

oregon-washington region



BILL TWEIT and BILL TICE

Many marginal wintering species were present in fair numbers, while some of the more northern species, such as Snow Buntings, Snowy Owls, and rosy-finches, were absent. Heermann's Gulls were not only found as far north as Astoria, but staged an impressive movement north during mid-February. Unusual numbers of Northern Fulmar, Brown Pelican (continued abnormal distribution and abundance), Great Egret, and Harris's Sparrow were widely commented on.

The mildness of the winter is best depicted by the lack of sub-zero temperatures at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Oregon. Precipitation appeared relatively normal in most areas.

Abbreviations: F.R.R. (*Fern Ridge Res., Lane Co., OR*); *Sauvie (Sauvie I., Columbia/Multnomah Co., OR)*; S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop Co., OR*); W.W.R.D. (*Walla Walla R. delta, WA*).

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

There were only 3 reports of Pacific Loon in inland areas away from the lower Columbia R.: one at Selmac L., *Josephine, OR*, Dec. 4-Feb. 9 (DM, PISu, DV); one at Richland, *Benton, WA*, Dec. 12 (BW); and one at Washougal, *Clark, WA*, Feb. 9 (WC). The only reports of Yellow-billed Loons were singles at the mouth of the Chetco R., *Curry, OR*, from Nov. 19 to Dec. 5 (JR, A. Barron, C. Dillingham) and one immature at Olympia, *Thurston, WA*, throughout the period (BS, m.ob.). Clark's Grebe is rare, but annual, in winter. Two were at Millacoma Marsh, *Coos, OR*, for much of the period (TR); one was at Vancouver L., *Clark, WA*, Dec. 18 to Jan. 3 (PtSu, BS); one was at Skamania, *Skamania, WA*, Jan. 17 (WC); and one was at Olympia, *Thurston, WA*, Jan. 25 (BS).

A dead Laysan Albatross was found near Thiel Cr. Beach, *Lincoln, OR*, Feb. 27 (B&S Loeffel) and one was seen off Depoe Bay Feb. 28 (GG). There were an unusual number of N. Fulmar reports from shore, of

both live and dead birds. Live sightings included one near Coos Bay, *OR*, Dec. 7 (DL); one at S.J.C.R. Dec. 19 (*vide MP*); one at Westport, *Grays Harbor, WA*, Dec. 20 (BT); 38 at Coos Bay Dec. 20 (*vide HN*); one at Tillamook Dec. 20 (*vide HN*); three at Port Orford, *Curry, OR*, Dec. 27 (JR, *vide AC*); and one at Neah Bay, *Clallam, WA*, Jan. 27 (PtSu). Beached bird counts included 19 in 4.5 mi near Thiel Cr., *Lincoln, OR*, in November (*vide RB*); 31 in 3 mi s. of Yaquina Head, *Lincoln, OR*, Jan. 2 (AF); and three on Sunset Beach, *Clatsop, OR*, Jan. 18 (MP). Reports of Short-tailed Shearwater were also above average: one at Edmonds, *Snohomish, WA*, Dec. 16 (*vide RR*); two at Point No Point, *Kitsap, WA*, Dec. 17 (VN); four at S.J.C.R. Dec. 21 (*vide MP*); one at Tillamook, *OR*, Dec. 20 (*vide HN*); and seven off Orford Head, *Curry, OR*, Feb. 14 (JG, TJW). A report of a small black-and-white shearwater off Cape Blanco, *Curry, WA*, Feb. 11 will be evaluated by the ORBC (JR). Reports of Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel from shore included two at Westport, *Grays Harbor, WA*, Dec. 17 (BT) and one at S.J.C.R. Dec. 21 (*vide MP*). Rarer than the previous species, a Leach's Storm-Petrel was at S.J.C.R. Dec. 20 (*vide MP*).

