

THE CHANGING SEASONS

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I HAVE AN ELDERLY NEIGHBOR WHO CLAIMS TO HAVE WITNESSED 83 years of unusual weather. In reviewing the winter Changing Seasons section of this journal for the past several years, I begin to see his point: each of these winters seems vastly different from the others and from anything like "an average winter." In 1981–1982, the season was described as "Endless Winter." In the East and North, it was marked by lowered avian survival. Raptors including Northern Goshawks, Rough-legged Hawks, Gyrfalcons, Hawk and Short-eared owls were present in high numbers. Red-breasted Nuthatches and Common Redpolls were also widely reported as incursive.

The following winter, 1982–1983, found El Niño in the Pacific Ocean. This oceanic phenomenon produced an exceptionally wet and mild winter across the United States and Canada. These conditions resulted in waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, hummingbirds and passerines lingering later than average, but caused no irruption of boreal seed-eaters.

Winter of 1983–1984 is remembered—for some of us this memory is in our very bones—as "The Siberian Express," with record-low temperatures in many areas during December and January. From an ornithological viewpoint, it was also memorable, with widespread avian mortality, and low numbers of individuals in some areas. More positively, at least for observers, was an influx of Asiatic strays like Smew, Slaty-backed Gull (see this issue for all details), Bramblings, Rustic Bunting, and Siberian Rubythroat. Great Grey Owls irrupted and there was a moderate incursion of boreal songbirds.

Last winter, 1984–1985, was not so easily characterized, and did not earn itself a nickname. Early winter was mild, January cold and icy, and February set record-high temperatures in the East. Not surprisingly, many migrants, especially shorebirds and warblers lingered well to the north. The major irruptions were described as food-, and not weather-related and involved White-winged and Red crossbills, Bohemian Waxwings, Mountain Bluebirds, and Common Redpolls. Paul Lehman in his Changing Seasons column, characterized them as western montane species moving into lowlands, south, and east.

The season just past, the winter of 1985–1986, was also not a simple one to describe succinctly. For the majority of the regions this report covers, December was a very wintry month. November had been brutally cold in western Canada and northwestern United States. By mid-December this cold had been brought to about two-thirds of the United States in a series of storms labelled "Alberta Clippers," based on their origin in a Pacific-Arctic front and its associated low pressure areas over Northwest Canada. Temperatures were well below average to the east of the front,

which remained poised from northwest British Columbia southeast to Colorado. Cold air from the storms moved southeast from the Great Plains bringing temperatures 14°F below normal to Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois, and a hard freeze to central Florida, just after Christmas. The storms brought heavy "lake-effect" snows to the Great Lakes states; Buffalo, always in winter a snowy city, eclipsed previous snowfalls to set a new monthly maximum (68.4"). To the west of the Pacific-Arctic front, high pressures aloft served to trap cold air at the surface and cause very persistent fog that shut out sunshine and warmth. Idaho recorded an awful 18°F below average, with 20 consecutive days below 0°F. There were few "winners" from this weather pattern. In the southwest conditions were very dry—not exactly a blessing there—and a few degrees warmer than average. Curiously, the Canadian Prairie Provinces were also warmer than average, as was Alaska. In the tropical regions, where rainfall is much more variable than is temperature, both the Hawaiian Islands and the West Indies were exceptionally dry.

January is normally the coldest month in most places, but a long thaw this winter eliminated much of the snow cover previously deposited. Only the southeastern United States had temperatures below average. It was very dry over most of the continent and in a large land swath centered around Kansas and reaching well into Texas had no measurable precipitation for the entire month. In contrast, the peripheries of the continent—Florida, New England and the Maritimes, the Pacific Northwest, British Columbia and much of Alaska—had precipitation well above average. This was enough, however, to bring snow cover north of a line running from New Jersey to southern New Mexico.

February's weather, complex in detail, is nonetheless easy to summarize. It was warm compared to averages in most areas. Temperatures from south Texas (103°F) to Washington State (73°F) were more appropriate to summer than winter. The regions unaffected by the heat formed a broad belt across New England, Great Lakes States, Northern Plains and most of Southern Canada. Here temperatures were normal, or at worst, slightly cooler than normal. Precipitation was generally well above average except in the non-coastal portions of the Southeast and along the Mexican border. The only major snowstorm was a record-breaker on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The most important meteorological feature of the month was a series of rainstorms on the Pacific coast from southern California to Oregon. The warm rains caused snow to melt in the higher elevations. The combination of the deluges and the snowmelt caused severe flooding, especially in Sonoma and Napa.

Historians of science find that as a discipline matures it passes through recognizable stages: description, quantification, and ultimately, prediction. Most of what is written in this journal is *descriptive*: where birds were and when. Each year in the Christmas Bird Counts, we participate in an enormous *quantitative* endeavor, the largest such volunteer undertaking in all of science. But *prediction* is another matter entirely. Can one take the winter season reports of the preceding few—or many—years, with the above summary of the past winter's weather, and predict either the broad trends or the specific details of the records found following this column? I confess immediately that I cannot. Ours, it seems, is still a very young science. The exercise is not futile, however, and I recommend it to anyone seriously involved in examining the distribution and abundance of birds. It serves to focus attention on what we need to know, and thus, information we need to *collect*. For example, before I tried to predict the whereabouts of seabirds I would like to know the temperature and salinity values for the various bodies of water involved. For birds of prey, I would need to know what the populations of small mammals were like well into the Arctic. For seed- or berry-eaters I would like information on the food plants in the breeding region, in *all* areas where the bird breeds. (See AB 39(2):139, 1985 and AB 37(3):276, 1983 for more on this point.) Things get very complex very quickly.

What would one say about a season where December was cold (except in the Southwest), followed by a warm and dry January, and then a very warm and generally moist February? I would expect few lingerers in most regions, and an upsurge of more northerly birds in the Southwest. Ducks and species dependent on open water should not have had to move too far south, since the January thaw prevented much freeze-up. Boreal invaders, both raptors and others, should not have had to move especially far either. Finally, spring migration might start early in many regions, stimulated by the warm weather. Whatever you do, do not stop here! With the exception of the last one, all these "reasonable" predictions were wrong.

Late migrants and overwintering birds

In many populations of migrating birds, a small but significant portion of the birds choose to migrate later than the main body and some forego migration entirely. Whether this is determined genetically or by the bird's own physiological condition is, I believe, not well known. (Statements such as this are sure to fill my mailbox with notes from better informed readers.) If the winter cold comes early, these lingerers are at risk. Some, it seems, are prompted to depart hastily, while others succumb and are removed from the gene pool. This year the cold December, preceded in many areas by a cold November, had the effect of removing lingering birds for only a surprisingly few regions.

The Hudson-Delaware, Middlewestern Prairies, Northern Great Plains, and Southwest regions mentioned "half-hardy" birds as being pushed out by December's cold, but for the Prairie Provinces and Mountain West the birds were gone because of November's bitter weather. Not surprisingly, they did not return when December moderated.

Elsewhere birds did not all leave early and the list of "low density, late migrants," as these birds have been called, was impressive. For the Northeastern Maritimes, it nearly rivaled the excellent variety of December 1984, which was very mild. This time, 11 warbler species, including seven species at St. John's, Newfoundland, two Yellow-throated Warblers on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and an Ovenbird seen in February on Nantucket Island, Mas-

sachusetts were exemplary Yellow-throated Warblers were also found in Virginia (1st winter record), North Carolina, and even Arizona. The Southern Atlantic Coast Region managed eight species of warblers, four earning "bold face" status. Florida had a dozen wintering species that were either unusual or especially numerous. The Townsend's Warbler at a nature center there must certainly have increased the number of visitors. Most or all of these survived the Christmas week freeze. Louisiana too had a wonderful variety of warblers. These may have been holdovers from the autumn hurricane season. It is clear, however, that the number and variety of species that remained north of the normal wintering grounds was substantial. In northern California, an Elegant Tern was remarkable, as was a total of four species of *Empidonax* flycatchers. In the same region, Prairie Warbler, American Redstart and Ovenbird were unusual winter guests.

In the Northeast and Midwest, the number of Carolina Wrens overwintering is often indicative of the season's hospitality. This winter they expanded in Maine and Quebec in the East, the Southern Great Plains in the West and essentially all "fringe" areas in between. The list of other overwintering and late migrants is far longer than can be examined in this column. I invite you to delve into the reports themselves. There's far more within them than my "prediction" would indicate.

Rarities

When displaced birds are discussed in this column they are often classified as "Eastern Birds West" or "Palearctic Birds in the Nearctic" etc. The assumption being that there is a pattern, and a common cause, to certain unusual bird movements. Even the choice of the word "displaced" implies a displacing agent, responsible for putting all these birds in boldfaced print. When a season is known as "The Siberian Express" and Asiatic strays abound, for instance, this is probably fitting. Often, however, the description of these birds as "vagrants" seems more accurate: those who wander from place to place.

The rarities reported this season, and there were not a lot, seem to fall into one of two categories. Quite a number are birds who did not migrate on a normal schedule. That is, they left late, arrived early, or never left at all. Some of these are mentioned below, approximately in taxonomic order. In other cases, with few exceptions, they seem to be straightforward examples of vagrancy.

The most interesting rarities this winter were a Redwing in Newfoundland, keeping company with four or more Fieldfares, and two or three Crimson-collared Grosbeaks in south Texas.

The European thrushes were apparently part of a significant movement, as Nikula describes in the Northeastern Maritime report. Interesting in this context is a possible Fieldfare, described over the telephone by a novice birder in eastern Pennsylvania. Interesting, too, is the much publicized Fieldfare that turned up practically in Nikula's backyard in Concord, Massachusetts, in late March. The Redwing report provided only the 4th record for North America and is probably a just reward for birding Newfoundland in December.

Even rarer, Crimson-collared Grosbeak has occurred only once before in the United States. It is a resident of eastern Mexico, about 300 miles south of the current sightings. It is noteworthy that the two cities where Crimson-collared Grosbeak were seen (Laredo and McAllen) are about 125 miles apart.

No less interesting, though much less timely, was the report of a road-killed Mottled Owl found in February, 1983, also in south Texas and also at least 300 miles from its normal range. The record was the first for the United States.

Among the other rarities of the season, not mentioned below, were a Red-throated Loon and a Red-necked Grebe in New Mexico, a Horned Grebe in Hawaii, very late Great Blue Herons in the Prairie Provinces and a "Great White Heron" in South Carolina. Pacific Loons were found in Ohio and on the Alabama/Florida border. In the woodpecker family, Red-headededs wintering in Manitoba and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers north of San Francisco were unusual. So too were the Black-backed Woodpeckers in Iowa and northern Illinois, and the invasion of Three-toed Woodpeckers in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Five Say's Phoebes were found in the East. Two were in Eastern Pennsylvania, and another was in North Carolina during December. In January, Louisiana observers discovered one, as did Virginia birders who considered it the find of the season in the Appalachian Region. Tyrannus flycatchers were unusually present this season. A Thick-billed Kingbird wintered for the 4th year in southern California. A Couch's Kingbird, found during November in New Mexico, held on until the first week of December and another was found in Florida, coincidentally I am sure, immediately thereafter. A Tropical Kingbird was in North Carolina late in December for the first eastern United States record, and a "tropical"-type was the one that got away in Louisiana. Ash-throated Flycatchers were found in Alabama and New Jersey during December. These last fit neatly the known seasonality of observations, demonstrated by Murphy (AB 36(3):241-247, 1982).

Harris' Sparrows also moved east, with remarkable records in Quebec, New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia. Curiously enough, they were also found in northern Arizona in numbers unequalled in almost 15 years, and also in Alberta in 3 different locations.

Painted Buntings headed in divergent directions, one spending the winter at 2 feeders in Massachusetts, and another being found for 2 days in southern Arizona. A third showed up in February on Eleuthera Island, in the West Indies. Looking with the "tunnel-vision" of contemporaneity, I can find no pattern in all these wanderings. Let's turn to some of the major ecological groupings of birds.

Waterfowl

Winter populations and movements of waterfowl are controlled by the success of the previous breeding season, food supply, and the presence of open water. Thus, they are highly affected by weather, but also, more subtly, by long-term trends in land-use and habitat availability. For most waterfowl the trend has been downward, but for some of the larger birds, notably Mute and Tundra swans, Greater White-fronted Geese, and in some regions, Canada Geese, populations have been growing.

In fact, the situation for geese from an observer's standpoint can have all the attraction (read: confusion) of watching gulls. Comments on the existence of the "blue" Ross' Geese can be found in the Middle Pacific Coast report, you can wonder about how the Barnacle Geese in the Hudson-Delaware and Middle Atlantic Coast regions were determined wild, and especially, you can puzzle over where all of these Greater White-fronted Geese are coming from. They were found across the entire continent, and described with terms such as "unprecedented number" in southern New England, "up from last year" in the Hudson-Delaware

report, "almost every winter now" in South Carolina, "continue to winter in good numbers" in the Central Southern report, "high numbers" in south Texas, 11 "compared with 5 last winter" in the Mountain West. Last winter, Lehman (AB 3913:143) raised the question of the racial identity and origin of these geese. The Greenland race, *flavivirostris*, is most likely the race found on the Atlantic Seaboard. Unfortunately, although the races are distinguishable in the field (orange bill and darker belly characterize the Greenland birds) no reports reaching me contained this detail. The origin and cause of the expansion remains intriguing.

There seemed to be few continent-wide trends; nothing that clearly fitted my prediction. Wood Ducks were numerous at the western and northern fringes of their range (with Appalachian and Great Plains regions commenting on their use of zoo ponds. Where else but at a zoo would this species be inconspicuous in winter?). Greater Scaup were curiously widespread, often well inland of normal wintering sites. One in South Dakota in February was particularly unusual. The species was even found at several Hawaiian locations, where it is normally rare. Harlequin Ducks set records off Rhode Island and northern California, and Barrow's Goldeneyes showed a similar pattern: unusually numerous near San Francisco, and Massachusetts. Black Scoters turned up in number during December off the Atlantic coast of Florida, an unusually southern location. Regions to the north of Florida, however, made no mention of the species. All three merganser species were well reported. Hoodeds were unusually common along the Rio Grande (which traverses three American Birds regions), in Mississippi, and in western Tennessee. Common Mergansers showed strength in the noncoastal regions of the United States (though not in Colorado), and Red-breasteds were numerous, at least early in the season, along the Atlantic coast. One Hooded and three Red-breasteds even reached Eleuthera Island, West Indies.

Raptors

The long-term trends for diurnal raptors, with a few important exceptions, seem good. At the top of food chains and highly visible, their declines were widely recognized 3+ decades ago, the causes (pesticides, human harassment, and habitat loss) traced, and steps taken to reverse the decline. Is it overly optimistic to believe that the statements, found throughout the regional reports, of "encouraging," "good numbers," or "slow increase" are a result of these efforts?

Black and Turkey vultures, especially the latter, are apparently expanding their winter ranges. Turkey Vultures were found in Maine (where one apparently starved) and, in the midwest, at 8 locations in Illinois where they are normally quite rare. Arizona had two in areas where they are uncommon and in the Caribbean, Eleuthera Island recorded its first. Birds of this species were noted returning very early in Oklahoma and Washington, as well.

Ospreys were recognized as late lingerers in Quebec, Ohio, Kentucky, Texas and New Mexico, and a few wintered in Arizona, an uncommon event.

Black-shouldered Kites are continuing the range expansion begun about 1960. Once severely decimated, they were found outside of their routine sites this winter in southern California, Arizona, Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. A roost of 79 in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, where they are not rare, is nonetheless impressive.

The news was also good for Bald Eagles, occurring in

record numbers in New York and Kentucky and in above-average numbers in most areas. Northern Goshawks were scarce in northerly latitudes, except around Anchorage, but were well represented in southerly regions. In the East, one reached Tennessee. In the West, one dined on duck in downtown Denver, and New Mexico found more at lower elevations than normal. Cooper's and Sharp-shinned hawks were found, often at feeders (as "unwelcomed pests" in LeGrand's words), in high or even record-breaking numbers. Red-shouldered Hawks earned bold print in 2 regions, the Northern Great Plains and Southwest. They were mentioned favorably in an additional 6 regions, a welcome relief from previous declines. Rough-legged Hawks were generally scarce across the northern regions, but were found in good numbers south to about the 36th parallel. Among the falcons, Merlins were commented on as being at above-average levels. Montana recorded its first Merlin, and first Peregrine in winter. Elsewhere, Peregrines were at or above normal levels, and one was even found in Oahu, Hawaii. Gyrfalcon numbers were only average, but several Prairie Falcons found themselves well to the east of the 100th meridian, and, one presumes, the object of much observer attention in their new haunts.

The two exceptions, at least this winter, to all this good news regarded the Northern Harrier and American Kestrel. The former was generally considered scarce in the northern portions of its wintering range. The significance of this, perhaps temporary, contraction is hard to assess. More certain and more permanent however are the declining populations of American Kestrels on the east coast, where "distressingly low numbers" were found.

Another rapacious bird, unrelated of course to all the above species, is the Northern Shrike. Nonetheless, its movements sometimes parallel other northern, irruptive birds of prey. This winter Northern Shrikes were found in a pattern strikingly similar to Northern Goshawks: large numbers in Iowa and northern Illinois, the northern prairie states and New Mexico. Where Northern Goshawks were considered low—for instance the Prairie Provinces Region—so were Northern Shrikes.

Shorebirds

For many years, shorebirds have received relatively little attention when conservation issues were discussed. In the meantime, populations of species like the Piping Plover have declined precipitously through habitat loss, and a greater appreciation of how critical certain migration staging and stopover areas are has been emerging. Spring and autumn migrations are now carefully monitored by the International Shorebird Survey and the Pan-American Shorebird Program, and quantitative data are being amassed and analyzed. Wintering locales within the United States have received less attention. Thus the repeated visits to a single area by observers in Virginia are especially interesting. At least this winter, Marbled Godwits, Whimbrels, Willets, and high counts of Dunlin spent the winter there. Worth examining, also, is the table of high counts of shorebirds contained in the West Indies report.

Other interesting, if less systematic, shorebird reports are of the *fulva* race of Lesser Golden-Plovers in both California regions, Killdeer wintering in New York, Nebraska, Utah, and Alaska, one hundred Mountain Plovers wintering in southeastern Arizona, a Solitary Sandpiper in January in Arkansas, Willets wintering in southern New England, Red Knots on Miquelon Island and in the Greater Antilles, Dunlin wintering in Colorado, on St. Pierre Island, and in New York, Stilt Sandpipers in excellent numbers from

Texas to Florida, and Common Snipe in Alaska, New York, and Quebec. Greater Yellowlegs dawdled on migration in many areas and two wintered in Connecticut. Some Least Sandpipers were also widely recognized as being late in several regions. Wilson's Phalaropes were noteworthy for their presence at 4 locales in southern California, and also in south Texas, and on Eleuthera Island. The species is only a casual winterer in the first 2 states and was previously unrecorded from the West Indies in winter.

Gulls and terns

There were few surprises, and a little disappointingly, no raging controversies, among the gull reports. One could probably have written this summary before the season even began: Common Black-headed, Thayer's, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous gulls have continued to expand, or at least are found in more distant regions. Increasing numbers of extralimital Mew Gulls are being identified; apparent hybrids are turning up more often; and "old one foot" continues to return to northwest Florida.

The huge increases in populations of the large Larids may be one of the most significant trends in the North American avifauna. Clearly associated with the by-products of human society, the gull explosion has hurt populations of other coastal or island breeders including terns and alcids. The boredom of late-winter birding is certainly relieved by observing gulls; searching, and not infrequently finding, rarities. Equally important is the degree of care observers develop through gull-watching (see Goetz et al., Slaty-backed Gull article this issue). But, in the long run, we may be paying a very high price for this pleasure.

Among the notable finds this season were four adult Mew Gulls and a Ross' Gull in Newfoundland. Adult Mew Gulls were also found in Ohio and Illinois. The Hudson-Delaware, Middle Atlantic and Florida regions each reported Lesser Black-backed Gulls in double digits. The question Muth raises in the Central Southern Region concerning the whereabouts of Louisiana's seven plus invaders of this species from the Fall season may well be answered in the Southern Great Plains and South Texas regional reports. An apparent *intermedius* race adult on Lake Erie was noteworthy as this race originates in the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway.

Thayer's Gulls were found in all but a few regions, with South Dakota and Iowa recording state firsts. Arkansas had its first Little Gull. Colorado found its second first Iceland Gull, the first first having transmogrified to a Thayer's under expert scrutiny. The Hawaiian report of a now dead gull awaiting similar scrutiny leaves one eager for details.

In last year's Changing Seasons column, Lehman (Vol 39(2)138) sounded a cautionary word concerning reports of Franklin's Gull. This species is often found as a late lingerer but seldom a true winterer. Records this year from Mississippi December 4, and northwest Florida December 11 and 31 fit the usual pattern. A Louisiana bird present December 21-January 11 might have been lingering or staying, though its site fidelity would indicate the latter. A pelagic record off Maryland February 8 was difficult to fit into any pattern as this gull is found on the prairies in summer, and on the Pacific Coast of South America in winter.

An Iceland Gull in southern California, a California Gull in Smith, Texas, a Black-legged Kittiwake in Tennessee, an Ivory Gull in New Jersey, and a concentration of 200,000 gulls on Lake Erie (Appalachian Region) were remarkable.

Terns laid claim to new areas for winter, with Common

and Sandwich terns in the Virgin Islands, Elegant Terns in Texas and northern California; Caspians in Puerto Rico, central and northern California, and Hawaii; Forster's in the Bahamas, inland in Texas, and in Arizona; a Common in Louisiana; and Black Tern inland in Florida. In other regions, these same species were often described as late lingerers as was the Royal Tern off Maryland and Virginia.

