in Boston, making it the second-warmest winter in 121 years of record keeping. Sixty-degree temperatures were reached on ten days during the period. It was not only warm, but fairly dry, with only 8 inches of rain (almost 5" below normal) and less than 20 inches of snow. December set the pace, averaging a record-breaking 40.7°F, incredibly 7°F above normal. More typical temperatures returned in January, when winter made a few rather feeble and short-lived attempts to establish itself, but the warmth returned in February which averaged more than 5°F above the norm. The paucity of snow meant that bare ground was the rule rather than the exception across the southern two-thirds of the Region.

Every year, lingering individuals of those species that winter well to the south of our Region comprise a substantial percentage of the reports at this season. Given the prevalence of bare ground and open water this year, it is no surprise to find an unusual preponderance of such sightings in the following summary. This tendency was especially pronounced among waterfowl. Other birds that were unusually evident, presumably owing to benevolent weather, included herons, Osprey, Eastern Phoebe, wrens, warblers, sparrows, blackbirds, and Eastern Meadowlark.

Boreal irruptives were generally scarce, with the prominent exception of Northern Shrike and, to a lesser degree, Rough-legged Hawk and Bohemian Waxwing.

Comprehensive reports were received from all six states—thanks to all who contributed. As usual, CBC records have been omitted from this summary. Contributors are asked to please note my change of address.



Abbreviations: CCL&PWS (*Cape Cod Lake & Pond Waterfowl Survey*); MAS/TASL (*Massachusetts Audubon Society's "Take A Second Look" census of Boston Harbor*); M.V. (*Martha's Vineyard*).

LOONS TO HERONS

Modest numbers of Red-throated Loons included 95 in Provincetown, MA, Feb. 3 (PT), 47 at Sherwood Island S.P., CT, Feb. 25 (JF), and 45 in Wellfleet, MA, Feb. 24 (KJ), the latter two totals perhaps indicating an early northward movement. An Arctic/Pacific Loon was studied by a number of observers in Sagamore, MA, Jan. 13–20 (RA *et al.*), although no details were received. Common Loons were again in large numbers along the Region's south coast, as evidenced by an estimate of 500 from Matunuck to Charleston, RI, Jan. 14 (RG); reports of up to 12 at the Quabbin Res., MA, through early January (*fide* SK), and one on L. Winnepesaukee Jan. 14 (G. & C. Ports) were indicative of ice-free conditions inland.

Pied-billed Grebe numbers continued low; 43 on the CCL&PWS, Dec. 1–2 (C.C.B.C.), was 45% below the previous 6-year average. Nine Pied-billeds in Lakeville, MA, Jan. 11 (KSA) made an unusual mid-winter concentration

inland, but a single grebe in far northern Errol, NH, Jan. 26 was unprecedented at this season (*fide* DDL). Red-necked Grebes were in short supply, but two inland at Andover, CT, Dec. 9 (L. Bevier *et al.*) were notable; the usual late winter incursion apparently failed to materialize to any degree this year. Details accompanied the report of an Eared Grebe on Lake Champlain at Ferrisburg, VT, Dec. 15 (†A. Pistorius *et al.*), but not another at Sachuest Pt., RI, Jan. 14 (K. & D. Karlson). The Western Grebe was reported sporadically through January and February in Georgetown, ME, for the 14th consecutive year (*fide* WT); one was found again in Rye, NH, Feb. 9–18 (v.o., *fide* DDL), and another was on Nantucket Feb. 11 (†JP).

Northern Fulmar reports have been few in recent years, but a handful were found 10–30 mi south of Nantucket: one Jan. 2; 12+ Jan. 29; and three Feb. 5 (SH). The spectacular late fall concentration of N. Gannets off Chatham, MA, numbering into the tens of thousands, remained into mid-December but then disappeared abruptly, despite continuing mild weather. Gannets were surprisingly scarce south of Nantucket with a high of only 25+ on Feb. 5 (SH), although 200 were in Provincetown, MA, Jan. 19 (IG *et al.*).

Potentially the bird of the sea-

son, and startling if true, was a Magnificent Frigatebird reported flying past Sachuest Pt., RI, Feb. 4 (RG, J. Gee). Regrettably, only vague 2nd-hand details were received. Much as I dislike to belabor the point, it must be re-emphasized that a bird of this rarity, no matter how seemingly straightforward the identification, must be documented. A frigatebird at 100 yards in good light may be an easy call, but at 1000 yards in poor visibility may present a more difficult challenge. Observers are also reminded that more than one species of frigatebird is possible in this area.

Single Snowy Egrets in Quincy, MA, Dec. 7 and Jan. 1–3 (KR *et al.*), E. Boston Dec. 9 (N. Smith), and Hyannis/Centerville, MA, Jan. 19–23 (S. Clifton *et al.*) were the first at this season in several years. A Green-backed Heron at the Scituate Res., RI, Dec. 20 (J. Zbryowski) was equally rare. Although breeding populations of Black-crowned Night-Herons are doing fairly well in New England, for no obvious reason the species has become scarce as a winterer (e.g., a total of only 13 at 7 sites in Massachusetts this season); thus, a group of 12 in Jerusalem, RI, Feb. 4–5 (MMu) was of interest. Lingering Glossy (presumably) Ibises included one on Plum I., MA, Dec. 2 & 5 (GdE *et al.*), two in Squantum, MA, Dec. 7 (KR), and one in S. Kingstown, RI, Dec. 20 (S. Haydock).

WATERFOWL

Thanks to the weather, it was generally a great season for waterfowl lovers, particularly inland.

A Greater White-fronted Goose was discovered in New Bedford, MA, Feb. 13 & 28 (TA *et al.*). Following last fall's huge flight through the Champlain valley, Snow Geese lingered into December: 1000+ were estimated at Dead Creek W.M.A. Dec. 1 (PH) and 800 in Addison, VT, Dec. 7 (J. Peterson). In Maine, one Snow Goose was in Saco Dec. 23 (S. Pollock) and "several" were on Deer Isle Jan. 30 (*fide* WT), while in Massachusetts four singles were noted and in Connecticut there were seven at 4 sites. A Barnacle Goose was in Lexington, MA, Dec. 6–7 (†L. Batchelder, v.o., ph.); and six, apparently a family

group, in Osterville, MA, Jan. 18–Feb. 28 (B. Barber, m.ob.), were assumed to be the same birds reported from Nova Scotia during the first half of the winter; as this was being written a report surfaced indicating that the birds were confirmed parolees from captivity.

Wood Ducks were reported from every state and in seasonally unparalleled numbers from the southern half of the Region: one each in Maine and Vermont, two in New Hampshire, 35+ in Massachusetts (most in the interior), 12 in Rhode Island, and 16 in Connecticut. Some of these appeared in the last 10 days of February, presumably the result of an early northward movement.

The annual aerial waterfowl survey of the Massachusetts coast, recorded 19,150 Am. Black Ducks Jan. 2–4, up slightly over last year but 7% below the 10-year average (HWH). In contrast, the CCL&PWS found a record high 2004 Black Ducks on Cape Cod ponds Dec. 1–2, up 63% over the 6-year average (C.C.B.C.), and 3394 were tallied in Boston Harbor Jan. 20 (MAS/TASL).

Unprecedented at this season were seven Blue-winged Teal: one in Hadley, MA, Jan. 6–30 (PY), only the 3rd winter record for w. Massachusetts (*fide* SK); two in Yarmouth, MA, throughout the period (v.o., *fide* BN); and four at Trustum Pond N.W.R., RI, Dec. 31 (L. Symynkywicz, *fide* DE). The ponds of Monomoy N.W.R. attract the largest concentration of N. Shovelers in the Region; 74 were still there Dec. 2 (SP *et al.*). Shovelers also set new winter highs elsewhere, with nine at 6 sites in Massachusetts, nine at 3 sites in Rhode Island, and one in Connecticut. The CCL&PWS recorded 151 Gadwall Dec. 1–2, nearly double the previous high and 265% over the 6-year average (C.C.B.C.), and two were notable at Nichols Pt., VT, Dec. 22–29 (DJH). Eurasian Wigeon numbered seven or eight Region-wide: one in Connecticut, three in Rhode Island, and three or four in Massachusetts.

Twenty-two Canvasbacks at 5 sites in w. Massachusetts was well above average (*fide* SK), but at their more traditional haunts, numbers were rather sparse. The anatid of the season was a Tufted

Duck seen by many in Warren, RI, Jan. 20–Feb. 28 (C. Hobbs, m.ob.). The aerial survey of the Massachusetts coast uncovered only 4255 scaup, the lowest total since 1963 and 37% below the 10-year average (HWH), but 10,000 Greater Scaup in West Haven, CT, Dec. 15 (JF) made an impressive aggregation. A few Lesser Scaup usually overwinter in s. coastal New England, but five in Ferrisburg, VT, Jan. 7 (WGE *et al.*) and up to 28 in Belfast Harbor, ME, Dec. 26–Feb. 6 (M. Sears) were very atypical at those latitudes.

One of the few remaining avian spectacles in the Region is the massive wintering concentrations of Com. Eider off our s. e. coast, particularly the shoals off Monomoy I., where (unfortunately for us) they are virtually inaccessible. This year's aerial survey Jan. 2–4 tallied a record high 185,290 eider, more than double last year's total and 61% above the 10-year average; of these, 108,000 were off Monomoy and another 40,000 off M.V. (HWH). King Eider were scattered along the coast: at least 10 in Maine, seven in New Hampshire, nine in Massachusetts, six in Rhode Island, and one in Connecticut.

Three Black Scoters remained inland at Ferrisburg, VT, Dec. 30–Jan. 3 (DJH). Only 6512 Com. Goldeneye on the coastal Massachusetts aerial survey was less than half of last year's total and 27% below the 10-year average (HWH), but probably reflected the mild season, as suggested by the well-above-average total of 284 in w. Massachusetts (*fide SK*). Barrow's Goldeneyes were similarly scarce except, curiously, in Rhode Island, where five was "many more than normal" (DE). Inland Barrow's were at Lake Bomoseen, VT, Dec. 28 (R. Ellison), and Holyoke, MA, Feb. 5–9 (*fide SK*).

Hooded Merganser numbers continued their upward surge: 116 at Damariscotta Mills Jan. 12 (D. Anderson), apparently a record winter count for Maine; 720 on the CCL&PWS Dec. 1–2, shattering their previous high and 168% above the 6-year average (C.C.B.C.); and 180+ in w. Massachusetts, "many more than normal" (SK). Other notable counts of Hoodeds included 68 in Franklin, NH,

Dec. 6 (*fide DDL*) and 118 in Arlington, MA, Jan. 1 (LT).

RAPTORS

Turkey Vultures are becoming too numerous as winterers in s. New England to detail; peak counts, possibly involving some very early migrants, were of 30 in Guilford, CT, Feb. 19 (C. Goertz); 20 in S. Dartmouth, MA, Feb. 13 (TA); and up to eight in Hopkinton, RI, in January (*fide DE*). Farther north, single vultures were in Colchester, VT, Feb. 11 (J. Marsh), Hinsdale, NH, Feb. 6 (WGE), and at 3 sites in Maine during January, the northernmost in Turner (*fide WT*). By late February, migrants had appeared in many areas.

Ospreys lingered through Dec. 8 in Manchester, NH (E. Staub); Dec. 2 at Lake Fairlee, VT (†F. & E. Pratt); through mid-December at 2 sites in Massachusetts (*fide RHS*); and through Dec. 2 in Cumberland, RI (D. Kowal); but most amazing was one in Brewster, MA, Jan. 27 (SH *et al.*, *fide BN*). Single Ospreys in Goff, NH, Feb. 27 (B. Gannon) and Lakeville, MA, Feb. 25 (M. Murphy), although probably very early migrants, must have wintered not too far away. Bald Eagle totals on the national survey in January were somewhat lower this year, presumably because the birds were less concentrated in the ice-free conditions.

Sharp-shinned Hawks have become routine in winter throughout most of the Region, but Cooper's Hawks drew comments from far and wide, and terrorized many a bird feeder. Although Regional totals are impossible to enumerate accurately, representative were totals from w. Massachusetts where 33 Cooper's were reported compared with 55 Sharp-shinneds (*fide SK*). A dozen or more mid-winter Red-shouldered Hawks in s. New England were encouraging, and one was as far north as Brunswick, ME, in January; by mid-February, residents had returned to several locales. Although Red-tailed Hawks were scarcely mentioned for the most part, the annual raptor survey in Hampshire Co., MA, Feb. 9, located 72 birds, more than double their previous 10-year high (*fide SK*). An "albino" Red-tailed in the Montpelier, VT,

area in January (S. Conway *et al.*) must have been a striking sight. Rough-legged Hawks were rather scarce in Maine and New Hampshire, but numerous in the Champlain valley of Vermont where up to 11/day were reported (v.o.), and parts of Massachusetts where daily peaks included eight in Bridgewater Jan. 13 (KH) and seven in Marshfield Jan. 25 (MM). Four Rough-leggeds made it to Connecticut and five to Rhode Island.

As usual, a Golden Eagle wintered at Quabbin, MA (*fide SK*), but the only other was an immature found shot in North Hero, VT, Jan. 2 (T. Lynch *et al.*). Five Merlins in w. Massachusetts was "very unusual" (SK). The Regionwide total of 20+ Peregrine Falcons was indicative of that species' continued well-being. Gyrfalcons were reported from Plum I., MA, Dec. 2 (†R. Bradbury *et al.*); Chatham, MA, Dec. 15 (P. Bailey); Bridport, VT, Jan. 13 (B. Rist); and Provincetown, MA, Feb. 4 (G. Martin).

MOORHEN TO ALCIDS

A Com. Moorhen survived until at least Feb. 14 on Nantucket (JP) and another was in Chatham, MA, through Jan. 19 (WRP *et al.*). American Coots were found in the best numbers in several years: 22 in Rockland, ME, through Jan. 31 (B. Cadbury); a maximum of 260 at their Regional stronghold in Plymouth, MA (SP *et al.*); a peak of 49 on Nantucket (JP); and 64 in Litchfield, CT, Dec. 12–14 (DR). A Sandhill Crane, present since October, remained through the winter in Belchertown, MA (*fide SK*), and another was in Salisbury and nearby Canaan, CT, Jan. 27–Feb. 16 (NC *et al.*).

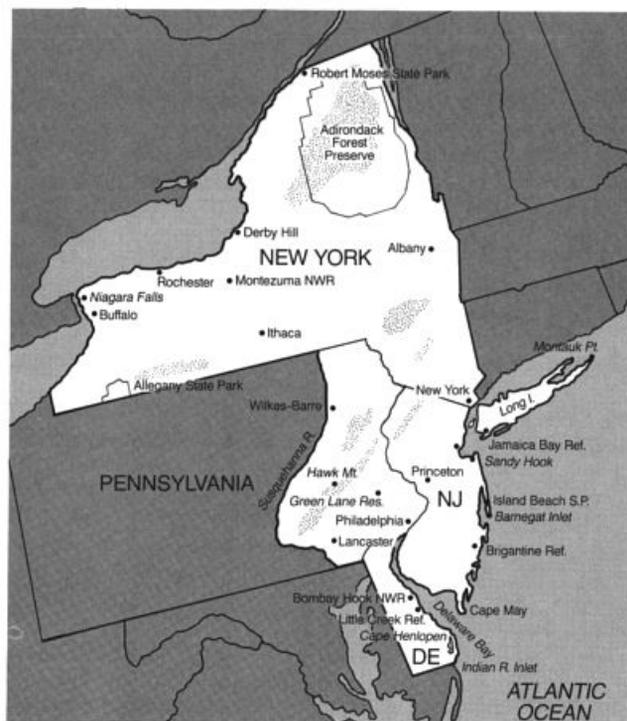
Despite the favorable weather, shorebirds made a poor showing, emphasizing that, for any bird, the bottom line is food supply, not weather—and the two are often not correlated. Wintering Greater Yellowlegs included 10 at 5 sites in Massachusetts during January (*fide GdE*) and at least four at 3 sites in Connecticut through Feb. 5 (*fide BK*). Two W. Sandpipers in Winthrop, MA, Dec. 4 (TA) were late, as were five Long-billed Dowitchers on Plum I. Dec. 6 (W. Drew *et al.*) Twelve Com. Snipe were

stragglers at 3 sites in w. Massachusetts during December (*fide SK*), and one through February in Plymouth, VT (L. Maurer) was apparently a successful winterer—most unusual at that latitude. Displaying Am. Woodcock in both Chatham and Salem, MA, Feb. 9, were rushing the season (BN, JB).

Rarest larid of this non-winter was a first-winter Franklin's Gull in Weekapaug, RI, Dec. 10–13 (†CR, MMu). Single Little Gulls were reported from 3 sites in Massachusetts and one site in Rhode Island, while Com. Black-headed Gulls numbered three in Maine, one in New Hampshire, 21+ in Massachusetts (a peak of 15 at the traditional Winthrop site), and two in Connecticut. Numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls often linger into early winter, but typically disappear once the weather turns severe; 800 on Nantucket through January were atypical.

Unprecedented in the Region was the occurrence of two ad. Mew Gulls together in Winthrop, MA, in February (RHS, †JB *et al.*); at least one of these birds was present as early as December 16 (SP). Another Mew Gull wintered again in Quincy, MA (RA *et al.*), and one was reported from Newburyport, MA, Feb. 10 (S. Mirick). Both Iceland and Glaucous gulls were scarcer than usual in w. Massachusetts, attributed to the gradual closing of dumps (*fide SK*)—another price we'll have to pay for a cleaner environment! A Lesser Black-backed Gull was in Hinsdale, NH, Feb. 24 (†WGE *et al.*), while six were noted in Massachusetts, and three or four in Connecticut.

Dovekies were well represented in December, with counts of up to seven from many coastal sites in Massachusetts, and two made it as far south as Rhode Island. A southeasterly blow Dec. 4 generated a "mini-wreck" of these diminutive alcids in Maine and New Hampshire; in Maine, numerous reports included several as far as 50 mi inland, and another was found in Warren, NH (T. Sears), just south of the White Mts! At least several Com. Murres, all in Massachusetts and most in Provincetown, was somewhat more than normal. Scattered reports of one to two Thick-billed Murres from Maine to Rhode Island was nor-



Wildlife Ref., Atlantic Co., NJ;
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winter throughout most of the Region, staging its biggest invasion in a decade or so. Crude totals by state were: Maine, 27; New Hampshire, 34; Vermont, 35+; Massachusetts, 110+; Rhode Island, 4; and Connecticut, 13.

WARBLERS TO SPARROWS

Nothing exemplified the season's temperateness more than the appearance of 14 species of warblers. This potpourri of procrastinating parulids was highlighted by a Nashville Warbler in S. Boston, MA, Jan. 5 (KR); a ♂ Black-throated Blue in Norfolk, MA, on the incredible date of Jan. 17 (B. Rothwell, *vide* WRP); a Black-throated Green in Chatham, MA, Dec. 6 (W. Bailey); a Prairie on Nantucket Dec. 31-Jan. 1 (DB *et al.*); Ovenbirds in Springfield, MA, Dec. 9-15 (*vide* SK) and Hookset, NH, Jan. 5-29 (†R. Novack); a N. Waterthrush in Waltham, MA, Dec. 2 (LT); and a Wilson's on Nantucket Dec. 29 (SP *et al.*). Curiously, the only Orange-crowned Warbler(s) were one or two birds on Nantucket Dec. 29-Jan. 1 (KJ *et al.*); a decade ago this was one of the more regular of the lingering warblers in s. coastal areas, but it has become increasingly difficult to find at this season. Yellow-rumped Warblers were extremely scarce along the coast, but three in Lewiston, ME, Jan. 15 (D. Anderson) and one in Bloomfield, VT, Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (D. Killam *et al.*) were unusual in interior n. New England. A few Pine Warblers regularly overwinter in s. coastal sections, but one at a feeder in Fairfield, ME, Jan. 6 & 13 (W. & B. Sumner) and another in Springfield, VT, Dec. 15-31 (W. Elton) were in noteworthy locales. Palm Warbler is another species that regularly remains in small numbers along the s. coast until snow covers the ground, but four in Eastham, MA, Jan. 15 (KH) and one in Osterville, MA, Feb. 13 (PH) were notable survivors. Post-CBC period Yellow-breasted Chats included five in Massachusetts, the latest in S. Dartmouth Feb. 24 (MB), and one or two in Jamestown, RI, as late as Feb. 12-18 (W. Gardner).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported, without details, in Holyoke, MA, Dec. 16-23 (D. McLain, *vide* SK). A ♂ Painted Bunting again overwintered in

Old Lyme, CT (*vide* BK), and another appeared in N. Falmouth, MA, Dec. 10-14 (M. McCloskey, v.o.).

A good, though unspectacular, number and variety of sparrows overwintered. Clay-colored Sparrows were found at 4 sites in Massachusetts and one was in Wakefield, RI, Feb. 27-28 (JO *et al.*). Up to 12 Chipping Sparrows were in Yarmouth, MA during February (KH), but virtually no others were reported. Single Vesper Sparrows were found at 2 sites in Massachusetts and at one in Rhode Island, and Lark Sparrows were in Sandwich, MA, Dec. 13 (PT) and Northampton, MA, Jan. 23-Feb. 3 (T. Gagnon, v.o.). Good numbers of Savannah Sparrows included up to 57 in Hadley, MA, a record winter count in that area (*vide* SK). Grasshopper Sparrows were unearthed in Portland, ME, Jan. 10-11 (†R. Eakin *et al.*) and Chester, VT, Dec. 30-Jan. 3 (†T. Johnson, ph.), and good details were provided for a Lincoln's Sparrow in Springfield, VT, Jan. 13 (†L. Sneddon, L. Master); less convincing was a Lincoln's reported at a feeder in Clinton, ME, Jan. 28.

LONGSPURS TO FINCHES

Some good counts of Lapland Longspurs included 40 in Gouldsboro, ME, Feb. 15 (F. Young) and in Massachusetts, 80 in Newbury Dec. 5 (SP *et al.*), 50+ on Plum I. Jan. 26 (WRP), and 50 in Halifax Jan. 27 (KSA). Snow Buntings were numerous inland though less so than last winter, but very scarce along the coast. There seemed to be more wintering Red-winged Blackbirds than usual, particularly in interior s. New England, and a widespread arrival of spring migrants was evident throughout the Region Feb. 22-24. Eastern Meadowlarks were found in the best numbers in years: in Massachusetts, 147+ were reported, with a high of 40 in Middleboro Feb. 22 (*vide* RHS); in Rhode Island, 104 were noted in December (DE). Rusty Blackbirds were virtually all in Massachusetts, where 120+ were reported at 10 sites. Both Com. Grackles and Brown-headed Cowbirds wintered in above average numbers and, like Red-wingeds, began migrating in numbers Feb. 22-24

It was the worst winter in a long, long time for winter finches. Pine Grosbeaks were reported only twice in Maine, 3 times in New Hampshire, once in Vermont, and on 5 occasions in Massachusetts. Purple Finches were again hard to find throughout the Region. Red Crossbills concentrated (to use the term very loosely) in w. Massachusetts, where the largest of 10+ flocks was 37 birds at Quabbin (GdE); in n. New England, there was only one report each from New Hampshire and Maine, and none from Vermont. Incredibly, there were no White-winged Crossbills reported from either Maine or New Hampshire, and only one sighting in Vermont, but a total of 32 were at 4 sites in Massachusetts. Inexplicably, half of the (very few) Com. Redpoll reports came from Connecticut, a total of 12 birds at 4 sites; elsewhere, there were only 2 reports from New Hampshire, one report each from Maine and Massachusetts, and none from Vermont or Rhode Island. Small flocks of Pine Siskins were sparsely scattered across the interior of the Region and modest numbers of Evening Grosbeaks were present at higher elevations inland, but both species were virtually absent from the coastal plain.

Sub-regional editors (boldface), contributors (italics), and observers: Robert Abrams, Kathleen S. Anderson, Tom Aversa, Jim Berry, Mike Boucher, Richard Bowen, David Brown, Cape Cod Bird Club, Neil Currie, Walter G. Ellison, Glen d'Entremont, Diane De Luca, Alan & Barbara Delorey, Jody Despres, David Emerson, Jeff Fengler, Richard A. Forster, Kay Gammons, Richard Gee, Ida Giriunas, George W. Gove, Ken Hamilton, H. W. Heusman, Seward Higley, David J. Hoag, Karen Holmes, Peter Hunt, Kyle Jones, Seth Kellogg, Betty Kleiner, Douglas L. Kraus, Vernon Laux, Mark Lynch, Mike Maurer, Mary Murray (MMu), Julie M. Nichols, Jim Osborn, Jackie Papale, Simon A. Perkins, Wayne R. Petersen, Chris Raithel, David Rosgen, Kevin Ryan, Robert H. Stymeist, Lee Taylor, William Townsend, Peter Trimble, Vermont Institute of Natural Science, Peter Yeskie.—BLAIR NIKULA, 2 Gilbert Lane, Harwich Port, MA 02646.

HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION

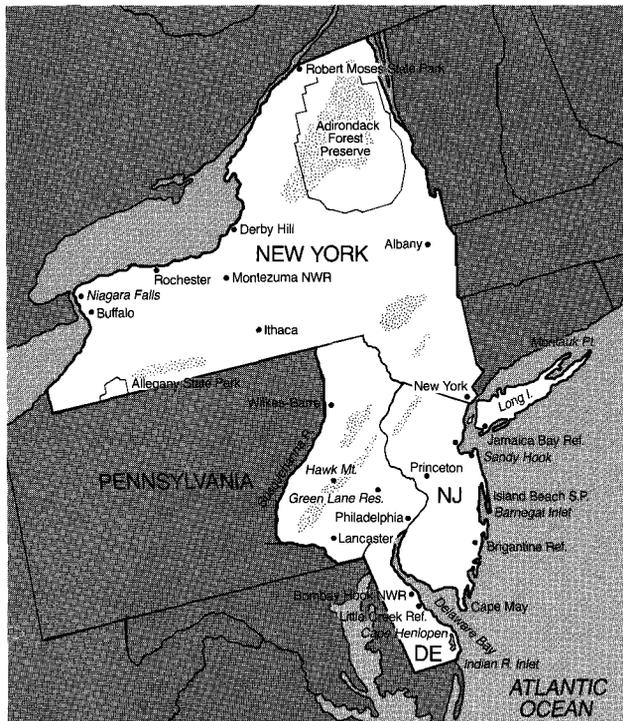
William J. Boyle, Jr.,
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The Region experienced one of the warmest winters on record and some of the best birding in years. Continuing the trend from the fall, December was warm and wet. Temperatures averaged well above normal in Buffalo (up 5.5°), Rochester (+4.8°), and New York City (+6.4°), where it was the third warmest December on record and the thermometer hit 60 or more on seven days. Precipitation was about 50% above normal, although most of it fell as rain, except in western New York. January was closer to average, but February brought another heat wave. Rochester was six degrees above normal and New York City almost seven, hitting record highs on four consecutive days in the first week, including a balmy 70° on the fifth.

The mild weather left fresh water open over most of the Region, and even lakes Erie and Ontario remained partially open. As a consequence, waterfowl were widespread in good numbers and great diversity. Landbirds were hard to find as good food crops combined with the climate to keep them well dispersed, but good numbers of half-hardy migrants remained for the season. Winter finches were virtually nonexistent.

One of the highlights of the season was the biggest acid flight in more than fifty years, apparently owing to the presence of abundant schools of fish. Some of the usual winter attractions, such as white-winged gulls and Snowy Owls, were relatively scarce, but a long list of rarities prompted Rich Kane, the voice of New Jersey Audubon Society's hot-line, to call this "the mother of all winters," borrowing a phrase from events transpiring in another part of the world.

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Male Harlequin Duck at Indian River Inlet, Delaware, January 27, 1991. Photograph/Colin D. Campbell.

Delaware, where one or two wintered at Indian River (WWF, APE). Five were on Lake Ontario from Manitou, *Monroe*, to Pt. Peninsula, *Jefferson*, NY, in January and February, and a single made the Massena CBC. Harlequin Ducks were similarly distributed, but with no concentration at Montauk; up to 15 were at Barnegat Light, *Ocean*, NJ, and one to two were at Indian River in January (WWF, NH, ph. CC). At least three were found along Lake Ontario in January, and one wintered at the Moses-Saunders Dam.

A White-winged Scoter was an unusual mid-winter find on the Susquehanna R., *Lancaster*, PA, Jan. 12–13 (SSa), but others wintered on the Great Lakes. Barrow's Goldeneyes occurred in record numbers, but all in New York. Six, four males and two females, were present in such diverse areas as Three Mile Harbor, *Suffolk*, Jan. 29 to late February (JA *et al.*); *Bronx*, New York City, Jan. 19 to February (SW, m.ob.); Staten Island Jan. 12–14 (BC); Rye, Feb. 24–Mar. 19 (TWB *et al.*); Au Sable Point, *Clinton*, on Lake Champlain Jan. 19 (C. & H. Hess); and two at Moses-Saunders Dam Dec. 9 (BD).

RAPTORS

Raptors, especially Turkey Vultures, N. Harriers, and Red-tailed Hawks, were present in excellent numbers throughout

the s. half of the Region. Black Vultures even made mid-winter forays into s. New York, with 3 reports of three or four birds in *Orange* and *Rockland*. A survey of *Salem*, NJ, Feb. 3, turned up 1166 raptors of 10 species, the majority Turkey Vultures. A late Osprey was at Ables Pond, *Dutchess*, NY, Dec. 5 (B. Butler), while three were noted in interior New Jersey in mid-December; most unusual was one at Lake Ontelaunee, PA, Jan. 29 (D. Gemmill, J. Galm).

Bald Eagle reports were too numerous to tally (approaching 200), but the spring report will carry news of increased nesting. Indication of the continuing recovery is given by the estimated 82 wintering on the upper Delaware of New York and 30–35 in s. New Jersey. As noted above, N. Harriers wintered in above average numbers, and roosts were found in many places. Some of the more impressive roosts, all on the ground in farm fields, included up to 20 at Alpha, *Warren* (GH), 35 at Point Breeze, *Hunterdon*, NJ (J. DeMarras), and a spectacular 90–110 at Pine Island, *Orange*, NY, Jan. 13 & 15 (SA); the latter group dispersed following a snowstorm on the 16th.

At least eight to 10 N. Goshawks were around Cape May during the season, and three ventured into n. Delaware's *New Castle*, including an adult that visited a Centerville feeder 5 times Feb. 16–24 (E. & S. Speck). Rough-legged Hawks wintered in moderate numbers, except at the upper end of Lake Ontario, where up to 100 per day could be found in the Pt. Salubrious-Pt. Peninsula region of *Jefferson* (*vide* KLC).

Merlins appear to be changing their wintering habits in this Region; whereas 10–15 years ago inland records in mid-winter would be viewed with great skepticism, such sightings, correctly identified, are becoming almost commonplace. There were about 18 reports from New Jersey, two-thirds of them away from the immediate coast and some representing birds seen repeatedly at favored sites. There were a dozen reports from New York, including six from such upstate locations as *Dutchess*, *Albany*, *Rochester*, *Buffalo* (Jan. 14–Feb. 26), and even Cape Vincent at the n. end of Lake Ontario. In

contrast to last winter, not a single Gyrfalcon was detected.

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

A Black Rail was seen at Tobay Sanctuary, L.I., Dec. 2 (J. & E. Casper); so little is known about migratory dates and wintering habits of this species that it's hard to judge the significance of this late record. With the mild season, numerous rails, mainly Virginias, were noted on CBCs. The most unusual member of the family to occur was a Eurasian Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) that appeared in suburban Wilmington, DE, Dec. 5 and fed and roosted on the property of a neighborhood church for 2 weeks (R. Varner, m.ob.). Thought to be either a molting sub-adult and/or from one of the Middle Eastern subspecies, its origins (boat-assisted, escapee, or vagrant) will likely remain a mystery.

American Oystercatchers continue to overwinter in increasing numbers; Cape May had a record 254 on the CBC, 35 were still present at Stone Harbor, NJ, Jan. 23, and one was at Jones Beach, L.I., Feb. 4. Bombay Hook still held 50 Am. Avocets Dec. 1, although numbers rapidly diminished thereafter, but six were still present in early January (NH); one was at Wilmington Dec. 15, and another was at Mannington Marsh, *Salem*, NJ, in mid-February, an unusual winter record (RJB, BM).

An extremely late Solitary Sandpiper was discovered in Newton, NJ, Dec. 16–17 (S. & W. Wander). Later still was a Spotted Sandpiper in Rye, NY, Jan. 26 (J. Stanley). A Marbled Godwit was a highlight of the Oceanville, NJ, CBC, Dec. 15. Among the many wintering dowitchers, those identified were termed Long-billed.

SKUAS TO ALCIDIS

Two Great Skuas seen at close range from a fishing boat 15 mi east of Cape Henlopen Feb. 10 would provide a first for Delaware, if accepted by the state records committee (†CC, ES, JS). Details were also submitted for a Great Skua seen from land at Manasquan Inlet Feb. 15 (†JZ). Little Gulls remained through the winter in upstate New York; up to 13 were at

Durand-Eastman Park, *Rochester*, in early January, while about four were in the Niagara area at the same time and a single was at Dunkirk on Lake Erie. Three were seen on Long Island and one or two around *Cape May* in December, while a pair was at Indian River Jan. 3 (NH).

Bonaparte's Gulls peaked at about 40,000 at the Niagara River mouth Dec. 8, but unusually large numbers remained for the winter, with 15,000 there Jan. 19. A Thayer's Gull was at the Moses-Saunders Dam Dec. 2 (BD), but impressive numbers of Iceland Gulls were there later in the season, with 32 counted Jan. 19 and 67 Feb. 6 (BD). Elsewhere, there were about a dozen along the Great Lakes and about eight on Long Island, including an unpigmented bird, resembling the nominate race, that has wintered at Shinnecock Inlet since 1987. There were nine reports from New Jersey, but only two from Delaware at the Wilmington Dump, that also produced the state's only Glaucous Gull of the winter Jan. 26 (JS, CC *et al.*).

Lesser Black-backed Gulls were again present in good numbers in all parts of the Region, including an impressive 11 on the *Lower Bucks*, PA, CBC, and a first *Berks*, PA, record on the Reading CBC. An unprecedented mid-winter Forster's Tern was at Dunkirk Harbor on Lake Erie Jan. 3–6 (D. Klayborn, m.ob.).

This was the Winter of the Alcids from Montauk to Indian River, with the biggest flight since the 1930s. All six eastern alcids were found in New Jersey, while New York had three and Delaware two. A Dovekie washed ashore at Monmouth Beach, *Monmouth*, NJ, Dec. 4 to start the influx, and was taken to a rehabilitation center. One on the Montauk CBC was the first since 1980, while the S. *Nassau*, L.I., count also recorded one. Although there were some December reports of unidentified murre, one to two Thick-billed Murres were regular at Manasquan Inlet from early January to mid-February (m.ob.), and a Common Murre was with one of the Thick-billeds Jan. 21 (KK) & 24. At least two other Com. Murres and several Thick-billeds were reported by the NJ Audubon hotline. In



Thick-billed Murre at Manasquan Inlet, New Jersey, February 10, 1991. This was New Jersey's best alcid winter in decades. Photograph/Alan Brady.

Delaware, two Thick-billed Murres were at Indian River Feb. 9, for the 2nd state record (JS, BL, APE).

Razorbills were widely reported in impressive numbers. Twenty-eight on the Montauk CBC was the highest since 1931, while 24 at Island Beach S.P., NJ, Jan. 5 was the top land-based count in New Jersey. Off-shore counts included 88 seen 2-4 mi off Sea Isle City, NJ, Feb. 28 (DW). In Delaware, one Razorbill was at Indian River in mid-January, but unprecedented was a flock of 15 in the surf at Cape Henlopen Feb. 9 (BL); 20+ were seen on the pelagic trip off the Cape the following day (CC, ES, JS).

The rarest of the alcids in New Jersey, **Black Guillemot**, was a surprise visitor to Sandy Hook Jan. 20 (CS, PS, VE); it was seen to fly in, rest a few minutes, then take off to the south, where what was probably the same bird was seen at Manasquan Inlet an hour later (†LL, S. Lipschutz *et al.*). What may have again been the same bird was reported from Manasquan Inlet a week later (A. Schreck, L. Fields). An unconfirmed report was received of a Black Guillemot seen briefly at Jones Beach, L.I., Jan. 13 (*vide* B. Spencer). Rounding out the list, an **Atlantic Puffin** was seen from a boat 8 mi off Cape May Feb. 23 (M. Fritz *et al.*).

DOVES TO WRENS

A **White-winged Dove** visited a feeder in Tuckerton, *Ocean*, NJ, Dec. 31-Jan. 1 and was identifiably photographed (ph. J. Bauer); there are only 3 previous records for New Jersey, all within

the past decade. A couple of dozen Snowy Owls were found in upstate New York, but only a six made it to the s. part of the state (two in *Dutchess*, four on Long Island), and just three were located in New Jersey, including two that wintered at Island Beach S.P. Three Snowies wintered in e. Pennsylvania, with two at the Allentown-Bethlehem Airport all season.

The bird of the season in Pennsylvania was a **Northern**



Birders came from near and far to view this Northern Hawk Owl near Lookout, Pennsylvania, in February 1991. It furnished the first definite record for the state in over a century. Photograph/Randy C. Miller.

Hawk Owl discovered on a farm in the Pocono Mts., near Lookout, *Wayne*, Feb. 17; by the following weekend hundreds of birders converged on the scene from hundreds of miles away to view this typically tame and usually cooperative vagrant (T. Gauld, m.m.ob.). Discussions with the farmer, who set up a concession stand to take advantage of the influx of visitors, revealed that the bird had been present since late October; it was last seen March 17. This was the first fully documented record for Pennsylvania in more than a century. Two other N. Hawk Owls were seen briefly in upstate New York, where they are more frequent; one was at Hamlin Beach, *Monroe*, Jan. 27 (RO), and another was sitting atop a tree beside the Adirondack Northway (I-87) just north of the Warrensburg exit the same day (J. Burgiel). Another rare visitor, a **Great Gray Owl**, visited a yard near Elizabethtown, *Essex*, NY,

Jan. 29 and Feb. 12 (H. & S. Kurtenbach).

Other wintering owls were in above average numbers. Up to 30 Short-eared Owls wintered at the Pine Island, *Orange*, NY, sod farms (SA), seven were at a farm in *Wyoming*, PA, and many were in their usual haunts along the coast of New Jersey and Delaware. Northern Saw-wet Owls were widely reported, including seven in the *Lehigh*, PA, area, where young Jason Horn started off the year right with seven species of owls Jan. 1.

Vying with Hawk Owl for bird of the season in e. Pennsylvania was an *Empidonax* discovered on the S. Lancaster County CBC Dec. 15 (J. Meloney, H. Morrin). Relocated the next morning, it was studied, photographed, and tape recorded, then identified as **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** (B & FH, RMS, SSa, L. Lewis *et al.*); fortunately, the bird remained through Dec. 26 to be enjoyed by many. If accepted by the Pennsylvania Records Committee, as seems likely, it would constitute the first state record and first confirmed record east of the Mississippi. Eastern Phoebes took advantage of mild weather to winter in good numbers, including a few as far north as the Albany, NY, area (*vide* KA). Single W. Kingbirds were on the S. *Nassau* and Captree CBCs, on Long Island, and another was at Sandy Hook Dec. 9-Jan. 1 (GW *et al.*).

The **Black-billed Magpie** at Montauk, noted in the fall report, remained to mid-March (m.ob.). Fish Crows continue their expansion up the major rivers, a few wintering as far north as Schenectady, NY (RPY). Fourteen Com. Ravens near Claryville, NY, Jan. 4 were part of the growing Catskill population (J. Weise *et al.*). The major movement of Black-capped Chickadees that started in fall reached as far south as Wilmington, DE, and *Cumberland*, NJ, but no Boreal Chickadees came south with them.

Tufted Titmice are continuing to increase in upstate New York, e.g., Buffalo and Schenectady, as are Carolina Wrens, one of which was singing in Canton, *St. Lawrence*, all winter (KLC). A House Wren was in Mount Olive, *Morris*, NJ, Jan. 6 (DH), and several were on CBCs in New Jersey and Long Island.

Winter Wrens were in good numbers throughout, and seem to be recovering from earlier declines. A Sedge Wren on the Montauk CBC was the 3rd for the count and first since 1937; one was found in Cape May Dec. 1 (VE, BB), and another at Hansey Creek, *Cumberland*, NJ, Feb. 21 (JDo).

THRUSHES TO WARBLERS

The only reports of Varied Thrush also came from New York; one spent the winter at a Napanock, *Ulster*, feeder (B. & M. Edleman, m.ob.), and another was at Letchworth S.P. Dec. 16 (B. Mongi, S. Skelly). Taking advantage of the mild season, Gray Catbirds wintered as far north as w. New York at Fredonia, East Aurora, and Greece, while Brown Thrashers, rarer still in winter, also remained for the season at Olean, Greece, and even Cape Vincent.

The highlight in New Jersey was a **Bohemian Waxwing** discovered at Sandy Hook Feb. 3, and enjoyed by many through Feb. 18 (S. Komito, m.ob.). This was only the 6th for New Jersey, all within the past 40 years, and the first since 1977 to linger for multiple viewers. Northern Shrikes staged a major invasion into New Jersey, with at least 10 reports, including individuals present for months at Pennington, *Mercer*; Thompson Park, *Monmouth*; Barbour Pond, *Wayne*; and Sandy Hook. One was present for several weeks in *Lancaster*, PA (J. Heller), and another was seen in the same area as the Hawk Owl Feb. 21-25 (v.o.). Upstate New York reported above average numbers, especially early in the season.

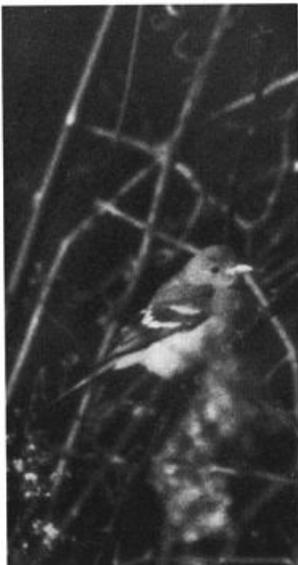
Among eight species of warblers found on New York City CBCs, a Tennessee Warbler was an outstanding find for the Bronx-Westchester CBC, Dec. 23 (J. Moyle). Orange-crowned Warbler numbers were far above normal; 14 were found on two Long Island and four New Jersey CBCs, one was at an *Ulster*, NY, feeder from late December to mid-January (N. April), and another wintered in N. Chili, near Rochester (M. Lanzone). An Orange-crowned again wintered at the Eatontown Arboretum, *Monmouth*, NJ, where it was joined by Pine Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and N. Ori-

ole (NK). More unusual was a Nashville Warbler that visited a feeder in Landisville, Lancaster, PA, from mid-February into March (T. Kauffman, v.o.). A very late Black-throated Blue Warbler was in W. Cape May, Dec. 9 (L. Zemaitis-Smith).

A Pine Warbler visited a Dutchess, NY, feeder for the 2nd winter in a row (F. Germond), while a late Am. Redstart stopped at a feeder in Princeton, NJ, Dec. 3 (T. Southerland). Unusual warblers noted on New York CBCs, in addition to the Tennessee, were Black-and-white Warbler and Ovenbird, both in Central Park, and a Northern Waterthrush on the Queens CBC (*fide* B. Dieterich). Yellow-breasted Chat was a new species for the Hamburg, PA, CBC, while a wintering bird was at the Baxter Tract, New Castle, DE, Jan. 26 (MVB, J. Russell).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A Western Tanager discovered in Central Park, NYC, Dec. 1 survived to make the Lower Hudson CBC, but was found dead Dec. 27 (J. Mora *et al.*). Another W. Tanager was in N. Cape May Jan. 15 only (JDo, ph. CS, KS). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited



Western Tanager at North Cape May, New Jersey, January 15, 1991. Photograph/Clay Sutton.

a feeder in Harmony, NJ, Dec. 28–30 (R. Farley, B. Lorentz). Two Dickcissels were found on the Elmer, NJ, CBC, and one wintered at Higbee Beach W.M.A., Cape May. Rufous-sided Towhees wintered in small

numbers as far north as the Niagara River, Elba, and Cazenovia, all in upstate New York. A male of the western "spotted" form was at Conesus Lake, Livingston, NY, Dec. 22 (DS, J. Skelly).

Chipping Sparrows also wintered in small numbers throughout the Region, and were actually fairly common in the south. A Clay-colored Sparrow discovered at Lawrenceville, NJ, during the Princeton CBC Dec. 15, was still present the next day (RJB, BM); although regular in fall along the coast, there are few winter records. The same can be said of Lark Sparrow, but one was at a feeder near Lyndell, Chester, PA, Jan. 3–6 (*fide* AH), while another was with a flock of juncos in Clarksboro, Gloucester, NJ, Feb. 4 into March (R. Steelman, m.ob.). The "Gray-headed" Dark-eyed Junco found at Hamlin Beach S.P., NY, Feb. 9 was surely the one seen there in November (RGS).

Lapland Longspurs were hard to find, especially with the lack of snow cover. Two made it as far south as Bombay Hook, but the maximum at St. Charles Cemetery, Farmingdale, L.I., was only 22 in February (SW); on the other hand, observers found a major invasion at the n. end of Lake Ontario (*fide* KLC). Two others were in a flock of 200+ Snow Buntings at Meshoppen, Wyoming, PA, Feb. 18 (WR). Snow Buntings were found in fair numbers as far south as Bombay Hook, but nothing approaching the 3000+ at Caledonia, Livingston, NY, Jan. 28 (F. Dobson).

Large flocks of wintering blackbirds produced interesting finds in Salem, NJ, including about 10 Yellow-headed Blackbirds. But the big story involved Brewer's Blackbird. Before last winter, when eight showed up in Cape May, there were only a few confirmed records for New Jersey. This season one was found in Woodstown, Salem, Dec. 2 (WDa) and three were in Cape May, Dec. 8 (A. Keith), but on Jan. 20 a flock of 50 was discovered at Ft. Elfsborg near the town of Salem; numbers varied, but some of these birds were seen through March (P. & A. Guris, m.ob.). Across the river at Leipsic, Kent, DE, where Brewer's have been seen almost annually for more than 30 years, a record flock of 110 was found (JCM,

m.ob.). Finally, two males were seen off and on through the season at a feeder in Easton, PA (A. Koch *et al.*).

With all of the other activity noted above, perhaps it is just as well that this was not a winter finch year. In most places, winter finches were nonexistent. Other than a flock of 45–50 Pine Grosbeaks at Massena, St. Lawrence, NY, Jan. 2 (*fide* KLC), there were only 5 other reports of small groups, all in upstate New York. Small flocks of Red Crossbills were likewise mostly in the north, although a few made it to Long Island and six were along the Delaware River at Dingman's Ferry, NJ, Feb. 1 (DB). The four reports of White-winged Crossbill were all from upstate New York, while the seven reports of Com. Redpoll included one from New Jersey, two from Pennsylvania, and the rest from New York. Evening Grosbeaks were uncommon to rare, except in the Adirondacks.

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MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Henry T. Armistead

On the heels of a mild fall this winter was exceptionally mild also with temperatures above normal in December (+6.1° F.), January (+3.5), and February (+5.3). Combined with low snowfall and brief, unsustained cold snaps, the effect was for many birds to linger, especially herons, some shorebirds, phoebes, warblers, and wrens. Reports of many species normally driven out by cold, such as loons, gannets, pelicans, Ospreys, Least Sandpipers, and Tree Swallows, were above average. Combined with an excellent gull winter, a good flight of Rough-legged Hawks and Short-eared Owls, and invasions of alcids and Northern Shrikes, this was an interesting winter, in spite of yet another year without a flight of northern finches. Precipitation was only slightly above average during December and January but 2.3 inches below the norm for February.

Abbreviations: Assat (*Assateague I., MD*); Back Bay (*Back Bay Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MD*); the Bay (*Chesapeake Bay*); Blackwater (*Blackwater Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MD*); C.B.B.T. (*Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel, VA*); Chinc. (*Chincoteague Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA*); Craney (*Craney Island Disposal Area, Portsmouth, VA*); D.C. (*Washington, D.C.*); Fish I. (*Fisherman Island Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA*); Hart (*Hart & Miller Islands in the Bay e. of Baltimore*); Susq. (*lower Susquehanna R./Conowingo Dam, MD*). Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS TO IBISES

Notable inland were three Red-throated Loons at Seneca, MD, Dec. 1 (MO, PO). A spectacular flight took place off Assat, Feb. 11 when 3000 were estimated (MO, HLW *et al.*). Common Loons lingered in record numbers up the Bay as indicated by CBCs, and 172 also set a record for the Ocean



City CBC Dec. 28 (CSR). Far inland at Kerr Res., VA, 17 were found Dec. 16 (BP). Portlock found 71 on the lower Rappahannock R. in tidewater Virginia Jan. 5. Horned Grebes continue to manifest pathetic totals compared to their numbers in the mid-1970s and earlier, with Wilson's 105 at Craney Dec. 10 the highest count received. There were six reports of Red-necked Grebes from 5 sites, mostly in February, including one at Patuxent N.A.S., MD, Feb. 20 and two there Feb. 27 (KR). Always rare, single Eared Grebes were seen at Ocean City on 3 dates Jan. 14–Feb. 16 (BL, MO, EB), and one was at Craney Dec. 6 (SR).

At sea off Virginia Beach, 18 Manx Shearwaters Feb. 2 (BP, KHB *et al.*) apparently set a record state total. Northern Gannets were in record winter numbers in the mid Bay with nine on the Crisfield, MD, CBC Dec. 27. Owing to the mildness, 36 were already at N. Beach Feb. 27, almost as far up the Bay as Annapolis (JLS). Tremendous numbers overwintered in the Virginia Capes area with reports such as 5000 Feb. 14 (C & DB) and 6000 Feb. 23 (SR) from C.B.B.T., plus "thousands" off Rudee Inlet, VA, Feb. 1–2 (SHD).

An Am. White Pelican, by now practically a classic fixture there, was at Chinc. most of the winter (VBK, JFF, m.ob.). Brown Pelicans made the best

showing ever in the Virginia Capes area with 64 at Little Creek CBC Dec. 31, 26 at Back Bay CBC Dec. 28, two up the James R. near Yorktown Jan. 1 (BW), five at C.B.B.T. Feb. 14 (CRV, C & DB), and four up the coast at Chinc. Feb. 22 (JJF).

No doubt owing to mild weather, this was a better than average winter for herons. An Am. Bittern at Lilypons, MD, was unusual for the Piedmont Jan. 20–Feb. 11 (LMD, MI, EMW *et al.*). Great Egrets lingered, in some cases, through the winter in high numbers, such as four at D.C. Dec. 16 (*vide* JB), one on the Piedmont at Nokesville, VA, Dec. 12 (KHB), a record 10 at Crisfield CBC Dec. 27 (*vide* CRV), 32 at Cape Charles CBC Dec. 27 (HTA *et al.*), and six were at Elliott I., MD, Feb. 18 (LMD). The only non-CBC Little Blue Heron was one at Chinc. Jan. 19–20 (EMW). Deal I. continues to be the outstanding winter heron locale for Maryland, with totals of two Snowy Egrets, 60 Tricolored Herons, and 80 Black-crowned Night-Herons plus four Glossy Ibises Dec. 18 (MO, RV). Black-crowned Night-Herons continue to decline as winterers on the Virginia coast, with low numbers on CBCs there. Single White and Glossy ibises were at Fish I. Dec. 27 (MAB, DD), and Vaughn found a Glossy at Wallops I., VA, Feb. 12.

WATERFOWL

Mildness was also responsible for low numbers and late arrivals of many waterfowl, although there were outstanding counts of some species. Single Greater White-fronted Geese were at 5 localities including the first ever for *Caroline, MD*, Dec. 18 (MWH, SW *et al.*). Snow Geese continue in stupendous supply on the Maryland E. Shore with 20,000 at Sudlersville Jan. 1 (J & PF); the peak count of "Blues" was at their *festung* of Blackwater, where 1400 were on the CBC Dec. 26 (CSR *et al.*). An errant Brant was at Blackwater Dec. 10 (MO). Single *hutchinsii* Canada Geese were reported from Laytonsville, *Montgomery, Feb. 1 (MO)* and Church Hill, *Queen Annes, Feb. 20 (J & PG)*, and several other small birds were suspected *hutchinsii* also.

Hart had some exceptional waterfowl counts, including 1000 Green-winged Teal and 20,000 scaup (mostly Lessers) Dec. 16 (RFR *et al.*). Eurasian Green-wingeds were at Blackwater Jan. 3 (GG) and Deal I. Jan. 23 (SHD). On Assat I., Hoffman's top Mallard tally was 16 on Jan. 16. Why bother saying so? Because this illustrates that Mallards still are rather scarce in remote salt marsh areas of the Region. Blue-winged Teal were seen at 7 localities, a strong showing for winter here. Gadwall were abundant at Deal I., with 800 Dec. 10 (MO).

Three Eur. Wigeon were seen, singles at Fish. I. Dec. 27–Jan. 26 (RLA, EH, HTA), Deal I. Dec. 1–Feb. 8 (RFR, MO), and Little Creek Dec. 30 (GBH, TG, DLH, DSs). The remote Pocomoke Sound area has some of the best duck concentrations in the Region but few are ever there to see them, except on the Crisfield CBC, which this year found 8000 Redheads, 6001 Canvasbacks, 12,000 Ruddy Ducks, and 779 Surf Scoters Dec. 27 (*fide* CRV). This is more Redheads than an active observer can see in a lifetime anywhere else in the Region at today's levels, unless they just happen to see the Pocomoke Sound–Tangier I. birds fly over some other locality on their way to or from the prairies!

Wilson found 7000 Canvasbacks on Fishing Bay at Elliott I. Dec. 26 and 6656 were seen by the Annapolis–Gibson I.



Canvasbacks on the Choptank River, Maryland, February 1991. A few good concentrations were found in the Region this winter, but evidently none to compare with the numbers of half a century ago. Photograph/Dave Czaplak.

CBC Dec. 30, heartening but still a pale reflection of the untold thousands of "cans" that occurred on the Bay in the 1940s. As usual one to two Common and King eiders were present at Ocean City and C.B.B.T., but more unusual was a Com. Eider at Chinc. Feb. 18–22 (JJF, DC), and rare was a ♂ Harlequin Duck on the Bay at Driftwood Beach, MD, Feb. 10 (DB). Black Scoters were in record numbers at Cape Charles CBC Dec. 27 with 4671 (HTA *et al.*) and 403 at Ocean City was the best since 1965 (*fide* CSR). A flock of Surf Scoters at Fish. I. Jan. 26 was

S.A.

A historical perspective, so important with waterfowl, shows the Canada Goose population at Blackwater at 2000 in 1939, 300 in 1940, soaring from 1000 to 6000 1941–1943, then increasing steadily during 1962–1966, during which period it peaked at c. 100,000. Meanwhile the duck totals there peaked from 1955–1969 at 100,000 or more. By 1986–1990, maximum duck totals had declined to 20,000 or fewer, the geese 40,000 or fewer (*fide* refuge staff). Refuge counts of waterfowl have always seemed somewhat suspect and bureaucratic to me. Even so, these Blackwater figures are telling. Geese adapt and change their food sources and localities rather readily. Many Canada Geese are wintering north of this Region now, including numbers in semi-urban areas, whereas in the 1950s and earlier many more wintered south of it. World and regional Snow Goose populations have increased greatly since the 1960s, spreading east. Ducks do not adapt as well (except for Mallards). Many of the best duck totals recorded in these pages are of far northern or boreal species, whose habitat has not been changed as much by man as the prairies have. The prairie birds continue to make a very poor showing. It is good that Canvasbacks have switched somewhat from feeding on the Bay grasses, which hardly exist anymore since the late 1960s, to mollusks, but if their prairie nesting sites are destroyed this does not do them much good. But Am. Wigeon and Brant cannot shift from feeding on grass to invertebrates and their numbers on the lower Bay have plummeted.

estimated at 4675 (HTA, AM, PT). Hooded Mergansers were in high numbers, highest ever on CBCs at Cape Charles (378), Crisfield (66), and Ocean City (33), with 550 at Little Creek Dec. 31, 167 at Newport News Dec. 15, and 287 at Williamsburg Dec. 16.

RAPTORS TO CRANES

Excellent vulture totals were perhaps encouraged to linger owing to the mildness. Ospreys were seen on 4 CBCs; others were singles at *Harford*, MD, Jan. 26 (*fide* RFR), and a probable early arrival on the lower Rappahannock R., VA, Feb. 22 (WP), with two birds in early December in Maryland probably late migrants. Bald Eagles were again in fine numbers, although the influx of northern birds was muted owing to seasonally warm weather, with the January Virginia count recording 271 (vs. 314 last year; MAB) and the analogous Maryland census finding 115 (5th highest since 1979, but cf. 263 last year; GDT). Three N. Goshawks were reported: in *Charles*, MD, at Benedict Bridge, Dec. 8 (MI *et al.*), at Little Creek CBC Dec. 31 (DLH, TG) and one present at Cape Charles November to Jan. 20 (JJF, PWS, PM *et al.*). Every winter there are a few goshawk

reports that sound authentic; but really good descriptions for this species are hardly ever submitted.

This was a better than average Rough-legged Hawk winter. There was even one at Kerr Res. CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* BP) and 15 were at Deal I. Feb. 8 (MO), with two at Saxis I., VA, probably the southernmost site where expected, in late January (JJF, TD).

In the cannon fodder department it is of interest to note that 58 Ruffed Grouse were released in *Charles*, MD, near Zekiah Swamp last fall with more to

S.A.

Northern Bobwhites continue to decline alarmingly. Does the reader realize how dramatic this decline is everywhere in the Region? On the CBCs, D.C. missed them for the first time, 55 at Ocean City were the lowest since the 1950s, 13 in S. *Dorchester* (Blackwater), MD, Dec. 26 were the lowest since 1956, there was one on Newport News Dec. 15, three at Pt. Lookout, MD, Dec. 29 (PC), and exactly zilch at Ft. Belvoir. These attractive little gamebirds are in big trouble, for reasons that have nothing to do with hunting.

come next fall (GDT). How nice it would be to have a coastal plain population established here.

Eight Soras at Ft. Eustis, VA, throughout the winter were of interest (SR). The Poolesville, MD, Sandhill Crane, present continuously for well over 2 years, was last seen Dec. 16 (MO), and other birds were s. of Trappe, MD, late December to Feb. 28, adjacent to Last Chance Liquors off Rt. 50 (GG, MI, MO; m.ob., ph.), at Langford, MD, in January and February (J & PG *et al.*), and at Nokesville, VA, Feb. 28 (KHB, RAA, ph.).

SHOREBIRDS

Mild weather allowed good numbers of shorebirds to linger well past normal departure, as evidenced by this list of waders at Hart on the very late date of Dec. 16 (RFR, SRi): one Marbled Godwit, eight Least, one White-rumped, and 40 Western sandpipers. Thirty Least were at Hopewell, VA, Dec. 16 (*fide* LR), five at Ocean City Jan. 17 (MO, GG) and nine on Assat. Jan. 27 (MHf). Other tardy shorebirds were a Spotted Sandpiper and two Piping Plovers at Fish. I. Dec. 27 (RLA, MAB), a Red Knot at Blackwater Dec. 10 (MO), and five Semipalmated Plovers at Assat. Jan. 6 (MHf). Twenty Willets at Chinc. Jan. 27 made a high mid-winter total (TD). A new locale, Willis Wharf, on the c. Eastern Shore of Virginia, produced 35 Marbled Godwits, four Least Sandpipers, and 30 W. Sandpipers Jan. 25 (TD), and one to three Marbled Godwits wintered along the Chinc. causeway (VBK, SHD, JJF, DC). A Red Knot was at Ocean City Feb. 17–18 (MO, LMD). A Long-billed Dowitcher was at Blackwater Dec. 26 (MO) and Ringler *et al.* discovered 22 at Deal I. Dec. 1.

American Woodcock bandings were down at Cape Charles this winter because it takes a strong cold snap to concentrate them there. Even so, 231 were captured through early February (PT, BN). As usual the best shorebirding was on the E. Shore of Virginia, with 20 species at Cape Charles Dec. 27 including a Semipalmated Plover, 236 Am. Oystercatchers, 96 Greater Yellowlegs, a Whim-

brel, 35 Marbled Godwits, and six Red Knots. Some Virginia totals were relatively low, especially for the larger species. Later in the season at Thoms Creek, where most of the big shorebirds on Cape Charles CBC are seen, 90 Black-bellied Plovers, 25 Willets, a Whimbrel, 30 Marbled Godwits, 20 W. Sandpipers, 3000 Dunlin, and 15 Short-billed Dowitchers were observed under simultaneous attack by two Peregrine Falcons and a Merlin Jan. 27 (HTA, BN).

Schwab's Back Bay beach patrol continues to turn in superior Sanderling counts such as 852 Dec. 21 and 862 Feb. 12. Less expected were 14 at Benoni Pt. Dec. 23 (HTA, MEA) with 20 nearby at Oxford Dec. 16 (JGR) in *Talbot*, MD. A genuine rarity was a Red Phalarope on a pond in the Virginia Piedmont near S. Boston Dec. 23 (JCB, ph.), and Dyke found one at W. Ocean City, MD, Feb. 26.



Great Skua at the north end of Norfolk Canyon, off the coast of Virginia, February 2, 1991. Photograph/Ken Bass.

JAEGERS TO ALCIDS

The highlight of the period was probably the most successful winter pelagic trip in the history of the Region on Feb. 2 when two Great Skuas (ph.), 290 Dovekies (a record state count), two Atlantic Puffins, one Razor-



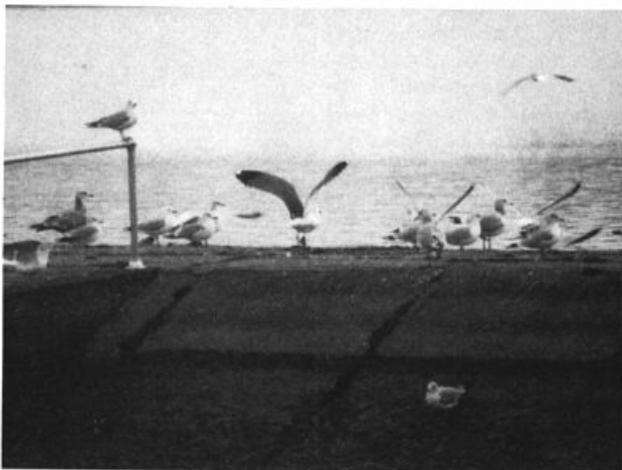
Iceland Gull [back center] at Georgetown Reservoir, Washington, D.C., February 12, 1991. Photograph/Ottavio Janni.

bill, a Little Gull, and 40 Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen out from Virginia Beach (KHB, BP *et al.*) plus Manx Shearwaters and Red Phalaropes. This trip was almost scrubbed owing to lack of interest!