Two Am. White Pelicans wintered at F.R.R. (m.ob.); currently they seem to be resident at this westside location. Unprecedented numbers of Brown Pelicans were reported in coastal Oregon throughout the period: 55 were at the Pistol R. mouth, *Curry, Dec. 2 (DM)*; eight were at the Chetco R. mouth, *Curry, Dec. 15 (DM)*; 11 were at Port Orford, *Curry, Dec. 27 (JR, vide AC)*; three flew past Yaquina Head, *Lincoln, Dec. 27 (RB)*; five were at Manzanita, *Clatsop, Dec. 29 (B. Godfrey)*; one was at Tierra Del Mar, *Tillamook, Jan. 2 (W. Gross)*; three were at Boiler Bay, *Lincoln, Jan. 25 (AC)*; one was at Newport, *Lincoln, Feb. 8 (J. Chard)*; one was at Bandon, *Coos, Feb. 9 (TR)*; and three were off Cape Blanco, *Curry, Feb. 11 (TJW, JR)*.

Oregon had several high counts of Great Egret: 14 on *Sauvie Dec. 31 (S. Powell)*, an amazing 63 in the Portland area Jan. 3 (*vide RK*), and 71 in the Coquille Valley,

Coos, Jan. 3 (AC). Twenty-two in Washington included two in the interior, at Walla Walla Dec. 7 (M&MLD) and at Lowden, Walla Walla, Jan. 1–4 (PtSu, M&MLD), and 20 in s.w. Washington (WC, JE, PtSu, BT). Even though the fall Cattle Egret flight was unspectacular, on the westside at least, there were an unusual number of winter reports: two wintered at Hermiston, *Umatilla*, OR (CC, J. Stevens); one at Sauvie Dec. 1 (HN), two–three at Richland, *Benton*, WA, Dec. 1–12 (BW); one at Silverdale, *Kitsap*, WA, Dec. 4 (PtSu); one at Lowden, WA, Dec. 27 (M&MLD); two at Eugene, OR, Dec. 31–Jan. 11 (BC); and one on Airlie Rd., *Polk*, OR, Jan. 5 (C. Karlen). There seem to be increasing numbers of Black-crowned Night-Herons wintering on the westside: 65 individuals were tallied, including a roost of 36 near Eugene Jan. 12 (D DeWitt) and three on the outer coast, with one at Pony Slough, *Coos*, OR, Jan. 10 and two at Newport, *Lincoln*, OR, Jan. 17 onward (*fide* RB).

Oregon observers continue to find Trumpeter Swans in new areas: one at Salem, *Marion*, Dec. 20 (*fide* SD); two at Cedar Canyon, *Washington*, Feb. 4–22 (GG, m ob); and one near Coquille, *Coos*, Feb. 24–25 (TR, B. Fawver). The first w. Oregon record of **Whooper Swan** remained through Dec. 1 in *Polk* (m.ob.). The lower Columbia survey of Tundra Swans found 1550 at Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark*, WA, Dec. 12 (JE). A Mute Swan wintered with Tundras near Roy, *Washington*, OR (HN). Winter reports of Ross's Goose are increasing simultaneously with spring reports. The total of six is a new winter record. Three were present in w. Oregon: one at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, Dec. 2 (TJ) to Jan. 19; one immature at Finley N.W.R., *Benton*, Dec. 20–Jan. 6 (AF, *fide* JP, BC); and one was n of Florence, *Lane*, Dec. 6 (B. Stotz) to Jan. 22. Three in w. Washington included one at Vancouver L., *Clark*, Dec. 6–20 (WC, †SM), one at Nisqually N.W.R., *Thurston*, Jan. 8 (*fide* RR); and one at Keyport, *Kitsap*, Feb. 7–23 (I. Paulsen, PtSu). The Emperor Goose residing on the lower Sandy R. seems to have taken up residence, it stayed through the period (m.ob.); an immature was near Vancouver L., WA, Jan. 17 (RK, *fide* HN).