Seabirds

When the discussion turns to the occurrence of pelagic birds in winter, the interest immediately heightens as here is an area in which significant advances can be made. The obstacles of cold air, high winds, rough seas, and reluctant captains are compounded by ostracism in general (including spouses). Reading the regional reports, these obstacles should be kept in mind.

The seabird event of the season was indeed a tragedy. For the 2nd time in just over 2 years, oil was spilled outside San Francisco Bay. Common Murres, with an historic population of 400,000 individuals on the Farallon Islands alone, had been, for many years, recovering from a decline to only 5000+ birds. But the past 6 years have seen a drop from a recent high of 90,000 to fewer than 40,000. Bourne (*Mar. Pollut. Bull.* 1983, 14:1-2) has observed that the most serious threats to seabirds are introduction of domestic animals and rodents to breeding sites, human exploitation (e.g., hunting or eggging), overfishing, and losses in nets. He suggests that pollution incidents are generally of a local nature and that population recoveries have been startlingly fast in most cases. But California's Common Murres have been affected by *all* of the threats listed. How much of this can they stand?

Alcid numbers were low or average in the North Atlantic Ocean, but quite numerous to the stalwarts aboard a February pelagic trip off Ocean City, Maryland. In the Pacific Ocean, four Xantus' Murrelets, two Ancient Murrelets, and a dying Horned Puffin constituted the alcid sightings of an unusual nature. A few Northern Fulmars were seen on each coast at the southern limits of their winter ranges. Both California regions found a few shearwaters, but the Southern Pacific Coast Region considered pelagics "unusually scarce." A Manx Shearwater February 8 off Ocean City was most unusual, as were five or more Audubon's Shearwaters off North Carolina.

Sulid reports were of a dead Masked Booby on the Georgia coast in February, a live bird on the Texas coast in January, both Masked and Brown boobies breeding in the West Indies, and Maskeds trying to breed on the Dry Tortugas. Northern Gannets seemed more plentiful than normal in the western portions of the Gulf of Mexico.

Jaegers were widely reported, often seen from land. Pomarines were found in double digits off California, the Atlantic coast and in the West Indies. More unusual was one wintering at Buffalo, New York. Parasitics seem to prefer the Gulf of Mexico where almost a dozen were found, apparently without anyone getting on a boat.

No ornithologist has undertaken shipboard transects of the Gulf of Mexico and no one has ever discovered major areas of bird concentrations away from shore. The absence of records this season (e.g., Masked or Brown boobies) tells us nothing about their abundances. Similarly, the scarcity of alcid reports from the Northeastern Maritime Region tells us more about the schedule of "The Bluenose" ferry across the Gulf of Maine than it does about seabird distribution.

Phalaropes

Red and Red-necked phalaropes seemed unusually numerous. The former was not unexpected as a wintering bird from the Carolinas south, in the Gulf of Mexico, and off southern California. Indeed, hundreds were found in the Atlantic and Pacific though none was found in the Gulf of Mexico (again from lack of pelagic observers?). One mentioned, without comment, from the Niagara-Champlain Region seems most remarkable. The Mexican state of Sonora recorded its first wintering Red Phalarope, on the Sea of Cortez.

Red-necked Phalaropes were found, perhaps as very late migrants, at 3 coastal locations on the Gulf of Mexico. Two well inland in central Florida in late February are hard to explain, but 46 off South Carolina can scarcely be written off as accidentals, especially in light of similar records off Georgia in recent years. Very little is known about the ecological differences between Red and Red-necked phalaropes (now considered congeners) outside of the breeding season. Lehman's statement (AB 38(3):291) "more fieldwork is needed" certainly bears repeating.

Owls

It was not, at first glance, a very impressive winter for owls. Snowys were in low numbers everywhere except North Dakota; some regions felt the totals were the lowest in a decade. Great Grays were also in low numbers except for southwestern Alberta where their numbers were described as excellent. Common Barn-Owl, a severely declining species, was noted in New York, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Oregon, which is to say, all across the northern limits of its normal range; its situation appears more sanguine this season. Great Horned Owls were described as above recent levels in New York, Minnesota and the Prairie Provinces. Long-eared and Short-eared owls were found in unusual numbers throughout the eastern and central regions, as well as in the Southwest. Other regions generally found them to be scarce, or did not comment.

Northern Saw-whet Owls were exceptionally numerous throughout the northeastern and north-central regions. An astonishing 92 near State College, Pennsylvania was the result of "a special effort." Special indeed! This equals the total of the highest Christmas Bird Counts for the past 6 or 7 years. If one remembers that the paucity of Snowy and Great Gray sightings probably indicates good food resources on their preferred wintering grounds, this was, in fact, a healthy season for owls.

Frugivores

Fruit-eating birds are well-known for their tendency to go where good berry crops and mild weather make for easy living. This winter almost all the movement of native species was from west to east. Single Mountain Bluebirds were found in Louisiana and New Jersey. Eastern Bluebirds were up in several eastern regions but down in Ohio and Kentucky along the western edge of their winter range. Townsend's Solitaires turned up in South Dakota, Iowa, the Hudson-Delaware Region, and as part of an astonishing thrush season in Newfoundland. They were described as being "elsewhere" in most of the western regions. Varied Thrush, probably the champion wanderer of this group, held true to form showing up in average numbers throughout central and eastern regions. American Robins were on

maneuvers in Texas and Oklahoma, and in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, along the Middle Atlantic coast, and in Florida. Three scouts found their way to Eleuthera Island and hundreds were observed in Newfoundland. They were not mentioned, oddly enough, in either the Central Southern or Southern Atlantic Coast regions. Conversely, the Mountain West and southwest regions noted their absence. In the east, Bohemian Waxwings were common south to Massachusetts, but although present, were in modest numbers in other portions of their range. Fifteen hundred put in a brief appearance in Newfoundland. Cedar Waxwings were found commonly to Virginia but were scarce farther south, although Tennessee apparently had record numbers. Both species were described as low or absent across the Southwest, apparently as a result of last summer's drought and its effect on berry crops. But, 10,000 were seen briefly in February in Oregon. Where could they have come from?

Hummingbirds

Reading Muth's Central Southern Region report, one has the feeling that wearing red clothes in Louisiana would have invited attack, by overwintering hummingbirds. Fortunately, many of these birds were captured and their identities "firmly established" by measurement and use of dichotomous keys. Only one had the ill-manners to molt into an adult plumage characteristic of a different species. In all, 5 species of 3 genera were present: *Amazilia* (Buff-bellied), *Archilochus* (Ruby-throated and Black-chinned), and *Selasphorus* (Rufous and Allen's). An instructive discussion of *Calypte* (Anna's and Costa's) immatures is found in the Middle Pacific Coast Region report. In short, reports of Anna's X Costa's hybrids have been unconvincing, as is that of a wintering Black-chinned in the same region. Out of all this haze, two things at least seem clear: a decent living can probably be made selling hummingbird feeders in the Southeast next winter; and extreme caution had best be used in identifying hummingbirds in winter.

In other areas, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds wintered in Florida and North Carolina. *Selasphorus* hummers of one or another species were found in South Carolina, Florida, Mississippi and Texas. Anna's Hummingbirds were found in a neat path from Big Bend, Texas, northwest to Washington in some cases wintering and in some as early returnees. Also early were several Allen's Hummingbirds in central California in January.

South Texas' lack of Buff-bellied Hummingbirds (all in Louisiana?) was compensated with two Broad-taileds and a Broad-billed, the latter species also being found in southern California, in one case for the 6th consecutive winter.

Irruptive granivores

A common feature of this column during winter is a discussion of the movements of the boreal seed-eaters. The 8 species usually discussed often show similar movements; that is they irrupt as a group. This winter such a pattern was not in evidence. After fairly strong autumn movements, winter concentrations were generally unspectacular.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were described as widespread, but present in relatively low numbers. Only in the Southern Atlantic Coast, Appalachian, Central Southern and Southern Great Plains regions and the southwest portion of Alberta were they considered "good" or "common." These

same areas found Purple Finches numerous as did Wisconsin (where Red-breasted Nuthatches were not plentiful) Pine Grosbeaks were rated moderate-to-good across the more northerly regions east of the Rocky Mountains, apparently uncorrelated with other species of this category. Winnipeg, Manitoba doubled its previous high count

Both crossbill species were scarce or absent in almost all regions. Red Crossbills were largely confined to the Northern Rocky Mountain-Intermountain Region. White-winged Crossbills moved strongly into the lower elevations of that region, and were found in the western portions of the Prairie Provinces Region as well. These 2 regions were the only ones with a generally good "finch winter." The outstanding irruption was of Common Redpolls, which were unusually numerous in most regions, except for along the southeastern coast. Eleuthera Island recorded the first-ever for the West Indies, and a flock of 30+ in northern California was only the 2nd in this century. A flock of 15,000 in an unharvested sunflower field in South Dakota must have been a wonderful sight for observers. On the other hand, an unharvested sunflower field must be a wonderful sight for Common Redpolls!

Pine Siskins were widespread, generally in small numbers. Beside the 2 regions already mentioned as having a generally good winter, only Utah and Iowa had impressive flights. Evening Grosbeak reports were mixed. The regions along the 100th meridian had very good flights. Elsewhere, Newfoundland and New Brunswick, the Appalachian Region, coastal southeast stations, and inland Central Southern Region observers had good numbers. Outside of these areas the species was found in no more than a few small flocks.

Commentary

This Changing Seasons column has been written without reports from Ontario, Northwestern Canada, and the Northern Pacific Coast regions. This is the 2nd consecutive season for which some regional reports have been missed and for which Northern Pacific Coast birders have not had their records become part of the analysis. Still, the decision has been made to follow deadlines for each issue, and, it is a decision I applaud. We all deserve prompt publication and analysis of reports. The burden this places on compilers and regional editors is heavy. There are about 6 weeks from the end of the reporting period until reports are due at *American Birds*. If we, as observers, take 2 weeks to get reports to our subregional compilers (who in turn take 2 weeks to collect these data and pass them on to the regional editor), then the Regional Editor has only 2 weeks to collect, collate, write, and submit a report. The Changing Seasons editor has less than 3 weeks (if all reports are on time) to read and assimilate the reports and write an analysis. Believe me, it is not a leisurely activity, for either veterans or neophytes. (Ten thousand thanks to Janice Smith, an extraordinarily capable and patient typist!) The implication of all this is that records submitted early can speed the process at every stage. Why not habitually send in your sightings at the end of each month, rather than at the end of the reporting period?

While on the subject of records, let me add another comment. The best records of unusual birds are the most complete: accompanied by a detailed written description, a photograph, and in some cases, a tape recording of a vocalization. Carry a small notebook and pen at all times in the field, and take notes about anything that catches your attention. Use your camera, and submit photos with your

records of rarities. I also often carry a cassette recorder and small shotgun microphone with me, just in case. Surprisingly few birders carry sound-recording gear. It is now as compact and about the same price as a camera and telephoto lens, and no more difficult to use. It especially adds a great pleasure to breeding-season birding. How wonderful it would have been to have recordings of, say, the North Carolina Tropical Kingbird.

Quantitative records are more valuable than most birders know. Most of us assume that our territory is well-birded and that abundances of birds are well understood. For some species and some areas this is true. For many though it is only an illusion. I have already mentioned what we do not know about wintering shorebirds. The remedy is simple. Visit and revisit an area, recording as precisely as possible the number of individuals, the plumages (juvenile, basic, or breeding) involved, and what the tide, temperature and other conditions were. This is the only way long-term trends can ever be revealed. Some areas have begun late winter gull surveys ("dump duck days" as they're called in Maine) that collect data on numbers, species, age class, and habitat use (natural vs man-made). Finally make sure you record and report everything you can about the birds you see. Only in the past decade has it become clear what different ecological requirements males and females of the same species can have, or in what different geographical areas they may winter. The same can be said for juveniles or subadults of many species. Nonetheless reports printed here often lack this critical, although easily gathered, information.

Another way in which the reporting, and especially the analysis, of the astonishing volume of data collected can be improved is by using electronic storage, transmittal, and retrieval methods. Paul DeBenedictis, in last season's report (AB 40(1):75-82, 1986), discussed some of the advantages and difficulties of using a microcomputer to help with the continental analysis. I think though that it is too much to ask the Changing Seasons editor to choose a format, enter the data and then analyze it. I would like to see a standard format chosen and records entered in this form at the state or provincial level. For states with non-game wildlife programs, the cost barriers should not be insurmountable. For future workers the accessibility of historic data is greatly improved, and again, long-term trends become much easier

to discern. If these data are coupled with a fairly good mapping program, then the task of analyzing the seasonal reports becomes down-right pleasant. Instead of pawing through a few hundred pages of reports to find where else Harris' Sparrow may have turned up this season, one simply enters the question and waits a few seconds for a distributional map to be displayed.

Others have certainly thought longer and deeper about this problem than I have, but, I would like to suggest a few next steps which might be taken:

1) A conference to discuss the types of data that should be stored, a common format for storage, and a means of archiving and transmitting data.

2) A series of articles, or an in-print workshop in this or another journal covering the same topics.

3) A substantial financial award to a programmer who can design the software needed to accomplish these tasks.

4) A commercial telephone-line based network to provide access to a data base of bird sighting records.

Whatever steps are taken to facilitate reporting and analysis, we must not lose sight of some simple facts. Birding is a pleasure, and if we add a little skill and discipline to it, we can continue to advance the science of field ornithology and ensure the continued survival of birds in their natural habitat.

Crazies

Of the many curiosities in these pages, my favorite this season is the Laysan Albatrosses that arrived in Oakland, California, after refusing to leave a freighter on which they landed during a storm. Two then began courtship at a local nature center and were finally sent to Hawaii aboard another freighter. I've thought some about this; I wouldn't mind a free trip to Hawaii. You don't suppose that if I went to Oakland, and began. . . .

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Abbreviations Frequently Used in Regional Reports

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

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

The Winter Season

December 1, 1985–February 28, 1986

NORTHEASTERN MARITIME REGION

Blair Nikula

This issue marks a change in Regional Editors for two of the seasons. Rick Heil has resigned as the winter season editor and I have changed from spring to winter. Assuming the position of spring season editor is Bruce Mactavish (37 Waterford Bridge Road, St. John's, Nfld., A1E 1L5, Canada). Please send your spring reports to Bruce promptly! Our thanks to Rick for his four years of service. Stu Tingley and Richard Forster will continue as summer and fall editors, respectively.

The deadlines imposed on the Regional Editors are now being strictly enforced. As a result, this summary contains no reports from Nova Scotia and only partial reports from Maine and eastern Massachusetts. Contributors must submit their reports promptly if future summaries are to be complete.

The weather this winter was uncharacteristically uniform throughout the Region and decidedly benign. December began very cold and by mid-month most ponds and lakes had frozen. Temperatures averaged up to 3°F below normal for the month, but ameliorated considerably during the last week or so. This mild trend continued through much of January, interrupted rather infrequently by short cold snaps. Temperatures in February returned to normal or slightly below. Throughout the season and Region precipitation was below normal, markedly so in some locations, and snowfall was scant everywhere. Snow cover was absent for much of the season in southern portions and even in Newfoundland bare ground was evident in early February!

The benevolent weather allowed for good survival of many "half-hardies" that each year remain to test the sea-



son. Berry crops were ample, even copious in many northern and inland locations, enticing frugivores to linger in those areas and creating a paucity of such species in their usual coastal haunts. The season was marked by a continued increase in several species that only recently have become regular winterers in the Region, e.g., Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Merlin, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and a rather predictable array of lingering species, a number of which appeared to have survived the

clement season Winter finches appeared throughout the Region, although to a lesser extent than was anticipated.

True vagrants were few in number, with most reports once again emanating from our northern outpost; Newfoundland continued to produce a wondrous assortment of extralimital, extraseasonal, and extraordinary species, most from just the small area around St. John's. Surely we yet have seen only the tip of the avian iceberg in that frontier

Data from Christmas Bird Counts are, for the most part, not included in this summary.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Loons drew little comment, but seemed to be in near-normal or somewhat below-normal numbers. A Red-throated Loon at Turner's Falls, Mass., Dec. 1 (SS) was a left-over from the exceptional inland flight in November. Also notable inland and indicative of the mild season was a count of 16 Horned Grebes at Quabbin, Mass., Jan. 8 (PY). Along the coast Horned Grebes continued to be reported in depressed numbers, although up somewhat from the low point in the late 1970s. The only Red-necked Grebe counts of note came from Miquelon where totals of 125 Feb. 3 and 161 Feb. 15 (*vide* RE) were unexceptional for that area. The W. Grebe of Reid S.P., Me., continued its quest for avian immortality, returning for the 9th consecutive winter (*vide* WCT).

Great Cormorants were again present in large (though below-record) numbers in s. New England while wintering Double-crested Cormorants continued to establish new records. Following double-digit totals of Double-crested on several C.B.C.s in s. New England, later totals of note included 25 in Boston Harbor Jan. 12 (*vide* RHS) and 12 at Ninigret Pond, R.I., Jan. 21 (*vide* DLE), while February birds included three at Warren, R.I., Feb. 1, three in Falmouth, Mass., Feb. 23 (P. Trimble), four at Salt Pond, R.I., Feb. 26 (*vide* DLE), and two at Manchester, N.H., Feb. 25 (*vide* A & GR). Late herons were nearly absent this year, a Little Blue Heron at Weekapaug, R.I., Dec. 11 & 19 (*vide* DLE) being the only report of note.

WATERFOWL — Tundra Swans lingered into December throughout much of the Region: one to three were in Connecticut, six to seven in Rhode Island, several in Massachusetts, two in New Hampshire, four-plus in Maine, and eight to nine in New Brunswick. Most had departed by early January. An unprecedented number of Greater White-fronted Geese appeared in s. New England, with possibly as many as five in Connecticut including singles at Southbury Nov. 28–Dec. 8 (F Gallo *et al.*), Westport Dec. 22 (*vide* FWM), and E. Windsor Jan. 13–15 (*vide* DV), and two adults in Orange Dec. 11–Feb. 8+ (*vide* DV), while an adult was at Cross Mills Pond, R.I., Feb. 13 (*vide* DLE) and another was present again in Rochester, Mass., throughout most of the season (*vide* RHS). Snow Geese were also scattered throughout s. New England, numbering 13–14 in Rhode Island (including one "Blue") and 30+ in Massachusetts (also including one "Blue"). Canada Geese were also well above average in s. sections, with 3600 in Tiverton, R.I., Feb. 23 providing the highest total outside of C.B.C.s.

A "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal was found Dec. 29–Feb. 28 in Milford, Conn. (*vide* DV) and two were on St. Pierre Dec. 29 (*vide* RE). At least 13 Eur. Wigeon were distributed among Massachusetts (seven), Rhode Island (three-plus), and Connecticut (three), while a count of 650 Am. Wigeon at Watchemoket Cove, R.I., Dec. 26 (*vide* DLE) was notable. Nantucket remains the only location in the Region where wintering Red-heads can be found in any numbers, a count of 150+ there Jan. 11 (RHS *et al.*) being representative. Off Monomoy I., 25,000+ Com. Eiders were estimated Dec. 12 (W. Harrington, BN) but the species had become scarce there, and apparently elsewhere, by the end of the season. King Eiders were in modest numbers at traditional locations, with counts of eight at Rockport, Mass., in January (HCF *et al.*) and eight on Block I, R.I.,

Jan. 2 (*vide* DLE) the most noteworthy Harlequin Ducks are obviously finding much to their liking at Sachuest Pt., R.I., the expanding population there peaking at an unprecedented 42 birds Feb. 2 (*vide* DLE), undoubtedly a record count for s. New England. Scoters went almost unreported, the one exception a concentration of 1000+ Black, 3000+ Surf, and 3000+ White-winged in Nantucket Sound Jan. 12 (HCF), while three White-winged lingered inland at S. Quabbin, Mass., until Dec. 22 (HA). Twelve Barrow's Goldeneyes at Nantucket Jan. 11 (GWG *et al.*) was a notable total near the s. limit of the species' wintering range.

Red-breasted Merganser populations have risen steadily along the s.e. coast of the Region over the last few years, presumably in response to a corresponding increase in the population of sand-lance (*Ammodytes* sp.). This year thousands were present from Rhode Island to Cape Cod, but by the end of the period the birds obviously had become severely stressed as unprecedented numbers began appearing inland on freshwater ponds and many dead or dying birds were picked up along the coast (including some road-kills!). Although starvation is the simplest explanation, it was not determined if other factors, such as disease, may have contributed to the die-off. Of course, such mortality is to be expected when natural populations reach unnatural levels. A Ruddy Duck at St. John's, Nfld., Dec. 9–14 (M. Parmentar) added to the few records of the species from that province.

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Turkey Vultures continued to expand their wintering range in the Region; in addition to the birds now routinely wintering in Connecticut, several were seen in Rhode Island throughout the period, four to five were in Massachusetts, and two were in Maine, one of which was found dead Feb. 12 (*vide* WCT). The wintering Bald Eagle population is also doing very well: 54 were found in Connecticut on the national eagle census in January, while 40 were tallied at Quabbin, Mass., during the same census, and 41+ were reported from New Hampshire throughout the season. Northern Goshawks were somewhat more numerous than normal in s. coastal sections, while winter Red-shouldered Hawk totals of three in Rhode Island and 12 in Massachusetts were encouraging.