This was one of the best gull winters ever with 12 species (not counting Yellow-legged), most in good numbers. Strangely, Laughing Gulls and Forster's Terns were scarce in spite of the mildness. One or two Little Gulls were at Ocean City most of the winter (MO, DC, EB), but high counts were of six at Ft. Story Feb. 3 (KHB, BP) and at C.B.B.T. Dec. 21 (WR). Common Black-headed Gulls were found at Ocean City during February, Back Bay Feb. 12 (DS, TG), Chinc. in December (VBK, JJF), Salisbury, MD, Dec. 16 (GS), and near Baltimore Feb. 27-Mar. 1 (JW). At Susq., famous for its gull con-

centrations, 35,000 Ring-billed Gulls were estimated Dec. 30 (GS), but these had declined to 200 by Jan. 31 (MO). There were three Thayer's Gulls seen: at Piney Run Park, Carroll, Dec. 8 (RFR), Georgetown Res. in D.C., Dec. 15 (DC), and Laytonsville, Montgomery, MD, Jan. 21 (MO, PP). Iceland Gulls were at 7 localities, with two at Laytonsville Dec. 22 and Jan. 19 (MO). Glaucous Gulls were at 5 places, all in Maryland, except one at inland Nokesville Dec. 16 in company with two Lesser Black-backed and 166 Great Black-backed gulls (KHB *et al.*).

Two Yellow-legged Gulls were well documented: single adults at Laytonsville, MD, Jan. 5-Mar. 2 (RH, MO, OJ, PO *et al.*) and Georgetown Res. in D.C. Dec. 18-Mar. 16 (GG, RH, DC, MO, OJ, ph. *et al.*). This was perhaps the best win-



"Yellow-legged" Gull [at center, taking off] with Ring-billed and Herring gulls at Georgetown Reservoir, Washington, D.C., January 1991. This controversial form [race of Herring Gull, or full species?] was identified at two localities in the Region this winter. Photograph/Dave Czaplak.

ter ever for Lesser Black-backed Gulls with sightings at 22 localities. Best counts were four at Little Creek Dec. 31, five at Georgetown Res., D.C., Jan. 9 (OJ), and seven at Laytonsville Dec. 22 (MO, WK, HLW) with nine there Jan. 21 (MO, PP). In the freak show category were two hybrids: an apparent Laughing X Ring-billed Gull at Ocean City Feb. 9-10 (MO, EB, ph.) and a Glaucous X Herring at Laytonsville Jan. 21 (MO, PP).

A few Royal Terns lingered at the mouth of the Bay with two at Craney Dec. 10 (EMW) and one at Back Bay Jan. 3 (DS, TG). More unusual was one at Ocean City Dec. 1 (RFR, JDn, EB). Most unexpected were three Com. Tern reports: singles at False Cape S.P. Dec. 23 (NB), Hampton Roads Dec. 31 (RMe, *vide* NB), and Back Bay Feb. 26 (DS, TG).

This winter marked the best alcid invasion in the Region's history. Unfortunately there was little boating activity to help chronicle this, with most sightings amazingly being made from shore, such as three Common Murres and two Razorbills reported from Fr. Story Jan. 20 (SA); the murres need rarities committee verification, since they represent a new Virginia record. The previous day a Dovekie and a Razorbill were seen here (PP *et al.*). At Ocean City three Com. Murres and two Razorbills were reported Feb. 10 (EB, JC *et al.*) and the next day observers saw nine Razorbills plus 59 unidentified large alcids (MO, HLW, GG). The only Thick-billed Murre report was of one at Chinc. Feb. 22 (JJF). Other Razorbill records were of one at Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach Feb. 1 (SHD) and two at Chinc. Feb. 18 (DC). Alcids are rare enough in this Region that all should be documented in detail.

OWLS TO SHRIKES

A Long-eared Owl, always scantily reported, was banded at E. Shore of Virginia N.W.R. Jan. 15 (BW, PT), five were at Mt. Airy, MD, Jan. 27 (SW), and there were 2 other Maryland records. This was an excellent Short-eared Owl winter. They were widespread and in good numbers with totals such

as 12 at Saxis, VA, Jan. 24 (TD), seven at Manassas, VA (VBK, JF, SR), nine at Elliott I. Feb. 18 (LMD), and five at Deal I. (SHD, PGD), six at Massey, MD, Jan. 1 (J & PG), plus numerous other records.

Red-headed Woodpeckers were in high supply in parts of Virginia, including 70 on the CBC at Banister River W.M.A., which recorded 100 on the 1989 CBC! Nowhere else are they so abundant in this Region. This was an exceptionally good winter for E. Phoebe with good numbers on the CBCs and even afterwards, such as six at Pocomoke City, MD, Feb. 8 (MO). Single W. Kingbirds were seen on the St. Michaels, MD, CBC Dec. 23 and at C.B.B.T. Dec. 19 (SR).

For the first time in several years, Tree Swallows overwintered, with 275 at Assat. Feb. 9 (EB), 100 at Chinc. Jan. 27 (TD), and 15 at Fish. I. Jan. 26 (HTA, AM, PT). There was a big influx of White-breasted Nuthatches into the Region this winter, less so for Red-breasted Nuthatches. A pair of Brown-headed Nuthatches was excavating a nest cavity as early as Mar. 7-10 near Richmond, VA, an unusual locality (PB).

House Wrens, normally seldom reported after the CBCs, were fairly widespread through the winter. The same may be said for Marsh Wrens with six at Hart Jan. 19 (RFR *et al.*) plus three at Tanyard, MD, Feb. 3 (MO). The Craney Rock Wren overwintered, although it was not always easy to find (EMW, VBK, PP, m.ob.), providing an enduring 2nd Regional record. Numbers of Winter Wrens on CBCs were better than average. Eastern Bluebirds continue in excellent numbers, with Mathews, VA, posting a record 724 on its CBC Dec. 30 (MP *et al.*) and record numbers also on CBCs at Hopewell, Crisfield, and Salisbury.

Catbirds and Brown Thrashers overwintered in slightly higher numbers than usual. The greatest Northern Shrike invasion since the mid-1950s reached Maryland with singles at 5 localities: Schooley Mill Park in Howard Jan. 5-6 and Feb. 28 (NM, MC, RFR, m.ob.), Crumpton Jan. 20 (FLP, J & PG), Lilypons Jan. 20 into February (RH, MO,

JF, RAA, JB, m.ob.), Patapsco Valley S.P. Jan. 26 (CR, DH, CB, AR), and near Elkton Jan. 27-Feb. 3 (HF). A Loggerhead Shrike was also present most of January at Lilypons, providing a welcome comparison. Loggerheads made a slightly better showing than usual, by recent standards.

VIREOS TO FINCHES

Genuinely rare was a White-eyed Vireo on Ocean City CBC Dec. 28 (BD); one at Sparta, VA, in early January was less surprising yet still unexpected (WP). A Solitary Vireo was at Ft. Eustis Dec. 2 (SR) and singles were on CBCs at Williamsburg and Little Creek, with three at Back Bay Dec. 28 (*vide* PWS). This was an outstanding winter for Orange-crowned Warblers, on CBCs and afterwards, with records such as one at Hog I., VA, Feb. 3 (BW), five at Ft. Eustis Feb. 9 (SR), two at Williamsburg, VA, Feb. 12 (SR), and one at Bellevue, MD, Feb. 16 (HTA). Warbler rarities included a Cape May at Jamestown, VA, Feb. 19 (SR), an Ovenbird in Baltimore Nov. 26-Feb. 1 (BR), and a Wilson's in Alexandria, VA, Dec. 1 (BP, ML). Less surprising but notable were single Prairie Warblers in the Back Bay area Dec. 23 & 28 (NB, BP) and Yellow-breasted Chats at Olney Dec. 22 (JSp) and Ellicott City Jan. 12 (DK). Half-hardy species such as Pine and Palm warblers and Com. Yellowthroats were found much more frequently than usual after the CBCs, undoubtedly beneficiaries of the mild weather this season.

An exceptional winter rarity was a Summer Tanager at a feeder in Amherst, VA, Jan. 1 and later (BP *et al.*). Another good feeder bird was a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Sterling, VA, in late February (CT *et al.*). A ♂ Painted Bunting was near Newport News during January (BW *et al.*). A Dickcissel was banded near Laurel, MD, Feb. 6-17 (MKK, WHH). The mildness did not seem to induce more than the usual number of Chipping Sparrows to linger, although 67 were seen on the Chinc. CBC Dec. 29 (*vide* TK). Lark Sparrows were at Hopewell, VA, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* LR) and at Holly Neck,

Baltimore, Feb. 13-Mar. 5 (B & BC, EPr). This winter's fancy sparrow was a Le Conte's at Ft. Eustis, VA, Jan. 13 and Feb. 16 (SR). A Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco was present in Charlottesville, VA, late November to March (RB, CES).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds in Maryland were a female at Blackwater Feb. 3 (MO), a male at Rising Sun Jan. 13 plus a female there Feb. 16 (HF), and one at Snow Hill Feb. 17 (DMD, EJ). There were three reports of Brewer's Blackbirds, including four at Nokesville, VA, Dec. 16 (KHB), one in Howard, MD, Jan. 26-Feb. 16 (RM *et al.*), and five females with 10 Rusty Blackbirds at Blackwater Feb. 28 (MO). Two N. (Baltimore) Orioles were at Hopewell CBC Dec. 16, one was in Fairfax, VA, Dec. 19-26, and one was at Broadmead, MD, Feb. 2 (NR).

Purple Finches were in pitiful numbers, with several large CBCs reporting only one apiece. No bird is quite as erratic as Red Crossbill. This year there were 5 scattered reports from widely separated localities. This was another very poor winter for Pine Siskins (especially) and Evening Grosbeaks. To end on a note of absurdity, the CBC at Cape Charles, usually the count with the longest list in the Region, recorded only two House Sparrows. This species is declining in many areas of the Region and is, in fact, not numerous at the Cape, but surely some were overlooked.

Observers: D.F. Abbott, J.M. Anderson, R.A. Anderson, R.L. Anderson, G.L. Armistead, M.E. Armistead, Scott Atkinson, Robert Barbee, Cliff Barry (CBy), K.H. Bass, J.B. Bazuin, Chris Beaton, Paul Bedell, J. Bjerke, J.B. Blalock, Eirik Blom, M.R. Boatwright, Dave Bohaska, David Brinker (DBr), Ned Brinkley, Don & Carol Broderick, J.H. Buckalew, M.A. Byrd, Jeff Chenoweth, Martha Chestem, Betty & Bob Christopher, Patty Craig, David Czaplak, John Dalmas, Thelma Dalmas (TDs), L.M. Davidson, Doug Davis, Tom Dick, Bob Dixon, Jon Dunn (JDn), Sam Droege, P.G. DuMont, S.H. Dyke, Roger Eastman, Stephen Eccles, Jeff Effinger, Ethel Engle, Bob Eubanks, Frederic

Fallon, Jane Farrell, A.F. Fletcher (Caroline, MD), Harold Fogleman, Robert Folker, J.J. Fulton, Hans Gabler, Greg Gough, Jim & Patricia Gruber (Kent, MD), Tom Gwynn, Dan Haft, G.B. Harris, Ed Hatch, J.F. Hays, M.W. Hewitt, Robert Hilton, Robert Hindle (RHe), Mark Hoffman (MHf; Assateague I., MD), R.L. Homan, Marshall Howe, W.H. Howe, D.L. Hughes, Marshall Iliff, Ottavio Janni, George Jett, Emily Joyce, Hank Kaestner, Teta Kain (C.B.B.T.), Kerrie Kirkpatrick, V.B. Kitchens, M.K. Klimkiewicz, Wayne Klockner, David Kubitsky, Bruce Lantz, H.E. LeGrand, Margaret Lisi, J.C. Loenze, Pete Marevitch (PMh), Ann McCready, Joan McKearnan, Paul McQuarry, Nancy Magnusson, Doug Miller, Stauffer Miller, Carolyn Mills, Randy Moore (RMe), Dotty Mumford (DMD), Rosamond Munro, Bill Murphy, Ben Nottingham, Marianna Nuttle, Michael O'Brien (state of MD), Paul O'Brien, Bonnie Ott, Earl Palmer (EPr), F.L. Parks, Brian Patteson, Elizabeth Peacock, Grayson Pearce, Paul Pisano, E.L. Pitney (lower E. Shore of MD), William Portlock, Mary Pulley, Kyle Rambo, J.G. Reese (Talbot, MD), Carol Renfrew, Sue Ricciardi (SRI), Bob Rineer, R.F. Ringler (entire state of MD), C.S. Robbins, Larry Robinson, Walter Rodgers, Art Rogers, Steven Rottenborn, W.F. Rountrey, Nancy Rowe, Gene Scarpulla, R.M. Schutsky, Don Schwab, Sharon Schwemmer, Jay Sheppard (JSp), S.W. Simon, Chris & Eddie Slaughter, L.T. Short, Don Snipes (DSS), Jo Solem (Howard, MD), J.L. Stasz, C.E. Stevens, D.B. Stewart, Charles Swift, P.W. Sykes, Brian Taber, Peter Tango, G.D. Therres, David & Mark Titus, R.J. Tripician, Craig Tufts, V.E. Unger, C.R. Vaughn (lower E. Shore of VA & MD), Ron Vorhees, Mark Wallace, Pete Webb, Dave Weesner, David West (DWt), Steve Westre, Bob & Steve Whitcomb, H.L. Wierenga, Jim Wilkinson, Bill Williams, G.M. Williamson, G.B. Wilmot, E.M. Wilson (greater D.C. area), Dick & Jeanne Woods.—HENRY T. ARMISTEAD, 523 E. Durham St., Philadelphia, PA 19119.

SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

(FALL 1990 REPORT)

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.

This may sound like a broken record, but the weather was warmer than usual. Significantly, the Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, airport has now recorded above-normal temperatures for eleven consecutive months (January to November). Rainfall was normal to light, and a number of interior lakes were several feet below normal, producing extensive mudflats.

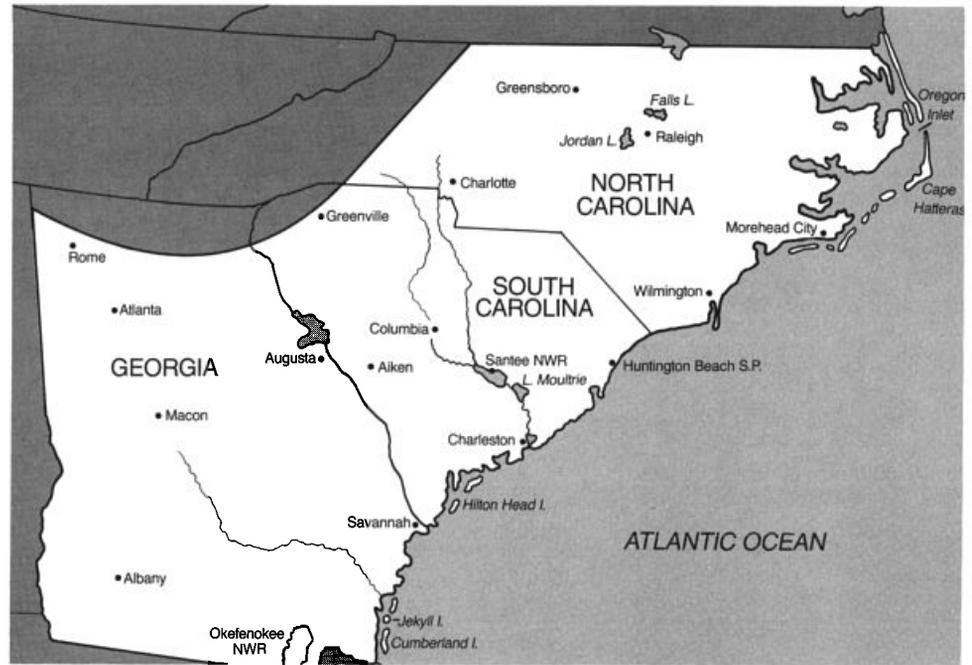
Unfortunately, there were no great waves of migrants, nor other notable weather conditions that produced fallouts. Hurricane Lili was prepared to make landfall on the North Carolina Outer Banks in October, but it veered away.

LOONS TO FRIGATEBIRDS

The only inland sighting of Red-throated Loon was near Greensboro, NC, Nov. 10 (HH, HLI), while single Com. Loons were out of season Aug. 3 on L. Lanier, GA (JP), and Aug. 25 on L. Spivey, GA (HG). Eared Grebes were seen again at both Goldsboro, NC, and Monroe, GA; the species has been reported from ponds at these sites for the past few autumns. Returning birds included one at the former site Sept. 2–Oct. 26 (ED) and one all of November at the latter site (TJ), with three there Nov. 10 (JG).

Because the deepwater zone is difficult to reach in a one-day trip off South Carolina, Black-capped Petrel is seldom reported in that state. However, one was about 30 mi off Charleston Aug. 23 (TH *et al.*). Good counts in North Carolina were of 1500 Cory's and 62 Greater shearwaters off Oregon Inlet Aug. 4 (HL, ML). The elusive and difficult-to-identify Band-rumped Storm-Petrel was just that, with singles off Oregon Inlet Aug. 4 (HL, ML) & 11 (HL, RM, TH) the only certain individuals.

The flock of Am. White Pelicans at Andrews I. near



Brunswick, GA, in July peaked at 101 Aug. 18 (MC). Elsewhere, White Pelicans were represented only by singles all fall at Pea I., NC (m.ob.), and the Savannah spoil area, SC, Nov. 12 (KC). A Brown Pelican appeared on L. Lanier, GA, Sept. 4–6 (*fide* EJW); there are at least 5 previous inland records for the state. It can be assumed that single Magnificent Frigatebirds at Jekyll I., GA, Oct. 6 and St. Simons I. Oct. 7 (*fide* D & DC) were the same individual.

WADERS

The remarkable flurry of "Great White" Heron sightings continued, and again most were inland. One was near Goldsboro, NC, Aug. 8–26 (ED), one was at the South Carolina spoil site near Savannah, GA, Nov. 21 (DF, DoF, MJ), and the summer birds at 2 sites in Georgia—Clayton and L. Lanier—remained to Oct. 21 (A.A.S.) and Sept. 23 (JP), respectively. Why is this coastal bird of s. Florida appearing mainly inland in the Region? Is it simply overlooked among all the Great Egrets along the coast? Reddish Egrets in the Region nearly always confine themselves to the coast; this season's reports—all of dark morph immatures—were of singles Sept. 2 at Oregon Inlet (BL), Aug. 5 at Andrews I. near Brunswick, GA (D & DC *et al.*), and Sept. 25 at nearby Jekyll I. (PM, TM,

MAV). The best post-breeding count of Cattle Egret in the Piedmont was of a notable 46 in Clayton, GA, Sept. 1 (BD, AM).

Did White Ibises have a poor nesting season? There were extremely few reports inland. Glossy Ibises are notable inland at any season. Such reports for the fall were of two in Clayton, GA, Sept. 1–15 (BD, AM) for just the 2nd Atlanta area record; singles at Goldsboro, NC, Aug. 2 (GH) & 20–26 (ED); and one at the upper end of L. Murray, SC, Sept. 12–15 (KC, LG). Roseate Spoonbills seen during summer near Brunswick, GA, remained until Oct. 13 (JG); peak count was of eight Sept. 2 (D & PMcC), Wood Storks were reported inland on 4 occasions in Georgia.

WATERFOWL

Although I suspect that Greater White-fronted Geese were lurking somewhere at Eufaula N.W.R., GA, the only report received was from reliable Santee N.W.R., SC, where one was present mid-October to Nov. 12 (RM *et al.*). A few blue Snow Geese appeared at Georgia sites where rare, but there were no concentrations of the species away from normal wintering areas (tidewater portion of the Carolinas). South of winter range was a Brant in Charleston, SC, harbor Nov. 19 (RM, KC). Mottled Duck has been introduced into several marshes in coastal South Caroli-

na since 1975. The species is doing well, and is now common in Colleton, Beaufort, and Jasper (RC); populations in these counties are apparently descended from birds released at Bear I., Colleton. Six N. Shovelers in Hall, GA, Aug. 25 (JP) were early and rare away from the coast. Male Eur. Wigeons were reported from 4 sites: Bodie I., NC, Nov. 10 (TH, JPo, HW); L. Mattamuskeet, NC, Nov. 17 (HH *et al.*); Savannah N.W.R., SC, Nov. 22–23 (AW, VW); and Pea I. Nov. 25 (MT). One of the few reports of a ♀ Eur. Wigeon for the Region was at Pea I., Sept. 16 (RD); females are presumably as numerous as males, but identifying them is a dangerous proposition!

Greater Scaup were detected away from the coast only 3 times, at Goldsboro (ED), Augusta (VW), and Monroe, GA (TJ). Definitely out of season, although there are a few previous summer records for North Carolina, was an imm. ♂ Common Eider at Oregon Inlet Aug. 15–19 (PD). A ♀ Harlequin Duck returned to its wintering haunts under the Oregon Inlet bridge by Nov. 25 (LP). Although Oldsquaws are common in Pamlico Sound, NC, one a few miles away on L. Mattamuskeet Nov. 11 (TH *et al.*) was noteworthy. An excellent count of eight Surf Scoters was unprecedented at Jordan L., NC, Nov. 24 (PSa). One Surf

was at that lake Nov. 4 (HLi, HS *et al.*), whereas an ad. male was surprising in a flooded pasture (!) near St. Matthews, SC, Oct. 28–30 (RM, LG). The two Com. Mergansers that were present in summer at Jordan L. were last noted Sept. 7 (PSa); the observer believed they were imm. males.

HAWKS TO COOTS

Surprisingly, there were no reports of any major hawk flight, either along the coast or from the foothills. The Bald Eagle situation continues to brighten, at least based on the plethora of fall sightings. Did anyone look at the Broad-winged Hawk flight along the foothills? No such flight totals were received. The best reports were of an immature well studied Nov. 30–Dec. 1 near Raleigh, NC (JM), for a very late Regional record, and an immature mist-netted near Mayesville, SC, Sept. 25 (EDa, LG).

A Rough-legged Hawk, soaring with Red-tailed Hawks, was rare and quite early Oct. 29 s. of Goldsboro (ED). As with the previous species, any report of Golden Eagle is noteworthy; both of the season's sightings came from Georgia, with single immatures Oct. 13 at Ft. Stewart (JG *et al.*) and Nov. 24 near Fitzgerald (MH, BHu). Merlins were found inland only 3 times, as were Peregrine Falcons. If these species are doing well, one would not know this from reports from the Region. The severe decline in Am. Kestrel continues, and observers can at times find more Merlins or Peregrine Falcons (four or five birds) than kestrels along the Outer Banks at the peak of fall migration.

Clapper Rails make a migration short-cut over the inland portion of the Region, but land only when they collide with towers and buildings. Such misfortune hit a Clapper at Goldsboro, where it was found alive Aug. 23 (ED). A Virginia Rail was tardy Dec. 1 at Chapel Hill, NC (HW), whereas a Com. Moorhen was a migration casualty at Greensboro, NC, Oct. 13 (BC, *UNC-G). What may have been the first nesting by Am. Coot in the Region's Piedmont was established when

Raney found two adult and two young coots at Griffin Res., GA, Aug. 11.

SHOREBIRDS

The somewhat extensive mudflats on inland lakes contributed to an overwhelming flood of shorebird reports, perhaps 20–25% of the total of all reports for the season! There were 14 reports of Lesser Golden-Plover, some involving duplication, but birds were seen in North Carolina at Cape Hatteras point, Goldsboro, Falls L. near Durham, Jordan L., the Raleigh-Durham Airport, and L. Brandt near Greensboro. Georgia reports came from Clayton and Dublin. The best counts were of 11 at Falls L. Oct. 14 (RD) and four at Dublin Sept. 9–10 (TKP). Seldom reported inland, and perhaps frequently misidentified, was a Wilson's Plover at L. Juliette in c. Georgia Sept. 8 (TJ); there appears to be just one previous inland record for the state.

Single Willets were inland Aug. 31–Sept. 10 at Goldsboro (GH, ED), Oct. 20 in Aiken, SC (DCon), Aug. 27–Sept. 1 in Forsyth, GA (JP), and Aug. 31 in Clayton, GA (BB, GW). Long-billed Curlews were not unusual at Oregon Inlet 20 years ago, but one there Sept. 29 (NB) was notable. Other Long-billeds were singles at Ft. Fisher, NC, much of the fall (SC, GH, BG), and Cumberland I., GA; Nov. 27 (LGA, HG, AA, MK).

One of the few Regional inland reports for Hudsonian Godwit was one at L. Mattamuskeet, NC, Nov. 11 (HW, TH); the black wing lining was seen. The species was, as usual, seen elsewhere only along the Outer Banks, with one notable exception. The literature indicates that Hudsonian Godwit migrates primarily in fall over the Atlantic Ocean, with the southernmost point on the coast of regular occurrence being Cape Hatteras. The migrants are practically never seen; yet, a flock of 15 godwits was seen getting up from the water (!) 20 mi ENE of Oregon Inlet Aug. 25 (RD *et al.*).

The only inland Ruddy Turnstones were in North Carolina, good counts being of six near Greensboro Sept. 16 (HH) and four at Goldsboro Sept.



Red Phalarope (in transition from juvenile to first-winter plumage) at Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, October 1990. Photograph/Graham C. Dugas.

14–19 (ED). Just one Red Knot was inland—near the Raleigh-Durham Airport Sept. 30 (HL). Four Semipalmated Sandpipers were studied on the late date of Nov. 17 at the spoil area near Savannah (RC); also late was a W. Sandpiper Nov. 22 at Goldsboro (ED). White-rumped Sandpipers generally avoid inland sites in fall, and there were just 2 such reports—one to two at Goldsboro Aug. 26–Oct. 24 (ED) and one in Forsyth, GA, Sept. 1 (JP). Baird's Sandpipers were seen on several occasions at Cape Hatteras point Sept. 4–16 (BH, RB, RD), and at Clayton, GA, Aug. 30–Sept. 4 (BD, FM *et al.*) and Sept. 29 (CR).

Pectoral Sandpipers commonly linger into November, but three Nov. 29 in Laurens, GA (TKP), were exceptional. The lone Curlew Sandpiper was simply a holdover from summer at Pea I., where last seen Aug. 12 (HL, MT). One of the few shorebirds that would get votes for continental increase over the past 2 decades is Stilt Sandpiper. Fall birds were widespread; notable were 15 as late as Nov. 17 at the Savannah spoil area (RC), 10 at Goldsboro Oct. 11 (ED), and seven near the Raleigh-Durham Airport Oct. 2 (TH, JPo). Buff-breasted Sandpipers were reported somewhat more fre-

quently than in the past few years, but nothing approaching the numbers seen 15 years ago. A total of 11 on Sept. 9 in Laurens, GA (TKP), was excellent; elsewhere, only ones and twos were reported.

Of note were Wilson's Phalaropes inland: one at Jordan L. Sept. 8 (HLi, C.H.B.C.), two at Goldsboro Sept. 12–19 (ED) and singles there Aug. 30–Oct. 15 (ED), and three at Laurens, GA, Oct. 25 (TKP). The best Red-necked Phalarope count was of 89 off Oregon Inlet Sept. 1 (PD). A Red Phalarope that spent Oct. 21–26 on the beach at Hilton Head I., SC (GD, m.ob.), drew hordes of birders, as this is a tough species to find in that state. Nonetheless, 18 Reds were encountered off Charleston Nov. 19 (RM, KC).

GULLS TO TERNS

The rare Franklin's Gull was encountered twice, in Georgia—a winter adult at Jekyll I. Nov. 3 (PS) and one at Skidaway I., Nov. 18 (RMa). Seldom reported before the CBCs was the returning Com. Black-headed Gull at Morehead City, NC, noted Oct. 27 (PSa). Also rare before Christmas was an imm. Iceland Gull at Pea I., Nov. 25 (MT). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were widespread along the coast; they show up slightly earlier and in larger numbers nearly every year. Sightings were made at Pea I., Avon, Cape Hatteras, and Ocracoke in North Carolina, Folly Beach in South Carolina, and Tybee I. and Jekyll I. in Georgia.

Georgia had more late reports than usual of Sandwich Tern, including Nov. 27 at Cumberland I. (AA *et al.*). The only Roseate Tern was at Cape Hatteras until Sept. 3 (PD *et al.*). Inland Least Terns were two at L. Lanier Aug. 21 (JP), one there Sept. 20 (JP), and 20 in Pitt, NC, Aug. 4 (JW). Numbers of Bridled and Sooty terns in the Gulf Stream vary wildly from pelagic trip to trip. A remarkable 81 Sooties, all adults, were off Oregon Inlet Aug. 11 (MT, HL); only three Bridleds were seen. DuMont's trips in these waters yielded one Sooty and 10 Bridleds Aug. 18 and six Sooties and 65 Bridleds

Sept. 1. Other terns of note were an excellent 22 Sooties off Charleston Aug. 23 (TH, LG *et al.*), 15 Bridleds over cold water n.e. of Oregon Inlet Sept. 8 (MT, HL), and a Sooty at Jekyll I. Sept. 2 (EM, JeW).

DOVES TO FLYCATCHERS

The 6th South Carolina record of White-winged Dove was



White-winged Dove in Charleston, South Carolina, November 11, 1990. Photograph/Steve Compton.

established when Compton photographed one in his yard at Charleston Nov. 11–13. Where are the Black-billed Cuckoos? One banded at Mayesville, SC, Oct. 1 (LG, EDa) and another seen at Clayton, GA, Sept. 30 (A.A.S.) were the only ones reported. Can it be true? There were *three* times as many reports of Rufous Hummingbirds (*i.e.*, *Selasphorus* hummingbirds) as Black-billed Cuckoos! The only definitive record was of one at Forsyth (town), GA, late October into November (H & JW); it was banded and measured Nov. 4 (B & MS) and determined to be an ad. ♀ Rufous. Other female/immatures were at Winston-Salem, NC, Nov. 30+ (RS, KB, HHO *et al.*); Raleigh Oct. 13 (FI); Tucker, GA, Aug. 6 (JS, CS); Decatur, GA, in early September (*vide* JV); and Snellville, GA, Sept. 27–28 (*vide* JS).

Empidonax flycatchers must be on the decline; observers are having difficulty finding them nowadays. There were just 3 reports of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers: at Oregon Inlet Aug. 26 (RD, HL), near Aurora Sept. 25 (SC), and banded at Jekyll I. Sept. 24 (D & DC). Western Kingbirds were found only 5 times along the coast, with four

in North Carolina. A Western was also inland at New Bern, NC, Oct. 22 (BH, RB, KW), one of the few reports away from the coast in a decade. Grant witnessed very large numbers of E. Kingbirds in Croatan N.F., NC, Aug. 28, with at least 274 counted at 2 lakes. A Gray Kingbird was a rarity at Avon, NC, Aug. 19 (PD). Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was encountered just once—Sept. 18 in n. Pamlico, NC (SC).

NUTHATCHES TO WARBLERS

Red-breasted Nuthatches had another poor flight. A singing Winter Wren at Falls L., NC, was very early Sept. 18 (RD). As has been mentioned here before, thrushes are disappearing as migrants. No one reports significant counts any more; the only notable records were of a late Swainson's in Anderson, SC, Nov. 20 (PW) and a Wood in Atlanta Nov. 2 (DL). Although there are at least 7 previous South Carolina records, the Sprague's Pipit seen repeatedly at Huntington Beach S.P. Nov. 20–25 (IP, LG, RC, DF *et al.*) was the first from this Region in over a decade that was identified to everyone's satisfaction, especially this editor's!

The elusive Warbling Vireo was found in Forsyth, GA, Sept. 9 (JC). Just as elusive, although much more numerous east of the mountains, Philadelphia Vireo was banded at Mayesville Sept. 28 and Oct. 2 (LG, EDa) and Jekyll I. Oct. 16 (D & DC); others were seen at Carolina Beach, NC, Sept. 16 (SC) and Augusta Sept. 29 (AW).

A Nashville Warbler that circled a boat off Oregon Inlet Sept. 8 (HL, MT) was unusual, as were two early Nashvilles at Cape Romain N.W.R., SC, Aug. 24 (TH, VP). Among the better counts were 30 Magnolia Warblers along the Chattahoochee R. near Atlanta Sept. 29 (A.A.S.) and 24 Bay-breasted Warblers at Fr. Fisher, NC, Oct. 14 (GM). There were 5 reports of Cerulean Warbler, all from Aug. 4 to Sept. 15. Very late was a N. Waterthrush Nov. 23 at Savannah N.W.R., SC (AW), as was a Hooded Warbler Nov. 12 in Jones, NC (HL, JF). Reports of Connecticut Warblers were of singles at

Augusta Sept. 22 & 29 (AW, VW) and a bird banded near Mayesville Sept. 17 (LG, EDa). A Mourning Warbler was banded at Southern Shores, NC (no date, DLe) and another was observed Nov. 1 at Athens, GA (BDu).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A Western Tanager was noteworthy on Johns I., SC, Oct. 1 (PL). Late was a Painted Bunting Nov. 19 in Glynn, GA (D & DC), and the only Dickcissel as usual was a seen/heard bird at Bodie I. Sept. 16 (RD). I feel that Regional birders simply are not familiar with the "buzzer" call of the Dickcissel; the species should be found more often along the coast at this season.

Coastal birders missed Clay-colored Sparrow, as the only report was in Durham, NC, Nov. 4 (TK). Lark Sparrow was reported only once; this species was not a rare coastal migrant 10 to 20 years ago. The elusive Le Conte's Sparrow was found near Darien, GA, with two Nov. 21 (DF, DoF, MJ). Lapland Longspurs were regular in late November at Huntington Beach S.P., with four there Nov. 25 (DF *et al.*); the only other sighting was of one at Figure Eight I., NC, Nov. 18 (DCa).

A Bobolink was seen early Aug. 5 in Clayton, GA (JG). There is a "migration" of Yellow-headed Blackbirds along the coast in early fall, and 3 records point this out—one at Pea I. Sept. 2 (PD), two at Cape Hatteras Sept. 7–16 (MaL, RD), and two near Charleston Oct. 2 (DF). Shiny Cowbird was encountered again. Holmes had a male at his feeder in New Bern Oct. 9–12, North Carolina's 2nd; the bird returned Oct. 29 and met its demise (*, not yet deposited).

The winter finch scenario sounds like a broken record for most of the past decade. Red Crossbills again were unreported, Pine Siskins were uncommon, and Evening Grosbeaks were rare. And, as House Finch continues to dominate feeders, Purple Finches are being squeezed out from the suburbs. Observers in the East need to keep an eye on native cardueline finches, particularly Purple

Finches, to determine if House Finches are contributing to population declines. Maybe House Finches are impacting only House Sparrows, but I would suspect other species are being impacted, as well.

Observers: Anselm Atkins, Atlanta Audubon Society, Kay Bergey, Bill Blakeslee, Rich Boyd, Joel Brenner, Ned Brinkley, Kevin Calhoun, Derb Carter (DCa), Robin Carter, Jack Caruso, Chapel Hill Bird Club, Mike Chapman, Don & Doris Cohrs, Steve Compton (StC), Dan Connelly (DCon), Sam Cooper, Bill Craft, Evelyn Dabbs (EDa), Ricky Davis, Eric Dean, Bruce Dralle, Graham Dugas, Paul DuMont, Barny Dunning (BDu), Caroline Eastman, Mary Eriksen, Dennis Forsythe, Donna Forsythe (DoF), John Fussell, Hugh Garrett, Liz Garrett (LGa), Lex Glover, Betty Grady, Gilbert Grant, Joe Greenberg, Todd Hass, Herb Hendrickson, Bob Holmes, Hop Hopkins (HHo), Milton Hopkins, Gene Howe, Bob Humphries (BHu), Fran Irvin, Terry Johnson, Margaret Jolly, Margaret Kavanaugh, Tom Krakauer, Dennis Lacoss, Pete Laurie, David Leake (DLe), Harry LeGrand, Bob Lewis, Henry Link (HLi), Merrill Lynch, Marcia Lyons (MaL), Robert Manns (RMA), Greg Massey, Ellery McClintock, Dennie & Pam McClure, Roger McNeill, Francis Michael, Peggy Moore, Terry Moore, Jim Mulholland, Adrienne Myles, Vince Pack, John Paget, Leonard Pardue, T.K. Patterson, Irvin Pitts, Joe Poston (JPo), Paul Raney, Chris Rustay, Paul Saraceni (PSa), Bob & Martha Sargent, Harriet Sato, Carol Sewell, Jeff Sewell, Alistair Smith, Ramona Snavely, Peter Stangel (PSt), Paul Sykes, Steve Thomas, Mike Tove, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, Mary Ann Vernocy, Joel Volpi, Anne Waters, Vernon Waters, Gene Wenger, E.J. Wentworth, Haven Wiley, Ken Wilkins, Harry & Juanita Willingham (H & JW), Peter Worthington, Jeannie Wright (JeW), John Wright, Ann Wyand (AWy), Peter Yaukey.—HARRY E. LEGRAND, JR., N.C. Natural Heritage Program, P.O. Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611.

FLORIDA REGION

John C. Ogden

Winters in Florida, ornithologically speaking, are often characterized by the source and magnitude of invasions from the outside. Thus we have western invasions, northern invasions, Caribbean invasions and, rarely, east coast invasions by seabirds. The other major factors that strongly color the ornithological character of the winter seasons are the wide year-to-year differences in the number of neotropical migrants that overwinter in the peninsula, and the effects that rainfall extremes have on the dominant waterbird populations. While almost all winters show influences from all or most of these variables, many winter images are clearly the product of strong contributions from one or at most two from the list. All of which is an elaborate way for me to say that because none of the above occurred to any exceptional degree during the winter of 1990-1991 (though the number of neotropical species wintering north of where expected was on the high side), it was a somewhat difficult one to describe.

In the following paragraphs, therefore, I will attempt to make a mostly uneventful winter season not sound too dull. In addition, I will take this "short report" opportunity to elaborate on two topics where some speculation is called for: the future of waterbird populations in Florida, and the question of where all those mostly neotropical migrants that show up in south Florida in February come from.

Weather-wise, the winter was mild and dry for the most part. Thankfully we experienced no severe cold front throughout the period, although the absence of strong fronts also contributed to the rainfall deficiency in many areas, and our prolonged dry spell continued into the second or third year, depending upon location.

LOONS TO CORMORANTS

One Red-throated Loon, very rare locally, was at Port Richey,

Pasco, Dec. 27 (BP, RDG, PAY). Eared Grebes, once considered accidental in Florida, have recently been found annually. One was at Crystal Beach, *Pinellas*, Jan. 17 (SEB, MWT), and four wintered at 2 *Polk* locations (CLG), the 8th consecutive winter that one or more Eareds has been found there. About 50 Magnificent Frigatebirds were attending nests on Long Key, Dry Tortugas, Feb. 26 (GEW, HBT); so far as I know, increased levels of boat traffic at the Marquesas Keys have resulted in no recent frigatebird nesting there. Up to 80 Am. White Pelicans on ponds on n. Key Largo during early January (PWS, SAS) probably were there because of extremely dry conditions in nearby inland wetlands.

Northern Gannets occurred in unusually high numbers, in the hundreds, off St. George Island, *Franklin*, throughout the period (RW). Also off St. George Island was one ad. Brown Booby Feb. 17 (RW); they are very rare in winter. Six Masked Boobies, including two attending two large chicks, were at the small Hospital Key, Dry Tortugas, nesting colony on Feb. 26 (GEW, HBT). An amazingly large concentration of Double-crested Cormorants,

estimated at not fewer than 25,000, was off Anclote Key, *Pasco*, Jan. 15 (BP, PAY).

WADING BIRDS

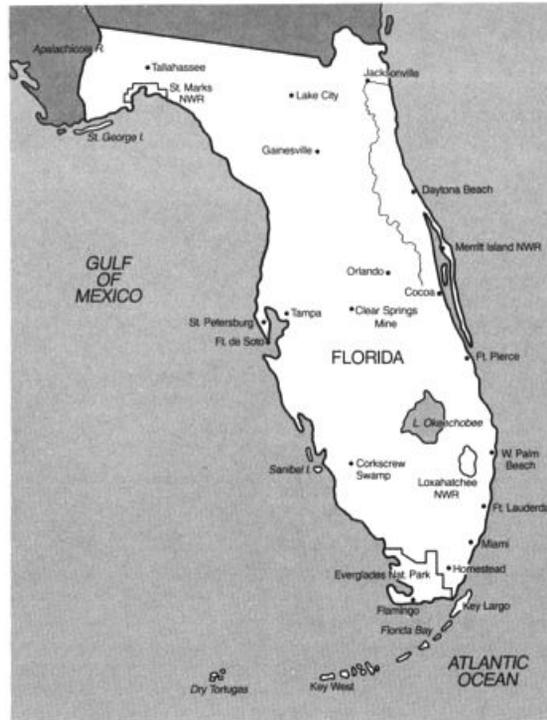
The number of wading birds nesting in the Florida peninsula almost certainly is declining, and quite likely at an accelerating pace. The reasons, while not well documented, certainly go well beyond the effects of the current drought. Besides the Wood Stork, long recognized to be in trouble, many observers now share concerns for Snowy Egret and White Ibis as well. Fear for the future of the ibis is an especially troublesome situation; White Ibis was once far and away the most abundant wading bird in the state. Peter Frederick has recently calculated that the number of ibises nesting in Florida during 1986-1987, before the drought, was no more than half the number that nested in the mid-1970s. The number nesting at one traditional ibis colony site, Alafia in Tampa Bay, dropped from 80,000 in the 1940s to 30,000 in the mid-1970s, to 10,000 in the late 1980s (RTP). Even greater declines by ibises have occurred in the Everglades. We understand the biology and ecology of waders well enough to know that steady losses in

feeding site options may be the single most important factor contributing to this population decline. I suggest that unless we seriously address this issue, Florida will continue to lose waders at a fast pace, to the point where we will some day place reports of wading bird concentrations on our telephone hot-lines!

What prompted me to editorialize on this crisis wader situation was that as of the end of the period, only about 550 pairs of wading birds had initiated nesting in the entire central and southern Everglades region (AMS, RJS, JCO). The only noteworthy wader observations were for two coastal species. One Reddish Egret was unusually far north for winter at St. Marks N.W.R. Jan. 1-Feb. 17 (DS), and two different Reddish Egrets were at coastal locations in *Pasco* and *Pinellas* Jan. 15 (BP, DJR, PAY). Three Roseate Spoonbills wintered inland in the *Polk* phosphate mines (CLG), and two were seen Feb. 1 at the Jack Island Preserve near Ft. Pierce, where they are considered rare in late winter (JMB).

WATERFOWL, RAPTORS

When I asked about waterfowl, one s. Florida response was, "What waterfowl?" (PWS, SAS). Things may have been a bit better in the interior of c. Florida, where high counts of 3000 each Green-winged Teal and N. Shoveler were in the *Polk* phosphate mines Dec. 31 (PJE, CLG, DF). To the west, however, numbers of Lesser Scaup in Hillsborough and McKay bays were very low (RTP). The most notable waterfowl report was of one White-cheeked Pintail with a small flock of teal at Nine Mile Pond, Everglades N.P., Feb. 5 (C & JNR, JAT; ph. to FOS records committee). A high count was of 22 Greater White-fronted Geese flying high over Lanark, *Franklin*, Jan. 21 (DCB). Common Goldeneyes appeared statewide in more locations than usual: one each in *Pasco* Dec. 26 (RWS, LAH), Tarpon Springs Dec. 22 (PT), and near Moore Haven Feb. 11 (PWS, SAS). Other noteworthy waterfowl observations were of one Fulvous Whistling-Duck



on the Dry Tortugas Feb. 27 (GEW, HBT), three Am. Black Ducks at St. Marks N.W.R. Dec. 2 (DAE, DBN), and three Surf Scoters at Cedar Key Jan. 17 (B & LC, m.ob.).

Up to 12 Black-shouldered Kites were in w. *Dade* during the period (PWS, SAS, m.ob.). If not wintering, one Am. Swallow-tailed Kite at Lakeland Jan. 30 (JGo) was about a month early in returning from the tropics. The mid-winter statewide Snail Kite survey (December) revealed a decline from one year earlier in the number of kites in the too-dry Water Conservation Area 3A impoundment, *Dade/Broward*, from 169 to 13 birds (JAR)! Fortunately, the Snail Kites showed their true character and appeared in almost equal numbers in several c. Florida lakes. As of the end of the period, 80 nest starts by kites had been documented at one of these lakes, L. Tohopekaliga, *Osceola* (JAR).

Buteos that were north of their usual wintering range included single Broad-winged Hawks at Tallahassee Feb. 22 (JAC, KN) and near Sebring Feb. 20 (JG), one Swainson's Hawk at Lake Placid Dec. 23 (BP, GEW, RDG), and one light morph Short-tailed Hawk at St. Marks N.W.R. Jan. 20 (RLW *et al.*).

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

The elusive Black Rail continues to pop up here and there, strongly suggesting that it is not a rare bird. Single Blacks were heard at Upper Tampa Bay Park, *Hillsborough*, Dec. 22 (BP), and on Rattlesnake Key, *Levy*, Dec. 29 (DCH, BW), and one was seen near the lighthouse at St. Marks N.W.R. Dec. 9 (BDN). It wasn't the beef that was missing, but the Am. Coots, throughout the Everglades region. Ponds and lakes in the national park that had floating mats of tens of thousands of coots a few years ago had almost none this winter. Yet they must have been somewhere in the s. peninsula; a large raft estimated at possibly as many as 100,000 coots was along the n.w. shore of L. Okeechobee Feb. 21 & 24 (HBT).

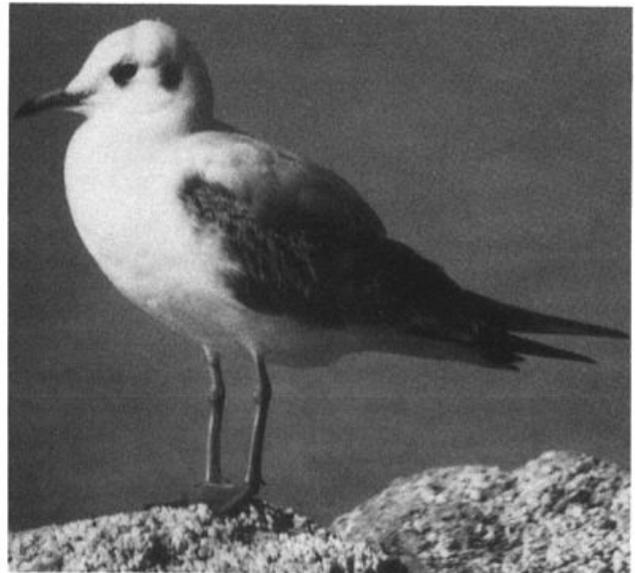
The largest concentration of Am. Oystercatchers I can remember being reported in Florida was of 850 on a sandbar off Cedar Key, *Levy*, Dec. 29 (B & LC, DCH, BW). A locally high mid-winter count for Black-necked Stilts was of 35 at McKay Bay Jan. 26 (RWS). Interest in surveying for Piping Plover has turned up local high counts: 228 in coastal *Pasco and Pinellas* Jan. 15 & 19 (SEB, MWT), and 41 at Lanark Reef, *Franklin*, Jan. 21 (DCB, RKC). A worthwhile by-product of these surveys were high counts of 12 Snowy Plovers at Ft. DeSoto Park Dec. 31 (SEB, MWT), and 10 Snowies at Ft. Myers Beach Jan. 18 (JLB). These comparative numbers reinforce my belief that Snowy Plovers are in much more trouble in Florida than are Pippings.

One Long-billed Dowitcher seen and heard calling at St. Marks N.W.R. Feb. 8 (DAE) was either an early migrant or rare wintering bird. One Am. Woodcock performing intensive distraction displays in extreme s.w. *Jackson* Jan. 17 (CJB) was almost certainly close to a nesting site. At the opposite end of the peninsula, two woodcocks were making courtship flights at late dusk in e. Everglades N.P., beginning Jan. 23 (PWS, SAS), the 4th consecutive year for this location.

GULLS TO HUMMINGBIRDS

A high count of Bonaparte's Gulls was of 300 at Tierra Verde, *Pinellas*, Feb. 15 (BHA, LSA). Good details were submitted to the FOS records committee for one Little Gull, rare anywhere in the peninsula and especially so inland, at Lake Jessup, *Seminole* (CTR, CT). The Com. Black-headed Gull found in November at Naples was seen again and photographed Dec. 17 (JRW, PW). One Glaucous Gull was at Ward's Bank near Jacksonville Feb. 6 (BJR). Although becoming regular along the Atlantic coast, Lesser Black-backed Gulls are still rare on the Gulf coast or inland. Thus two at the *Pinellas* landfill Dec. 1 (LSA, BHA), one at the East-point landfill, *Wakulla*, Dec. 29 (LSA, BHA), and one

inland at the Keystone Heights dump, *Bradford*, Dec. 7-20 (BJB) were noteworthy. One Black-legged Kittiwake was found dead on the beach, and another seen flying nearby, at St. George Island, *Franklin*, Dec. 16 (RW).



Common Black-headed Gull at Naples, Florida, December 17, 1990. Photograph/Pat Ware.

White-winged Doves, from introductions, are rapidly becoming common urban birds in the Lake Wales area (CLG). P. William Smith points out that the dynamics of "Canary-winged" Parakeet populations in *Dade* is anything but settled. While the big Coral Gables roosts of the 1970s were composed of true Canary-wingeds, *Brotogeris v. versicolurus*, many "canary-wingeds" seen this winter in more western and southern parts of the county were the well-marked race *B. v. chiriri*, the "Yellow-lined" Parakeet. One flock of 18 of the latter seen repeatedly near Homestead during January contained all banded birds (PWS, SAS)!

Groove-billed Ani made a minor invasion of the peninsula, with one at Paynes Prairie, *Alachua*, Jan. 9 & 24 (BMS, EMS *et al.*), and singles at 2 widely separate locations in s. Florida, Eco Pond near Flamingo, Everglades N.P., Feb. 5-28 (GW, PWS, SAS), and w. *Dade*, Feb. 24-28 (PWS, SAS). Wintering Com. Nighthawks unusually far north were two calling at Clearwater Dec. 18 (RWS). Possibly early returning Chim-

ney Swifts, two *Chaetura* sp. were in n.w. *Pasco* Feb. 28 (PAY). A hummingbird almost certainly a first-year ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird (violet of beginning gorget seen) was at a Cedar Key feeder Jan. 4-8 (DCH, DTF). *Selasphorus* sp.

hummingbirds were reported from Gainesville, one throughout the period (DTF; twice two were seen), and one at Cedar Key Jan. 19-27 (DTF, DCH).

FEBRUARY MIGRATION BY NEOTROPICAL PASSERINES

In my winter report one year ago, I described some characteristics of what may be February migration by a substantial list of neotropical species. The most noticeable aspect of this early "flight" is the rather abrupt increase, usually at many south Florida locations and well underway by mid-month, of small flocks of warblers, including Parula, Prairie, and Black-and-whites. While these and other species in these February flocks regularly winter in south Florida, the Regional increases in numbers implied by these observations are convincing me that birds are also coming up from more tropical locations as well. Recent conversations with Bill Smith (PWS) and Bill Robertson (WBR) have only served to reinforce this notion. We all have repeatedly noted substantial mid-February increases in Gray Catbirds around our homes, and blue-plumaged

Indigo Buntings at our feeders. If these are no more than locally wintering birds showing pre-migratory restlessness, where are comparable numbers during mid-winter? If my yard becomes a daily haven for eight to ten catbirds during the last two weeks of February, why are only one or two there throughout the winter? I suggest they are south of Florida!

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS

Western Kingbirds were encountered at an unusually large number of locations in central and north Florida, including singles at White Oaks Plantation, *Duval*, Jan. 10 through February (MRT), at 2 *Franklin* sites Dec. 2 & 9 (BDN, DAE), in rural *Alachua* Jan. 2-17 (RDW, GES), and four at Montverde, *Lake*, Feb. 6 (DWF). One *Couch's Kingbird* was well studied, and heard calling, at the Belle Glade marina, *Palm Beach*, Feb. 2-23 (BHH, HPL, GSH, m.ob.). Great Crested Flycatchers also wintered unusually far north, as evidenced by singles at 2 *Alachua* locations, one through the period and the other Feb. 1 (JHH, CAL), and one at Bartow, *Polk*, Dec. 14 (PJF, DF). One of the few specimens of the *Ash-throated Flycatcher* for peninsular Florida was acquired when one *Ash-throated* chased another in front of a passing car, near Lake Jessup, *Seminole*, Dec. 29 (BHAn, EC, * to Univ. Central Florida)! Apparently two different *La Sagra's Flycatchers* were found in the upper Florida Keys. One found on Elliott Key during the late December Christmas Count (WRH) remained through the period (m.ob.). The other *La Sagra's*, found on Key Largo in October, remained through the entire winter period (WRH, PWS, SAS, calls taped).

No great numbers of Tree Swallows made it as far south as the Everglades this mild winter, but 500,000 were estimated in a roost on L. Istokpoga, *Highlands*, Dec. 23 (ML, C & MW). Presumably the same, determined Bahama Swallow returned to the same s. *Dade* Cave Swallow colony for the 4th consecutive year, March 2; the Caves had preceded it by

over a week, with 30 first found roosting Feb. 21 (PWS, SAS). Two Cave Swallows were on Bush Key, Dry Tortugas, Feb. 26 (HBT, GEW).

NUTHATCHES TO TANAGERS

The only Red-breasted Nuthatch reported was one in s. Jacksonville Jan. 10 (RWL). Rarely found on the coast, one Brown Creeper was at St. Marks N.W.R. Dec. 2 (DAE), and another creeper was as far south as Gainesville Feb. 27 (SM). Almost unreported in Florida any longer, one Bewick's Wren remained at a site on the Apalachicola N.F., *Leon*, Nov. 26-Jan. 6 (TM). A locally unprecedented high count for Cedar Waxwings was of 750 in Beacon Woods, *Pasco*, Feb. 27 (BP), in a winter when no other station reported high numbers.

Good numbers of warblers were encountered north of their expected wintering ranges. The highlights of this list are as follows: Tennessee Warbler, one at Lake Placid Dec. 23 (RDG); Yellow Warbler, one at St. Petersburg Dec. 15 (MH), and two others w. of Boynton Beach Dec. 30 through January (BHH); Black-throated Blue Warbler, one w. of West Palm Beach Jan. 27 (GW, HPL); Black-throated Green Warbler, a high count of three at Sawgrass Lake Park, *Pinellas*, through the period (RDG); Am. Redstart, one at Lake Placid Dec. 23 (BP, RDG, GEW); Prothonotary Warbler, one near Highlands Hammock State Park, *Highlands*, Feb. 20 (RB); Ovenbird, a high count of 11 in the Bartow area Dec. 14 (PJF, DF); Louisiana Waterthrush, one in w. *Pasco* Dec. 27 (BP, DJR); and Yellow-breasted Chat, one near Lake Jessup, *Seminole* (BHAn, EC).

Details of a sighting of a Bananquit near Pompano Beach Jan. 22 (JLB) were submitted to the FOS records committee. A ♀ plumaged *Stripe-headed Tanager* was along the Snake Bight Trail, Everglades N.P., Dec. 14-25 (BPe, MEG, PWS, SAS, ph. to FOS records committee). A Summer Tanager in Homestead Feb. 6 (MB) and another

on Fisheating Creek, *Glades*, Feb. 13 (PWS, SAS) both occurred during that same early February period when several tanagers may have "arrived" one year ago (see my 1990 winter report).

GROSBEAKS TO SISKINS

The scene this winter at the Belle Glade marina, *Palm Beach*, was perhaps unprecedented for the Florida peninsula, and was more reminiscent of the assemblages of migrants one encounters in southern Mexico in winter. Bird feeders at the marina campground hosted maximum counts of 12 Blue Grosbeaks, four Orchard Orioles, two N. Orioles, and three Dickcissels through most of February (HPL, BHH, GSH, KG, CN)! Orchard Orioles are especially rare anywhere in Florida in winter; these were present Feb. 2-5. Another Orchard was at Sawgrass Lake Park, *Pinellas*, Dec. 30 (RDG). And it certainly was a good winter for Blue Grosbeaks elsewhere as well; one was at Stony Bayou, St. Marks N.W.R., Dec. 15-Jan. 27 (BDN, DAE), and another was on St. George I. Feb. 8 (RW). Also well north of expected areas, one Indigo Bunting was found near Lake Jessup Dec. 29 (BPa, GM), and single Painted Buntings were at Jacksonville Jan. 17 and Feb. 4 (MCD), and St. Petersburg Dec. 15-Feb. 19 (SEB, MWT).

A high count of Lark Sparrows was of six near Homestead in late December-early January (JCS, PWS, SAS), while one on Paynes Prairie Dec. 26 (TR) was considered rare there in winter. Although the birds were not always easy to locate, Bill Smith (PWS) considered Grasshopper Sparrows fairly common in *Dade* this winter; two Grasshoppers were also located Dec. 29 in *Seminole* (BPa, GM), where they may be much rarer.

A maximum count of 23 Yellow-headed Blackbirds was made at 4 *Palm Beach* locations Feb. 2-4 (HPL, BHH, GSH). No new locations were reported for Shiny Cowbirds, while up to six were in the usual Homestead to Flamingo spots (PWS, SAS) Bronzed

Cowbirds appeared at Lakeland, five on Dec. 14 (L & BC), one near Odessa, *Pasco*, Dec. 27 (RDG), and one in w. *Palm Beach* Feb. 3 (BHH) And Pine Siskins barely penetrated the Region this winter, the only reports were of six in Jacksonville throughout February (TW) and one near Wakulla Springs Dec. 9 (DAE).

Corrigendum: AB 45(1):92, column 2, the large population of Ospreys at Lake Disston was censused by Henry M. Stevenson.

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ONTARIO REGION

Ron D. Weir

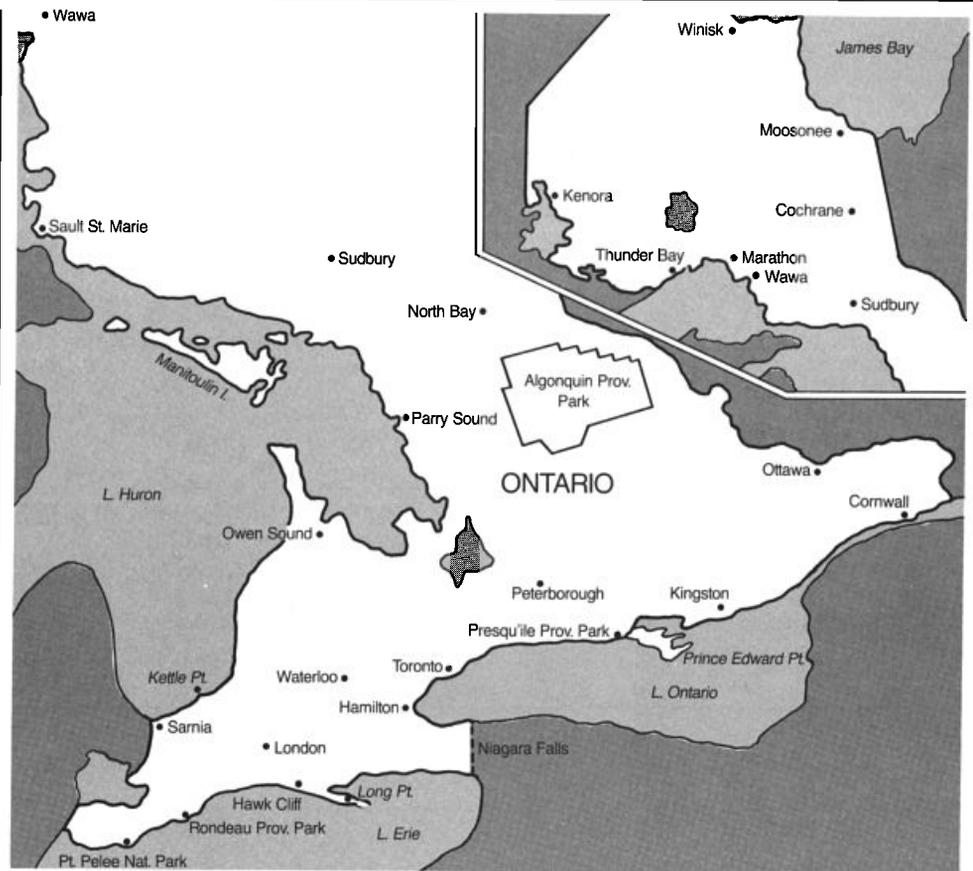
The season was most interesting and, like many aspects of Nature, exhibited both predictable and contradictory occurrences. The trend to warmer winters continued with less snowfall throughout the south and cold snaps that lasted only a few days at a time. Predictable were the late lingering waterfowl that exploited open water, and raptors that hunted successfully in the shallow snow cover. This was the 'finchless' winter over much of the province as the birds remained within their nesting range for the most part. On the other hand, many of the traditionally hardy winterers like creepers, kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Purple Finches cleared out almost completely. Feeder operators complained of low attendance rates. However, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Carolina Wren prospered and many of these winterers are expected to nest in the province.

The irruptive species making headlines were Gyrfalcon and King Eider, both of which pushed south in numbers to the lower Great Lakes. The owl movement was mediocre, although noteworthy incursions to the south were detected for Great Gray Owl and Northern Hawk Owl.

Abbreviations: P.E.Pt. (*Prince Edward Pt.*); Pelee (*Point Pelee Nat'l Park and vicinity*); Algonquin and Presqu'ile are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* refer to counties.

LOONS TO HERONS

The 10 Red-throated Loons were the most in winter of the last decade, and double the average. Singles were at Richmond Hill, Long Pt., Niagara-on-the-Lake, P.E.Pt., Amherst I., and Whitby Dec. 1–Jan. 6. Later birds were singles at Whitby Feb. 7, where three appeared Feb. 13 (BH, DDC, MJB), and at Winona Feb. 28 (BS). More than usual numbers of Pied-billed Grebes wintered, including singles n. to Owen Sound Dec. 22–Feb. 8 (PM), Peterbor-



ough Jan. 9 (AGC), and Jones Falls Jan. 6 (MH). Early migrants were at Pelee Feb. 3 (AW) and St. Williams Feb. 21 (RWK, MJ). The latest Horned Grebes were at Silver Islet, Thunder Bay, Dec. 15 (SVP, RMW), Owen Sound to Feb. 18 (PM), and Pelee Jan. 10–12 (AW). The 25 Horneds and nine Red-neckeds at Winona Feb. 28 (BS) were early arrivals. The 76 Red-necked Grebes made a seasonal high total, led by 25 off Manitoulin I. Dec. 1 (JCN) and Long Point's first ever in winter Dec. 15 (DA, DSh).

