

Bentsen, Peter Billingham, Lorie Black, Al & Mel Black, Marge Blackburn, Hazel Bluhm, Doug Booher, Bill Bourbon, **David Bradford** (East Texas: 18046 Green Hazel, Houston, TX 77084. e-mail: brdfrd@tenet.edu), Barbara & Roger Breedlove (B&RBr), David & Luanne Brotherton (D&LBro), Hugh Brown, Hans Brunotte, Andrena Brunotte, Barbara Bruns, Tim Brush, **Kelly Bryan** (Trans-Pecos: P.O. Box 786, Ft. Davis, TX 79734), John Buckman, Marty Campbell (MCa), Oscar Carmona, Jack Childs (JCh), Charlie Clark, Jeremy Clark (JCl), Chris Collins, Wendy Connally, Will Cook, Arlie & Mel Cooksey, E. Cowan, Carolyn Cuthbertson (CCu), John Cys, France Davis, Bruce Decker, Jean Dake, Betty Rae Davis, Jeff Davis (JDa), Louis Debetaz, Jon Dunn, Dave Durham, Charles Easley, Mark Elwonger, Rosemary English, Andrew Farnsworth, Harold Fetter, Betty Fisbeck (BFi), Mark Flippo, Fort Worth Audubon Society, Tony & Phyllis Frank, Brush Freeman, Gil Fry, Red & Louise Gambill, Hugh Garnett, Brian Gibbons (BGi), Jeff Gordon (JGo), Peter Gottschling, Bill Graber, Karl Haller, Hap Hamous, Peggy Harding (PHa), George Harmon, Bob Harrison, Dale Hartsfield (DHa), Jill Haukos, Carl Haynie, Tom Hayes, Dick Henderson (DHe), Petra Hockey, Gary Hodnee (GHo), Joe Holbrook, Norman Holgerson, Margo Holst, P.D. Hulce, Don Hunter (DHu), David Hurt, Robert Hurt, Joe Ideker, Bob Johnson, Tom Johnson, Thomas L. Johnson (TLJ), Larry Jordan, Bill Kelley, Richard Kinney, Phillip Kite, Ed Kutac, Tom Langschieid, Bob Lanier, Greg Lasley, Harry LeGrand, Lee Lemmons, Llano Estacado Audubon Society, Keith Lockhart, Mark Lockwood, Ron Lockwood, Jim Luce, Guy Luneau (GLu), Bob Madrulli, P.K. Martin, Elke Matejivich, Steve Matherly, Guy McCaskie, Marline McGuire, Debra McKee, Brad McKinney (BMc), Tony Messina, Wayne Meyer, Mike Mizell (MMi), Steve Mlodinow (SMl), Ralph Moldenhauer, Laura Moore, Carroll Moore, Derek Muschalek (DMu), Candy Myers, Ken Nanney, Luci Nash, Kenny Nichols (NKi), LaDonna Nichols (LNi), Gail & Terry Nickel, Linda Northrop (LNo), Julius Nussbaum, Lisa O'Donnell, L.C. Olmstead, Brent Ortego, Nancy & **Paul Palmer** (South Texas: 615 South Wanda, Kingsville, TX 78363. e-mail: kfpcp00@taiu.edu), Emily Payne, Dick Payne, Dwight Peake (DPe), Marcos Peredes, Jim Peterson, Tom Pincelli, Randy Pinkston, Barbara Pothast, Alice Rasa, **Ross Rasmussen** (N.C. Texas: 600 S. Graves #1704, McKinney, TX 75069),