"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal in Washington were reported from Swantown, *Island*, Dec. 7 (SM); at Renton, *King*, Feb. 8 (*fide* RR); and at Bingen, *Klickitat*, Feb. 16 (SJ). An apparently pure Am. Black Duck at Hood River, OR, Jan. 4 and beyond (S. Russell, DBa) represented about the 10th

Oregon record; origin of these is an unsettled issue, although the introduced Washington population is fast disappearing (SM, pers. comm.). Only four Eur. Wigeon were reported from the interior: one at Clarkston, *Asotin*, WA, Jan. 8 (*fide* M. Kolinier); one near Baker City, OR, Jan. 9 (S. Speegle); one at Dallesport, *Klickitat*, WA, Jan. 28 (SJ); and one at the W.W.R.D. Feb. 20 (M&MLD). There were 53 Redheads reported from various westside locations, primarily in Oregon, for a high total. The largest group was 24 at Sally's Bend, Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR (KM). A male Tufted Duck wintered at Bingen, WA (WC, SJ). A male Tufted Duck × scaup was reported from Drano L., *Skamania*, WA (SJ), and another was at Everett, WA, Jan. 3 on (†SM). Up to six Oldsquaw were near W.W.R.D. Dec. 18–Jan. 7 (M&MLD); one was at Suttle L., *Jefferson*, OR, Jan. 1 onward (L. Rems); and one was at Summer L., *Lake*, OR, Dec. 23–27 (BTi, RG), an above-average number from the interior.

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

At least 50 White-tailed Kites were found, all but one in Oregon. Counties with multiple counts included *Coos* with 13, *Polk* with 10 (TJ), *Lane* with nine (LM, m.ob.), *Douglas* with eight (*fide* RM), and *Josephine* with seven (DV). The Washington report was at Raymond, *Pacific*, Feb. 13 (PtSu). Red-shouldered Hawks put on another excellent showing at the n. edge of their usual range, with reports from 14 of 19 counties in w. Oregon, totaling 42+ birds, plus one in w. Washington at Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark*, all winter (WC). In the interior, one was at W. Richland, *Benton*, Jan. 31–Feb. 11 (T. Greager, BW) for the 2nd e. Washington record. At least 10 *harlanii* Red-tailed Hawks were reported, all from w. Washington and n.w. Oregon; this may be somewhat above-normal numbers for this race.

Golden Eagle reports are increasing in winter on the westside: three were found in w. Washington and 12+ were found in w. Oregon. Most were found in the Puget Trough/Willamette Valley, but four were from the coast, where very rare. For the 4th consecutive winter, the number of Gyrfalcon reports was in the double digits. There appeared to be four-plus in the n. Willamette Valley: one in *Benton/Linn* Dec. 6–23 (AF), one on Sauvie Jan. 17 (*fide* HN), one along Livermore Rd. Feb. 8–11 (PtSu) for the third *Polk* record, and one at Finley N.W.R., *Benton*, Feb. 21 (PtSu). Western Washington had five-plus birds, and e. Washington had six Winter numbers of

Prairie Falcon are also on the increase on the westside: about six were reported from the Willamette Valley and three were reported from w. Washington, including one at Nisqually N.W.R. Jan. 8, for the 2nd *Thurston* record (S. Nord), and two in *Skagit* (TA, BN, SM).

Three Lesser Yellowlegs were reported: one on Coos Bay, OR, Dec. 20 (*fide* HN); one near Astoria, OR, Dec. 21 (*fide* MP); and one at the Humptulips R. mouth, *Grays Harbor*, WA, Feb. 11–23 (TA). A Wandering Tattler at Newport, OR, Feb. 1 (KM), a Red Knot at Yachats, *Lincoln*, OR, Feb. 12 (S. Lockyear), and a Long-billed Dowitcher at the Yakima R. delta, *Benton*, WA, Dec. 17 (BW) were also rare in winter at those locations. Small numbers of Red Phalarope appeared onshore in December and again after a storm February 6–7. December reports totaled 20; the largest number was eight at Westport, WA, Dec. 17 (BT). Two at E.E. Wilson W.M.A., *Benton*, OR, Dec. 1 (AF) and two in Corvallis Dec. 23 (*fide* JP) were the only inland reports. After the Feb. 6–7 storm, Oregon coastal areas had 40+ birds; the largest concentration was 20 at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, Feb. 9 (C&J Chard). Four were reported from Washington, all from *Grays Harbor* Feb. 13–23 (G&W Hoge, TA, PtSu, BW).