Rough-legged Hawks were reported to be scarce in New Brunswick (DSC) but were widespread and numerous throughout most of New England. Single Golden Eagles were reported in 6 locations from New Brunswick to Connecticut and a total of three in Essex, Conn. (date?, *vide* DV), was a noteworthy concentration. Merlins, once unheard of during the winter, are now routinely encountered in s. coastal areas throughout the season and are showing up inland as well: this season's 32+ birds included two to three or more individuals in w. Massachusetts. Ten Peregrines were found, singles in Miquelon, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, and seven in Massachusetts. Gyrfalcons were reported from Deer Isle, Me., Dec. 12 (M. Hundley, *vide* WCT) and Bar Harbor, Me., Jan. 30 (K. Jones, *vide* WCT) but otherwise the species was absent except in Newfoundland where they were very scarce (BM).

A Clapper Rail survived the season in Norwalk, Conn. (FWM *et al.*) and three were reported from coastal Massachusetts in January. American Oystercatchers are lingering later each year, and in Massachusetts this season five were in Chatham Dec. 8 with one still there Dec. 28 (PT), three were in Duxbury through Dec. 15 (*vide* GWG), five were in Orleans Dec. 22 (RAF *et al.*), and one on Nantucket Jan. 13 (D. Beattie) established a late record for the Region. A Willet was present throughout the season in Jerusalem, R.I. (*vide* DLE), probably the first successful wintering of that species in the Region, and another was found in Norwalk, Conn., Dec. 1–21 and Jan. 24 (FWM *et al.*). Other tardy shorebirds included two Greater Yellowlegs throughout the winter in Norwalk, Conn. (FWM *et al.*), Lesser Yellowlegs at Seapowet, R.I., Dec. 22 (*vide* DLE) and Newburyport, Mass., Dec. 28 and Jan. 4 (R. Heil, G. Soucy), five Red Knots in Miquelon in early January that decreased to two birds

by late February (*vide* RE), one or two Dunlin on St Pierre through Feb. 12 (*vide* RE), and a dowitcher sp. at Milford, Conn., Dec. 7 (M. Szantyr). Winter's end was presaged by an Am. Woodcock performing in Kingston, R.I., Feb. 22 (*vide* DLE).

GULLS THROUGH OWLS — Laughing Gulls apparently did not tarry this season, as one at Tiverton, R.I., Dec. 22 was the only one reported. A first-winter Little Gull at Stephenville, Nfld., in early January (SIT *et al.*) and one in Chatham, Mass., Dec. 1 (W. Bailey) were, surprisingly, the only ones recorded this winter. Common Black-headed Gulls numbered 75+ in Newfoundland, six at St. Pierre/Miquelon, three-plus in Maine, five-plus in New Hampshire, 16+ in Massachusetts, and eight-plus in Rhode Island.

Four ad. Mew Gulls together in St. John's, Nfld., Dec. 20 (BM) was unprecedented in the Region and probably anywhere in e North America (except perhaps their yet-to-be-discovered breeding grounds?). Three of the birds were present daily until Feb. 14 and two thereafter. All of the birds apparently had failed to complete their post-breeding molt as their flight feathers were very worn. They frequented a parking lot, where they became dependent upon human handouts, ignoring a sewer outfall nearby. An apparent Thayer's Gull (first-winter) in Chatham, Mass., Jan. 12–Feb. 23 (BN *et al.*, ph.) obliged many observers with point-blank looks and was the only one reported. A report of mixed breeding between Thayer's and Iceland gulls on Southampton Island (Gaston, A.J., and R. Decker. 1985. *Can. Field-Nat.* 99:257–259) emphasizes the caution required in identifying this perplexing group of gulls.

The only Lesser Black-backed Gulls of the season were in Massachusetts, single adults in Gloucester Dec. 14 (HCF), Centerville Dec. 29 (BN *et al.*), Montague Dec. 29 (M. Fairbrother), Amherst Jan. 14 (PY *et al.*), and Nantucket Jan. 10 (E. Andrews), and an "immature" at the latter locale Jan. 12 (HCF). Black-legged Kittiwakes were again abundant off s.e. coastal locations early in the season but had largely disappeared by February, a circumstance probably explained by the appearance of hundreds returning to their breeding colonies in Newfoundland during the last one-half of the month (BM). Last, but certainly not least, among the small gulls in Newfoundland was an adult (possibly 2nd-winter) **Ross' Gull** in Stephenville Jan. 2–3 (SIT *et al.*, ph.), for the 3rd provincial (previous records Dec. 1, 1976 and May 11, 1985) and 6th Regional record.

Alcids drew little comment with only a typical abundance (*i.e.*, 10,000s) of Dovekies off Newfoundland, a scattering of Thick-billed Murres in Maine during January, and hundreds of Razorbills off Cape Cod in December being noted. Black Guillemots were nearly absent off Provincetown, Mass., where concentrations of 200+ birds have been recorded in recent winters.

Several Mourning Doves attempted to winter in e. Newfoundland but none was known to have survived (HD). In New Brunswick, however, both numbers and survival of the species were above average (DSC). Six Snowy Owls were reported from Maine during the season and six were banded at Logan Airport in Boston during December (N. Smith), but otherwise the species was very scarce, even in Newfoundland. Barred Owls were much in evidence in New Brunswick but were unremarked upon elsewhere. The only Great Gray Owls were in New Hampshire, singles in Concord Jan. 3 (H. Siff, *vide* A & GR) and Rollingsford Feb. 23 & 25 (J. Argue, *vide* A & GR). Short-eared Owls were well-reported along the s.e. coast with five-plus in Rhode Island, 15+ in e. Massachusetts, and two in Maine. Northern Saw-whet Owls were also found in well-above-average numbers in s. New England.

WOODPECKERS THROUGH SHRIKES — Only one Red-headed Woodpecker was reported, that an individual in Norwalk, Conn., Dec. 22 (*vide* FWM). Red-bellied Woodpeckers, on the other hand, were almost common in w. Massachusetts, where a total of 13 was well above recent norms. Wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are being encountered with increasing frequency in s. New England and this year at least 30

were noted in Connecticut, most on C B C s, with a few apparently surviving the winter (*vide* FWM). Elsewhere, at least three sapsuckers were in Massachusetts in December and two were in Rhode Island in February (*vide* DLE). Extra-limital Black-backed Woodpeckers were in Provincetown, Mass., Dec. 6 (R. LeBlond *et al.*) and Dana, Mass., Dec. 21–Jan. 11 (ML *et al.*).

Two E. Phoebes were reported from Sakonnet Pt., R.I., Dec. 22 (*vide* DLE), and singles were in Massachusetts at S. Wellfleet Dec. 6 to early January (D. Reynolds *et al.*), Longmeadow Dec. 21–Feb. 15 (C. Withgott), and Wellesley Feb. 17 (C. Ewer) Lingering W. Kingbirds were on Nantucket Dec. 1 (E. Andrews) and in Dennis, Mass., Dec. 7 (A. Tait *et al.*), and tardy Tree Swallows were in Greene, R.I., Dec. 6 (*vide* DLE) and Acoaxet, Mass., Dec. 22 (*vide* DLE). A single Eur. Jackdaw continued throughout the period on Nantucket (E. Andrews *et al.*) The expansion of Com. Ravens continued unabated: 49 in Massachusetts included two in e. portions of the state. Boreal Chickadees stayed home this winter, while Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread but in low-to-moderate numbers.

Carolina Wrens have responded predictably to the recent mild winters; three in Maine and nine in w. Massachusetts were indicative of an expanding population. Golden-crowned Kinglets were also well distributed, with only e. Newfoundland reporting a scarcity. A rugged Ruby-crowned Kinglet was in Williamsburg, Mass., Jan. 18 (*vide* SK), but even more impressive was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 15–Dec. 26 (*vide* BM).

S.A.

Frugivores, especially those in Newfoundland, provided much of the limited excitement this winter. Mactavish reports that during the period Dec. 20–Jan. 10 flocks of hundreds of Am. Robins arrived in the St. John's area feeding on an abundant crop of Mountain Ash berries. Presumably, these birds had been induced to linger farther north by an ample berry crop and fairly mild weather. Accompanying the robins were no fewer than four **Fieldfares!** One-day counts of four birds were made Dec. 31 (BM) and Jan. 8 (C. Brown), but the frequency of sightings gave the observers the strong impression that more birds were present. Large flocks of robins were noted elsewhere in the province and Mactavish suspects that other Fieldfares passed through unseen.

Part of the same movement and of greater rarity was another European thrush, a **Redwing**, found with robins and Fieldfares in St. John's Jan. 7–8 (SIT, E. Spalding, C Brown)! This sighting constituted the 3rd in the province and only the 4th for North America. The weather factors involved in this incursion of European Turdidae may be difficult to resolve as the birds may have arrived in North America well before their appearance in St. John's. Perhaps of greater interest to those of us to the south is the question, "Where did they go when they left Newfoundland?"

Mundane by comparison, the now-annual Varied Thrushes were reported from Granby, Conn., Jan. 5 to mid-February (*vide* DV), Ashburnham, Mass., Dec. 4 (D. Fetig), Sunderland, Mass., Jan. 4–Feb. 28 (*vide* SK), Milford, N.H., Feb. 2–9, and Alna, Me., Jan. 1–2 (*vide* WCT). There were several records of late (or wintering) Water Pipits, but a count of 58 at Watch Hill, R.I., Dec. 23 (*vide* DLE) was extraordinary. Notably late were five pipits at Portsmouth, R.I., Feb. 9 and two at Cards Pond, R.I., Feb. 18 (*vide* DLE).

Bohemian Waxwings were much in evidence as far s as Maine. In Newfoundland, where small flocks are almost annual, a sudden influx in St. John's Dec. 29–31 resulted in 1500

birds in 2 flocks which "disappeared as fast as they appeared" (BM) In New Brunswick they were numerous in early December but then declined, and in Maine flocks of up to 50+ were reported. The southernmost, and only s. of Maine, were all in Massachusetts: two in Hardwick Dec. 28 (fide SK) and singles in Worcester Feb. 4 (ML), Marshfield Feb. 6 (D. Clapp), and E. Orleans Feb. 14-17 (J. Russell et al.). Cedar Waxwings were common throughout the Region with the largest concentrations in w Massachusetts where 4400+ birds were totaled, including some huge flocks, such as 500 birds in Northampton Feb. 23 (TG) and 430 in Agawam Jan. 9 (HA). Not all of Newfoundland's fruit-eaters came from the north or east: a **Townsend's Solitaire** was found at Cape St. Francis Jan. 19 (J. Blass, BM, SIT), providing the 2nd provincial record. Northern Shrikes rebounded from their anemic showing last year but were still scarce in southernmost sections.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — A White-eyed Vireo in Eastham, Mass., Dec. 15 (N. Waldron) was the only one of its family this season. The area around St. John's again hosted a remarkable array of retarded warblers in December, consisting of no fewer than seven species. An Orange-crowned Warbler was present there through Dec. 12 (fide BM), a N. Parula through Dec. 10 (BM et al.), a Yellow Warbler through Dec. 9 (BM et al.), three Black-and-white Warblers, the last seen Dec. 26 (fide BM), an Am Redstart through Dec. 8 (fide BM), a Wilson's Warbler through Dec. 8 (R. Burrows et al.), and two Yellow-breasted Chats through Dec. 7 & 8 (fide BM). Yellow-rumped Warblers were very scarce; Dave Emerson in Rhode Island speculated that salt-spray damage from Hurricane Gloria to the bayberry crop was responsible, and recalled similar situations following the 1955 and 1960 hurricanes. However, the species was hard to find even in areas that were unaffected by Gloria, such as Newfoundland, where Yellow-rumped were conspicuously absent from the December warbler "wave."

Yellow-throated Warblers visited feeders on Martha's Vineyard Dec. 3+ (T. Rivers, V. Laux et al.) and in Harwich, Mass., Dec. 9-Jan. 20 (R. Comeau et al., ph.), for the 4th and 5th winter records in the last 5 years, the Harwich bird also the latest by 19 days, thanks to a generous diet of ground-up sunflower hearts and suet. Pine Warblers seemed more numerous than usual in s. coastal areas and a particularly robust individual visited a feeder in Rousesay, N.B., through mid-February (H. Inches, fide DSC). Palm Warblers are routinely present along the s. coast into December but generally disappear with the first snow cover; thus four in Rhode Island during January were indicative of the clement season. The only other procrastinating parulids were an Ovenbird on Nantucket Feb. 9 (J. VanVorst), a Wilson's Warbler in Eastham, Mass., Dec. 18-19 (A. Thomas, fide BN), and a Yellow-breasted Chat feeding on barberries in St. Andrews, N.B., Dec. 4-14 (D.J. Clark). As usual, a few chats were also scattered along the s. coast during the early part of the season.

GROSBEAKS THROUGH ORIOLES — Single grosbeaks, identified as Rose-breasted, were reported from St. Pierre Dec. 29 (fide RE) and Washington, Mass., Jan. 18 (fide SK). The status of winter *Pheucticus* grosbeaks in the northeast is in need of clarification. A quick check of the last 10 years of winter summaries in AB shows reports of 16 Rose-breasted and eight Black-headed grosbeaks from this Region. While this may accurately reflect the ratio of these two species, few have been adequately described or photographed, and more substantive documentation is desired. A **Painted Bunting** spent the winter at 2 feeders in Salem, Mass., although its presence did not become known until March (fide RAF). Dickcissels were found in St. John's, Nfld., through Dec. 26 (C. Brown et al.) and Manchester, N.H.; through Jan. 17 (M. Martin et al.), and in Massachusetts at Agawam Dec. 27 (R. Stone), Hadley Dec. 29-Jan. 1 (SS et al.), and Manchester Feb. 23 (JB).

Sparrows were rather sparsely reported this season. Aside from the usual scattering of December reports, late Chipping Sparrows were at Swan Pt. Cemetery, R.I., Jan. 10 (fide DLE)

and Northampton, Mass., Feb. 23 (TG) The only w sparrows in the Region were a Clay-colored Sparrow in Bar Harbor, Me., Dec. 6-7 (fide WCT) and a Lark Sparrow in Chatham, Mass., Dec. 22-Jan. 2+ (BN et al.). Up to six Vesper Sparrows were present at Card Pond, R.I., during January (fide DLE). Rhode Island also had exceptional concentrations of White-crowned Sparrows: 19 were in Middletown and 11 in Portsmouth Dec. 22, with five still present at the latter site Feb. 9 and two in Barrington Feb. 22 (fide DLE). Elsewhere, reports of White-crowns were limited to six birds in Massachusetts and an individual identified as *gambelli* in Hartland, N.B., Nov. 19-Jan. 19 (F. Britton, fide DSC). Dark-eyed Juncos were said to have become very scarce in Maine by early January (WCT) but drew little comment from elsewhere in the Region. Single "Oregon" Juncos were in Northampton, Mass., Feb. 22 (fide SK) and Sussex, N.B., in mid-December (M. Broomhead).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds, both males, were in Middletown, R.I., Jan. 12 (fide DLE) and Groton, Conn., Feb. 15-28 (fide FWM). Several of the fall's **Boat-tailed Grackles** stayed through the winter; three females were in the Lordship/Stratford area of Connecticut through at least Feb. 18 (fide DV & FWM) and five females remained at Quonochontaug, R.I., through Feb. 16 (fide DLE). Scattered N. Orioles are expected in early winter but seldom survive the season. This year two particularly vigorous individuals challenged the Newfoundland winter in St. John's and achieved a 50% survival rate, one bird lasting through the season, the other dying in mid-February (R. Burrows et al.). "Bullock's" Orioles were reported from Swan Pt. Cemetery, R.I., Dec. 9 (fide DLE) and Manchester, N.H., from December through Jan. 9 (M. Martin et al.).

FINCHES — It is always a challenge to make sense out of the erratic wanderings of these avian vagabonds, but for the most part this season the distribution of winter finches was relatively uniform. It would have to be termed a "finch year" as all species were reported from all parts of the Region (with one or two exceptions) yet in many instances their appearances were brief and in small numbers, and the expectations generated by last fall's movements went largely unfulfilled.

Pine Grosbeaks were numerous and widespread from Newfoundland through n. New England into w. Massachusetts, particularly during December, but there were only scattered reports from Connecticut and e. Massachusetts and none from Rhode Island. Purple Finches were very scarce throughout New England and were not mentioned in reports from farther n. The prolonged decline in this species increasingly appears to be more than just cyclical. House Finches continued to expand N and E in Maine.

Red Crossbills made a token appearance throughout the Region but in most areas reports consisted of only one or 2 small flocks, while White-winged Crossbills were widespread in small numbers from Newfoundland to New Hampshire but scarce to absent to the south. Common Redpolls were the most common winter finches just about everywhere and were found in huge flocks in some places. On St. Pierre/Miquelon they were "the most common winter bird" and there were "hundreds seen flying over the sea (arriving from Nfld.?)" Dec. 11 (fide RE). Some of the largest counts came from w. Massachusetts, where the season's total of 5300+ redpolls included a flock of 800 in Hadley Feb. 9-15 (fide SK). Hoary Redpolls were "easy to find all winter" in Newfoundland (BM) but singles in Mary's Pt., N.B., Feb. 4 (fide DSC) and Hardwick, Mass., Feb. 15 (ML) were the only reports to the south.

Pine Siskins were also found just about everywhere, but were nowhere common, most reports being of small flocks at feeders. Evening Grosbeaks were fairly common in Newfoundland and New Brunswick but were very scarce elsewhere. Finally, a Eur. Goldfinch visited a feeder in Greenfield, Mass., Dec. 8 and Jan. 20-Feb. 28 (fide SK, m.ob.); the status of this species in North America remains questionable at best.

UNCONFIRMED REPORTS — The following were reported without details (to this editor): a Pacific Loon at Nuble

Light, Me, Dec 4, a Manx Shearwater at Two Lights S P, Me, Jan. 26, a Spotted Sandpiper at Martinsville, Me., Jan. 18, an Ivory Gull at Windsor, Conn., Jan. 11, a Loggerhead Shrike in Lonsdale, R.I., Dec. 21, and an Indigo Bunting in Bar Harbor, Me., Dec. 6-7.

EXOTICS — Thirteen Monk Parakeets were in Warwick, R.I., Jan. 24 (*vide* DLE) and eight were present throughout the season in Fairfield, Conn. (DV).

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The Autumn Migration 1985 season report should have appeared in the Spring (Volume 40, Number 1) issue. Unfortunately, at press time, we had not received the report from our Regional Editor(s). Therefore, we are publishing the previously unpublished regional report on the Autumn Migration (1985) in this issue. We apologize for any inconvenience to our readers.

The Autumn Migration August 1–November 30, 1985

Richard A. Forster

The weather for the fall was generally warm and dry. The southerly flow of winds and lack of cold fronts produced, in most observers' opinions, a lackluster migration. Groups singled out as being poorly represented were thrushes and warblers. Even long-established banding stations recorded low thrush totals. The lack of coastal northeasters produced meager results for onshore observers. The only periods with widespread bird activity were just prior to Labor Day and the Columbus Day holiday weekend of October 12-14. Although the consensus for the season was that it was poor, this report is liberally filled with rarities, proving that even in the worst of times some bright spots occur. The dominant weather feature of the fall season was Hurricane Gloria on September 27 which, while not living up to its billing, left its mark on ornithological history in the Northeastern Maritimes.

LOONS, GREBES — Loon migration in the Region begins in early September and extends throughout the period with peak numbers observed during storms and strong on-shore winds. A major movement of Red-throated Loons occurred in Massachusetts Nov. 11-12. At Rockport, Mass., 900+ were noted in 5 hours of observation on Nov. 11 (WRP, RAF). The following day, 890 were counted at 2 locations on outer Cape Cod, Mass. (JA, BN), and 150 were seen at Pt. Judith, R.I. (*vide* DLE). Inland at Gill, Mass., on the Connecticut R., 100+ were found Nov. 11 (MF, *vide* SK) and lower numbers were noted on other inland bodies of water. A Pacific Loon was carefully observed at Warwick, R.I., Nov. 30 (*vide* DLE). Common Loons were well reported but no counts approached those of Red-throateds. Pied-billed Grebes were reported in low numbers

but several reporters felt numbers were improving slightly. Likewise, Horned Grebes were reported in low numbers but one at Miquelon I., French Overseas, Oct. 13 & 30 provided the first local record. A Red-necked Grebe at Seapowet, R.I., Aug. 12-31 provided the state's first summer record and there were a few other notably early reports. However, 135 in breeding plumage at Tidnish, N.S., Sept. 10, and 225 at the same location Oct. 5 (SIT) were exceptionally high counts for so early and was possibly owing to unsuccessful nesting in breeding areas due to drought conditions. A report of an Eared Grebe in breeding plumage at Rockport, Mass., Aug. 11 was received without details (*vide* RHS). The W. Grebe returned to Georgetown, Me. in November for the 8th consecutive year (*vide* WT)

S.A.

HURRICANE GLORIA: The effects of Hurricane Gloria became noticeable locally about noon September 27. Winds from that time through the remainder of the day, were from a southerly direction averaging 60+ m.p.h. with gusts of up to 100 m.p.h. reported from exposed areas. These same locations, in eastern Rhode Island and the south shore of Cape Cod, including the offshore islands, experienced the brunt of the storm and almost all of the expected (and unexpected) rarities. Observers not fortunate enough to venture out during the height of the storm were largely disappointed with the results. However, taken as a whole, Hurricane Gloria was the most memorable in recent times for vagrant fallout. By sunrise of Sept. 28, the sky was clear, the ocean calm and, except for a few locations, the birds few.