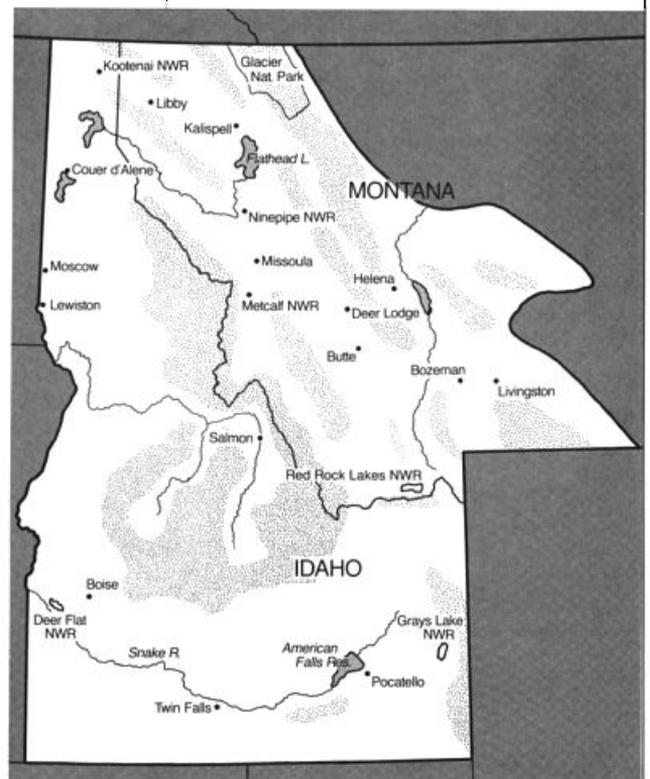
James D. Ray (JDR), Joel Reese (JRe), Martin Reid, John & Barbara Ribble (J&BRi), Kay Rice, Artie & Hanna Richard, Peter Riesz, Jan & Will Risser, Kristin Salas (KSa), Larry Sall, Nancee Salzman, Rick Schaefer, Georgina Schwarz (GSc), Rosemary Scott (RSc), Jim Seeden, Chuck Sexton, **Ken Seyffert** (Panhandle: 2206 S. Lipscomb, Amarillo, TX 79109), Cliff Shackelford (CSh), J.W. Sifford, Joel & Vicki Simon (J&VS), Lynn Smith, Jennifer Smith, Kim Snipes, John Sproul (JSp), Tom Stehn, Cliff Stogner (CSt), Glenn Swartz, Paul Sykes, James Thomas, Susan Tomlinson, Peggy Trosper, Champ & Nancy Turner, Al Valentine, Betty Vernon, Virgil Wade, Ro Wauer, Herbert Wessling, Ed Wetzel, Matt White (MWh), John Whittle, Jana Whittle (JaW), Richard Wilberforce, Egon & Sue Wiedenfeld (E&SWie), Steve Williams, Frances Williams, Jeff Witt, Bonnie & Richard Wright, Charles Wright, Phyllis Yochem, Barry Zimmer.

—*Greg W. Lasley, 305 Loganberry Ct., Austin, TX 78745-6527 (e-mail: GregLasley@aol.com) and Chuck Sexton, 101 E. 54th St., Austin, TX 78751-1232 (e-mail: chuck_sexton@mail.fws.gov).*

Idaho-Western Montana Region

DAN SVINGEN

Skiers, homeowners, birders, and birds were all kept guessing in winter 1995-1996. The season started unseasonably mild, and many species lingered. The sudden arrival of heavy snow and very cold temperatures in early January caused an influx of semi-hardy species into urban areas. In late January, the return of above-normal temperatures then subjected north Idaho and west-central Montana to severe flooding. Particularly hard hit was low-lying riparian forest, which was completely demolished in some areas. The biological significance of this disturbance is heightened by the fact that only small remnants had survived past development. Weather conditions changed again in mid-February, when cold weather returned to the Region, causing another urban influx of



semi-hardy species ... followed shortly thereafter by another warming trend, and more flooding!

Abbreviations: A.F.R. (*American Falls Res.*, by *American Falls, ID*).

Loons to Ducks

Two Pacific Loons lingered on A.F.R. until at least Dec. 3 (CT). Two record-late and locally-rare Red-necked Grebes were at A.F.R., Dec. 1 (JB, MS). A W. Grebe at A.F.R. provided the first overwintering record for latilong 27.

Double-crested Cormorants are apparently expanding their regional wintering range, as well as their breeding range. The season, birds were reported near Lewiston, ID and on Idaho's Coeur d'Alene and Pend O'reille Lakes (m.ob.).

The many lingering birds this season included Idaho's 2nd overwintering Great Egret Dec. 16 and Feb. 18 (CT), and Idaho's latest Cattle Egret Dec. 16. Both birds were initially found during the Hagerman CBC.