The usual handful of winter jaeger reports totaled four, all off the Oregon coast and three of those in February (GG, AC). A Little Gull wintered at American L., *Pierce*, WA, for the 10th consecutive year (PtSu). The most striking aspect of the winter was the number of Heermann's Gulls along the outer coast. There were many reports of 1st-year, 2nd-year, and ad. birds along the entire coast throughout the winter. They were most numerous in *Curry* and *Coos*, the southernmost counties (DM, DL, KC, TJW, TR), as indicated by counts of 40 at Port Orford Feb. 15 (JG, TJW) and 35–40 (including 20 adults) in Brookings Feb. 12 (DM). Farther north along the Oregon coast, most of the 27 individuals were seen in February. Peak counts included: five at Lincoln City Feb. 14 (SLa), six (four adults and two immatures) at Sunset Bay Feb. 14 (RM), and five at Cape Kiwanda, *Tillamook*, Feb. 15 (D. Bagues). Many fewer were in Washington: two-plus were in the Ocean Shores/Westport area of *Grays Harbor* Dec. 17 on (BT, m.ob.); one was at Sequim, *Clallam*, Dec. 20 (*fide* BN); and one was at Cape Flattery, *Clallam*, Feb. 15 (C. Chappell). Four reports of Mew Gull in the Washington interior were all from locales where they are regular, but still sparingly

distributed: Clarkston (D. Holick, KD), Ice Harbor Dam (M&MLD), Spokane (WH), and the Snake R. mouth (D. Rockwell). A Thayer's Gull at Clarkston, *Asotin*, WA, Jan. 18 (*vide* M. Koliner) was the only interior report.

There were four **Slaty-Backed Gull** reports: two adults on Sauvie Dec. 27–Feb. 18 (JJ, m.ob.); a 3rd-winter bird was found at Westmoreland Park, *Multnomah*, OR, Feb. 8–18 (P. Mueller, JG); and an adult in Tacoma Jan. 3–6 (R. Sullivan, ph.). This is the highest winter total since 1992–1993. About 20 Glaucous Gull reports furnished the lowest total in 6 years, with 12 in w. Oregon, two in e. Washington, and six in w. Washington. Counts of 312 Black-legged Kittiwakes off Depoe Bay, OR, Feb. 28 (GG) and 200 at Cape Flattery, WA, Feb. 7 (*vide* RR) headlined a large number of reports. Other coastal reports totaled 90+ in Oregon and 50+ in Washington. Away from the outer coast, kittiwakes were at John Day Dam on the Columbia R. Jan. 16 (C. Roberts, CM), and s. of Monmouth, *Polk*, OR, Feb. 23–28 (BTi, m.ob.). An extremely early Caspian Tern was at Bandon, *Coos*, OR, Jan. 20 (A. Parker).

OWLS THROUGH TROGLODYTES

Last winter brought the largest Snowy Owl invasion in over 20 years, but there was almost no "echo" flight this winter. The total of four-plus in e. Washington, including three-plus in *Lincoln* (JA) and one in *Grant* (M&MLD), and four in w. Washington, two in *Skagit* (*vide* G. Bletsch), one in *Pierce* (*vide* RR), and one in *Grays Harbor* (S. Richardson), was less than 10% of last winter's numbers. In comparison, the echo flight of 1974–1975 was about 1/3 of the preceding invasion. The Burrowing Owl in *Polk*, OR, Dec. 10 was the only westside report, and provided the 4th county record (H. Hamman). Long-eared Owls are being reported more frequently on the westside: one was in Corvallis, OR, Dec. 23 (*vide* JP); one was found dead on Spencer I., *Snohomish*, WA, Dec. 25 (E. Deal); and one was at Lake Sammamish S.P., *King*, WA, Feb. 4 (*vide* RR).