It is difficult to pinpoint the highlights. Rating high was a convincing report of two **Black-capped Petrels** reported from Pt. Judith, R.I., during the height of the storm Sept. 27 (RLF). Not to be outdone were no fewer than three **White-tailed Tropicbirds**, one adult seen during the storm at Chatham, Mass. (BN), an immature picked up alive on a ballfield in Byfield, Mass., Sept. 28, and an adult at Pt. Judith, R.I., Sept. 28 (RC). The Region's first **Brown Pelicans** in more than 20 years were an immature observed at Martha's Vineyard (hereafter, M.V.), Mass., Sept. 28 (VL) and what was probably the same bird was seen from the ferry entering Nantucket Island Harbor, Mass., later the same day (MP). An exhausted imm. **Brown Pelican** landed aboard a fishing vessel on George's Bank, Mass., Sept. 29 (*vide* RHS) where it was fed by the crew and remained on board until the boat returned to Boston Sept. 30. It was taken to the Franklin Park Zoo and subsequently flown to Florida for its release. A N. Fulmar seen at the Wachusett Res., Mass., Sept. 27 (FMc) provided only the state's 2nd inland record.

TUBENOSES — Scattered N. Fulmars were reported throughout the period but the only sizable concentration was of 42 on Stellwagen Bank Nov. 30 (*vide* RHS). It was not a good year for Cory's Shearwater especially from Cox's Ledge, R.I. Surprisingly the best count, 35, came from Little Harbor, N.S., Sept. 23 (*vide* RGG), a rather late date for numbers that far n. Rare for Connecticut were single Cory's and Greater shearwaters found incapacitated on coastal beaches as a result of the hurricane Sept. 28 (*vide* DV). Otherwise Greater Shearwaters were widely reported in the Region throughout the period in appropriate offshore locations but no exceptional concentration was noted. Sooty Shearwater numbers were rather low but 80+ at Brier I., N.S. (FLL, *vide* RGG) was rather high for the date. A count of 200 Manx Shearwaters at Burn Pen., Nfld., Aug. 14 (BM) was the highest concentration ever

noted in the province and 110 at Stellwagen Bank, Mass., Aug 4 (RSH) was also an above average number. Trips to Hydrographer Canyon on the s.e. edge of George's Bank, recorded 15 Audubon's Shearwaters Aug. 19 and three Sept. 7 (WRP). More surprising was one at Cox's Ledge, R.I., Sept. 10 (*vide* DLE). The storm-petrel situation after the hurricane was confusing, certainly a result of inherent identification problems. Unidentified storm-petrels were three inland at Wachusett Res., Mass., Sept. 27-28 (*vide* RHS), three at Stamford and two at Farmington, both in Conn., Sept. 27 (*vide* DV). Inland on the Connecticut R., at Longmeadow, Mass., there were 12 Leach's and two Wilson's storm-petrels Sept. 27 (SK), and at Chatham, Mass., the same day there were 100+ Leach's (BN). The figures for Pt. Judith, R.I., Sept. 27 were 100 Wilson's and 10 Leach's (*vide* DLE). Otherwise Wilson's were found in impressive numbers offshore until their departure in September with 8000 at Stellwagen Bank, Mass., Aug. 4 (RSH). Both **White-faced Storm-Petrels** and **Band-rumped Storm-Petrels** were recorded again at Hydrographer Canyon. Two Band-rumped and one White-faced storm-petrels were seen Aug. 19 and single individuals of both species were recorded there Sept. 7 (WRP). Both are probably rare but regular at this location in late summer.

GANNET, CORMORANTS — Northern Gannets were particularly obvious in coastal Massachusetts in October and November with counts totalling in the thousands on several occasions. However, in Connecticut where they are very rare, an unprecedented flight occurred in late November. Estimates along the coast ranged from >150 Nov. 28-31 (DV) to 372 Nov. 29 (NSP). Normally only one or two are expected even during a good year. Both cormorant species have witnessed dramatic population increases in recent years and are generally ignored by the birding community. However, there are increasing reports of Double-cresteds lingering into winter and at least 15 Great Cormorants were on inland lakes and ponds in Massachusetts where unheard of only a decade ago.

HERONS AND IBISES — Species in this group reach their annual maxima in late summer when the local breeding population is augmented by young of the year and post-breeding wanderers. By and large these concentrations begin retreating S in early September with most having departed by October. Increasingly, scattered observations of Great and Snowy egrets, Little Blue and Tricolored herons are made into mid- or late November in s. New England. As many as 6-12 Tricolored Herons in Connecticut during October (*vide* DV) were considered a result of the hurricane. American Bitterns were almost universally unreported. Is this a further indication of its decline in the Region? A Least Bittern that lingered at Concord, Mass., until early November (*vide* RHS) was both late and unusual. Out of place Yellow-crowned Night-Herons included one at Monhegan I., Me., Aug. 22 (JW) and three during August and September in Nova Scotia (*vide* IAM). A Cattle Egret in Sanford, N.S., Oct. 15 was late but not exceedingly so. Late Glossy Ibises were reported at a manure pile in Mansfield, Mass., Oct. 20 (KR) and one was present in the Milford, Conn., area until Nov. 10 (M. Szantyr, *vide* DV).

WATERFOWL — Tundra Swans put in better than average showings. In Maine there was a "small incursion" with three near Machias Nov. 26-27 (*vide* WT). One was observed flying over Concord, Mass., Nov. 9 (*vide* RHS), and seven were at Monomoy I., Mass., Nov. 17 (BN). The only Rhode Island report was of one at Cross Mill Pond Nov. 21 (DF, DLK, *vide* DLE). A Greater White-fronted Goose returned to the Lakeville/Rochester, Mass. area, Nov. 3 (GWC, *vide* RHS) for the 3rd consecutive fall and up to three or more were present with numerous Canada Geese at various places in Connecticut beginning in late September (*vide* DV). A Snow Goose at Onset, Mass., Aug. 13 (RB) was a scarce summer visitor and migrant flocks were observed earlier than normal in mid-September in Massachusetts. Migrating flocks of Snow Geese in interior Massachusetts

totalled 1300+ individuals in October and November (*vide* SK), about average by recent standards. A modest coastal movement totalling >500 birds was observed in Massachusetts and Rhode Island Oct. 25-27. Three Brant at St. Paul's Inlet, Nfld., Sept. 20 (BM, BMy) was an unusual sighting. Otherwise, the passage of this species went unheralded except for 5096 Oct. 27 at Pt. Judith, R.I. (RLF, *vide* DE), which represents a substantial movement.

For the most part there were few surprises among the puddle ducks. Early arriving species: Am. Wigeon, N. Shoveler, N. Pintail, began trickling in during late August as usual. Twelve reports of Gadwalls totalling 27 birds in Nova Scotia was better than normal with a peak count of six at Barrington Bay Sept. 25 (*vide* CRKA). No fewer than 14 Eur. Wigeons were reported in the Region with the first appearing Sept. 22 at Monomoy I., Mass. (BN). By the end of November there were five at Monomoy I., and nearby Nantucket I. A flurry of reports was concentrated in the Maritimes in early November. Two were seen in the Codroy Valley, Nfld., Nov. 11 (SIT), two of a flock of three were shot by a hunter at St. Pierre-Miquelon Is., French Overseas (hereafter, S.P.M.), Nov. 10 (*vide* RE) and three were seen at Seaforth, N.S., Nov. 3-14 (IAM). Canvasbacks were scarce until late November when 500 were seen at E. Providence, R.I., Nov. 23 (*vide* DLE). Three Redheads at Amherst Pt. Bird Sanct. (hereafter A.P.B.S.), N.S., Sept. 16 (*vide* CRKA) were said to be locals while migrants in Massachusetts were noted in early October, and built to peak counts of 75 at Nantucket I., Mass., Nov. 30 (EFA) and 40+ at S. Monomoy, Mass., Nov. 19 (BN). An excellent flight of Ring-necked Ducks produced high totals of 1100 at Carlton Pond, Me. (*vide* WT) in the first week of November and 1650 at Lakeville, Mass., Nov. 3 (WRP). Reports of Lesser Scaup in the Maritimes are increasing as a result of diligent searching. There were 5 or 6 reports from Newfoundland this fall where they were "overlooked previously" (BM), and one shot at S.P.M., Nov. 11 (RE) represented their first record. Farther s. 100+ at Lakeville, Mass., Nov. 3 (WRP) was a good count. Common Eiders are a familiar sight in most coastal areas in the Region but 25,000+ at S. Monomoy, Mass., Nov. 11 (BN) represented only a portion of the total number present. A Regional total of seven King Eiders, with five of these at Weekapang, R.I., Nov. 28 (*vide* DLE) was a poor showing. Harlequin Ducks were said to be "present as usual" at York, Me., and three were present at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Oct. 30 where numbers had swelled to 17 by Nov. 24 (*vide* DLE). Oldsquaw were scantily reported from coastal regions until late in the reporting period when 10,000+ were seen at Nantucket I., Mass., Nov. 29 (EFA). The scoter migration proceeded as usual peaking in the latter one-half of October with Surf Scoter being well represented. Rather early were six Barrow's Goldeneye at Pictou, N.S., Oct. 30 (*vide* CRKA), but otherwise few were reported. In s. New England Ruddy Ducks put in fine appearances with many counts exceeding 100 individuals and an impressive 350 at S. Monomoy, Mass., Nov. 11 (BN).

DIURNAL RAPTORS — The increase in Turkey Vultures continues unabated. From 35-40 were present at a piggery in Arundel, Me., in September and six were at Brier I., N.S., Oct. 13 (IAM) with two late individuals in Nova Scotia in November. Osprey numbers were also high with the now-expected lingers to mid- or late November. Bald Eagle numbers were average as were reports of N. Harriers. Sharp-shinned Hawks were widely reported but the only exceptional movement was at Brier I., N.S., where possibly as many as 4000/day were estimated Sept. 28-Oct. 6 (*vide* IAM). The low numbers of N. Goshawk reports indicated no substantial southward movement. The Broad-winged Hawk flight spanned a few days following a cold front Sept. 10 producing NW winds for several days. Broad-winged moved through in numbers but no exceptionally high daily totals resulted. At Mt. Wachusett, Mass., totals exceeded 4000 birds each day Sept. 11-13 (PR). Counts elsewhere were lower but 2000 Broad-winged at Deer I., Me.,

Sept 13 (*vide* WT) was much better than expected. A rare Swainson's Hawk was carefully observed Sept. 9 at Hammonasset S.P. (hereafter, H.S.P.), Conn. (DV). An early Rough-legged Hawk was observed in Nova Scotia Sept. 9, with the next being Oct. 12 with 12 more to the end of the period (*vide* IAM). Otherwise, reports were scanty with no signs of a major influx. At Hancock, Mass., nine Golden Eagles were observed Oct. 29–Nov. 8 with three each Nov. 3 & 8 (JM, *vide* SK). American Kestrel numbers were down from previous years at almost every reporting station but Merlin numbers were well above normal, being noted early in September and continuing through mid-October. In Maine, 35 Merlins were at Monhegan I., Oct. 4 (JW) and 63 were counted at Harpswell Oct. 6 (*vide* WT). Peregrine Falcons were reported in the best numbers in memory. Even allowing for released birds, the numbers were impressive and encouraging. Perhaps >200 were reported Regionwide, topped by an amazing 41 at Harpswell, Me., Oct. 6 (*vide* WT). A Gyrfalcon was well seen and described at Block I, R.I., on the early date of Oct. 8 (DLE) and another barely made the reporting period at St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 30 (RB).

RAILS, CRANES — A Yellow Rail at Eastham, Mass., Oct. 13 (DEC) was originally sighted about 200 yards distant, flying over a marsh, but eventually landed virtually at the feet of the observers. Other rails were very sparsely reported and some observers commented that rails could be in trouble. A total of ten Clapper Rails reported from coastal marshes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island was about normal. NO King Rails were reported. A Com. Moorhen, "rarer than Purple," was present at St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 15–25 (BM). Ten moorhens at A.P.B.S., N.S., Sept. 22 (IAM) was a post-breeding concentration, and two at Acadia N.P., Me., Oct. 6 (*vide* WT) were unusual. Several observers felt Am. Coots were making a slight comeback from recent low totals but numbers are only a fraction of a decade and one-half ago. Ninety-nine were recorded in Rhode Island during November (*vide* DLE). The Region's only Sandhill Cranes were both observed Oct. 12, at Westport, Mass. (*vide* RHS), and Sakonnet Pt., R.I. (RB, *vide* DLE).

SHOREBIRDS — Reports of Black-bellied Plovers were routine as were reports of Lesser Golden-Plovers except in Connecticut where they were said to be distinctly more common than usual (*vide* DV). The best count was of 275 at Amherst, N.S., Sept. 6 (SIT) and there was the normal scattering of November reports that are now expected. Semipalmated Plovers were also routine but 2500 Aug. 6 at Cherry Hill, N.S. (JSC) was an above-average count. Killdeer numbers were above average in Massachusetts on agricultural fields in September and October, but were widely unmentioned on elsewhere. American Oystercatchers are now well established in s.e. New England and post-breeding counts reflect that increase. However, the number of individuals present in late September and October in that area were, most likely, a result of Hurricane Gloria with totals of 80 in Massachusetts, 70 in Rhode Island and 20+ in Connecticut. Not surprisingly, a few of these lingered through November. Only four Am. Avocets were noted in the Region, somewhat fewer than expected. Noteworthy was one at Canso, N.S., during much of September (*vide* FS), and one at Grand Manan I., N.B., Oct. 27 to at least Nov. 12 (BD, *vide* WT).

Several Solitary Sandpipers lingered rather late into mid-October at several locations in the Region. Willet reports were scarce but a late lingerer was at Chatham, Mass., through November. Whimbrel numbers were widely unreported or unmentioned upon. Were they genuinely scarce or just a lack of significant concentrations deemed noteworthy? Several sightings of Hudsonian Godwits in Newfoundland prompted the comment they are "more routine than Newfoundlers thought" (BM). The only Hudsonian at S.P.M., was a single individual Oct. 25 (AD, *vide* RE). As many as 70 Hudsonians were at Glace Bay, N.S., Aug. 17 (N.S.B.S.) while the peak at Monomoy I., Mass., was 100 Aug. 3 (BN). Several Hudsonian Godwits were found in Connecticut during October but eight

at Guilford Nov. 10 (NSP) were unusually late. Two Marbled Godwits were at Cherry Hill, N.S., Sept. 14, and the usual few were noted in Massachusetts and Rhode Island during August and September. However, immediately after Hurricane Gloria there was a spate of reports. In Massachusetts three were at M.V., Sept. 29 (VL), and one at Nantucket I., the same day (EFA). At Monomoy I., Mass., there were five Marbleds Sept. 29, seven Oct. 12 with six still present in nearby Chatham Nov. 11 (BN). Two Marbled Godwits were at Block I, R.I., Oct. 5 (*vide* DLE), and singles were found in Connecticut at Westport Sept. 29, Norwalk I., Oct. 6, and two at Saybrook Oct. 7 (*vide* DV). Red Knot numbers peaked at Third Cliff, Scituate, Mass., in early August with 2500 Aug. 3 (RAF). Also noteworthy were 129 at Grand Barachois, S.P.M., Sept. 1 (RE).

Far and away the most abundant shorebird migrant in the Region is Semipalmated Sandpiper. Even so, counts of 100,000 at Lubec, Me., Aug. 9 (CDD) and 45,000 at Evangeline, N.S., Aug. 5 (*vide* FS) were astounding. It was a relatively poor fall for W. Sandpipers. One was seen at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 21 (*vide* FS) and only three in late August and September in Maine (JW). The best count from Massachusetts was of 20 in Orleans, Mass., Sept. 17 (BN).

S.A.

The best shorebird of the season was a brightly plumaged Little Stint present at Third Cliff, Scituate, Mass., July 25–Aug. 16 (WRP, m.ob.). After its initial discovery, it was unobserved for one week before being rediscovered and then seen nearly daily until its departure. During its stay there were various unconvincing reports of other stints and there may have been a dull Rufous-necked Stint present, but it is best left unreported.

The peak count of Least Sandpipers was of 350 at a Halifax, Mass., manure pile Aug. 27 (KSA), and one was present very late at Cape Race, Nfld., with two White-rumped Sandpipers Nov. 29 (BM). Otherwise, there were apparently fewer White-rumped than usual except in Nova Scotia where counts of 50+ were noted in August and October with 25 still present at Halifax Nov. 2 (*vide* FS). A total of 42 Baird's Sandpipers was recorded in the Region with all but two occurring in the period Aug. 13–Sept. 28. The only October individual was at Grand Manan I., Oct. 13 (*vide* WT). Good numbers of Pectoral Sandpipers were generally reported Regionwide beginning in mid-September with numerous groups totalling in excess of 50 individuals. There were 120 at St. Paul's Inlet, Nfld., Sept. 20 (BM), and 200 at Sheffield Mills, N.S., Oct. 19 (*vide* FS), with numbers dwindling thereafter. The Region's 4th Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was an imm. bird banded and photographed at Norwalk, Conn., Oct. 16–17 (FM, DV *et al.*). An early (or summing?) Purple Sandpiper appeared at Seal I., N.S., Aug. 8 (ELM). Dunlin is our latest migrating shorebird and is pretty much taken for granted, but, 3000 at Duxbury, Mass., Nov. 24 (WRP) was an above-average count. The season's only Curlew Sandpipers were in Massachusetts; an adult at Squantum July 27–Aug. 3 (RA) and a juvenile at Ipswich Sept. 21–22 (EN). Long overdue, according to local observers, was Newfoundland's first Stilt Sandpiper at Lamoline, Burin Pen., Aug. 14–15 (BM, J. Pratt). About average were 26 Stilt Sandpipers at W. Lawrencetown, N.S., Aug. 12 (*vide* FS) and 53 at Plum I., Mass., Aug. 17 (RAF). Buff-breasted Sandpipers staged a fairly good flight especially in the Maritime provinces. Eight were seen in Newfoundland Aug. 23–Sept. 7 and a late bird was seen Oct. 6 (*vide* BM). In Nova Scotia at least 10 were seen with a high count of five at Brier I., in early September (N.S.B.S.). Only two Ruffs were reported—one at St. John's, Nfld., Sept. 15 (*vide* BM), and a Reeve at Cherry Hill, N.S., Aug. 11–15 (*vide* FS). Away from their stronghold at Plum I., Mass., Long-billed Dowitchers are only sparsely reported with most coming later in the season. In Nova Scotia, four were at A.P.B.S., Oct. 13

(SIT) and the last was seen Nov 11 at Cole Harbor (*vide* FS). A laggard was seen at Grand Manan I., Oct. 27 (*vide* WT). A peak of 50 occurred at Plum I., Sept. 18 with 15 still there Nov. 2. Connecticut reports of Long-billed Dowitchers included three singles in October and one in November (*vide* DV). Wilson's Phalaropes were in lower than normal numbers and were distributed as follows: two Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, two Maine, seven Massachusetts, and four Rhode Island. Eight thousand Red-necked Phalaropes were at Campobello I., N.B., Aug 9 (CDD) and the Red Phalarope flock at Brier I., N.S., comprised fewer than usual with a peak of "only" 1000+ Sept. 2 (N.S.B.S.). Otherwise, phalarope reports were very slim with the most noteworthy report being of a Red Phalarope Oct. 7 at Stratford, Conn. (DV).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — The lack of n.e. storms contributed to the poor seasonal total of jaegers. Only a handful of Pomarine Jaegers was reported from far offshore waters. More significantly, at Pt. Judith, R.I., Pomarines were observed as follows: three Sept. 27, four Sept. 28, one Oct. 27, and nine Nov 5 (*vide* DLE). Surprisingly, Pomarine Jaegers were at W. Haven, Conn., Aug. 6 (*vide* DV), and Guilford, Conn., Nov. 28 (NSP). Many Parasitic Jaegers were noted during the hurricane on Cape Cod and the islands but otherwise numbers were unimpressive. All 3 species of jaeger occur well offshore of Newfoundland but Long-tailed Jaeger is seldom reported from in-shore waters. Juvenile Long-tailed were at Frenchman's Cove, Nfld., Aug. 14, and L'Anse-aux-Meadows, Nfld., Sept. 17 (BM). An unaged Long-tailed Jaeger was on George's Bank off Nova Scotia Aug. 25 (*vide* RGBB). In Massachusetts an adult was seen on Stellwagen Bank Aug. 25 (L. Selzer) where a juvenile was seen Sept. 8 (RAF) and another juvenile was seen at George's Bank Sept. 7 (R. Cech). The status of skuas in the Region is in need of clarification, if indeed that is possible. At Frenchman's Cove, Nfld., a S. Polar Skua and two unspecified skuas were observed Aug. 14 and another unspecified skua was seen at Cape St. Francis Aug. 30 (BM). On a "Bluenose" crossing from Maine to Nova Scotia Aug. 29, there were two Great Skuas and a S. Polar Skua (CDD, PDV). Two of three skuas seen off Machias Seal I., N.B., Sept. 15 were thought to be S. Polars (BD, *vide* WT), as was a skua seen in the height of the hurricane at Chatham, Mass., Sept. 27 (BN). Great Skuas were reported from S.P.M., at Grand Barachois Aug. 21 and on the e. coast of Miquelon I., Sept. 20 (RE).