A Snow Goose and Blue-winged Teal were on Thompson L., *Kootenai*, ID Dec. 4 (JWN), where seasonally rare. Eurasian Wigeon sightings in Idaho included two in Boise during January and February (MC, FK), three in Nampa Dec. 16 on the CBC, one near Marsing Dec. 23 (JG, DL), and two males and a female at Marsing Jan. 1 (JG, DL).

Among the lingering migrants early in the season were three Redheads on the Salmon, ID CBC Dec. 17 (HR), extending the previous local late record by almost 3 months. Greater Scaup pairs were seen Jan. 9 in Cascade, ID (JG) and near Nampa, ID Feb. 17 (JG). A wounded female Surf Scoter was collected at A.F.R. in mid-December (*Idaho State University, Ornithology Museum). A male White-winged Scoter was on the Snake R. near Hagerman Feb. 4–18 (CT). A late Barrow's Goldeneye was in Salmon Jan. 13 (HR). Red-breasted Mergansers again wintered below A.F.R.: Two were there Jan. 1 (CT). A female Red-breasted Merganser was on Coeur d'Alene L., Jan. 18 (JS), where more expected.

Hawks to Gulls

A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk wintered near Coeur d'Alene (C.A.S.). Many biologists and falconers suspect that most Gyrfalcon which winter in the n. states succumb to disease before returning north. At least one banded bird beat the odds, however, by returning to Gannet, ID (LB) for a 2nd year.

Two lingering Virginia Rails were still at

Warm Springs Cr. 10 mi s.e. of Challis, ID until approximately Dec. 9 (HR). A Sandhill Crane near Bozeman, MT from Dec. 30 to at least Jan. 2 provided only the 3rd winter record for the state (†MM).

A single Western and two Least sandpipers were at Dry Lakes W.M.A., *Canyon*, ID Feb. 17(JG), where the two species were also seen last winter. Dunlin are generally rare and irregular anytime across the Region, and are even more unusual in winter. This season new records included a single at Stevensville, MT Dec. 9–27 (G&PC, JH, MH), and \leq six at Mann L., *Nez Perce*, ID from last fall until mid-February (m.ob.).

Bonaparte's Gulls continued at A.F.R. past their normal departure date, with 29 found on the CBC Dec. 17. An ad. Mew Gull was at the Polson, MT dump Feb. 16 (DH). California Gulls took advantage of the availability of open water and mild temperatures and lingered in s.e. Idaho until early January (CT), much later than in past years. A Thayer's Gull was with 60 Herrings at the Fighting Cr. Landfill in late December (JH, MH). The Polson dump held a 2nd-year Glaucous-winged Gull Feb. 16 (DH). Glaucous Gull sightings included one at A.F.R., Jan 13 (JB, MS), \leq four in the Coeur d'Alene area Jan 13–Feb. 1 (SHS, G&PC, m.ob.), and one near Hagerman Feb. 10 (LB). The species is now almost annual at the Polson dump (DH).

Owls to Jays

One–two Barn Owls were found near Post Falls in mid-December (G&PC, SHS) and late January (JS), though local residents said the birds had been there for several years. Periodic reports of late fall or winter Flammulated Owls in w. Montana continue to puzzle researchers on when (or even if) the species migrates S, as is commonly believed. The plot continued to thicken this season, when Flammulateds were reported in Missoula Dec. 14 (PW) and near Kalispell Jan. 30 (JRb).

A Missoula Great Horned Owl pair got a jump on spring by beginning incubation around Christmas, 2 months earlier than normal (SD, DH). The crash of mountain *Microtus* populations noted by n. Idaho researchers was likely the cause for the numerous N. Pygmy-Owl sightings in n. Idaho valleys this winter, as well as the appearance of N. Saw-whet Owls in prairie settings, including singles in Moscow Dec. 15–Jan. 3 (DK, DNS, IS, *University of Idaho Museum), and near Whitebird, ID Dec. 31 (DNA, IS). A locally-rare Barred Owl was in Boise Dec. 3 (VA).