The influx of Northern Gannets into the lower Great Lakes basin, first noted during autumn, was evident early in this period. One appeared at Queenston Dec. 2 (WD, RFA *et al.*) and an immature was picked up alive but exhausted at Kingston Dec. 6. It was fattened prior to its trip Dec. 17 to New Jersey for successful release (ph. KC). Another Atlantic coast rarity to appear, also propelled presumably SW along the St. Lawrence R., was **Great Cormorant**. An immature was in Hamilton Jan. 5 (AGC), where two adults and one in first-win-

ter plumage remained Feb. 9–28 (RHC *et al.*).

The overwintering attempt by the Am. Bittern near Kingston was costly, as the bird slowly starved and was finally picked up dead Jan. 2 (WG, RDW). The Great Egret at Pittock L., Woodstock, Dec. 1 was record late by 22 days for *Oxford* (JH) and furnished one of few provincial records in December.

WATERFOWL

The Lake Ontario mid-winter waterfowl inventory Jan. 6 resulted in a tally of about 93,700 individuals of 37 species along the inshore waters from Kingston west to Niagara. Leading the totals were 25,556 Canada Geese, 21,466 Oldsquaw, 16,239 Mallards, and 10,052 Com. Goldeneye (WJE).

The most northerly of 21 records of Wood Duck were of a male and female at Coboconk, *Victoria*, a female at Bobcaygeon, *Victoria* (RJP, RGT, DT), all Dec. 1–Feb. 28, and three at Black Rapids, *Leeds*, Jan. 16 (N.L.B.). Two Green-winged Teal at Sudbury Dec. 23 were late (DG, CTB) and the sight-

ing of 11 at Pelee Feb. 28 tied the early arrival date (GTH). The largest concentrations of Am. Black Duck and Mallard were 7500 and 12,500, respectively, at Wildwood L., *Oxford*, Dec. 16 (JMH *et al.*). A ♀ N. Pintail at Bobcaygeon Jan. 1–Feb. 28 was unusual there (RJP, RGT, DT), and a ♀ Blue-winged Teal at Guelph Jan. 19–20 was *Wellington's* first in winter (RVT). Of the 46 N. Shovelers in Toronto's High Park Dec. 1 (HK), eight were still present Feb. 17 (AGC). Two Gadwall at Pelee Feb. 4 were record early by 2 days (AW). A ♂ Am. Wigeon X Wood Duck hybrid lingered near Woodstock Dec. 9–15 (JMH *et al.*).

Late Ring-necked Ducks were singles well n. at Swastika Dec. 16 (LT) and at Pelee Jan. 12 (AW). Kingston's Com. Eider tarried at Millhaven Nov. 24–Dec. 2 and moved to nearby Amherst I. by Jan. 6 (JHE, RDW *et al.*). The 20 King Eiders constituted an invasion (1982–1990 winter average of 4) that was detected last autumn when eight were shot at Presqu'ile. Singles were at Port Elgin Nov. 25–Jan. 1 (MP),

Oshawa Dec. 2 (MJB), and Amherst I. Dec. 26 & 27 and Feb. 15 each in different plumage (TFMB, K.F.N.). Another was shot at Presqu'île Dec. 5 (SML), but fortunately four were still alive there Dec. 2-10 (AGC, CV *et al.*). Seven were near St. Catharines Dec. 16 (MEH) and the two females at Winona Nov. 29-Dec. 9 (MWD, EJ *et al.*) were joined by an imm. male Dec. 1-Jan. 6 (JLO).

Harlequin Ducks numbered nine (1982-1990 winter average of 5), led by four in Sault Ste Marie Jan. 2, one of which was present Feb. 1-28 (EC, GM). Two were at Presqu'île Dec. 21 (DS) and singles remained in Oshawa Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (GAS), Toronto Islands Jan. 6-20 (GC, WJE), and Winona Feb. 9-15 (KAM *et al.*). Leading the totals for the large number of scoters noted were 25 Blacks off Amherst I. Dec. 23 (K.F.N.), 27 Surfs at Pelee Dec. 22 (GTH) where two were record late Dec. 31 (DGC, AW), and 1045 White-wingeds at P.E.Pt. Jan. 6 (K.F.N.). The only Barrow's Goldeneye noted was a male near Lakefield Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (DCS *et al.*).

VULTURES TO SHOREBIRDS

Turkey Vultures were n. to Wolfe I. Dec. 16 (RDW), Demorestville, *Prince Edward*, Jan. 2 (RTS), and Joyceville Feb. 3 (KB). Another was near Woodstock Jan. 27 (TS). The 100 Bald Eagles reported in the south represented a further increase in the species' steady rise since 1982. Enormous numbers of voles attracted 72 N. Harriers on Amherst I. Dec. 23 (K.F.N.), where raptor numbers remained high through the season. The 62 Red-tailed Hawks at Presqu'île Dec. 16 were noteworthy (SML), along with the adult and immature frequenting a Thunder Bay grain elevator Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (NGE). Rough-legged Hawk numbers were up in s. Ontario, probably a result of the light snow cover. Usually deep snow reduces their hunting success, thereby forcing the birds farther south into the USA. Highest concentrations were of 78 on Amherst I. Dec. 27 (K.F.N.) and 46 at Metz Dec. 27 (RVT).

S.A.

It was the Gyrfalcon that stole the raptor show, with numbers exceeding those of their last big invasion during winter 1984-1985. In the mostly unsettled



Adult Gyrfalcon at Thunder Bay, Ontario, January 5, 1991. Photograph/N.G. Escott.

north, four grey morph birds entertained observers in Thunder Bay Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (ph. NGE) and another remained in Sudbury Jan. 5-Feb. 28 (JGL, CGB, JCN). At least seven Gyrs penetrated into s. Ontario. In the vanguard, a dark bird reached West Bay, Manitoulin I., Dec. 14 (CJW) and a grey individual tarried at Ottawa Dec. 15-22 (*fide* VBL). The dark immature on Wolfe I. Dec. 16 (RDW, BJ) had moved to Amherst I. by Jan. 24 (TH, BMD *et al.*), where it was seen eating a Short-eared Owl. The grey bird found shot and alive west of Kingston Jan. 18 has recovered, but is unreleasable (KC). Others were a dark bird at Kemble, *Grey*, Feb. 2 (DF) and a grey bird in the Oshawa-Whitby area Feb. 3 (DP). The 7th was on Manitoulin I. Feb. 8 (DEB).

Eight Golden Eagles about equalled the 1982-1990 winter average of seven. They were in Thunder Bay Dec. 10 (SVP, RMW) and Manitoulin I., *Peterborough*, Algonquin, *Prince Edward*, *Frontenac*, and Wolfe I.

during the period. Single Peregrine Falcons were in Hamilton Dec. 10 (TC) and Jan. 3 (RHC, BS), Kingston Jan. 4 (PH), Toronto's e. Headland Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (MWD *et al.*), and Ottawa Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (*fide* VBL).

The only rail report was of a Virginia Rail at Long Pt. Dec. 15-Mar. 12 (L.P.B.O., AW). Noteworthy Am. Coots were singles at Tillsonburg Dec. 24 for *Oxford's* first in winter (JMH, JSk) and Wheatley Jan. 2-21 (AW *et al.*).

Mild conditions through December encouraged some littorals to linger late, including a juv. Lesser Golden-Plover at Erieau Dec. 16 (AW, MWJ). The Ruddy Turnstone at Wheatley Dec. 2-Jan. 1 (AW *et al.*) was thought to have been the same bird at Erieau Jan. 6 (KJB). A W. Sandpiper at Turkey Pt. Dec. 8-11 (RDM *et al.*) was record late for the province, and a White-rumped Sandpiper at Wildwood L. was record late for *Oxford* by 13 days (JMH). Other tardy waders were the two Pec-



This Ruddy Turnstone at Wheatley Harbour, Ontario, was already extremely late when it was photographed on December 5, 1990, but it lingered into January. Photograph/Alan Wormington.

tors at Long Pt. Dec. 2 (DAM *et al.*) and Purple Sandpipers at Presqu'île to Dec. 21 (SC, PC) and Niagara Falls Jan. 5 (JBM *et al.*) and Feb. 3 (JMH *et al.*). The last of many late Dunlin were singles at Presqu'île to Dec. 21 (SML) and Niagara Falls Jan. 5 (JBM *et al.*), and two each at Amherst I. to Dec. 23 (K.F.N.) & Hamilton to Jan. 1 (RHC *et al.*).

GULLS TO OWLS

Herring, Ring-billed, and Great Black-backed gulls were present



Bill shape is usually a good field mark in gull identification, but not always, as suggested by this Ring-billed Gull with a deformed bill at Toronto, Ontario, December 28, 1990. Photograph/Tim Sabo.

throughout the period over much of s. Ontario, no doubt influenced by the warm weather. The only Franklin's Gull was at Niagara Falls Dec. 9 (*fide* RFA). Fewer Little Gulls frequented the Niagara R. than normal (GBE), but 116 at Pelee Dec. 4 made a record high tally there (AW). One at Wheatley Feb. 12 furnished the first mid-winter record for the Pelee area (AW). One Com. Black-headed Gull appeared in the Queenston area Jan. 6-27 (*fide* RFA), Ontario's 20th during the past 27 winters. The 40,000 Bonaparte's moving past Niagara-on-the-Lake Dec. 8 were the season's high (GBE), and 75 adults at Wheatley Feb. 12 made a high tally for mid-winter (AW).

Ontario's 13th Mew Gull appeared in west Toronto Dec. 14-Feb. 12 (ph. RY *et al.*), but was not always easy to find among the loafing gulls. The 45 Icelands, nine Thayer's, and 176 Glaucous gulls were normal numbers, but the 70 Glaucous in w. Hamilton Bay Dec. 26 made a noteworthy concentration (AW, RGF). The 19 Lesser Black-backed Gulls Dec. 1-Feb. 17 were double the 1982-1990 winter average of nine. Some 13 were concentrated from the Toronto region to Hamilton and Niagara. The six others were in Ottawa, Peterborough, *Wellington*, and Wildwood L., *Oxford*. A Great Black-backed Gull at Wildwood L. Jan. 20 (JMH) provided a first January record for *Oxford*. Six Black-legged Kittiwakes were the most during winter since 1983-1984. Singles were at Wheatley Dec. 3 (AW), Fort Erie Dec. 9 (*fide* RFA), St. Catharines Dec. 16 (*fide* MEH), and Wolfe I. Dec. 16 (RDW, J. Haig). Two were at Turkey Pt. Dec. 15 (RHC *et al.*). Ontario's 2nd Ross' Gull delighted observers at Turkey

Pt. Dec. 11 (RDM *et al.*). The province's first, May 14–24, 1983, was photographed along the James Bay coast at Moosonee.

Snowy Owls totalled about 60 in the south, their best showing since winter 1987–1988. The only concentrations were of 11 on Wolfe I. and 10–13 on Amherst I. through the period (K.F.N.). Following the strong irruption of N. Hawk Owls during autumn, it was not surprising that the species continued to appear in numbers. Five in the north and 12 in the south exceeded those totals from the irruption of 1987–1988. Two remained in Sudbury throughout the season (JCN) and singles were in North Bay Dec. 8 (RDT), Nolalu, Thunder Bay, Dec. 18 (JM), and Sault Ste Marie Jan. 1–Mar. 5 (ph. DG *et al.*). Those in the south were led by five on Manitoulin I. Dec. 3–Feb. 28 (JCN) and three in Ottawa Dec. 2 to late February (VBL). Singles were in Kenilworth Dec. 15 (G. Meyer), Brighton Nov. 28–Jan. 20 (KL *et al.*) until it was killed by a car, Richmond Hill Jan. 15–Feb. 23 (DWT *et al.*), and Indian R., Peterborough, Jan. 20–Feb. 13 (PB *et al.*). Great Gray Owls also erupted into the south, but typically without any signs of them last fall. The 20 birds in the Thunder Bay area Dec. 1–Feb. 28 were most ever there (NGE). The 13 in the south arrived in e. Ontario at Ottawa Dec. 9 (*vide* VBL), Perth, Lanark, Dec. 12 (RB), and near Smith's Falls Jan. 12 (G. Ide). One reached Markham Jan. 26 (JW). The big influx with a second wave occurred on Manitoulin I., where eight birds appeared Feb. 4–28 (JCN), and another showed at Ottawa Feb. 24 & 26 (VBL). Two of those on Manitoulin I. were killed by cars.

Numbers of Short-eared Owls were way up, providing a basis for some optimism for this species thought to be in trouble because of habitat destruction. The 100 in *Haldimand* Jan. 13 were part of a larger group wintering there (JBM, GP *et al.*). Some 50 overwintered at 8 sites near London (PAR) and up to 40 each were on Wolfe I. and Amherst I. during the period (K.F.N.). Other concentrations were of 24 at Stevensville, *Nia-*

gara, Feb. 24 (*vide* RFA) and 18 at Lansdowne Feb. 13 (N.L.B.). The only Boreal Owls were singles on Amherst I. Dec. 21–Jan. 6 (ph. AS *et al.*) and Manitoulin I. Feb. 14 (SH). A N. Saw-whet Owl was well north at Virginiatown Jan. 3 (ph. MN *et al.*).

KINGFISHERS TO GNATCATCHERS

Wintering Belted Kingfishers were n. to Barrie, Peterborough, and Minden, and single Red-headed Woodpeckers were farther north in Sudbury Dec. 1–31 (JCN) and on Manitoulin I. Nov. 15–Jan. 31 (RCa, DEB). The 44+ Red-bellied Woodpeckers were indicative of their strong numbers, and pioneers expanded the range again. Singles were n. to Thunder Bay Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (AV *et al.*), Sault Ste. Marie about Dec. 15 (NH), North Bay Dec. 15–Jan. 31 (RDT), and Barrie I. off Manitoulin Feb. 1–28 (JCN). At the e. edge of the range, four birds wintered at 3 Kingston sites (K.F.N.). Toronto's Yellow-bellied Sapsucker spent the period again alive and well in the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery (HK), and tardy sapsuckers were singles on Wolfe I. Dec. 16 (RDW), west Toronto Dec. 23 (HK), Tillsonburg Dec. 24 (JMH, JSk), and the Jarvis area Jan. 1 (JBM, SJM, GP).

A Barn Swallow near Brighton tarried Nov. 21–Dec. 13 (LC). Extralimital Gray Jays pushed south to Clarendon, Frontenac, Oct. 15–Mar. 7 (MAS), Dyer's Bay Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (TRM), Colpoys Jan. 12 (TRM), Kleinburg Jan. 26 & 30 (REA), and Tamworth Feb. 9 (ST). For the first time, roosts of Com. Raven were discovered in the Kingston area, containing 25 birds at the Chaffeys Locks site from Dec. 20 (MB, RDW) and 20 at the Canoe L. site during January (JG). Red-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers were scarce everywhere.

Carolina Wren numbers, buoyed by a series of mild winters, reached an all-time winter high of 103+ birds. The 84+ in the traditional range from Hamilton and Niagara to the southwest were part of a steady rise, but 19 elsewhere were a big jump from the 1982–1990 winter average of six. Seven each wintered at sites in the Toronto and Kingston areas, with two at

Ottawa. Singles were in Pontypool, Peterborough, Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (AP), Inverhuron, Bruce, Feb. 15 (MP), and Port Sydney, Muskoka, Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (JGfd). A late House Wren appeared at Erieau Dec. 16 (AW), and noteworthy among nine late Marsh Wrens was one near Presqu'île Dec. 16 (CV *et al.*). Golden-crowned Kinglets were scarce everywhere. A lone Blue-gray Gnatcatcher appeared at Long Pt. Dec. 15 (AW, MWJ).

THRUSHES TO WARBLERS

Wintering E. Bluebirds numbered five n. to Moscow Jan. 18 (EK), four in Camden East Jan. 19 (PG), and four at Castleton Jan. 31 (SML). Pelee's 4th Mountain Bluebird lingered Nov. 30–Dec. 3 (JEF *et al.*). Six Townsend's Solitaires occurred during the 8 winters 1982–

Presqu'île Dec. 27–Mar. 1 (DS *et al.*), Wheatley P.P. Jan. 3–Feb. 28 (DGC *et al.*), and Nephron, Peterborough, Feb. 10–14 (CAS *et al.*). The Swainson's Thrush at Leamington Jan. 1–2 furnished a first local winter record (AW *et al.*). Flocks of up to 100 Am. Robins were reported all winter from Waterloo, Niagara, Durham, Simcoe, and Frontenac. Six Varied Thrushes equalled the 1977–1990 winter average: at a Thunder Bay feeder Nov. 25–Feb. 28 (EH), Red Rock Dec. 12–Jan. 15 (OC), Sault Ste. Marie Jan. 1–Feb. 28 (A. Walker), Guelph Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (*vide* KAM), Nobleton Dec. 5–Jan. 31 (JRM), and Kleinburg Dec. 14 (JL).

Six Gray Catbirds were the most in winter in at least a decade; they were in downtown Toronto Dec. 1–Feb. 17 (TS, AD), Toronto's High Park Feb. 9–28 (GC),



Townsend's Solitaire at Wheatley Provincial Park, Ontario, January 3, 1991. Four in the province this winter represented an invasion. Photograph/Alan Wormington.

1990, so this season's four constituted an invasion. Singles were in Thunder Bay around Dec. 15 (ph., *vide* NGE),

Whitby Dec. 23–Jan. 12 (RGT *et al.*), Peterborough Nov. 17–Dec. 16 (WM), and London Feb. 21 (JMCK). The 6th was well north

at Thunder Bay Dec. 6-7 (S & MB).

The Bohemian Waxwing flight was moderate from Sudbury e. to Ottawa, where numbers built up after Jan. 8 (VBL). Movement s.w. of this axis was evident during early February as 430 birds penetrated to the Pickering area Feb. 2-3 (*vide* MJB) and 30 arrived at Camden East Feb. 3 (PG). Singles reached Guelph Jan. 30 (BKW) and Wheatley P.P. Feb. 3 (B & MC), the same day two were in Port Royal (RZD). Numbers of N. Shrikes were up sharply nearly everywhere with 154+ birds. On Amherst I., where about 10 wintered, the shrikes were eating meadow voles which they stored on the thorns of hawthorne.

An Orange-crowned Warbler, very rare in winter, appeared in Colchester Dec. 15-17 (PDP, AW). A Yellow-rumped Warbler wintered at a feeder in Toronto's Rexdale area (MAK), but the species was scarce everywhere. The Yellow-throated Warbler reported last autumn at Heathcote remained to Dec. 26 (DCy) and another was in Leamington Dec. 22 (MBI). A late Ovenbird dined at a Mississauga feeder Dec. 3-27 (GH), while another at an Ottawa feeding station survived Dec. 16-Feb. 28 (*vide* VBL). Since 1982, there have been Ovenbird records during 3 winters. Even more bizarre were the three N. Waterthrushes. One was in the Long Pt. area Dec. 15-16 (L.P.B.O., TS), another remained in Toronto's Lambton woods Dec. 23-Jan. 6 (AR, NM), while the 3rd foraged successfully all winter in the Snowy Owl pens of Toronto's Metro Zoo (MWD *et al.*).

BUNTINGS TO FINCHES

Single Indigo Buntings, extremely rare in winter, were at Tobermory Dec. 19-Jan. 10 (JWJ, TRM) and Whitby Dec. 23-Jan. 12 (DB *et al.*). The most northerly of the nine Rufous-sided Towhee reports was the single at a feeder near Clinton Dec. 23-Feb. 28 (TL). Rare overwintering Chipping Sparrows included one at Sudbury to Jan. 19 (DScd) and another in Paris, *Waterloo*, to Feb. 15 (H & WW). Late Savannah Sparrows were two at

Pele Dec. 22 (*vide* AW) and one at Aldershot Dec. 31 (JLO). Two Fox Sparrows appeared at Gore Bay, Manitoulin I., Feb. 24-28 (SW) from unknown origins.

The only Yellow-headed Blackbird was an imm. male at Brighton Dec. 16-Jan. 6 (S & DH), which compares with the 1982-1990 winter average of two birds. The three Rusty and one Brewer's blackbirds at Swaburg, *Oxford*, Jan. 1 were unusual for winter (JMH). Other Brewer's were five along L. St. Clair Jan. 1 (KJB *et al.*), two at Brighton Jan. 1-10 (AGC, TS *et al.*), and one near Nobleton, *York*, Jan. 26-Mar. 1 (DJC). Three Com. Grackles survived at a feeder in Kirkland Lake Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (LT) and another was in Matchewan to Dec. 25 (LT). The ♂ Brown-headed Cowbird at a feeder within Algonquin Dec. 1-Feb. 27 was the park's first in winter (J. Coons).

Ontario's 2nd ever **Brambling** visited a feeder n. of Port Hope Feb. 20-28 (JGe *et al.*). The province's 6th **Rosy Finch**



Rosy Finch in the Thunder Bay District of Ontario, December 9, 1990. Sixth provincial record. The very extensive gray on the face suggests a northwest coastal form, unexpected as a stray so far east. Photograph/N.G. Escott.

frequented a feeder 40 km s. of Thunder Bay Dec. 8-13 (ph. S & RI *et al.*). The extensive grey on the head suggested the "Hepburn's" or coastal race of the Gray-crowned Rosy Finch that occurs from Alaska s. to British Columbia. Pine Grosbeaks remained in the north within their breeding range, and most Purple Finches had left the province last autumn, leaving only a few spread over widely scattered areas. Large numbers of Red Crossbills were in Petroglyphs P.P. during the period. Two males killed on the road there showed measurements of wings and culmen well beyond the range of the subspecies *L.c. sitkensis*. These data, together with their orange red plumage and 'choop choop' calls when alive, suggested the subspecies *L.c. minor*, the old northeastern subspecies renamed *L.c. neogaea* (see AB 41:189-194, 1987) (RJP). A few Reds were noted s. to Presqu'ile, Whitby, *Oxford*, and Long Pt. Dec. 2-28, but a flock of 22 appeared at Long Pt. in late February (L.P.B.O.). Only nine White-winged Crossbills were reported during the period, from widely separated locales. Redpolls failed to move in any numbers s. of a line joining Sudbury n.e. to Virginia town. The only Hoary Redpoll was a single near Thunder Bay Feb. 24 (JSk). Pine Siskins were also very scarce in the south and were noted in numbers only on Manitoulin I. (JCN) and *Temiskaming* (PWR). Evening Grosbeaks remained plentiful in most of their nesting range and only a few penetrated farther south.

Corrigendum: AB 44:1128, column 4, bottom, the Whimbrels were at Hurkett June 3 (SVP, WSC) not at Presqu'ile June 13.

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APPALACHIAN REGION

George A. Hall

From Erie, Pennsylvania, Jerry McWilliams summed up the season for the whole Region: "Fall extended well into winter and then spring arrived." Indeed, it was another year without a real winter. All three months averaged warmer than normal and there were only one or two really cold spells. At Pittsburgh the rainfall for the three months was 10.63 inches while the normal is 8.49 inches. December alone had 8.51 inches. There were no heavy snowfalls.

Most of the Region had plenty of open water throughout the period, which resulted in many waterfowl remaining in the north, and also produced an unusual number of records of gulls and other wetland species.

Unlike last year the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) were conducted in mild, open weather and many regions reported record high numbers for many species. Surprisingly, though, there were not a lot of "half-hardy" stragglers reported.

Wild food supplies were adequate and many backyard feeding stations were nearly deserted for most of the season. There was no influx of "northern finches," but Snowy Owls and Northern Shrikes made a good showing.

Abbreviations: B.E.S.P. (*Bald Eagle State Park, Centre Co., PA*); Ch.N.F. (*Chattahoochee Nat'l Forest, GA*); K.C.P.P. (*Kyger Creek Power Plant, Gallia Co., OH*); M.E.C.H. (*Minor E. Clark Hatchery, Rowan Co., KY*); P.N.R. (*Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., PA*); P.I.S.P. (*Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., PA*). Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS TO HERONS

A Red-throated Loon was at P.I.S.P. Dec. 2 (JM). Common Loons were widely reported in December, with a high count of 121 at S. Holston L., TN (BC). A total of 23 wintered on lakes near Elizabethton, TN (RK),



and wintering reports came from Fishersville, VA (SR), Rowan (FB), and Warren, PA (DD). A Red-necked Grebe was at P.I.S.P. Feb. 16 (DHo) and an Eared Grebe was there Dec. 8-Jan. 1 (EK). The 14 Horned Grebes at Somerset L., PA, Dec. 3 (TM) made an interesting concentration, but the flight of about 400 that arrived at P.I.S.P. the night of Feb. 15 (JM) was most remarkable. Could they have been forced out of the north by a freezeup? A Horned Grebe was also at Trout Run Res., PA, Dec. 30-Jan. 15 (RM & RCL), and there were 4 reports from n.e. Tennessee (RK).

Two or three Double-crested Cormorants were at P.I.S.P. from Dec. 15 to Feb. 10 (JM) and two wintered on S. Holston L., TN (RK) while other reports came from C.F.H., KY, Jan. 11 (FB), Pymatuning L., PA, Dec. 16 (RFL), and Wood, WV, Dec. 11 (JE).

The abundance of open water produced a large number of wintering Great Blue Herons even as far north as Crawford, PA, where 25 were listed on the CBC Dec. 16 (RFL). At the heronry in Mercer, the first Great Blues arrived Feb. 19 and by the end of the period 75 were present, perhaps 15% of the expected breeding population

(EB). A belated Great Egret was at Rural Retreat L., VA, Dec. 14 (HC).

WATERFOWL

The abundance of open water made a marked change in the waterfowl status of many areas. Many birds remained in the north as, for example, the ice-free waters at Presque Isle Bay, Erie, PA, had large numbers all winter with maximum counts of 10,000 Com. Goldeneyes, 6000 Canvasbacks, and 1200 Red-heads (JM). Consequently numbers were low in the south, and some regions had few or no ducks. Most areas, however, did report a good variety of species, and at several places CBC counts set new species highs.

Tundra Swans were still moving south in December with scattered reports from w. Pennsylvania localities, including a high count of 120 at Kinzua Dam, PA, Dec. 26 (RL). More unusual were reports from K.C.P.P. in s. Ohio Jan. 26 (WA), and Fishersville, VA, through the period (SR). A Greater White-fronted Goose, with Canadas, at Cave Run L., KY, Jan. 11 (FB) furnished the first local record. Snow Geese were reported from Pymatuning L., PA (m.ob.); Shenango L., PA (EB); Wood (KC) and Cabell, WV (WA); and Unicoi,

TN, the latter providing a first local winter record (RK).

Greater Scaup are usually rare in this Region, so reports from Pymatuning L., PA, Dec. 16 (first CBC record) (RFL), Mosquito L., OH, Dec. 16 (NB), Mason, WV, Dec. 29 (WA), and two wintering at Johnson City, TN (RK), were all notable. All three scoters were at P.I.S.P., with up to four Blacks, a total of 20 Surfs, and 18 White-winged scoters (JM). A White-winged Scoter was also reported from Roanoke, VA, Jan. 19 (MS). The prize waterfowl records of the season came from P.I.S.P. with an immature King Eider (ph.) Jan. 1-27 (TF) and a ♀ Harlequin Duck (ph.) Feb. 17 for the 9th Erie record (JM).

RAPTORS

A Black Vulture at State College, PA, Dec. 4 was rare there in any season (TF). Turkey Vultures arrived in the north in the 3rd week of February, as much as 8 days early at some places. The only Osprey report was from Laughlontown, PA, Jan. 17 (RM, RCL). Bald Eagle sightings were reported from 13 different areas. Eagles were at a nesting site at Mosquito L., OH, in late February (DH) and were at the Bath, VA, nesting site Jan. 21 (MH).

Cooper's Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, and Am. Kestrels were all in good numbers, and there were many reports of the usually rare Sharp-shinned and Red-shouldered hawks. Wintering N. Harriers were found at Lander, PA (WH), Somerset, PA (TM), Mosquito L., OH (CB), and Toccoa, GA (DB). The only reports of N. Goshawks came from Kinzua Dam, PA, Jan. 4 (DD, WH), Cambridge Springs, PA, Jan. 19 (RFL), and near Erie, PA, in a flight of Red-taileds, Feb. 24 (JM). Rough-legged Hawks were more widespread than usual, possibly another consequence of the mild weather. The southernmost reports were from Mason and Cabell, WV (WA), and Augusta and Highland, VA (SR). The only reports of wintering Golden Eagles came from Highland, VA, where as many as three were seen Jan. 4 (SR). A bird thought to be a belated fall migrant was seen at Bald Eagle Mt., PA, Jan. 13 (KS).

Unusual for winter were Merlins at Stuart's Draft, VA, Dec. 31 (SR), Erie, PA, Feb. 16 (JM), and perhaps the same bird at P.I.S.P. Feb. 2 (JeS, JiS).

GROUSE TO TERNS

Ruffed Grouse were reported as doing very well at Lock Haven, PA (PS, GS). Wild Turkey populations seem to be booming as, for example, the record high 48 listed on the Clarksville, PA, CBC (RB) and the 12-15 that flew across Interstate 79 in *Har-rison*, WV, Jan. 25 (GB).

In *Whitfield*, GA, 200 south-bound Sandhill Cranes were seen Dec. 16 (CBI, KSa) while in nearby *Murray*, northbound birds were reported the last week of February (HD, MDa). In the Hiawasee CBC circle, cranes now winter by the "hundreds" where even as late as the mid-1980s they were unknown (JPa). Most unusual was a Sandhill Crane at Colyer L., PA, Feb. 2 (EBu, MR).

There were numerous reports of wintering Killdeer, with a high number of 120 at Boone Dam, TN (RK), and spring migrants arrived by mid-February. A Ruddy Turnstone at P.I.S.P. Jan. 26 furnished the first local winter record (JM). Five Am. Woodcock were seen in *Centre*, PA, Dec. 3 (MB) and the one at P.I.S.P. Jan. 2 provided a first winter record there (BW). By the 3rd week in February, woodcock were displaying at many places, and one shot in *Washington*, TN, Feb. 23 was carrying an egg in the oviduct (AA).

It was a great year for gulls, and reports of unusual numbers of Ring-billed Gulls came from all over the Region. At Presque Isle Bay, PA, gull numbers peaked at just under 100,000 with an unprecedented total of 1000 Great Black-backed Gulls (JM). As usual, one Great Black-backed was seen at B.E.S.P., Jan. 5 (MW). Ten to 20 Bonaparte's Gulls wintered at Boone L., TN (RK), 15 were seen in *Whitfield*, GA, Jan. 20 (HD), and 258 were reported at Mosquito L., OH, Dec. 16 (NB). Finally, the roll call of the rarer gulls from P.I.S.P. included up to four adult and one imm. Little Gulls, four Thayer's Gulls, six Iceland Gulls, seven Lesser Black-backed Gulls, and

"good numbers" of Glaucous Gulls. Two of the Thayer's Gulls were the first adults ever recorded in Pennsylvania (JM, EK).

Most unusual were Forster's Terns reported from P.I.S.P. Jan. 13-19 (JM) and Boone L., TN, Dec. 24 (RK). Both provided first local winter records.

OWLS TO WRENS

A Barn Owl nest in *Washington*, TN, had 7 eggs (one hatching) Feb. 18 (DHu). The Huntington, WV, CBC listed a record eight Great Horned Owls (WA). Snowy Owls were



Snowy Owl at Edinboro, Erie County, Pennsylvania, on February 3, 1991. In this non-invasion winter, only a few Snowies made it as far south as Pennsylvania. Photograph/Jerry McWilliams.

reported from P.I.S.P. Jan. 31-Feb. 25 (JD), a 2nd bird in *Erie* Dec. 2 (RC), Pymatuning L., PA, Dec. 29-Jan. 5 (RFL, IK), and *Wood*, WV, Dec. 1-8 (JE). One or two Long-eared



Long-eared Owl at Presque Isle State Park, Pennsylvania, February 17, 1991. Photograph/Jerry McWilliams.

S.A.

What gives with the Short-eared Owls? Until recently this was a rare species in this Region, but suddenly it has turned into a common wintering bird in places, particularly where recovered surface mines offer extensive areas of grassland habitat. In Pennsylvania, reports came from *Erie* (up to seven birds) (JM), *Mercer* and *Clarion* (30 birds) (WF), and *Warren* (WH). In Ohio, *Columbiana* had up to seven (DH, NB), *Jefferson* had up to 12 (MA), and others were in *Athens* (VF, JE). More remarkable was their occurrence in at least 5 locations near Waynesboro, VA, in the agricultural Shenandoah Valley, with a high count of 12 at Swoope Feb. 26 (RS).

Owls were at P.I.S.P. Dec. 8-Feb. 17 (DDa); a roost of possibly four was located in *Clarion*, PA (WF); and one was a road-kill in *Mason*, WV, Feb. 3 (WA).

The Black-chinned Hummingbird reported in the fall report from Chattanooga was last seen there Jan. 14 (JPa). Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue to expand to the north with reports from *Warren* (WH) and a total of 10-12 in *Clarion*, in place of the usual one (WF). Eastern Phoebe's wintered in more than the usual numbers. The record of the season was of an Ash-throated Flycatcher (ph.) in *Jefferson*, WV, Dec. 15-26 (RD, WHe).

Two large concentrations of Horned Larks were reported: 400-500 in *Somerset*, PA, Dec. 26 (TM) and 447 at Stuart's Draft, VA, Jan. 9 (SR). Black-capped Chickadees had staged a modest southward movement in the autumn, but a record total of 442 on the CBC at Lock Haven, PA, was remarkable (PS). This Count also had a record high of 159 Tufted Titmice (PS). There were scattered reports of Red-breasted Nuthatches coming to feeders, but no major invasion. Brown-headed Nuthatches were present all season at Toccoa, GA (DB).

Carolina Wren continues to thrive, and the rather mild winter was good to them. Especially encouraging were reports of

good numbers in the far north of the Region, in *Erie*, *Warren*, and *Elk*, PA, *Trumbull*, OH, and in the mountains of *Somerset*, PA. Especially noteworthy was a Bewick's Wren in *Whitfield*, GA, Dec. 17 (MP).

KINGLETS TO WARBLERS

Despite the mild winter, few Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were reported only from B.E.S.P. Dec. 31 (JP) and from Staunton, VA (CC). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Boone Dam, TN, Dec. 21 (DH) provided the first local winter record. There were only a few reports of Hermit Thrushes, but E. Bluebirds were more common than usual and Am. Robins were present in large numbers even in the north. A Varied Thrush (ph.) at Walden, TN, Dec. 13-Feb. 15 apparently furnished the first state record (JPa).

The only reports of Gray Catbirds came from *Centre*, PA, Dec. 12 (J & BP) and Jan. 12 (TF), but Brown Thrashers were reported from *Warren*, PA (WH), *Centre*, PA, Dec. 2 (J & BPe), *Somerset*, PA, Dec. 28 (TM), Fishersville, VA, Dec. 15 (SR), and *Morehead*, KY, Dec. 16 (FB), and they were regular at Toccoa, GA (DB).

American Pipits were found in *Meigs*, OH, Dec. 30 (VF) and *Washington*, TN, Jan. 2 (RK). It was a great year for N. Shrikes with at least 15 birds reported, all in northern locations: four in *Erie* (JM), one in *Venango*, PA (JM), four in *Warren*, PA (WH), two in *Centre*, PA (JP), and four in *Trumbull*, OH (CB, DH). Individual Loggerhead Shrikes were reported from *Murray*, GA (HD), *Stephens*, GA (DB), and *Rock-bridge*, VA (SR), as well as 10-12 reports from the Elizabethton, TN, area (RK) which has been the last stronghold of the species in this Region.

Yellow-rumped Warblers were unusually numerous even in the North. At Lock Haven, PA, 37 on the CBC was the 2nd-highest ever (PS). Other than a few Pine Warblers in the south, the only other warbler records came from n.e. Tennessee: a Yellow-throated Warbler wintered at a feeder in *Unicoi* for a first local winter record

(GW); a Palm Warbler was in *Washington* Feb. 6 (TMc); and Com. Yellowthroats were noted at *Elizabethton* Dec. 16 (FA) and *Washington* Jan. 2 (RK).

SPARROWS TO FINCHES

Most of the sparrows, including Rufous-sided Towhee and Dark-eyed Junco, drew highly varied reports. A few areas had good numbers, even record high numbers of some species, but most areas had very low numbers or were missing certain species altogether. For several years, without much notice, Am. Tree Sparrow has disappeared as a wintering bird from the central part of the Region, and this year it was generally reported as being unusually scarce in the north also. A Vesper Sparrow was at *Waynesboro*, VA, Jan. 10 (SR). Fox Sparrows were reported more commonly than usual. An "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco came to a feeder at *Girard*, OH, all season (J & DH).

Single Lapland Longspurs were seen at P.I.S.P. Dec. 1 (EK) & 22 (GR), and six were at another location in *Erie* Jan. 17 (JiS, SS). Well south of normal range, and providing a first county record, was a flock of at least 13 longspurs at *Stuart's Draft*, VA, Jan. 8 and later, associating with the large flock of Horned Larks mentioned above (SR). Four Snow Buntings were also in this concentration, which was caused by a snowfall (SR). One Snow Bunting had also been found near *Fishersville*, VA, Dec. 15 (SR).

A few Red-winged Blackbirds and E. Meadowlarks wintered in the north, and the early spring Red-winged arrived by mid-February. Midwinter Rusty Blackbirds were reported from *Columbiana*, OH, Jan. 27, (ND), *Niles*, OH, Feb. 22 (CB), and *Somerset*, PA, Jan. 11 & 21 (TM). A Brewer's Blackbird was seen in *Huntingdon*, PA, Jan. 13 (GG).

There was no concerted movement of Purple Finches, and in n. West Virginia House Finches were not as numerous as in recent years (GAH). Red Crossbills were reported Dec. 16 & 26 from Ch.N.F. (HD *et al.*), where they have been more or less regular, *Elizabethton*, TN, Dec. 16 (RK), *Centre*, PA, Jan. 1 and Feb. 3 (TF), and *Highland*, VA, Feb.

9 (CC). The only report of White-winged Crossbills came from *Athens*, OH, in February (LB). There were only two reports of Com. Redpolls: 25 in *Huntingdon*, PA, Jan. 3 (MW) and two at P.I.S.P. Feb. 23 (JB).

There were widely scattered reports of small numbers of Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks. The siskins occurred mostly as singles or very small flocks, while the grosbeaks fell into one of three categories: (1) a very few stations had moderate numbers all season, (2) many stations had occasional small groups, and (3) many stations had none.

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WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

David J. Powell

Generally, it was another mild winter in the Region, with below average snowfall, particularly in the north, and near average temperatures. The season started with a bang, when a blizzard moved through the southern portions of the Region, dumping a foot or more of snow in many areas, but the temperatures then warmed, most of the snow melted, and the next several weeks were relatively mild. Many lakes in Minnesota which normally would have been frozen for several weeks remained open, resulting in many more waterbirds than usual on their CBCs. Late December to early January resulted in more sleet and ice in Wisconsin than normal, again in the southern two-thirds. Tessen remarked that it seemed more like the southern states than the Great Lakes. In Minnesota, temperatures dropped well below zero during the same period, with temperatures getting as low as -45°F. Warmer weather followed, but the real surprise was in early February when a record warm spell came, particularly in northern Minnesota. Many record highs were recorded, as temperatures ran 20-30 degrees above normal. A truly startling temperature was recorded February 3 in Grand Marais on Minnesota's North Shore, where the high was 54°F, a record by 20 degrees! More normal temperatures returned thereafter, and some snow fell, but by the end of the season snowfall levels were way down across the northern parts of the Region.

This was a winter of no birds at feeders Regionwide. This was certainly owing in part to the near total absence of winter finches, but even other small birds were absent from feeders. It might have been owing to the open nature of the winter, with the general lack of snow, but even out in the woods, birds were hard to come by. Minnesota had record or near record numbers of Great Gray Owls and Northern Hawk Owls, and

Wisconsin had a few of both. In the account that follows, place names in *italics* are counties; and to reduce unnecessary duplication, only the most exceptional Christmas Bird Count data are included.

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

The only Red-throated Loon of the season was one Dec. 4 at *New Buffalo*, *Berrien*, MI (RS). Common Loons lingered into December in Wisconsin and Michigan, and one Jan. 14 at *Sault Ste. Marie*, MI (RP), was the last reported. Pied-billed Grebes lingered in all 3 states, with individuals overwintering in *Kalamazoo*, MI (JG), and *Eau Claire*, WI (JP), and one on the *Duluth* CBC, the first ever. Horned Grebes lingered in Michigan and Wisconsin, with the highest count 20 on Jan. 12

S.A.

The Trumpeter Swan situation in the Region is becoming more and more confused with the continuing introductions and more sightings. This winter, unbanded as well as banded birds were seen in Wisconsin, with five at *Oshkosh* Dec. 5-8 (TZ); one intermittently along the *Mississippi R.* in *Buffalo* (m.ob.); and one found sick Jan. 1 at *Trempealeau N.W.R.*, which died several days later of lead poisoning (*vide* FL). In Minnesota, an apparently valid "wild and countable" Trumpeter showed up at *Reads Landing*, *Goodhue*, in December, and eventually overwintered (with seven "non-countable" birds that had been introduced at *Crex Meadows W.M.A.*, WI). All the swans were traced by their neck bands, and this particular individual, 36FA, had been banded at *La Creek N.W.R.*, SD, where a flock has been established since the 1960s. Further investigation revealed that this bird was most likely part of the established flock, not a stray or introduction from one of the other introduced flocks elsewhere. Assuming acceptance by the Minnesota Records Committee, this would be the first Minnesota record since Trumpeters bred in the state in the 19th century (KE).



in *Leelanau*, MI (CF). Late Red-necked Grebes were found Dec. 1–2 at Pt. Iroquois, *Chippewa*, MI (WW, PC, JG), and Dec. 2 at Tawas Pt., *Iosco*, MI (RW).

American White Pelicans wintered at Albert Lea and Black Dog L., MN, and lingered into December at 2 other locations in Minnesota. Double-crested Cormorants lingered in all 3 states, with birds overwintering at one Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations, about average for this increasing species. Great Blue Herons lingered in good numbers throughout the s. parts of the Region, with overwintering birds in several places in s. Michigan and s. Wisconsin. Twenty-two were seen Feb. 2 at the Erie Power Plant, *Monroe*, MI (DP), an impressive number for February in the Great Lakes. A Great Blue seen Feb. 3 in *Freeborn*, MN (RK), raised the possibility that one also managed to overwinter in Minnesota.

The normal number of Tundra Swans lingered in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with several overwintering at Muskegon, MI (JG). Mute Swans continue to increase in Michigan, with reports from 26 counties, and a high of 486 in *Kalamazoo* (RA). Greater White-fronted Geese were seen twice in Michigan, four Dec. 14 at the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, *Kalamazoo* (*fide* RA) and one Jan 10 at the Allegan S.G.A. (*fide* TM).

Green-winged Teal were reported from 6 Michigan and one Wisconsin locations, with one overwintering in *Kalamazoo* (JG, DP). A N. Pintail survived the winter at the unusually far northern location of Duluth. A King Eider was at Port Austin, *Huron*, MI, Dec. 9 (ME). Harlequin Ducks were at one Michigan, 2 Minnesota, and 2 Wisconsin locations, with overwintering likely at both Minnesota locations and at Milwaukee, where two of the four found in December spent the winter. Inland Oldsquaws were reported from *Jackson*, MI (DB), and Madison, WI. Black Scoters were reported from 2 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations and Surf Scoters were reported from 3 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin sites.

RAPTORS

A Turkey Vulture Feb. 24 at Grand Haven, MI (FD), was early. Northern Harriers were seen in good numbers across the Region in December, and overwintered in several Michigan and Wisconsin locations. Sharpshinned and Cooper's hawks were widely reported in both Michigan and Wisconsin, many of them visiting feeders, as has become the norm for Accipiters in the winter. A Ferruginous Hawk, presumed to be the same individual as last winter, was seen intermittently through the period at Allegan S.G.A., MI (KM). Rough-legged Hawks were reported in good numbers

in Michigan and excellent numbers in Wisconsin, with some counts in the latter state tallying 50+ individuals.

Golden Eagles were well represented this winter, with four individuals from 2 sites in Michigan, and eight from 5 sites in Wisconsin, several overwintering in each state. American Kestrels were found in above-average numbers in Michigan. Merlins continue to do well, with at least 10 reports in Minnesota and 4 reports in Michigan, high for winter. Pere-



Gyrfalcon in Chippewa County, Michigan, December 28, 1990. The western Great Lakes enjoyed what may have been their greatest Gyrfalcon invasion ever during the winter of 1990-1991. Photograph/Jim Granlund.

grine Falcons were also reported more frequently than usual in Minnesota, likely a reflection of recent introductions. The Region was virtually invaded by Gyrfalcons this winter, with three in the Sault Ste. Marie, MI, area through the period (RP, m.ob.), two Feb. 26 found feeding on Prairie-Chickens at Buena Vista Marsh, *Portage*, WI (MB), and no fewer than 7 Minnesota reports: two in *Lake of the Woods* Dec. 28–29 (DW, MK *et al.*), with one relocated Jan. 12 (PS); two in *Roseau* Jan. 12 (SM); and singles Dec. 1 in *Wadena* (KL), Dec. 16 in *Aitkin* (AB), and Jan. 27 in *Anoka* (RG). This is certainly the highest total ever reported for the Region: one or two is more normal. The only Prairie Falcon reported was a well-described bird Feb. 9 at the Buena Vista Marsh, *Portage*, WI (EM).

RAILS TO GULLS

Virginia Rails apparently successfully overwintered at Kensington Metrobeach, *Oakland*, MI, as two were seen Feb. 17 (DC). Sandhill Cranes lingered in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with overwintering confirmed in *Calhoun*, MI (MI). The first northbound cranes arrived in Michigan Feb. 23. A late Black-bellied Plover was at Hampton Park, *Bay*, MI, Dec. 1 (JS). A Purple Sandpiper at Sheboygan, WI, was the first overwintering bird for the state. One was also seen Dec. 29 in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, on the Whitefish Point CBC (JG *et al.*). Common Snipe were in above-average numbers in December Regionwide, with one successfully overwintering in *Kalamazoo*, MI (DP, JG).

A Franklin's Gull was at the Erie Power Plant, *Monroe*, MI, Dec. 1–9 (DB, PC, TWe). Two Little Gulls were seen Dec. 1, with one still there Dec. 2, at Muskegon, MI (JH, SMi). Bonaparte's Gulls lingered in Michigan and Wisconsin, with one still present Feb. 3 at Charlevoix, MI (BS, JSt). Ring-billed Gulls lingered in above-average numbers in December in Michigan, while Herring Gulls wintered in reduced numbers in Minnesota. Thayer's Gulls were reported from the Saginaw River, *Bay*, MI (m.ob.), the Muskegon



Adult "Kumlien's" Iceland Gull at the Saginaw River, Bay City, Michigan, January 6, 1991. Photograph/Rod Planck.

Wastewater System, MI (JG, PS), and Sheboygan, WI (m.ob.), a total of about 10 birds. Iceland Gulls were reported from 4 Michigan and one Wisconsin sites, a total of about 10 birds. Glaucous Gulls wintered in normal numbers in Michigan, with reports from 11 counties, but were well above normal in Wisconsin, with an impressive 19 at Superior.

Great Black-backed Gulls were seen in unprecedented numbers along L. Michigan in Wisconsin, with six to 10 birds, mainly adults reported from late January through February (m.ob.). Single Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Michigan were found Dec. 10 in Bay (MP), Jan. 9 in Berrien (RS), and Jan. 12 in Bay (DB), about average for this increasingly seen species. First-winter Black-legged Kittiwakes were found Dec. 4 at New Buffalo, Berrien, MI (RS), Dec. 9 at the Erie Power Plant, MI (PC, TWe, KP), and Dec. 16 on the Portage Canal, Houghton, MI (JC *et al.*).

OWLS TO WOODPECKERS

After last winter's low numbers, Snowy Owls were found in good to excellent numbers Regionwide. Northern Hawk Owls were seen in invasion numbers in the Region, with 16 in Minnesota, four in Wisconsin, and one in Michigan. The

distribution was eight in *St. Louis*, MN, five in *Lake of the Woods*, MN, two in *Aitkin*, MN, and two in *Douglas*, WI, with singles in *Pine*, MN, *St. Croix*, WI, *Marathon*, WI, and *Chippewa*, MI. The Minnesota birds were difficult to find on a regular basis, presumably owing to the openness of the cover and apparent abundance of prey (KE). Normally, a Hawk Owl once located tends to remain in the same spot for weeks, as did the birds in Superior, WI, and Sault Ste. Marie, MI. This was the 2nd-highest total for Minnesota, and the most ever for Wisconsin. Barred Owls were up in numbers in Minnesota, as has been the case in previous



Four Northern Hawk Owls in Wisconsin represented the state's highest winter total ever. This one was in Douglas County, Wisconsin, December 6, 1990. Photograph/Janine Polk.

Great Gray Owl invasion years. After last year's record low numbers, Great Gray Owls staged their largest invasion of Minnesota yet, with no fewer than 128 reported by mid-March (previous record was 122 in 1983-1984). The bulk of the records were from *Roseau*, *Lake of the Woods*, *Beltrami*, *Aitkin*, and *St. Louis*, and the North Shore of L. Superior in *Lake*. The most remarkable concentration was found late in the afternoon of Mar. 3, when Versaw found no fewer than 15 in a

9 square mile area in one hour and 15 minutes. He actually found 18 birds, but discounted 3 as duplicates. Although several Great Grays were picked up dead as road kills, apparently none died of malnutrition as has been the case in previous invasion years, again pointing to an abundance of prey this winter in Minnesota (KE). Great Grays were also seen in Wisconsin, where two to three birds in both *Douglas* and *Bayfield* were considered a mini-invasion. As during the last Great Gray invasion in the winter of 1988-1989, Michigan observers mostly missed out on the birds, with only 3 reports (likely of one bird) in Sault Ste. Marie.

A Short-eared Owl Dec. 28 in *Aitkin* (WN) was quite unusual for Minnesota, where they are rarely seen in winter. In Michigan and Wisconsin, Short-eareds are more regular, but this winter they were found more commonly than normal, with 22 on one Wisconsin CBC, and 11 Feb. 16 in *St. Clair*, MI (DM). Boreal Owls were reported 5 times in Minnesota, two alive in *Lake* and three dead in *St. Louis* (*fide* SW), a few more than usual.

Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue to wander N in the Region, with reports from the far north from all 3 states. The only reports of Black-backed Woodpeckers came from Wisconsin, where 2 pairs were in *Pine* (MH) and six were in the Brule River area, *Douglas* (LS *et al.*). A possibly mated pair of Three-toed Woodpeckers was seen and heard drumming most of the winter on the Gunflint Trail, *Cook*, MN (K & MH).

PHOEBES TO WARBLERS

Eastern Phoebes were seen in both Michigan and Minnesota, with singles on the Battle Creek, MI, CBC (R & BK), Flint, MI CBC (SJ), and Dec. 15-16 in La Crescent, *Houston*, MN (FL *et al.*), only the 2nd winter record for Minnesota. Common Ravens were found s. of normal in *Huron* (KO) and *Tuscola* (JS), MI. Red-breasted Nuthatches were absent/very scarce in Minnesota and n. Wisconsin, but were present in normal numbers in s. Wisconsin.

Carolina Wren is a species that is winter-limited, so this

winter's mild weather should help it continue its rebound in the Region. There were reports from 10 Michigan counties and from 2 Minnesota and 4 Wisconsin locations. A Marsh Wren Dec. 5 at Faribault (TB) was very late for Minnesota. Golden-crowned Kinglets were surprisingly common in some n. Wisconsin locations, but this was not true in the s. portions of the state. Eastern Bluebirds and Hermit Thrushes presented a contrasting picture this winter. Wisconsin observers found them on only two and one CBCs, respectively, but Michigan observers found them quite widespread in the s. third of the state, particularly bluebirds, with 425 individuals on the CBCs and reports from 16 counties. In s. Michigan, particularly the southwest, bluebirds have come to be expected in winter, particularly in swamps. An Am. Robin Feb. 3 in Marquette (JJ) was well n. of normal for the winter. Varied Thrushes were seen in their poorest numbers in many years, with only one in Michigan and only four in Wisconsin.

Gray Catbirds were seen in surprising numbers, with reports from 2 Michigan, 2 Wisconsin, and even one n. Minnesota site. More Brown Thrashers than normal were seen at Minnesota feeders. The ever variable Bohemian Waxwing was scarce to absent



This Pine Warbler spent the winter at a feeder at La Crosse, Wisconsin. Photograph/F.Z. Leshner.

MIDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

Bruce G. Peterjohn

The season started on a mild note with above normal temperatures throughout December, encouraging a number of late migrants to linger into the CBC period. What passed for winter weather arrived in January, producing a several-week period of snow and ice cover in most states. Unusually warm weather returned during February, ushering in another early start to the spring migration. Precipitation was generally above normal through mid-January, resulting in flooding along the Ohio River valley, but was close to normal later in the season.

The mild weather allowed reservoirs to remain open in southern Missouri where increased coverage produced a spectacular assortment of rarities. It was also an eventful season in Illinois and Iowa, but records from the other states conformed to recent patterns.

Abbreviations: Say. Res. (*Saylorville Reservoir, IA*); L.B.L. (*Land between the Lakes, KY*); S.C.R. (*Squaw Creek Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MO*); Spfld. (*Springfield, IL*). Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS TO HERONS

Late migrant Red-throated Loons were singles at Thomas Hill Res., MO, through Dec. 2 (SH) and Kentucky L., KY, Dec. 15-19 (†BP *et al.*). Other Red-throateds at Caesar Creek Res. Jan. 6-19 (†DD, CS) and Killdeer Plains W.M.A. Jan. 13-16 (LR, JH *et al.*) provided rare mid-winter records for Ohio. Kentucky's first Pacific Loon was photographed at Kentucky L. Dec. 15-19 (†BP *et al.*). Other late Pacifics were documented from Smithville L., MO, through Dec. 7 (†PM, TB) and L. Gage, IN, Dec. 6-11 (†Haw, m.ob.). A flight of 185 Com. Loons at Alum Creek Res., OH, Dec. 2 (BPj, MG) was sizable for early winter. Most Commons departed before Jan. 1, and the only wintering Commons away from s.

this winter in Minnesota, with only 3 reports from the south and only 8 CBCs having them. Wisconsin was hardly better, with small numbers in the n. one-third of the state. Michigan came closer to having normal numbers, but they were all confined to the n. one-third of the Lower Peninsula. On the other side of the coin, N. Shrikes were up Regionwide this winter, with their best movement in many years. Yellow-rumped Warblers overwintered in Michigan, where not unexpected, and might have in Minnesota, where much less expected, where one was found Feb. 5-6 in Bloomington (SC). One was also seen Dec. 20 in St. Paul (BH). A Pine Warbler overwintered at a La Crosse, WI, feeder (FL *et al.*).

CARDINALS TO WEAVER FINCHES

Northern Cardinals continue to be reported well n. in the Region, with one at a Port Wing, WI, feeder (LE), and one as far north as Hovland, Cook, MN (SL). American Tree Sparrows were in low numbers in both Michigan and Wisconsin, but Michigan observers found them farther n. than normal. A Field Sparrow lingered until Jan. 11 in St. Paul (BH), quite late for Minnesota. A Fox Sparrow on the Sax-Zim, MN, CBC (KE) was quite far north. White-throated Sparrows were much less common than usual in Michigan and Wisconsin, with only a few reports. Lapland Longspurs were found in small numbers throughout the Region, with more reports from the n. parts of the Region, particularly n. Minnesota, than normal.

Meadowlarks (most likely Easterns) were more common than in recent years in Wisconsin. Yellow-headed Blackbirds lingered until Jan. 20 in Otter Tail, MN (SM), and through January at Horicon N.W.R., WI. Although reported in small numbers, Rusty Blackbirds were reported more often than normal from all 3 states, with a few overwintering in Wisconsin, and individuals n. of normal in Koochiching, MN (RG, BJ), Jan. 12 and Emmett, MI (BS, JSt), Dec. 22-Feb. 1. Two Com. Grackles found Feb. 22 in Marquette, MI (V & KK) were well

n. of normal. The last one-third of February brought a return of numbers of grackles, blackbirds, and cowbirds to southern areas.

Michigan's 2nd (Gray-crowned) Rosy Finch was seen



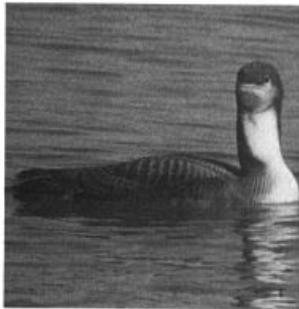
Rosy Finch at Pigeon, Michigan, February 25, 1991. Second state record. Photograph/Robert Putman.

at Pigeon Feb. 24-27 (TB, MW, m.ob., ph.), but unfortunately left before many could see it. Interestingly, the other Michigan Rosy Finch also occurred in late February. After last winter's relative abundance, the winter finches were almost totally absent this winter, returning to the pattern of the winters prior to last. Pine Grosbeaks varied from poor in Minnesota and Wisconsin to only slightly below normal in Michigan, with none south anywhere in the Region. Purple Finches were generally distributed, but only in small numbers. House Finches have almost completed their conquest of the Region; they are absent only in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the n. one-third of Wisconsin, and north of a line formed by I-94 between the Twin Cities and Moorhead, MN; in the rest of the area, they vary from common to abundant, particularly in cities, but spreading into the countryside.

Red Crossbills were scarce Regionwide and restricted to the far north, with the only sizable flock 75 at Whitefish Point, MI, Jan. 13 (RP). Late in the season, they made a modest incursion into n. Wisconsin. White-winged Crossbills were almost nonexistent Regionwide, with none on Michigan or Min-

nesota CBCs, 3 reports from Michigan, 4 reports from Minnesota, and very few in Wisconsin. With the exception of scattered small numbers on Minnesota CBCs, Common Redpolls were almost as scarce as White-winged Crossbills. There were few reports (essentially all from the far north), no large numbers, and no reports of Hoary Redpolls anywhere. Pine Siskins were in small numbers in scattered locations in Michigan and Wisconsin. American Goldfinches were seen in good numbers in Michigan, particularly north. Evening Grosbeaks were seen in only the n. parts of Michigan and Wisconsin, and there in small numbers. A Eurasian Tree Sparrow was present at Lindsley's feeder in Pierce, WI, for the 4th year in succession, although it had not been previously reported (ph.).

Contributors: (This editor wishes to thank the many individuals who submitted reports. The nature of this summary precludes listing every individual who sends in a report; therefore, only observers with cited records are listed below. State editors are in boldface.) Ray Adams, Betsy Beneke, Murray Berner, Tom Boevers, Al Bolduc, Don Brooks, Steve Carlson, Donald Chalfant, Phil Chu, Jean Cochrane, Feller DeWit, Kim Eckert (Minnesota), Laura Erickson, Monica Essenmacher, Carl Freeman, Ray Glassel, Jim Granlund (Michigan), Maybelle Hardy, Bruce Hitman, Jason Hoeksema, Ken & Molly Hoffman, Mabelle Isham, Bob Janssen, Sharon Johnson, J. Judichi, Martin Kehoe, Rich & Brenda Keith, V. & K. Kepler, Ron Kneeskern, Ken LaFond, Fred Leshar, Sandy Lunke, Tom Mears, Steve Millard, Dan Miller, Kip Miller, Steve Minard (SMi), Erik Munson, Warren Nelson, Karl Overman, Michael Petrucha, Rod Planck, Janine Polk, David Powell, Kurt Powell, Larry Semo, Roy Smith, Joe Soehnel, Bonnie Stout, Janie Stout (JSt), Peder Svingen, Paul Sykes, Daryl Tessen (Wisconsin), Terry Walsh, Ron Weeks, Tex Wells (TWe), Warren Whaley, Dan Williams, Steve Wilson, Tom Ziebell.—**DAVID J. POWELL, 217 Montrose Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49001-4222.**



A first-winter Pacific Loon faces the camera at Kentucky Lake, Marshall County, Kentucky, December 19, 1990. First state record. The narrow dark "chin-strap" shows exceptionally well from this angle. Photograph/Brainard Palmer-Ball.

Missouri were up to five in Gibson, IN, through Jan. 27 (JC, GB).

The expected small numbers of Pied-billed Grebes wintered, while 45 in *Gibson*, IN, Feb. 10 (GB) were probably early migrants. Sizable wintering flocks of Horned Grebes totalled 42 at Baldwin L., IL, Jan. 21 (TF, JD) and up to 36 in *Gibson*, IN (JC, GB). An impressive 229 early migrants gathered at Stockton L., MO, Feb. 10 (TB). Wintering *Aechmophorus* grebes included a Western at Braidwood, IL, Feb. 22–Mar. 4 (JM, ph.) and Missouri's 2nd Clark's Grebe throughout the season at Table Rock L. (†PM, †TB, m.ob.). Both species are virtually unknown in this Region during winter.

S.A.

Table Rock Lake, MO, deserved the title "Loon Capital of Inland North America" this winter. A complement of 15+ wintering Com. Loons was joined by a Yellow-billed Loon, no doubt the same individual discovered there last year. It was initially observed Dec. 27 (CL) and remained into March. At least two Pacific Loons also wintered on the lake for the 2nd consecutive year, after their discovery Jan. 18 (m.ob.). Completing the grand slam, a Red-throated Loon was discovered there Jan. 21 (†PM *et al.*), lingering through February. The presence of *four* loon species on one lake at the same time is without precedent in the interior of this continent.

One or two Am. White Pelicans lingered at 2 Illinois and 4 Iowa sites through Dec. 15–21. One at Thomas Hill Res., MO, Jan. 20 (BG) may have wintered. Migrants returned to that state by Feb. 10.

The mild weather allowed above-normal numbers of Great Blue Herons to winter with maxima of 82 in *Calloway*, KY, Jan. 2 (JE, *fide* CP) and 47–52 in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The latest Great Egret noted was in *Ottawa*, OH, Dec. 9 (BPj, MG), while single Green-backed Herons appeared on CBCs in Illinois and Ohio. An

exceptional 22 Black-crowned Night-Herons were tallied at L. Calumet, IL, Dec. 29 (WM). Only small numbers were noted there after Jan. 1, but scattered night-herons appeared at nearby locations in n.e. Illinois and n.w. Indiana. Other wintering Black-crowns were up to three near Lawrenceburg, IN, through Jan. 14 (PW) and one in *St. Charles*, MO, Jan. 5 (N & RW).