Attesting to the increase in Laughing Gulls was 1000 Aug. 24 at Stellwagen Bank, Mass. (SK), most of which were immatures. In Rhode Island, 1000 were at Block I., Oct. 5 and 800 were at Napatree Nov. 5 (*vide* DLE). In Newfoundland Laughing Gulls are now annual in summer with one at Bellevue Beach Aug. 12 (BM), and an adult in n. Newfoundland Aug. 24 & Sept. 15 (*vide* BM). Little Gulls were reported only from Massachusetts where up to three were present in Newburyport Sept 28, and singles were seen in Winthrop in late August with an immature at Dennis Nov. 11 (BN). The wintering flock of Com. Black-headed Gulls were said to have settled in at Glace Bay, N.S., by Nov. 7 (S. MacLean, *vide* RGBB) and the maximum count at St. John's, Nfld., in November was 71 (BM). South of there only a few were reported. Eight thousand Bonaparte's Gulls at Deer I., N.B., Aug. 23 (CDD) was a paltry number by recent standards. An ad. Mew Gull was found at St. John's, Nfld., Sept. 4, where it remained for the rest of the reporting season (m.ob.) and another was still present at Eastern Passage, N.S., where it was first discovered in spring. Ring-billed Gulls were everywhere. A possible Thayer's Gull was noted at a Farmington, Me. dump Nov. 5 & 8 (JW). Only a few Iceland Gulls were reported with up to eight seen in various Maine dumps during November (JW). The best known Lesser Black-backed Gull in the Region returned to Digby, N.S., Oct. 14 for the 15th consecutive year. Other Lesser Black-backed in the Region were three from St. John's, Nfld., two in Halifax, N.S., one in Maine, 11 in Massachusetts and one in Connecticut. An unseasonal Glaucous Gull at Milford Pt., Conn., Aug. 22-

30 (T Baptist, *vide* DV) was one of the few reported. During November in Massachusetts there were 4 counts of Black-legged Kittiwakes exceeding 1000 birds but quite rare were reports from Connecticut Nov. 29 of three at H.S.P., and one from Guilford (*vide* DV). Strangely, the only Sabine's Gulls reported were seen on whale-watching trips to Stellwagen Bank, Mass., where single adults were seen Aug. 4, 14, & 24 and two immatures each were seen Aug. 24 and Sept. 8 (v.o.)

On Sept 8, an evening roost of mixed Common/Roseate terns at Monomoy I., Mass., totalled approximately 15,000 birds with an estimated 30-40% Roseates. This is undoubtedly the most reliable location to see Roseate Tern on the Atlantic Coast in late summer. A late individual was seen there Oct. 14 (BN). Extraordinarily late Com. Terns were two at Stephenville Crossing, Nfld., Nov. 7 (SIT) and one Nov. 11 at Three Fathom Harbor, N.S. (FLL). Impressive numbers of Royal and Sandwich terns were noted after Hurricane Gloria on the islands off Cape Cod and s. coastal areas in Rhode Island. Approximately 150 Royals were observed on M.V., Sept. 28 (VL), 20 at Nantucket I. the same day (SAP), 23 were in Rhode Island Sept. 28-30 (*vide* DLE) and 10-20 were noted along the Connecticut shore up to one week after the storm (*vide* DV). Not surprisingly, a handful of Royal Terns lingered into November. Sandwich Terns, much rarer in the Region, occurred in numbers that eclipsed all previous records. Forty were estimated at M.V., Sept. 28 (VL), 25-30 were at Nantucket I. (SAP) and 25+/day along the Rhode Island shore Sept. 28-30 (*vide* DLE). The only tropical terns reported were three **Sooty Terns** in Eastham, Mass., Sept. 27 (CAG, *vide* B.O.E.M.) and a **Bridled Tern** at Branford, Conn., the same day (NSP). Forster's Tern also figured prominently with 300+ recorded in Massachusetts, nearly 100 in Rhode Island and lesser numbers in Connecticut. A Gull-billed Tern at H.S.P., Conn., Oct. 6 (*vide* DV) was certainly a hurricane waif. Black Skimmers were also hurricane-borne to the Region, especially in Connecticut where 100-200 were noted along the shore in the weeks following the storm, with individuals and small flocks lingering into November (*vide* DV). Unaffected by the hurricane, Black Terns staged an extremely poor fall flight with the maximum for the Region a scant six in Eastham, Mass., Aug. 31 (WRP).

Reflecting the norm for recent falls, alcids were sparsely reported with a few notable exceptions. Dovekies were almost unreported save a large on-shore flight at Cape St. Francis, Nfld., Nov. 1-3 where 12,000 were estimated in a 3-hr. period Nov. 2 (BM). At Rockport, Mass., Nov. 28-30 counts of Razor-bills averaged 30-50 and three Thick-billed Murres were seen Nov. 29 (*vide* B.O.E.M.). Becoming regular in the fall, three Atlantic Puffins were noted at Stellwagen Bank, Mass., Nov 30 (*vide* B.O.E.M.).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Now recorded almost annually, the Region's White-winged Doves were one at Little Harbor, N.S., Sept. 8 (J. Graves, *vide* IAM) and Grand Manan I., N.B., Nov. 11-15 (BD, *vide* WT). Both cuckoo species received little comment except in Nova Scotia where "errant" Yellow-billed were first noted at Hartlen Pt., Sept. 29, with a seasonal total of seven and the last Nov. 9 (*vide* IAM).

There were virtually no indications of a Snowy Owl flight with the handful of reports by the end of the period indicating no definite pattern. There was some indication of a Long-eared Owl migration in late October and early November when six were banded at H.S.P., Conn. (CT, *vide* DV). A few other migrants were observed during roughly the same time frame in Nova Scotia, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The usual scattered reports of Short-eared Owls were received, but unusual was a group of 11 surprised at a diurnal roost on Nantucket I., Mass., Oct. 12 (ML). The usual scattering of reports of N. Saw-whet Owl including five banded at M.B.O., during October (*vide* TL-E) which indicated only a small flight, but, one at S.P.M., Nov. 11 provided the first record for the location (AD, *vide* RE).

In the Connecticut R. Valley of Massachusetts, where night-

hawk watching is a popular pastime, nearly 10,000 were recorded in late August and early September with the highest evening total being 2835 in Southwick Sept. 3 (SK). However, the season total was considered slightly below average. Brisk SW winds and warm temperatures Nov. 7 were responsible for reverse migration. Very late Chimney Swifts were at S.P.M., Nov. 8-9 (AD, *vide* RE), two at a sewage outfall at Herring Cove, N.S., Nov. 9 (*vide* IAM), Port Clyde, Me., Nov. 8 (*vide* WT), M.V., Mass., Nov. 7 (VL), two at H.S.P., Conn., Nov. 7 (CT, *vide* DV) and three each in the same state at Lighthouse Pt., Nov. 8 & 13 (RE, *vide* DV). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were well-reported during late August to mid-September, especially at migrant locations in Nova Scotia and at interior hawkwatches. Two presumed Ruby-throateds were noted Nov. 7 in Boston, Mass. suburbs (*vide* RAF). The Region's 4th (?) **Rufous Hummingbird** was an ad. male present at the botanical park in St. John's, Nfld., Aug. 4-10 (J. Powers, *vide* BM). Migrant Red-headed Woodpeckers were generally scarce. A pair with three young were seen in a Boston, Mass. park Aug. 5 where they nested. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were unreported n. of s. Massachusetts where they are barely established as permanent residents. The sapsucker flight varied within the Region but was deemed "better than recent years" (SK) in w. Massachusetts. About 25 were seen at Block I., R.I., Oct. 4-6 (*vide* DLE) and fair numbers were noted in Massachusetts Oct. 12-13 (*vide* GWG). A wayward ♂ Black-backed Woodpecker was present at Nantucket I., Mass., Sept. 10 (N. Waldron, *vide* RAF). Northern Flicker migration was obvious beginning in mid-September with 180 at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 12 (*vide* IAM).

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — Although a well-established breeder in the Region, the Olive-sided Flycatcher is an inconspicuous and infrequently reported migrant through the Region. In late August and early September, it virtually flooded the Region. Among the better counts were from Nova Scotia with four at Bon Portage Aug. 28, four at Brier I., Aug. 30 (*vide* JSC) and five to eight at Plum I., Mass., Sept. 7 (*vide* RAF). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were "exceptionally well reported" in Nova Scotia. Ten were at Seal I., Sept. 2 (*vide* JSC) and 36 were banded at Appledore I., Me., Aug. 23-Sept. 12 (DWH). A late Yellow-bellied was at Monhegan I., Me., Oct. 6 (JW). *Empidonax* flycatchers flooded Nova Scotia coastal landbird traps Aug. 28-30 and 58 "Traill's" Flycatchers banded at Appledore I., Me. (DWH) was somewhat above recent averages. Although Acadian Flycatchers are scantily established as local breeders in s. New England and are regularly reported as spring migrants, there are few fall records. An individual critically examined in the hand at M.B.O., Oct. 2 (TL-E) provided an exceptional fall record. Not annual in the Region, a Say's Phoebe at Quabbin Res., Mass., Oct. 20 (ML, SC) was one of few recent records. Also rare, an Ash-throated at Grand Manan I., N.B., Nov. 10-12 (DSC) fit Regional patterns of occurrence but not a Great Crested Flycatcher at Brunswick, Me., Nov. 7 (*vide* WT). Western Kingbirds staged an excellent fall flight with the bulk of 28 reports in September and November. Of these, 15 were seen in September with pronounced concentrations early in the month, and only three were seen in October. An adult and two fledgling E. Kingbirds at St. John's, Nfld., in late August provided the province's first breeding record (BM). Otherwise they were numerous and conspicuous, as usual, in late August with a noteworthy late occurrence at Block I., R.I., Oct. 9 (*vide* DLE). An unusual fall occurrence of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at M.V. on the late date of Nov. 14 (WM, *vide* VL). **Fork-tailed Flycatchers** again graced the Region. The first for Rhode Island was at Block I., Oct. 9 (RB, DLK, DLE) and one was present in e. Boston, Mass., Oct. 11-12 (S. Thomas, *vide* RAF). An undocumented Fork-tailed was reported from inland Maine at Monroe Oct. 10 (*vide* WT).

The swallow group received little comment other than the usual hordes of Tree Swallows that congregate along coastal areas in late August. A report of 75,000+ at the Elizabeth Is., Mass., Sept. 15 (PT) is indicative of how common they can be.

Two Purple Martins carefully scrutinized at St. John's, Nfld., Oct. 9 (BM) were slightly more exceptional than one at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 12 (SIT) and at Brunswick, Me., Oct. 7 (*vide* WT). There was a scattering of late September reports for Cliff Swallow and N. Rough-winged Swallows in Massachusetts which may have been hurricane related, but three at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 18 (S. Manuel) were decidedly tardy.

CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS — Nantucket I.'s Eur. Jackdaw remained through the reporting period (EFA) but one at S.P.M. was last seen Aug. 8 (*vide* RE). The increase in Com. Ravens in s. Massachusetts is remarkable. Twenty-six were at Wachusett Mt., Oct. 2 and one was seen in s.e. Massachusetts near the Rhode Island border Oct. 11 (*vide* DLE). A massive coastal movement of Black-capped Chickadees was evident in coastal areas where M.B.O. banded 1227 for the month of October with a peak of 157 Oct. 16 (TL-E). Surprisingly, no Boreal Chickadees were represented in this flight, although they were common at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 15-23 when 75+ were present (*vide* JSC). Otherwise, the only extralimital records were of one at Amherst, Mass., Oct. 19 (*vide* SK) and H.S.P., Conn., Nov. 10 (*vide* DV). Widely scattered reports indicated that a good Red-breasted Nuthatch flight was in progress by mid-August, but reports slowed down in southern areas by October. A northerly Carolina Wren was at Falmouth, Me., Oct. 30 (*vide* WT), and the only Sedge Wren report for the Region was of one at H.S.P., Conn., Sept. 6 (*vide* DV).

KINGLETS THROUGH SHRIKES — Golden-crowned Kinglets received mixed reviews. They were present in good numbers in w. Newfoundland (BM) and there were 50+/day at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 15-23 (*vide* JSC), but, farther s., reports were only slightly better than average. Good numbers of both kinglet species, with Ruby-crowneds predominating (100+) were at Scituate, Mass., Oct. 11 (DEC). The deluge of late fall gnatcatchers failed to materialize as last year. Nevertheless, S.P.M. obtained its first record Nov. 11 (RE), and one was present at St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 14-30+ (J. Pratt, *vide* BM). Single N. Wheatears were an immature at Pt. Amour, Labr., Aug. 26-27 (C. Brown, *vide* BM) and at H.S.P., Conn., Sept. 5-10 (REN, *vide* DV). Most observers in the Region commented on the lack of thrushes, especially Swainson's, which can be a very common migrant. The only exception was 50 Hermit Thrushes seen at Mt. Desert, Me., Oct. 29 (*vide* WT). Of the 14 Gray-cheeked Thrushes reported, six were banded. A Varied Thrush frequented a Chelmsford, Mass. backyard Oct. 22-23 and another appeared at an Ashburnham, Mass. feeder Nov. 27+ (*vide* RAF). Water Pipits arrived early in Nova Scotia and Massachusetts with the peak occurring in mid-to late October. Bohemian Waxwing is now an annual winter visitor to n. portions of the Region s. to central Maine. First reports were in late October and small groups were present in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Maine by the end of November. Slightly unusual was one in Williamsburg, Mass., Nov. 30 (*vide* SK). The earliest N. Shrike was seen at Plum I., Mass., Oct. 26, but by the end of the season, fewer than 20 had been reported (10 in Massachusetts), indicating a flight was not in the offing. The only Loggerhead Shrike was banded at H.S.P., Conn., Aug. 13 (CT, *vide* DV).

VIREOS AND WARBLERS — Late White-eyed Vireos were noted in Massachusetts in Ipswich Nov. 10 and Plum I., Nov. 24 (*vide* LT). Two Yellow-throated Vireos in Nova Scotia in late August and early September (*vide* PRD) were rather far n. and individuals at Block I., R.I., Oct. 6 (*vide* DLE) and H.S.P., Conn., Oct. 30 (*vide* DV) were late. Still considered rare in Newfoundland but recorded for the 3rd consecutive year was a Warbling Vireo at Cape Broyle Sept. 28 (BM *et al.*). Banding results at Appledore I., Me. revealed low numbers of Philadelphia Vireos while Warbling Vireos had increased slightly (DWH).

Not much can be said for the warbler migration. All of the regularly occurring species were seen in varying numbers with

the only pronounced flight Aug. 28–Sept. 2. Southern warblers fared poorly with Yellow-throateds at Nantucket I., Mass., Sept. 15 (RHS) and at W. Middle Sable I., N.S., Nov. 10–11 (*vide* PRD). The only Kentucky was banded at M.B.O., Sept. 12. A Prothonotary Warbler was at Tuckernuck I., Mass., Aug. 15 (*vide* LT), one was at Seal I., N.S., Aug. 28 (ELM), and one at Mt. Desert Rock, Me., Sept. 10 succumbed to a Merlin (*vide* WT). Four Worm-eating Warblers were banded at Kingston, R.I., Aug. 28–Sept. 16, one was banded at Appledore I., Me., Aug. 23 (DWH) and a rather late individual was seen at Nantucket I., Mass., Oct. 6 (EFA). Perhaps offshore on George's Bank was the place to be where a Cerulean Warbler came aboard ship exhausted Aug. 20 and a Connecticut Warbler was seen Sept. 8 (WRP). More unusual were Cerulean Warblers in Nova Scotia Aug. 14 (IAM) and at Seal I., Aug. 27 (ELM). Of the 12 Connecticut Warbler reports, four were banded Sept. 20, three at M.B.O. and one at Nantucket I., Mass. Late warblers in Newfoundland during November (most after Nov. 21) were an Orange-crowned, a N. Parula, two Yellows, a Blackpoll, four Black-and-whites, an Am. Redstart and five Wilson's. Other late warblers were Tennessees at S.P.M., Nov. 10–11 (RE) and Grand Manan I., N.B., Nov. 11 (BD, *vide* WT), a Yellow-Warbler at Dartmouth, N.S., Nov. 30 (JSC) and two different Bay-breasteds on Nantucket I., Mass., Nov. 10 & 19–21 (EFA). The commonest warblers banded at Appledore I., Me., Aug. 20–Sept. 13, were 234 Am. Redstarts and 208 N. Waterthrushes (DWH). A late N. Waterthrush was banded at M.B.O., Mass., Oct. 31 (TL-E). The only warbler species that was reported in normal numbers was Yellow-rumped Warbler during October.

TANAGERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — The only W. Tanager reported was at a Nantucket I., Mass. feeder Oct. 29–Nov. 18 (EFA) and no Summer Tanagers were recorded. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a feeder at Bar Harbor, Me., Nov. 11 (*vide* WT). Blue Grosbeaks were fairly well reported, partially as a result of the hurricane. Three were seen with a flock of *Spizella* sparrows at Provincetown, Mass., Sept. 28 (RAF). Very unusual was one that came aboard a trawler on S.P.M. bank Nov. 10 (*vide* RE). As many as ten Indigo Buntings were present at St. John's, Nfld., during the first 2 weeks of October (*vide* BM) and a late individual was present at Dartmouth, N.S., Nov. 9 (*vide* PRD). An imm. **Painted Bunting** was present at Monhegan I., Me., Sept. 6–9 (PDV) and a male, possibly a reverse migrant, visited a Beverly, Mass. feeder Nov. 14–18 (E. Talbot, *vide* RAF). The 30+ total of Dickcissels was an improvement over recent fall totals but the seasonal distribution of reports defies logic. Eight of the 12 Massachusetts reports occurred in September while seven of nine Nova Scotia records were in October (*vide* PRD).

American Tree Sparrows arrived at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 12 (IAM) and by late in the month had reached s. regions. Eight Clay-colored Sparrows was a poor seasonal total and were equally divided between September and October. Reports ranged from Nova Scotia to Connecticut. The total of 15 Lark Sparrows was average for recent years but well below totals of 15 years ago. Nine of these occurred in the normal late August-early September period, typical of the species. One at S.P.M., Oct. 1 (RE) was an unusual find while one at Crescent Beach, N.S., Nov. 2 (*vide* PRD) exceeded expected dates. A Lark Bunting at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 22 (SJF) provided about the 10th provincial record and was unique in the Region. Only a few migrant Grasshopper Sparrows were reported. A Henslow's Sparrow seen at Stratford, Conn., Oct. 7 (DV) was the only report of this now rare species. A Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Portugal Cove, Newfoundland, Oct. 4 (BM) furnished surprisingly, the first provincial record, considering they breed commonly in Nova Scotia. Seaside Sparrows breed n. sparingly to n. coastal Massachusetts. This season's wanderers were at Scarborough, Me., Aug. 6 (PDV), and Biddeford Pool, Me., Sept. 19 (JW) and a juvenile was at Hartlen Pt., N.S., Aug. 2 (*vide* PRD). The Fox Sparrow migration was unremarkable with the bulk of reports in the first one-half of November. Lincoln's Sparrows proved harder

to find than usual. One late individual was present at St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 21 (BM). Best numbers of White-crowned Sparrows were reported Oct. 12–13 with 20–30 at Seal I., N.S. (*vide* PRD), and 75 in Truro, Mass. (DEC). Harris' Sparrow is most frequently recorded at winter feeders; thus, a migrant at Bolton, Mass., Oct. 19–22 (CQ, m.ob.) was particularly noteworthy. In Maine, Dark-eyed Junco numbers were said to be "even higher than last year's impressive numbers" (*vide* WT). Few Lapland Longspurs were reported. A **Chestnut-collared Longspur** was well observed at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 23 (S. Manuel). The earliest-ever Snow Bunting was observed at S.P.M., Sept. 30. Otherwise, reports were normal with typical flocks scattering along coastal beaches and inland fields.

The bulk of the Bobolink migration passed through on schedule in early September with exceptionally late individuals at Cape Race, Nfld., Nov. 6 (BM) and Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Nov. 21 (REN, *vide* DV). Yellow-headed Blackbirds can reasonably be expected in late August and early September, but this year, the reports indicated a substantial reversal with eight recorded in October and November. Brewer's Blackbirds staged a modest influx in the Region. A male was observed at Monhegan I., Me., Sept. 24–25 (KJ), Grand Manan I., N.B., Sept. 15–Oct. 3 (BD, *vide* WT) and one inland at Concord, Mass., Oct. 25–26 (RAF). The Region's first **Boat-tailed Grackles** were finally reported, most likely as a result of Hurricane *Gloria*. Two were observed at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Oct. 7 (REN, *vide* DV) and three were discovered in Stratford, Conn., where as many as six were noted until the end of the period (CH, *vide* DV). In Rhode Island, Boat-taileds were first discovered Oct. 18 and were also present throughout the balance of the reporting period with a maximum of five seen (DF, *vide* DE). Amazingly, all were females. An Orchard Oriole banded at Rockport, Mass., Aug. 4 (RTN) was a surprise and even more so was one seen at Bon Portage I., N.S., Aug. 28 (*vide* PRD). A scarce breeder in s. portions of the Region, this species normally departs S in July. Several late November reports of N. Orioles were identified as "Bullock's."

WINTER FINCHES — After several years' hiatus, there were early indications of a good winter finch flight. In Newfoundland where the spruce cone crop was considered very heavy, daily counts of White-winged Crossbills were thought to exceed 1000, especially on the Avalon Peninsula. Also in that province, at Cheeseman P. P., during a NW gale Oct. 30, SIT recorded 2500+ White-winged Crossbills, 1500 Pine Siskins, 500 Com. Redpolls and 450 Pine Grosbeaks in only a few hours. Elsewhere in the province, Pine Siskins, Com. Redpolls and Pine Grosbeaks were said to be having a very good year (*vide* BM). In Nova Scotia all species were reported but in small numbers, save Com. Redpolls which staged a mid-November influx, as witnessed by 200–300/day at Caribou I., Nov. 9–11 (*vide* PRD). Farther s., observers were encouraged by a scattering of early reports and an observable increase in late October and early November, especially of White-winged Crossbills, Com. Redpolls and Pine Grosbeaks, but, by the end of the period, those species had passed on and few moved in to take their place. The predictable winter finch, Evening Grosbeak, was sparsely reported and more were especially evident by the end of November. Strangely, much of the finch movement was observed along the coast.

EXOTICA — A Chilean Flamingo that had spent most of the summer in Rhode Island appeared at Monomoy I., Mass., Aug. 7, where it remained for about one week (*vide* BN).