A male Costa's Hummingbird in Grant's Pass, *Jackson*, OR, Dec. 21 onward was said to have been around since summer (DV) and was joined by a second Feb. 22. Others were in Medford, OR, in December (*vide* DV) and in Portland Jan. 7 (D. Bush, *vide* HN). They are annual visitants in Oregon. A male Allen's Hummingbird at Harbor, *Curry*, OR, Jan. 27 (DM) was quite early. Two Tropical Kingbirds remained late after

a large fall flight: one n. of Coos Bay, OR, Dec. 13 (TR) and one near Rocky Pt. County Park, *Coos*, OR, Dec. 6–13 (DL). The **Black Phoebe**, Washington's 3rd, at Washougal, *Clark*, remained through Jan. 2 (WC). Other records from n. of their range were one in Albany, *Linn*, OR, Dec. 3 (J. Fleischer); one in Roseburg, *Douglas*, OR, Dec. 20 (*vide* BTi); and one wintering near Cresswell, *Lane*, OR (S. Nelson). There were 4 reports of Say's Phoebe in w. Oregon (AF, DM), about average.

At least seven Barn Swallows were found, a very high winter number. Two were in Eugene, OR, Dec. 31–Jan. 4 (*vide* BC); three were at Vancouver L., *Clark*, WA, Dec. 3–Jan. 2 (SM, WC, BS); and two were in Blaine, WA, Feb. 1 (*vide* RR). Eight Blue Jay reports is the lowest total in 4 years: two wintered at Spokane, WA (JA); one wintered at Enterprise, *Baker*, OR (CC); one wintered at Bend, OR (T. Crabtree); one was in Burns, *Harney*, OR, Dec. 28 (B. Michalski, H. Richburg); one was at Seattle Jan. 4 (*vide* RR); and two were in *Walla Walla*, WA, Feb. 20 (M&MLD).

THRUSHES THROUGH FINCHES

Twelve reports of N. Mockingbird consisted of 10 from w. Oregon and two from w. Washington. The total is slightly above average. Two Brown Thrashers were found: one that wintered at Summer L., *Lake*, OR (CM, m.ob.) and one along Bond Butte Rd., *Linn*, OR, Feb. 28 (D. Heyerly, PSh). The typical handful of Bohemian Waxwings on the westside were 20 at Skagit W.M.A., *Skagit*, WA, Dec. 14 (SA); one at Olympia, WA, Jan. 12 (A. Potter); and one at Minto Park, *Marion*, OR, Feb. 22 (L. Ashworth).

Rare winter finds were Cassin's Vireos in Port Orchard, *Kitsap*, WA, Dec. 4 (PtSu, ph.) and in Oak Grove, *Clackamas*, OR, Dec. 31 (JG); the Nashville Warbler at Pony Slough, *Coos*, OR, Jan. 22 (TR); Black-throated Gray Warblers at Seattle Dec. 25 (*vide* RR) and near Pony Slough, *Coos*, OR, Feb. 2 (J. Thomas, *vide* TR); the N. Waterthrush at Skagit W.M.A., *Skagit*, WA, Dec. 25 (†SM); and the Wilson's Warbler at Seattle Dec. 7 (P. Bartley). Ten Palm Warblers were found along the Oregon coast; seven of these were in *Coos*. This is an unusual number. One found inland in Eugene Jan. 17 was very rare in winter (C. Stockwell). Five Com. Yellowthroats were found on the westside (DL, KC, J. Bragg, JE), a bit on the high side.

A **Summer Tanager** that spent most of the winter at an undisclosed *Skagit* location (ph, D McNeely) represents the first

Washington record. A Green-tailed Towhee at Skagit W.M.A., *Skagit*, WA, Dec. 7–Jan. 10 (E. Deal, SM) provided the first Washington winter record in many years. American Tree Sparrows in the Willamette Valley are noteworthy; five were reported this winter (TJ, LM, SD). Wintering Chipping Sparrows are being reported from w. Oregon more regularly in recent years, but a total of eight is still quite remarkable one was at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, Dec. 1–2 (M. LaFaive) and again on Jan. 21 (BTi); one was in Roseburg, *Jackson*, Dec. 21 (*vide* RM); one was in Corvallis, *Benton*, Dec. 23 (*vide* JP); three were in Dallas, *Polk*, Dec. 30 (*vide* RG); one was in *Polk* Jan. 19 (TS); and one was at Ankenny NWR, *Marion*, Jan. 31 (JS). Completing the *Spizella* gang were a pair of Clay-colored Sparrows: one near Canby, *Clackamas*, OR, Dec. 11–Jan. 27 (TJ, m.ob.) and one near Duvall, *King*, WA, Jan. 2–31 (†E. Hunn, m.ob.).