WATERFOWL

Small numbers of Tundra Swans passed through the n. states during December, but most departed despite the mild weather. Wintering Tundras were one in *Pulaski*, KY, Jan. 2–11 (JEL), one to four at 2 Iowa locations, and a maximum of three at Danville, IL, Jan. 13–Feb. 16. Spring migrants returned to Ohio and Illinois by Feb. 10–16. At least four Trumpeter Swans from the introduced Minnesota population wintered in Iowa, while 13 from Wisconsin appeared in Illinois. Mute Swans continued to expand, producing flocks of 14–30 in n. Illinois, 23 in c. Ohio, and five in Iowa.

The last fall Greater White-fronted Geese were two late migrants in *Ohio*, KY, Jan. 1 (RH). None wintered, but their N flight started early, with 18 at Carlyle L., IL, Jan. 26 (KM). They were widespread during February with maxima of 340 at Riverton W.M.A., IA, Feb. 24

(SD), 200 at Otter Slough W.M.A., MO, Feb. 16 (HF), 25–28 at 2 Illinois sites, and nine in *Warren*, KY, Feb. 23 (BP *et al.*). There were also 2 records from Ohio and one from Indiana. Fall Snow Geese peaked at 420,000 at DeSoto N.W.R., IA, Dec. 1 while the largest winter flock totalled 18,000 at Ballard W.M.A., KY (CW). Their N passage was evident during February. As expected, the large Snow Goose flocks harbored some Ross' Geese, such as an impressive 56 at DeSoto N.W.R., IA, Dec. 1 (SD). Wintering Ross' Geese were restricted to Illinois with two at Rend L. Dec. 2–22 and one at Baldwin L. Jan. 21–Feb. 9 (TF, JD *et al.*). Spring migrants appeared at single locations in each w. state and 4 sites in Illinois during February. The only Brant was a casual visitor to Chicago Dec. 1–4 (JBI, m.ob.).

While Ballard W.M.A., KY, hosted 50,000 puddle ducks, its largest wintering numbers since 1970, their showing in most other areas was generally unimpressive. Most departed after early January but returned in February, such as flocks of 2000–3000 N. Pintails in Illinois and Iowa Feb. 23–24. Very rare during winter, Blue-winged Teal remained into the CBC period at 5 locations. The latest were noted Dec. 31 at Bettendorf, IA (PP), and Jan. 12 near Hammond, IN (KB *et al.*).

S.A.

The Great Lakes invasion by Zebra Mussels has received considerable negative press in recent years. While their detrimental characteristics have been well documented, these mussels have also proven to be beneficial for some birds. They provide an abundant food source which is increasingly utilized by waterfowl. Additionally, they have markedly improved water clarity which is resulting in the reestablishment of submerged aquatic vegetation, another important food for diving ducks. The net result was a significant increase in the wintering population of diving ducks on L. Erie this year, despite their declining numbers in most portions of this continent.

Most of these teal were injured.

The only sizable concentration of wintering Canvasbacks totalled 10,000 on Maumee Bay, OH. A flock of 319 Ring-necked Ducks at L. Pewee, KY, Jan. 15 (JH) was exceptional for mid-winter. Sizable scaup flocks were restricted to the Great Lakes. An early migration of Greater Scaup produced remarkable inland totals of 92 at Rend L., IL, Feb. 10 (TF *et al.*) and 50+ on L. Barkley, KY, Feb. 9-18 (BP). Fewer Harlequin Ducks wintered on the Great Lakes with two on L. Michigan through Jan. 1-6 and two into March at Cleveland. Oldsquaw appeared in fairly typical numbers with a Great Lakes maximum of 145 at Evanston, IL, Dec. 29 (DJ). The most noteworthy of 12 inland records were four Oldsquaw at Table Rock L., MO, Jan. 21 (PM *et al.*).

Lingering Black Scoters were noted into December along L. Michigan and at 2 inland sites in Illinois and one in Iowa. Four Blacks remained at Cleveland through Jan. 20 but did not winter. Normally very rare in mid-winter, Surf Scoters appeared in exceptional numbers. As many as 13 wintered at Cleveland and one to three at Joliet, IL (JM). Other records included five at Hueston Woods S.P., OH, Jan. 3 (DD, DS), one in Jasper, IL, Jan. 7 (LHa), two at Louisville Jan. 11 (LRa), and one at Thomas Hill Res., MO, Jan. 19 (†TB). Only scattered White-winged Scoters were detected on the Great Lakes and small numbers were noted at 7 inland locations. Their numbers appear to be declining.

HAWKS TO SHOREBIRDS

Black Vultures continued to prosper. Increased numbers included roosts of 30-80+ in Kentucky and 75 at Table Rock L., MO, Jan. 27 (LM, CH). Approximately 50 Black Vultures were poisoned in Adams, OH, in late winter, a sizable portion of the state's small population. Wintering Turkey Vultures were restricted to established roosts, peaking at 225+ in s.w. Missouri. Early migrants appeared N to Montrose, IA, Feb. 9 (SD) and *Tuscarawas*, OH, Feb. 23 (ES). Mid-winter Bald Eagle surveys produced

totals of 1864 in Illinois, 1815 in Missouri, and 169 in Kentucky. The 89 eagles tallied in Indiana were remarkable, including 31 scattered along the Wabash R., 14 on the White R., and 18 at L. Monroe. Fair numbers of N. Harriers included groups of 15-40 in most states.

It was not a flight year for N. Goshawks with only 13 sightings Regionwide south to Macon, MO, Jan. 1 (†PM, TB), Spring Mill S.P., IN, Dec. 21 (TC, LS), and 3 sites in c. Illinois. Rough-legged Hawks congregated in w. Indiana where 50+ wintered in *Montgomery* and *Parke* (AB). Elsewhere, reports of six to 15+ daily represented fair to good numbers.

Improved Golden Eagle numbers included reports from 14 locations, with an unprecedented 11 at 7 sites in Indiana. Only Ohio lacked sightings. The winter status of Merlins is changing, as small numbers are becoming regular residents in most states, with reports from 3 Missouri, 5 Iowa, 5 Illinois, and 6 Ohio locales, plus others on CBCs. Birds with characteristics of the pale prairie race appeared east to *Morgan*, IL, Jan. 1 (DB). Peregrine Falcons were reported from 7 locations, mostly intro-



Prairie Falcon in La Salle County, Illinois, January 18, 1991. More individuals than usual wandered east into the upper Midwest this season. Photograph/ Joe B. Milosevich.



Red Phalarope at Michigan City, Indiana, December 12, 1990. Photograph/Ken Brock.

duced birds in large cities. Accidental throughout the Region, a gray-morph Gyrfalcon was discovered in *LaSalle*, IL, Dec. 24 (†LA, m.ob.). This cooperative immature thrilled the multitudes through Feb. 17. It was also a banner winter for Prairie Falcons. Ten reports from Iowa and 4 from Missouri indicated they have become regular in those states. Three records from Illinois included one wintering in *LaSalle* at the same area hosting the Gyrfalcon (†JL, m.ob.). They are still accidental farther east, where Indiana's first Prairie Falcon was documented from Dugger W.M.A. Mar. 3 (†DW *et al.*). Kentucky's 2nd Prairie Falcon in *Ohio* through Jan. 13 (J & PBe, †m.ob.) may have been the same one noted there during winter 1988-1989.

In *LaSalle*, IL, both large falcons were subsisting on large flocks of Ring-necked Pheasants with as many as 200+ in some fields (JM). A Ruffed Grouse in *Warrick* Dec. 9 (JC) was outside its normal range in s. Indiana. The mild weather enticed a few Virginia Rails to linger. One was detected on an Iowa CBC, one was noted in *Kane*, IL, Jan. 5-12 (BO) and found dead on the last date, another appeared in *Seneca*, OH, Jan. 13 (TBa), and two at Spring Valley W.M.A., OH, Mar. 3 (PW) probably wintered. Even more remarkable was a lingering Com. Moorhen in *Butler*, OH through Jan. 21 (†CS). Migrant Sandhill Cranes during December included flocks of 700 over *Hart*, KY, Dec. 30 (SK), and 125 over *Hamilton*, OH, Dec. 4 (JDe). Spring migrants

appeared in *Barren*, KY, by Jan. 22 (MS) and elsewhere in Kentucky and Indiana during February.

December's mild weather produced some remarkable flocks of Killdeer with 400 near Terre Haute, IN, Dec. 15 (P & KB), 108 in *Wayne*, KY, Jan. 5 (JEL), and groups of 50-60 in Ohio. These flocks eventually departed, although wintering Killdeers were more widespread than normal. Spring migrants appeared in every state by Feb. 5-10. Other lingering shorebirds included a Lesser Yellowlegs at L. Pewee, KY, Dec. 2 (BP), a Ruddy Turnstone in *Gibson*, IN, through Jan. 13 (GB, JC), and Sanderlings along L. Michigan through Dec. 2-12. Least Sandpipers remained in every state except Missouri during December with a maximum of 39 in w. Kentucky. The last Least was noted at Buck Creek S.P., OH, Jan. 13 (DO). A Purple Sandpiper lingered along L. Erie until Jan. 1. As expected, small numbers of Dunlin were noted during December. Mid-winter records are very unusual, such as singles at Joliet, IL, Feb. 10 (JM) and Buck Creek S.P., OH, through Jan. 13 (*vide* JS). An exceptionally early Long-billed Dowitcher returned to Spfld. Feb. 23-24 (†DB). The last Am. Woodcock was reported Dec. 10 at Ballard W.M.A., KY (BP). One at Ozark, IL, Jan. 25 (TF) may have wintered. The first migrant was noted near Dayton, OH, Feb. 4 (BD) and in other states except Iowa by Feb. 10-17. The only Red Phalarope paid a visit to Michigan City, IN, Dec. 7-15 (CF, m.ob., ph.).

JAEGERS TO TERNS

Accidental in Missouri at any season, a Pomarine Jaeger was at Alton Feb. 27 (†BW, JZ *et al.*). An ad. Laughing Gull at Spfld. Dec. 29 (†DB) also established one of very few winter records for this Region. This gull may have wandered to s.w. Indiana, where one appeared in Gibson Jan. 1–6 (JC, GB). Franklin's Gulls were detected again this winter, although singles on an Iowa CBC and in Summit, OH, Dec. 24 (LR, ph.) were probably late fall migrants. Singles at Say. Res. Feb. 1 (†SD) and Thomas Hill Res., MO, Feb. 7 (†BG) were reportedly early spring migrants. Only one Little Gull was found along the Great Lakes, on L. Michigan near Chicago. One at Clinton L. Dec. 6–8 (†RC, m.ob.) was casual in inland Illinois. Up to two Little Gulls at L. of Ozarks Feb. 12–Mar. 2 furnished one of very few records from Missouri (†AC, m.ob.); they were accompanied by Missouri's 2nd Com. Black-headed Gull, a well-marked adult noted Feb. 12–17 (†AC, m.ob.). Exceptional numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls lingered during December's mild weather. The largest inland flocks numbered 5000 at Kentucky L., KY, Dec. 31 (JE, *fide* CP) and 1500 in Gibson, IN, Dec. 15 (JC). While large numbers wintered along L. Erie, most inland Bonaparte's departed by early January. However, "several hundred" wintering in w. Kentucky and 150 at L. of Ozarks, MO, Feb. 14 (PM *et al.*) were unusual for those localities.

An ad. California Gull at Stockton L. Feb. 10 (†TB) furnished a first winter record for Missouri. Good numbers of Thayer's Gulls included 17+ reports from the Chicago area as well as maxima of six at Alton, MO, Feb. 9 (PM *et al.*), four at Peoria, IL, through Feb. 17 (m.ob.), and three singles on the w. Kentucky lakes. Others were noted in Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. Few Iceland Gulls were reported, scattered singles along both Great Lakes, two at Peoria, IL, Dec. 25–Feb. 9 (LA, m.ob.), and one at Spfld. Jan. 24 (†DB). It was a good winter for Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Four were found in the Chicago area, while one to four daily were

noted at sites on c. Lake Erie. Inland records were of three on the w. Kentucky lakes during mid-December (BP *et al.*), one or two at Alton, MO, after Jan. 6 (m.ob.), and singles at Spfld. Dec. 23–24 (DB), Columbus, OH, Dec. 26 (BPj), and Pekin, IL, Jan. 13–Feb. 18 (LA, m.ob.).

Great Black-backed Gulls continued to increase on L. Michigan, producing 9 reports from Indiana and Illinois. Still noteworthy inland, single Great Black-backed were noted at Peoria, IL, Dec. 25 and Jan. 21 (LA), Alton, MO, Jan. 5 (DBe), Bettendorf, IA–Moline, IL, Jan. 14–17 (†JFu, †TK), and Keokuk, IA, Feb. 7–8 (†SD, †AJ). Good numbers of Black-legged Kittiwakes were highlighted by four at Say. Res. Dec. 9 (SD) and an adult at Clinton L., IL, Dec. 6–10 (†RC, m.ob.). One of the Say. Res. kittiwakes moved to Red Rock Res. and remained through Jan. 9 (m.ob.). Additionally, one was observed at Spfld. Dec. 5–20 (DB) and there were 3 reports from the Great Lakes where two remained at Lorain, OH, through Jan. 13 (m.ob.). This winter's birding highlight was probably the appearance of two Ivory Gulls, both immatures. A cooperative individual found below Red Rock Res., IA, Dec. 24 (†SD) was viewed by many through Jan. 1. Another appeared at Spfld. Jan. 1 (†CO, †DB *et al.*) but could not be relocated. They provided the first confirmed records for both states; the Spfld. record is easily the most southerly sighting in the midwest. An ad. Forster's Tern was briefly noted in St. Charles Feb. 9 (TB, †PM), furnishing the first winter record from Missouri. Perhaps the same tern was noted at Kentucky L., KY, Feb. 12 (CP).

CUCKOOS TO WRENS

An exceptionally late Yellow-billed Cuckoo in Hamilton Dec. 8 (*fide* PW) was easily the latest ever for Ohio. The only Barn Owls reported were from Ohio, including one in Trumbull Dec. 31 (PK), unexpected in the n.e. counties. Snowy Owls staged a mediocre flight with 17 reports across the n. states. One wintering in Knox, IN, marked the s. edge of this movement. Long-



Long-eared Owl in Sioux City, Iowa, December 9, 1990. This bird roosted in a suburban backyard daily for much of the early winter. Photograph/Randall D. Williams.

earred Owls were discovered in every state except Indiana including several roosts of 10+ in the n. states. Wintering Short-eared Owl numbers have noticeably improved during the past few years, in part owing to better habitat availability resulting from the CRP program. Roosts of 15–30+ Short-eareds were discovered in every state. A Pileated Woodpecker at S.C.R. Feb. 18 (CFi, DM) furnished one of few recent records from n.w. Missouri.

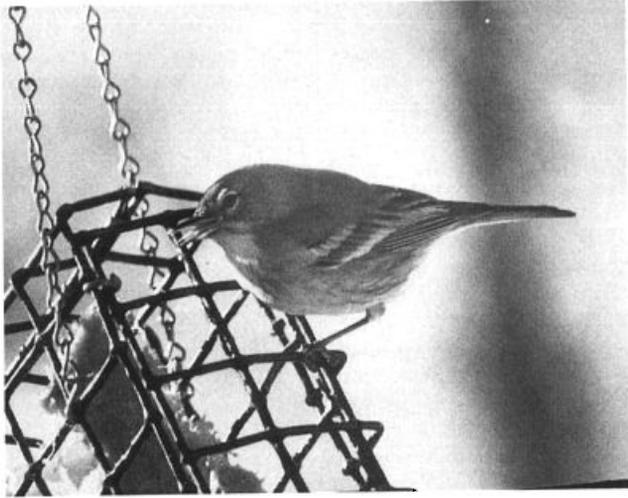
An incredibly late *Empidonax* flycatcher near Red Rock Res., IA, Dec. 16–18 (AJ, †m.ob.) was identified as a Least on the basis of its "whit" call note and plumage characteristics. A number of E. Phoebes lingered into December, one n. to Tuscarawas, OH, through Dec. 22 (ES). Mid-winter records are more remarkable, such as single phoebes at Ozark, IL, Jan. 21 (JD, TF), L. Monroe, IN, Feb. 8–23 (DW), and Pulaski, KY, Feb. 16 (JEl). Two early Tree Swallows returned to Saline, IL, Feb. 23 (TF, JD). Record late Barn Swallows were two on an Indiana CBC and one near Waverly, OH, Dec. 25–27 (VH, *fide* LD).

A Black-billed Magpie on a w. Iowa CBC had wandered only a few miles from its established range. The largest Am.

Crow roosts totalled 50,000 in Vermillion, IL (SB), 20,000 in Springfield, OH (*fide* DO), 8300 at Ames, IA (JDi), and 2000–3500 at 2 other locations. Three record-early Fish Crows returned to Union, IL, Feb. 4 (TF). Red-breasted Nuthatches were universally scarce. Carolina Wren numbers continued to improve, approaching population levels of the mid-1970s in some areas. Increased numbers at the n. edge of the Region included 23 in Iowa n. to Call S.P. A Bewick's Wren in Joplin, MO, during December (LH) furnished one of very few recent winter records.

KINGLETS TO DICKCISSEL

Golden-crowned Kinglets apparently experienced considerable mortality in Illinois during January, but wintering numbers were fair to good elsewhere. Wintering Ruby-crowned were noted n. to St. Louis and Champaign, IL. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher near Rend L., IL, Dec. 15–16 (BDa, †m.ob.) added to the handful of December records from this Region. Good numbers of E. Bluebirds included a remarkable 200 in Van Buren, IA, Jan. 27 (JFu). Townsend's Solitaires are rare but regular winter visitors to Iowa, where there was one CBC report plus singles in Mills Feb. 9 (DRo) and Woodbury Feb. 23 (†BH). One was also found in Illinois on a CBC. Hermit Thrushes were generally scarce. The largest Am. Robin roosts were from opposite corners of the Region with 10,000 in Stone and Taney, MO, Jan. 21 (PM, TB) and 6000+ in Lake, OH, Dec. 29 (BPj). A Varied Thrush in Memphis through Jan. 10 (JDa, m.ob., ph.) added to the handful of sightings from Missouri. Reports from the n. states were of three wintering in Winnebago, IL (DWi, JDo, m.ob.), one at Spfld. Dec. 24–Jan. 7 that met its demise at a window (DB), one in Spencer, IA, through Jan. 28 (*fide* JFu), and one on an Iowa CBC. The only Gray Catbird after the CBC period was found in Wayne, OH, Jan. 25 (LY, EM). The expected small numbers of Brown Thrashers wintered in most areas. One in n.w. Iowa was n. of its normal range,



Pine Warbler at a suet feeder in Vigo County, Indiana, February 1, 1991. Photograph/Henry Tamar.

described as "demented and unhappy" as it visited a Sioux Center feeder through Feb. 6 (JVD).

Normally absent after the CBC period, a few Am. Pipits wintered with as many as 30+ in Warren, KY, after Feb. 3 (BP), two in Gibson, IN, Feb. 3 (GB), and one in Tuscarawas, OH, Jan. 19 (ES). Early migrants appeared at several localities during late February. Single Bohemian Waxwings were noted at 3 Iowa locations during December where they are rare but fairly regular visitors. A casual visitor to Illinois, one Bohemian Waxwing briefly appeared at Spfld. Feb. 21 (†DB). Cedar Waxwings were noted in poor to fair numbers but no exceptional concentrations were encountered. It was a good winter for N. Shrikes, with 35+ reports evenly distributed across the n. states, ranging s. to Champaign, IL, and Tuscarawas, OH.

The mild weather allowed a good variety of warblers to linger into the winter period. Single Orange-crowns appeared on CBCs in Missouri and Illinois. The only Cape May Warbler tarried at Plainfield, IL, Dec. 9–21 (JM, ph.). Yellow-rumped Warblers were fairly scarce, although three in Van Buren Jan. 27 (TK, JFu) provided a rare mid-winter record for Iowa. A Yellow-throated Warbler was reported from a Missouri CBC while Ohio's 2nd winter record was of one visiting a Holmes feeder into January (m.ob.). Above-normal numbers of Pine Warblers

included an impressive 12 on a s.e. Missouri CBC, four at Ozark, IL, Jan. 2–Mar. 5 (TF), and one wintering at a W. Terre Haute, IN, feeder (H & MT, ph.). Most surprising was a tardy Am. Redstart in DuPage, IL, Dec. 8–15 (†EW *et al.*). A few Com. Yellowthroats were noted during December but the only one to winter was at Spring Valley W.M.A., OH (TL, CC). Other lingering passerines included a tanager at a Scott, IA, feeder Dec. 2; the details did not allow for a specific identity but it was a remarkable bird nonetheless. Indigo Buntings were one on an Illinois CBC and another banded in Poplar Bluff, MO, Jan. 19 (VM). The only Dickcissels noted were in Madison, IA, Dec. 3 (E & EA) and Urbana, IL, Dec. 9 (RC).

SPARROWS TO WEAVER FINCHES

Sparrows continued their mediocre showing of recent winters. The "spotted" form of Rufous-sided Towhee wandered E to Spfld. Jan 25 (DB). An exceptionally late Sharp-tailed Sparrow was discovered at Cleveland Dec. 10 (TL_e). A wintering Fox Sparrow at Rockford, IL (JDo, ABr), was near the n. edge of its winter range, as was a Swamp Sparrow near Sioux City, IA, Feb. 3 (BH). A total of 275 White-crowned Sparrows in Scott, MO, Feb. 20 (PM, JHz) was impressive. Illinois experienced an incursion of Lapland Longspurs during January, peaking with 10,000 in LaSalle Feb. 10 (RC). Nine early Smith's Longspurs

returned to Rend L., IL, Feb. 10 (DR *et al.*) and 17 were noted at Taberville Prairie, MO, Mar. 2 (PL). A ♂ Chestnut-collared Longspur was briefly noted in LaSalle Feb. 10 (†JL), establishing a 4th record for Illinois.

Since both meadowlarks are rare winter residents in Iowa, a total of 635 meadowlarks sp. in Page and Fremont Jan. 14 (SD) was noteworthy. Thirty W. Meadowlarks in Knox Jan. 20 (MB) was a sizable winter flock for Illinois. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were represented by a pair at Zion, IL, Jan. 1 (LB, RB) and singles in Cass, MO, Jan. 16 (JJ), Elizabethtown, KY, Feb. 16 (BP), and Spfld. Feb. 20–25 (DB). As observers sift through blackbird flocks wintering at feedlots, Brewer's Blackbirds are proving to be more numerous than previous records indicated. The largest flocks included 50 wintering in Warren, KY (BP *et al.*), 30+ in Lucas, OH, Dec. 9 and a similar number wintering in Ross, OH (BPj *et al.*), and 22 in Lake, IL, Jan. 1 (DJ *et al.*). A flock of 75 Great-tailed Grackles at S.C.R. Jan. 19 (TB) provided the only report. A N. Oriole with characteristics of the "Bullock's" race wintered at an Akron feeder (LK, ph.), only Ohio's 2nd record of this race.

The winter finch flight was disappointing. The only Pine Grosbeak reported was on an Iowa CBC. While 300+ Purple Finches congregated at an Osceola, IA, feeder Feb. 28 (BB) and 105 were counted in Macon, MO, Jan. 29 (TB), they were scarce to absent in most areas. Red Crossbills were restricted to Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois, "widely reported" in Iowa but local in the other 2 states. The largest flocks totalled 10–15 crossbills and they wandered S to Butler, MO (VM). White-winged Crossbills were very scarce with one report from Indiana and 2 Iowa sightings. It was a poor winter for Com. Redpolls. Small numbers were scattered across e. Iowa and only one appeared in Illinois. Given this poor flight, one at a St. Joseph, MO, feeder Jan. 30 (LG) was unexpected. Pine Siskins were generally scarce, although a few flocks of 40–86 developed in Illinois and Iowa. Even Am. Goldfinches were scarce in many areas. Only s.e.

Ohio harbored flocks of Evening Grosbeaks, such as 195 in Hocking Jan. 31 (JF); they were scarce to absent elsewhere. A small population of Eur. Tree Sparrows has become established in s.e. Iowa where a maximum of 14 wintered near Burlington (E & EA, m.ob.).

HYPOTHETICAL RECORD

The report of a "Yellow Grosbeak" visiting an Elkhart, IA feeder through Jan. 7 generated considerable attention. It was thought to be an imm. male, but the written descriptions may not be sufficient to accurately determine the age and sex of this individual.

This intriguing report poses a number of problems. The Yellow Grosbeak of Mexico is part of a superspecies complex that also includes similar species in Central America and n. South America. While the adult males of these species are readily identified in the field, their immature plumages are similar and may not be separable in all cases. These imm. plumages are also poorly described in the literature, adding to the confusion. The written descriptions of the Iowa "Yellow Grosbeak" did not positively eliminate all similar species, hence a discussion of this individual's origins would be speculative at best.

If one assumes this bird was a Yellow Grosbeak, its appearance during winter does not fit the pattern of summer/early fall vagrancy in Arizona. While very few individuals have been legally imported into the U.S. during the past decade and this species is currently rare in captivity, they are still regular components of the bird trade between Latin America and Europe. The illegal importation of grosbeaks from Mexico is another possibility that should be considered. Given these facts and the absence of previous records of long-distance vagrancy by this species, the origins of the Iowa grosbeak must be suspect.

Corrigenda: The following corrections are necessary for the spring 1990 report (AB 44:432–439): The Western Grebe at Charleston, IL, was discovered by R. Bradley. The number of Laughing Gull sightings on L. Erie was 2, not 20. The report of 20 Golden-winged

Warblers at Mingo N.W.R., MO, should be attributed to B. Reeves and R. Brundage. One report was inadvertently left out of the summer 1990 summary (AB 44:1138-1142). An extralimital Scissor-tailed Flycatcher also appeared in *Champaign*, IL, June 6-7 (†RC et al.).

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CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

Stephen J. Stedman

All parts of the Region experienced milder than usual temperatures this season. Snow cover was almost absent even in the Region's northern sectors. Rainfall, on the other hand, was far above average in middle Tennessee, where 15 inches accumulated during December in Cookeville, in southern Louisiana, where a record 20 or more inches fell in January at some stations, and in a quite a few other places. Consequently, many rivers flooded during the season. Although these floods were devastating to the people of many towns and cities, their effect on local bird populations was apparently negligible if the dearth of observer commentary about them is a reliable index.

Avian events during the season reflected warmth rather than wetness, with many summer and migrant species lingering into winter, some far inland. Semi-hardy species like bluebirds survived well and were often noted in considerable numbers. Furthermore, many species that winter almost exclusively along the coast ventured into the interior this year; an amplitude of unusual records

and some unprecedented ones resulted.

Given the warmth of the season, an absence of boreal species was expectable, and that expectation was generally borne out. Although Rough-legged Hawks were found in expected (that is, very low) numbers, Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered in unexpectedly low numbers nearly everywhere and in many locations were absent. American Tree Sparrows staged a small irruption into Tennessee and surrounding areas, while a few small flocks of Red Crossbills were encountered in Mississippi and Arkansas.

Christmas Bird Counts generated quite a bit of information that was vital in the following account. Without the infusion of this material, the Regional picture of avian events would be radically different. I thank the subregional editors for their diligence in obtaining the more unusual records from these counts. I would urge state CBC editors to follow the example of Tennessee's editor, Susan McWhirter, who mailed in copies of all counts that came her way. Overall, however, copies of fewer than a third of the Regional counts found their way to my desk in time to be scrutinized for this report. Given the restrictions imposed on the length of reports in the issue of the magazine devoted to the counts, it is imperative that all these data—not just data

about rarities—be considered for inclusion in future winter season reports. Several processes might work to ensure that Regional editors get these valuable data in time to use them.

For those, like me, who find the post-Christmas Bird Count months of January and February at bit dull after the excitement of December birding, let me recommend an antidote: Winter Roadside Bird Surveys. With my wife's assistance, I conducted such a survey in Putnam County, Tennessee, during January 1991, by selecting 500 roadside sites representing all habitats and topographic regions in the county. At all stops, which were at least one-third of a mile apart, I counted birds seen and heard for 4 minutes. After compiling the data from 500 stops, I had an excellent indication of the frequency and abundance of the 72 species of birds encountered. I compared these with "guestimates" of winter abundance noted on the county bird list and was able to substitute sounder abundance classifications for many species than had been possible previously. This survey also resulted in first winter records for three species, as well as a record for one species not previously documented before in the county. Finally, I learned that White-throated Sparrow density in the county is strongly correlated with elevation: many more winter in the western portion of



the county at 600–800 feet above sea level than do so in the eastern end at 1500–2100 feet. Birders who are bored in mid-winter might conduct a roadside survey or some similar project; you'll like doing it and you'll find the results will be of considerable value.

LOONS TO ANHINGA

Although Red-throated Loons went unreported from the Gulf Coast w. of the Florida panhandle, one was present Dec. 1 in *Escambia*, FL (PWS, RAD), where casual. It is even less frequent away from the coast, making one near the border of *Panola/Lafayette*, MS, Jan. 1–2 (WMD, GB) and another in *Henry*, TN, Feb. 26–27 (†PL, SF, JRW, DoM) noteworthy. A Pacific Loon in *Escambia*, FL, Dec. 1 (PWS, RAD) established the 8th or 9th local record.

Unusual concentrations of Horned Grebes appeared in Arkansas: 73 in *Carroll* Dec. 13 (MM) and a flock of 250+ in *Marion* Jan. 10 (DRM); the only other inland report of comparable numbers involved 58 on the Hickory-Priest CBC, TN, Jan. 1 (CGD *et al.*). The only Red-necked and Western grebes involved one of the former in *Henry*, TN, Dec. 9 (JRW, DB) and two of the latter in *Cameron*, LA, Feb. 9 & 20 (SWC, DLD, †CAM, PA). Eared Grebes were more widely detected with six at the regular site in *Jones*, MS, Dec. 9 (TLS), one in *Washington*, AR, Dec. 9–16 and Jan. 5–22 (MM), another in *Clark*, AR, Dec. 31 (DDH), and three in *Fafourche*, LA, Jan. 13 and Feb. 2 (DM, MaM, RDP, NLN).

American White Pelicans visited several far inland areas, including *Warren*, MS, where a flock of 100+ Jan. 25 (HM) was deemed to be overwintering; Arkansas sightings included two in *Hempstead/Howard* Jan. 12 (DJ, m.ob.), 13 in *Pope* Jan. 26 (HP, MP), and 30 in *Yell* Feb. 21 (HP, MP), while an immature in *Hardin*, TN, Dec. 14–29 (DJS) provided further evidence of the species' push northward this season. Brown Pelicans remained scarce in *Cameron*, LA (JVR), with 6 records of one to 10 birds. This species continued to increase dramatically in coastal Missis-

sippi, with frequent daily counts of 200+ this season (JAT).

Many Tennessee CBCs recorded Double-crested Cormorants, some of which overwintered, though the majority had moved south by January; post-December sightings included four birds in *Smith* Jan. 3 (SJS) and five (down from 108 Dec. 18) in *Lake* Feb. 1 & 16 (WGC). Anhingas rarely overwinter in Louisiana, where six were found in *Terrebonne* Dec. 22 (RSB, MHA, CLA) and one in *Jefferson Davis* Feb. 1 (AWK, JW); their status is similar in Mississippi, where one was reported in *Hancock* Dec. 27 (LK, JP, CK); however, in n.w. Florida the species is more regular, as indicated by two in *Gulf* Dec. 27 (RLW) and nine in *Bay* Dec. 29 (HL *et al.*).

BITTERNS TO STORMS

Rare inland appearances of Am. Bittern, including one in *Catahoula*, LA, Dec. 28 (JM *fide* SWC) and three from Arkansas—in *Prairie* Dec. 2 (WMS *et al.*), *Lawrence* Dec. 28 (TT), and *Hot Spring* Jan. 13 (MP)—provided testament to the mildness of the season.

Low lake levels in Mississippi's interior, as well as the mild season, probably prompted nearly 500 Great Blue Herons to remain in *Lafayette* and *Yalobusha* during December (TLS *et al.*). Great Egrets remained inland late, with two in *Grenada*, MS, Dec. 20 (GK, TLS, DMS); 10 in *Lonoke*, AR, Dec. 21 (KS, WH); one in *Sumner*, TN, Dec. 1–24 (RN *et al.*), the 2nd local winter record; and 235 on the Montgomery CBC Dec. 29 (JoB *et al.*). At least three Tricolored Herons were rare away from the coast in *Vermilion*, LA, Dec. 19 (AWK, JVR, JB, DP). Also rare was a white morph Reddish Egret (with two scarce dark morph birds) in *Lafourche*, LA, Jan. 13 (MaM, NN, DM, RDP). Single Reddish Egrets in *Harrison* Dec. 1 and *Hancock*, MS, Dec. 11 (JAT, m.ob.) were considered rare.

The only inland White Ibis report came from *Winston*, MS, Jan. 20 (GK, SK). The regular presence of small flocks of Glossy Ibis in s.w. Louisiana is gradually becoming established; records of one to 10 birds in

Acadia Dec. 19 (DLD), *Vermilion* Dec. 19 (KVR, GHR), and *Jefferson Davis* Jan. 27 (KVR) provided further evidence of this status. Considered unusual were four *Plegadis* sp. in *Hancock*, MS, Dec. 27 (MB, TH), five ad. Roseate Spoonbills inland in *Jefferson Davis*, LA, Jan. 27 (KVR), and a Wood Stork in *Macon* Jan. 10 (AM), the latter a first Alabama mid-winter record.

WATERFOWL

Fulvous Whistling-Ducks staged a minor invasion of Louisiana, where very rare in winter; flocks of two to 29 visited *Orleans* (DN, DM, PRC), *Calcasieu* (KVR), *Vermilion* (KVR, AWK, JW), and *Jefferson Davis* (SWC, DLD, CAM) from late December until early February. Alabama's first Black-bellied Whistling-Duck record involved three in *Morgan* Dec. 24 (*fide* GDJ); two were shot by hunters and one escaped, to be seen Dec. 31 at Wheeler N.W.R. (†HHK, RJK).

An imm. Tundra Swan in *Noxubee* and *Oktibbeha*, MS, Jan. 2 through February (TLS, MC, JuB) represented the southernmost of 3 sightings; an adult and three immatures stayed the season in *Lauderdale*, TN (JRW, WGC), while an immature in *Washington*, AR, Feb. 10 & 14 (DJ, AF) was accompanied by an imm. Trumpeter Swan, thought to have been a wild bird. Other Trumpeter Swans earlier in the season—three immatures in *Cleburne*, AR, Jan. 3 (RC, BV, ph. MP) and an adult with three immatures Jan. 19–20 in

Faulkner, AR (HP, MP)—were being studied to determine their origin.

Greater White-fronted Geese invaded Mississippi in moderate numbers—e.g., 45 in *Lafayette* Dec. 18 (GK, VT)—and penetrated to the coast, where 15 in *Hancock* Dec. 27 (GK, SK) represented a maximum; they were unreported in other states except Arkansas, where 28 in *Benton* Feb. 26 (DJ, m.ob.) were noteworthy. Ross' Geese are now regular in small numbers in s.w. Louisiana, with 4 more December sightings (SWC, DLD, AWK, JVR, MJM) in that part of the state. Outside of Louisiana this species has also been recorded with increasing frequency; this winter saw small flocks in *Limestone*, AL, Jan. 20 (JRW, DoM, SM); *Tunica*, MS, Feb. 21 (JRW); *Cross*, AR, Feb. 25 (PL, SF *et al.*); and *Benton*, AR Feb. 24 & 26 (MM, DJ, m.ob.). In addition, at least 67 were observed in *Drew*, AR, Feb. 16 (DRS).

About 12 small flocks of Greater Scaup were reported, probably indicating a modest increase in the species' numbers or greater skill on the part of Regional observers; no large flocks were reported from coastal Louisiana, where they may be considered too common to report. Oldsquaws were about normally represented by records of single birds at 3 sites in Alabama and 2 sites in *Hancock*, MS; a female Dec. 9 in *Richland*, LA (MMH, MTD), was a rarity. A single record of Black Scoter surfaced: seven to 14 males in *Harrison*, MS, Jan.



Immature Trumpeter Swans east of Heber Springs, Arkansas, January 8, 1991. Photograph/Max Parker.

10 & 12 (JAT). The only Surf Scoters were in *Shelby*, TN, Jan. 27 (GB); *Hancock*, MS, Dec. 27 (JAT, CR); *Jackson*, MS, Jan. 6 (GM, JP, CC); *Madison*, MS, Jan. 5 & 20 (MH, HM, m.ob.); and *Orleans*, LA, Feb. 16 (NN). Three reports of White-winged Scoter arrived: a male Dec. 27 in *Hancock*, MS (JAT, CR, JNR); three near Gulf Shores, AL, Jan. 12 (GF, JL, PG, SG); and one Jan. 12–13 in *Clark*, AR (DDH, HP, MP). A raft of 1200 Hooded Mergansers in *Panola*, MS, Dec. 11 (WMD) represented a high count. The ♀ Com. Merganser on the New Orleans CBC Dec. 23 remained to at least Jan. 27 (GS, †JPS), and one was in *Jackson*, MS, Feb. 14 (JAT, m.ob.); each was considered very rare.

RAPTORS

Ospreys apparently took advantage of the mild season to winter inland more frequently; they were also more common along the coast, as evidenced by 14 on the CBC Dec. 29 in *Bay*, FL, (HL *et al.*), where the average over the past 10 years was 3.5. Black-shouldered Kites perpetuated their status as scarce winter residents with sightings in *Hancock*, MS (JAT, LK), and in *Cameron*, LA (SWC, DLD, GHR, CAM, DP). The concentration of Bald Eagles for which the Reelfoot L., TN, area is renowned numbered 176 (107 ad. and 69 imm.) Feb. 4 (*fide* MGW), somewhat low; 30 in *Benton*, AR, Feb. 3 (DJ, m.ob.) represented the next highest total reported. Very few non-CBC harriers and accipiters were reported, a paucity that is



Swainson's Hawk, evidently a first-winter bird, in Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana, on December 29, 1990. Generally rare in North America in December, the species should always be documented like this. Photograph/Kenneth V. Rosenberg.

hard to interpret; observers are urged to continue reporting these birds each winter, and subregional editors are asked to summarize all reports.

A Swainson's Hawk on the New Orleans CBC Dec. 23 (NN, GC, †ph. RDP) was probably a first for that locale, while another was well documented in *Jefferson Davis*, LA, Dec. 29 (ph. KVR), where casual. "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawks were noted at 3 sites in Mississippi and one in Louisiana. An incubating Red-tailed in *Washington*, AR, Feb. 26 (DJ) was deemed to be an early nester. Six Rough-legged Hawk reports (*fide* MGW & DFV) in Tennessee were about the expected number, while two were also present in s. Louisiana during December (†GS *et al.*).

Normally rare in Arkansas, Golden Eagles, including an adult and four immatures, were reported in 4 counties; an immature in *Winston* and *Noxubee*, MS, during most of the season was the 4th locally (TLS, m.ob.). Merlins were better represented than usual in the interior with 2 reports each from Tennessee, Arkansas, and n. Mississippi. A Peregrine Falcon in *Little River*, AR, Dec. 29 and Jan. 4 (CM, HP, MP) was a first in winter for the L. Millwood area; two reports from w. Tennessee (*fide* MGW) were encouraging and probably also indicative of the mild weather. Well documented Prairie Falcons raised adrenaline levels Jan. 26 and Feb. 12–13 (JRW, BPL, HP, MP) and Feb. 3 (DJ, m.ob.), in *Pope* and *Benton*, AR, respectively, where the species is rare.

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

Inland rail records were few, despite presumably favorable conditions: four Virginia Rails were heard in *Pulaski*, AR, Dec. 15 (JLY, DP), and two Soras were registered in *Chicot*, AR, Feb. 4 (DRS).

Locally late and unusual, a Lesser Golden-Plover visited *Escambia*, FL, Dec. 6 (RAD). Snowy Plovers in n.w. Florida were present in small numbers, including 13–19 in *Escambia* all season (RAD), two in *Gulf* Dec. 27 (*fide* RLW), and 17 in *Bay* Dec. 29 (HL *et al.*); a single Snowy in *Jefferson*, LA, Feb. 2

(DM *et al.*) was a by-product of the census work described next.

During January and February the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (RM) coordinated a Piping Plover Survey along 177 mi of mainland and barrier island beaches in *Cameron*, *Vermilion*, *Iberia*, *St. Mary*, *Terrebonne*, *Lafourche*, *Jefferson*, and *St. Bernard* parishes. Over 25 persons participated in the survey, which counted 750 plovers (4.2/mi of beach surveyed). Of the habitat surveyed, the barrier islands, including those of the Chandeleur chain, Isles Dernieres, and the Timbalier Is., offered the best habitat for Piping Plovers. However, some of these islands are experiencing substantial land loss due to erosion, or are being ripped to prevent erosion. Should these islands ever erode completely or be buried under mountains of rock, suitable substitute habitat can be created for the plovers, since RM discovered that the small dredge spoil islands in the Atchafalaya R. Delta hosted a dense plover population (13.5/mi). Unsurveyed, but similar, habitat—the large dredge spoil islands created near the many passes at the mouth of the Mississippi R.—might also support plovers; these will be high priority sites for next year's survey effort.

Twelve Wilson's Plovers were early in *Jefferson*, LA, Feb. 2 (DM *et al.*), as were three in *Escambia*, FL, Feb. 24 (RAD). Few Am. Oystercatchers winter in s.e. Louisiana, making two in *Jefferson* Feb. 2 (RDP, NN *et al.*) notable; six were present all season in *Hancock*, MS (JNR, CR, m.ob.), where uncommon but regular. Late Greater Yellowlegs showed up at 3 sites in Arkansas during December (WMS, JLY, KY, RHD), while an early or wintering Lesser Yellowlegs appeared in *Lafayette*, MS, Feb. 2 (GK). A further indicator of the mild winter was the first January Spotted Sandpiper in *Grenada*, MS, seen the 15th (GK). Two Whimbrels in *Rapides*, LA, Feb. 2 (DP, MM *et al.*) were unprecedented inland winter vagrants; rare singles were in *Cameron*, LA, Feb. 2 (SWC, DLD, CAM) and in *Jackson*, MS, all of January and February (CD, m.ob.). A Long-billed Curlew in *Gulf*, FL, Dec. 26–27 (†SJS, BHS) furnished

the only report, and occurred at a site where seldom reported; did the birds at the Battleship Alabama in Mobile not appear this winter?

Pectoral Sandpipers are very rare winter stragglers, making one in *Gulf*, FL, Dec. 27 (†BHS) and another in *Lafourche*, LA, Feb. 3 (RS, MW) noteworthy; a third, probably an early migrant, was in *Lafayette*, MS, Feb. 26 (GK). On Dec. 6 a Purple Sandpiper appeared in Gulfport, MS (ph. JAT), the 5th consecutive year of sightings at that location. American Woodcocks were widespread in the Ozarks (DJ, BR), and one engaged in a distraction display Jan. 17 in *Jackson*, FL (*fide* RLW), where few breed.

GULLS, TERNS

Laughing Gulls were scarce in *Jefferson Davis* and *Acadia*, LA (KVR), while an adult in *Panola*, MS, Jan. 24–Feb. 9 (GK, TLS *et al.*) was only the 3rd locally in winter. Mississippi's 6th Little Gull was reported without details from *Grenada* Jan. 15 and Feb. 15–17 (GK, WMD *et al.*), as was the 3rd Arkansas sighting, made Dec. 28 and Jan. 1–5 in *Little River* (CM, m.ob.). The 4th and 5th Mississippi records of Common Black-headed Gull, reported from *Tishomingo* and *Panola* on Jan. 12 (GK, JRW) and Jan. 18 & 24 (WMD, GK), respectively, also arrived without documentation; Arkansas' first Common Black-headed Gull, an adult in *Little River* Dec. 29, was photographed (JRW, CM). Observers and subregional editors are reminded that all records of species sighted fewer than 10 times in a state, except individuals that return year after year to the same site, should be submitted with full substantiating details.

Interior Bonaparte's Gulls were reported more frequently than usual from Louisiana (SWC), while 500+ stayed all of January and February at productive Pickwick Dam in *Hardin*, TN (DJS, m.ob.). A putative California Gull Dec. 8–29 in *Hardin*, TN (†DJS, m.ob.), awaits analysis by the TBRC, as does a putative Thayer's Gull seen in the same area Dec. 28–29 (†DJS); each would

represent a first state record if accepted. Another Thayer's was described in superior detail in *St. Bernard*, LA, Feb. 22 (PL, †CAM, SF, GS), as was an ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull there the same date (†CAM). Lesser Black-backs were also reported from *Harrison*, MS (TLS, JAT, m.ob.), the 8th consecutive year of sightings there, and from *Grenada*, MS, Dec. 13 (GK), with no details; two immatures were reported in *Hardin*, TN, Dec. 28–29 (†DJS) and await action by the TBRC. Glaucous Gulls appeared in *Hardin*, TN, Jan. 6–19 (DJS, JRW, DoM, m.ob.), *Rutherford*, TN, Jan. 7 (TJW), and *Marshall*, AL, all period (ALM, †GDJ). Great Black-backed Gulls were well represented with single birds along the Gulf Coast in *Lafourche*, LA, Jan. 13 (MaM, NN, RDP, †DM), *Harrison*, MS, Dec. 19 until the end of the period (ph. JAT, m.ob.), *Baldwin*, AL, Jan. 26 (†GF, PB), and *Gulf*, FL, Dec. 27 (†SJS); an inland sighting of an immature took place in *Hardin*, TN, Dec. 29 and Jan. 6 & 12 (†DJS, JRW). Lone imm. Black-legged Kittiwakes graced L. Millwood, AR, Jan. 4 (HP, ph. MP), Sardis L., MS, Dec. 12 (GK, VT), and St. Andrew Rec Area in Bay, FL, Dec. 29–Jan. 3 (MAO, HL, ph. TM), the latter a county first.

The first December Least Tern for *Escambia*, FL, appeared Dec. 4 (RAD).

DOVES TO SWIFTS

Forty-two Eur. Collared-Doves in *Walton*, FL, during December (*fide* RAD) represented an increase. White-winged Doves were reported from 4 Louisiana parishes in small groups, all palling by comparison with the roost of 120 in *Plaquemines* Dec. 30 (KVR, DM, AWK). An Inca Dove in *Washington*, AR, Dec. 1–Jan. 4 (DJ *et al.*), killed by a cat and then preserved (* U.A.M.), was the 2nd for the n.w. part of that state.

Groove-billed Anis were noted in 6 Louisiana parishes Dec. 17–Jan. 13 in groups of one to five (m.ob.). The only Long-eared Owls were singles in *Henry*, TN, Dec. 2 (JRW) and *Grenada*, MS, Dec. 19 (GK, TH) Short-eared Owls were

well represented by 10 records in Tennessee, as well as by a single bird in *Tunica*, MS, Feb. 21 (JRW), three in *Prairie*, AR, Feb. 24 (PL *et al.*), and five in *Acadia*, LA, Dec. 19 (SWC, DLD, DaP, BF). Unidentified swifts, probably representing at least 2 species, were noted at 2 sites in *E. Baton Rouge*, LA, during December and January (AWK, SWC *et al.*).

HUMMINGBIRDS TO FLYCATCHERS

Louisiana's first Broad-billed Hummingbird, described in the fall report, continued in *Jefferson* until Jan. 5 (†NLN, ph. PN). Six additional species of hummingbirds were present during the season in Louisiana: Buff-bellied (1 record), Ruby-throated (at least 1 record), Black-chinned (at least 4 records), Broad-tailed (1 record), Rufous (at least 6 records of 22 birds, including 14 in one Reserve yard), and Allen's (1 record); experienced observers considered these results to represent an average or even a bit below average season. Elsewhere in the Region, hummingbird sightings were probably above average. Alabama's 2nd Calliope Hummingbird stayed the winter in *Shelby* (†RRS, m.ob.); it weighed 2.89 grams when it was banded. One Rufous was banded in Mobile Jan. 25 (RRS, MS), and four stayed the season at feeders in coastal Mississippi (*fide* JAT) with another present in *Washington*, MS, until Jan. 14 (GEA). Two were present in Arkansas, another measure of the mildness of the season: an imm. male stayed the winter and was banded in *Union* (SS, LS) and an imm. female was banded in *Pulaski* Dec. 15 (WMS, RC). Finally, a ♀ Rufous discovered in November remained until Feb. 14 in *Coffee*, TN (DD).

The controversial "Red-naped" Sapsucker in *Orleans*, LA, returned this winter and was exposed as a plebian Yellow-bellied (SWC, PL *et al.*). A Red-cockaded Woodpecker was identified near Irons Fork L. in *Polk*, AR, a new location for the species. A female, trapped in Texas, transported across state lines, and ensconced in a man-made cavity in the territory of a bachelor Red-cockaded near

Mena in the Ouachita N.F., AR, apparently hit it off marvelously with the male; no other reports (and certainly none as racy) of this endangered resident of the Region were received.

Louisiana almost cornered the market on rare flycatchers, sporting three Vermilion Flycatchers (AWK, KMD, KVR, DP), one Ash-throated Flycatcher (†SWC, DLD), and one Couch's Kingbird—seen and heard Feb. 10–11 in or near *St. John the Baptist* (WA, CF, †RDP, †JPS, GS), it represented the 2nd or 3rd for the state. Single W. Kingbirds in s. Alabama (RAD) and n.w. Florida (GF *et al.*) were all that prevented a monopoly by the birders in the bayou state.

SWALLOWS TO PARULIDS

Early Purple Martins arrived Jan. 18 in *E. Baton Rouge*, LA (AWK), and Feb. 23 in *Noxubee*, MS (JRW, WMD). Fish Crows wintered for the first time in *Noxubee*, MS, where up to four were present (TLS, JuB, GK, SK). A Rock Wren in *Catahoula*, LA, Dec. 15 (†KCC) was the 4th or 5th for the state, if accepted by the LBRC. At least two Bewick's Wrens were in *Rutherford*, TN, one spending the winter (RVM, TJW, DM); one appeared Jan. 26 in *Yell*, AR (BPL); Mississippi records included one in *Yalobusha* Dec. 13–20 (GK), three in *Grenada* (GK, SK), and one in *Quitman* Jan. 31 (GK); and singles were discovered in Louisiana on the Johnson Bayou CBC Dec. 16 (DLD, SWC) and the Baton Rouge CBC Dec. 18 (RBH). More than the customary number of Sedge Wren sightings were recorded in n. Mississippi (GK, TLS), while a Marsh Wren in *Carroll*, AR, Dec. 28 (MM) was only the 2nd for the n.w. part of that state.

Arkansas' 2nd Townsend's Solitaire visited *Yell* Feb. 9–17 (WMS, BV, ph. MP), and two Wood Thrushes turned up on the Gulf Shores CBC, AL, Dec. 29 (CLK), for that state's 3rd winter record. By Feb. 16 an Am. Robin had already laid an egg in its nest in Nashville, TN (DAB). American Pipits were unusually widespread in n.w. Arkansas (MM), while single

Sprague's Pipits seen at sites 10 mi apart in *Cameron*, LA, Dec. 14 and Feb. 3 (SWC) were probably different individuals and were certainly unusual.

The White-eyed Vireo in *Clark*, AR, Dec. 15 (HP, LD) was far north of usual winter haunts. Fairly cooperative and vocal, a Bell's Vireo in *Cameron*, LA, Dec. 15 (†GHR, †JVR, AWK) established the 5th or 6th winter record for that state.

Singing N. Parulas in *Jefferson* and *St. Charles*, LA, Feb. 19 & 25, were early. A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler in *St. John the Baptist* Dec. 29 (BO, RBH), present since November, provided the first well-documented winter record for Louisiana. One ♀ Black-throated Green Warbler showed up in Bay, FL, Jan. 25 & 28 (JO, EK), while Black-throated Gray Warblers were noted in *Cameron* Dec. 16 (DM, RDP) and *Plaquemines* Dec. 30 (DM, KVR, †AWK). Pine Warblers wintered in n. sections of the Region in fair numbers, such as 14 in *Hardin*, TN, Dec. 29 (DJS *et al.*) and two Jan. 3 & 4 in *Putnam*, TN (SJS), where no previous winter records existed. Black-and-white Warblers and Ovenbirds were reported from many areas where normally absent or scarce in winter. Three N. Waterthrushes visited *Jefferson*, LA, during January and February (DM), while single Yellow-breasted Chats turned up in *E. Baton Rouge* Dec. 18 (RTB) and *St. John the Baptist*, LA, Dec. 29 (BC, JK).

TANAGERS TO LONGSPURS

At least two December Summer Tanagers were detected in *E. Baton Rouge*, LA (KVR, TAP, RTB), where quite rare in winter. An ad. ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was late or wintering in *Williamson*, TN, Dec. 22 (DFV), while a ♂ Black-headed Grosbeak in *Clark*, AR, Dec. 5 (DDH) was rare. Eight Blue Grosbeaks stayed the season in *St. John the Baptist*, LA (RS, MW). Rare wintering Indigo Buntings dotted the Regional landscape; one appeared in *Jefferson*, AR, Dec. 25 (GL), another in *Lafayette*, MS, Feb. 22–27 (GK, SK), and at least three in different Louisiana parishes (AWK, JVR, MW, RS, DM) An equally unusual ♂

Painted Bunting visited *Escambia*, FL, Feb. 7–12 (OEF, JoM), while ♀-plumaged birds showed up in *Acadia*, *Jefferson*, and *Orleans*, LA, on Dec. 19 (JH), Jan. 13 (MaM, RDP, NN, DM), and Feb. 23 (DM), respectively. Seven Dickcissels in Louisiana (SWC, DLD, KVR), one in n.w. Florida (RH, KO), a male in coastal Mississippi (JP, CC, m.ob.), and a male in *Jefferson*, AR, Dec. 29 (RHD) were all noteworthy.

The first local winter record of Bachman's Sparrow occurred Feb. 2 in *Noxubee*, MS (GK, SK). Two Rufous-crowned Sparrows in *Logan*, AR, Dec. 4 (WMS, AMu), four in *Yell*, AR, Feb. 11 (BPL), and one at a new location—Redland Mt. in *Pike*, AR—Feb. 15 (WMS, CT) demonstrated that this sparrow is still doing well in the Region's n.w. frontier. American Tree Sparrows staged a moderate incursion into Tennessee: 27 were counted on the Reelfoot CBC Dec. 18 (*vide* MGW), and 40+ were in that vicinity Feb. 2 (SJS, BHS, m.ob.); 19 were in *Stewart* Dec. 15 (CSH), and four showed up farther east in *Montgomery* Jan. 8 (AHH). Only three records of single birds occurred in Arkansas (*vide* MP), while Alabama hosted the southernmost, with three at Wheeler N.W.R. Jan. 19 (SM). A single Clay-colored Sparrow in *Cameron*, LA, Dec. 15 (JVR, AWK) was extremely rare.

Small to moderate numbers of Vesper Sparrows stayed late in Tennessee: 20 were counted on the Memphis CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* MGW); 15 were on the CBC in *Lawrence* Dec. 29 (*vide* DJS); two were in *Coffee* Dec. 29 (DD); and one was in *Putnam* Jan. 3 (SJS). Seven Lark Sparrows on the Crowley CBC, LA, Dec. 19 represented a respectable number; single birds in *Lowndes*, MS, Dec. 15 (TLS) and *Rutherford*, TN, Jan. 5 (TJW, DM, BLE) were unexpected. The 2nd and 3rd Louisiana records of "Gambel's" White-crowned Sparrow occurred Dec. 14 (* L.S.U.M.N.S.) and Feb. 2 in *Cameron* (SWC). The season's only Harris' Sparrows stayed Jan. 16, 20, & 21 in *Shelby*, TN (CB, VR, NS, m.ob.) and Dec. 19 in *Acadia*, LA (JH).

Two McCown's Longspurs, establishing the 2nd Louisiana

record, were studied Jan. 27 and Feb. 1 in *Jefferson Davis* (KVR, SWC, DLD, AWK, †CAM). Lapland Longspurs occurred in numbers: 55+ were in *Shelby*, TN, Dec. 23 & 26 (MGW, m.ob.), 44 were in *Limestone*, AL, Jan. 19 (JRW), 100 were in *Bolivar*, MS, Jan. 9 (NJH), and 300 invaded *Acadia*, LA, Dec. 25 (KVR, RTB). Smith's Longspurs occurred in smaller numbers: up to 22 in *Prairie*, AR (WMS, JLY, HP, MP); two to eight in *Shelby*, TN, in December and February (JG, MGW *et al.*); and one in *Yalobusha*, MS, Dec. 19 (GK).

MEADOWLARKS TO GROSBEAKS

Western Meadowlarks in *Lafayette* (KVR), *Acadia* (SWC, DLD), and *Vermilion* (KVR), LA, were rare but expected, as was one in *Pope*, AR (HP, MP); one farther east in *Lafourche*, LA, was most unexpected Feb. 24 (RSB). Brewer's Blackbirds were reported in small numbers from Tennessee, although 50 in *Lawrence* Dec. 28 (DJS) were an exception; two females in *Putnam*, TN, Jan. 15 (BHS) established the first local winter record. A ♂ Shiny Cowbird in *Escambia*, FL, Feb. 3 (†CDF) probably represented a first winter record for that area. Purple Finches were in low to moderate numbers wherever they were reported.

House Finches invaded the westernmost and southernmost reaches of the Region in unprecedented numbers. Observers in Arkansas and along the Gulf Coast are now getting a taste of what has been going on in Region's n.e. sector for the past decade, and they had better brace themselves, because numbers are just going to keep increasing. For example, one bander in *Shelby*, TN, handled 1700 birds in January (BBC), and that figure was 900 fewer than the previous January's total; 5 years ago such totals would have been unthinkable. Furthermore, given this bird's ability to tolerate high temperatures, it will stay as a breeder as far south as there is land to breed on. With the completion of the House Finch invasion, the avifaunal character of our entire Region will be subtly changed in less than 15 years, although the change will

be a more pleasant one than those attending the arrival of certain other avian colonists.

Red Crossbills visited *Noxubee* and *Winston*, MS, in flocks of one to 11 in late December and February (TLS, m.ob.); they were also present during February in flocks of one to two dozen in *Scott*, AR (RHD). Pine Siskins were generally absent or present in low numbers, although a few pockets of better representation in Tennessee were reported (MGW, DFV). American Goldfinches had a good winter, but Evening Grosbeaks were all but absent, with 4 reports coming in from Tennessee, 2 from Mississippi, and one each from Alabama and Arkansas.

Corrigendum: The 32 Am. Swallow-tailed Kites near Marengo, AL, reported (*AB* 44:1144) as present July 2, 1990, were actually seen Aug. 3, 1990 (as correctly stated in *AB* 45:114).

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PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION

Rudolf F. Koes and Peter Taylor

After a relatively mild start to the period, extremely cold air enveloped the Region from December 17 to January 10, with daytime maxima generally remaining below 0°F. There was a partial respite in mid-January, then an exceptionally mild spell in early February, with maxima well above freezing throughout the south for a week or more. After that, conditions were more variable, and the period closed out with a short but sharp cold snap. Precipitation remained generally low where it is needed on the prairies.

Many straggling waterfowl and half-hardy birds were driven or weeded out in the cold Christmas period, and feeder birds were generally scarce. The early mild spell brought some changes at the feeder scene, and just a hint of spring migration. Overall it was a quiet season, with owls and falcons doing a lot to keep birder and soul together.

GREBES TO RAPTORS

One W. Grebe remained on the South Saskatchewan River near Gardiner Dam to Dec. 5 (CB, WH). Twenty-four species of waterfowl were reported across the Region, but only 14 after December, mainly at Calgary and near dams in s. Saskatchewan. Avian cholera struck crowded waterfowl on the Bow R. in Calgary, with about 1000 succumbing by mid-January (RD).

Unusually late were a Greater White-fronted Goose at Regina Dec. 5-6 (RKR, FL) and an ad. Snow Goose at Calgary Dec. 23 (JS, SH). Fewer than 350 Canada Geese wintered at Regina, continuing the decline since the power-plant closure. Three wintering Am. Black Ducks, also at Regina, comprised two probable escapees and one believed to be wild. An impressive 10,600 Mallards were still at Gardiner Dam Dec. 5 (WH), and about 4000 remained in the area Feb.



4 (FR). At Boundary Dam reservoir, Estevan, SK, there were two Gadwall Feb. 27 (PC, RKR) and an Am. Wigeon Feb. 13 (DW).

Pine Falls provided the best late duck records in Manitoba: a Ring-necked Duck Dec. 1 (RKO *et al.*), a Greater Scaup Dec. 8-9 (GGF *et al.*), and an Oldsquaw lingering from fall to Dec. 9 (PT *et al.*). A 2nd Ring-necked Duck was nearby at McArthur Falls Dec. 1-2 (PT, DBy *et al.*). Rarities at Gardiner Dam were a **Common Eider** Dec. 8 (SS, MWi), a ♂ Harlequin Duck present from fall to at least Feb. 8 (CB, WH, m.ob.), and an ad. ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye Dec. 5 (CB). Also unusual so late were a White-winged Scoter Dec. 1-5 (WH, RKR, m.ob.) and a Red-breasted Merganser Dec. 2 & 17 (CB, RKR).

Bald Eagles were attracted to duck carcasses in Calgary, with a peak count of 17 on Jan. 12 (TK). Northern Goshawks were more common than usual across s. Manitoba, with 28 reported sightings; the only other accipiter species were on Alberta CBCs. A well-regarded observer reported a Swainson's Hawk near Medicine Hat, AB, Dec. 16 (PM, *fide* DBo). A Calgary oddity was a dark morph Red-tailed Hawk at the Cominco property, Jan. 13 (AS)—the 5th consecutive winter record at that location. A dark morph adult Ferruginous Hawk was

studied near Robsart, SK, Dec. 16 (KB, RKR, RM). Rough-legged Hawks were at their lowest in 4 years near Calgary (RD), and very scarce in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

An overwintering ♀ Peregrine Falcon in Winnipeg had been released at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in July 1989. At least 14 Gyrfalcon reports in Saskatchewan were enviable, while four in one field in Calgary, Dec. 16 (ET, BC, TK) were truly drool-inspiring. Scattered Prairie Falcon records included a returnee to a Winnipeg senior citizen's home (RKO *et al.*)—an odd sight indeed, roosting on an air-conditioner on a high-rise balcony. A pair of Prairie Falcons was already mating at Medicine Hat, Feb. 16 (BV).