CORRIGENDUM — The 62 Solitary Sandpipers reported in the spring season report in Millis, Mass., were observed May 15 not Apr. 15 and were not concentrated at a sewer-bed.

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QUEBEC REGION

Richard Yank and Yves Aubry

The northern one-third of the province recorded above-average temperatures and snowfall this winter. The remainder of Quebec generally saw readings near or slightly below normal with less snowfall than usual. A notable exception was eastern Quebec, which received heavy snowfall in January. Due to the absence of a sustained mild spell during the period, however, the snow that did fall remained on the ground.

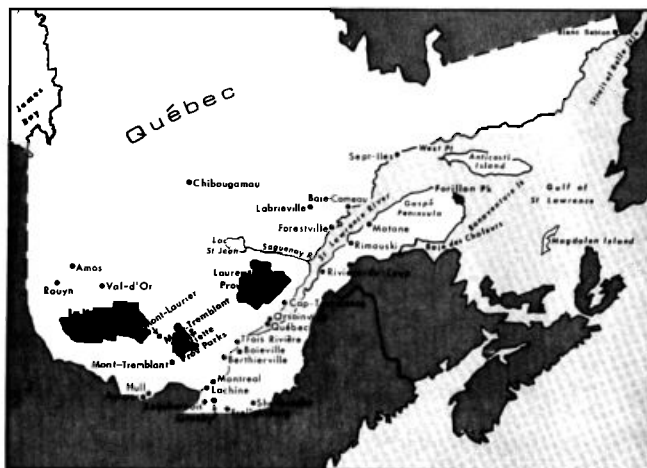
This season produced few rarities, feeders and corn cribs providing most of the limited excitement.

GREBES THROUGH TURKEY—Two very late Horned Grebes were found Dec. 28 at Georgeville (PLd, ALa) where the species also lingered last year. Also late were single Great Blue Herons at Saint-Gilles Dec. 24 (YH), Beauharnois Jan. 2 (ALe), and Waterloo Jan. 10 (ST)—the latter an injured bird. Lone Canada Geese remained at Chapeau Dec. 21–Jan. 25 (RLD) and Dorion Feb. 15 (GH). A ♂ Wood Duck was still present at Beauharnois on the late date of Dec. 28 (PBa, RYa) and a Green-winged Teal, very rare in winter, stayed at La Baie until Feb. 15 (GMo, MB et al.). A N. Shoveler x Mallard hybrid was noted at Châteauguay Dec. 28 (ND) and record late was a Ring-necked Duck at I. aux Allumettes Jan. 25 (RLD). Less remarkable were a ♂ King Eider at Pointe-au-Père Dec. 14 (YG et al.), a Harlequin Duck at the mouth of the Saguenay R., Dec. 27 (GCh, PLe et al.), and two Hooded Mergansers at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue Jan. 19 (RYo).

An extremely late Osprey was seen at Cap Tourmente Dec. 26 (JPB, LM). Sharp-shinned Hawks were sighted in above-average numbers, with at least 20 reports from s. Quebec, and one observed near Rimouski in February represented a 3rd winter record for that area (fide DRu). An ad. Cooper's Hawk was also noteworthy at Sherbrooke Feb. 2 (FS et al.). Very few Rough-legged Hawks wintered in the Region but one at Saint-Honoré Jan. 15 (LB) was late for the Saguenay area. Of interest was an imm. Peregrine Falcon observed near Huntingdon Feb. 15 (PBa) and only one Gyrfalcon was noted in s. Quebec this winter, at Saint-Romuald, Lévis Co., Dec. 10 (PBr).

A dead Gray Partridge was picked up at Berthier-sur-Mer in February (fide Jlc) where the species was also found last year. Wild Turkey sightings involved a group of 10 at Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle throughout the winter (EO) and lone birds at Covey-Hill (RW) and Georgeville (GA, AM) in January.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH OWLS—A Com. Snipe (possibly two) overwintered at Beauport (CV, PLe), as has occurred several times in past years. The Thayer's Gull recorded at Aylmer in the fall report was last seen Dec. 13 (JD et al.) and another first-winter bird was identified at Beauharnois Jan. 4 (DSH). Other rare larids included a subad. Lesser Black-backed Gull on L. Magog Dec. 6–7 (PBo), an ad. Ivory Gull described at Quebec City Dec. 1 (RBo, LMB), and three that visited Pointe-



au-Père Dec. 20 (YG). Three Dovekies were seen from shore at Sainte-Luce Dec. 7 (GG, DRu) and a total of five Thick-billed Murres was sighted along the e. shore of the Gaspé Pen., Jan. 20–Feb. 2 (JGa, GCa, GS, PP, GL). The latter is likely a regular but seldom-reported occurrence.

Mourning Doves continue to overwinter in increasing numbers; in addition to the many concentrations found in s.w. Quebec, there were 14 in Chicoutimi Jan. 31 (RT, JT) and groups of 30+ at Quebec City (fide CV), 15± at Saint-Pacôme (CA et al.), and two at Rimouski (GG) throughout the period. Snowy Owls were reported in low numbers, and the only other northern owls to reach s. Quebec were single N. Hawk-Owls at Dupuy Jan. 17 (JLp) and Sainte-Germaine Feb. 6 (MD), two Great Gray Owls at Plaisance Feb. 19 (RBa, RM), and a Boreal Owl at La Baie Dec. 7 (HS). Several N. Saw-whet Owls again wintered in the Montreal area (m.ob.), but more unusual were sightings at Bergeronnes Dec. 29 and Feb. 3 (AB, EB).

KINGFISHERS THROUGH SHRIKES—A Belted Kingfisher apparently overwintered successfully at Pierrefonds (MM, BB). The Black-billed Magpie at Saint-Etienne-de-Beauharnois (see fall report) was last seen there Dec. 31, and what was likely the same bird was spotted in flight approximately 15 km to the n., at Pincourt, the next day (MA). The Saguenay's 2nd winter record of a White-breasted Nuthatch was provided by a bird at Sainte-Marguerite-Marie October to Mar. 16 (MS et al.). The Carolina Wren made a good showing for this Region with individuals on I. des Soeurs Dec. 21 (ND et al.), at Sherbrooke Dec. 20–Feb. 20 (SC, GMa et al.), and in Pointe-Claire December to Feb. 10 (fide MM). Quite late was a Ruby-crowned Kinglet observed near Tadoussac in late December (fide GCh). A Varied Thrush first appeared at Saint-Luc, Saint-Jean Co., Feb. 21 (MV, m.ob.) and was still present Mar. 9, while a N. Mockingbird at Saint-Méthode Feb. 15 (MAB) provided a first local winter record. Bohemian Waxwings were numerous in

s w Quebec, including a flock of 1500± at Pierrefonds Jan 25 (BB, MM), but were tallied in normal to low numbers elsewhere in the province. Contrary to last winter, Cedar Waxwings were scarce. Northern Shrikes reached s. Quebec in higher numbers than last winter and a Loggerhead Shrike identified at Saint-Eugène, L. Saint-Jean, Dec. 1 (CB) was both late and locally rare.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES — Hardy Yellow-rumped Warblers came to feeders in Saint-Nicolas Jan. 12 (two birds, *fide* YA) and Chandler December to Feb. 8 (one, PP). Extralimital N. Cardinals included a male at Boischatel Dec. 6–Feb. 23 (JGu) and another that overwintered at Tadoussac (YD). This species has evidently been increasing within its established range as well, with a record-high 29 on the Montreal C.B.C., 18 (2nd-highest count total) on the Hudson C.B.C., 20± in the Sherbrooke area (*fide* SG, GBe), and one dozen or so at Drummondville (*fide* DJ). No longer surprising were single Rufous-sided Towhees at Notre-Dame-du-Laus Nov. 5+ (DDu), Huntingville Nov. 10+ (*fide* GBe), and Haldimand Jan. 25+ (DRi), all apparently of the eastern race and still present at the end of the period.

Feeders also enticed an excellent variety of sparrows to remain during the season. A Chipping Sparrow was late at Beauport Dec. 26–Jan. 1 (CS, AT, CV), as was a Field Sparrow at Aylmer Dec. 22–Jan. 26 (m.ob.). A Fox Sparrow at Pointe-Label over the period furnished Quebec's 3rd winter record. Wintering Song Sparrows at Rimouski (*fide* DRu) and Chicoutimi (*fide* CC) are now considered regular, but single Swamp Sparrows were surprising at Beauport Jan. 1–Feb. 22 (CV, PLe) and Baie-Saint-Paul Jan. 25 (JPO). At least 18 White-throated Sparrows were reported, probably our highest winter total ever, and a White-crowned Sparrow was notable at Katevale Nov. 6–Feb. 28+ (JC, PC *et al.*). Quebec's 7th **Harris' Sparrow** arrived Dec. 21 at a Chambord feeder (MT, GCy, m.ob.), where it was last seen Jan. 25, in poor condition. Dark-eyed Juncos were also in evidence, overwintering in the Saguenay (*fide* CC) and at Tadoussac (YD), Rimouski (*fide* DRu), and Hauterive (*fide* GCy). Also worthy of mention was a flock of 55 at Granby Jan. 11 (CH, SD) and a female of one of the w. races at Aylmer Dec. 5–Feb. 28+ (RLD, CD). Lapland Longspurs made a slightly better-than-average showing, with groups of up to one dozen reported.

Three different ad. ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbirds and one immature frequented corn cribs in Saint-Etienne-de-Beauharnois Dec. 26–Feb. 21 (YA, GD, m.ob.). Less unusual were sightings of two Rusty Blackbirds at Baie-Saint-Paul Feb. 1 (CV) and one at Beauport Feb. 9 (PLe), as well as the few Com. Grackles that

remained in most areas. For the 2nd consecutive winter Brown-headed Cowbirds were present in substantial numbers, including 100+ around Quebec City (*fide* CV) and several in the Rimouski area (*fide* DRu).

In contrast to last year, Pine Grosbeaks invaded s. Quebec in high numbers, especially early in the season, while Purple Finches were almost totally absent. The House Finch is still expanding its range: a pair reached Rivière-du-Loup for the first time Feb. 8 (YT) and a male showed up at Sainte-Foy Dec. 29 and Jan. 12 (LM). While small groups of Red Crossbills were seen regularly, particularly at Rimouski (*fide* DRu) and in the Saguenay/L. Saint-Jean area (*fide* CC), White-winged Crossbills went almost unreported. After their arrival in the fall, Com. Redpolls continued abundant in s.w. Quebec but numbers were termed average or low elsewhere. The Pine Siskin population has apparently returned to normal levels following 2 exceptionally good years. Well-reported in extreme s. Quebec were Am. Goldfinches, but Evening Grosbeaks were sparsely distributed.

EXOTICS — A Ringed Turtle-Dove was reportedly seen among a flock of 82 Mourning Doves at Joliette Jan. 2 (no details—GBo, IB). A Great Tit (*Parus major*) visited a Montreal feeder in the company of Black-capped Chickadees Dec. 4–Jan. 27 (RWM, SMM).

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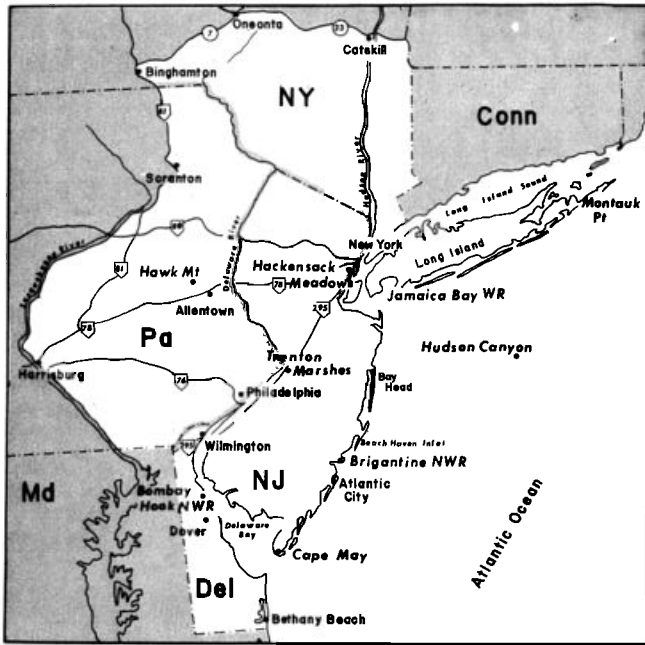
HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION

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

The winter of 1985–1986 marked a return to more normal temperatures compared to last year's warm December and February. Except for a cold spell in mid-December, which apparently eliminated many of the half-hardy species often found on Christmas Bird Counts, the thermometer readings averaged near the expected. It was a comparatively snow-free winter over most of the Region except the higher inland portions. December was very dry, while most of the precipitation in January fell as rain. February brought the only significant snowfalls to the lower elevations.

Excellent concentrations of raptors were a highlight of the season, along with a good variety of rarities, especially thrushes, from the north and the west. A minor invasion of northern finches, mainly Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, and Evening Grosbeak, brought interesting birding to some areas, but these visitors were sporadic and the anticipated massive incursion never materialized. Alcids were practically nonexistent and the rarer gulls were unusually scarce, although one of the rarest put in two appearances in New Jersey.

ABBREVIATIONS — Bombay Hook = Bombay Hook Nat'l Wildlife Ref., near Smyrna, Del.; Brig = Brigantine Unit, Edwin B. Forsythe Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Atlantic Co., N.J.; C.B.C. = Christmas Bird Count. Place names in italics are counties.



LOONS THROUGH IBISES—Loons were decidedly scarce along the coast this winter, perhaps owing to the colder weather; inland, a Red-throated Loon at 2 sites in Mercer, N.J., in early December was unusual. Red-necked Grebe numbers were not high, but the birds seen were widely distributed, mainly during the first month of the season. They included five on Long Island and one on Staten Island, N.Y.; six in New Jersey, including three at different inland locations, and three in e. Pennsylvania. An Eared Grebe was at Barnegat Light, N.J., Dec. 1 (JDo) and another was at Sandy Hook for the 2nd year in a row, this time making the C.B.C. on Dec. 21. Also recurring for a 2nd winter at the same locale was a W. Grebe at Ditch Plains, Montauk, N.Y.; first reported Dec. 5, it was last seen Feb. 17 (fide FF, TWB).

The Am. White Pelican noted in the fall at Brig was last seen Dec. 1, but what was probably the same bird reappeared there Jan. 6–7; another (or perhaps the same) was seen over Cape May Jan. 6 (K. Seager). A Great Cormorant at Rockland Lake Landing, Rockland, N.Y., Dec. 24 furnished a good local record (P. Derven), while six wintered along the Delaware R. off Riverton, N.J., where they have become an annual feature (H. Fennimore, m.ob.). The most remarkable member of the order Pelecaniformes was an ad. ♂ **Magnificent Frigatebird** reported flying over Staten Island on the extraordinary date of Jan. 12 (H. Richard).

Hérons (except for Great Blue) and egrets were scarce after the mid-December cold spell, and only a few were found on coastal C.B.C.s. Inland, a Glossy Ibis was at Assunpink Dec. 12 (J. Hawk) and a Great Egret was in Princeton Dec. 22. A Snowy Egret at Lido Beach, Long Island, Feb. 1, probably wintered, but a Tricolored Heron at Bombay Hook Feb. 26 was more likely an early returning migrant (APE, JSw).

WATERFOWL—The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwinter Waterfowl Survey, conducted during the 2nd week of January, found about 550,000 ducks and geese in the Region, 20% fewer than last year, but still well above the ten-year average. Most of the decline from the previous winter was due to the departure, just prior to the survey, of many scaup and Brant for warmer weather to the south. For the Atlantic Flyway as a whole, waterfowl numbers were down 5% from 1985, not a significant change. The tally of Brant decreased a whopping 25%, however; this may simply reflect the variability of the censusing method, which occasionally misses large concentrations, but certainly bears scrutiny for next year.

The **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** discovered at Cape May in November remained until Dec. 12. At least six Greater White-fronted Geese were found around the Region, up slightly from last year. They included an adult in Bucks, Pa., which wandered widely in December and early January; an immature at Muddy Run, Lancaster, Pa., Jan. 11–Feb. 1 (DHe, m.ob.); an adult near Princeton from Dec. 22 on (m.ob.); an immature at Bombay Hook Jan. 12–Feb. 6 (m.ob.); and two birds at Sylvan Lake, Dutchess, N.Y., Dec. 27–Feb. 12, for what has become an annual visit (A. Jones et al.).

Although the Snow Geese departed from Brig with the arrival of the cold weather, a spectacular 65,000 wintered at Bombay Hook. The Ross' Goose at Brig was last reported Dec. 7 (CS), while the one at Bombay Hook (found earlier, but not noted in the fall column) was still present Dec. 8 (C. & E. Perry). A Barnacle Goose, apparently an immature, was at Bombay Hook Feb. 6 (H. & B. Cutler et al.). Eurasian Wigeon continue to be scarce compared to former times; this winter there were only nine reports, six from Long Island and Westchester County and three in New Jersey.

A ♂ Tufted Duck again wintered (4th year in a row) on the Central Park Reservoir in New York City, but another drake at Lake Silkworm, Luzerne, Pa., Dec. 1–15 was new for that area (D. Bird, m.ob.). It was a banner year for eiders at Montauk, although they were not overly common farther south. The Montauk C.B.C. tallied 114 Com. Eiders, while a waterfowl census Jan. 11 found 89 (fide JR); at least 30 were still present Jan. 30 (PG). Interestingly, the Midwinter Waterfowl Survey found none. To the s., two females at Stone Harbor Feb. 9 were the only ones reported. King Eiders were more widespread; in addition to 25 on the Montauk C.B.C., there were three at Jones Inlet, Long I., in early January. In New Jersey, there were up to eight at Barnegat Inlet, two at Sandy Hook, and four at Cape May, while a maximum of five wintered at Indian River Inlet, Del.; more unusual was a female at Broadkill Beach, Del., on the bayshore Feb. 16 (P. Pisano, B. Holland). Harlequin Ducks were not especially plentiful, with just four at Montauk, another four at Orient Pt., Long I., one at Jones Inlet, and up to four at Barnegat Light.

Two drake Barrow's Goldeneyes were reported, one at Orient Pt., Jan. 11 (R. Willott) and another at Montauk Feb. 14 (JMc, E. Wilson), but the Shark River, N.J., bird again failed to appear. The Midwinter Waterfowl Survey found 9800 Ruddy Ducks on the Delaware R. near Philadelphia, continuing the slow improvement in the numbers of this formerly-abundant species.

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS—The Black Vulture increase is gradually spreading throughout the Region; a count of 26 at Winterthur Forest, Wilmington, Del., Jan. 9 was the highest count ever for the state (WJW), while a tally of 12 at Summeytown, Montgomery, Pa., Dec. 22 was a new high for that part of s.e. Pennsylvania (GLF, GAF). The Princeton roost again had a peak of 71, while many others were reported from Hunterdon, Warren, and Salem in New Jersey. Despite the colder weather, Turkey Vultures wintered in large numbers from Princeton s., and several were seen in Orange and Dutchess, N.Y., during January.

Bald Eagles again wintered in good numbers, with over 100 reported around the Region. The Sullivan-Ulster, N.Y., reservoirs had the highest concentration (51) as usual, but widespread reports included sightings from all parts of the Region, including several on Long Island. With the exception of Am. Kestrel, most wintering hawks and falcons were found in above-average numbers. This was especially true of accipiters, which were widely reported. Numerous compilers commented on the abundance of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks raiding bird feeders; naturalist Moscattello received about 3 dozen calls from concerned homeowners. At least 10 N. Goshawks were seen in New Jersey, but reports from other parts of the Region were scarce.

Wintering Golden Eagles included one at Rio Reservoir, Sul-

Ivan, N Y , two along the Delaware R in n w New Jersey, six in s New Jersey; an immature near Kempton, Berks, Pa.; another seen by many at Middle Creek W.M.A., Lancaster, Pa.; and one or two at Bombay Hook. Another Golden Eagle was seen on the Wilmington, Del., C.B.C. As noted above, Am. Kestrels were in distressingly low numbers compared to the abundance of other raptors, including Merlins, of which over 3 dozen were found on C.B.C.s throughout the Region. Wintering Merlins included another communal roost at Sandy Hook, Monmouth, N.J., with about five (JDo), and a surprising number of individuals inland, including one that landed on the ice at Squibb Pond, Lawrenceville, N.J., while observers were watching the Greater White-fronted Goose (BMo *et al.*). An ad Peregrine Falcon wintered at Cambell Hall, Orange, N.Y. (E A M.B.C.), while other inland records during January came from Freehold (RD), Somerset (PR), and Medford (KT), all in New Jersey.

Many observers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey commented on the scarcity of Ring-necked Pheasant despite continued stocking. The remaining ad. Sandhill Crane at Miller Place (Mt Sinai Harbor), Long I., was last seen Dec. 5 (JR).

The increasing Am. Oystercatcher wintered at several spots in the Region. Up to 21 were at Shinnecock Bay, L.I., in January and February (JR, PG *et al.*), three were present all season at Dead Horse Bay, Brooklyn (R. Clark), and at least 35 stayed around Nummy Island, Cape May, N.J. (DW). Six Am. Avocets were still at Bombay Hook Dec. 8, and five were back there as early as Feb. 18 (G. Charles). A Willet at Brig Feb. 20 was unseasonal (PP); less surprising were a Marbled Godwit on the Barnegat, N.J., C.B.C. and another at Jones Beach, L.I., Jan. 11 (AMo). A Red-necked Phalarope on the Delaware R. at Riverton, N.J., Dec. 4 was unusually late (J. Taylor).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Parasitic Jaeger on the Cape May C.B.C. provided the only report of the season. Only two Little Gulls were found, the fewest in many years: an adult was at Pt. Pleasant, N.J., Dec. 2 (JDo) and another was off lower Manhattan Jan. 11 (*vide* TWB). Common Black-headed Gull was reported in more normal numbers, with three on Long Island and eight in New Jersey ranging from Liberty State Park to Goshen on the Delaware Bayshore.