The ad. Lark Sparrow wintering at Brownsville, *Linn*, Jan. 4 on (JS) is also highly unusual. A Sage Sparrow at the Sandy R. mouth, *Multnomah*, OR, Feb. 15 (B. Altman, D. Van Den Broek) furnished the 3rd county record, and another at Nisqually N.W.R., *Thurston*, WA, Feb. 16 (D. Shaw) provided the 2nd county record. A Fox Sparrow of one of the reddish (eastern and northern) races was at Minto Brown and Riverfront Park, *Marion*, OR, Dec. 7–Jan. 25 (TS, m.ob.). Swamp Sparrow numbers show extreme annual variation in the Region. The total of 13 is well below the decade average, but better than last winter. All but three of these were in w. Oregon, two of the remainder were in n. Puget Sound (SM), and one wintered at Bend, OR (J. Meredith). Fourteen reports of White-throated Sparrow from w. Washington is a bit below average, but the tally of 12 at Minto Park, *Marion*, OR, Feb. 7 (R. Chadwick) is evidence of a good winter in w. Oregon. Harris's Sparrow numbers were the highest in a decade or so. The total of 30+ included eight in e. Oregon, seven in e. Washington, 11 in w. Oregon, and four in w. Washington.

Rusty Blackbirds were found at 2 *Walla Walla* sites: Madame Dorian S.P. Dec. 27 and Wallula Jan. 9 (M&MLD), as well as on the westside at Duvall, WA, Jan. 11–31 (*vide* RR). They are being found annually in recent years. White-winged Crossbill numbers remained elevated. The peak count was 300 at Havillah, Okanogan, WA, Feb. 6 (PtSu). Other reports came from Mt Spokane, WA, in early February (WH, JA), Stevens Pass, *Chelan/King*, WA, in January

(J. Starfire); Moro, *Sherman*, OR, in December (PtSu); and Odell L., *Klamath*, OR, Feb. 1 (J. Harding). Pine Siskins were reported in minute numbers in most areas (BW, HN, BT). Flocks of 36 Lesser Goldfinch in Portland Jan. 3 (*vide* RK); nine in Salem, *Marion*, OR, for most of the period (AC); eight in W. Salem, *Polk*, OR (RG); and 13 at Lyle, *Klickitat*, WA, Feb. 16 (PtSu) are an indication of the strength of the population at the n. edge of their range. A **Lawrence's Goldfinch** at a feeder in Jacksonville, *Jackson*, OR, mid-December–Feb. 1 (S. Faught) would represent the 3rd state record if accepted by the ORBC.

EXOTICS

A Ruddy Shelduck was at Stevenson, *Ska-maniamia*, WA, Nov. 29 (BT) to Jan. 29 (PtSu, SJ). A Red-crested Pochard was in Tacoma Dec. 20 (PtSu). A Red-breasted Goose, a Bar-headed Goose, and several Black Swans were in the Willamette Valley this winter. A Crested Caracara at Neah Bay, *Clallam*, Jan. 4–Feb. 1 (BN, m.ob.) inspired a great deal of debate, but the WBRC treated it as of uncertain origin. The Portland colony of Monk Parakeets had 12 birds Jan. 17 (RK).