GALLIFORMES TO WOODPECKERS

Grasslands N.P., SK, is a Regional stronghold for prairie gamebirds new and old: 110 Ring-necked Pheasants and 19 Sage Grouse were counted there Dec. 30 (PC). Five Killdeer remained near Calgary until Dec. 17, disappearing with the first blizzard (RD), and one was at Govenlock, SK, Dec. 16 (WH). A Herring Gull at Calgary Dec. 12 (MWi) provided a local late record. An Iceland Gull was independently identified by 2 observers, and compared with Glaucous Gulls near

Gardiner Dam Dec. 5 (CB, WH). Glaucous Gulls peaked at six in that area Dec. 8 (SS, MW), and one remained at L. Diefenbaker Jan. 28 (WH).

A Black Guillemot was dropped alive on a Churchill, MB, street by a passing Com. Raven on Jan. 4. Retrieved by a local resident and forwarded to Natural Resources staff, it died from an infection at the Winnipeg Zoo 3 days later (*fide* RN).

Eastern Screech-Owls were reported from 8 locations in their limited range in s. Manitoba and s.e. Saskatchewan; a locally rare red-morph bird frequented a barn near Kleefeld, MB, for much of the winter (CP, DF). Snowy Owls were patchily distributed in fair numbers (peak day counts around 10 birds) in all 3 provinces. Northern Hawk Owls were found at 15 or more locations across s. and c. Saskatchewan, and six were banded near Sundre, AB (DC), but only three were reported in Manitoba.

Great Gray Owls were well represented at normal locations in all 3 provinces. In s.e. Manitoba, numbers rivalled the record winter of 1978-1979; 80 birds banded were thought to represent a quarter of reports received (RN, JD, HC). An albinistic Great Gray Owl was found near Patricia Beach, MB, Dec. 29-30 (GH, BF, RN). Short-eared Owls were

widespread across the south in early winter, especially in Saskatchewan; Regina's CBC total of 25 was remarkable. The only Boreal Owl report came from Somme, SK, Feb. 20 (DBI). A N. Saw-whet Owl survived a window collision near Medicine Hat Dec. 1 (WT), and this species was calling in the Calgary area by Feb. 15 (RD) and at Sherwood Forest, SK, on Feb. 26–28 (PC *et al.*). Northern Flickers were surprisingly plentiful in several prairie cities in early winter; those in Winnipeg disappeared in late December (RKO), but at least some survived in Regina (TH).

PASSERINES

The mild spell brought Horned Larks back to s. Manitoba even earlier than usual, with numerous sightings Feb. 6–15. A total of 3050 Horned Larks in the Rockglen–Coronach area set a Saskatchewan CBC record (MM, RR). Common Ravens edged out of the forest in strength again in Saskatchewan and Manitoba; 387 were counted at a roost in Birds Hill Provincial Park, near Winnipeg, in late January (GGm, *vide* RN). Red-breasted Nuthatches were “in large numbers everywhere” around Calgary (RD), but scarce to absent in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. A Winter Wren lingered in Calgary until Dec. 17 (RD).

Alberta's 3rd winter N. Mockingbird, and the first known to survive, braved the elements in Calgary from late December into April (MBb, m.ob.). Thousands of Bohemian Waxwings remained in Calgary for the winter, but the species was spottily distributed and generally scarce farther east. A count of 5445 Lapland Longspurs at Bromhead, Jan. 2, was another Saskatchewan CBC record (CB, MBI). The most unusual sparrow was an overwintering Swamp Sparrow in Calgary, probably a Regional first; it was last seen Mar. 13 (JP, HG, m.ob.). A Song Sparrow visited a feeder in Winnipeg until Dec. 22 (RT), and two Song Sparrows were seen along Battle Creek, s.w. Saskatchewan, Dec. 15 (RKR, KB, RM).

A “Black” Rosy Finch, apparently the first for Canada, was an excellent find in the Big Muddy valley, just north of the Montana–Saskatchewan border, Jan. 2 (CB, MBI). A ♂ House Finch at a Carberry feeder, Nov. 17–Dec. 4, furnished Manitoba's first winter-period record (B & RA, ph.).

The more characteristic winter finches were disappointing in general. Few Pine Grosbeaks left the forest, and both crossbill species were extremely hard to find. Common Redpolls were fairly numerous but patchy,



Northern Mockingbird in Calgary, Alberta, January 16, 1991. Third winter record for the province, and first one known to have actually survived the season there. Photograph/Terry Korolyk.

while Pine Siskins and Am. Goldfinches were numerous only in s.w. Manitoba. Evening Grosbeak numbers were generally below average; a CBC total of 550 at The Pas, MB, suggests that many may have stayed north.

Finally, Manitoba's one and only Eur. Tree Sparrow was seen for the last time at St. Fran-

cois Xavier Jan. 22, but its genes apparently lived on in three hybrid offspring.

Corrigendum: The Ring-billed Gull at Calgary on Dec. 5, 1989, was not the city's first winter gull, as originally stated.

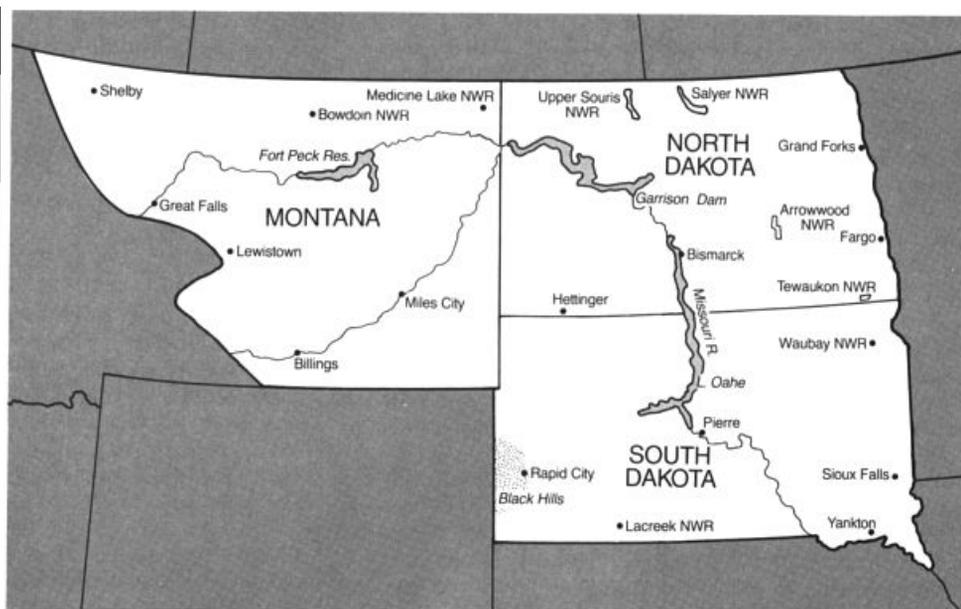
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NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Ron Martin

Another mild, open winter with very sparse precipitation over almost the entire Region continued the trend of the last several years. As the drought lingers on, the outlook for the prairie potholes is even more bleak than last year. Numerous species remained into December, but a cold snap from mid-December to early January drove out most of the semi-hardy species.

A good mix of late waterfowl were at numerous localities.



Several raptor species were present in above-average numbers, but owls did not follow this trend. Larids continued to cause excitement at Garrison Dam with seven species present in December. Finch numbers were generally unimpressive except for American Goldfinches, but several individual finch records were of interest.

Seasonal highlights included the third Mountain Chickadee for South Dakota and the first Lesser Black-backed Gull for North Dakota.

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A Com. Loon found on a highway at Malta, MT, in mid-December died Dec. 21 (DP). A green vent area suggested lead poisoning. Six December Great Blue Heron reports from the Dakotas were above average, and one was at Yellowtail Dam, *Bighorn*, MT, Feb. 12 (HC).

Tundra Swans also made a good late showing with 2 December reports in South Dakota and three birds on L. Sakakawea until Dec. 16. Three Greater White-fronted Geese Dec. 6 in *Charles Mix*, SD, were late (BKH). Snow Geese remained to mid-December in all 3 states and a North Dakota Game and Fish Department survey of Canada Geese in early December tallied 135,000 birds from L. Sakakawea to the South Dakota line. In Montana, Canada Geese returned to 3 refuges in early February.

Early February waterfowl in *Yankton*, SD, included Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Red-head, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, and Lesser Scaup (BKH, WH). Also noted in South Dakota in early February were Am. Wigeon in *Fall River* (RAP) and Bufflehead in *Charles Mix*. Two Green-winged Teal Dec. 8 at Garrison Dam provided the 2nd-latest record for North Dakota (GBB), and two remained at Fort Peck until Jan. 15 (CC). An Am. Black Duck Jan. 13 at Garrison Dam furnished a rare mid-winter record (RM). An Oldsquaw that spent the season at Garrison Dam provided the first wintering record for North Dakota. Two Barrow's Golden-eye on the CBC at Pierre, SD, were east of their normal range. Hooded Mergansers Dec 16 at

Bowman-Haley Dam (D & CG) and Garrison Dam furnished the 3rd-latest record for North Dakota. Common Mergansers peaked at 3200 Dec. 6 in *Yankton*, SD (WH).

RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS

Bald Eagles were well below normal at Garrison Dam during the annual January survey, after most of the Missouri R. had frozen downstream during the extreme December cold. After a peak of 41 on Dec. 30, only two birds remained by Feb. 2 at Fort Peck. In other areas, numbers reported were average. A N. Harrier in *Grand Forks*, ND, Dec. 15 was late (EF). Sharp-shinned Hawks at 6 locations were about normal for recent years. Several sightings of a Cooper's Hawk at Bowdoin provided the first wintering record for latilong L9 (KS). After only 5 reports last year, N. Goshawks may be on the upside of their 10-year cycle with 26 individuals noted.

Counts of 14–29 Rough-legged Hawks were noted along some highway stretches in Montana. Golden Eagles were widespread and in good numbers throughout the Region, and the 28 recorded Dec. 15 on the CBC at Medora set a new record high for North Dakota. After the good fall movement, mid-December reports of Gyrfalcons came from Fort Peck (CC) and Freezeout L., MT (*fide* MS), and Pierre, SD. For the 3rd consecutive winter, Gyrfalcons wintered in the Garrison Dam area, with two birds present this year (v.o.). Prairie Falcons were widespread in Montana and North Dakota but only 2 reports came from South Dakota. A Peregrine Falcon was at Arrowwood N.W.R., ND, Jan. 3 (PCV).

Wild Turkeys gathered into a flock of 600 in *Richland*, ND (BK). A Com. Snipe Dec. 9 at Garrison Dam furnished the 3rd winter record for North Dakota (DNS).

GULLS TO OWLS

A Ring-billed Gull appeared at Fort Peck Feb. 7 and remained to the end of the period (CC). The last California Gull left Fort Peck Dec. 23, and one arrived at Freezeout L., MT, Feb 26 (MS) A record high

seven Thayer's Gulls were at Garrison Dam Dec. 8 (GBB). The Iceland Gull reported during the fall season at Garrison Dam remained to Dec. 16, and the 4th documented North Dakota record was provided Dec. 8 when a second bird appeared (REM, GBB). A Lesser Black-backed Gull graced the late afternoon scene at the Garrison Dam CBC Dec. 16 (REM, DNS). Opinions were still being solicited as of this writing, but the bird was thought to be in 2nd-winter plumage. If accepted this would represent the first record for North Dakota and the Region.

Glaucous Gulls were reported at 2 South Dakota locations along the Missouri R. and also at Garrison Dam, ND. At Fort Peck they peaked at seven Dec. 23, and five remained to Feb. 10 (CC). An unidentified large, light-backed, adult gull at Garrison Dam Dec. 8 resembled a bird photographed Oct. 31 at the same location. Photos of the October bird sent to three w. coast experts did not garner a unanimous opinion, and the bird or birds will likely remain a mystery. The three Black-legged Kittiwakes found at Garrison Dam in late November were seen again Dec. 1 and one bird was at the same location Dec. 8–16 (REM, GBB).

Rare in North Dakota, a red-morph E. Screech-Owl was found Feb. 3 in Grand Forks (DOL). After a fair Snowy Owl movement in early December, very few were seen during the last half of December and in January. February produced a total of only eight birds. Three January sightings of Long-eared Owls were all in Montana, and 19 Short-eared Owl sightings were down from 33 last year. A N. Saw-whet Owl Jan. 1 at Sawyer, ND, was the only report of the season (RM).

LARKS TO WARBLERS

Flocks containing hundreds of Horned Larks were seen through the period in c. and w. North Dakota, but Marble commented that numbers in the Chester, MT, area were very low. They were moving into e. North Dakota by early February, and a flock of several thousand was in *Jackson*, SD, Feb. 28 (KG)

Three Gray Jays were at Mayville, ND, Jan. 14 (RMK) and a Steller's Jay was in Billings Jan. 18 (JP). Blue Jays continued to increase in e. Montana A Common Raven was in *Pembina*, ND, Jan. 4 (LFM). A Mountain Chickadee photographed Jan. 3 in *Fall River*, SD (KA), was present for most of the season, and represented the 3rd state record. Nine of the same species in Malta, MT, Dec. 15 made an unusually high total there. A Marsh Wren at Bowdoin N.W.R. Dec. 15 was in the same location as one observed Oct. 31 (KS). The bird furnished the first winter record for L9. Three December reports of Golden-crowned Kinglets made a very low total for North Dakota and only one sighting came from e. Montana They were at 7 locations in South Dakota in December.

Twenty-one E. Bluebirds in *Yankton*, SD, in December made an unusually high number. The 31 Townsend's Solitaires on the Medora CBC set a new record high for North Dakota. American Robins were very scarce in North Dakota after the CBC period. Four Varied Thrushes were all in Montana. Representing only the 2nd winter records for their respective states were Gray Catbirds on the CBCs at Fargo, ND, and Billings, MT, Dec. 15.

Bohemian Waxwings were generally in low numbers in both Dakotas but about normal in Montana. Northern Shrike numbers were generally good, and held throughout the period A day-long trip in c. North Dakota Feb. 17 yielded six birds. Yellow-rumped Warblers on 2 s. South Dakota CBCs were very unusual.

TOWHEES TO FINCHES

A Rufous-sided Towhee at Minot, ND, January to March may have been the first to over-winter in North Dakota (RM) An Am. Tree Sparrow retrapped Jan. 13 in *Jackson*, SD, had been originally banded in 1983 (KG). For the 2nd consecutive year, Dark-eyed Junco numbers were above average. The Fox Sparrow Dec. 9–18 in Grand Forks, ND, was among few winter records for the state (m.ob.). Lapland Longspurs were more widespread in c

North Dakota than in any winter since 1978 with a peak of 900 Jan. 13 in *McLean*, ND (GBB). Snow Buntings were also quite numerous in c. North Dakota with daily counts higher than for e. North Dakota. Usually the opposite is true. The species was noted at only 2 Montana and 3 South Dakota localities.

Unusual were eight Yellow-headed Blackbirds Feb. 8 near the Montana-North Dakota state line west of Grenora (TN). Brown-headed Cowbirds are very rare in North Dakota in winter, so one at Grand Forks (DOL) Dec. 9 and one in *Richland* Dec. 20 (KLN, SMM) were unexpected. Two reports were received from South Dakota.

There were only 2 reports of Rosy Finches for the Dakotas and none for Pine Grosbeaks in the Region. Purple Finches were

scattered at feeders in North Dakota and were in 3 South Dakota counties. Five birds at a Malta, MT, feeder through the period established a new record for L9 (JM). Three Cassin's Finches at the same feeder the last half of December also provided a new record for L9. Photos were obtained of both species.

The House Finch parade continued with more birds at more localities. In South Dakota, 45 were present most of the period in Yankton (WH) and single males were in *Roberts* Dec. 11 (BB) and *Lawrence* throughout the season (DCB). In Montana, House Finches were said to be at virtually every feeder in Billings and were starting to sing by the end of the period. Farther east, 75 were recorded at Miles City on the CBC. In North Dakota, birds were in Minot, Fargo,

and Bismarck, with a peak of 14 in December in Grand Forks. Crossbills were virtually nonexistent with only 2 county reports of Red Crossbills in South Dakota and two small flocks of the same in Minot, ND, in December and February. Common Redpolls were present in very low numbers in Montana and North Dakota and were reported in only 4 South Dakota counties. Pine Siskins were at many localities in the Dakotas in low numbers but only 3 reports came from Montana. American Goldfinches were widespread in the Dakotas with the best showing since 1983. Ten to 35 were regular at many feeders in North Dakota with a peak of 72 in *McLean* Jan. 13 (GBB). Two observations of Evening Grosbeaks, away from their usual haunts in w. South Dakota and Montana, were

both in North Dakota.

Area editors (boldface) and cited observers:

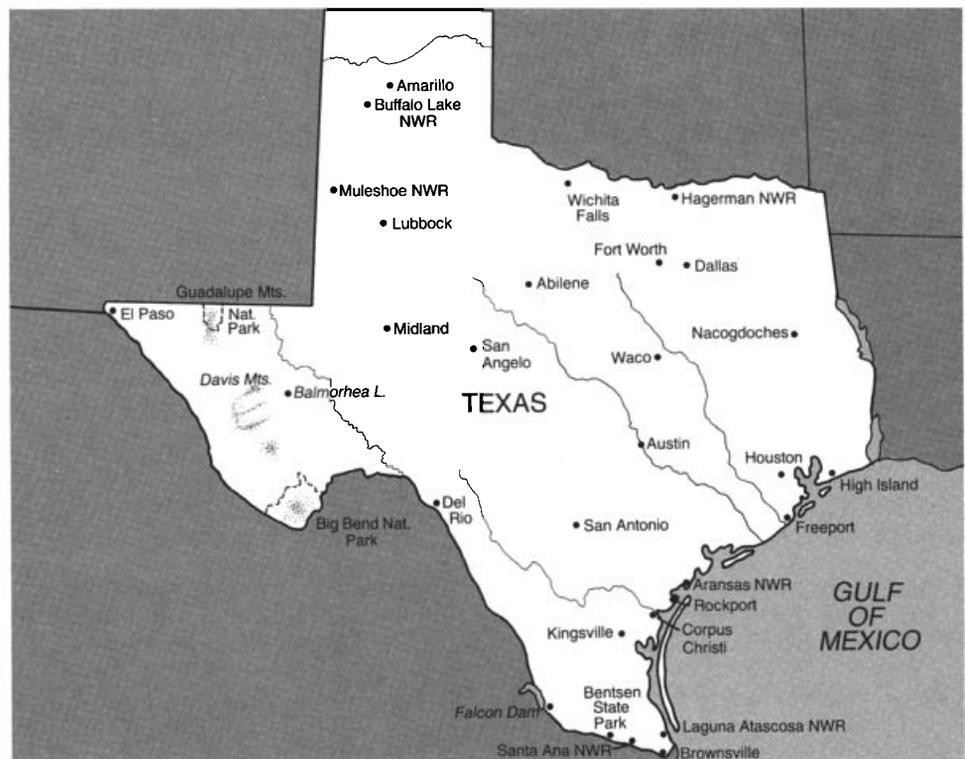
MONTANA: Charles Carlson, Helen Carlson, Clarke Dirks, Harriet Marble, Jack Millar, Ted Nordhagen, Dwain Prellwitz, Jim Phelps, Michael Schwitters, James and Karen Stutzman. **NORTH DAKOTA:** Gordon Berkey, Eve Freeberg, Dave and Carolyn Griffiths, Bob Kloubec, Robert Kruger, Donald Kubischta, David Lambeth, Ron Martin, Laura Mitchell, Sheldon Myerchin, Kristine Nelson, Gary Nielsen, Dan Svingen, Paul Van Ningen. **SOUTH DAKOTA:** Kathy Anderson, Doug Backlund, Barbara Bernstein, Ken Graupman, Willis Hall, Bruce Harris, Mike Michael, Richard Peterson, Dennis Skadsen, Jerry Stanford.—**RON MARTIN**, Rt. 1, Box 59A, Sawyer, ND 58781.

TEXAS REGION

Greg W. Lasley and
Chuck Sexton

Superlatives were not much in evidence in the accounts from our contributors this season, neither in a positive nor a negative vein. Instead, adjectives such as "mild" and "uneventful" were uncharacteristically overused. To be sure, we had one cold arctic blast just before Christmas which chased lingering hummingbirds and flycatchers south and put most of the state in a deep freeze momentarily, but that event was noted more for the extra complaints from unlucky Christmas Bird Count participants those days than for any major avian impact. Most of the state received at least some good rains, except for the droughty interior of south Texas and the playas of the High Plains where there was almost a complete absence of surface water. Baffin Bay on the lower coast, normally a productive estuarine habitat, was suffering from the lack of freshwater input and the continued presence of a "brown tide" algae. The bay was nearly birdless.

By contrast, the impressive rains in the fall in west Texas



created a bountiful seed crop, setting up a feast for seed-eaters this season. This also led to unprecedented lingering of several species that generally winter farther south. Nonetheless, as first hinted at in the fall, avian invasions were mostly absent: No masses of birds came down from the mountains, in from the east or west, or over the river from the south. The characteris-

tic irruptive species simply didn't. Nuthatches, goldfinches, purple finches, and especially siskins were almost universally described as scarce. Most remarkable was the virtual absence of bluebirds and solitaires in the western half of the state.

In many locales the Christmas Bird Counts seemed to provide tantalizing rarities that

rekindled a little extra follow-up field effort in January and February. Perhaps just a bit more this season than usual, visiting birders and tour groups seemed to stumble upon and alert locals to rarities, and of course this was more typical in the heavily visited coastal and southern parts of the state. Detailed ornithological exploration of the new Big Bend

State Natural Area (hereafter the "Big Bend Ranch" to distinguish it from the neighboring national part to the east) began in earnest, with some intriguing finds.

After this season we will regrettably lose the services of our indefatigable east Texas subregional editor, Ted Eubanks Jr., to a busy schedule of other ornithological pursuits and business demands. Thankfully, none of us has heard the last of Ted...stay tuned for bigger and better things from this remarkable observer and reporter.

Abbreviations: Ft. Bliss (*Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds in El Paso Co.*); G.M.N.P. (*Guadalupe Mountains Nat'l Park*); L.R.G.V. (*Lower Rio Grande Valley*); U.T.C. (*Upper Texas Coast*). The following are shortened names for the respective county, state, or national parks, refuges, etc.: Anzalduas, Aransas, Atwater, Bentsen, Big Bend, Big Boggy, Hagerman, Hueco Tanks, Lake Texana, Laguna Atascosa, Lost Maples, and Santa Ana.

LOONS TO DUCKS

The only Pacific Loon of the period appeared on the Galveston CBC Dec. 26. Common Loons wintered in record numbers at L. Tawakoni; a few Commons in *Lubbock* and *Crosby* in December were noteworthy. A staggering 800 Horned Grebes were counted Feb. 3 on L. Tawakoni (RK, GH, JN). Three W. Grebes, a species absent from e. Texas for almost a decade, frequented Lake Texana, *Jackson*, Feb. 9 onward (Spoonbill). Galveston CBC participants were shocked into incredulity by a **Sooty Shearwater** that remained around Galveston harbor for most of Dec. 26. Interestingly, a dead Sooty was found on the beach near San Luis Pass, *Brazoria*, about 25 mi down the coast Jan. 2 (TH). About three Audubon's Shearwaters were reported off Port Aransas on a Feb. 15 pelagic trip (SG). The Masked Booby reported on the Freeport CBC Dec. 16 added to the sparse set of winter records for the species.

Single Am. Bitterns at Big Bend Ranch Jan. 6 (KB) and in *Marion* (in the Pineywoods)

Feb. 26 (N.E.T.F.O.) were much less expected than the handful reported along the coast. Very unusual for mid-winter were 12 Snowy Egrets at Ft. Hancock, *Hudspeth*, Jan. 17 (BZ). A flock of 1000 White-faced Ibises was seen on a ranch in *San Patricio* Dec. 17 (RM *et al.*).

Wintering Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were scarce and localized in drought-stricken interior south Texas. A Tundra Swan made a 3-day stop at Big Boggy in mid-December (*vide* B.C.N.C.). Two pairs of Tundras were reported at Wichita Falls in mid-January (*vide* BO) and another was found in El Paso Jan. 17 (LJ). Greater White-fronted Geese were less numerous in s. Texas but there were 3 reports of up to 40 birds at scattered Trans-Pecos locations. Ross' Geese were notably more abundant statewide, including a flock of 76 Jan. 26 at Hagerman (KN *et al.*) and *Midland's* 3rd county record Feb. 1-28 (G & MT).

Three Eur. Wigeons constituted a good sprinkling: Nacogdoches Jan. 20 (D & MW *et al.*), near Laguna Atascosa Jan. 27 onward (E & JM), and Austin Feb. 17 (BF). Canvasbacks peaked on L. Sam Rayburn with 3000 Jan. 25 (DF *et al.*). Five reports of up to 22 Greater Scaup in coastal s. Texas made a better than average showing. An impressive 300 Com. Mergansers were at Ft. Hancock Jan. 17 (BZ); three Red-breasteds in *Lubbock* 10 days later were of also of note.

RAPTORS

Richard Wright and David Wolf documented a surprising migration of Turkey Vultures over Nacogdoches Dec. 13 & 15 when 1100 and 1725+, respectively, were counted. Not only was this unexpectedly late in the season, these were also the largest migrations of this species ever detected over that area. A Black-shouldered Kite, accidental in the Trans-Pecos, was found in *Hudspeth* Dec. 23 (ES, LyS). The Harris' Hawk continued to be seen in *Lubbock*, north of its normal range. Two adults and an immature were found Dec. 2-31 (CSt, L.E.A.S.).

Four very early Broad-winged Hawks were reported over

Bentsen Feb. 11 (R & LG). A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was carefully studied near El Paso Feb. 15 (BZ); few legitimate records exist for this race in w. Texas. Ferruginous Hawks were more frequent in some areas, including a rare Hill Country record in *Gillespie* (NJ) and some beautiful dark-morph birds in *Kenedy* and *Kleberg* (N & PP, m.ob.). Two single Rough-legged Hawks in e. Texas were fortunate finds; they were in *Upshur* Feb. 9 (N.E.T.F.O.) and *Victoria* Feb. 25 (RW). Peter Scott and Rose Ann Rowlett had a rare Golden Eagle in Austin Dec. 9. Merlin was another species seemingly more numerous in many parts of the state. Presumably hatched Aplomado Falcons were seen in scattered L.R.G.V. locations but one reported to the north at Aransas (*vide* BO) was unexpected.

QUAIL TO TERNS

Three Montezuma Quail found in Dog Canyon of G.M.N.P. were an exciting find Dec. 2 (RR); we have learned that there has been a release program for that species in recent years in the park. Only 146 of the 155 Whooping Cranes in the Aransas/Wood Buffalo flock reached Texas. Tragically, a record 11 were lost, mostly to unknown causes, to leave the flock at 135 by season's end. The spring migration will bring further bad news.

A Semipalmated Plover at Balmorhea L. Dec. 7-15 was a first for winter in the Trans-Pecos (ML); another Semipalmated lingered in *Harrison* in the Pineywoods until Dec. 2 (N.E.T.F.O.). Agency personnel and volunteers, under the auspices of the Great Lakes/Northern Great Plains Piping Plover Recovery Team, conducted a census of the Piping Plover throughout its wintering range. In Texas, the census revealed a total of 1904 Piping Plovers and 1413 Snowy Plovers. An extraordinary concentration of over 6000 Am. Avocets was at Boca Chica, *Cameron*, Feb. 28 (BZ). Four avocets at Ft. Hancock Jan. 17 were either extremely early or wintering in the area for only the 2nd time in the past 20 years (BZ).

Observers' attention was caught by a few Long-billed Curlews in unexpected localities in far n. and w. Texas. The 2nd winter record of W. Sandpiper for *Hudspeth* was found Jan. 17 (BZ). Freeport's two Purple Sandpipers lingered through the season and another Purple was found at the very tip of Texas in *Cameron* on Feb. 28 (BZ), undoubtedly the southernmost record for this part of the world. Terry Maxwell found an Am. Woodcock near San Angelo in late January, providing the 2nd Concho Valley record (DT).

A Little Gull spent Dec. 16-Jan. 24 on L. Waco but was difficult to find most of the time (JMu). An ad. **Common Black-headed Gull** had preceded that bird at the same lake Dec. 11 (MC, JMu). Rare in mid-winter were a few Bonaparte's Gulls in the Trans-Pecos in December and January (BZ). A first-winter Mew Gull, furnishing the 3rd



Mew Gull in first-winter plumage at Calaveras Lake, San Antonio, Texas, December 14, 1990. Photograph/Bret Whitney.

state record, was sporadically sighted at Calaveras L. in San Antonio Dec. 10-Jan. 7 (ph. WS *et al.*).

The Brownsville dump was clearly the best place for gull watching. Jon Dunn photographed a first-winter Thayer's Gull there Jan. 4 as well as Lesser Black-backed and a Glaucous; the latter birds remained into February. Lesser Black-backed continued to be reported with increasing frequency with at least seven described and/or photographed, including *the* Port Aransas bird (8th winter). The Lesser Black-

backed at Balmorhea L. mentioned in fall lingered through Dec. 3 (ML, m.ob.). Another Glaucous Gull was found in Austin Dec. 1 (N & RA, ph. J & BRI) and yet another was on the Port Aransas CBC (TA). Dunn's last entry from a virtuoso performance finding rare gulls in s. Texas was a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake at the mouth of the Rio Grande Jan. 4. Small numbers of kittiwakes were reported on the U.T.C. in December; one on L. O' The Pines Dec. 1 was especially notable (KN *et al.*). A very late Com. Tern was reported Dec. 2 from Mt. Creek L. (KN, *fide* WP).

PIGEONS TO FLYCATCHERS

A vagrant White-winged Dove appeared during late December n.e. of Ft. Worth (NG, ph. RDC). Inca Dove continued its northward expansion. One in Pampa, *Gray*, Feb. 3 (M & TM, *fide* JE) was a county first. Away from the L.R.G.V., two Green Parakeets and at least one Red-crowned Parrot were seen irregularly in Kingsville (CBu, N & PP). Notable owl records included a Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl reported at Bentsen (RM), a few Elf Owls at the same park (R & LG), and Burrowing Owls wintering well n. of their usual range in the n. half of the state (m.ob.). Each year we come very close to getting Com. Nighthawks on the Austin CBC; this year the last of them lingered through Dec. 20 but just outside the CBC circle (GC, RD).

Prior to the Christmas freeze, single Buff-bellied Hummingbirds were encountered out of range in San Antonio Dec. 1-6 (MH, *fide* SH) and in Austin Dec. 21 (NAL, ph. GL). The latter bird was captured alive by rehabilitators and transported a few months later to the L.R.G.V. for release (GL, VE). A ♂ Anna's Hummingbird spent part of the winter in w. Corpus Christi (CC *et al.*); a ♀ Broad-tailed Hummingbird was at the same site simultaneously (CC). Broad-taileds were also reported in December and January in Kingsville (N & PP). Interesting kingfisher records included Ringed at Laredo (ES, LyS) and Boerne (DiH) in January, and a Green in *Goliad* in

December (RM *et al.*).

Sapsuckers and flickers were reportedly sparse in much of s. Texas (N & PP). A Downy Woodpecker in McKittrick Canyon Dec. 29 provided a rare G.M.N.P. record (ML). Expected but rare wintering *Empidonax* flycatchers included two Leastons on the U.T.C. (Spoonbill, WG) and Duskiess photographed at the Big Bend Ranch (KB). Very unexpected was a **Gray Flycatcher** also photographed by Bryan at Big Bend Ranch Jan. 6, only the 2nd documented Texas winter record.



Gray Flycatcher in Presidio County, Texas, January 6, 1991. Second documented winter record for Texas. Photograph/Kelly B. Bryan.

The remarkable overwintering Gray in *Karnes* was still present on Mar. 8 (DMu). A Say's Phoebe spent its 2nd winter in a row in Cleburne, *Johnson* (CE). A full array of documentation, including photos and multiple tape recordings, was amassed on a pair of **Tropical Kingbirds** identified in Brownsville Feb. 9 by Jeff Kingery and Dave Sibley for Texas' 2nd solid record (m.ob. into March). We are grateful to Kingery, Sibley, Chris Benesh and others who quickly recognized not only the rarity of the sighting but the special documentation requirements for this species. A Cassin's Kingbird in Alpine Feb. 22 may have been an early migrant or an overwintering bird (ML). A couple of CBCs benefited from hardy Scissor-tailed Flycatchers that were reluctant to be pushed south by the late December freeze.

SWALLOWS TO SHRIKES

Defining the "winter" season for swallow sightings in coastal and s. Texas is as tricky as recognizing "summering" shorebirds. It is *approximately* January for most species but that is misleading. Small numbers of Barns, N. Rough-wingeds, larger numbers of Trees, and occasionally other species are normally reported from the CBC season into January. By late January and early February, most of the regular species are already headed back N into Texas. Cave Swallow has now become *the* wintering swallow in most of s. Texas (*e.g.*, 200+ in San Antonio). We heard of a not-unexpected first Cave Swallow record for *Victoria* on Feb. 23 (RW).

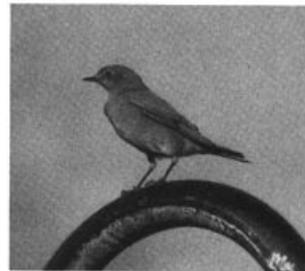
In stark contrast to the winter

Curiously, alongside the reports describing the lack of bluebirds and solitaires in their normal areas were sightings of out-of-range strays such as a ♀ Mountain Bluebird at Anzalduas from Feb. 13 onward (R & LG, m.ob.), a ♂ Mountain at Hagerman Feb. 21-28 (KH *et al.*), and a solitaire in *Bastrop* Feb. 17 (BF). There are clearly no "laws" cast in stone regarding vagrant occurrences but two situations seem to produce the most here: *Either* a season when a species is super-abundant in its normal range or when it is unexpectedly sparse in such areas. Can anyone offer an explanation for the latter situation? Clay-colored Robins deserted us. There was but a single report from Laguna Atascosa and several reports at Santa Ana. The abundance of the species in



The status of Cave Swallow in Texas has changed remarkably in recent years. It was formerly scarce in summer and absent in winter; now it is abundant in summer, and winter records are becoming commonplace. This flock of Cave Swallows was at Braunig Lake, San Antonio, Texas, on December 24, 1990. Photograph/Willie Sekula.

of 1989-1990, the only noteworthy corvid records in w. Texas were of a flock of Pinyon Jays in Dog Canyon Dec. 29 (SW) and 2 sightings around the New Year of the Black-billed Magpie returning for its 2nd winter near El Paso (MMi, KK). Three Mexican Crows at Laguna Atascosa Feb. 23 were a surprise just several miles n. of their regular haunts at the Brownsville dump (*fide* ST). A Canyon Wren in Yellow House Canyon, *Lubbock*, in January and February was the first there in 10 years (*fide* DS). The most interesting of scattered Winter Wren records were in G.M.N.P. in late December (ML) and in *Randall* in January (KS *et al.*). Golden-crowned Kinglet was an exception to the lack of winter visitors; the species was widely reported as being more numerous than usual.



Female Mountain Bluebird at Anzalduas Park, Texas, February 13, 1991. The species is very rare in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Photograph/Shawneen Finnegan.

1989-1990 lulled observers to sleep: None of the reports this winter was accompanied by any documentation. Folks, this is still a *very rare* species in Texas!! American Robins were abundant in n. and central Texas but they mostly stopped short of s. Texas. There were 3 reports of Varied Thrush: A hard-to-find bird at Bentsen in December

(TP, R & LG, m.ob.), a Dec. 15 report in Lubbock (MN, NO), and a bird in Chambers Feb. 2 onward (JW *et al.*).

Unusual late records of Gray Catbird included single birds in Garland and G.M.N.P. in late December. A Sage Thrasher Dec. 29 provided *Palo Pinto* with its 2nd record (EW *et al.*). Cedar Waxwings were much more abundant in the e. Hill Country than normal: An uncountable swirling flock that covered a half-acre expanse over the berry-laden cedars w. of Austin in late February was particularly impressive (CS). A single N. Shrike, in Palo Duro Canyon Dec. 20, was reported (MP).

VIREOS TO TANAGERS

Solitary Vireos were newsworthy in Dog Canyon Dec. 29 (SW), Edgewood, *Van Zandt*, Dec. 19 (RK), and at nearby Wills Point Jan. 1 (JC). Before he started on his gull tear, Dunn turned up a *Virginia's Warbler* at Santa Ana Jan. 3. This first documented wintering *Virginia* for Texas remained through the period and was seen by many. Kelly Bryan found and photographed a *Lucy's Warbler* at Big Bend Ranch Jan. 6, also a first documented winter occurrence in Texas and one of very few in the United States. Other noteworthy lingering warblers included a ♂ *Yellow* at Ft. Bliss Dec. 3-7 (first *El Paso* winter record; BZ), a possible *Grace's* Feb. 22 in Boerne (SWi), a *Prairie* in Sinton Dec. 8-10 (M & LS, CC), a *Palm* in Longview Jan. 13 (KN), a *Black-and-white* in Nacogdoches Dec. 16 (DW), two *Prothonotaries* on CBCs on the U.T.C., and a *Louisiana Waterthrush* at Lost Maps Dec. 12 (DMu).

Pine Warbler received the most mention as being extra abundant. Among extralimital reports of this species were a first *Kleberg* record Jan. 13 (N & PP), a first *Concho Valley* record Feb. 20 (DT), one in *Rio Grande Village* Feb. 24 (undocumented in the *Trans-Pecos*; R & JRo), and a 3rd winter record in *Midland* Jan. 19-27 (J & DMe, m.ob.). *Western Tanagers* made scattered news. At interior locations, they were reported on the *L. Livingston* and *Burnet* CBCs. A few more

were on coastal and s. Texas CBCs, another was at *Laguna Atascosa* Jan. 2 (*fide* ST), and a final individual was at *San Marcos* Jan. 11 (DH).

GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES

A *Black-headed Grosbeak*, not expected in e. Texas in any season, appeared at *Lake Texana* Feb. 21 (RM). Small numbers of *Blue Grosbeaks* were reported along the *Rio Grande* from *Del Rio* to the *Big Bend* region through the season. As many as 26 *Varied Buntings* along with one *Painted Bunting* were reported in early December at *Big Bend Ranch* (KB); we just don't know what to expect in that area!

If sparrows seemed sparse in some parts of central and s. Texas, blame verdant w. Texas where many observers reported huge concentrations, especially in *Big Bend*. *Lark Buntings* were likewise concentrated by the thousands in that area, while in other parts of the normal range the species seemed uncommon. The most northerly of our regular wintering sparrows, the *Am. Tree Sparrow*, was also more numerous in its usual haunts. One at *Hagerman* Jan. 26 (KN) was a rare find as was one in *Dog Canyon* Dec. 29 (SW). At the latter locality and date, a *Field Sparrow* was also an excellent find (SW). *Vesper Sparrows* seemed plentiful on the U.T.C. (WRi, m.ob.). Two *Lark Sparrows* near *Amarillo* Dec. 9-15 represented only the 2nd winter record on the caprock (HH, KS). Over 200 *Grasshopper Sparrows* wintered in one area of *Karnes* (DMu), while two *Grasshoppers* in *El Paso* Jan. 9 were the first there in several years (BZ). *Henslow's Sparrow* disappeared from e. Texas in the 1980s. A glimmer of hope, at least for wintering populations, was provided by 5 records this season: One was in *Nacogdoches* Dec. 14-16 (DW); another found at *Jones Creek* on the *Freeport* CBC stayed through Jan. 21 (MG, JGo, m.ob.); one was at *Attwater* Dec. 19; two near *Ore City*, *Upsbur*, on the *L. O' Pines* CBC remained into mid-January (MP *et al.*); and as many as three were found in *Chambers* Feb. 24 through the end of the

period (RU *et al.*).

Most exciting was an imm. **Golden-crowned Sparrow** discovered at the base of the *Franklin Mts.* in n. *El Paso* Dec. 31 (JS). Another imm. *Golden-crowned* visited a feeder n. of *Amarillo* in *Potter* from early December through the period (TMa). One *McCown's Longspur*, the rarest of the four longspurs in n.c. Texas, mingled with 200 *Laplans* in n.w. Ft. Worth during december (CH, m.ob.). *Laplans* became scarce after December in that area, but *Smith's Longspurs* closed in on all-time highs at *L. Tawakoni* in January with 320 counted Jan. 1 (m.ob.). On the same day, an impressive 82 *Smith's* were tallied on the *Longview* CBC. In addition, 150 or more *Smith's* were found in several fields in *Hunt* (MWh) and a flock of 95 was in the *Caddo grasslands* of *Fannin* Dec. 18 (CH *et al.*).

The only exceptions to the general lack of *Purple Finches* were found locally in n.c. Texas where observers in *Johnson* (CE) and at *L. Tawakoni* (*fide* CH) felt the species had never been more numerous!

About 30 *Red Crossbills* remaining in *Midland* from Christmas through the end of the period provided only the 3rd record in nearly 40 years there (D & AK, *fide* FW). A ♂ *Lesser Goldfinch* at *L. Tanglewood*, *Randall*, Dec. 9 (TJo) furnished only the 5th winter sighting in that area. At the same locale, *Johnson* later

S.A.

Following an increase in n. Texas noted the previous fall, *House Finches* staged an unprecedented invasion all over n.c. and e. Texas (m.ob.). The list of localities where the species was reported is simply too long to recite. The species was virtually everywhere in small to moderate numbers. They arrived in s.e. Texas with the cold snap of Dec. 22. On the U.T.C., where the first *House Finch* was carefully documented just a few years ago, dozens, perhaps hundreds, were found from *Jefferson* down to *Matagorda* and all points in between. This was the most conspicuous event in a season without other notable incursions.

reported the season's only *Evening Grosbeaks*, a flock of 200 Feb. 28.

Addendum: A specimen collected in August 1980 on *Padre I., Kleberg*, and now in the *Welder Wildlife Foundation* collection (W.W.F. No. 2270) was recently identified as a **Greater Shearwater** (CS, GL), providing only the 2nd specimen and 4th documented Texas record of the species.

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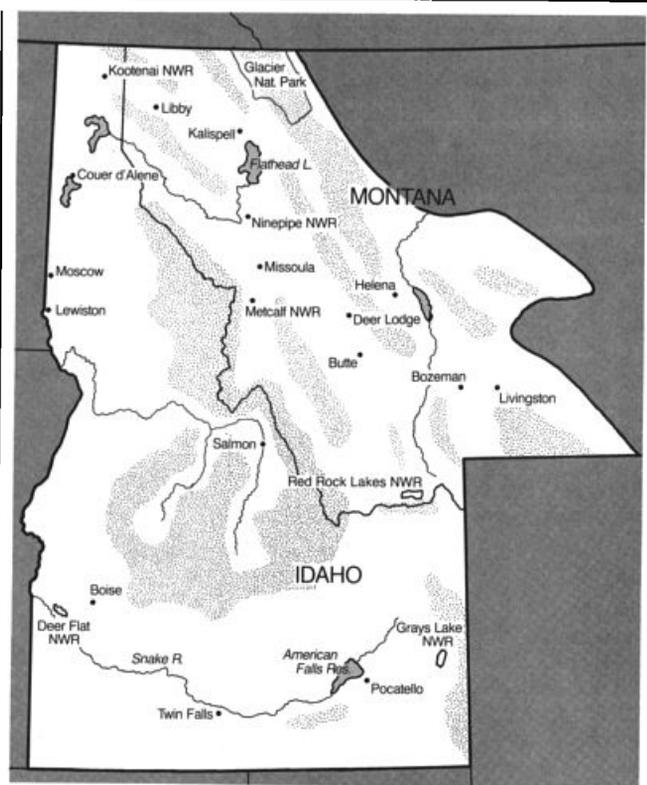
IDAHO-WESTERN MONTANA REGION

Thomas H. Rogers

December weather at first was quite normal but during the third week it plunged the Region into the deep freeze, with temperatures in many places dropping into the -20s F, and at Helena, MT, to -35 degrees and Polebridge, MT, to -51 degrees! Another subzero spell occurred during the last week which, in western Montana and southern Idaho, continued into the first week of January. Elsewhere, January temperatures were about normal. By contrast, February was decidedly warm, generally averaging at least 10 degrees above normal. Precipitation was generally low, especially in February, which was notably dry. The principal effect of the abnormal weather pattern was that spring migration tended to be early in many areas. In spite of the extreme cold of late December, in general reporters considered the winter mild, encouraging some normally nonwintering birds to remain.

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A Pacific Loon was sighted on the Snake R. below C.J. Strike Dam, ID (DT, ST), and one was on Pend Oreille L., ID, in November and December, along with a Yellow-billed Loon (EAC). Arrowrock Res., *Elmore*, ID, had a Com. Loon Dec. 14 (DT), and one was on Flathead L., *Flathead*, Dec. 2 (DC). Four Commons were found on Coeur d'Alene L. Dec. 13 (SF, PL, BT, BW). Thirty Horned and 12 Western grebes were on Flathead L. at Somers, MT, Dec. 8 (DC). Two of the former were on the Clearwater R. at Lewiston, ID, Jan. 27 (C.B.). A few Double-crested Cormorants lingered on L. Lowell, Deer Flat N.W.R., Nampa, ID, until mid-December (DT). Two or three Great Blue Herons were present at Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, ID, most of



the winter.

Several Tundra Swans wintered on Coeur d'Alene L., n. ID (SHS) and the species returned to Kootenai N.W.R. in late February (JJR). About 350 Trumpeter Swans were captured on the Henrys Fork in Harriman S.P., ID, and at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., Lima, MT, by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and moved to Bruneau Sand Dunes S.P. and Spring Cr. on Ft. Hall Res. north of Pocatello, ID. This was done to provide the birds with food, as the aquatic vegetation at the capture areas had been seriously overgrazed.

Fort Boise W.M.A., *Canyon*, ID, counted 70 Greater White-fronted Geese Feb. 8 and 1300 Feb. 26; 36 were at Deer Flat N.W.R. about Feb. 20 (DT). Snow Geese at Ft. Boise numbered 100 and several hundred flew over there very high Mar. 3 (*vide* DHJ). Two Snow Geese were on the Snake at Lewiston Jan. 9 (BA); a pair was on Thompson L., *Kootenai*, ID, Feb. 28 (JN), and L. Lowell had two the 2nd week of December (DT). Two Ross' Geese accompanied a flock of Snow Geese heading N near American Falls Res., s.e. Idaho, Feb. 23 (CHT) and two were on a Lewiston pond

Jan. 30-31 (JM, JK). "A rough estimate of 17,000 (Canada Geese) on American Falls Res. illustrates that they are doing well and provide lots of eagle food. Fortunately, most wounded ones now have steel shot in them" [as opposed to lead shot, which formerly was responsible for much lead poisoning] (CHT). At Kootenai N.W.R. about 500 were present before the freezeup and 300 returned by February's end (JJR).

More than 180 Wood Ducks were on West Pond in Lewiston Jan. 30 (C.B.). Two were seen at Ft. Boise Feb. 8 (DT). Mallards at Kootenai N.W.R. followed a pattern similar to that of the Canadas, except that some may have wintered on the nearby Kootenai R. Several other duck species there returned about 2 weeks earlier than normal (JJR). Several Cinnamon Teal near Springfield, ID, Feb. 23 seemed early (FR). Unusual dates for N. Shovelers were Dec. 9 (one) and Feb. 10 (two) near Pocatello (CHT). Kiwanis Park, Lewiston, had a Eur. Wigeon Jan. 27 (C.B.) and one was on the Coeur d'Alene River W.M.A. near Harrison, ID, Feb. 23 (PG, C.A.S.). Four Greater Scaup accompanied Lessers at Hager-

man W.M.A., ID, Dec. 2 (DT) and two males were with a Lesser at Somers Dec. 8 (DC). A Red-breasted Merganser appeared on American Falls Res. Feb. 5 (CHT) and one was at Deer Flat about Feb. 22 (DT).

RAPTORS

An early pair of Ospreys was found near St. Maries, ID, Feb. 23 (PG, C.A.S.). The Missouri R. and Reservoir complex just e. of Helena, MT, had a peak Bald Eagle count of 264 in December. The birds congregated there to feed on spawning Kokanee salmon (GH). Idaho's mid-winter eagle count came up with 830 Balds, highest in the last 12 years but with a record low count for northern Idaho (LMB), and 101 Golden. At Deer Flat, Bald Eagle numbers peaked at about 30 in late December (DT). Two were present most of the winter at Kootenai N.W.R. and a peak of eight occurred there in mid-February (JJR). Single birds appeared occasionally at Polebridge, MT (DJO).

An abundance of microtine rodents in w. Montana attracted high numbers of Rough-legged and Red-tailed hawks. Counts of 133 of the former and 63 of the latter were made at Ninepipe N.W.R. in the valley s. of Flathead Lake. The Frenchtown Valley w. of Missoula, MT, also had high numbers (PLW). "Record" numbers of Rough-leggeds in the upper Flathead Valley around Kalispell dwindled sharply after the severe December cold spell, in spite of high vole numbers (DC). A count of 21 was obtained in the Lewiston area Jan. 26 (CV, WH, MK). A Ferruginous Hawk was sighted w. of Bruneau Sand Dunes S.P. Dec. 2 (DT). Three Merlins, one Peregrine, 13 Gyrfalcons (mostly on CBCs), and one Prairie Falcon were reported.

PTARMIGAN TO GULLS

A flock of White-tailed Ptarmigan was sighted all winter in the Schweitzer Ski Basin near Sandpoint, ID (AC, TC, PK, JWP, MJR, LW). Cottonwood Cr. e. of Lewiston had nine Wild Turkeys and one

was on Paradise Ridge near Moscow, ID. Several sightings of turkeys were made in the Farragut S.P.—Coeur d'Alene—St. Maries, ID, area. Sixteen N. Bobwhite were sighted near Rose Lake, ID (LD, SW), for the first record since 1914. Their origin was unknown. Six Mountain Quail were seen at Pollock, ID, Feb. 7 (CV, WH).

Two Sandhill Cranes flew over the Coeur d'Alene—Post Falls, ID, area Feb. 28 (RB). A very late Least Sandpiper appeared at Deer Flat Dec. 4 (DT) and one apparently wintered with Killdeer along the Snake R. above Massacre Rocks S.P. (CHT). Coeur d'Alene had a tremendous gathering of gulls Dec. 13: 800 Ring-billed, 600 California, 700 Herring, eight Thayers, one Glaucous-winged, and four Glaucous (SF, PL, BT, BW). The Polson, MT, dump yielded a Mew Gull Jan. 5 and Feb. 2 (DH, PH, DTr, DW), plus a Glaucous-winged Jan. 26 and a Glaucous Gull Jan. 5 (DH, DTr), the latter a new w. Montana record. Deer Flat had single Herring Gulls Dec. 4 and about Feb. 21 (DT). A Glaucous Gull was sighted at the Portneuf R. mouth near Pocatello Feb. 5 (JT, CHT).

DOVES TO SHRIKES

Two Mourning Doves survived the winter at Helena (MW). A Barn Owl was reported near the Fish & Game hatchery near American Falls, ID, Dec. 8 (*vide* CHT). One was found in Spalding Park, *Nez Perce*, ID, Feb. 2 (C.B.) and the species apparently wintered in the vicinity of Moscow, ID (P.A.S.). A W. Screech-Owl was calling Feb. 8 near Polebridge (DJO). The species is rare in Montana. At Deer Flat, a few used nest boxes throughout the winter (DT). The Polebridge, MT, area had a visit from a N. Hawk Owl Jan. 27 (SG). Single N. Saw-whet Owls were found in the Viola—Potlatch, ID, area (MH) and in Spalding Park (DBr, MK, LL, LP). One was calling along Kinney Cr. s. of Pocatello Feb. 10 (CHT).

A sapsucker, presumably a Red-naped, was spotted in

Pocatello Feb. 8 (NN). Unusual were 12 Horned Larks in the Flathead Valley n. of Somers in December and into January (DC). Four Blue Jays frequented a feeder on the Gifford—Reubens Rd., ID, in early December (LN). One wintered in Pocatello (CHT, JT, P.A.S.); one wintered at a Lewisville, ID, feeder; two frequented a feeder in Arco, ID, Dec. 28 (*vide* CHT), and one appeared in Idaho Falls, ID (P.A.S.).

Arrowrock Res., *Elmore*, ID, had a Canyon Wren Dec. 14 (DT). Early Mt. Bluebirds were appearing in the Missoula area in late February (PLW). Springfield had one female Dec. 16 (CHT). A Hermit Thrush was found at Pocatello Dec. 17 (CHT). Several Am. Robins had appeared by Feb. 13 in the Eureka—Rexford, MT, area (WW). Missoula had a Varied Thrush Jan. 19 (WK) and spring migrants were arriving in late February there. Four Am. Pipits were sighted at Deer Flat Dec. 4 (DT) and three were in the Frenchtown Valley Feb. 20 (DH). Some 900 Bohemian Waxwings were sighted at Coeur d'Alene L. Dec. 13 (PL *et al.*) and a "huge flock" was reported at Hells Gate S.P. s. of Lewiston Jan. 8–9 (BA). Early Loggerhead Shrikes were sighted Feb. 16 near Pocatello (CHT) and Feb. 22 near Springfield (DB).

WARBLERS TO FINCHES

A Yellow-rumped Warbler was found at Missoula during CBC week (*vide* PLW). Single Rufous-sided Towhees were sighted in Lewiston Orchards, ID, Jan. 4 (OM) and at a Viola, ID, feeder Jan. 1–18 (JH, MH). One at Coeur d'Alene Feb. 25 may have been an early migrant (WK, RK). American Tree Sparrows were reported mostly from s. Idaho. One at a feeder at Devil's Slide n. of Gardiner, MT, Dec. 20 was worthy of note (JQ). A White-throated Sparrow came to a feeder in the Coeur d'Alene vicinity Dec. 7–Jan. 6 (RB). One near Helena in mid-December apparently was the 2nd ever reported for that vicinity (TB, EB). One to two White-

throated Sparrows and one Harris' Sparrow at Devil's Slide Dec. 1–Feb. 28 were apparently the latilong's first (JQ, TM). The latter species was reported near Star, ID, in January (CW). A White-throated Sparrow visited a Culdesac, ID, feeder Dec. 1–Feb. 15 and a Harris' was there Dec. 1–Feb. 1 (WH, HH). One White-throated was along the Gifford—Reubens Rd. Dec. 8 (RG, WH, CV). The Swamp Sparrow at Missoula stayed through December and January, disappeared in early February, and reappeared Mar. 11 (PLW).

A flock of Lapland Longspurs appeared near Pablo, MT, Jan. 5 & 25 (DH, DTr) and a small flock was mixed with Snow Buntings at Black's Creek Res. e. of Boise Jan. 1 (DT). Snow Buntings were sighted in the Blackfoot Valley n.e. of Missoula. A W. Meadowlark reported near Fortney, MT, Feb. 9 was Weydemeyer's earliest record in 71 years' observing there.

"Gray-crowned" Rosy Finches were more commonly reported at feeders in the upper Flathead Valley than in most winters. At least 20 Rosy Finches roosted in rimrock near Lucky Peak Dam s.e. of Boise (DT) and up to 300 birds, including all three forms, visited feeders in the Devil's Slide vicinity (JQ). In a flock of some 400 Rosy Finches at Miller Cr. s. of Missoula in late December, "Hepburn's" outnumbered the "Gray-crowned" about two to one (HK). Pine Grosbeaks were mentioned only for Polebridge, early in the winter (DJO), and for the Coeur d'Alene area (SHS).

House Finches at Devil's Slide, MT, were apparently the first ever for the latilong (JQ). They dominated a Somers feeder during December, but Cassin's exceeded them in numbers there by the end of the report period (DC). The latter were reported for the Coeur d'Alene vicinity (SHS) and at Polebridge Feb. 18 (DJO). Red Crossbills were little reported. Common Redpolls were mentioned only for the Helena area, where they were common (GH). One or

two Pine Siskins and a few Am. Goldfinches visited a feeder at Devil's Slide, MT (JQ, TM), and the latter species was also reported for the Coeur d'Alene vicinity (SHS). Evening Grosbeaks occurred in record numbers in Lincoln, MT, where a feeder n.w. of Eureka was visited regularly by several hundred birds (WW). Many small flocks frequented the Lewiston area and up to 40 visited a feeder at Devil's Slide (JQ).

Addendum: A flight of 270 W. Grebes occurred at Murphy L. near Fortine in late May, 1990 (WW). An imm. Ruddy Turnstone was described at Sandpoint's city beach Oct. 4, 1990, as was an ad. Arctic Tern accompanying 26 Com. Terns Sept. 30, 1990 (EAC, KC).

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MOUNTAIN WEST REGION

Hugh E. Kingery

Weather this season had an observable effect on bird movements in the Mountain West. Mild fall weather continued until December 18; then sub-zero temperatures arrived and continued unabated for seven to ten days. Even at Las Vegas the temperature dropped to 7° F December 23, and stayed in the low teens for several nights. In southwestern Utah, observers found sapsuckers dead beneath trees. Many Utah stations reported the coldest December in 35 years. The printout of Regional observations shows dozens of late records in early December, all ceasing on December 18.

Many birds had lingered with the mild fall temperatures, but the abrupt cold either drove them out or did them in; few half-hardy vagrants and waterfowl persisted after the abrupt cold.

OPEN WATER

Many species lingered far later than usual. Species recorded up to Dec. 15 (the 2nd day of the first CBC weekend) included: Pacific Loon, Com. Loon, W. Grebe, Am. White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant,

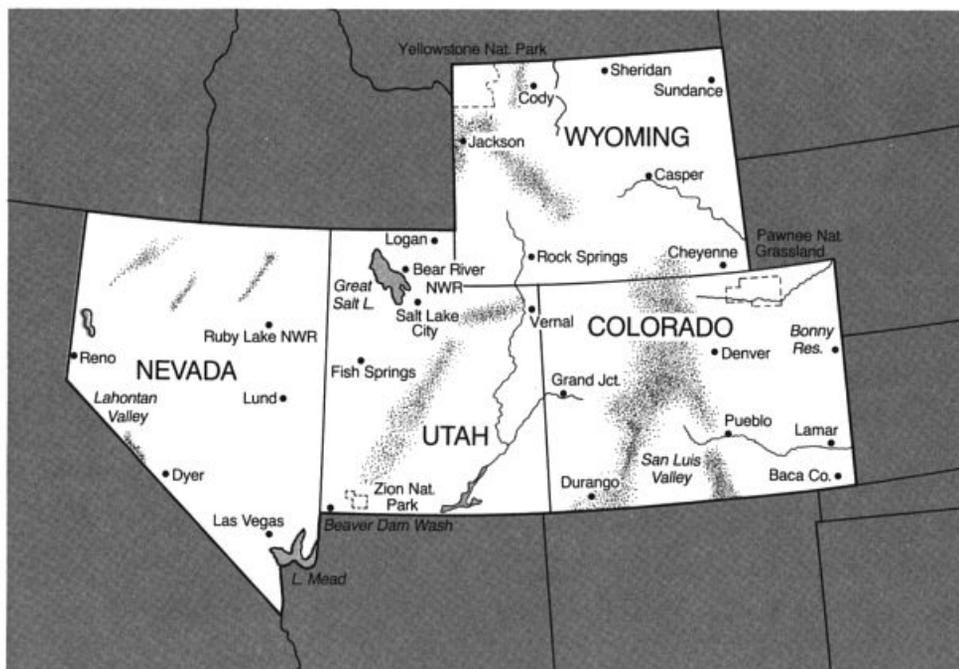
Tundra Swan (125–300 seen migrating at Stillwater and Ruby Lakes N.W.R., NV, and Casper, WY, and even two at Yellowstone Dec. 5), Snow Goose, Sora, and Bonaparte's Gull (including 100 at Pueblo, CO, Dec. 1—A.V.A.S.). Most of these birds disappeared when the below-zero weather arrived Dec. 17. Utah's first Lesser Black-backed Gull, however, came in January. Mildness led land birds too to linger until the sub-zero onslaught: a W. Kingbird at Moab, UT, to Dec. 15, Winter Wrens, Orange-crowned, Cape May, and Yellow-rumped warblers, Utah's first N. Parula, an oriole at Loveland, CO. The four Le Conte's Sparrows that provided Colorado's second record were found Dec. 2, but they survived the cold unfazed; observers saw at least three of them in March.

Abbreviations: I.P.W.B.C. (*Indian Peaks, CO, Winter Bird Count*); L/L/B/L (*Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records*); S.S.G.L. (*South Shore, Great Salt Lake*); † (*written description on file with R.E.*); †† (*written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state or local records committee*). This report omits most observations from Christmas Bird Counts, as the *American Birds* CBC issue covers those thoroughly.

LOONS TO DUCKS

Red-throated and Pacific loons reported in fall stayed into early December at Las Vegas, Pueblo, Denver, and Longmont, CO. Common Loons wintered in Colorado for the first time, one each at Grand Junction and Rawhide (G.V.A.S., F.C.A.S.). Observers found them in January at Las Vegas, Reno, and s.w. Utah. A **Yellow-billed Loon**—Colorado's 7th—also wintered at Rawhide, and was seen usually in the company of the wintering Com. Loon (††F.C.A.S.).

At Yellowstone a U.S.F. & W.S. aerial survey counted 680 Trumpeter Swans Dec. 6, but only 75 on Feb. 7. Fifteen Trumpeters wintered at Ruby L., and of 24 released at Fish Springs, 14 wintered. A Trumpeter at Boulder, CO, stayed with a Tundra Dec. 9–16, for convenient comparisons (BK). The winter produced twice as many reports of Greater White-fronted Geese as any recent one; they included 16 found Jan. 9–22 at Stillwater (WH) and 18 in February at Fallon, NV, Ft. Collins, and Bonny Res., CO. Snow Geese had started to return in February, with 8000 already in s.e. Colorado Feb. 1 (D.F.O.) and 8500 at Carson L., NV, Feb. 25 (AJ, LN). Three wintered in the Las Vegas area (MC). Henry surveyed 5132 Canada Geese in the Lahontan Valley, NV, and



found 69% were Lessers (*B. c. taverneri*), 31% Honkers (*B. c. moffitti*), and 13 (0.3%) Cacklers (*B. c. minima*).