A white-winged gull at Oak Lane Res., Philadelphia, in December, originally identified as an Iceland, proved on closer scrutiny to be an albino (or leucistic) Ring-billed Gull (DAC). A probable Thayer's Gull was photographed in New York City Dec. 28 (L. Pohner), and another was reported without details from the Hackensack Meadowlands of New Jersey (D. & J. Clark). White-winged gulls were generally scarce, a condition also noted farther n., although numbers improved in February. About 2 dozen Iceland and one dozen Glaucous gulls were scattered along the coasts of Long Island and New Jersey.

Lesser Black-backed Gull was again widely reported, with at least seven in s.e. New York and eight in New Jersey. The new hot-spot for the rarer gulls, however, was along the Susquehanna R. in Lancaster, Pa., where thousands of gulls gathered to feed on young gizzard shad from early December to mid-January (RMS). At least five Iceland and two Glaucous were counted among the flock, and on Jan. 11, Schutsky and Lewis found 11 Lesser Black-backed along a 15-mi stretch of the river (RMS, LL).

The non-passerine rarity of the season was **Ivory Gull**; a first-winter Ivory was discovered at Lake Como, Belmar, Monmouth, N.J., on the afternoon of Feb. 10 by Peachey, who was able to obtain distant but identifiable photos; after about 25 minutes the bird flew off and, although other birders were notified, could not be relocated (JP). This was only the 3rd verified record for the state, and the first in 31 years. Remarkably, another first-winter Ivory Gull was found at Liberty State Park, Jersey City, on the morning of Feb. 16 (D. Freiday, E. Anderson). This one was more cooperative as it fed with Ring-billeds and perched on lamp posts for 2 hours, entertaining a birding group from Orange, N.Y., that arrived in time to enjoy

the show. Good photos were obtained to document the record (ph. E. Anderson).

An imm. Com. Tern was at Cape May Dec. 3 (RB), but fewer than usual Forster's Terns were found on C.B.C.s. A Forster's at Mantoloking, N.J., Jan. 9-14 (PP) and another at Barnegat Light Jan. 19 (TH) were the only ones reported after the C.B.C. period. Alcids were very scarce; other than a few Razorbills off Montauk and New Jersey, the only reports were of a Thick-billed Murre at Cape May Jan. 1-2 (*vide* RK) and another at Lawrence, Long I., an unusual location, Feb. 9 & 17 (*vide* TWB).

OWLS THROUGH SHRIKES — Only a handful of Snowy Owls appeared; other than four on Long Island, the only bird was an immature near Newton, Sussex, N.J., that entertained hundreds of birders and curious sightseers from Dec. 19 into early March (FT, m.ob.). Long-eared Owls were spotty, but were reported in local concentrations from numerous places in the Region. Encouraging numbers of Short-eared Owls were found throughout, including many inland reports. Northern Saw-whet Owls, on the other hand, were hard to come by.

Two **Say's Phoebes** were found in e. Pennsylvania; both lingered long enough to be seen by numerous observers. The first was at Middle Creek W.M.A., Dec. 7-24 (Mick Gockley *et al.*) and the 2nd, located on the Hamburg C.B.C., was near Hawk Mt., Dec. 29 to at least Jan. 6 (MB, E. Hoopes, B. Fisher). An apparent Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was discovered at Middle Creek W.M.A., Dec. 15 (EW, D. & T. Garner); photos were sent to experts for confirmation. The **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at Cape May remained until Dec. 8, while a W. Kingbird lingered at the same site until Dec. 17. Other W. Kingbirds were at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Ref., N.Y., to Dec. 5 and at Howell Farm Park, Mercer, N.J., Dec. 8 (G. Wald).

A Carolina Chickadee on the Hamburg C.B.C. and another at an Allentown, Pa., feeder in late December (RW) were well out of range, while Brown-headed Nuthatches were common at the Rehoboth, Del., boundary of their range (*vide* WWF). A Sedge Wren on the Marmora C.B.C. furnished the only Regional record. Among the other wrens, Carolinas were reported in great abundance, while Winter Wren continued to be scarce.

Thrushes put on an outstanding Regional show. A ♂ **Mountain Bluebird** returned to Beltzville Lake, Pa., Dec. 22-Jan. 26, for the 2nd year in a row, and was a highlight of the local C.B.C. (RW *et al.*). Sixteen-year-old beginning birder John Pushcock discovered a bird he could not identify while hiking the Appalachian Trail near Lehigh River Gap, Pa., Jan. 18. Fortunately he was able to obtain photographs, from which he deduced the identity of a **Townsend's Solitaire**, for one of the few records for Pennsylvania (ph. J. Pushcock). Others looked for the bird some weeks later to no avail.

A well-described Swainson's Thrush was a highlight of the Cape May C.B.C., while two different Wood Thrushes from New York included one on the Orient C.B.C. and another at Bronx Park Jan. 11 (*vide* TWB). An immature Varied Thrush was reported feeding with robins along the Garden State Parkway in Ocean, N.J., Dec. 7 (†DF). Many birders commented on the abundance of American Robins—as observer Paul Weirick put it, “this was the winter of the robin.” Among the robins was one of the more remarkable finds of the season, a bird in a Bryn Mawr, Pa., yard, Feb. 13. It was described in detail over the phone to Regional Editor Dave Cutler by novice birder Darryl Cutler, who had no idea what the robin-like visitor was. The description and the circumstances of the account leave little doubt that the bird was a Fieldfare. What was possibly the same bird was seen on 2 subsequent occasions by another birder, who failed to obtain satisfactory views. Despite much searching by others, the record could not be confirmed.

Five **Bohemian Waxwings** flew over the Cape May hawk watch Dec. 5 (FN). Northern Shrikes were a bit above average, with at least nine in s. New York and Long Island, and four in New Jersey. One at Cape Henlopen, Del., Feb. 9-22, furnished only the 4th state record (T. White, B & SF, WWF *et al.*). Six Loggerhead Shrikes were reported, three each from New Jersey

and Delaware. At least two of them wintered, one at Assunpink W.M.A., N.J., and the other near Leipsic, Del.

WARBLERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — Few warblers were detected this season, presumably owing to the colder weather, but there were a few noteworthy finds. In addition to a small scattering of Orange-crowned Warblers, there were single Nashville Warblers on the Bronx and Montauk C.B.C.s, and a wintering ad. male at Princeton Feb. 22–28 (RBl). The previously-reported ♂ Summer Tanager at Medford Twp., Burlington, N.J., completed its 2nd winter at the same feeder (E. Woodford, m.ob.). A ♀ W. Tanager was at Croton Point, Westchester, N.Y., Dec. 7–14 (J. Askildsen et al.), and a male was in Villas, Cape May, N.J., Feb. 3, but could not be located thereafter (JDo, D. Schepis).

Three ♀ Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were an above-normal tally; one was on the Walnut Valley, N.J., C.B.C., a 2nd was at an Easton, Pa., feeder Dec. 30 (DD), and the last was at Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx, N.Y., Jan. 5 (fide TWB). A ♂ **Black-headed Grosbeak** wintered at the Specks' feeder in Wilmington, Del., for only the 2nd state record. It gradually assumed ad. ♂ plumage and was well-photographed (E & SS, m.ob.). Dickcissels were reported from Red Lion Circle, Burlington, N.J., Dec. 22–Jan. 1 (KT), and from Kendall, Middlesex, N.J., during February (fide C. Leck).

A Clay-colored Sparrow was near Media, Pa., from just before Christmas to at least Jan. 4 (fide FH, v.o.). A Vesper Sparrow wintering at Alpha, Warren, N.J., furnished the only post-C.B.C. report (JE), while a Lark Sparrow on the Raritan Estuary, N.J., C.B.C. was a solo for the season. A Grasshopper Sparrow photographed at Layton, Sussex, N.J., Feb. 6 represented one of the few winter records for this species (T. Koebel et al.).

Two different **Harris' Sparrows** were highlights of the season. One spent the entire winter from Dec. 6 at the Frech's feeder in Lewes, Del., where it was seen by most of the active birders in the state. Another was discovered in a shrubby area near Flanders, Morris, N.J., during a winter bird survey Jan. 19; it lingered into March and was seen by hundreds of birders from New Jersey and surrounding states (JDe, EP, m.ob, ph, SLf). Snow Buntings were present in excellent numbers in Dutchess, N.Y. (R.T.W.B.C.), but were harder to find farther south. In contrast to last winter, Lapland Longspurs were



Harris' Sparrow at Flanders, N.J., Feb. 2, 1986. Photo/Serge Lafrance.

scarce, with only a few scattered reports as far s. as Bombay Hook, where two were present Feb. 8 (MVB, GKH, J. Russell).

Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds appeared at a Penns Grove, Salem, N.J., feeder after a snowstorm Feb. 10 (fide JH); this was the 2nd winter in a row this feeder has attracted these blackbirds. Two ♂ Brewer's Blackbirds were described in detail from Ross' Corner, Sussex, N.J., Feb. 1, only one-quarter mi from the wintering Snowy Owl (fDF). Only a few N. Orioles were found after the C.B.C. season (when there were numerous reports), but an imm. male of the Bullock's race visited a Summit, N.J., feeder during January (fide WJB).

FINCHES — This season produced the best winter finch flight since 1981–1982, although it still failed to measure up to expectations. Pine Grosbeak was widely distributed, with many reports of small flocks starting in Dutchess, N.Y., in early December and spreading into the higher parts of n. New Jersey and e. Pennsylvania by the end of the month. One female or immature even reached Port Elizabeth, Cumberland, N.J., near the Delaware Bayshore, Dec. 23 (RB). Red Crossbills were much rarer, with about 8 reports of small flocks (two to 25) from Long Island and the New York City area, a similar number from New Jersey as far s. as Monmouth, and one flock of six in Wilmington, Del., Feb. 6 (J. Citron). White-winged Crossbills were scarcer still, with only 3 reports from New York, 4 from New Jersey, and a male at a Philadelphia feeder in late December (DC).

Although there were a few early reports, Com. Redpolls began to arrive in numbers in mid-January. Thereafter they were widespread, often in large flocks, as far s. as Philadelphia and c. New Jersey; individual flocks of 500+ at Warwick, Orange (DM), and Red Hill, Dutchess (R.T.W.B.C.), both in New York, were impressive. Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks were common and widespread in December, but thinned out considerably later in the season.

EXOTICS — A Monk Parakeet was in Phillipsburg, N.J., Dec. 2 (JE). A Eur. Goldfinch wintered at feeders in Hellertown, Northampton, Pa. (D. & E. Mease, m.ob.), and another visited a Flemington, Hunterdon, N.J., feeder (R. Randolph).

CORRIGENDA — The comment in the Changing Seasons column for Summer 1985 (AB 39:883) on the status of Cliff Swallow in New Jersey and Delaware, should refer to the Delaware Valley of c. New Jersey and e. Pennsylvania. Cliff Swallow does not breed in Delaware. The reference to Boat-tailed Grackles at Tinicum Nat'l Recreation Center, Philadelphia, in the Autumn report (AB 40:90) was in error; the birds were actually seen in coastal New Jersey.

OBSERVERS (Subregional compilers in boldface) — **Peter Bacinski** (PBa) (coastal NJ): 511 Prospect Place, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071), Robert Barber, M. V. Barnhill, Paul Bernath (PBe), **Irving Black** (n.e. NJ): Eagle Rock Village, Bldg. 26, Apt. 8B, Budd Lake, NJ 07828), Mark Blauer, **R. J. Blicharz** (n.c. NJ): 827 Pennsylvania Ave., Trenton, NJ 08638), Jim Brett, P. A. Buckley, **T. W. Burke** (s.e. NY): 234 Highland Ave., Rye, NY 10580), Dan Cristol, **R. F. Deed** (Rockland, NY): 50 Clinton Ave., Nyack, NY 10960), John DeMarrais (JDe), Dave DeReamus, Rich Ditch, Jim Dowdell (JDo), Peter Dunne, John Ebner, **A. P. Ednie** (New Castle and Kent, DE: 21 N. Wells Ave., Glenolden, PA 19036), Fran File, Bill & Sally Fintel, G. A. Franchois, **W. W. Frech** (Sussex, DE: Carr. Rt. 3, Box 1144, Lewes, DE 19958), G. L. Freed, David Freeland, Paul Gillen, Laurie Goodrich, Al Guarente, Jerry Haag, Frank & Barb Haas, Tom Halliwell, **Greg Hanisek** (n.w. NJ): RD 3, Box 263, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865), David Harrison, Dorothy Hartmann, Dan Heathcote (DHe), Otto Heck, G. K. Hess, Rich Kane, D. E. Kunkle, Serge LaFrance, R. J. Laskowski, S. R. Lawrence, Larry Lewis, Jerry McConville, E. A. Mearns Bird Club, **J. K. Meritt** (s.w. NJ): 809 Saratoga Terrace, Turnersville, NJ 08012), August Mirabella, Arthur Morris (AMo), **B. L. Morris** (e. PA: 825 Muhlenberg St., Al-

lentown, PA 18104), Brian Moscatello, Bill & Naomi Murphy, Dennis Murphy, Frank Nicoletti, Ed Patten, Jack Peachey, Peter Plage, **William Reid** (n.e. PA: 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702), Paul Rodewald, John Ruscica, R. M. Schutsky, Jana Skolnicki, Esther & Stan Speck, Clay & Pat Sutton, J. F. Swertinski, Fred Tetlow, Ken Tischner, **J. P. Tramontano** (Orange & Sullivan, NY: Orange

Co. Community College, Middletown, NY 10940), David Ward, **R. T. Waterman Bird Club** (Dutchess, NY), W. J. Wayne, Rick Wiltraut, Eric Witmer.—**WILLIAM J. BOYLE, JR., 13A Kensington Rd., Chatham, NJ 07928; ROBERT O. PAXTON, 460 Riverside Dr., Apt. 72, New York, NY 10027; and DAVID A. CUTLER, 1110 Rock Creek Dr., Wyncote, PA 19095.**

MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Henry T. Armistead

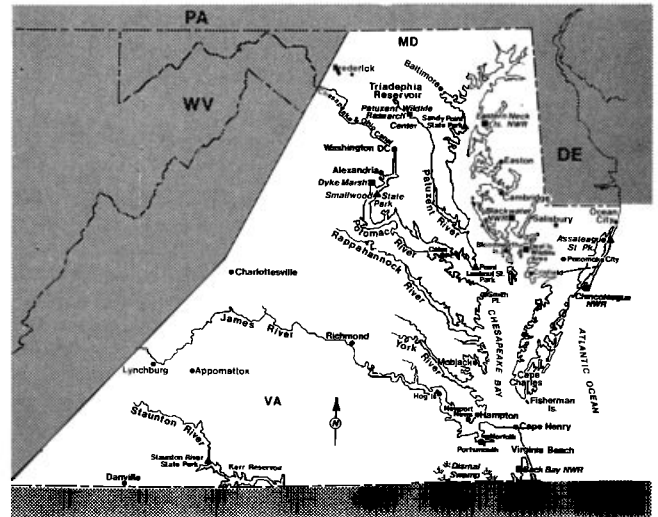
This was a moderate winter with limited periods of cold, none of which was extreme, and little snow. Precipitation was slight and spring began with conditions verging on a mild drought for that time of year. Deviation from normal of temperature: December, -2.5°F ., January -0.1° ; of precipitation: December, -2.5 in., January -0.7 in. February weather sheets not received in time, but it was a mild, dry month. Northern finches and other irruptive northerly species were present in disappointing numbers. But it was a good winter for pelicans, cormorants, King Eider, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Iceland Gull, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, and House Finch. Rarities were nearly nil.

In December birders throughout the Region were shocked to hear that Fred Scott, the previous Regional Editor for 23 years, suffered a stroke. Fred is presently undergoing a promising rehabilitation and all of us wish him the best.

ABBREVIATIONS — Back Bay = Back Bay Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Va.; Balt. = Baltimore, Md.; the Bay = Chesapeake Bay; C.B.B.T. = Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, Va.; Chinc. = Chincoteague area, Va.; Craney = Craney I. disposal area, Portsmouth, Va.; D.C. = Washington, D.C.; Fish. I. = Fisherman I. Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Va.; Susq. = the lower Susquehanna R., Harford-Cecil counties, Md. Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS THROUGH FLAMINGO — The only Red-throated Loon report away from the sea was of one at Chesapeake Beach, Calvert, Md., Dec. 12 (BM). Three latish Com. Loons were at Piney Run Park, Carroll, Md., Dec. 15 (RFR), notable for an interior and Piedmont area. Numbers of Horned Grebes were up slightly in some areas but still way below what they were 10 years ago (v.o.). Always scarce here, a Red-necked Grebe was at Alexandria, Va., Feb. 15 to March, often seen at extremely close range (RAA, EMW, DFA *et al.*), while others were at such surprising locations as the Kerr Res., Va., Jan. 25 (BP) and Upper Marlboro, Prince Georges, Md., Dec. 3 (JLS). Out from Ocean City, Md., an extraordinary pelagic trip Feb. 8 turned up six N. Fulmars, a Manx Shearwater, and many hundreds of N. Gannets (HLW, EB, m.ob.). Gannets are scarce but regular on the Bay, especially in March, April, and November, so seven seen from Pt. Lookout, St. Mary's, Md., Dec. 7 were certainly worth mention (AH) as was one there Feb. 2 (MO).

American White Pelicans are almost taken for granted but really should not be; singles were seen in the Lynnhaven Inlet and nearby L. Rudee areas of Virginia Beach in late February (MRB, BP, TRW, DFA), while another (?) was present at Chinc., Feb. 8–16 (JHB). For apparently the first time ever, Brown Pelicans overwintered in the Virginia Capes area, with four immatures at Fish. I., Jan. 25 (HTA) and Feb. 21 (LH), and 16 were seen from C.B.B.T., Jan. 5 (PB, DP, CF). Two were at Back Bay



Jan. 5 (*fide* DD) and four on Feb. 22 (MRB, BP), with one nearby at Virginia Beach Dec. 24 (TRW). Up the Bay a short way from the capes were 17 at New Point I., Mathews, Va., Dec. 1 (JBB). The change in the status of this great bird from that of an occasional summer visitor to that of close to a permanent resident at the mouth of the Bay, and common from June through October, is most heartening.

Great Cormorant was another piscivore reaching near-optimal numbers here with a high of 22 along the C.B.B.T., Dec. 31 (DCr, GLA, HTA *et al.*), 18 there Jan. 25 (HTA), 19 in Lower Machodoc Creek off the lower Potomac R., Westmoreland, Va., Feb. 3 (JEJ), and smaller numbers at several other favored spots such as Cape Henry, Craney, Pt. Lookout, etc. (TRW, EMW, AH). By coincidence Johnson has noted each year 1984–1986 on Feb. 16 that ad. birds at Machodoc had already developed the white flank patches. Unusual was one seen at Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Md., Jan. 1 (JLS). Double-crested Cormorants wintered in optimal numbers around the s. mouth of the Bay with totals such as 1000 in the James R. at Newport News Feb. 10 (GW), 600 at Craney Feb. 11 (TRW), 250 at Norfolk Jan. 13 (DFA), and hundreds at Cape Henry Jan. 18 (TRW). Farther up the Bay in Maryland they lingered late and a few were even seen in mid-winter: six in St. Mary's, Dec. 10 (EMW), 20 at Hawkins Pt., Anne Arundel, Md., Dec. 7 (RFR, EB), and one all the way up on the lower Susq., Feb. 2 (SR, *fide* EB).

Exceptional were two Least Bitterns flushed by dogs at Back Bay Dec. 30 (NB, *fide* BP), for one of the few Regional winter records. At Susq., the many dead or injured fish below Conowingo Dam as usual attracted many herons and gulls such as 170 Great Blue Herons Jan. 11 and 27 Black-crowned Night-Herons Dec. 28 (RFR); 59 Great Blues at Owl Creek, Virginia Beach, were a fine count for there Feb. 15 (TRW). Unique was a Cattle Egret at Theodore Roosevelt I., D.C., Jan. 4 (RH). A latish Glossy Ibis was at Chinc., Dec. 23 (JHB) but other than

on the C.B.C.s (q.v.), herons and their allies were hardly seen at all. A (the?) flamingo (sp.) was seen again at both Craney and Chinc. during December (TRW, CPW).

WATERFOWL — In the D.C. area on the Potomac R., the recent resurgence of submerged aquatic vegetation, including exotic *Hydrilla*, continued to attract unusual numbers of waterfowl, shorebirds, and coots. Accompanied by increasing water clarity and improved fishing, *Hydrilla verticillata* seems also to have inspired some biopolitical hysteria with the Army Corps of Engineers gearing up for eradication programs and one local politician intoning “send the dastardly stuff to Libya,” apparently out of unreasonable fears that it will clog the entire estuary and limit boat traffic. J. M. Abbott has written a detailed summary of its positive effects on birdlife that ends by saying: “I say keep the marina and boat owners happy by mechanically raking/mowing lanes from marinas to open water . . . Keep the fish, fisherman, birds, and birders happy by leaving the rest of the SAV beds alone.” Except for those attracted by this Potomac revival there was little other encouraging news about the dabblers and five pochard species.