A "Yellow-shafted" N. Flicker found on the Bozeman CBC Dec. 30 was very

unusual, as the "Yellow-shafted" x "Red-shafted" hybrid seen nearby in mid-January (JP). A Blue Jay, apparently present since November, lingered in Boise through January (AL, HL, m.ob.), while two wintered in Bonners Ferry (*vide* RDC).

Wrens to Warblers

The distribution of migrant *vs.* resident Canyon Wren in Idaho is very unclear, but at least one innovative individual beat the cold snap by hiding in a St. Maries barn Feb. 2 & 3 (JM), 100 mi from the nearest suitable habitat. Bewick's Wrens were at Coyote Grade, *Nez Perce*, ID Dec. 15–Jan 1 (KD, GH, MH), on the Moscow CBC Dec. 16 (KD, DNS, IS), near Kamiah, ID Dec. 30 (DNS, IS), and near Lewiston, ID Feb. 17 (C.B.). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet on the Snake R. near Whitebird, ID Dec. 31 (DNS, IS) provided a winter latilong first.

Six W. Bluebirds showed up at a Moscow-area residence Jan. 20–Feb. 2 (DHk) during the harsh weather period. A locally-late Mt. Bluebird was near Salmon Dec. 31 (TL). Varied Thrushes were among the semi-hardy species which appeared in towns and cities during this season's cold snaps, including several birds in Missoula and Moscow, and dozens of birds in the Coeur d'Alene area (m.ob.).

A rare N. Mockingbird wintered in the Pocatello, ID area, present from mid-December to at least early March (JPr, KS, CT). After being largely absent last winter, Bohemian Waxwings were found in high numbers throughout w. Montana and n. Idaho. Peak counts of >1000 birds were seen in several locations throughout this area (m.ob.), undoubtedly aided by the good Mountain Ash berry crop (PW, m.ob.).

Idaho's first Yellow-throated Warbler spent mid-November–mid-January at George and Helen Oatman's feeder in Harrison (†, ph.).



Yellow-throated Warbler at Harrison, Idaho, in December 1995. A first for the state, it visited this feeder from mid-November 1995 into January 1996. Photograph/George and Helen Oatman.

Sparrows to Redpolls

Single Am. Tree Sparrows were seen by Whitebird, ID Dec. 31 (DNS, IS), and in Grangeville, ID Jan. 31 (DNS, IS). Idaho's 11th Swamp Sparrow was at the Ted Trueblood W.M.A., *Elmore*, ID Dec. 28 (DT). Several of Idaho's records have come from there. Another Swamp Sparrow was at the Hagerman W.M.A., *Gooding*, ID Feb. 10 (LB), where a bird was also seen last winter (LB). A single White-throated Sparrow was in Garden Valley, ID during February (R&SF). Snow Buntings were more common than usual along w. Montana highways (PW), except in the Bozeman area (EL).

One-two female **Great-tailed Grackles** were at Marsing, ID from Dec. 23–Feb. 28 (JG, DL). Eight Great-taileds were near Pocatello Dec. 18–mid-January (CT). The Burley, ID birds were not seen after early December (*fide* CT).

As first noted in last season's report, White-winged Crossbills were abundant through the fall and winter in the Region's northern-most areas. Small flocks were also noted by Dixie, ID Dec. 24 (DNS, IS) and Grangeville Dec. 27 and Feb. 11 (DNS, IS).

The status of Black Rosy-Finch in Idaho is unclear. The species again wintered in Ketchum, where $\leq 20\%$ of the 200 rosy-finches were Blacks. A lone Lapland Longspur was near Gannet, ID Feb. 2–5 (LB), filling one of the "holes" in the species Idaho range.

Although regular in Montana, Com. Redpoll are irregular in Idaho. The species made a typical showing in w. Montana this winter, but was more widespread than usual in Idaho, including a single in Lewiston Dec. 9 (C.B.), 16 in Moscow Dec. 12–Jan 4 (KD, m.ob.), 20 near Challis Feb. 4 (AD), and 60 in Deary Feb. 22 (CV). At least one **Hoary Redpoll** associated with the Moscow redpoll flock Dec. 15–Jan. 1 (†KD, ph. †MD, †DNS, m.ob.), for Idaho's 4th documented sighting.