To minimize avian cholera, Monte Vista N.W.R. turned off all pumped and regular artesian wells. The resultant freezeup reduced overcrowding. Wintering Mallards dropped from 16,000 to 6500, and mortality dropped significantly from previous winters. The composition of wintering ducks at L/L/B/L shifted dramatically from last year: 1837 dabblers this winter, cf. 3887 last year, and 1932 diving ducks this winter sextupled last year's 346 (including 7 times as many Com. Mergansers). Canada Geese also increased, threefold. The D.F.O. tallied a similar drop in dabblers, with 1040, 28% lower than the lowest count in the previous 6 years. At Fish Springs and Ruby L., a few Cinnamon Teal wintered. The Eur. Wigeon found at Reno in November stayed through Feb. 3 (JT). Another was reported from Sheldon N.W.R. in n.w. Nevada Dec. 12 (†D & BS). Coloradans counted 13 Greater Scaup, including six at Colorado City Feb. 28. The 13 Oldsquaws (more than ever recorded in the Region in any season) included three that wintered at Provo, one at Las Vegas Feb. 8, two in Casper Jan. 21 and Feb. 25, and five in e. Colorado. White-winged Scoters were at Pyramid L., NV, Dec. 9 (†JW, †DBo) and Grand Jct., CO, Dec. 5 (CD).

RAPTORS

At Cedar City, UT, 150 Bald Eagles wintered, up slightly (SH), and a peak of 30 plied the South Shore of Great Salt L. The Bald Eagle roost count at Rocky Mt. Arsenal, CO, peaked at 38 Jan. 27 (DR). Band numbers on a Bald at Fairfield, UT, revealed that it was at least 14 years old: banded as an adult in 1981 at Glacier N.P., MT, it wintered that year in Fairfield, and nested in the Northwest Territories, Canada—data courtesy of radio telemetry (BWa).

Regionwide, commentators referred to low numbers of Rough-legged Hawks: e.g., 30% of normal at Cedar City, UT, eight on D.F.O. trips (a 6-year range of three to 25). The exception occurred at the n.



Gyrfalcon in Weld County, Colorado, December 2, 1990.
Photograph/Brian K. Wheeler.

edge of the Region—31 Rough-leggeds at Sheridan, WY, Jan. 9 (HD). The Region had a remarkable three Gyrfalcons: the usual Sheridan record, Jan. 1 (†MHu), plus one east of Casper seen Jan. 30 and Feb. 10 (†J & VH) and a juvenile gray morph bird that wintered in Weld, CO (ph. BW, m.ob.). Colorado bird watchers rarely find Gyrs, but falconers in the state claim they occur regularly—enough so that in 1989 they persuaded the Wildlife Commission to permit trapping Gyrs for falconry.

CRANES TO Doves

Sandhill Cranes had arrived in the San Luis Valley by Feb. 28—7500 along with at least two Whooping Cranes. Stillwater Ref., by Feb. 28, had a fan-



Adult Mew Gull [standing on the tall whitewashed rock] surrounded by Ring-billed Gulls east of Reno, Nevada, January 10, 1991.
Photograph/Jane Thompson.

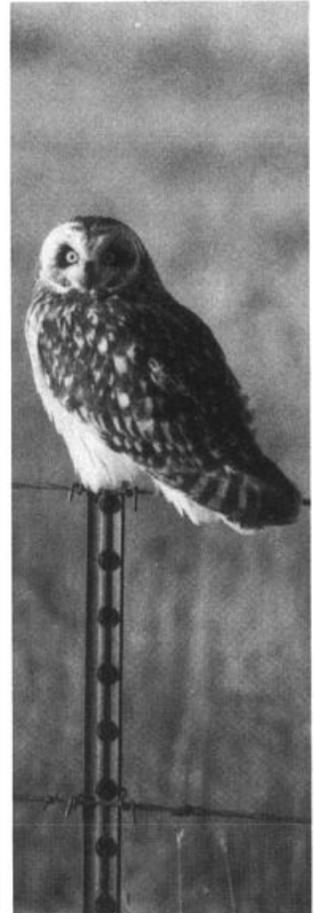
tastic 1400 Am. Avocets (WH). Eight to 11 Greater Yellowlegs wintered at Fish Springs and one was at Logan, UT, Feb. 17 (LR). At S.S.G.L. several errant shorebirds appeared in January: five Greater Yellowlegs Jan. 4, four to five peeps Jan. 22–23, and one Dunlin Jan. 4–Feb. 5 (CK, ES, JV, TS).

December Bonaparte's Gulls included one in Lahontan Valley Dec. 12 (AJ, LN). Reno had its 3rd Mew Gull in 3 years Jan. 10 (†CS, ph. JT). It also had high numbers of Herring Gulls—50 Jan. 6–12, as did Pueblo (62 on Dec. 31), L/L/B/L (80 cf. 3 last year), and Denver (115 on D.F.O. trips). Utah garnered its first Lesser Black-backed Gull Jan. 25 at Salt Lake City. It exhibited all characters of a classic adult except for a smudge on its bill, as it posed in the same binocular view with Ring-billed, California, and Herring gulls (†CK, †ES). A few Glaucous Gulls wintered—one at Reno provided the 3rd n. Nevada record (†CS, ph. JT). Four wintered at Salt Lake City dumps (ES *et al.*), and e. Colorado reported four.

A few Mourning Doves survived the sub-zero December to winter in the Fort Collins area, including 10 seen at Windsor Jan. 19. Two Inca Doves in Washington Feb. 4–20 gave Utah its 8th record (SH, BD, TS).

OWLS TO FLICKERS

Observers found 26 Long-eared Owls, including 13 on 5 dates at Grand Jct. Reports of Short-eared Owls increased slightly;



Short-eared Owl in Weld County, Colorado, in January 1991. One of about four individuals seen regularly by birders seeking the wintering Gyrfalcon in the area.
Photograph/Janis Steenberg.

six of the 24 were seen at Berthoud, CO, Jan. 24. On Cameron Pass, CO, Feb. 28, the full moon inspired five to

S.A.

Silverman commented that he and Bridges concur that "Eastern Screech-Owls as well as Westerns occur in [the Pueblo area]. I heard one in Rye, CO, Mar. 15, 1981, identified by a long trill on one note repeated for several minutes. Dave Johnson heard a similar call in Pueblo Aug. 19, 1990. On Feb. 2, 1985, I had a gray screech-owl on my porch with a solid yellowish-ivory bill which, if diagnostic, makes it an Eastern. While Westerns are clearly the majority in Pueblo County, I feel Easterns are here too, and there is an overlap of ranges in s.e. Colorado." Observers have also reported both species in *Baca s.e.* of Pueblo.

eight Boreal Owls to call (RR). At Yellowstone, four N. Sawwhets responded to a tape on Feb. 25 (TM).

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker wintered in a Fort Collins cemetery (ph. DL). Another was reported from Canon City, CO, but without a description. In our Region, winter sapsuckers probably are more likely Yellow-bellied than Red-naped, but until we establish their status more definitely, each winter sapsucker needs a written description so that we can evaluate the reports. The ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker at Las Vegas Jan. 24 gave the Region its first January record in recent years (MC). Woodpeckers increased substantially in L/L/B/L, with 85 Downies and 154 N. Flickers (39 and 84 last year); D.F.O. had 91 flickers, in a 6-year range of 39–131.

LARKS TO KINGLETS

Despite a lack of snow cover, Horned Larks were conspicuous. The Nunn (Pawnee Grassland) CBC counted 8404, up from the previous high of 7779 in 1975.

Very early Tree Swallows arrived—one Feb. 11 at Fallon and three Feb. 18 at Fish Springs. Blue Jays strayed W to Salt Lake City Jan. 30, Logan in February, Jackson, WY, from CBC to Feb. 28, and Grand Jct., where one wintered. American Crows have become more noticeable in the Region: 1500–2000 wintered at Cedar City, Las Vegas had 500 Feb. 27, Denver had 500–1000 wintering in the city. A single mob of 83 Com. Ravens swirled over a Jackson, WY, observer on Feb. 13. Although observers found Winter Wrens in early winter from Salt Lake City to Boulder and Fort Collins, no one reported them after Jan. 10. Marsh Wrens wintered at Grand Jct. and Berthoud. A smattering of Golden-crowned Kinglets appeared in the valleys, as in Cedar City and Zion N.P., Reno, Boulder, and Lyons. The Indian Peaks W.B.C. counted 44 on Jan. 5—at 0.4/hour a big increase over the prior high of 0.3/hour.

BLUEBIRDS TO WARBLERS

Eastern Bluebirds have com-

menced a westward movement in the Pueblo area. This year they capped a 10-year increase with a wintering flock that peaked Jan. 5 at 40 birds (A.V.A.S.). Two moved 20 mi farther west to Penrose Feb. 6–14. Mountain Westerners see the Mt. Bluebird as the first spring returnee—even though a few winter in the s. part of the Region. (Pueblo, Cortez, and L/L/B/L reported January observations.) The first ones, greeted with enthusiasm, arrived Feb. 2 at Rocky Mt. Arsenal, Feb. 11+ at Evergreen, CO, and Feb. 12 at Fort Morgan, CO, followed a week later by others at Cody, WY, Ruby L., Casper, and Denver (its first time on a D.F.O. Denver-area winter trip). Four Varied Thrushes all arrived in December; those in Salt Lake City and Grand Jct. spent the winter or most of it, the ones in Reno and John Martin Res., CO, did not.

Bohemian Waxwings streamed South. In n. Wyoming (Jackson and Sheridan) they peaked in December; January saw only a few in Wyoming. To the south, on Jan. 5–6, came counts of 108 from Morgan, UT, 3541 on the I.P.W.B.C., and 200 at Rocky Mountain N.P. A few arrived in Fort Collins at the same time, then burgeoned to 3000+ Jan. 23. Smaller flocks continued through February. Utah reported only a few small flocks in Ogden and Logan, plus one that wandered out to the desert and found Fish Springs Feb. 21 (JE). Southernmost records came from Rye, Salida, and Monte Vista, CO.

Winter warblers in our Region often cause a stir, as two remarkable ones did this year. Fort Collins had a late Orange-crowned Dec. 10 (DL). Utah's first Northern Parula greeted Chanson as he "was awaiting lunch in the Red Iguana Restaurant [in downtown Salt Lake City.] The bird flew to a small deciduous tree (20 feet high) on the sidewalk...I watched the bird through the window for about 5 minutes as it flitted in branches and gleaned for insects. After lunch I retrieved my binoculars from my car and relocated the bird." He noted all the appropriate field marks, as did observers the following

day (†BC, †CK). Prior weather had been mild, a late autumn without frosts. At Colorado City, CO, a Cape May Warbler stayed Dec. 1–11 in an old apple orchard. "The warbler fed on flies and hovered about the apples like a hummingbird sipping nectar" (†DS). Colorado has 15–20 records, including one of a bird that spent the winter at a suburban Denver feeder.

CARDINALS TO FINCHES

A ♀ Northern Cardinal wintered at Sheridan, the first Lati-long record (†HD, ph. EM, A & ML); Wyoming has fewer than 10 records. Sheridan recorded its first wintering Rufous-sided Towhee (†HD). Scarce last winter, Am. Tree Sparrows returned in good numbers: L/L/B/L tallied 630 cf. 220 and D.F.O. counted a record 270 on its field trips; Casper and Grand Jct. also had good numbers. Rare in n. Nevada, single Am. Tree Sparrows were found at Sheldon N.W.R. Dec. 24 and Feb. 16 (B & DS). Bridges found Colorado's most remarkable winter record: four Le Conte's Sparrows, seen from Dec. 2 through Mar. 6 (†SF, †PL m.ob.). This coterie inhabited a reedy/weedy/grassy marsh, typical of their habitat preference, and provided a long-lasting, firm basis for Colorado's 2nd record. Ten or so Swamp Sparrows inhabited the same marsh. White-throated Sparrows strayed west to Las Vegas, Ogden, Logan, and Durango, all in December except the two at Las Vegas. Colorado had one Golden-crowned Sparrow at Pueblo in December (MY, MJ) and one at Denver Jan. 29 and later (RS). The Alaskan breeding range of Lapland Longspurs makes it surprising that they occur so rarely in the Great Basin. This winter two reports came in, one from Fish Springs Jan. 9 (JE) and one from Sheldon N.W.R. Dec. 12 (†B & DS).

In s.e. Colorado on Jan. 6, D.F.O. found 45,000 Red-winged Blackbirds. L/L/B/L reported large numbers—8941 cf. 3262 last winter. The Rusty Blackbird found on the Green River, WY, CBC spent the winter, attending a feeder along

with Red-winged Blackbirds (†RS). A flock of 117 Great-tailed Grackles, the largest yet reported in Colorado, made a cacophony at Las Animas Jan 6 (MJ). Others wintered at St George, UT, and at Cortez for the first time (LB). Brown-headed Cowbirds wintered in Pueblo (100 on Jan. 3) and Fruita, CO. A first-year ♂ N (Bullock's) Oriole came to a Loveland, CO, feeder Dec 16–18, and ate bits of sunflower seeds that other birds had left. On Dec. 19 came a snowstorm, and the bird disappeared (AM).

Rosy Finches descended in their usual numbers, although the 500 at Cody and 400 at Grand Jct. were more than usual (and Grand Junction's flock of 150 mostly Blacks was unusual). The 100 at Sheldon N.W.R. were also unusual, maybe because so few bird watchers visit there (B & DS).

The I.P.W.B.C. counted 101 Pine Grosbeaks, a record high, and Jackson claimed more than usual. One came to a feeder far from the conifers in Green R., WY, during January (LBr). Red Crossbills were locally common—I.P.W.B.C. counted 170, at 1.54/hour a count high. A pair building a nest Jan. 5 at Evergreen had fledged its young by Feb. 28 (RH), as had a pair on Mt. Falcon near Denver Feb. 20 (DL). White-winged Crossbills observed on the I.P.W.B.C. engaged in likely courtship behavior, but no nesting was documented. Near Georgetown, CO, on Feb. 16 was a flock of 45, and two were seen at Yellowstone Feb. 14 (†TM). Only Jackson and Sheridan reported Com. Redpolls.

Almost every observer commented on the absence of Pine Siskins. They did winter in a few reporting places—Cody and Sheridan, the foothills west of Denver—but most observers saw few to none. In contrast, Am. Goldfinches seemed common in some Colorado towns (Penrose, Florence, Fort Collins, L/L/B/L, Cortez, Walsh). Evening Grosbeaks reflected the same pattern as the siskins.

Addendum: For some reason I missed a noteworthy observation from Fontanelle, WY, last

summer: that warbler trap added Wyoming's 2nd Canada Warbler to its list of gems (†FL, RS).

Corrigenda: AB 44 (5): Data on the failed colony at Pathfinder N.W.R. came from WY Game and Fish Dept. (p. 1161, first paragraph). BR, cited on p. 1163 for N. Parula and Mourning Warbler, should have been BRi (Bob Righter).

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SOUTHWEST REGION Arizona

David Stejskal and Gary H. Rosenberg

Despite the heavy rains and subsequent surplus of grasses produced during summer and fall 1990, the anticipated "Big Sparrow Winter" never materialized. What seemed to influence bird populations this season were the generally above-normal temperatures through much of the period. Insectivores, frugivores, and other warmer climate-loving species lingered into December and often beyond, and a number of species arrived in the state somewhat ahead of schedule. A scattering of quality rarities across the state, such as the state's second Mew Gull and Pine Warbler, plus an incredible Aztec Thrush, all combined to further elevate Arizona birders' temperatures.

Abbreviations: A.B.C. (*Arizona Bird Committee*); B.T.A. (*Boyce Thompson Arboretum*); L.C.R. (*Lower Colorado River*); M.F.L. (*Many Farms Lake*); S.P.R. (*San Pedro River*); S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant*); V.O.C. (*Village of Oak Creek*).

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

An impressive three Pacific Loons were found in s.e. Arizona, with one at Sierra Vista

S.T.P. Dec. 17 (JWh) and two in Tucson, the first in n.e. Tucson Nov. 30–Dec. 26 (m.ob.) and the other just s. of the airport Dec. 22 (M. Stevenson). This bird is still exceptionally rare in this part of the state. The only report for Horned Grebe was of a single bird at Willcox Jan. 26 (RM). A W. Grebe, always a surprise in s.e. Arizona at this time of year, was found in Tucson Dec. 22. After last summer's huge invasion of Brown Pelicans, it was not a complete surprise to learn of at least two that lingered into the period: one until Dec. 16 at Ruthrauff Pond in Tucson (PH), almost certainly the same bird across the Santa Cruz R. at Silverbell L. Dec. 21, and another through the period at the Bill Williams arm of L. Havasu (m.ob.). Only one report was received of Olivaceous Cormorant, an immature at Kino Springs Dec. 23–Mar. 1 (m.ob.). Unusual for both locality and date was a Least Bittern at the Gila Farms Pond s. of Phoenix Nov. 26 (C. Clark).

A few Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks again wintered with six at the Avondale S.T.P. through the period (m.ob.) and two at the Sierra Vista S.T.P. Dec. 18 (*vide* DK). A flock of up to 21, an unusually high number for winter, was present through the period at the Phoenix Zoo (m.ob.). Three Tundra Swans, about an average number, were located in c. Arizona with one at Granite Reef Dam e. of Phoenix Dec. 25 (M. Deprest), an immature at Alamo L. Jan. 3

(TC), and another at Peck's L. Jan. 24–Mar. 4 (VG *et al.*). Greater White-fronted Geese away from the L.C.R. included six to seven at Willcox Dec. 26–Feb. 13 (J. O'Brien *et al.*), and another in Scottsdale Jan. 21 through February (JiB, DR, RN *et al.*). Single Snow Geese were observed at Avondale S.T.P. Dec. 11–23 (BD, JW, RN), Granite Reef Dam Dec. 30–Jan. 13 (SGa), and Peck's L. Jan. 10 (VG). More surprising were four more along with two Ross' Geese at M.F.L. Dec. 8 (CL). Both of these species are quite rare in n.e. Arizona. Other Ross' around the state included one near McNeal Dec. 1 (GHR *et al.*), one w. of Tucson Jan. 10 (J. Druick), and as many as five in Scottsdale Jan. 21 through the period (JiB, DR, RN).

One to two ♂ Eur. Wigeons wandered between McCormick Ranch, the Phoenix Zoo, and Papago Park through all of December and January (m.ob.), and another was reported without documentation from Sun City in early December (*vide* SGa). An apparent ♂ Eurasian X American Wigeon was present much of the period at Kino Springs and Guevavi Ranch near Nogales (m.ob., ph. CDB). Rare winter duck species reported included a ♀ Greater Scaup at the Gila Farms Pond Dec. 19 (CB), a ♀ Oldsquaw reported without details from Lee's Ferry, Colorado R., Dec. 10 (*vide* CL), and a White-winged Scoter at the Chandler S.T.P. Dec. 6–10 (H. Willoughby *et al.*).



VULTURES TO GULLS

Three Black Vultures were seen s.w. of Phoenix Jan. 21 (A. Spencer). There have been few records in this part of the state in recent years. A Turkey Vulture near Sierra Vista Feb. 23 was a bit early (JWh). The only Black-shouldered Kite for the season was a lone bird near Buckeye Dec. 20 (*vide* DT). Is this bird on its way out after invading the state only 9 years ago? If observers are continuing to see this bird in Arizona, please let us know about it!

At least one and possibly two imm. N. Goshawks were found on the upper S.P.R. near Hereford Dec. 18 (*vide* DK) and again 8 mi n. of there Feb. 26 (DK). Another immature was reported from Patagonia Jan. 5 (TC); this species is always unexpected in the lowlands of s.e. Arizona. Surprising was a Harris' Hawk, n. of its usual Arizona range, at Cottonwood Jan. 11 (VG). The 3rd Red-shouldered Hawk reported for the Fall/Winter period came from w. Tucson Feb. 2 (JK). An ad. "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was seen by numerous observers near McNeal through most of the period. This race is infrequently reported from Arizona.

Intriguing was the presence of one, and possibly as many as three, *Whooping Cranes* in the Sulphur Springs Valley at least Jan. 16–Feb. 10 (JWh, R. Woodroof, JiB). The origin of this bird(s) would almost certainly be the Grays L., ID, foster parent flock which normally winters in New Mexico.

Almost unprecedented was the lingering of a single Willet at the Gila Farms Pond to at least Dec. 23 (RN, SGa *et al.*). There is only one previous December record for the state: three birds in Phoenix Dec. 27, 1969. Western Sandpiper was recorded from several localities in the Phoenix and Tucson areas with one to two at the Avondale S.T.P. through the period (m.ob.), as many as five at the nearby El Mirage Rd. Pond Dec. 23 (RN), two at the Gila Farms Pond Jan. 12 (TC), and two more at the Snyder Hill S.T.P. Jan. 19–Feb. 24 (PH). A Com. Snipe, rarely reported from n.e. Arizona in mid-winter, was found at M.F.L. Dec.



Mew Gull in first-winter plumage at Lake Havasu City, Arizona, February 25, 1991. Second documented state record. Photograph/ Joseph G. Hentz.

30–Jan. 1 (CL). Remarkably, the Wilson's Phalarope that remained through fall at Ruthrauff Pond, Tucson, lingered at least until *March*, providing the first overwintering record for the state (m.ob.).

Exciting was the discovery of a first-winter Mew Gull at L. Havasu City Feb. 25–Mar. 9 (JK, m.ob.; ph. CB, D. Treadway, J. Hentz). This is only the 2nd verified state record, the other involving four birds at Davis Dam in March and April 1979. An ad. Bonaparte's Gull was an unusual find at Tucson Jan. 26 (PH). A real rarity at any time of year, a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake put in an appearance at Kayenta Dec. 1–8 (ph. CL) for n.e. Arizona's first report.



Black-legged Kittiwake in first-winter plumage at Kayenta, Arizona, December 6, 1990. First record for northeastern Arizona. Photograph/Chuck LaRue.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

An Inca Dove at Tapco, Verde R. Valley, Jan. 12 was considered a casual straggler from the south (VG). Following the male seen here during the fall, at least two Ruddy Ground-Doves were again seen sporadically most of the period on the upper S.P.R. near the Highway 90 bridge with a female there Dec. 18 (TG, DK), and a male and female there Feb. 16–25 (DK). Arizona records continue to accumulate. Primary feathers of a Barn Owl were picked up 13 mi s. of Tonalea near Tuba City Feb. 9 (CL); there are few records for this part of the state.

Only a handful of winter records of Violet-crowned Hummingbird exist for the state, so one at a feeder in Bisbee Dec. 9 through the period was very interesting (JWh). Early ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbirds included one at a feeder in Sedona Feb. 20 (G. Robinson), and another the next day at Ramsey Canyon (JWh). Very late was a *Selasphorus* hummingbird, reported as a Rufous, in W. Sedona Dec. 16 (E. Keefe). At least five Green Kingfishers were reported for the period with single females at the upper S.P.R., Sonoita Cr., and Nogales (m.ob.), a male on the upper S.P.R. Dec. 9 (DK), and yet another from Arivaca L. n.w. of Nogales Feb. 3 (W. Clark).

Lewis' Woodpeckers, sparse in s.e. Arizona outside of invasion years, were near Hereford on the upper S.P.R. Dec. 11 and near Elfrida Jan. 16 (both JWh). Much rarer at any time of year, single Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported from M.F.L. Dec. 30–Jan. 12 (CL), and s.w. of Phoenix Feb. 23 (DR). As we have stated previously, details or photos should accompany all reports of this species.

FLYCATCHERS TO VIREOS

Single E. Phoebes, rare but regular visitors, were discovered at Empire Cienega near Sonoita Dec. 11 (TC), and near St. David Jan. 3 (DK). One or two Greater Pewees are generally detected in the state during the winter, with this season's coming from s.w. of Phoenix Dec. 8 (CB). A Hammond's Flycatcher

at Cook's L., lower S.P.R., was a new wintering locality for this sparse winter resident (GM).

A pair of Am. Dippers building a nest in Casner Canyon, Sycamore Wilderness Area, on the early date of Feb. 21 was extraordinary (W. Gunning). Records of Golden-crowned Kinglets in the lowlands of Arizona in non-invasion years are few, so six at Camp Cr. n. of Phoenix Jan. 26 were noteworthy (TC). It would have been interesting to have determined the subspecies of these birds.

Unusual in n.e. Arizona at this time of year were a single Hermit Thrush at M.F.L. Jan. 1, and three others at Moenave near Tuba City Jan. 27 (both CL). A total wonder was the discovery of an ad. ♂ Aztec Thrush feeding on *Pyracantha* berries with a flock of Am. Robins at Portal, Chiricahua Mts., Jan. 25–Feb. 3, marking the first winter record of this casual vagrant from the mountains of Mexico (ph. C. Rau; †D. & T. Powell *et al.*)! One N. Shrike was observed near Mormon L. s. of Flagstaff mid-December to Jan. 11 (JC *et al.*), and a total of nine was counted through the period in n.e. Arizona between Cow Springs and Dinnehotso (CL). Following suit with the rest of the continent, Loggerhead Shrike numbers appeared to be down this winter in the S.P.R. Valley (*vide* DK). Arizona birders should remain alert for declines of this troubled species. A wintering Solitary Vireo was found at Tapco, Verde R. Valley, Feb. 1 (VG); this species is unusual in winter n. of the Phoenix area.

WARBLERS TO TANAGERS

A very late Tennessee Warbler was discovered near the confluence of the Salt & Verde Rivers e. of Phoenix Dec. 17 (†TC). Sabino Canyon near Tucson hosted one Dec. 2 (WR) and another or the same Dec. 25 (KK, LK), but not between those dates. A N. Parula attempting to overwinter at B.T.A. Jan. 13–31, may have lingered because of an injury (TC). Individual Chestnut-sided Warblers, regular in winter in small numbers during the past 20 years or so, were found s.w. of Phoenix Dec. 12 to early February (BNi), and another



Male Pine Warbler at Mesa, Arizona, January 4, 1991. Second documented record for Arizona. Photograph/Robert A. Witzeman.

was at a Tempe yard Feb. 4 (R. Dummer). Possibly resulting from the milder than usual temperatures across the state, many observers noted that Townsend's Warblers appeared to be much more common than usual in s. Arizona. On an entirely different level was an ad. ♂ Pine Warbler at a feeder in a Mesa yard Dec. 10 through February (M. & S. Hornbaker, m.ob.; ph. RW), providing the state with its 2nd record. Interesting is the fact that the only other record in the state was of a bird attempting to winter also.

As has been customary during recent years, a Louisiana Waterthrush was found at Madera Canyon Feb. 16 into March (PS *et al.*). A very late MacGillivray's Warbler was detected in Chandler Dec. 4 (SGa); there are still very few winter records for this bird in the USA. A Summer Tanager at the Phoenix Zoo Dec. 27 was thought to be a late migrant (R. Jones).

GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES

A ♀ Blue Grosbeak, an extremely sparse wintering bird away from the Patagonia/Nogales area, was near Fairbank, upper S.P.R., Feb. 27 (DK). This was an excellent winter for Lazuli Buntings in s.e. Arizona. Large numbers (possibly hundreds) were present in the Patagonia/Nogales area throughout the period (m.ob.), and a few even lingered along the upper S.P.R. with one

Dec. 18 near the Hwy 90 bridge (*fide* DK), and two more near St. David Feb. 20 (DK). More unusual were three at Dead Horse S.P. near Cottonwood Feb. 17 (VG), among few winter records n. of Phoenix.

A Cassin's Sparrow s. of Big Wash, Falcon Valley, w. of Oracle Feb. 14 was at an odd locality at this time of year (GM). A Five-striped Sparrow census in Sycamore Canyon w. of Nogales Feb. 3 yielded no fewer than 11 birds (SM *et al.*). Whether these birds are present here during colder winters remains to be seen. Good numbers of both Fox and White-throated sparrows were present throughout s.e. Arizona this winter. Three White-throateds were also reported from the n. half of the state, one at Moenave Jan. 27 (CL) and two near Sedona Feb. 25 (S. Clemenz). One Harris' Sparrow in n. Tucson Jan. 7 (JBo) and another there Dec. 23–Jan. 12 (KK, WR), and single Golden-crowned through the period at Portal (m.ob.), at Arivaca Dec. 18 (PS), and at Proctor Rd., lower Madera Canyon, Jan. 26 (JBo) were the only ones reported. Very unusual in s.e. Arizona was a Lapland Longspur in the San Rafael Grasslands s. of Sonoita Jan. 12–13 (†SM, S. Alden *et al.*).

Two Hooded Orioles, sparse in winter, were seen at Tucson Dec. 24 (PS). Another Hooded spent the season at a Tucson feeder (P. Whitley). More exciting were 2 reports of Streak-

backed Oriole with the first, thought to be an imm. female, at Arivaca Dec. 3–18 (†GHR *et al.*), and the 2nd, thought to be an ad. female, at Green Valley Feb. 16 through the end of the period (†PS, S. Mlodinow *et al.*). This species (this individual) has been recorded here in winter for 3 of the last 4 years.

The only Purple Finch reported to us during the season was a single male at Seven Springs n. of Phoenix Jan. 26 (TC). A trickle of Lawrence's Goldfinches made it into the state this year.

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New Mexico

*Sartor O. Williams III
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Abbreviations: Bitter Lake (*Bitter Lake Nat'l Wildlife Ref.*); Bosque Refuge (*Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Ref.*); C.C.N.P. (*Carlsbad Caverns Nat'l Park*); Chih. (*state of Chihuahua, Mexico*); E.B.L. (*Elephant Butte Lake*); L.V.N.W.R. (*Las Vegas Nat'l Wildlife Ref.*); P.O. Canyon (*Post Office Canyon, Peloncillo Mts.*);

R.G.N.C. (*Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque*); T or C (*Truth or Consequences*); Zuni (*Zuni Indian Reservation*). Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A probable Pacific Loon was at Navajo L. Feb. 12 (JH, JV). Notable were 15 Com. Loons at E.B.L. Jan. 26 (JP) and seven in the Brantley L. area Dec. 23 (*fide* SW); singles were at Bluewater L. Dec. 8–18 (DC, SI) and Sumner L. Feb. 19 (LH). One to two probable Horned Grebes were at Bosque Refuge Dec. 2 (LG, CD), E.B.L. Jan. 27 (LG, CD), and Caballo L. Dec. 1 (JP). Notable were six W. Grebes at Navajo L. Feb. 13 (JH, JV), while a local first was a Clark's Grebe at Evans L. Dec. 8–19 (D & MZ, ph. RF). About 2900 *Aechmophorus* grebes, in flocks of 300–1000, were counted at E.B.L. during an aerial survey Jan. 7 (SOW), and these presumably wintered there.

Two to three Am. White Pelicans were at E.B.L. and up to 25 were at Caballo L. through the period (v.o.); seven were in the Brantley L. area Dec. 23 (*fide* SW) and five at Ascension, Chih., Jan. 22–24 (RD, WB). Ninety Olivaceous Cormorants were near T or C Dec. 1 (JP). Single Double-crested were at Bluewater L. in December (DC, SI) and Evans L. Dec. 9 & 11 (RF), plus up to eight in *Eddy* Dec. 22–23 (*fide* SW) and six at Guerrero, Chih., Jan. 29 (RD, WB). One or two Great Blue Herons were already standing on or near nests at Glenwood Feb. 4–6, though not nesting (JH). A Snowy Egret was at Loving Dec. 22 (SW), while several Cattle Egrets were at Mexicanos L., Chih., Jan. 28 (RD, WB).

Three Tundra Swans were at Bosque Refuge Dec. 2 (SOW *et al.*) and one on Feb. 9 (JP, AK). Other probable Tundras were one to three at Ute L. and near Santa Rosa Jan. 8 (SOW), Redrock Jan. 10–13 (AF), Lordsburg Playa Dec. 31 (CS), and Loving Dec. 22 (*fide* SW). Unusual were single Greater White-fronted Geese at Zuni Feb. 24 (ph. DC) and R.G.N.C. Feb. 9 (LG), plus 26 at Sevilleta N.W.R. Dec. 15 (PES); three were at Ascension,

Chih., Jan. 22–24 (RD, WB). A Snow Goose at Rattlesnake Springs, Eddy, Dec. 15 (SW *et al.*) was a local first; a blue-morph Snow was in *Dona Ana* Jan. 10 (BZ), where rare. Ross' Geese were reportedly plentiful at Bitter Lake in December (SBI *et al.*) and moderately common at Bosque Refuge through the period (S & NC *et al.*); others included one at Burn L., *Dona Ana*, Dec. 30 (BZ) and several at Ascension, Chih., Jan. 22–24 (RD, WB). The 12,000 Canada Geese at Clayton L. in the period made a new local high (*fide* WC). Small-bodied Canadas included several at Morgan L., *San Juan*, Feb. 12 (JH, JV), six at R.G.N.C. Feb. 17 (LG), and four at Sevilleta N.W.R. Dec. 15 (PES).

Wood Ducks continued to thrive in the Rio Grande Valley, including highs of 10 at Corrales Dec. 13 (SBa), 96 at Albuquerque Dec. 16 (HS *et al.*), eight at Bosque Refuge Dec. 2 (SOW), and three at Las Cruces Dec. 20 (BZ *et al.*); elsewhere, one was at Tesuque, *Santa Fe*, Jan. 27 (W. Huey), two were at Roswell Dec. 15 (SBI *et al.*), one at Glenwood Feb. 4–5 (JH), and four at Silver City Dec. 15 and Jan. 7 (RF, D & MZ)—with five at nearby Tyrone Feb. 5 (RF). Unusually late were 16 Blue-winged Teal at L.V.N.W.R. Dec. 23 (GB *et al.*) and 25 at Loving Dec. 22 (SW *et al.*). A few Cinnamons remained at Bosque Refuge through January (v.o.), with 13 at Caballo L. Dec. 16 (BZ *et al.*). The November Greater Scaup at R.G.N.C. was still there Jan. 4 (HS); other singles were at Caballo L. Dec. 16 (BZ) and Burn L. Dec. 30 (BZ). A Surf Scoter was at Bosque Refuge Dec. 15 (*fide* S & NC). Up to 12 Barrow's Goldeneyes were below Navajo Dam Feb. 2 (DC), where documented last winter; a few were still there Feb. 16 & 23 (JP, PRS). Notable were 18 Hooded Mergansers at Bitter Lake Dec. 15 (SBI *et al.*). Over 8500 Com. Mergansers were at Caballo L. Jan. 11–12 (CS, BZ), plus over 3500 at E.B.L. Feb. 17 (DC).

RAPTORS TO GULLS

Unusual was an Osprey at Maxwell N.W.R. in January (W. Mosley). Noteworthy was a

Black-shouldered Kite at Encinillas, Chih., Jan. 27 (RD, WB). An aerial survey Jan. 7–9 yielded 368 Bald Eagles (55% ad.) on standard transects in New Mexico (SOW), the 2nd highest total since the surveys were initiated in the late 1970s. Notable concentrations included 57 birds in the Chama Valley (Espanola to Heron L.), 42 at Conchas L., 28 at Ute L., 82 at E.B.L., and 30 at Caballo L. Twenty-three Bald Eagles at Bosque Refuge Jan. 5 (JP) appears to be a new local high, while six were in n. Chihuahua Jan. 22–31 (RD, WB). The species was scarce in the Gila Valley (*fide* RF), while birds away from water included singles in the Sandia Mts. Jan. 8 and on Albuquerque's West Mesa Jan. 26 (HS).

Notable was an ad. N. Goshawk at R.G.N.C. Dec. 21 (JP) and Feb. 17 & 23 (LG *et al.*). A probable Common Black-Hawk at Glenwood Jan. 5 (R. Skaggs) represented the state's first reliable winter report. A Harris' Hawk at Caballo L. Jan. 21 (PES) was outside the usual range. Up to 15 Merlins were reported statewide (v.o.), with a high of three at Santa Fe Dec. 16 (PI *et al.*).

Eleven Com. Moorhens were at Las Cruces Dec. 30 (BZ *et al.*). Noteworthy Sandhill Crane reports included 55 at L.V.N.W.R. Dec. 23 (GB *et al.*), two over Moriarity Feb. 24 (PI *et al.*), 20 at Moon Ranch, *Grant*, Feb. 7–8 (JH), and two near Rodeo Dec. 29 (*fide* RS). Only 12 Whooping Cranes migrated south from Idaho this year (*fide* U.S.F.W.S.), with eight at Bosque Refuge Dec. 15 (S & NC *et al.*).

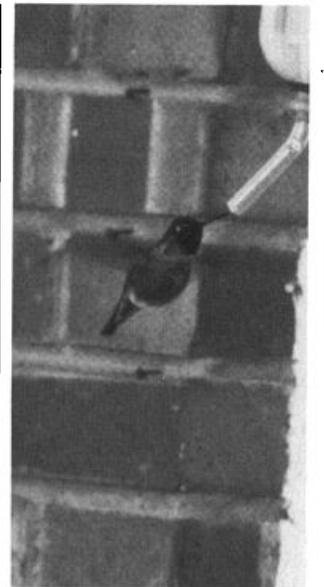
Late were 17 Am. Avocets at Burn L. Dec. 3 (LS). Single Lesser Yellowlegs were at Bosque Feb. 9 (JP) and Laguna Grande, *Eddy*, Jan. 3 (SBa). Spotted Sandpipers included one bird at Cliff Jan. 25 (RF). About 100 Long-billed Curlews were at Ascension, Chih., Jan. 22–24 (RD, WB). The juv. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Bosque Refuge Nov. 3 was last seen there Dec. 2 (LG, CD, DC); a single Dunlin was also present there Dec. 8 (v.o.). Long-billed Dowitchers at Bosque Refuge included up to 24 Dec. 15 (S & NC *et al.*, JP)

and 14 on Jan. 22 (PES). One to three Com. Snipe were at Santa Fe Dec. 16 (PI *et al.*), L.V.N.W.R. Dec. 23 (GB *et al.*), and Zuni Dec. 15 (*fide* JT); noteworthy were 45 at Loving Dec. 22 (SW *et al.*). Unusual was a Bonaparte's Gull at Albuquerque Dec. 15 (S. Cox, *fide* HS); others included three at E.B.L. Dec. 7 (PES) and Jan. 27 (LG), three at Caballo L. Jan. 5 (PRS), and 16 in the Brantley L. area Dec. 23 (SW *et al.*). One to two California Gulls were at E.B.L. Jan. 27 (LG) and one at Caballo L. Dec. 16 (BZ). An ad. probable Western Gull was seen and described at Caballo L. Dec. 16 (BZ), for the first reliable New Mexico report.

DOVES TO SWALLOWS

White-winged Doves were locally numerous in the south, including highs of 25 at Socorro Dec. 8 (JP), 44 in the Caballo/Percha area Dec. 16 (BZ *et al.*) and 30 there Jan. 26 (JP), 16 in the Alamogordo area Dec. 29 (RJ *et al.*), and 51 at C.C.N.P. Dec. 15 (SW *et al.*). The population west of the Rio Grande is migratory, so most unusual were three birds at Redrock during January (AF) and one that overwintered at P.O. Canyon (RS). Inca Doves included five at Socorro Dec. 8 (JP), four at Roswell Dec. 15 for the 2nd winter there (SBI *et al.*), and up to six in the Brantley L./Carlsbad/Black River Village area during the period (SW *et al.*). A Com. Ground-Dove at P.O. Canyon Nov. 3 through February provided only the 2nd local record and the first to overwinter (*fide* RS).

Single N. Pygmy-Owls were in Santa Fe Dec. 16–19 (*fide* PI, SBa) and at Zuni Dec. 15 (JT). One to two Burrowing Owls near the n. limit of the wintering range were near Albuquerque Dec. 16–Jan. 31 (HS). Single Anna's Hummingbirds were at feeders in Albuquerque Dec. 7–21 (B. Halstead *et al.*) and Las Cruces Dec. 30 (ph. BZ), the latter where present the past 3 winters. The Red-headed Woodpecker at Mesilla in November was last seen Jan. 11 (ph. BZ). Notable were several Acorn Woodpeckers in the Las Cruces area Feb. 10 (LS *et al.*), while six were at Caballo/Percha Dec. 16 (BZ *et*



Male Anna's Hummingbird in Las Cruces, New Mexico, December 30, 1990. This same bird had apparently been present here the last three winters. Photograph/Barry R. Zimmer.

al.). The state's first verified Red-bellied Woodpecker was near Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 15 (T. & J. Reynolds, ph. SW), although sight records date back to 1955! Possible Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were singles at Socorro, Silver City, Las Cruces, and Rattlesnake Springs (v.o.), but the reports were not all detailed.

Six Cave Swallows were back at C.C.N.P. Feb. 10, increasing to 40 by Feb. 28 (*fide* SW).



Red-headed Woodpecker at Mesilla Dam, New Mexico, December 30, 1990. Rare so far west, this bird was present at least November to January. Photograph/Barry R. Zimmer.

CORVIDS TO WARBLERS

In stark contrast to last year's influx, no Steller's Jays were recorded away from montane areas nor Blue Jays west of the eastern plains; however, a few Scrub Jays were scattered in the s. lowlands. Southerly Pinyon Jays included about 90 at Silver City Dec. 15 (RF *et al.*) and 20 Jan. 11 (D & MZ), and one at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 15 (*fide* SW). Unusual were six Black-billed Magpies at Corrales Dec. 7 (SBA), while the species may be increasing in *Union* (*fide* WC). Over 8000 Am. Crows were counted at Albuquerque roosts Dec. 16 (BW, *fide* HS), with another 1300 at Bosque Refuge Dec. 15 (S & NC *et al.*); notable were about five Feb. 7–8 at Moon Ranch (JH, RWD). Chihuahuan Raven was finally confirmed in the Albuquerque area when a bird (* Univ. New Mexico) was found dead Dec. 26 (BW); up to 16 roosted with crows there during January (BW), with one to three on the West Mesa all winter (HS).

Up to six Bridled Titmice were in Sixmile Canyon, Magdalena Mts., Feb. 15 (J. Black). Submontane Am. Dippers were singles at Navajo L. Feb. 13 (JH, JV) and Santa Fe Dec. 16 (*fide* PI). Lowland Golden-crowned Kinglets were four at Albuquerque Dec. 16 (HS *et al.*) and singles at Roswell Dec. 15 (*fide* SBi) and Loving Dec. 22 (SW). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was reported in creosotebush at Dripping Springs, *Dona Ana*, Jan. 11 (KS *et al.*), though not detailed. Eastern Bluebirds made an impressive showing, including three in *Taos* Feb. 3 (LH, PI), one at Zuni Feb. 23–24 (ph. DC), up to 18 at Sumner L. Feb. 19–22 (LH, SBA), 25 in the Caballo/Percha area Dec. 16 (BZ *et al.*), two in the Peloncillo Mts. Dec. 29 (*fide* RS), five in Las Cruces Dec. 30 (BZ *et al.*), and 103 at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 15 (SW *et al.*). Mountain Bluebirds (and Am. Robins) were common in the Zuni area, but Westerns were relatively scarce (*fide* JT). Southwesterly Mountains included three in the Moon Ranch area Feb. 8 (JH, RWD) but none in the Silver City area (RF).

A late Gray Catbird was at

Roswell Dec. 15 (SBi), while northerly were one near Chaco Canyon N.M. Feb. 23 (JH *et al.*), up to 10 Sage Thrashers at Zuni Dec. 15 (JT *et al.*) and at least three w. of Magdalena Feb. 15 (JH, RWD). Westerly Brown Thrashers were singles at Glenwood Feb. 4 (JH) and Mesilla Dec. 30 (BZ).

Cedar Waxwings were relatively numerous in the south, with northern reports including 40 in *Taos* Feb. 3 (PI, LH) and one at Gallup Feb. 7 (SI). Eight N. Shrikes were reported, the most southerly in Albuquerque Dec. 9–15 (HS *et al.*). A Hutton's Vireo at Percha S.P. Dec.



Hutton's Vireo at Percha Dam State Park, New Mexico, January 11, 1991. First confirmed record for the Rio Grande Valley in New Mexico. Photograph/Barry R. Zimmer.

16–Jan. 26 (JP, ph. BZ) was the first confirmed in the Rio Grande Valley. A Townsend's Warbler at Dripping Springs Jan. 11 (KS *et al.*) furnished only the state's 2nd winter report. Highly unusual was a probable Yellow-throated Warbler at Roswell Nov. 14 and Dec. 10 (M. Peckinpaugh).

CARDINALS TO CARDUELINES

Three each N. Cardinals were in the Peloncillo Mts. Dec. 29

(RS *et al.*) and at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 15, plus one at Black River Village Jan. 18 (SW *et al.*). Lazuli Buntings in n. Chihuahua at Galeana and Casa Grandes Jan. 25–26 (RD, WB) were near the n. limit of the species' winter range. One to two Painted Buntings at Las Cruces Dec. 8–11 (LS *et al.*, ph. R. White) represented the first winter record for the state. Two Canyon Towhees at Los Alamos Feb. 24 may have overwintered (PRS), high for the species. Notable Am. Tree Sparrows were 12 near Espanola Feb. 3 (PI, LH), 63 at L.V.N.W.R. Dec. 23 (GB *et al.*), two at Bluewater L. Dec. 10 (DC), and one at Roswell Dec. 15 (SBi *et al.*). Thirty Chipping Sparrows in the Albuquerque area at R.G.N.C. Jan. 11 (HS) were noteworthy; highs farther south included 467 at Caballo L. Dec. 16 (BZ *et al.*) and 913 in the Peloncillo Mts. Dec. 29, where other grassland sparrows (Brewer's, Vespers) were also common (RS *et al.*).

Low to moderate numbers of Swamp Sparrows were widespread, including two at Zuni Dec. 15 (SI). White-throated Sparrows "invaded" much of the state, including highs of 10 at Zuni Dec. 15 (JT *et al.*) and 26 at Percha S.P. Dec. 26 (BZ). Single Golden-crowned Sparrows were at Zuni Dec. 15 (JT), in *Bernalillo* Jan. 13 (B. Vaughn), and P.O. Canyon Dec. 20–Feb. 28 (RS). Four Harris' Sparrows were in the Albuquerque area Dec. 16 (*fide* HS), with one to two at Caballo L. Dec. 16 (JS *et al.*) and Las Cruces all season (CS, EW). Six Lapland Longspurs were at Moriarty Feb. 1 (LG) and one at Los Lunas Feb. 9 (JP, AK). Moderate numbers of McCown's were at the Moriarty and Los Lunas turf farms, plus 25 were at Sunland Park, *Dona Ana*, Feb. 10 (P. Lehman). Chestnut-collared Longspurs were widespread in moderate numbers, including three at Zuni Dec. 15 (*fide* JT), one at Bluewater L. Dec. 18 (SI), and two each near Glenwood Feb. 7 and near Moon Ranch Feb. 8 (JH, RWD).

Northerly were two Com. Grackles at Las Vegas Dec. 23 (GB *et al.*), with others in

December at Socorro, Bosque Refuge, Roswell, and Rattlesnake Springs (v.o.); 15 at Black River Village Feb. 19 were a local first (SW). Northerly were two Brown-headed Cowbirds at Albuquerque Jan. 4 (HS), as was a Scott's Oriole "flycatching" at Pancho Villa S.P. Dec. 31 (SBA). Two ad. ♂ Purple Finches were at Glenwood Feb. 4–6 (JH) and the species may have wintered in the area (R. & S. Nelson). Cassin's Finches and Pine Siskins were scarce or absent in submontane areas, and the few Red Crossbills reported were confined to the Jemez, Sangre de Cristo, and Sandia mts. (v.o.). In contrast to last winter's showing, Evening Grosbeaks were especially conspicuous by their absence—the only submontane reports were of a few near Santa Fe Feb. 5–23 (LH, SBA), Gallup Dec. 16 (SI), Zuni Dec. 15 (*fide* JT), Silver City Feb. 19 (D & MZ), and the Sandia Mts. Feb. 26 (HS).

Addendum: A Rufous Hummingbird was at a Carlsbad feeder Oct. 23, 1989, through Jan. 10, 1990, where it survived temperatures as low as 10°F in December and left when the weather warmed in January (D. & J. Hoffman).

Cited observers: Sy Baldwin, Pat Basham, Sherry Bixler, George Blanchard, Wendy Brown, David Cleary, Wes Cook, Steve & Nancy Cox, Carol Davis, Robert W. Dickerman, Rod Drewien, Ralph Fisher, Alton Ford, Larry Gorbet, Harold Harrison, Lois Herrmann, John Hubbard, Stephen Ingraham, Pat Insley, Robert Jenness, Burton Lewis, Andy Kraynik, John Parmeter, Catherine Sandell, Robert Scholes, Lorraine Schulte, Hart Schwarz, Katie Skaggs, Patricia R. Snider, John Sproul, Ted Stans, Paul E. Steel, Ross Teuber, John Trochet, James Vaught, Steve West, Bill Willard, S.O. Williams, Eleanor Wootten, Barry Zimmer, Dale & Marian Zimmerman.—SARTOR O. WILLIAMS III and JOHN P. HUBBARD, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, NM 85703.

Ketchikan Dec. 9 (SH) represented one of Southeast's highest one-day tallies. Although ice conditions preclude daily influxes of gulls to Upper Cook Inlet and Anchorage by mid-December, enough open water habitat remains at the Kenai R. mouth that gulls continue to venture north to that area throughout most winters. Sixty-two Glaucous-winged Gulls, scattered between the Soldotna dump and the Kenai R. mouth Dec. 29 (MAM, MR), were a good mid-winter count (MAM, MR).

OWLS TO WAXWINGS

Indications were strong that at least some local populations of N. Hawk Owl have finally begun to increase. Most areas within the species' range had previously reached a high in the cycle in the early 1980s. This winter's birds were found at Kodiak, two through at least December (RAM), and at Cordova, six along the Copper R. Hwy all season (REF), localities that had experienced at least a 7-year hiatus without this owl. A single calling Boreal Owl at Anchorage Dec. 15 (RLS) was exceptionally early by at least a month. For the first time in several years, N. Pygmy-Owls went unreported in the Region all winter.

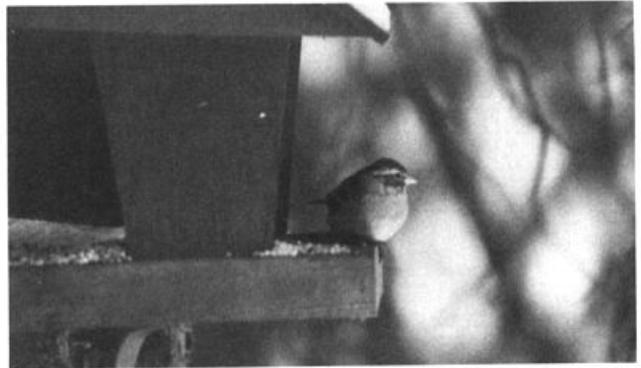
Reports of single N. Flickers from Homer, Anchorage, and near Ketchikan were about average. The Anchorage bird was the same individual from the previous winter (*q.v.*). A single Say's Phoebe lingered at Sitka to Dec. 16 (†KH). Although we have numerous October and a few November reports of Say's, this was the Region's latest sighting and first in winter. Casual in Alaska, a Clark's Nutcracker put in a brief appearance at a Juneau feeder Dec. 13–15 (RBW). At least in the Upper Cook Inlet basin, several resident passerines have rebounded from the 1989 "Omega block" freeze. Record counts of Red-breasted Nuthatch were obtained at Anchorage, 71 on Dec. 15, at Eagle River, 13 on Dec. 30, and north to the Matanuska Valley, 16 on Dec. 29 (*m.ob.*). Most resident forms are certainly aided through the winters by the expanding feeder system

around the greater Anchorage area. Brown Creeper counts were equally healthy at those locations, but the species remains hard to find at Kodiak (RAM) and on the Kenai Pen. at Homer (GCW). The Kodiak area Winter Wren population continues to rebound, and this winter the species was half the normal winter numbers.

Golden-crowned Kinglets continue to be the hardest hit species by the harsh winter of 1988–1989; populations in Southcoastal remain very low. This winter's numbers at Anchorage and Kodiak are still a fraction of what had been normal. Still considered casual in winter in the Region, single Townsend's Solitaires were located at Cordova Dec. 13–Jan. 25 for a first local winter record (REF) and near Eagle River Feb. 18 for a 2nd Upper Cook Inlet record (†RDJ). Normally absent from the Region by late November, a late Hermit Thrush was noteworthy at Ketchikan Dec. 15 (*vide* SH). Bohemian Waxwings invaded the Upper Cook Inlet basin by early December in record numbers and remained in high numbers through the period. The Anchorage December peak reached a conservative total of 9070 birds Dec. 15 (*m.ob.*). Up to 800 in dispersed flocks remained there through the period, continuing a trend begun in the mid-1980s. Prior to then, Bohemian Waxwings were casual after early January. Observers at Homer and Kodiak also remarked on the presence of good numbers at those locales after mid-January.

WARBLERS TO FRINGILLIDS

Following the fall's (*q.v.*) 2nd island sighting of Townsend's Warbler at Kodiak, two and possibly three birds were seen sporadically around that community Dec. 17–Feb. 24 (†RAM, DWM, JBA). We had long anticipated a winter record of this warbler, since it winters occasionally north to s. coastal British Columbia. Both of the fall's (*q.v.*) exceptionally late Chipping Sparrows lingered into the winter season, to Dec. 4 at Sitka (MW) and to at least Feb. 10 at Anchorage (first local and 2nd Alaska winter record, GJT, DWS, *ph.*). Of the half-



Chipping Sparrow at Anchorage, Alaska, January 20, 1991. Remarkably far north for the season, this bird furnished a first local wintering record. Photograph/ David W. Sonneborn.

dozen December Lincoln's Sparrow reports between Eagle River and Southeast, none remained past Dec. 29 (*vide* DFD, RAM, *vide* MEI). The imm. Swamp Sparrow that appeared at Ketchikan Nov. 30 lingered to Dec. 12 (SH) to establish a new late date for the Region.

Representing only the Region's 2nd record away from the Bering Sea/Aleutian Is. and Kodiak's first ever, a winter-plumaged Rustic Bunting was found on a CBC near Cape Chiniak Dec. 30–Jan. 1 (†RAM, KM, JBA). There are no prior Alaska fall reports beyond late October. The McKay's Bunting with a flock of Snows at Homer Dec. 26 (DWS) furnished a 2nd local record, well east of the species' normal winter range from the Alaska Peninsula to Kotzebue Sound zone. Other reports came from Bethel, where both Snow and McKay's buntings were present sporadically through the season; maximum McKay's count was of 25 Feb. 26 (BJM). Both species were absent from the Kotzebue Sound coast, where snow and ice covered the favored *Elymus* flats (WRU).

Two groups of what were probably 18 Bramblings lingered at 2 separate areas of Kodiak I. to Dec. 9 (JBA, †RAM). These birds were part of the fall report's unprecedented group of seven found in the same area in late November. Another Brambling spent the month of December at a Juneau feeder (*vide* MEI). Both Red and White-winged crossbills were found locally in variable numbers between Kodiak I. and s. Southeast through the period.

Scattered groups of White-winged were also reported from the east and west ends of the Interior, but only a few were found in between at Fairbanks (TOO, TJD, DDG). The only movement detected during the period was a drift of White-winged into the Fairbanks area in late February (DDG). Redpolls were scattered in average numbers throughout the mainland in a band between the Yukon R. valley and Southcoastal. A late season surge of paler Hoary types reached into the Upper Cook Inlet basin (*i.e.*, five or six in Anchorage the last week of February, *m.ob.*). Pine Siskin winter distribution showed no discernible pattern within the normal winter range between the N. Gulf Coast and Southeast. The species was essentially undetected beyond the coastal fringe, so a flock of 220 at Hope (WT) through the season was puzzling.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA/ YUKON REGION

Chris Siddle

Early winter was mild until just before Christmas, when a large Arctic high pressure cell began to dominate the weather throughout British Columbia for the next three weeks. Temperatures plummeted as low as -46.1 degrees Celsius (about -45 F) January 8 in Prince George. Coastal locations like Victoria experienced snowfalls, rare events around Christmas. A brief period of mild weather in February seemed to draw some early migrants into the southern interior; however, the month ended cold and wet with no end to winter in sight.

Once again, Vancouver as an area did not forward anything more than a few rare bird sightings.

Abbreviations: V.I. (*Vancouver Island*).

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A Yellow-billed Loon on Howe Sound Dec. 15 was a local first for the Sunshine Coast checklist (DB). Another was at Qualicum Beach Dec. 9 (E. Nygren). Only four Clark's Grebes have ever been accepted for Vancouver. One was well documented off Iona I. Dec. 16 (†Rick Toochin), possibly the same Clark's seen Oct. 8.

Great Blue Herons were absent from Revelstoke this winter, probably driven out by the cold weather around Christmas (DP). For the 3rd year in a row, Great Blue Herons were found on the Prince George CBC. This year, two were along the Nechako R. Dec. 16, compared to one the previous 2 years (P.G.N.C.). Very few Cattle Egrets were reported. One was at Martindale Flats, Saanich, Dec. 17 (BB, T. Gillespie), perhaps the same bird that was reported on the Victoria Bird Alert at Martindale Jan. 2-5.

A swan matching the description of a Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) was seen



with several hundred Trumpeter Swans in a field on Westham I. Feb. 16 (†DJ, Brian Self). This was a 2nd sighting for the province; the first was reported in November 1990. These sightings join a growing body of observations which includes a "Bewick's" Swan photographed near Regina, SK, Oct. 27-Nov. 11, 1978, and sight records from s. Ontario and s. Alberta (W.E. Godfrey, *The Birds of Canada*, 1986).

The annual Kamloops-Okanagan swan count of Jan. 13 found 40 Tundra Swans, a dramatically low total due to freeze-up, and 171 Trumpeter Swans, a total that continues to climb each year—partly because observers are getting better at distinguishing swan species, and partly because Trumpeters are increasing around Kamloops (RH).

Three Greater White-fronted Geese were in Kamloops Feb. 23 into March (SR, m.ob.). Three wintered in Kelowna (Robin Yellowlees, BT). An immature was at Penticton Jan. 4 (GD, PR, CS). A Lesser White-fronted Goose was photographed and described in detail around Victoria Dec. 15 and Jan. 17 & 21 (†BW, †BB, JS, RS, m.ob.). Supposedly this bird actually arrived about October and was very shy at



Lesser White-fronted Goose at Saanich, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, December 15, 1990. Origins of this bird were unknown, but as yet there are no unconfirmed records for North America. Photograph/Bruce Whittington.

first. Origins of this bird will forever remain a source of debate. If it was a wild bird, it would be Canada's first. Less unusual was a single Snow Goose at Duncan Jan. 18 (DM). An Emperor Goose, perhaps the same bird that had spent the last 3 winters in Victoria, appeared at various locations on the Saanich Peninsula Jan. 20-Feb. 22.

A Wood Duck at Kamloops Dec. 8-16 was unusual (RH). A ♂ Tufted Duck was at Esquimalt Lagoon from Feb. 23 to the end of the period. An imm. ♂ Tufted Duck was found on the Kelowna CBC on Okanagan Lake Dec. 15 and

was well described (Denise Brownlie). This was the 2nd record for the Okanagan Valley and probably only the 5th for the province's interior. Four Common Goldeneyes, among the hardest ducks, were on the Yukon R. near Whitehorse, Yukon, Dec. 8 (HG).

A ♀ King Eider, very rare on the coast, was seen at the Iona I. Jetty, Vancouver, Jan. 19 into February (†David B. Lewis, Ann Marie Neugebauer). This was the 8th Van area record, and first since 1986. An eider sp. was seen at Crofton, V.I., Dec. 15 (†E Watts, S. Baker, J. Griffin). Red-breasted Mergansers, rare winter residents in the Okanagan Valley, were seen at Vernon and Osoyoos. Two were at Okanagan Landing Jan. 24 (PR) and up to six were at Osoyoos Feb. 17-27 (DB). A ♂ Com. Merganser was on the Yukon River near Whitehorse Dec. 1 (HG).

VULTURES TO CRANES

A few Turkey Vultures lingered on southern V.I. with one over Metchosin Dec. 7 (J. Moll, A. Knowles) and two on the Sooke CBC Dec. 29 (I. Weston). In February, more were seen with two over Metchosin Feb. 10 (J & RS), one over the Malahat Feb. 21 (DFF), one flying N over the Victoria airport Feb. 25 (BD), and one over Saanichton Feb. 28 (BB).

The cold weather of late December and January drove Bald Eagles out of the back country, concentrating them along unfrozen water courses both along the coast and throughout the interior. Sixty-seven were at Goldstream P.P. Jan. 20, an all-time high for the park (DFF, G & JA). Some 105 concentrated at Cowichan Bay Jan. 27 (BB). The annual eagle count Jan. 13 found 65 Bald Eagles in the Okanagan and Kamloops area, the highest total since the count began, and 19 Golden Eagles (RH).

From the Victoria area 15 reports of 46 sightings of Sharp-shinned Hawks were forwarded, probably representing at least 16 birds. There was an all-time high count of 27 on the Victoria CBC Dec. 15. Cooper's Hawk sightings for Victoria were also up from 1989 with 61 sightings, involving about 20 birds (*file*

BW). Four N. Goshawks on the Nakusp CBC Jan. 2 made an unusual concentration. Fourteen were found on the interior CBCs, marginally higher than last year's 11. Two goshawks were seen in the s. Yukon, one at Marsh L. Dec. 16 (Don Russell) and the other flying across the South Klondike Hwy Jan. 2 (HG).

A Merlin wintered in Nakusp for the first time in about 10 years (GD). The last Merlin at Prince George was seen Dec. 20 (JB). Three Merlins on the Revelstoke CBC might have found easy prey among the dozens of Varied Thrushes, which were very placid and unwary, from either cold or hunger (DP, CS). The Victoria CBC had an all-time high count of 19 Merlins. A Peregrine Falcon on the Nakusp CBC Jan. 2 was the only winter record for the interior (GD, Terry Bennett), but Victoria reported 41 sightings during the winter, the highest number of reports in the last 3 years. A possible *tundrius* Peregrine was at Esquimalt Lagoon Jan. 29 (RS, Blake Maybank). A Prairie Falcon in Delta Dec. 20 (†Colin Butt, Olive Butt) may have been the same bird has been wintering in the area since the winter of 1988-1989. Another Prairie Falcon appeared at Osoyoos Jan. 24 and Feb. 2 & 12 (DB). One or two appeared briefly in Vernon, one Dec. 2 in Lavington (John Quirk) and the other at the head of Okanagan L. Dec. 16 (PR, Peter McAllister). The only interior Gyrfalcon was a gray morph bird at Swan L., Vernon, Dec. 16 (†CS). On the coast a gray Gyr was over Blenkinsop L., Saanich, Feb. 21 (RS).

Very unusual was a White-tailed Ptarmigan at Gibsons at 200 ft above sea level Jan. 18 (George Smith), while several were repeatedly spotted in the cross-country ski area (5000 ft) of Silver Star Mountain, Vernon (Ken Dennys) and one was present at the bottom of the Revelstoke Ski Hill throughout December (DP, m.ob.). A ptarmigan sp. was at Marsh L., s. Yukon, Dec. 16 (Cathy McEwen). Eighteen Sharp-tailed Grouse were found on the Kamloops CBC on Dec. 16 (RH). Six Sandhill Cranes were seen over Osoyoos on the very early date of Feb. 21 during a

short period of spring-like weather (DB).