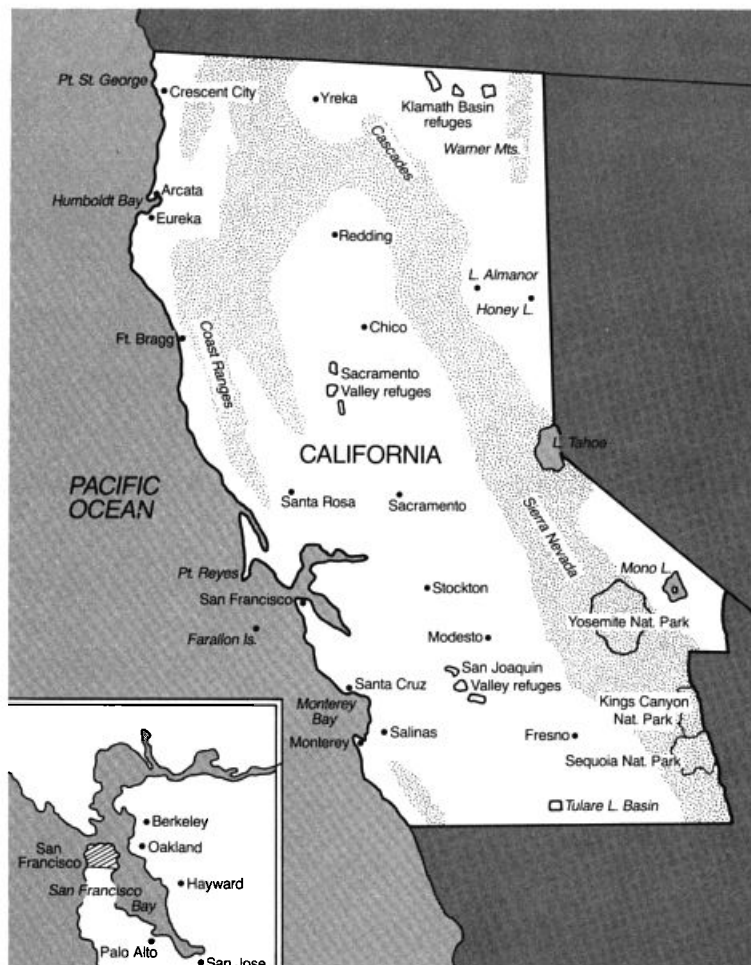
Initialed observers, with subregional editors

in boldface: Jim Acton, Scott Atkinson, Tom Aversa, Range Bayer (*Lincoln*), David Bailey (DBa), Wilson Cady, Kathy Castelein, Barbara Combs, Alan Contreras, Craig Corder, Mike and Merry Lynn Denny, Steve Dowlan, Kas Dumroese, Joe Engler, Anthony Floyd, Roy Gerig, Jeff Gilligan, Greg Gillson, Warren Hall, Tim Janzen, Stuart Johnston, Ray Korpi, Dave Lauten, Bill & Nancy LaFramboise, Gerard Lillie, Ron Maertz, Larry McQueen, Kathy Merrifield, Tom Mickel (*Lane*), Craig Miller, Steve Mlodinow, Don Munson, **Harry Nehls** (western Oregon), Vic Nelson, Bob Norton, Mike Patterson, Jonathon Plissner, Tim Rodenkirk, Jim Rogers, **Russell Rogers** (Washington), Tom Rogers, Bill Shelmerdine, Tim Shelmerdine, Paul Sherrell (PSh), Jamie Simmons, Andy Stepniwski, Patrick Sullivan (PtSu), Paul Sullivan (PtSu), Bill Tice (BTi), Dennis Vroman, Terry J. Wahl, Bob Woodley.

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middle pacific coast region



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El Niño conditions throughout the Pacific Basin pulled the northern jet stream south, bringing wave after wave of Alaskan storms slamming into the northern California coast from January into March. Many areas set new precipitation records. Flooding was widespread along the coast and in the Central Valley, and landslides closed numerous roads throughout the Region. These savage storms affected seabirds surprisingly little, but landbirds were locally displaced. Mountainous areas of *Trinity* had few birds, while the Trinity River canyon in eastern *Humboldt* sheltered

“up to a million” American Robins gorging on madrone berries (Fix). The fast-moving systems dumped their heavy loads before or on the Sierra Nevada; east of the mountains it was cold without much snow until mid-February.

Despite the tempests, temperatures west of the Sierra averaged higher than usual, enticing insectivores to linger late—some remained to winter. Swallows were particularly conspicuous. Wintering Tree and Violet-green swallows are expected, but Barn and Northern Rough-wingeds, normally very rare in winter, were widely reported. The mild temperatures likely account for a smorgasbord selection of wintering flycatchers, wrens, and warblers despite the rains, but nectar-feeders (particularly