Great-tailed Grackle is continuing to expand its small foothold in the interior of the Northwest. This female was at Marsing, Idaho, through February 1996. Photograph/John Gatchet.

With greater coverage and more regular reporting, Hoary's will likely turn out to be much more regular in northern-most Idaho than is generally accepted.

Addendum

The newly established fall hawk watch on Boise's Lucky Peak continues to produce Broad-winged Hawks. Nine birds were seen there this fall, mostly in the last 2 weeks of September (GK). One Broad-winged was banded.

Observers cites (subregional editors in boldface): IDAHO: Vern Anderson, Larry Barnes, Joan Bergstrom, Caynon Birders (C.B.), Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society (C.A.S.), Rich Del Carlo (RDC), Pat Cole, Mark Collie, Gordon and Pam Comrie (G&RC), Ross Dake, Art Dahl, Mike Denny, **Kas Dumroese**, Ralph & Sherry Foote (R&SF), John Gatchet (JG), Bill Gundlach, Winnie Hepburn, Greg Hirth, John Hirth (JH), Marty Hirth, Dave Hollick (DHkk), Greg Kaltenecker, **Merlene Koliner**, Florence Knoell, Al Larson, Hilda Larson, Tony Latham, George and Louise La Voie (G&LL), Dave Lawrence (DL), John Montgomery, John Nigh (JWN), Chris O'Brien, Jim Paruk (JPr), Susan Patla, **Hadley Roberts**, Ken Salzman, John Shipley, Marie Smith, **Shirley Sturts** (SHS), Dan Svingen (DNS), Ila Svingern, Dave Trochlell, **Charles Trost**, Carol Vande Voorde. MONTANA: Sharon Browder, **Dan Casey**, Stacey Drasen, Erick Greene, Joan Hardie (JHa), Denver Holt (DH), Eric Lichtwardt, David Lockman (DLo), Mike Myers, John Ormiston, John Parker (JP), Jean Robocker (JRb), **Philip Wright**.

—Dan Svingen, P.O. Box 132, Grangeville, ID 83530.

Mountain West Region

VAN A. TRUAN AND BRANDON K. PERCIVAL

As a whole, this winter seemed mild throughout the Region into January. In mid-January and February, several "Arctic Blasts" returned winter to the eastern portions of the region. It was 78° F. in Pueblo, Colorado, February 2; the next day it plummeted to a record-low -26° F. These extreme temperature changes have to affect birds. Southern areas of the Region were extremely dry, such as the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo Mountains in Colorado, and northern areas seemed normal or above-average in precipitation. Many lakes in northern areas remained open into mid-December or later, which aided in increased reports of waterbirds, but kept Bald Eagles north.

There were some exceptional birds recorded this season, including four Black Scoters, three Gyrfalcons, an Ancient Murrelet, a Black Phoebe, one each of Yellow, Prairie and MacGillivray's warblers, and a LeConte's Sparrow in Colorado. In Nevada, there were two Mountain Plovers and an American Redstart; in Utah, a Yellow-billed Loon, a Black Scoter, and a Savannah Sparrow; and in Wyoming, a Greater Yellowlegs.

Abbreviations: State Wildlife Area (S.W.A.) † (*written description on file with R.E.*), and * (*specimen submitted to Denver Museum of Natural History*).

Loons to Herons

With the mild weather reservoirs and lakes remained open into mid-December, thus reports of loons, grebes, Am. White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, and herons were much higher than usual. There were two Red-throated Loons at Chatfield Res., Dec. 1 (†BKP, DSm, GC) and one at Union Res., Dec. 8–12 (DAL). Up to nine Pacific Loons were observed at 5 e. Colorado reservoirs in December, one at L. Powell, UT Jan. 19 (JS, CP), one at Pyramid L., NV Jan. 17 (DT), and one at L. Mead, UT Feb. 10 (J&MC). The only **Yellow-billed Loon** recorded was in Utah at L. Powell Feb. 16 (CP), providing Utah's 3rd state record. Reports of Com. Loon were above-average. A Pied-billed