SHOREBIRDS TO WOODPECKERS

The Willet, Long-billed Curlew, and Marbled Godwit, all casual in the Vancouver Checklist area, continued to reside in company with one or two Whimbrels at Blackie Spit, Crescent Beach, throughout the winter and into April (†Wayne Weber, CS). The Marbled Godwit provided the first Vancouver winter record. A small flock of Dunlin at Kamloops during the fall dwindled to four birds by Dec. 23 (RH). A Spotted Sandpiper, rare in winter in the province, was at Ucluelet Feb. 10 (CE). A Lesser Yellowlegs was reported from Westham I. Feb. 20 (CE).

An imm. Franklin's Gull was near the mouth of the Nicomekl R. in Surrey Dec. 1, for the 3rd Vancouver winter record (†Hue MacKenzie, †Jo Ann MacKenzie). A Western Gull at Sechelt Inlet Dec. 7 was the second for the checklist area (TG). Ten California Gulls were in Kamloops Dec. 8-16 (RH). Also in Kamloops were a Thayer's Gull Dec. 8 and a Glaucous Gull Dec. 16 (RH). The only other interior Glaucous Gulls were one at the mouth of the Adams R. Dec. 22 (RH) and one at Roberts L., Kelowna, Dec. 15 (Bill Baker, CS, GD). Also present at Kelowna Dec. 15 was a first-winter Glaucous-winged Gull (CS, GD).

Rock Doves survived -45° C temperatures in Whitehorse, Yukon, in January (HG). Possibly they found somewhere warm to roost.

A Snowy Owl was on Iona I. Dec. 4 (CE). Another turned up at a mall in Nanaimo Dec. 20 (RP). Northern Pygmy-Owl sightings were about the same as 1989 CBCs on the coast but were down to half the 1989 totals for the interior. A Burrowing Owl was one of the season's highlights on V.I. It appeared at the Patricia Bay airport, N. Saanich, in early January but birders didn't find it until Feb. 26-27 (BD, J & GA, BB, m.ob.). This was the 6th record for the Victoria checklist area. How established have Barred Owls become on V.I., where 10 years ago, they were noteworthy rarities? Five, an all-



Burrowing Owl at Patricia Bay Airport, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, on March 13, 1991. Present since early January, this bird provided the sixth record for Vancouver Island. Photograph/ David F. Fraser.

time high, were recorded on the Victoria CBC Dec. 15! Short-eared Owls were very scarce around Victoria with only one or two reported all winter. Kamloops had 5 overwinter (RH).

A ♂ Anna's Hummingbird spent the fall at a Vernon feeder but disappeared Dec. 7 after a short cold snap (John Barling, CS). Two Lewis' Woodpeckers overwintered in Kamloops (*vide* RH), which is very unusual, since this species generally winters only around Summerland-Vaseux Lake.

S.A.

The sudden influx of Red-breasted Sapsuckers to the lower elevations of the Sunshine Coast was described by Tony Greenfield as "incredible." Driven out of the mountain forests by the cold, the sapsuckers appeared from Dec. 22 until about Dec. 25. "For a few days they seemed to be tapping on every second tree near sea level. However, it appears they suffered significant mortality, as I heard of sapsuckers that were hit by cars, that hit windows, were caught by cats, were harassed by eagles, and others that were found dead of no apparent cause" (TG). This species also invaded the Victoria area, with 23 individuals seen at 16 locations between Dec. 22 and Feb. 4. Kamloops had its first confirmed Red-breasted Sapsucker Dec. 16 (SR, RH, ph.).

FLYCATCHERS TO WARBLERS

A Say's Phoebe at Vaseux Lake Feb. 8 set a record early spring migration date (Carlton McNaughton). On Feb. 23 another was at Osoyoos (DB). The highest count of Eur. Sky-larks for Victoria was of 42 on Dec. 29 in a Central Saanich bulb field (BB). There was much flocking and wandering owing to the snow cover. One bird on a lawn on the waterfront of Dallas Rd., Victoria, Jan. 5 was in a very unusual location (Keith Taylor). A Horned Lark, now very rare in the Vancouver Checklist area, was at Iona I. Dec. 16 (†DJ, m.ob.). Blue Jays left over from the fall invasion wintered in various locations. Three or four were at Nakusp (GD), up to five were at Revelstoke (DP), one was near Kimberley until at least mid-January (MW), one was at Wasa L. most of the winter (MW), and on the coast one was at Roberts Creek from Nov. 3 onwards (Dorothy Wright), and one was on Salt Spring Island Dec. 13 (DFF, D. Copley, E. Walters) and Jan. 3 (KT). The latter bird had been present since October. Higher than usual numbers of Clark's Nutcrackers were found, but only in the West Kootenays where 15 on the Nakusp CBC Jan. 2 was fairly typical for this winter (GD).

At least a few Bewick's Wrens survived the long cold snap. Ten were at Rithet's Bog, Saanich, Feb. 27 (B. Hanwell *et al.*). Victoria also set an all-time record for Winter Wrens with 451 on its CBC Dec. 15. A Golden-crowned Kinglet at Prince George Jan. 2 furnished a first winter record (Wilf Fortney).

Mountain Bluebirds are quite rare around Victoria during spring and fall. A December record was unheard of, until one to five birds were seen in Central Saanich Dec. 13-17 (†BD, J & GA). Two at Cranbrook during the last week of February were unusually early (MW).

Very noteworthy was a Red-throated Pipit in Delta Dec. 23-24. Aside from a single-observer sighting in the mid-1980s, this was the first record for the Vancouver Checklist area, and the first accepted record for British Columbia.

The bird loosely associated with a small flock of Am. Pipits in a marshy field (†BRG, m.ob.). Three sets of field notes were forwarded; unfortunately, two were written hours after the observations had taken place. Red-throated Pipit can be tough to identify. Notes on such a bird should be made at the time of observation.

Although Bohemian Waxwing numbers were low in the West Kootenays, they were much more common this winter in the Okanagan Valley and the Prince George area, with an estimated 11,000 in the Vernon area alone (*fide* PR). One was reported from Courtenay Jan. 25–27 (D.W. Innes, Barbara Sedgwick). Small flocks of Bohemian Waxwings in Whitehorse survived -45° C weather (HG, Clive Osborne, Robb Ellwood). They ate mountain-ash berries. Sixteen Cedar Waxwings at Kamloops Dec. 16 provided a first confirmed winter record there (RH).

Southern V.I. had most of the wintering warblers with two Orange-crowns at Victoria, two Com. Yellowthroats (one each at Somenos and Crofton on Dec. 3—DM), and one Townsend's Warbler at Saanich Dec. 15 (Jeff Gaskin).

SPARROWS TO FINCHES

It was a good winter on southern V.I. for Am. Tree Sparrows, which are vagrants there. The first was found along Lochside Trail, Central Saanich, Dec. 14 until at least Jan. 31 (BB, C. O'Brien). This is or another was along Island View Road Feb. 9 (S. Cumming). An unconfirmed bird was at Quick's Bottom, Saanich, Jan. 19 (M. Blau), and a 3rd or 4th bird was at Somenos Flats, Duncan, Jan. 18 and Feb. 1 & 15 (DM). One was reported from Westham I. Dec. 4 (CE). One Swamp Sparrow was at Somenos Flats, Duncan, Dec. 6–Feb. 1 (DM).

White-throated Sparrows were reported across the s. half of the province. The northernmost was an immature at Prince George Dec. 16 (P.G.N.C.). Vernon had four on its CBC. There were single birds at feeders in Gibsons (DB), Tofino (RP), Nakusp (GD), and Revelstoke (OG), while southern V.I. reported about seven. Harris'

Sparrows were reported much more frequently than usual with three at Revelstoke during January, one at Nakusp all winter (GD), up to four at Vernon (CS), two at Kelowna (BT), and two at Victoria (*fide* Ken Morgan). At least one Dark-eyed Junco survived most of the very cold winter at a Whitehorse feeder (HG).

British Columbia's 2nd **Rus-tic Bunting** appeared in a backyard in Tofino Dec. 8 and remained to late February. Excellent field notes and sketches were made (†RP). Miss Patterson is to be congratulated for the good spirit she maintained while over 200 birders visited her during the bird's stay.

Four **Bramblings** were spotted this winter, three around Victoria and one at Vancouver. The Vancouver bird, probably a female, came to a South Vancouver feeder Jan. 6 (†A.J. Patrick Oswald, Hilary Oswald). This was the 5th Vancouver record and the first since 1984. The first Victoria Brambling was a male in Colwood Dec. 15–Feb. 26 (B. Irwin). The 2nd was a female in N. Saanich, about Dec. 14 to at least Feb. 10 (J. & B. Holt). A 3rd, unconfirmed, bird was reported in Central Saanich Jan. 23–26.

Rosy Finches were erratic, as usual, appearing for a day or two in scattered locations, and then disappearing. Up to 200 were atop Silver Star Mountain, Vernon, Dec. 16 to at least Dec. 23 (Brian Holmes, Peter McAllister, CS). More Rosy Finches were on the Vernon Commonage Jan. 23 (Mavis Cameron). Five were in Revelstoke Jan. 19 (OG) and 100 were at Merritt Dec. 2 (RH).

Pine Grosbeaks numbers were up in the n. half of the province and down in the southern half. They were abundant in the Prince George area. Flocks of 10–20 birds at the beginning of December dwindled to three to eight birds each by the end of February (JB). North Pine CBC (Fort St. John) had a record high 157 Pine Grosbeaks Dec. 15 (Derek Connolly), while Smithers CBC reported 231. In Vernon, Pine Grosbeaks generally stayed in the mountains, with only one small flock encountered in the valley (CS).

The winter *Carpodacus* situation in s. interior British

Columbia is complex. House Finches seem to be staging a minor invasion of Nakusp in the West Kootenays with up to three wintering (GD). In the Okanagan, Cassin's Finches winter locally, as they do in the West Kootenays. The number of Purple Finch reports continues to grow. Observers should be cautioned that ♀-plumaged Purple and Cassin's finches are often *very difficult* to tell apart, particularly since most field guides do not adequately treat important field marks. Reports of Purple Finches here must be substantiated with photos or careful field descriptions, *written at the time of observation*.

Red Crossbills were present in very small numbers throughout the s. half of the province in early winter, and began to appear in large flocks at Kimberley in February (BC). White-winged Crossbills were uncommon or absent throughout. Common Redpolls were quite uncommon or even absent from most places in the south, but around Prince George were in "normal" numbers, with 1034 tallied on the CBC Dec. 16 (P.G.N.C.). Three reports came from Victoria with one bird well described Jan. 1 (BB). Pine Siskin numbers varied. Revelstoke reported "big numbers" this winter while Kimberley had large flocks toward the end of winter (BC). Prince George reported only small flocks, as did the Okanagan and most coastal locations including Victoria.

Addendum: A moribund White-throated Swift, providing the first confirmed record for the Vancouver area, was recovered from a grain elevator in North Vancouver in early November 1990. Possibly the bird confused the tall concrete sides of the elevator for canyon cliffs. The bird was rehabilitated (a swift recovery?) at a local shelter and flown to California for release.

Initialed observers: (subregional editors in boldface) Gladys Anderson, Jerry Anderson, Barbara



This White-throated Swift, first one ever confirmed for the area of Vancouver, British Columbia, was picked up ailing at a local grain elevator in November 1990. Photograph/Lorraine Andrusiak.

Beggs, Jack Bowling (Prince George and the north), Doug Brown, Bunny Cooper, Gary Davidson (Kootenays), Brent Diakow, Cameron Eckert, David F. Fraser (southern V.I.), Bryan R. Gates, Orville Gordon, Tony Greenfield (Sunshine Coast), Helmut Grunberg (Yukon), Rick Howie (Kamloops), Dale Jensen, Derrick Merven, Rory Patterson, Doug Powell, Prince George Naturalist Club (P.G.N.C.), Phil Ranson, Syd Roberts, Joy Satterfield, Ron Satterfield, Chris Siddle, Keith Taylor, Brenda Thompson, Mildred White, Bruce Whittington.—CHRIS SIDDLE, Site 10, Comp. 56, R.R. 8, Vernon, BC V1T 8L6.

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OREGON/ WASHINGTON REGION

(FALL 1990 REPORT)

Bill Tweit
and
David Fix

It was the third-warmest fall on record in central Oregon, with August and September abnormally hot and dry there. Effects included continued receding of Malheur Lake and a 3300-acre forest fire at Bend. Eastern Washington suffered local flooding during a wetter than average August. Following rainfall in October and November that was almost twice the average, western Washington had extensive flooding the last week of November.

The warm sea surface temperatures and low amounts of upwelling this fall were similar to conditions during the 1983 El Niño event. This fall's conditions were linked to low numbers of Buller's and Flesh-footed shearwaters, high numbers of Brown Pelicans and Heermann's Gulls, and an Elegant Tern incursion.

It was a great fall for vagrant warblers, primarily in southeast Oregon. Other movements included a considerable flight of scoters in the interior, a November incursion of Steller's Jays into the Columbia Basin, unusual numbers of Blue Jays through much of the Region, and record numbers of White-throated Sparrows.

Abbreviations: Bandon (*Bandon and the Coquille R. estuary, Coos Co., OR*); Davis (*Davis Lake, Klamath and Deschutes counties, OR*); Fields (*Fields, Harney Co., OR*); Malheur (*Malheur Nat'l Wildlife Ref., OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor Co., WA*); Sauvie (*Sauvie Island, Columbia Co., OR*); S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop, OR*); W.W.R.D. (*Walla Walla River delta, Walla Walla, WA*). Place names in *italics* are counties.



LOONS TO EGRETS

The 10,000 loons moving S off *Lincoln, OR*, Nov. 8 (PP) were 50% Common, 40% Pacific, and 10% Red-throated, a high percentage of Com. Loons for a coastal movement, generally dominated by Pacifics. Red-throated Loons were scarce inland this fall; there was only one freshwater record, on Lost Creek Res., *Jackson, OR*, Oct. 18 (DCr). Seven Yellow-billed Loons were reported, including two from the outer coast: Winchester Bay, OR, Sept. 8 (L. & C. Yox) and Grays Harbor, WA, Oct. 7 (TW *et al.*). The five Puget Sound reports included three in the San Juan Is. Nov. 3-4 (TW *et al.*), one at Pt. Roberts Oct. 8 (WW), and one at Dosewallips Oct. 28 (DPa, BSu).

Clark's Grebes were more widely reported than in any previous fall. In e. Washington, up to 20 were at the colony on Moses L. Sept. 14 (RM). In e. Oregon, there were 8 reports of 22 birds, apparently all but one of migrants. Latest in the interior were of two at Malheur Oct. 20 (LH, CB) and one on

Banks L., *Grant, WA*, Oct. 28 (AS, BT). There were reports of 35 migrants or winterers in w. Oregon and two in w. Washington. Oregon reports included 20 (no details) with 3000 W. Grebes in the Columbia R. gorge Nov. 17 (AF) and four on the s. coast at Port Orford Nov. 24 (NL), where regular. The two w. Washington reports with details were of one at O.S. Oct. 5 (†G & WH) and one at Seattle Nov. 11 (†BSu).

A record number of pelagic trips were reported: 11 from Westport, WA, Aug. 11 to Oct. 7 (TW), one from Ilwaco, WA, Sept. 8 (JJ), three from Garibaldi, OR, Aug. 11, Sept. 9 (TC), and Oct. 20 (NL), and one from Charleston, OR, Sept. 8. Laysan Albatross were seen twice off Westport (TW) and one was seen from shore at Cape Arago, OR, Nov. 25 (*vide* NL). Northern Fulmar numbers through September ranged 15-169, and jumped to over 2300 by Oct. 5 (TW). In late November, 40 were found dead on *Lincoln* beaches (Bob Loeffel, Sara Brown) and 240 were seen from Cape Arago Nov. 25 (NL). A large *Pterodroma*, believed to be a Juan

Fernandez Petrel (P. externa), was seen by 2 boatloads of birders at the edge of the Continental Shelf off Westport Sept. 14 (†TW, †BT, m.ob.). This sighting is the first for the e. Pacific within the 200-mi limit.

It was the poorest fall in years for Buller's Shearwater. None were seen during August, and the peak count was only 10 off Garibaldi Oct. 20. A Manx Shearwater was seen in the mouth of Grays Harbor Sept. 14 by birders on 2 boats (†BT, †TW, m.ob.), seen again the next day from the O.S. jetty (†BSu, †TSc, †WC), and apparently seen again 20+ mi off Westport Oct. 6 (†NL, †RM, †TW). The descriptions of this first state report seem to exclude the Pacific members of the *puffinus* complex.

Brown Pelican numbers in Washington were above the recent average: over 1000 were present on both Grays Harbor (BT, DPa) and Willapa Bay (RM). There were no reports farther north on the outer coast, but two were seen inside Puget Sound. One at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, Oct. 9 (VN) was only the 2nd in 15 years there, and another was equally rare in lower Georgia Strait Oct. 5-15 (WW, Tom Burton, *vide* TW).

There was a small flight of Cattle Egrets, with about a dozen in w. Oregon after Oct. 25. Two near Vancouver, *Clark*, Nov. 9 (WC) and four on the Lummi Flats, *Whatcom*, Nov. 18 (JD) were the only Washington reports. In e. Oregon, one at Summer Lake Nov. 21 (CM) was a first for *Lake*.

WATERFOWL

The regular small number of Trumpeter Swans in n.w. Oregon appeared in November. Three were on Sauvie Nov. 17, one was at Forest Grove, *Washington*, Nov. 24, three were at Scappoose Nov. 26, and three were near Airlee, *Polk*, Nov. 27 (*vide* HN). Four pairs of Trumpeters produced seven cygnets this year at Malheur and an October survey found 20 adults there (GI). The first Snow Geese had returned to the Skagit Flats, WA, Sept. 27 (Jon Anderson) and by the end of November,

31,000 were counted (*fide* TW). The Dept. of Wildlife noted that 2 consecutive years with summer ice storms in Siberia have caused nearly complete die-offs of crops of goslings. Single Ross' Geese in w. Oregon were on Sauvie Oct. 12–28 (m.ob.) and at Nehalem Nov. 16+ (Bill Shelmerdine). The only Emperor Geese, also rare but annual, were three at Oceanside in early October (CR).

A Mallard banded as a fledgling July 30 near Summer Lake, OR, was trapped 28 days later and 300 mi farther north on Columbia N.W.R., Grant, WA (RH)! If only Scott's Orioles would do that... Seattle's Tufted Duck X scaup returned for a 5th winter (EH). A brood of Lesser Scaup was found at Everett, WA, Sept. 2 (EH); there are very few breeding records in the Region. There were six Oldsquaw reported inland Oct. 20 (PM) to Nov. 26 (JT). An unusually large movement of scoters occurred in the interior in October. The largest flock of Surf Scoters was remarkable: 38 at Suttle L., Jefferson, OR, in late October (TC). There were 29 other Surfs reported in e. Oregon and Washington, and six in w. Oregon away from the coast, Oct. 14 (JA, DA, DL, CC) to Nov. 23 (PS). The largest flock of White-winged Scoters was of 13 at Lake Lenore, Grant, WA, Oct. 14 (JA), and 10 others were reported from other e. locales through Oct. 27 (AS, BT). A single Black Scoter was on Willow Creek Res., Morrow, Oct. 20 (DL, CC) for one of few eastside Oregon records. Red-breasted Mergansers, also scarce on the east side, were also above average. The largest flock was of 12 on Banks L., Grant, WA, Oct. 28 (BT, AS, BL), and six others were reported Oct. 13 (CC) to Nov. 21 (CM).

HAWKS

Black-shouldered Kites were scarce in Oregon this fall. Only eight were reported from the entire coast and seven from the Rogue valley (*fide* MM). In Washington, six were at the Raymond breeding site (RM), and one near Duval Oct. 18 (Gerry Adams) was a 2nd for King. There was only one report of Red-shouldered Hawk away from regular range, an

immature at Toledo, Lincoln, OR, Sept. 16 (E & HH). Rough-legged Hawks were scarce, but there were some early sightings. Three reported from the Steens Mts., Malheur, OR, Aug. 10 (S. Freshman, RV) set a new early arrival date. Several mid-September sightings, from Philomath, OR (Sheila Madden), in Asotin, WA (*fide* MK), and near Spokane (JW) were also a bit early.

A few Merlins also showed up early. The most unusual was one n. of Corvallis, OR, for several weeks in August (Bill & Rita Snyder) and there were 4 Washington reports in August. There was only one Gyrfalcon reported, an immature in Whatcom, WA, Nov. 7 (Paul DeBruyn, *fide* TW). A Prairie Falcon at O.S. Sept. 15 (DPa) was a first for Washington's outer coast, and another was on the Lummi flats, Whatcom, WA, Aug. 31 and later (JD) where now almost regular.

SHOREBIRDS

B & ZS surveyed Oregon beaches for Snowy Plovers this fall. Among those they found on Lane beaches were birds banded in 1990 in Coos, and on Coos beaches they found birds banded in California and a bird banded in 1989 on Lake Abert, Lake, OR. In addition, a Snowy Plover was at the Necanicum R. mouth, OR, Nov. 10 (MP), four were at Bayocean, OR, Oct. 24 to December (HN), up to five were at Leadbetter Pt., Pacific, WA, through Sept. 8 (AS, MO), and one was at O.S. Sept. 12 (EH).

Four Am. Avocets in w. Oregon were more than usual. One was at Sauvie Aug. 7 (David Bailey), two at Bandon Aug. 26 for the 5th Coos record (LT), and one at Yachats Aug. 25–30 (*fide* Dfa). Willet reports from areas where casual were one at Lummi Flats, WA, Aug. 19 (JD), another at Bayocean Spit, OR, Aug. 12 (NL), two at the W.W.R.D. Sept. 27 (MLD) for the 3rd Walla Walla record, and two at Kinney L., Wallowa, OR, Sept. 3 (PS). An ad. Gray-tailed Tattler from Bandon Aug. 18 (†JG, GL) furnished a first Oregon record.

There were 10+ Long-billed Curlews along the Oregon coast (v.o.), well above average. Marbled Godwit numbers were also

above typical levels. The 270 at Tokeland Nov. 4 (RM) likely made a record high for Washington. In Oregon, at least 73 godwits were reported from 8 coastal locations. At least one imm. Bar-tailed Godwit was on Willapa Bay, WA, Aug. 25 (†NL) through Oct. 6. On the Oregon coast, imm. Bar-tailed Godwits were seen at Bayocean Spit Sept. 7 (RS) and at Bandon Sept. 8 into October (†BT, JG). The four sightings of imm. Hudsonian Godwit could have been the same individual. One was in flight over O.S. Sept. 8 (†BSu) and one was seen Sept. 8 & 13 at nearby Leadbetter Pt. (†NL, WC). The 4th was near the Siuslaw R. mouth, Lane, Sept. 18 (B & ZS). These made both Oregon's and Washington's 11th records.

A juv. Great Knot found at Bandon Sept. 1 (†NL, JG, m.ob.) stayed through Sept. 19, for the first confirmed North American record outside of Alaska. Red Knots were scarce on the coast (v.o.). In the interior, one was at the W.W.R.D. Sept. 10 (KK) for the 2nd local record and one was at the nearby Yakima R. delta Sept. 24–26 (RW) for the 3rd local record. At least 41 Semipalmated Sandpipers were found in the interior and 29 on the west side.

What has happened to Pectoral Sandpipers? Numbers were abysmal again, with most counts of fewer than ten. Westside peaks were 32 at Sauvie Oct. 1 (NL) and 15 at Aberdeen, WA, Aug. 29 (G & WH) and the eastside peak count was 46 at Malheur Sept. 10–11 (GI). The Sharp-tailed Sandpiper picture was mixed. For the 2nd consecutive year, there was only one Washington report, inland at the Yakima R. mouth Sept. 26 (RW) for the 2nd local record. In Oregon, there were six sightings at Bandon Sept. 22 (Dan van der Broek) to Oct. 28 (LT). One was at Sauvie Sept. 14–19 (HN, NL) and one was at S.J.C.R. Oct. 29 (Lisa Campbell *et al.*).

An ad. Curlew Sandpiper molting out of breeding plumage at O.S. Sept. 19 (†EH, †JS) was the 5th Washington sighting. Buff-breasted Sandpipers had nine reports from w. Washington and seven from w. Oregon. Buff-breasteds are very rare on the east side, one near

Prineville Sept. 24–Oct. 5 (DA, DL) was a first for Crook. Four imm. Ruffs reported from the Grays Harbor area Aug. 25–Sept. 16 (v.o.) and two from the Oregon coast Sept. 16 & 17 (JG, B & ZS) made an average number. Red-necked Phalarope numbers were low. The peak count off Westport was 184 Aug. 18 (TW), about 10% of average. Interior numbers seemed average, with a peak count of 261 at Summer L., OR, Aug. 16 (CM). Red Phalaropes were low until late November. The peak of 34 off Westport Aug. 18 (TW) was not impressive. There was one unusual inland sighting in early fall, a breeding-plumaged adult Sept. 2 at Everett, WA (EH). The storms of Nov. 25 caused thousands of Red Phalaropes to pass near shore, estimated at 15,000 passing S past Cape Arago (NL). One at Yamhill, OR, Nov. 26 (Tom Love) was the only inland sighting associated with this storm.

JAEGERS TO ALCIDS

The only interior report of Parasitic Jaeger was at Malheur Sept. 14 (Fred Zeillemaker). No S Polar Skuas were reported off Oregon, and there were only 4 sightings out of Westport between Sept. 8 and Oct. 7 (TW), well below average.

Franklin's Gull numbers on the west side this fall were never higher than three immatures in any locality from the same Puget Sound locales that in earlier years held 10 to 15 birds. Eight first-year birds were sighted in w. Washington and two in w. Oregon. One near Salem Nov. 11 (BB) was late, and a Marion first. The 4 eastside records included two at Clarkston, WA, Sept. 15 (AF), one at Richland, WA, Oct. 17–25 (RW), and one in Morrow, OR, Nov. 22 (CC). The only Little Gull was an adult at Seattle Sept. 22 (EH). Over 250 Bonaparte's Gulls migrating south in e. Washington Oct. 27–28 (AS, BT, BL) was a large movement for the interior, but timing was typical.

Heermann's Gulls were high on the Washington coast, with peak counts of 1820 at Grays Harbor Aug. 18 (TW) and 2000 at Willapa Bay Sept. 11 (RM). One ad Heermann's at

Thompson Res. Oct. 16 (†SS) was the 2nd for e. Oregon and may correlate with big coastal numbers this fall. At least five Mew Gulls were in the interior. Two adults at Spokane (JW) were the only ones away from the Columbia R. Two first-year Thayer's Gulls were reported from the interior, where probably scarce annual migrants: at Grand Coulee, Grant, WA, Oct. 28 (AS, BT, BL) and at the Wenatchee R. mouth, Chelan, WA, Nov. 28 (JT).

The six Glaucous Gulls reported were all from w. Oregon. They included one rare adult at Moolack Beach, Lincoln, Nov. 29 (DFi). In the interior, a Black-legged Kittiwake on the Snake R. Nov. 10 (Ray Korpi) furnished a 2nd *Asotin* record and an ad. Sabine's Gull on Summer Lake, OR, Sept. 26 (SS) was also rare.

S.A.

This fall brought the 2nd major incursion of Elegant Terns into our Region; the previous one was in 1983, while 1987 saw a smaller flight. The first terns appeared in July along the s. Oregon coast. By Aug. 11 they had reached the S.J.C.R. (*fide* Kamal Islam) and by Aug. 26 they were at Willapa Bay, WA (†RM). Numbers of Elegant Terns along the Oregon coast diminished rapidly after late August, when they were just appearing in numbers on the s. Washington coast—the first report for Grays Harbor was not until Sept. 13 (†H. & J. MacKenzie). Counts in Washington were lower than in 1983; maximum on Willapa Bay was 104 at Tokeland Sept. 1 (RM), and none was reported north of Grays Harbor in 1990. This year's flight may have involved no more than 300 terns. The last report was of four at Tokeland Oct. 19 (G & WH). The few observations on age indicated they were largely adults (RM, BT).

Excellent numbers of Com. Terns were reported inside Puget Sound and along the Oregon coast. On Puget Sound, the peak count was 1500 at Point No Point Sept. 4 (VN)

and by mid-September, flocks of 50 to 150 were on the Oregon coast. Arctic Terns were almost unrecorded offshore, but up to 50 were onshore at the Umpqua R. mouth Sept. 11–15 (DI, HN *et al.*). Two in e. Oregon, near Wamic, Sept. 8 (DL) were very rare inland.

Common Murre numbers showed some improvement over last fall (TW, BT), but were still below average. Marbled Murrelets were well reported along the Oregon coast. The highest count was of 135 off Cape Arago Aug. 23 (B & ZS), probably a *Coos* record. KM's surveys in Lincoln found 50 at Yaquina Head Sept. 9, 40 at Yachats Aug. 4, and 30 at Seal Rock Sept. 9. Ancient Murrelets seemed low on Puget Sound; the peak was 90 at Point No Point Nov. 16 (VN). On the Oregon coast, Ancients were more readily found than usual in November. Twenty were at Yaquina Head Nov. 18 (DL), 35 were at Cape Arago Nov. 25 (NL), and they were plentiful along the Curry coast Nov. 24–26 (SS).

Among possible effects of above-average sea surface temperature was the great number of Cassin's Auklets close to shore. The most remarkable counts were from Oregon's Lincoln coast: 3000 seen from the Rocky Cr. viewpoint Oct. 30 (PP) and 40/minute passing Boiler Bay in 90 minutes Sept. 12 (PP), and there were counts elsewhere in Oregon of 50–500. In Washington, auklet counts on trips off Westport were below 200 / trip until Oct. 6 when 800+ were found (TW). A molting ad. Horned Puffin off Bandon Sept. 23 (†Michael Price) was the 2nd for *Coos*.

CUCKOOS TO SWALLOWS

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo found dead near Omak, WA, on the incredibly late date of Nov. 5 (R. & J. Wilkinson, ph.), furnished only the 2nd record in Washington in the last 10 years. There were no Snowy Owl reports in the Region. A ♂ Barred Owl was in the Mapleton area of w. Lane during the summer (*fide* Blythe Brown) and one heard at Thornton Cr. Oct. 5 (DFa) was a first for Lincoln. Short-eared Owls were reported sparingly. Boreal Owls

were heard in the Blue Mts., n. of Tollgate, OR (DL), Sept. 9 and in the Okanogan Highlands in the Rogers Lake, WA, area Aug. 25 and Nov. 3 (AS).

A Black Swift near Snohomish Oct. 13 (Ken Brunner) was the latest ever for Washington. An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Malheur Oct. 14 (TC, SS) was a 5th for Oregon and a refuge first. At least three Red-breasted Sapsuckers were found at Malheur Sept. 9 into October (v.o.), probably the highest fall total yet. At least three Red-breasted Sapsuckers were found in Bend in November (TC). A brief survey in November of the area burned during August near Bend found 14 Black-backed, 35 Hairy, and four White-headed woodpeckers (TC, CM). These birds apparently move into newly burned areas rapidly.

A Least Flycatcher among many other *Empidonax* at DeMoss Springs Park, OR, Aug. 23 (PP) and one at Malheur Sept. 15 (TC) were the only reports of this rare migrant. A Gray Flycatcher near Spokane Sept. 2 (JA) was a county first and may be indicative of their increasing range in Washington. The token Tropical Kingbird was one at Yaquina Bay, OR, Oct. 24 (Tricia Heminghaus). Purple Martins at 2 *Whatcom* sites in August (TW) may be evidence of recolonization of n.w. Washington. A Purple Martin in Richland Sept. 4 (RW) provided the first fall record for e. Washington.

CORVIDS TO WARBLERS

Steller's Jays began an incursion into the Columbia Basin. First reports were of four at Irrigon, Morrow, OR, Oct. 28 (CC). During November, they appeared at Touchet and Wallula, WA (MD), and at Boardman, OR (CC). Many more Blue Jays than usual also appeared. Eastern Oregon had at least 9 records. One at Silver Lake Sept. 30 (SS) was the first. During October, records came from Pendleton (PS), Hermiston (CC), Fields (J & KKe), and Malheur (R. Roberts). At least three appeared in Vale, Malheur, in November (Rob Johnson). In Washington, Blue Jays appeared on both sides of the Cascades in October: at

Spokane (Fran Hayward), Clarkston (L. & V. Bradley), Lummi Flats (JD), and Everett (M. Manzanares). There also was some parid movement. *Morrow* in the Columbia Basin had a flock of Mountain Chickadees and two Chestnut-backed Chickadees Oct. 20 (CC, DL), the latter a county first. In w. Oregon, several Mountain Chickadees appeared at Portland (*fide* HN), two were n. of Gold Beach Oct. 13 (DFi), and two were at Lone Ranch Beach Nov. 23–25 (SS, JJ).

The Bewick's Wren expansion in the interior extended to Columbia N.W.R., WA, with one Oct. 4 (RH). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on Bayocean Spit Oct. 25 (DFi) provided only the 4th Oregon n. coast sighting. A Gray-cheeked Thrush was reported at Wallula Oct. 6 (†Ken Knittle, †Joe Evanich) for the first Washington report. A few Bohemian Waxwings appeared by the end of the period along the e. edge of the Region (v.o.).

A Blue-winged Warbler at Anacortes Sept. 17 (†EH, †Jeff Gordon) furnished a first report for Washington. It was an excellent fall for warblers in e. Oregon. A ♂ N. Parula at Malheur Sept. 23–26 (DA) was a rare fall vagrant, more frequent in spring. A Chestnut-sided Warbler at Malheur Sept. 17 (CB) was a more regular fall vagrant. A Magnolia Warbler, another fairly regular fall vagrant, was at Malheur Oct. 5–7 (K & JKe). An imm. ♀ Cape May Warbler at Malheur Sept. 22–24 (SS, JG, ph.) furnished a 5th state record. Black-throated Blue Warbler is another of the more regular vagrants. This fall's included a female at Moro, Sherman, Sept. 9 (PP, GL), a male at Frenchglen Sept. 23 (C. & M. O'Leary), and a female at Malheur Sept. 26 (JJ). An imm. Bay-breasted Warbler at Malheur Sept. 24 (JG) provided the 8th Oregon record. There were five Blackpoll Warbler sightings, all from Malheur, Sept. 9–Oct. 1. A Black-and-white Warbler was at 6 Mile Pond, Catlow Valley, Harney, Sept. 19 (RS). A Worm-eating Warbler at Malheur Sept. 16 (†TC, Dave Stejskal, Tony Greager) furnished a first record for Oregon. The only vagrant found in w. Ore-

gon was a window-killed **Canada Warbler** in Gold Hill, *Jack-son*, Sept. 17 (Robert Nelson), the 4th for the state.

SPARROWS TO FINCHES

An Am. Tree Sparrow at the S.J.C.R. Nov. 18 (MP) was very rare on the outer coast. The only two Clay-colored Sparrow reports were from the s. Oregon coast: North Bend Sept. 20 (BG) and Nesika Beach, *Curry*, Oct. 13 (DFi). A **Lark Bunting** at Malheur Sept. 17–23 (JJ) was the first for the refuge and about the 10th for Oregon. Numbers of White-throated Sparrows were outstanding. Eastern Oregon had at least 27 and there were another five in e. Washington. They were well reported throughout w. Oregon, and w. Washington had at least 15. In contrast, few Harris' Sparrows were reported: four on the west side and three in e. Oregon.

Three Rusty Blackbirds were found: at Aberdeen, WA, Oct. 13 (†RM), Sauvie Oct. 28 (JG), and Eagle Point Nov. 16 (HS). A Great-tailed Grackle at Malheur Oct. 26 (D. Browder) provided the 2nd fall record for Oregon. An **Orchard Oriole** in Brookings, *Curry*, Nov. 12–Dec. 12 (Colin Dillingham, m.ob.) was the 3rd for Oregon.

Two **Bramblings** appeared on the west side for short periods. The 3rd for Oregon was a bird in Florence Oct. 25–31 (Greg Hamman, m.ob.). Washington's 5th was at Sedro Woolley Nov. 6–10 (*vide* TW, ph.). Red Crossbills went almost unreported this fall, except for numbers on San Juan I., WA, in September (EH). White-winged

Crossbills were absent, with only 3 reports from the Cascades (JD, PP) and the Okanogan Highlands (AS).

Initialed observers: (subregional editors in boldface) Jim Acton, David Anderson, C. Baars, **Barb Bellin** (Salem area), **Thais Bock** (Tacoma area), Wilson Cady, Craig Corder, **Tom Crabtree** (e. Oregon), Dick Cronberg, Mike & Merry L. Denny, Jim Dummel, **Merlin & Elsie Eltzroth** (Corvallis area), Darrell Faxon, Dave Fix, Anthony Floyd, Jeff Gilligan, Greg Gillson, Barbara Griffin, Larry Hammond, Elizabeth & Hendrik Herlyn, Randy Hill, Glen & Wanda Hoge, Eugene Hunn, David Irons, Gary Ivey, Jim Johnson, Ken Knittle, **Merlene Koliner** (s.e. Washington), Karen & Jerry Kearney, Bruce Labar, Nick Lethaby, Gerard Lillie, Donna Lusthoff, Phil Mattocks, Larry McQueen, Kathy Merrifield, Craig Miller, **Marjorie Moore** (Rogue valley), Roger Muskat, **Harry Nehls** (w. Oregon), Vic Nelson, Mark Oberle, Hal Opperman, Mike Patterson, Dennis Paulson (DPa), Phil Pickering, Craig Roberts, **Tom Rogers** (e. Washington), Howard Sands, Tom Schooley, Fred Sharpe, Jeff Skriletz, Richard Smith, Andy Stepnewski, Bill & Zannah Stotz, Paul Sullivan, Steve Summers, Bob Sundstrom, Jerry Tangren, Larry Thornburgh, R. Vetter, Terry Wahl, Wayne Weber, Jeff Wisman, Bob Woodley.—**BILL TWEIT**, P.O. Box 1271, Olympia, WA 98507, and **DAVID FIX**, 2611 S.E. 35th Pl., Portland, OR 97202.



Brambling in Florence, Oregon, October 28, 1990. Third state record. Photograph/Jim Johnson.

OREGON/ WASHINGTON REGION

*Bill Tweit and
Jim Johnson*

A severe cold snap that began December 19 and lasted through the first week of January had conspicuous effects on Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Bewick's Wrens, Varied

Thrush, warblers, and sparrows. The remainder of the season was relatively mild, dry in the interior and wetter than normal on much of the westside.

For the third consecutive winter, Bud Anderson and many (97) volunteers conducted a mid-winter survey of the raptor populations on the Skagit and Samish flats of northwestern Washington. The survey was conducted after extensive flooding of much of the survey area. Some portions of the area were under water for up to two weeks, which presumably affected the rodent population and indeed, there appeared to be a shift of raptor numbers to inland, unflooded areas. Red-tailed Hawk numbers were down by 20% but the numbers of N. Harriers were similar to the previous two years.

Other notable aspects of the winter included the highest numbers of Glaucous Gulls ever recorded in the Region, low numbers of the northern raptors (Rough-legged Hawk, Snowy and Short-eared owls), and irruptive movements of jays. Eurasian vagrants included a male Smew on the Columbia River and two more Brambling records.

Regional observers please take note. We have excluded more sightings than we would like from this summary, since they were undocumented. All sightings of rarities should be accompanied with details, especially sightings of species that are still on the review list for each state's records committee.

Abbreviations: Malheur (*Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR*); S.F.W.R.C. (*Skagit Flats Winter Raptor Census, Skagit and Snohomish, WA*); W.W.R.D. (*Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla, WA*).

LOONS TO FALCONS

Four inland records of Pacific Loon (TC, DL, DA, RW, WC) included three from the Columbia R., a normal number for winter. There were no Yellow-billed Loon reports from Washington and no documented reports from Oregon. Normally a few are found. Clark's Grebes were scattered throughout w. Oregon, with six along the outer coast (Ben Fawver,

KM, HN) and two from the Columbia R. (JJ, AS); this may be their normal winter pattern. A Jan. 19 pelagic trip off Westport, WA, found very few tubenoses (TW). The few included three Black-footed and two Laysan albatrosses and 60 N. Fulmars. Two Laysan Albatrosses and three **Mottled Petrels** were reported 45 mi off *Lincoln*, OR, Dec. 11 (†Tom Staudt). The Mottled Petrels provided the 4th Oregon report. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel in Puget Sound off Seattle Jan. 14 (Mike Gracz) was unusual for mid-winter and a *King* first.

American White Pelicans have become annual winterers in the Columbia Basin. Peak count this winter was of 38 on the Hanford Reach of the Columbia R. Dec. 26 (RH). An early arrival was set at Malheur with seven seen at Harney L. Feb. 21 (RV). The only winter report of Brown Pelican was one at Yaquina Head, OR, Jan. 13 (KM). Remnants from the minor fall flight of Cattle Egrets lingered until Dec. 16 at Bellingham, WA (PL, SF).

This fall's surveys indicate that the total of the Siberian population of Snow Geese nesting on Wrangell I. has declined to 63,500. Of these, 33,500 were counted this winter on the Fraser, Skagit and Stillaguamish R. deltas of s. British Columbia and n.w. Washington (Sean Boyd). Soviet ornithologists are worried that another summer with low reproductive success could push the population to critically low levels. A Ross' Goose wintered at Nehalem meadows, *Tillamook* (*vide* HN); they are now almost annual in winter in w. Oregon. Several mid-winter records of Wood Ducks in the interior were of interest. Three were at Omak, WA, Jan. 9 (SJ), one was at the mouth of the Grand Ronde R., *Asotin*, WA, Jan. 12 (MK), and four were at Prineville, *Crook*, OR, Jan. 29 (CM). The only Eur. Green-winged Teal report was of one at Kent, WA, Jan. 26 (EH); generally there are 5+ sightings per winter. Eurasian Wigeon counts from the interior were well above average. The high count was *nine* at Ana Res., *Lake*, OR, during December (SS), and 12 others were reported from all parts of the

interior. The only hybrid Eur. X Am. Wigeon reports were one at Seattle Jan. 20 (Gauker Hjartarson) and two on the Skagit Flats Feb. 16 (BT); we suspect many observers are not checking for hybrids.

The Tufted Duck X scaup that has wintered in Seattle for 5 winters was seen through Feb. 17 (Dick Veit), and a pure ♂ Tufted Duck was at the Sheridan Sewage Ponds, *Yamhill*, OR, Jan. 26–Feb. 6 (Bob Barnes). While coastal observers complain of a long-term decline in Greater Scaup numbers, Columbia R. observers are noting larger wintering numbers. A flock of 2500 on the Columbia R. at Biggs, OR, Feb. 6 (DI, DFi) was an outstanding count. More mundane numbers, flocks of 10–200, were reported between Mosier, OR (DL), and Brewster, WA (SJ). Interior reports of Oldsquaw included an imm. male at Summer L., OR, Dec. 17 (MSL) and a pair at W.W.R.D. Feb. 16 (M & MLD). Columbia R. observers are also finding larger numbers of Barrow's Goldeneyes wintering on the river than previously expected. Peak counts were 94 at Biggs Feb. 18 (NL) and 30 at Richland, WA, Jan. 1 (AS). A ♂ Smew found on the Columbia R. at Stevenson, WA, Jan. 26 (WC, ph.) was the first confirmed for Washington. After tantalizing Oregon observers for a couple of days, it finally moved across the river for that state's first record. The Smew remained until Feb. 23, and was most often found at Government Cove, *Hood River*, OR (m.ob.). It is worth noting that a ♂ Smew was seen in the same area Dec. 28, 1989 (†Christina Duchesne).

Very early Turkey Vulture reports included three at Detroit Lake, *Linn*, OR, Jan. 26 (Kathi Crabtree) and one at Dungeness, WA, Feb. 1–2 (D & SS). An Osprey at Bonneville Dam on the Columbia R. Jan. 27 (JG, Owen Schmidt) was very unusual for mid-winter there. Black-shouldered Kites were reported from 4 locations in w. Washington: near McChord, *Pierce*, Nov. 30 (*vide* John Gatchet), near Toledo, *Lewis*, Jan. 2 (Wendell Hoag), at Johns River along Grays Harbor Feb. 21 (Mark Ostwald) and at their only regular locale,

near Raymond (Ruth Taylor). In w. Oregon, kite numbers in the Rogue valley were lower than the last 2 years (MM) and numbers seemed reduced on the coast as well (NL). Several Bald Eagle reports suggested their numbers were above average this winter. The S.F.W.R.C. found 308 eagles, up about 20% from the last 2 years (BA). The count on the Skagit R. was approximately 400 eagles (*vide* BA), the highest in 5 years. In the interior, over 100, an exceptionally high number for e. Oregon, were around Harney L., Malheur, Feb. 17 (TC, SS).

Northern Harrier numbers were average on the S.F.W.R.C. (BA) and above average in the interior at Ellensburg, WA (PM), and Summer L., OR (MSL). The three w. Oregon reports of Red-shouldered Hawk included one very far north along the coast at Cannon Beach Jan. 19 (Tim Janzen). Red-tailed Hawk numbers were down by 20% on the S.F.W.R.C. (BA). "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk reports included two on the S.F.W.R.C. and three in the interior (JE, NL, PM). Rough-legged Hawks occurred in below-average numbers in all parts of the Region (M & MLD, NL, RH, JJ, TC, MSL). The S.F.W.R.C. found 39, a 43% drop from the high count in 1989 (BA).

The Merlin count of 11 on the S.F.W.R.C. was well above the previous two counts of seven and five, while the Peregrine count of six was equal to the prior counts of six and five. Merlin and Peregrine reports from the rest of the Region indicated usual numbers. It was a slow winter for Gyrfalcons, with single birds reported from n.w. Washington (BA) and 3 locations in e. Washington (AS, JA, EH). The only Prairie Falcon reports from west of the Cascades were two in Oregon (Tom Love, ME), unusually low for the last 3 winters, but not for the long term.

CRANES TO ALCIDS

A Sandhill Crane wintered at Carlsborg, *Clallam*, WA (D & SS), well north of regular wintering grounds in the lower Columbia R. mouth. The 'mild winter' shorebirds such as Semi-

palmated Plover, W. Sandpiper, and Long-billed Dowitcher were virtually unreported this winter, either as a result of reporting patterns or climate. Nine Snowy Plovers were reported from *Lincoln* and *Tillamook* beaches (*vide* HN and DFa) where regular most winters. Winter reports of Lesser Yellowlegs in our Region are like winter reports of House Wrens: few reports have plausible details. However, one at Netarts Bay, *Tillamook*, Dec. 30 (†GL) was credible. A very early migrant Marbled Godwit was at Malheur Feb. 28 (*vide* GI). The Region's only sizeable flock of wintering godwits and curlews, at Tokeland, WA, included 35 Long-billed Curlews and 230 Marbled Godwits (AS) this winter. A decade ago, wintering Whimbrels were almost unknown in the Region. Recently, they have wintered annually at Ediz Hook and Tokeland, WA, where peak counts were four and five respectively (EH, BSu). A Red Phalarope at Washougal, *Clark*, WA, Dec. 13 provided a first local record (WC). Up to 250 Red Phalaropes were onshore at Newport, OR, Jan. 13 (Hendrik Herlyn) and smaller numbers, totalling 20+, were onshore in the Grays Harbor area Jan. 13–15 (G & WH). Ten were found on the Jan. 19 pelagic trip off Westport (TW).

No Pomarine Jaegers were found on the January pelagic trip off Westport, but two were seen from shore in Oregon: one off Cape Blanco Dec. 2 and one off Cape Meares Dec. 31 (GL). An ad. Little Gull at Point No Point in Puget Sound Feb. 16–18 (VN) was the only report. Thayer's Gull is another species that appears to be more regular in the interior than was formerly thought. In e. Washington, singles were seen at 3 locations along the Columbia R. from late November to Jan. 1 (Jerry Tangren, RW, PL, SF, BT). They appear to be more unusual in e. Oregon; one at Haystack Res. Feb. 16 (LR) was *Jefferson's* 2nd. A W. Gull at Umatilla, OR, Feb. 3 (CC) was very rare that far inland. This was an exceptional winter for Glaucous Gulls in most of the Region, both for total numbers and number of adults. In most winters, ad Glaucous are not

found in our Region. Western Oregon had the highest number: 17 birds, including at least three adults, along the outer coast and Columbia R. In e. Washington at least eight individuals, including three adults, were found at 3 locations (RW, JA, CC). In w. Washington, at least 14 birds were reported from 10 locations (m.ob.) There were no reports from e. Oregon, where Glaucous are highly unusual.

There were also several reports of gulls initially identified as Iceland Gulls, although after additional scrutiny none of them was confirmed. Several of the individuals were very puzzling, and most of the serious gull observers in the Region remain as puzzled as ever about definitive separation of Kumlien's from Thayer's. An ad. Red-legged Kittiwake was briefly seen on the Jan. 19 pelagic off Westport (†DP, †EH), for the 2nd or 3rd Washington record. Only a handful of Ancient Murrelets were sighted on n. Puget Sound, with the last Jan. 19 (TB); low numbers were found on Puget Sound this fall also. In comparison, above average numbers were found along the outer coast of Oregon this fall, and good numbers remained along the south coast into the winter. Up to 50 were at Port Orford (GL), 27 were at Yaquina Head (KM), and smaller numbers were reported from many other locations.

OWLS TO TROGLODYTES

There was only one Snowy Owl report on the west side this winter: one Dec. 15 on the Skagit Flats (*vide* Bob Kuntz). In e. Washington, up to four were near Moses Lake (HHu) and up to seven were in the Harrington–Reardan area of *Lincoln* (JA, John Martin). Short-eared Owls were scarce throughout the Region, with no more than two reported from any locale. A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird was watched Dec. 18–25 at the same S. Ashland feeder patronized by a male last spring (*vide* MM). There are only a couple of prior winter records for Costa's in Oregon. Rufous Hummingbirds returned on time: Feb. 6 in Coos, OR (*vide* LT), Feb. 21 at Astoria, OR (Alan Richards), and Feb. 24 at

Cascade Locks, OR (JE). An Anna's Hummingbird nest with young was found in Seattle during February (*vide* Rob Thorne), and other February reports indicated some survived the freeze.

Three Acorn Woodpeckers discovered in The Dalles Jan. 21 (Linda Weiland, Pat Mueller, DL) and seen through the winter represent a range extension into e. Oregon. This group is 10 mi east of Washington's only known population in Lyle, *Klickitat*, where up to five were noted through the winter. An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Curry Feb. 24–Mar. 2 (Colin Dillingham, †AB) may have been Oregon's 6th. A cold snap almost invariably drives large numbers of Red-breasted Sapsuckers into the lowlands and the Dec. 19 snap was no exception. The numbers are best reflected in the CBCs taken after the freeze, such as 43 on the Skagit CBC Dec. 23. They were widely reported, especially in the Seattle area, through the rest of December.

Say's Phoebes arrived throughout the interior in mid-February; the earliest was at Omak, WA, Feb. 12–15 (SJ). Tree and Violet-green swallows were not widely reported until mid-February, somewhat late for Tree Swallows and about average for Violet-greens.

The jay incursion into the Columbia Basin and nearby areas apparently lasted the winter. Steller's Jays were in above average numbers in Ellensburg (PM) and were found in areas where usually absent. Fifteen were in the Hermiston–Irrigon area, OR (CC), three were at the Snake R. mouth, WA (RW), and singles were in Clarkston, WA (MK), and Wapato, *Yakima*, WA (AS). The Blue Jay movement was more either more widespread or more widely detected than the Steller's movement. In the interior, four wintered in the Hermiston, OR, area (CC), one was in St. John, *Whitman*, WA, in December (Eileen Schmidt), one was in Colbert, *Spokane*, WA (JA), and singles were in Ephrata (*vide* Ron Friesz) and Moses Lake (*vide* HHu), WA. On the west side, one wintered in Lake Bay, *Pierce*, WA (*vide* TB). Maybe

associated with this movement, a flock of eight Pinyon Jays in the Emigrant L. area, *Jackson*, OR, Dec. 6–Jan. 20 (MM, RS) was quite unexpected on the west side. Three Am. Crows spent the winter in Bend, OR (TC), for the first time in 5 years.

There was a low-density, but widespread, invasion of Mountain Chickadees into w. Oregon. Only singles were reported from any location, but sightings were distributed from Brookings to Portland (m.ob.). A Pygmy Nuthatch was in Ashland during January and February (RS); they are extremely rare in *Jackson*, or anywhere in w. Oregon. The Bewick's Wren range expansion into the interior continued with four birds at 2 new locations along the lower Little Spokane R., *Spokane*, WA (JA). One on the East Canal at Malheur Dec. 17 (SS) was in the only area in *Harney* where they are established. The bad news is that very few were left in *Walla Walla* after the freeze (M & MLD); they were almost common in riparian areas there prior to this winter.

THRUSHES TO WEAVER FINCHES

The first W. Bluebirds returning to breeding areas in Washington were seen Feb. 10 at Fort Lewis (George Walter, Liz Hoenig). Ten Feb. 2 near Sequim Bay, *Clallam*, WA (Dudley Doss), were in an area where breeding has not been documented for decades. Maybe they are recolonizing? Elsewhere, numbers of returning bluebirds increased throughout February (m.ob.). Varied Thrush mortality during the December freeze was heavy. Shortly after the freeze began, AF found 269 live and 63 dead Varied Thrushes Dec. 22 on a 14-mi stretch near Yaquina Bay, OR. Other observers in the same area found them picking through oyster shell piles alongside Black Turnstones (Range Bayer, Robert Olson). A Brown Thrasher wintering in Frenchglen, OR (SS, m.ob.), provided about the 4th winter record for this Oregon vagrant. Large flocks of Bohemian Waxwings were found along the e. border of Washington during December (M & MLD). Smaller num-

bers than average were found in their usual range along the east slope of the Cascades extending south to Ellensburg (SJ, PM) and those numbers diminished after December. In e. Oregon, small flocks were found in the northeast (Paul Sullivan, CC) in December. There was only one *Harney* report: six at Burns Feb. 24 (RV). Many were in *Lake* (SS, MSL), but few were noted all winter in Bend (TC). None was noted on the west side; usually a few are reported. Northern Shrike numbers on both sides of the mountains seemed below average this winter (G & WH, BT).

Apparently few Yellow-rumped Warblers survived the freeze in w. Washington (Rob Thorne) or the interior (M & MLD, CC). Townsend's Warblers may have been similarly affected: the only post-freeze reports in w. Washington were of birds at suet (Patrick Sullivan, Ilse Allen). The only Palm Warbler report came from the Oregon coast, at Waldport Dec. 30 (*vide* DFa).

A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a rare vagrant, was at an Ashland, OR, feeder Jan. 12–13 (*vide* MM). Reports of Am. Tree Sparrows totalled almost 150 birds, mostly in the northern half of e. Washington. This large number is partly the result of excellent coverage of northern Washington (SJ), but it also seems to have been a good winter for them. An ad. and an imm. Chipping Sparrow in Washtucna, *Adams*, Dec. 12 (†SF, †PL) furnished the first documented winter records for e. Washington. A

couple of Savannah Sparrow congregations were noted shortly after the freeze: 48 near Sequim, WA, Dec. 21 (Scott Atkinson) and 20 at Umatilla N.W.R., OR, Dec. 23 (CC). Only small numbers were noted later. On the same Yaquina Bay transect mentioned for Varied Thrush, AF found 779 live and 114 dead Fox Sparrows. Both the live and the dead count are remarkably large.

The only Swamp Sparrows reported in Washington were two at Willapa N.W.R. Jan. 5 (NL), well below totals of the past few years. However, 22 were found throughout w. Oregon (m.ob.), about average. The exceptional numbers of White-throated Sparrows reported in fall carried through into the winter in the interior, with five in e. Washington (RW, CC, M & MLD, VN) and one in e. Oregon (JE). Six reports from w. Washington and 18 from w. Oregon were about average. Seven Harris' Sparrows in e. Washington and five in e. Oregon were somewhat below average, as were three reports from w. Washington and one from w. Oregon.

The Orchard Oriole found this fall in Brookings for the 3rd Oregon record was last seen Dec. 12 (AB). Tricolored Blackbirds wintered for the 2nd consecutive year in central Oregon. Thirty were at Powell Butte, *Crook*, Feb. 3 (TC, LR) and up to five were at another *Crook* location Dec. 2–Jan. 12 (TC, LR). One was at Summer L. Feb. 16–22 (Anne & Merle Archie, SS). A Rusty Blackbird



This Brambling in Grays Harbor County, Washington, on January 19, 1991, provided the state's third record in three months—and seventh record ever. Photograph/V.J. Anderson.

at Washburn I., near the Okanogan R. mouth, Feb. 17 (†S) furnished the 3rd winter record for e. Washington. After its 5th record this fall, Washington was graced with two more **Brambling** records: a male near Elma, *Grays Harbor*, Jan. 20 to Feb. 26 (Vickie Anderson, ph., m.ob.) and one at Port Angeles Dec. 14–Feb. 28 (*fide* D & SS, ph.). The only two Com. Redpolls reported each provided a first record: one was in Shelton, *Mason, WA*, Feb. 22–23 (Andrew Beelik) and another was videotaped in Reedsport, *Douglas, OR*, Feb. 19 (Kathy Crocker).

EXOTICA

A Barnacle Goose was at College Farm, *Walla Walla, WA*, Nov. 10–Dec. 10 (M & MLD). A flamingo (sp.) was at the Yakima R. mouth, Richland, *WA*, Feb. 9–Mar. 4 (RW).

Corrigendum: The breeding record of Black-chinned Sparrow in Oregon in summer 1990 was the 2nd for Oregon. The first was on Roxy Anne Butte, *Jackson*, in 1970 (Otis Swisher, SS).

Initialed observers, subregional editors in boldface: Jim Acton, Bud Anderson, David Anderson, Alan Barron, Thais Bock, Wilson Cady, Craig Corder, **Tom Crabtree** (e. Oregon), Mike & Merty Lynn Denny, **Merlin Eltzroth** (Corvallis area), Joe Evanich, Darrel Faxon, Shawneen Finnegan, Dave Fix, Anthony Floyd, Jeff Gilligan, Randy Hill, Glen & Wanda Hoge, Eugene Hunn, Holly Hutzell, Dave Irons, Gary Ivey, Stuart Johnston, **Merlene Kolliner** (s.e. Washington), Paul Lehman, Nick Lethaby, Gerard Lillie, Donna Lusthoff, **Phil Mattocks** (Washington), Kathy Merrifield, Craig Miller, **Margorie Moore** (Rogue valley), **Harry Nehls** (w. Oregon), Vic Nelson, Dennis Paulson, Lou Rems, **Tom Rogers** (e. Washington), Martin St. Louis, Ray Skibby, **Dory & Stan Smith** (*Clallam*), Andy Stepnewski, Steve Summers, Bob Sundstrom, Larry Thornburgh, R. Vetter, Terry Wahl, Robert Woodley.—**BILL TWEIT**, P.O. Box 1271, **Olympia, WA 98507**, and **JIM JOHNSON**, 914 NE 44th, Apt. 3, **Portland, OR 97213**.

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

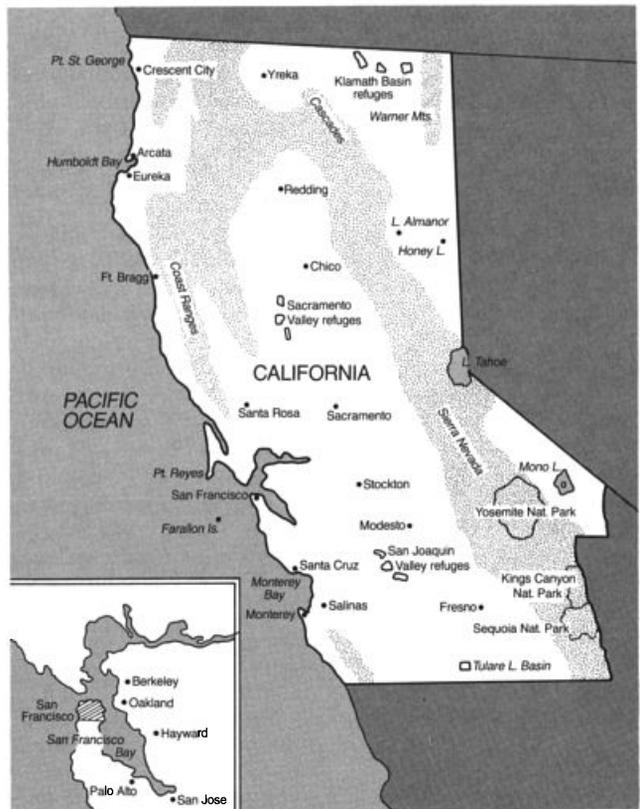
*David G. Yee,
Stephen F. Bailey, and
Bruce E. Deuel*

More *Pterodromas* graced our ocean waters, Swainson's Hawks were confirmed wintering in the Central Valley, and Yellow Rail was again found along the north coast. However, amid these highlights were the Region's fifth straight year of drought, and an Arctic blast that set record low temperatures during the last week of December. These events appeared to have a profound effect on local wintering waterfowl populations, distributing them in large numbers over atypical areas. Most striking was how the Big Freeze affected insectivores and nectarivores. The length and severity of the freeze caused massive vegetation and insect die-offs. Many noted the drop in hummingbird, Tree Swallow, and warbler numbers during and after the freeze. Rich Stallcup felt Townsend's Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets in coastal Marin County may have suffered mortality rates in excess of 90%!

Abbreviations: C.A.S. (*California Academy of Sciences*); C.V. (*Central Valley*); D.F.G. (*Department of Fish and Game*); E.O.P. (*End of Period*); F.I. (*Southeast Farallon Island*); S.F. (*San Francisco*); ph. (*photo on file with Regional Editors*). All records from F.I. should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory. Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS TO CORMORANTS

Inland Pacific Loons were at L. Shastina, *Siskiyou*, Dec. 14 (RE) and O'Neill Forebay, *Merced*, Dec. 30 (RAE). The lone documented Yellow-billed Loon frequented Moss Landing Jan. 10–Feb. 13 (REM, †DR, †m.ob.). A Red-necked Grebe was rare away from tidewater at Overfelt Gardens, *San Jose*, Dec. 18 (D. Johnson). Roughly 500,000 Eared Grebes were still on Mono L. Dec. 30 (D. Banta, ES). Such large numbers last



lingered into December–January in 1987–1988. The S. Marin CBC total of 536 Clark's Grebes Dec. 29 set a new continental CBC record.

The 1140 N. Fulmars counted from Pigeon Pt. Dec. 29 (BS) established a new high for *San Mateo*. Eight **Mottled Petrels** from 39 mi w.n.w. of Patricks Pt., *Humboldt*, to 36 mi w.s.w. of Point St. George, *Del Norte*, Dec. 10 were almost expected, but a **Murphy's Petrel** at the latter location (all †M. Force, T. Staudt) was seasonally unprecedented (see AB 43(3): 400–415 and AB 45(1):146). Flesh-footed Shearwaters offshore *Monterey* Feb. 2 (RLCL) & 9 (DLSH) may have been the same bird. Ashy Storm-Petrel is rare in winter, especially near shore, but one was off Bodega Head Jan. 27 (M. Williams).

Double-crested Cormorants were extraordinarily abundant in *San Joaquin*, with maxima of 1500 at the Stockton sewage ponds Jan. 30 (WRH) and 2200 roosting on Empire Tract Feb. 22 (DGY). The drought and strong shad runs in the *San Joaquin R.* were possible explanations (DGY). Two Brandt's and three Pelagic cormorants were deep inside south S.F. Bay (PJM, RJR, ES) and another Pelagic was found inland to

Benicia, *Solano*, Dec. 17 (ABtt, G. Karr, V. Coburn).

EGRETS TO DUCKS

A most unusual Snowy Egret with entirely yellow legs was found at L. Earl, *Del Norte*, Feb. 2–3 (ph. ADB). This could complicate identification of young Little Blue Herons! The hybrid Snowy Egret X Little Blue Heron spent its 4th winter at the south end of S.F. Bay (m.ob.). A flock of 90 Cattle Egrets on Bouldin I., *San Joaquin*, Dec. 1 (DGY, WRH) was the only large group noted. The Sebastopol/Santa Rosa **Wood Stork** remained until Dec. 28 (ph. DN, m.ob.), was seen at Pt. Reyes Dec. 29 (D. Weintraub), and was found dead near Pigeon Pt. Jan. 2 (P. Gandy-Jaureguy, *C.A.S.), a first for *San Mateo*.

Over 47,000 Tundra Swans counted on the Stockton CBC set a new national CBC record. As many as four "Bewick's" Swans wintered in the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta (MJL, SNGH, LJP *et al.*) and another was seen at Pt. Arena, *Mendocino*, Dec. 27 (R. Alexander). An adult and four imm. Trumpeter Swans were present in the Arcata Bottoms Dec. 24–Jan. 6 (S. Miller, †FJB,

†BBA), our only verified report this season. Coastal goose reports included 42 Greater White-fronted, 10 Snow, and 19 Ross' (including a high of 12 in the Monterey area). Two Emperor Geese appeared on F.I. Jan. 25 (†ph. J. Walsh). One stayed through E.O.P. but the other left around Feb. 1 and was probably the same individual that frequented Pt. Reyes Feb. 11—E.O.P. (†PP, m.ob.). Another was found at Colusa N.W.R. Dec. 8 (†MJL). Two Brant and a Barnacle Goose were mixed with Aleutian Canada Geese near Grimes, *Colusa*, Dec. 19 (RMcM). Was the latter the same bird as in 1985, a new escapee, or are we seeing a pattern here? Stayed tuned.

Eight Eur. Green-winged Teal (including a Eur. X Am. hybrid) reported this winter indicated interest in this form is not dead in the Region. After an absence of 2 months, the ♂ Garganey was present at the Bolinas sewer ponds Dec. 29—Jan. 5 (†DaS, m.ob.). Numbers of Blue-winged Teal (55) and Eur. Wigeon (74 plus two hybrids) were above average. Over 3600 Canvasbacks were found on the Stockton CBC Dec. 15 (*vide* DGY).

The male Tufted Duck wintering at Rodeo Lagoon, *Marin*, until Jan. 21 (†D. Cunningham, m.ob.) was thought to be the same bird present at Sutro Baths, S.F., Jan. 18—E.O.P. (m.ob.). A female described from Bouldin I. Dec. 15 (†MJL, MFe) was refound on the Stockton sewer ponds Dec. 18 (†DGY) for only the 3rd or 4th C.V. record. Another female was present at the s. end of Mare I., *Solano*, Feb. 11 (†DASH). Three Tufted Ducks were reported without details. Greater Scaup are regular inland at certain reservoirs, but 150 at O'Neill Forebay Jan. 20 (DGY, WRH) was a large number. Inland a ♀ Oldsquaw at the Hwy 16 Trestle Ponds Dec. 22 (MP *et al.*) was *Yolo's* first, and one at Mono Lake County Park Dec. 30—Jan. 8 (†ES, L. Horn) was the 2nd in that area. The total of 134 Barrow's Goldeneyes reported was down 30% from the previous 2-yr average. A male near Lucerne, *Lake*, Dec. 2—Jan. 16 (GC0, JRW) and two birds near the Mad R. mouth, *Humboldt*, Jan. 5—Feb.

7 (†FJB, RLeV, GSL) were in unusual areas. Many observers commented on the abundance of Hooded Mergansers, capped by 150 on Putah Cr., *Napa/Solano*, Jan. 15 (FGB).

RAPTORS

Twenty-eight Bald Eagles in the Carson R. Valley, *Alpine*, Jan. 12 included many immatures, and was the largest number in 10 years of coverage (WEH). A Red-shouldered Hawk on the L. Almanor CBC Dec. 18 (HG) was rare in the n. Sierra. Two imm. Broad-winged Hawks began the winter in w. *Marin* but neither persisted. One in Inverness Dec. 15—16 was last seen before the Big Freeze (RS). The other was in Bolinas Dec. 14 (KH), but its tail and other feathers were found Dec. 31 (DaS, *C.A.S.).

Five Harlan's-type Red-tailed Hawks were reported, two with full details: w. of Los Banos Dec. 7 (†SBT, P. Delevoryas) and on Bouldin I., *San Joaquin*, Jan. 16 (†DGY). A third

S.A.

With numerous December—February reports of Swainson's Hawks in the delta region of *San Joaquin* during recent years, it has been suggested that some actually winter in this area (AB 43:362 & 44:323). This was confirmed in 1990—1991, primarily on Venice and Bouldin Is., and also in portions of *Sacramento* and *Contra Costa* (DGY, WRH). Most startling was 28 birds flying into an evening roost on Andrus I., *Sacramento*, Dec. 1. While this number was not seen subsequently, up to 15 birds were consistently observed scattered over various delta islands through mid-February. Curiously, over 90% of the birds were dark morph adults. Many questions arise; foremost among them are, from where do these birds come and how long have they been wintering? A clue to the latter question may be in their noted behavior of feeding on small rodents behind tractors discing corn fields. Local farmers stated that this winter farming procedure was started in the late 1960s when delta farmers switched to a corn-wheat farming rotation.—DGY

description lacked the observer's name! A very light Red-tailed Hawk at Sargent's Landing, *Santa Clara*, Jan. 27 (†MMR, JiC) was described better than previous reports of "Kridler's," but probably most such birds are unusually pale western Red-taileds. Rough-legged Hawks were generally scarce, with 126 on the Fall R. Mills CBC (BY *et al.*) the only large number reported. Among unprecedented numbers of Merlins wintering in *Santa Clara*, mostly in urban habitats, last year's ad. ♂ *richardsoni* returned to Mountain View (MMR).

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

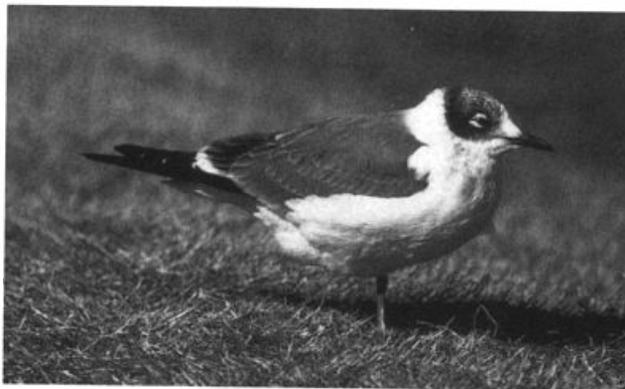
A Yellow Rail was found on Samoa Spit, *Humboldt*, Feb. 10 (†T. Leskew), in the same area and by the same method (flushed by a dog) as one in 1987. Better than in recent years, a minimum of 11 Black Rails in 4 S.F. Bay area marshes were seen, but one was eaten by a Great Egret at Benicia S.P., *Solano*, Dec. 2 (RLCL *et al.*).

A Lesser Golden-Plover at Bract Tract Dec. 15 (AEn *et al.*) furnished only the 2nd winter *San Joaquin* record. The Big Freeze was a disaster for Killdeer in *Marin* (RS) and *Humboldt* (FJB) as birds found it impossible to obtain food in the frozen ground. Mountain Plovers were absent from Panoche Valley, *San Benito*, where they normally winter, but made noteworthy appearances elsewhere, with four at L. Shastina, *Siskiyou*, Dec. 15 (†RE), 70—80 in the *San Joaquin Delta* Dec. 15—Feb. 3 (AEn, S. & L. Stocking *et al.*), and one at Monterey Bay Academy, *Santa Cruz*, Jan. 1—4 (DLSu). Two Black-necked

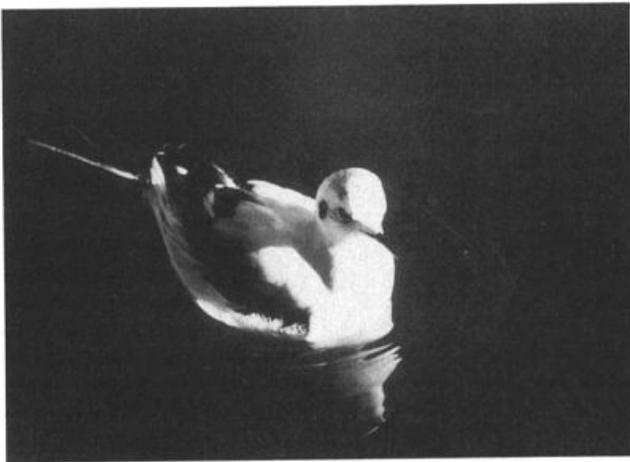
Stilts on F.I. Jan. 2 provided a first island record, and 14 coastal birds from Bolinas Lagoon n. to Arcata Marsh, all after Dec. 30, were unprecedented in winter. Displacement by the Big Freeze is suspected. Three Dunlins at Mono L. Jan. 1—2 (ES *et al.*) were first winter records there. A Ruff was at Moonsglow Dairy, *Monterey*, Feb. 10 (†HG).

JAEGERS TO ALCIDS

Four Parasitic Jaegers on the S. Marin CBC Dec. 29 (RS, KH, PP) were surprising, as our entire Region averages about two per winter. Apparently only one Franklin's Gull wintered, an immature at Palo Alto and Milpitas Jan. 26—Mar. 8 (DPM, ph. A. Walther, †WGB). One imm. Little Gull cruised Santa Cruz lagoons and estuaries Dec. 23—Feb. 6 (ph. †PEL, †GFi, †ALE, ph. A. Walther). An ad. gull at the Sunnyvale sewage ponds, *Santa Clara*, Jan. 10 (†RSTh) may have been a hybrid Herring x Glaucous-winged. Glaucous Gulls broke all our records in S.F. Bay Area counties. A survey of landfills and reservoirs in *Santa Clara*, *Alameda*, and *Contra Costa* tallied 11 immatures (SBT, P. Delevoryas), with a high of three at Contra Loma Res., *Contra Costa*, Jan. 23 (SBT). Non-survey maxima were up to five at Sunnyvale sewage ponds Jan. 6 & 31 (both PJM) and three at Dillon Beach, *Marin*, Jan. 12 (LeE, MiW). Seven more were in other coastal counties and *Yolo*. An adult was near Bodega Bay Feb. 11 (KH). A survey cruise from the Gulf of the Farallones to 50 mi offshore Feb. 14—17 counted up to 200



The season's only Franklin's Gull for northern California was this first-winter bird, photographed at Palo Alto on January 28, 1991. Photograph—Alan Walther.



The documented immature Little Gull at Santa Cruz, California, December 23, 1990. Photograph/ Paul E. Lehman.

Black-legged Kittiwakes per day, with both age classes numerous (SFB, M.W. Newcomer, DR).

Only three or five Caspian Terns were reported: one at Stockton Jan. 7-8 (WRH, DGY) and two at Mad R. Estuary, *Humboldt*, Dec. 31 and Jan. 25 (both FJB). Astounding was an Arctic Tern about 3 mi s.w. of Bolinas, *Marin*, on the Dec. 29 CBC (†ASH, M. Elliott, R. Holway). Were not the description from a good and very cautious observer, the report would not be believed. We know of no credible winter or CBC records for Arctic Tern in North America. Ancient Murrelets were numerous in December, but less common later. Maxima in *San Mateo* were 134 at Half Moon Bay Dec. 10 (PJM) and 167 at Pigeon Pt., Dec. 29 (BS).

DOVES TO HUMMINGBIRDS

On the heels of last Season's mini-invasion to the c. coast, a Common Ground-Dove was found at Wilder Ranch S.P., *Santa Cruz*, Jan. 18-24 (DEG, †RAE *et al.*). The lone Burrowing Owl in Livermore, *Alameda*, Dec. 22 was the last known individual in the Livermore Valley (ALE), and epitomized this owl's condition statewide. Many observers have noted its steady decline in recent years, and we encourage everyone to monitor its numbers. The California D.F.G.'s ongoing Spotted Owl census revealed at least 270 pairs within *Mendocino*, *Lake*, *Napa*, *Sonoma*, and *Marin*, with new birds discov-

ered weekly (T. Wooster). Interestingly, the birds have been found nesting in second growth forests as regularly as ancient forests (T. Wooster). Concomitantly, the pair of Barred Owls was seen again at Wheel Gulch along the Big R., *Mendocino*, Feb. 23 (S. Bunnell, K. Roberts), and another was located at Stewart's Pt., *Sonoma*, s. of Gualala, Aug. 3 through the winter (T. Wooster). The latter represents the southernmost conquest of this recent invader to the Pacific Northwest.

Winter reports of Com. Poorwill are annual, but single active birds at Bodega Bay Dec. 25-Jan. 5 (NTC *et al.*) and Dec. 18-Feb. 26 (R. & E. Reid), and another near Bolinas Dec. 28 (†S. Dovgill) surviving the Big Freeze still came as a surprise. A ♀ Costa's Hummingbird in Stockton Dec. 7-Jan. 8 (DGY *et al.*) also stayed healthy, but departed when the flowering eucalyptus trees succumbed. Males were also seen in Modesto during most of January (B. & M. Flesher, HMR *et al.*) and Los Altos Jan. 30 (PLN).

WOODPECKERS TO RAVENS

Highlighting the six Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reported this Season were *Del Norte's* first and 2nd records: an immature in Smith R. Dec. 10-17 (ADB, m.ob.) and an ad. male near Ft. Dick Feb. 8-9 (J. Gartland, ADB, T. Leskew). Among nine Red-naped Sapsuckers was the Mono Basin's first in winter at Lee Vining Dec. 30-Jan. 8

(†ES, m.ob.). *Humboldt's* 2nd record of Williamson's Sapsucker at Grouse Mt. Feb. 25 (R. Hewit, GJH) came 5 months after its first.

The Region's 3rd winter Least Flycatcher, at Pine L. Park, S.F., Dec. 17-20 (ph. ASH, †SFB, m.ob.) probably did not survive the Big Freeze, while our lone "Western" Flycatcher was at Butte Slough, *Sutter*, Dec. 20 (BED). Another *Empidonax* at Wilder Ranch S.P., *Santa Cruz*, Dec. 13 (DEG) was felt to be a Hammond's/Least type. Winter records of Say's Phoebe from the coast n. of *Sonoma* are few, so one at Arcata Bottoms Jan. 21-22 (FJB) was noteworthy. Another at Mono City Feb. 12 (D. & J. Parker) established the earliest spring arrival for the Mono Basin.

Unlike most of its predecessors, the Region's 7th Dusky-capped Flycatcher made only a brief appearance at Natural Bridges S.P., *Santa Cruz*, Dec. 1-4 (†SA, DLSu). *San Joaquin's* Tropical Kingbird of the Fall was seen again at Terminus Dec. 15 (MFe, †MJL). Single Cassin's Kingbirds were in *Monterey* at King City Jan. 1 (D. Fisher) and Greenfield Jan. 15-21 (M. Tidwell).

San Mateo became our last coastal county to bring home a Clark's Nutcracker: Portola S.P. Feb 9 (BS). A Com. Raven e. of Stockton Dec. 29 (K. Crump) and two in the Yolo Bypass Feb. 11 (MP) were rare for the C.V. floor.

CHICKADEES TO VIREOS

Single Mt. Chickadees visited the lowlands at McKinleyville Bottoms, *Humboldt*, Dec. 17 (FJB) and Pt. Saint George, *Del Norte*, Jan. 29 (ADB). The White-breasted Nuthatch at Crazy Peak Jan. 20 (ADB, J. Gartland) was only *Del Norte's* 2nd during the past 7 years. Varied Thrush seemed tolerant of all this "funny weather" as most reporting CBCs showed near average numbers.

The Region's 2nd wintering Gray Catbird pleased many at Pajaro Dunes, *Santa Cruz*, Jan. 1-Feb. 9 (†PJM, †m.ob.). That other crowd-pleasing mimid, the *Bendire's* Thrasher in Acampo, was last seen Mar. 2 (DGY). For the 3rd year in a



White (or Black-backed?) Wagtail in Monterey County, California, January 10, 1991. Photograph/ Dan Nelson.

row a White/Black-backed Wagtail was between Pajaro Dunes and Moss Landing Nov. 7-Jan. 19 (RMrr, ph. DN, †m.ob.). Many have suggested that these are the same bird, indicating that the bird should be adult; based on this assumption the bird keys out to White Wagtail. However, other expert observers have questioned the age of all birds during the 3 years, leaving the identifications controversial. Our only N. Shrike away from traditional locales was an immature near Solano L. Dec. 16 (WEH, L. Turner). Two December Solitary Vireos (one *cassinii*, the other undetermined) were below the recent average.

WOOD WARBLERS TO GROSBEAKS

With a dismal Fall and the Big Freeze, not surprisingly this was one of poorest winters for warblers. Coastally, there was only one Tennessee, eight Nashvilles, 13 Palms, five Black-and-whites, two Am. Redstarts, and three N. Waterthrushes. Most of these and many of the following warblers were not observed past the Big Freeze.

The *Vermivora* highlight was the Lucy's Warbler in Pacific Grove Dec. 27-29 (RFT, DR). Eight Yellow Warblers were seen into mid-December but not thereafter. The ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler in S.F.

was last observed Dec. 10 (*vide* JM). The lone Black-throated Gray Warbler tallied between the Stockton and Sacramento CBCs summarized their paucity in the C.V. this winter, with Townsend's Warbler reports in the C. V. equally scarce. An oasis in the warbler drought was provided by the Region's first "winter" record of **Black-throated Green Warbler** at L. Earl, *Del Norte*, Dec. 16-17 (†ADB, †MFRb, LPL, J. Gartland). Very rare Prairie Warblers were at Mad R. County Park, *Humboldt*, Dec. 9-13 (†BA, †FJB *et al.*) and Pilarcitos Cr., *San Mateo*, Dec. 22 (RS). A MacGillivay's Warbler found the comfort of Golden Gate Park, S.F. enough to go the distance Nov. 21-Feb. 25 (ASH, MLR, m.ob.).

Summer Tanager showed well in *Marin* with singles at Inverness Dec. 16-18 (RS) and Bolinas Dec. 29-Feb. 3 (KH *et al.*), and another was in San Bruno Jan. 17-18 (H. Wong). Among W. Tanagers, one warmed up to Golden Gate Park Dec. 12-Jan. 25 (ASH *et al.*), one was found on the Hayward CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* PEG), and up to three were along San Francisco Cr., *Santa Clara*, Dec. 14-17 (PMB). As usual, the Region received a handful of December grosbeaks. Our lone Rose-breasted visited Pacific Grove Dec. 1-3 (W. Hurlbert) while single Black-headed were at Castro Valley, *Alameda*, Dec. 16-17 (RJR *et al.*), Pescadero Dec. 23-30 (PJM *et al.*), Kelseyville, *Lake*, Dec. 30-Jan. 2 (NWh, JRW), and Saratoga Jan. 29 (H. Gerson).

TOWHEES TO FINCHES

A Green-tailed Towhee at San Luis N.W.R. Jan. 4 (L. Cole) was the first C.V. winter record in 6 years. An Am. Tree Sparrow s. of Samoa, *Humboldt*, Jan. 4 (†FJB) was far from regular wintering sites. Fifteen years ago, Clay-colored Sparrows were considered an anomaly. However, wintering Clay-colored Sparrows were again found along the c. coast. This Season saw two birds at Pine Gulch Cr., *Marin*, Oct. 23-E.O.P. (THK, KH, m.ob.) and another at the Half Moon Bay golf course, *San Mateo*,



Clay-colored Sparrow at Half Moon Bay, California, December 12, 1990. Photograph/John Rose.

Dec. 15-E.O.P. (G. Deghi, ph. J. Rose, m.ob.). There were six additional birds sighted in these areas during December-January. Conversely, one would expect our local Brewer's Sparrow to be found somewhat regularly during winter, but one at Pine Gulch Cr. Dec. 15 (AdW, THK) was one of few Regional December records!

In addition to the Sharp-tailed Sparrows mentioned in the Fall report, one at Alameda S. Shore Dec. 31 (G. Gerlach) was from a new locale and one of few for the S.F. East Bay. Fox Sparrows followed the lead from Rufous-sided Towhees last winter as they elicited many comments from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys on their exceptional numbers. In addition to the now annual plethora of coastal Swamp Sparrows reported (55+), three were in the C.V. and one was at Honey L. Jan. 1 (*vide* RNJ). A healthy eight Harris' Sparrows were reported from the coast, C.V., and Great Basin. A "Gray-headed" Junco in Sierra Valley Dec. 16 (†LJ) was the first for *Plumas*, and another was at Tom's Place, *Mono*, Dec. 15 (CDHa). These were only the Region's 7th & 8th during the past decade. However, most outstanding was the state's first documented "White-winged" Junco in San Rafael, *Marin*, "throughout the Period" (CLF, †RS, JW, ph. †SFB). In the Eel R. Bottoms, *Humboldt*, 30-75

Lapland Longspurs Dec. 26-Jan. 16 (FJB) was a noteworthy Regional winter concentration. All three of our Chestnut-collared Longspurs also came from *Humboldt*.

Tricolored Blackbirds put on a good show in *Humboldt* where very rare in winter: up to 12 in the McKinleyville Bottoms Dec. 16-Jan. 15 (BBA, FJB, R. Hewitt) and two at the Redwood Cr. mouth Jan. 17 (FJB, S. Beatty). A Rusty Blackbird at Moss Landing Jan. 13-26 (†SBT, †GKN *et al.*), a Hooded Oriole in Sacramento Dec. 20 (†J. Dick), and six coastal "Bullock's" N. Orioles met their recent winter averages.

The Region's 4th Brambling was very cooperative as it thrilled many in Santa Cruz Dec. 15-Feb. 16 (BBrr, ph. †m.ob.). Wandering Cassin's Finches reached S.F. Bay as two ♀-plumaged birds were in San Rafael Feb. 7 (CLF) and one male was in Berkeley Feb. 21-26 (†HG, PDG). Red Crossbill continued its Fall influx into the c. coast but not elsewhere except for up to 20 in Benicia, *Solano*, Dec. 30-Feb. 11 (S. Beasley *et al.*), a county where there were few records if any. Pine Siskin was noted for its near absence in the C.V. (DGY, TDM).

Addendum: The Red-breasted Merganser at Oroville in *AB* 44:343 was observed on Feb. 19.

Corrigenda: The male Anna's Hummingbird gathering nest material cited in *AB* 44:324 was actually a female with an all-red throat. The breeding Long-eared Owls at M.B.O.S.P. mentioned in *AB* 44:1182 were not a first for that locale. A pair raised three young there in spring 1987. The E. Kingbird at Cloverdale Rd., *AB* 44:1182 was observed July 25-26, not June 25-26. The imm. Ferruginous Hawk near Honcut, *AB* 45:147, was observed Oct. 8, not Aug. 10.

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SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie

Dry weather continued through most of the winter. Heavy rains at the end of February and early March brought the rainfall for most areas up to near normal for the year, but this did little to reduce the effect of five years of drought.

Mountain birds were relatively scarce in the coastal lowlands, with virtually no Mountain Chickadees present, and only a handful of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Golden-crowned Kinglets reported. Numbers of berry-eaters such as robins and Cedar Waxwings were in general unimpressive, although Hermit Thrushes were far more numerous than usual. Very few Purple Finches moved from areas of normal occurrence, and Pine Siskins were virtually absent away from known breeding areas.

An exceptional cold spell in late December undoubtedly impacted a number of insectivorous species such as Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and clearly had an adverse effect on birds attempting to winter north of normal range, as was evident from the numbers of such species as Solitary Vireos, Nashville Warblers, Wilson's Warblers, Summer Tanagers, and Northern Orioles present in December compared to those still present in January and February.

Abbreviations: B.V.R.A. (*Buena Vista Recreation Area, s.w. corner of the San Joaquin Valley, Kern Co.*); F.C.R. (*Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo Co.*); H.D.L. (*Harper Dry Lake, n.w. of Barstow, San Bernardino Co.*); N.E.S.S. (*north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.B.C.M. (*San Bernardino County Museum*); S.C.R.E. (*Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura*); S.E.S.S. (*south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.*); V.A.F.B. (*Vandenberg Air Force Base, Santa Barbara Co.*). As virtually all rarities found in S. California are seen by numerous



observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Michael A. Patten, P.O. Box 8612, Riverside, CA 92515-8612) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

LOONS TO PELICANS

At least five Red-throated Loons were found on large bodies of fresh water w. of the Coast Range, where small numbers are present each winter. A Com. Loon on West L. near S.E.S.S. Dec. 10 (JLD) was in an area where few winter records are known. Single Red-necked Grebes, unusual anywhere south of Pt. Conception, were in Ventura Jan. 7-25 (RJM), Oxnard Feb. 23 (RJM), and Marina del Rey Dec. 7-Feb. 10 (BE). A bird believed to be a light morph Wedge-tailed Shearwater was seen near 32° 45' N-120° 45' W, about 60 mi s.w. of San Nicolas I., Jan. 15 (RRV); there are only 2 accepted records for this species in California. A few Short-tailed Shearwaters were along the coast as indicated by singles off Pismo Beach Feb. 3 (EVJ), off Newport Beach Dec. 21

(MTH), off La Jolla Mar. 6 (JO'B), and off San Diego Jan. 1 (CGE). Most unusual for S. California waters was the presence of 15 Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels in the area of 34° 00' N-123° 00' W, far off Pt. Conception, Jan. 21 (RRV). Eleven Ashy Storm-Petrels netted on San Miguel I. during the night of Jan. 7 (JD) strongly suggested nesting at this locality.

Four Red-billed Tropicbirds were seen far off San Diego, with two together at 31° 10' N-118° 50' W on Jan. 9 (RRV), and single birds at 31° 20' N-120° 15' W and 31° 05' N-120° 45' W on Jan. 10 (RRV). Five Red-tailed Tropicbirds a little more than 200 mi off San Diego Jan. 11-12 (RRV) were in an area where this species is reported somewhat regularly. Ten Brown Pelicans on the Salton Sea Dec. 13 had declined to two on Jan. 13 (WRR); these and an immature near Brawley, *Imperial*, Jan. 26 (GMcC) may have spent the winter locally.

HERONS TO RAPTORS

Three Tricolored Herons were around San Diego with an immature at the mouth of the Tijuana River near Imperial Beach found Dec. 7 (GMcC),

an adult found there Jan. 1 (GMcC), and a subadult near the mouth of the San Diego River found Jan. 26 (PJ), all present through February. The ad. Reddish Egret spending its 9th winter around s. San Diego Bay was present through at least Jan. 1 (GMcC), and the immature in the same area was present through at least Feb. 8 (DSe). The ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron near Imperial Beach remained through Jan. 7 (DA), and the individual present around La Jolla and San Elijo Lagoon since October 1981 was in La Jolla Dec. 18-Feb. 26 (JO'B). Two Wood Storks near Escondido Dec. 28-Feb. 13 (PJ) were along the coast, where very rare.

At least 65 Greater White-fronted Geese were reported during December and January along the immediate coast, where now considered quite rare, including flocks of 20 at the Santa Ynez R. mouth, *Santa Barbara*, 15 near Del Mar, and 11 at Point Mugu, *Ventura*. At least 40 Snow Geese were reported from the same area, including flocks of 13 at Point Mugu and 11 near Oceanside; an adult photographed at Seccombe Lake near San Bernardino Feb. 24 (MAP) was of the blue morph, exceptional away from S.E.S.S. Twenty-seven

Ross' Geese were also reported along the coast, including a flock of seven in Anaheim Dec. 7-Jan. 1 (DRW); one at F.C.R. throughout the period (T & JH) and seven near Cantil, Kern, Feb. 1 (MTH) were at interesting localities. Up to seven Canada Geese of the endangered race *leucopareia* were near Del Mar Dec. 16-Jan. 21 (LS), and at least 13 "Cackling Geese" were along the coast, including six together at S.C.R.E. Dec. 31-Feb. 10 (LRB).

Since Blue-winged Teal are rarely found away from the coast in winter, 12 s.e. of Bakersfield throughout the season (JCW) and 15 around the Salton Sea Dec. 10 (JLD) were of interest. At least 28 Eur. Wigeon were reported, including two males far inland near Helendale, *San Bernardino*, Nov. 11-Mar. 3 (MAP). Most significant was a ♂ **Common Pochard** at Silver Lakes near Helendale Jan. 17-Feb. 23 (EAC), undoubtedly the same bird as present here during the winter of 1988-1989 (*AB* 43:365). At least seven Tufted Ducks were in the Region this

through the period (BLA), and an imm. male was present nearby Dec. 30 through February (RW).

Ten Oldsquaws were found along the coast, with a female on San Diego Bay Nov. 20-Feb. 24 (JLD) the southernmost; one photographed inland near Cantil Dec. 8 (MTH) was apparently only the 2nd found in Kern; one shot at S.E.S.S. Dec. 22 (WRR) and another seen there Feb. 13 (WRR) were also inland. Since Black Scoters are quite rare s. of Pt. Conception, the presence of six scattered along the coast, including up to two together on San Diego Bay Jan. 8 through February (DA), were more than expected in recent years. Two Surf Scoters on the Salton Sea near Salton City Dec. 9 (JLD) and three more at N.E.S.S. Feb. 18 (GMcC) were inland, where rare. A White-winged Scoter on the Salton Sea at the mouth of Salt Creek Dec. 10 (JLD), another at N.E.S.S. Dec. 16 (MAP), and two more at S.E.S.S. Dec. 13-18 (WRR) were also rare inland. An ad. ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye on Tinnemaha Res. near Big Pine,

adult in Escondido Dec. 19-Mar. 12 (MM) and an immature there Jan. 30-Mar. 18 (MM). The fact that only one Rough-legged Hawk was reported from along the coast, and none was found in the n.e. portion of the Region, illustrates just how scarce this species was this winter. A Merlin photographed near Bishop, *Inyo*, Jan. 26 (T & JH) appeared to be of the dark race *suckleyi*, considered very rare in S. California.

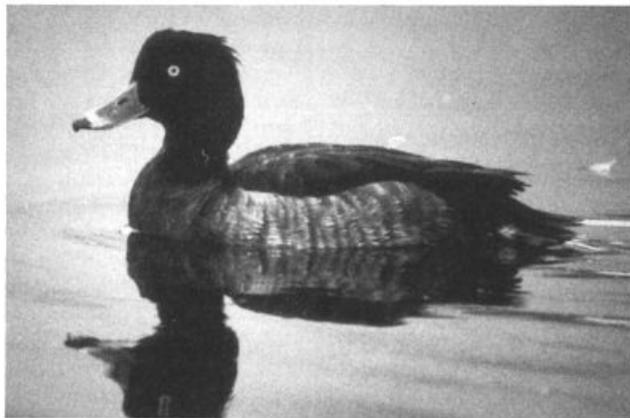
CRANES TO ALCIDS

An imm. Sandhill Crane photographed at N.E.S.S. Dec. 29 (MAP) was away from any area of regular occurrence; up to two immatures near San Juan Capistrano Dec. 20-Feb. 10 (RAE) and another over Orange Feb. 25 (SG) were along the coast, where now considered casual. A Black-bellied Plover at Edwards, Kern, Feb. 16 (MTH) was unexpectedly early for this area. Reports of wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers included two near Santa Maria still present Mar. 9 (JSR), six on V.A.F.B. Jan. 18 (KH), five near Point Mugu Feb. 9-Mar. 1 (RJM), up to 12 at Seal Beach through the period (DRW), and one near Del Mar Feb. 7 (DP), all identified as the Asiatic *fulva*, the only form known to winter in the State. The only Mountain Plovers found along the coast, where they have become rare, were the usual flock of up to 30 near Santa Maria (KH), up to 13 on V.A.F.B. (KH), 15 near Point Mugu Jan. 26-Mar. 10 (DDJ), and 10 near Imperial Beach (GMcC).

Two Ruddy Turnstones near

Salton City Dec. 9 (JLD) and another at S.E.S.S. Dec. 18 (GMcC) were inland where unusual in winter. A Wilson's Phalarope, most unusual in winter, was at S.E.S.S. Feb. 11 (HEC).

Four ad. Laughing Gulls, rare in California in winter, were at N.E.S.S. Dec. 29 (KR), one was on Finney L. near S.E.S.S. Dec. 10-17 (JLD), and another adult was photographed near Westmorland Jan. 30 (BRZ). A first-winter Franklin's Gull, very rare anywhere in California in winter, was on V.A.F.B. Dec. 16 (KH), and another was in Santa Barbara Feb. 5 (FS). The Mew Gull found at the B.V.R.A. Nov. 24 was still present Dec. 22 (SF), and first-winter birds at S.E.S.S. Dec. 18 (GMcC) and N.E.S.S. Dec. 9-Feb. 2 (JLD) were also far inland. An ad. Herring Gull on Klondike L. near Big Pine Dec. 30 (T & JH) was among very few ever found in *Inyo*. Even rarer in this general area was a first-winter Tayer's Gull in Victorville, *San Bernardino*, Jan. 1 (MAP). Since W. Gulls are considered casual inland, up to three at N.E.S.S. Dec. 17-Feb. 18 (JLD) were of interest. A 2nd-winter Glaucous-winged Gull at N.E.S.S. Dec. 29 (KR), and an adult at S.E.S.S. Dec. 18-Jan. 26 (JLD), were far inland where considered rare. An ad. Glaucous Gull standing on the ice at Tinnemaha Res. near Big Pine Dec. 23-25 (MTH) was the first found inland away from the Salton Sea; along the coast at least 11 first-winter birds were found, including nine along the *Santa Barbara* coast (AA, SEF, BKH, KH, MAH, JSR, KJZ) and up to two at S.C.R.E. Jan.



Tufted Duck at Ventura, California, February 9, 1991. At least seven individuals were found in southern California during the season. Photograph/ Don Desjardin.

winter, with a female near S.C.R.E. Jan. 19-Mar. 5 (RJM), a female at nearby Saticoy Dec. 23 (JLD), up to two males on Castaic L., *Los Angeles*, Dec. 28-Jan. 28 (KLG), a male on nearby Pyramid L. Jan. 14-Feb. 7 (BJ), another male on Quail L., *Los Angeles*, Feb. 1-Mar. 8 (DK), and a 5th male on Puddingstone Res., *Los Angeles*, for at least its 3rd winter Nov. 17-Jan. 30 (MB). The ♀ Harlequin Duck at Point Mugu since Nov. 17 remained

Inyo, Jan. 5-6 (T & JH) was in an area where small numbers may be regular.

Two Black-shouldered Kites near Westmorland Feb. 18 (GMcC) and another at S.E.S.S. Feb. 22 (KLG) were in the s.e. corner of the Region, where still considered rare. At least four Zone-tailed Hawks were along the coast of *San Diego* this winter, with an adult near Oceanside Dec. 22 (GMcC), another adult near San Marcos Dec. 22 (JO'B), an



First-winter Glaucous Gull at the Santa Clara River Estuary, California, February 19, 1991. Photograph/Brad Sillescu.

14-Mar. 2 (RJM).

A Com. Tern in Goleta Nov. 18-Jan. 15 (RGJ) was clearly attempting to winter locally. Up to 175 Black Skimmers at Point Mugu Jan. 3-Mar. 2 (RJM) and up to 16 in Santa Barbara Jan. 1-Feb. 4 (FS) were by far the largest numbers ever north of *Orange*, and surprising for this time of year.

Reports of Xantus' Murrelets included one off Santa Barbara Dec. 29 (JLD), two off Newport Beach Jan. 20 (MTH), one off La Jolla Jan. 1 (DJ), and another off San Diego Jan. 28 (BRZ). A few Ancient Murrelets



Ancient Murrelet at the Ventura Marina, California, January 1, 1991. Photograph/Bob Heffer.

moved south into S. California waters as indicated by up to two in Ventura Jan. 1-7 (DDe), one off Newport Beach Dec. 15 (MTH), two off La Jolla Dec. 12-16 (JO'B), and three more there Mar. 6 (JO'B).

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

Three White-winged Doves near Santa Ynez, *Santa Barbara*, Dec. 12-15 (CP), another near Solvang Jan. 27 (HPS), and one near Imperial Beach Dec. 9 (REW) were away from the w. edge of the low desert, the only area in the State where this species regularly winters. Two ♀ Ruddy Ground-Doves were still at F.C.R. Dec. 14 (T & JH), probably attempting to winter. Since Short-eared Owls have become alarmingly scarce in this Region in recent years, one on Upper Newport Bay Dec. 3-30 (PK) and another near S.E.S.S. Dec. 29 (BM) were of interest. Two Lesser Nighthawks, very rare in winter, were near Lakeview, *Riverside*,

Jan. 1 (DLD) and two more were over Lower Otay L. near San Diego Jan. 5 (KR). A Com. Poorwill in Randsburg, *Kern*, Dec. 13 (DVB) and another at H.D.L. Dec. 9 (EAC) were among very few ever found in the e. portion of the Region in winter.

Four Vaux's Swifts near downtown Los Angeles Mar. 16 (KLG), 50 over El Monte Jan. 22 (DRW), another group of about 50 near Oceanside Dec. 22 (GMcC), and one near Imperial Beach Dec. 8 (GMcC) were all undoubtedly wintering. A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird in Orange Feb. 11 (DRW) was the first to be found in California in 2 years. Well described Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers included an immature near San Luis Obispo Dec. 13-Jan. 8 (DR), another in Arroyo Grande, *San Luis Obispo*, Dec. 20 (MB & NM), and another inland at Desert Center Dec. 8 (CMcG). A Downy Woodpecker at H.D.L. Jan. 16 (EAC) was away from any area of normal occurrence.

FLYCATCHERS TO SWALLOWS

The Greater Pewee spending its 3rd winter in San Diego was still present at the end of the period (B & IM), and another near Tustin Feb. 10-13 (GMcC) was only the 2nd to be found in *Orange*. Wintering Gray Flycatchers included one in Santa Barbara Dec. 29-Jan. 1 (BS), another in Riverside Dec. 27 (C-TL), and a 3rd near Rubidoux, *Riverside*, Feb. 8-9 (CMcG). A "W. Flycatcher" in Mission Viejo Dec. 16 (BED), another in Irvine Dec. 30 (DRW), and a 3rd in Del Mar Dec. 16 (JO'B) were the only

ones reported this winter. Four E. Phoebes were present with one spending its 3rd winter in Santa Barbara Oct. 30-Feb. 8 (RWH), another in Grand Terrace, *San Bernardino*, Nov. 1-Feb. 1 (DG), a 3rd in the Prado Basin near Corona Feb. 3 (EAC), and the 4th along the Santa Ana R. near Riverside Dec. 16-Jan. 6 (SJM). A Vermilion Flycatcher spending its 2nd winter near Santa Maria Oct. 21-Jan. 13 (SFB) was unusually far north. The only Ash-throated Flycatcher was near Imperial Beach Dec. 2 (REW). A Tropical Kingbird at Los Serranos L. near Chino Jan. 29-Mar. 31 (HEC) and another in Anaheim Nov. 13-Feb. 16 (DRW) were away from the immediate coast, thus most unusual; one on V.A.F.B. Jan. 30-Mar. 15 (KH) was apparently the same bird present here the past 2 winters, and another in Goleta Sept. 27-Feb. 5 (RGJ) was apparently the same bird present here the past 4 winters. A Cassin's Kingbird at Finney L. near S.E.S.S. Jan. 19 and Feb. 10 (HEC) was among very few ever found in this area. A **Thick-billed Kingbird** near Tustin Dec. 16-Mar. 16 (DRW) was clearly the same bird that spent the last 8 winters at this location. A W. Kingbird in the Prado Basin Park

near Corona Feb. 8-9 (DRW) was only the 5th ever found in S. California in winter.

A N. Rough-winged Swallow over El Monte Jan. 18 (DRW), another in Irvine Dec. 2-30 (DRW), one in Anaheim Dec. 21-Feb. 10 (JP), another in Costa Mesa Jan. 11 (JP), and two near Imperial Beach Dec. 15-Feb. 3 (GMcC) clearly spent the winter locally.

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three more in Santa Barbara itself, indicated some moved from the mountains into the coastal lowlands; one in Bakersfield Dec. 28–29 (MOC) suggested a few may also have moved down into the Central Valley. A Plain Titmouse of the coastal race *transpositus* in Mecca Dec. 29–31 (GH, *S.B.C.M.) was the first ever found in the vicinity of the Salton Sea. Single Winter Wrens near Lakeview Dec. 16 (SJM) and Dec. 18–Jan. 27 (SJM), and another near Imperial Beach Dec. 3–15 (DP), were the southernmost reported; the latter was thought to be a bird from the e. population on the basis of its call.

A Brown Thrasher, a rare straggler, was near Calexico Dec. 13 (WRR). A Sage Thrasher at L. Los Carneros near Goleta Jan. 8 (JPH), another in Irvine Dec. 24 (JB), and a 3rd in Orange Feb. 2 (BED) were along the immediate coast, where unusual in winter. The ad. White Wagtail found in Satcoy Nov. 8 was still present Mar. 9 (RJM). A Bohemian Waxwing was well



Bohemian Waxwing at Big Pine, California, January 8, 1991.
Photograph/Tom Heindel.

photographed in Big Pine Jan. 8–13 (T & JH), and up to three were present in Bakersfield Jan. 16–19 (JCW), indicating a few reached S. California this winter. The only N. Shrike reported was an adult at Tinemaha Res. near Big Pine Feb. 14 (T & JH).

A Bell's Vireo, most unusual in winter, was near Imperial Beach Dec. 2–Jan. 5 (REW) with a 2nd nearby Dec. 15 (GMcC). Fifteen Solitary Vireos were along the coast in

December, including at least six along the Tijuana R. near Imperial Beach, but with only three remaining past the end of December; inland four were around Bakersfield in December with only two remaining later, and one more was in Brawley Jan. 20–31 (EAC); all but three *cassinii* near Imperial Beach and two more in Orange were of the gray form *plumbeus*.

WOOD WARBLERS

A ♀ Golden-winged Warbler along the Tijuana R. near Imperial Beach Dec. 15 (REW) may have been an exceptionally late fall vagrant, since much looking by a number of interested observers failed to locate it again. A Lucy's Warbler in Goleta Nov. 22–Dec. 23 (RPH) was attempting to winter locally, but evidently succumbed to the cold spell in late December. Seventeen Nashville Warblers were reported in December, but with only five of these remaining past the New Year. A Virginia's Warbler in Riverside Oct. 28–Mar. 3 (MAP) and another in Brawley Nov. 10–Jan. 31 (MAP) were both returning for their 2nd winter. A N. Parula in San Diego Dec. 2–Jan. 18 (B & IM) was apparently the same bird present here during the past 2 winters.

A Chestnut-sided Warbler, very rare in winter, was present in Pacific Beach, San Diego, Dec. 13–Jan. 31 (JO'B); another near Imperial Beach Dec. 1–3 (REW) was probably a late fall vagrant. A Magnolia Warbler in Lompoc Nov. 18–Dec. 7 (KH) appears to have been an exceptionally late fall vagrant. A ♀ Cape May Warbler in Costa Mesa Feb. 9 into March (RAH) was about the 7th known to have spent the winter in S. California. Only 12 Black-throated Gray Warblers were found along the coast, and singles were inland in Brawley Dec. 10 (JLD) and Jan. 26 (MAP). Thirteen Hermit Warblers were reported between Morro Bay and San Diego, now being found regularly along the coast in small numbers at this season. A Black-throated Green Warbler in Lompoc Nov. 18–Dec. 5 (KH) may have been attempting to winter locally but was more likely a late fall vagrant. The Grace's Warbler found in Santa Barbara Sept. 23 was still

present Feb. 25 (HPR). A ♀ Pine Warbler in San Diego Mar. 3–21 (DP) undoubtedly spent the winter locally, and was about the 12th known to have wintered in S. California. Nine Palm Warblers along the coast were fewer than expected, but one at N.E.S.S. Dec. 29 (SJM) was among very few ever found inland at this time of year.

Eight Black-and-white Warblers were reported: singles in San Luis Obispo Dec. 1–15 (JSR), Goleta Dec. 21 (RGJ), Carpinteria Nov. 30–Jan. 26 (LRB), Ventura Dec. 17–Jan. 9 (BL), Long Beach Dec. 22 through February (DSt), Huntington Beach Nov. 3–Feb. 9 (BED), Escondido throughout the period (PJ), and near Imperial Beach Dec. 3–9 (JO'B). An Am. Redstart present for its 3rd winter in Santa Ana Nov. 15–Dec. 30 (DRW), one near Oceanside in December (PU), another in La Jolla Dec. 2 (JO'B), one in San Diego all winter (REW) and two more along the Tijuana R. near Imperial Beach in December (REW) were all along the coast where rare in winter, but four or five around S.E.S.S. were in an area where small numbers regularly winter.

At least five N. Waterthrushes were along the Tijuana R. near Imperial Beach in December (REW) but only two were still there at the end of the period, suggesting some may have been late fall migrants or failed to survive the late December cold snap. A MacGillivray's Warbler, very rare in winter, was seen in Ventura Dec. 25 (RL), another was found in San Marino Feb. 18 (DC), and a 3rd was near Imperial Beach Dec. 1 (REW). A ♀ Hooded Warbler in El Toro, Orange, Dec. 15–16 (LRH) was apparently a very late fall straggler. Forty Wilson's Warblers along the coast in December was an above average number for winter, but fewer than half of these remained into the New Year.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A ♂ Hepatic Tanager in Santa Barbara Oct. 23–Apr. 3 (HPR) was undoubtedly the same bird present here during the past 8 winters, and another ad. male was present nearby Nov. 29–Dec. 29 (BLo). Twenty-two

Summer Tanagers were reported, but only seven of these were found after the first of the year. Western Tanagers appeared scarcer than usual with only 26 reported along the coast. The only Rose-breasted Grosbeak reported was in Santa Barbara Dec. 29 (KB). A Black-headed Grosbeak, most unusual in winter, was in Oceano Dec. 6 (KJZ) and another was in San Diego Jan. 8 (D & MH). A ♂ Indigo Bunting inland in Brawley Jan. 19–20 (EAC) was among very few ever found in S. California in winter.

A Clay-colored Sparrow, very rare in winter, was present in Lompoc Nov. 12–Jan. 20 (KH). Three Large-billed [Savannah] Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) *rostratus* at S.C.R.E. from fall through Feb. 23 (RJM) were the northernmost reported. A Grasshopper Sparrow, rarely found in winter, was near Valencia, Los Angeles, Dec. 29 (KLG), and another was on the Plano Trabuco, Orange, Jan. 11 (LRB). A Le Conte's Sparrow at H.D.L. Jan. 6 (EAC, *S.B.C.M.) was only the 3rd ever found in California in winter. Swamp Sparrows appeared to be more numerous than usual with 20 reported along the coast, and at least 12 more inland including seven around the Salton Sea. White-throated Sparrows appeared to be a little more numerous than usual with at least 35 reported. The only Harris' Sparrows found this winter were one in Goleta Dec. 29–Jan. 11 (TW), another in Long Beach Nov. 17–Dec. 19 (MH), and a 3rd in Irvine Jan. 1–30 (BED).

Two McCown's Longspurs, rarest of the regularly occurring longspurs in California, were on the Plano Trabuco Dec. 16 (RAE), two more were near Lucerne Valley, San Bernardino, Jan. 26–Feb. 3 (RMcK), and four were near S.E.S.S. Dec. 9 (JLD). Reports of Lapland Longspurs included up to six near Lucerne Valley Jan. 26–Feb. 6 (RMcK), one in Encino Dec. 23 through February (JSR), one on the Plano Trabuco Dec. 16–Jan. 11 (RAE), and three at S.E.S.S. Dec. 9 (JLD). More Chestnut-collared Longspurs were found than expected with a flock of up to 50 near Lucerne Valley Jan. 26–Feb. 6 (RMcK) and another

flock of up to 30 on the Plano Trabuco Dec. 16–Jan. 11 (DRW); one in Irvine Dec. 30 (BED) was probably a late fall vagrant.

A Rusty Blackbird in Malibu Dec. 11 through February (BP) was the only one reported this winter. A ♂ Com. Grackle, casual to accidental in California, photographed near Big Pine Dec. 12 (T & JH) is best treated as a very late fall vagrant. A ♀ Orchard Oriole on Pt. Loma in San Diego Mar. 9–15 (GMcC) had undoubtedly wintered locally. A Hooded Oriole, rare in winter, was found in Ventura Dec. 31 (RGJ), another was in nearby Simi Valley Jan. 30 (FH), three were together in San Marino through the period (DC), and another was inland in Bakersfield Dec. 29–Feb. 15 (JCW). Northern Orioles were scarcer than usual with only 53 found along the coast, including a "Baltimore" in Goleta Dec. 14 (JEL), another in Ventura Dec. 31 (PEL), and a 3rd on Pt. Loma Jan. 13 (REW).

Two Purple Finches in Brawley Jan. 26 (MAP) were in an

area where considered rare but proving to be regular. A few Red Crossbills were reported including two in Big Pine Dec. 13 (T & JH), two in California City Feb. 1 (MTH), and at least 12 on V.A.F.B. Dec. 22–Feb. 18 (KH), along with flocks of up to 50 in the San Gabriel Mts. of Los Angeles during January and February (KLG). A flock of 20 Evening Grosbeaks present in Big Pine all winter (T & JH) and five more in Ridgecrest Jan. 1 (DM) were in the n.e. portion of the Region where small numbers can be expected; up to 50 around Big Pines in the San Gabriel Mts. during January and February (KLG) were the only ones reported from the mountains; one in Ventura Dec. 25 (VK) was along the coast where unexpected, and another in Brawley Dec. 10 (JLD) was in the s.e. corner of the State, where accidental.

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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

Robert L. Pyle

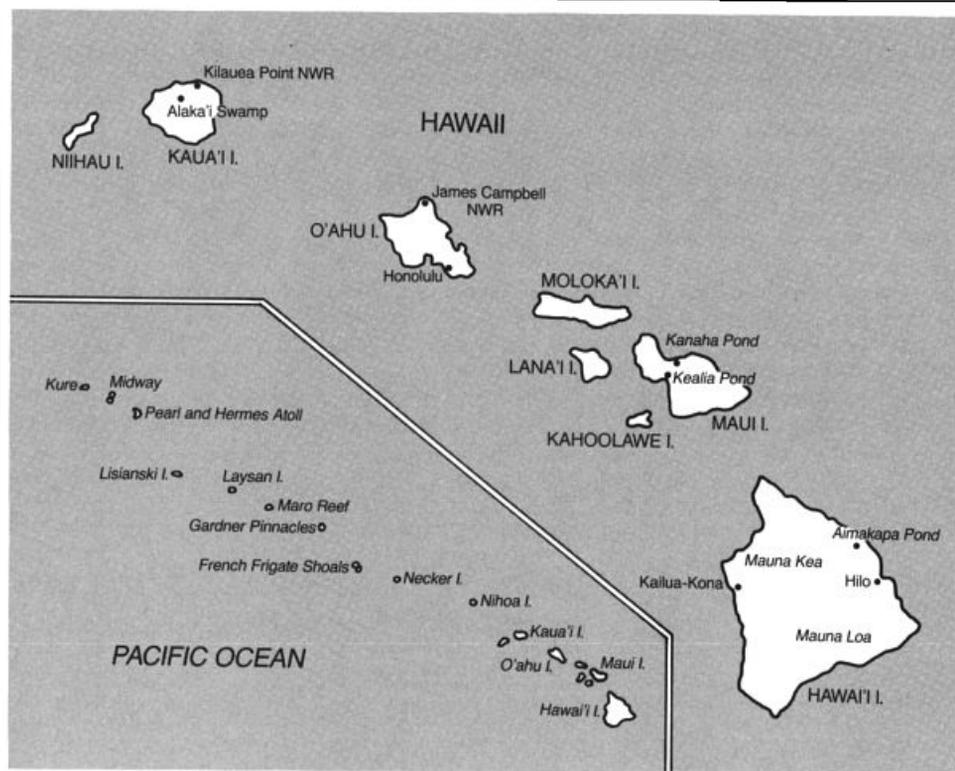
The wet weather of late fall continued through December except on Kaua'i, at the north-west end of the main islands, which was very dry. This dry weather spread in January and February to all stations on O'ahu, and on to most stations on Maui and Hawai'i by season's end. Wetland conditions remained good for waterbirds throughout the winter, but migrants in these areas were again well below numbers that were usual up to a few years back, apparently for some cause other than habitat suitability.

Abbreviations: BPBM (prefix for catalogue numbers of specimens in B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu); F.F.S. (French Frigate Shoals); H. (Hawai'i I.); K. (Kaua'i I.); M. (Maui I.); O. (O'ahu I.); J.C.N.W.R. (James Campbell N.W.R., O.); K.M.C.A.S. (Kane'oh'e Marine Corps Air Station, O.); P.H.N.W.R. (Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O.).

ALBATROSSES

The banded subadult Short-tailed Albatross that has been a regular visitor to Sand I., Midway, in recent winters was back there again this winter (CR).

Laysan Albatross are returning to nest at Kilauea Point N.W.R., K., in increasing numbers each year. This winter, out of 61 eggs laid beginning in December, 23 chicks hatched and 18 were still alive and healthy at end of March. Three other chicks brought over from Pacific Missile Range were placed successfully with foster birds. Three more chicks removed from the Range, for whom no appropriate foster birds were available, are being raised by a volunteer. At Princeville, an upscale residential area a few miles west of the Refuge, four eggs were laid in a vacant lot between houses and the four healthy chicks were being zealously guarded by nearby residents. Three more chicks are thriving in the 3 nests



started at Ke'ilu Pt., an isolated beach area just east of the Refuge (all from KF).

On O'ahu, however, the Laysans' choice of sites for congregating and nesting attempts have been imprudent and inappropriate. At Dillingham Airfield and K.M.C.A.S., numbers have increased annually despite severe disturbance from people, dogs, and vehicles. Animal Damage Control staff of the U.S. Department of Agriculture have had some success over the past 3 years in discouraging nesting and reducing numbers at these airfields by non-lethal harassment, *i.e.* fireworks, chasing, capturing, banding, and release elsewhere. Nests were obliterated and eggs were given to University of Hawaii for physiology research. Any chicks found were taken to Sea Life Park for raising and release.

Nevertheless, new birds are returning to Kaua'i and O'ahu in greater numbers each year. Thus, non-lethal harassment at these airfields and also at Pacific Missile Range on Kaua'i will have to continue diligently if lethal control of these magnificent birds is to be avoided (TO).

Furthermore, two pairs of Laysans each laid an egg in late December barely 10 ft from a

heavily used trail in the Kaena Pt. Natural Area Reserve on O'ahu, another site where they have congregated in recent years. One egg was soon abandoned; the other was incubated but was found broken some weeks later, despite special efforts to protect the nest from disturbance (MSa).

STORM-PETRELS TO HERONS

A Leach's Storm-Petrel was found freshly dead on a lava flow near the sea at La Perouse Bay, M., Dec. 27 (AF, *vide* RG, *BPBM-178353). Leach's are recorded in Hawaii rarely as dead remains along the shore. A Red-billed Tropicbird was observed well at East I., F.F.S., Feb. 21, the 3rd time this accidental straggler has been recorded at the Shoals at this time of year (JM, KN).

Three Brown Boobies were seen diving near a pod of Spinner Dolphins at Smugglers Cove, Kaho'olawe I., Jan. 24 (BE), an interesting record for this rarely visited military target island. Single Great Blue Herons, considered a vagrant in Hawaii, were reported this winter at Loko Waka Pond near Hilo, H., Jan. 3 (KI) and Feb. 13 (Paul Conry *vide* BE), and also at Kanaha Pond, M., Dec. 23 and in March (JO).

WATERFOWL

The nine Greater White-fronted Geese reported at Kealia Pond, M., this past fall were last seen Dec. 30 (JO). A (Black) Brant first seen at Tern I., F.F.S., Nov. 17 was captured and treated for an injured foot, then banded and released, and was still thriving at end of February (JM). Another Brant with a broken wing, first seen at the beach at Kihai, M., Dec. 23, was brought to the state endangered species facility at Olinda Dec. 26 and was still in rehabilitation at season's end (RG). Brant are casual visitors to Hawaii. Two small (probably Cackling) Canada Geese were at Kipu Kai, K., from Dec. 6 until at least Mar. 5 (TT). The single small (probably Taverner's) Canada resident at Waiakea Pond in Hilo, H., was still there Jan. 3 (KI), and the one resident for years at Amorient Aquafarm, O., was seen flying over one of the ponds Feb. 26 (BE). The little population of Nene (Hawaiian Goose, *Endangered*) introduced at Kipu Kai, K., produced at least 14 goslings from 4 known nests this winter. Most fledged successfully (TT).

Wintering ducks remained low in numbers this winter. Highest counts at single localities were 27 N. Pintails at Waipi'o Pen., O., Jan. 11 (PD)

and 55 N. Shovelers at Kanaha Pond, M., Jan. 12 (JO), well below maxima for these species recorded in the mid-1980s and before. Reports of less common species included six ♀ Green-winged Teal (a high number) at Honouliuli Unit, P.H.N.W.R., Feb. 21 (PD), two Garganey in ♀ plumage seen regularly at Waiakea Pond in Hilo, H., Dec. 13–Jan. 3 (KI), and two more Garganey at Waipi'o Pen., O. Jan. 9 (PD).

Hawaii's only recorded Com. Merganser, a female reported occasionally in fall and winter since 1986 at Kealila Pond, M., was seen there several times this fall but not after early November (JO). Thus, it was significant when a merganser was reported at Waimea Bay, O., in February and confirmed Feb. 21 to be a ♀ Com. Merganser (PD). Perhaps it was the same bird headed north for the breeding season.

HAWKS TO GULLS

O'ahu's virtually resident Osprey was seen again Dec.

16, this time flying over a pond at Waipi'o Pen. on the Christmas Bird Count (MO). Two dark-morph Hawaiian Hawks ('Io, *Endangered*) were observed chasing 'Apapane and 'I'iwi for 15 minutes at Hakalau N.W.R., H., Feb. 22. One finally caught and ate a juv. 'I'iwi (JL). Five Erckel's Francolins were observed on Palikea Trail high in the s. Waianae Mts., O., Jan. 19 (PD).

During the winter one to two Black-bellied Plovers were seen several times at Kealia Pond, M. (JO), about the only site in the state where this uncommon migrant can be found fairly regularly. Five Bristle-thighed Curlews flying near Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R., Feb. 25 (BE) furnished a notable winter record for this species in the main Hawaiian Is. Most observers agreed that the common migrants, Lesser Golden-Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, and Wandering Tattler, all seemed down in numbers despite availability of seemingly suitable habitat.

Two adult and two first-

winter Ring-billed Gulls wintered at Kahuku Pt. Pond and nearby J.C.N.W.R. (PD), and one was at Kealia Pond, M. (JO). Two Glaucous-winged Gulls were also seen at Kahuku Pt. and J.C.N.W.R. during December, with one remaining through February (PD, BE). One adult and one 2nd-winter Glaucous-winged wintered at Tern I., F.F.S. (JM), and one was seen at Sand I., Midway Dec. 4 (MSI).

PASSERINES

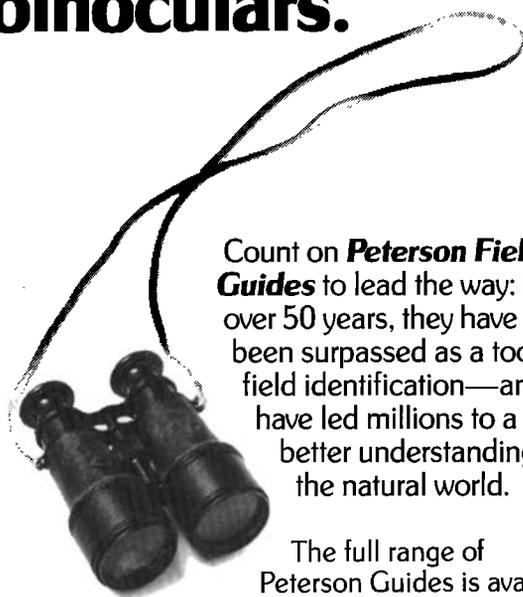
Eurasian Skylarks were singing at Waiawa Unit, P.H.N.W.R., and Waipi'o Pen. from late December through late February (PD). Twenty Red-vented Bulbuls along Aiea Trail Dec. 23 and 10 along Palikea Trail Jan. 19 (PD) reconfirmed that this introduced pest species has moved solidly into both the Ko'olau and Waianae Mt. ranges on O'ahu. Two Red-billed Leiothrix also heard on Aiea Trail Dec. 23 (PD) indicated that this more welcome introduced species continues to rebound from its population crash of the past few decades on O'ahu. A pair of Saffron

Finches, now very rarely reported on O'ahu although common in western Hawai'i I., was observed at Salt Lake, O., Jan. 11 (PD).

A pair of Hawai'i Creepers (*Endangered*) was observed nest-building at Hakalau N.W.R., H., Jan. 24, and incubating during February (JL). A flock of 10 Orange-checked Waxbills was seen Feb. 9 at their regular haunt along Hanson Rd. near Pu'unene, M. (JO), the only locality known for this introduced species on Maui.

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