Single Greater White-fronted Geese were seen at Flourdeu 100 Plantation near Surry, Va., Jan. 18 (DB, fide TK) and at Sandy Point S.P., Md., Jan. 5 (BC, HLW). Field-feeding Snow Geese continued to throng the upper E. Shore of Maryland with 12,000 at Martinak S.P., Caroline, Jan. 15 (LTS) and 10,000 at Price, Queen Annes, Jan. 9 (JMA). The top “Blue Goose” tally was of 500 at Curles Neck, Henrico, Va., Feb. 2 (PB, BRz, JD). At Cambridge, Md., a Barnacle Goose was seen off and on Jan. 2–Feb. 21 (DM, JGR, HN et al.). Canada Geese continue to increase on the Maryland Piedmont as shown by counts of 4200 at Piney Run Feb. 2 (RFR) and 2600 at Gaithersburg Feb. 15 (MO).

At Druid L. in Balt., Ringler found 55 Wood Ducks Jan. 14, and noted that without the zoo to feed them there would be none there in winter. At Hurlock, Dorchester, Md., 90 N. Shovelers Feb. 9 (RFR) were a fine count for a species which is never truly abundant anywhere in this state. Top *Hydrilla*-associated tallies, all excellent for the D.C. area, were 68 Gadwalls Jan. 4 (DFA), 2000 Canvasbacks Jan. 23 (JMA), and 98 Redheads Jan. 4 (DFA), these all seen on the Potomac from Virginia vantage points. Eurasian Wigeon were at 4 sites, a better-than-usual showing, all singles in Virginia: Hog I., Surry, in mid-February (DS), Sunken Meadows Pond, Surry, Jan. 1–18 (TK, BS et al.), Lynnhaven Inlet Feb. 22 (MRB, BP), and Fish. I., December to February (DFA). At Deal I., 1400 Am. Wigeon were estimated Dec. 1 (GLA, HTA).

Canvasback concentrations seen were 2500 with 5000 Lesser Scaup at Balt., Feb. 22 (RFR), 3000 at Kent I., Feb. 23 (RFR), and 1500 at Cambridge Jan. 15 (JGR). King Eiders were at Ocean



King Eider in flight at Ocean City, Md., Dec. 14, 1985. Photo/Michael O'Brien.



King Eiders at Ocean City, Md., Jan. 25, 1986. Photo/Michael O'Brien.

City throughout the period with nine there at least Jan. 18–Feb. 9 (BC, MO, RFR, GG), and Wolfe saw two at Rudee Inlet, Va., Dec. 7. Almost unprecedented for the Maryland part of the Bay was a Harlequin Duck at Chesapeake Beach, Calvert, Dec. 7–12 (RAA, JLS et al., ph.) but one-two on C.B.B.T. throughout were unsurprising (MRB, BP, HTA, TK). Top merganser counts (all in Virginia) were 80 Hoodeds at Stumpy L., Virginia Beach, Jan. 4 (GW), 257 Commons at Mason Neck N.W.R., Jan. 4 (EMW) and 202 at Curles Neck Feb. 2 (PB, BRz, JD), and for Red-breasteds, 10,000 off Back Bay Feb. 22 (BP, MRB), 6600 there Feb. 26 (DFA), and 1800 at Fish. I. Feb. 23 (HTA et al.), indicating a massive flight of this latter species in late February. The biggest Ruddy Duck concentration reported was of 8000 at Brandon Shores, Anne Arundel, Md., Dec. 7 (RFR). Naturally higher counts for almost all these waterfowl species were achieved on C.B.C.s.

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES — As usual one or two Ospreys turned up prematurely in February with singles at Hog I., Surry, Feb. 22 (TB, fide TK) and Fish. I., Feb. 23 (DCr, HTA, GLA et al.). Bald Eagles were present in excellent numbers with up to seven adults and 16 immatures along the Susq. plus the first known occupied nest there since the 1960s (RMS). Optimal numbers were also seen along the Potomac R., s. of D.C. (JMA), in the Crisfield, Md., area (CRV), in Kent, Md. (JG), and along the Rappahannock R. in Virginia, where Byrd counted 109 Jan. 4, eclipsing his previous high there of 50. Many other areas that often report only one to three birds had counts of eight to 10 (v.o.). At Blackwater N.W.R., 15 were in sight simultaneously Feb. 15, two of these chasing a pair of otters across the ice (HTA). Nests away from tidewater are always rare, so one on the Potomac at Great Falls 8 mi n.w. of D.C. attracted much comment (RAA, JAG et al.).

The season's star raptor was the Sharp-shinned Hawk, present in record-breaking numbers for winter, especially in December (v.o.). Rough-legged Hawks were in moderate numbers. Always semi-rare in s. Virginia, one at Curles Neck Feb. 16 was worth noting (BP). Single Golden Eagles were s. of Salisbury, Md., Feb. 14 (CRV) and along the Susq., mid-November to Jan. 1 (RMS), and an immature was banded by Schwab at Dismal Swamp N.W.R., Va., Feb. 9 (ph.).

Two Com. Moorhens lingered late at Brandon Shores, Md., Dec. 7 (RFR, EB) in company with 135 Am. Coots. The next day 85 coots were at Piney Run Park, Md., where they overwintered, 17 still being found there Feb. 2 (RFR), unusual for the Piedmont. One of the star rarities for the season was a Sandhill Crane seen at Wallops I., Va., Dec. 4–early January (CRV et al., ph.), an area with at least 2 other sightings in recent years.

SHOREBIRDS — As usual waders were under-reported during the winter, even in the prime area of the Virginia E.

Shore Good winter numbers from Ocean City included 163 Black-bellied Plovers and 91 Ruddy Turnstones Jan. 25, 41 Am Oystercatchers Feb. 9, and a Willet Dec. 14 (all by MO). Super for the Maryland part of the Bay were sightings of Purple Sandpiper singles from 3 counties: at Chesapeake Beach, Calvert, Dec. 7-10 (JLS), Pt. Lookout, St. Mary's, Dec. 26 (MO), and Love Pt., Queen Annes, Feb. 5 (JG). Other Maryland waders included the first winter records for Balt. of Greater Yellowlegs Dec. 29 and Feb. 16 & 22 (RFR), a Sanderling at Chesapeake Beach Feb. 9 (JLS), a very late Least Sandpiper at Liberty Res., w. of Balt., Dec. 8 (RFR), and 350 Dunlins at Hooper's I., Dorchester, Feb. 15 (HTA). The only Am. Avocets were two at Craney Dec. 12 (TRW), where what was superior shorebird and dabbler habitat only a few years ago continues to deteriorate.

A Semipalmated Plover at Chinc., Feb. 1, was unique (WDS). Thirteen Greater Yellowlegs at Hog I., Surry, Jan. 22 made a fine mid-winter tally (PB). Least Sandpipers may have overwintered again near Hopewell with one at Upper Brandon, Prince George, Va., Jan. 28 (WE, *vide* PB).

The best shorebird concentrations were as usual on the Virginia E. Shore including these birds at Chinc., Dec. 29: 10 Marbled Godwits, 20 Willets, 467 Am. Oystercatchers, 130 W. Sandpipers, and 18 Long-billed Dowitchers (CPW *et al.*), at the n. end of the Eastern Shore. In the midway point, e. of Accomac, on Dec. 22, 10 Marbled Godwits, 40 Willets, and 17 Short-billed Dowitchers were seen (KT *et al.*). At the s. end of this Virginia peninsula, visits were made to the great mudflats at Thoms Creek e. of Mockhorn I. in the Cape Charles area (HTA, LH, GLA, DCr *et al.*). These are summarized in the table below. This was the first time these flats had been censused through the winter months, although they have been visited every December since 1965 as part of the local C.B.C., and on Feb. 25, 1984. The area is remote and can be reached only by boat. What this year's counts established was that Marbled Godwits, Whimbrels, and Willets apparently do overwinter in numbers comparable to those in late December. This important area has been birded often in late December as well as from late August to early October. But what happens there the rest of the year is unknown. The Thoms Creek flats deserve to be protected and remain undisturbed, as do other important feeding and resting areas such as the flats n.e. of Folly Creek out from Accomac. A massive cloud of what could only have been Dunlins was easily visible over Thoms Creek Mar. 15, seen all the way from the e. end of Fish. I. through 10x binoculars, a distance of 5.75 mi (HTA). The numbers of the larger shorebird species seen here as shown in Table 1 surpass those of most areas n. of Florida on the East Coast. This was a rather mild winter. What waders would overwinter during a severe one pique the imagination.

Table 1. Mockhorn Island, Virginia, Winter Shorebird Counts for Selected Species, December-March 1985-1986 and Feb. 25, 1984

Species	Dec. 30	Jan. 26	Feb. 22	Mar. 16	Feb. 25, 1984
Black-bellied Plover	300	0	260	510	100
Willet	150	85	115	115	75
Whimbrel	6	3	3	3	0
Long-billed Curlew	1	0	0	0	0
Marbled Godwit	43	43	36	61	59
Red Knot	3	0	0	0	0
Western Sandpiper	25	13	195	8	0
Dunlin	4500	1200	5000	8100	1200
dowitcher (sp)	20	0	33	10	0

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS — Maryland birders again ran off with the gull honors, but then they seem to have more D.C.-Balt. area landfills to choose from. Ringler's comments are especially germane: "Gulls seem to have made another quantum increase and we are seeing this by birds going farther inland in greater numbers to feed. In fact I suspect they even roost on the inland reservoirs." At Susq., a first-winter Thayer's Gull was studied Jan. 15 (RFR, EB) and others were at Reichs Ford landfill, Frederick, Jan. 25 and Feb. 17 (RFR, PO). What were probably the same birds were at Susq., Jan. 1 and Reichs Ford Jan. 11 (PO). Iceland Gulls, which had an above-average winter here, peaked at Susq. with four Jan. 10 (RMS). Other singles were seen at Alpha Ridge landfill, Howard, Piney Run Park, Triadelphia Res. n. of D.C. (HM), Balt., and Reichs Ford (RFR, HLW, EB, GG, AH, MO *et al.*). Up to five Lesser Black-backed Gulls were on the Susq. (EB), with others at Balt. (RFR), Hoods Mill, Carroll (RFR), Schoolhouse Pond, Prince Georges (JLS), Easton (HTA), w. of Ocean City (v.o.), and at Liberty Res. (HM). Single Glaucous Gulls were at Piney Run and Reichs Ford (RFR), Chesapeake Beach (JLS), and Susq. (GG, MO). At Piney Run 15 Great Black-backed Gulls Feb. 2 (RFR) were impressive for the Piedmont interior. Rounding off the fancy gulls was an apparent Great Black-backed x Herring ad. hybrid at Alpha Ridge Feb. 1 (RFR, EB, HLW), the 4th such seen by RFR in Maryland. Most of the above Maryland gulls were seen in January and February.

An ad. Little Gull was at Ocean City Dec. 14 (PO, MO, BA). An Iceland Gull was at C.B.B.T., Feb. 23 (JH, HTA *et al.*), two Lesser Black-backed were at Virginia Beach landfill Feb. 15 (BP), a Glaucous was at Little Creek Dec. 31 (BP, PEM), a hefty total of 456 Great Black-backed was at Arlington Jan. 10 (JMA), and single Black-legged Kittiwakes were at C.B.B.T., Jan. 1 (BP, PEM), and Virginia Beach Feb. 16 (MRB), these all in Virginia. In D.C., a Lesser Black-backed was seen Dec. 30 and 200 Great Black-backed were noted Feb. 16 (DC). Topping off the gull sightings at landfills, hydroelectric complexes, bridge-tunnels, and dumps were 500 Bonaparte's at Back R. sewage treatment plant e. of Balt., Dec. 26 (MO).

Royal Terns lingered, especially notably in Maryland, where singles were at Ocean City Dec. 14 (MO) and, more unusual, at Chesapeake Beach on the Bay Dec. 16 (JRW) while in s.e. Virginia, where they are more to be expected, they were widespread in small numbers in December (v.o.). Three late Forster's Terns were at Chesapeake Beach Dec. 14 (JLS) but one inland at Piney Run Park Dec. 7 was a total surprise (WDS). Small numbers of Black Skimmers apparently overwintered in Virginia Beach where they were seen Jan. 4-Feb. 26 (TRW, DFA), this being the only Regional location where this ever seems to happen. A real rarity was a murre (sp.) seen from C.B.B.T., Dec. 31 (DCr, GD, PGD, HTA *et al.*). Out from Ocean City the superlative pelagic trip of Feb. 8 found a Franklin's Gull, an Iceland Gull, hundreds of kittiwakes, 76 Razorbills, three Dovekies, 13 Atlantic Puffins and 47 large unidentified alcids (HLW, m.ob.).

OWLS THROUGH SHRIKES — The only Long-eared Owl report was from n. Harford, Md., seen by Blom Feb. 10, and N. Saw-whet Owls were found only at Assateague I., Md., Dec. 27 (HLW) and McKee-Beshers W.M.A., Md., Dec. 31 (RAA). Short-eared Owls were reported in fairly good numbers with up to nine frequenting the Nokesville-Manassas airport area in Piedmont Virginia late December to early February (RAA, EMW *et al.*) and three at Craney Nov. 30 (*vide* TRW), but it was not an outstanding winter for owls. Woodpecker neglect is a normal symptom of this Region. However, Red-headed were present in good supply, cashing in on last fall's super acorn crop (v.o.); and one of the highlights of the season that drew universal commentary was the abundance of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, such as 61 on the Lynchburg, Va., C.B.C., Dec. 21, where they were seen in all 14 sectors (MM *et al.*) Worthy of note at this late date is the sighting of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in July 1984 in Worcester, Md., n. of Snow

Hill (WAD). This was just received and brings to three the total for that month in this Region (AB 38:1007), which is unprecedented.

The best areas for Horned Larks here seem to be Caroline and Frederick, Md., and Loudoun, Va. In these counties this subtle species can sometimes be seen in the hundreds. Along Rt. 28 near New Design Rd. in Frederick, 1200 were seen Feb. 15, accompanied by three Lapland Longspurs (MO). Without precedent was the presence of N. Rough-winged Swallows, with singles at Piney Run Park Dec. 7 (WDS) and Piscataway Creek near Accokeek Dec. 1–Jan. 4 (PN, WDS, m.ob.). They are not normally seen past the 4th week of October. This was not a Black-capped Chickadee flight year. In spite of many reports as early as August last year, Red-breasted Nuthatches thinned out and were present in small numbers in most places this winter (v.o.). The White-breasted Nuthatch flight, most noticeable in coastal plain areas where they do not breed, was also thin.

Eastern Bluebird numbers continued a recent trend of gains with a record 510 Jan. 5 at the Mathews, Va., C.B.C., the Regional bluebird capitol (MP et al.). Hermit Thrushes were present in very high numbers (RFR, EMW, JE), MO, GG, HTA, RRR), but Am. Robins drew even more comments, and by mid-January they were drawing media coverage (along with the great numbers of Cedar Waxwings) for stripping berries from hollies. In s.w. Balt. at Arbutus 12,200 robins were seen Dec. 8, including a pure white one (RFR). In some spots the influx of robins did not take place until late February (AJF, EB), yet even on many C.B.C.s they were found in above-average numbers (v.o.). Water Pipits were a bit more common than usual, with 300 at Nokesville Dec. 18 and 200 at Virginia Beach Dec. 29 (BPr, fide TK). The best single-observer, non-C.B.C. total for waxwings was 430 in D.C., Dec. 26 by Czaplak. A report of five Loggerhead Shrikes at Lucketts, Loudoun, Va., Dec. 29 was almost startling for this troubled bird (EMW), and one at Craney Dec. 19 was the first ever for Wolfe in 12½ years of birding there.

VIREOS TO HOUSE SPARROW — Wintering Solitary Vireos were spotted by Williamson at Northwest River P., Chesapeake, Va., where there were two Jan. 12, and one was at Cape Henry, Va., Feb. 16. An Orange-crowned Warbler was in Balt., Nov. 24 and Dec. 7 (JRW), for the only non-C.B.C. record. In extreme s. Virginia a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was seen well Dec. 15 at Elm Hill Game Area near Kerr Res. by Davis, for about the 6th state record. Also in the outré warbler league was a feeder-frequenting **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Williamsburg Feb. 12–16, carefully observed as it chased away Pine Warblers (BW), for apparently the first Virginia winter record. As heartening as the first swallows are the reports of when Pine Warblers begin song. This year it was Feb. 23 at Sussex (MRB) and Richmond (PB), with a premature singer Feb. 7 at Harrison L. National Fish Hatchery (PB, LR), all in Virginia. Otherwise it was a bleak winter for unusual warblers in spite of rather benign weather.

As if to demonstrate that not all of the “rose in Spanish Harlem department” consists of gulls at dumps, two Lark Sparrows were present at the Denton, Md., sewage ponds Dec. 24–Feb. 28, apparently an ad. male, given to occasional song, and an imm. female, smaller and less often seen (AJF, EB, RFR, HLW, JGR, MN, m.ob.). Several observers found Fox Sparrows up somewhat, in contrast to their protracted decline for over a decade (RFR, HTA, MO). A Lincoln's Sparrow was well seen at a feeder at Pocomoke City, Md., Feb. 13–14 (D & CB, CRV et al.). In many areas very low numbers of Swamp Sparrows now seem to be the rule for the past few winters as evidenced by only 10 on the D.C. Christmas Bird Count with 107 participants (EMW), 33 at Williamsburg C.B.C., Dec. 22 (BW), and comments by several others. Dark-eyed Juncos occurred in high numbers throughout the Region (v.o.). Lapland Longspur was seen more than expected with seven at Lucketts, Va., Jan. 2 (RAA) and six at Oland Rd., Frederick, Md., Feb. 1 (MO).



Lark Sparrow at the Denton, Md., sewage plant, Feb. 16, 1986. Photo/Michael O'Brien.

Snow Bunting sightings were also good with such as 25 at Craney Dec. 6 (TRW) and 100 at Laurel Grove, St. Mary's, Md., Dec. 21 (RRR). Just received is a Yellow-headed Blackbird record Nov. 9–10, the 2nd for Howard, Md. (HM et al., fide JS). Northern Orioles were seen at 5 localities, a so-so winter for them (v.o.). Purple Finch drew mixed reviews, although most felt there were few. But House Finch continued to be a red tide with increases noted in many locations. Eleven Red Crossbills were seen in Laurel, Md., Feb. 8 by Droege. Pine Siskins increased a bit late in the winter but it was nonetheless a poor flight year for these and other n. finches, with some areas finding fair numbers of birds, but most not. The top Evening Grosbeak tally was of 204 at the Mathews, Va., C.B.C., Jan. 5 (MP et al.). House Sparrows seem to be in decline (JGR, HTA, CRV).

OBSERVERS — D. F. Abbott, J. M. Abbott, Margaret Abbott, R. A. Anderson, G. L. Armistead, Bob Augustine, K. H. Bass, J. B. Bazuin, Paul Bedell, Tom Blair, Erik Blom, M. R. Boatwright, L. D. Bonham, Dana Bradshaw, Ned Brinkley, Doug & Chandra Bruce, J. H. Buckalew, M. A. Byrd, Barry Cooper, Daniel Cristol (DCr), David Czaplak, George Daniels, Ricky Davis, Donna Dewhurst, John Dillard, Bob Dixon, Sam Droege, P. G. DuMont, W. A. Dunson, S. H. Dyke, Wendy Ealding, Bill Ellis, A. J. Fletcher, R. E. Fletcher, Chris Foster, Kent Goldsmith, Greg Gough, J. A. Gregoire, James Gruber, Alex Hammer, Ed Hatch, M. W. Hewitt, Robert Hilton, Lynwood Horner, Julie Hotchkiss, H. C. Irving, J. E. Johnson, Teta Kain, Dennis Kirkwood, E. T. McKnight, P. E. McQuarry, Don Meritt, Myriam Moore, Jack Mozingo, Harvey Mudd, Bill Murphy, Heather Nicklas, Paul Nistico, Mariana Nuttle, Michael O'Brien, Paul O'Brien, Phil Olsen (POs), Brian Patteson, B. Pearce (BPr), Carl Perry, Darrell Peterson, P. A. Pisano, Mary Pulley, J. G. Reese, Sue Ricciardi, R. F. Ringle, C. S. Robbins, Larry Robinson, Barbara Ross, Betsy Roszell (BRz), R. R. Runkles, R. M. Schutsky, Don Schwab, Bill Sheehan, L. T. Short, Jo Solem, J. L. Stasz, W. D. Sumner, P. W. Sykes, Brian Taber, Karen Terwilliger, C. R. Vaughn, D. H. Wallace, Steve Westre, H. L. Wierenga, C. P. Wilds, J. R. Wilkinson, Lew Wilkinson, Bill Williams, Gary Williamson, G. B. Wilmot, E. M. Wilson, T. R. Wolfe, J. D. Wortman, Ben Yokel.—HENRY T. ARMISTEAD, 523 E. Durham St., Philadelphia, PA 19119.



SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.

Winter 1985–1986 was somewhat colder than normal in December, particularly late in the month, but January and February were rather mild and benign. Snow and ice were scarce; all-in-all it was a pleasant winter from the birds' point of view.

This was an exciting winter for many birders, especially those in North Carolina. Not only were a few northern species present, such as alcids and eiders, but there were some notable records of lingering species, particularly warblers, and some pelagic species seldom seen in winter. The major feature was an influx of western birds perhaps unprecedented at this season for the Region. On the negative side, waterfowl numbers were somewhat low in mid-winter, probably owing to both the mild weather and the long-term decline of duck populations. The winter finch flight, which seemed so promising in November, slowed to a crawl this season and was a disappointment to most observers.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Two Red-throated Loons on L. Hartwell near Clemson, S.C., Feb. 16–Mar. 2 (JHay, CW, SG) were very rare for the Piedmont; and at nearby L. Keowee were up to 125 Horned Grebes this season (DM, CW). An albatross (sp.?) was reported by several birders on a pelagic trip off Oregon Inlet, N.C., Dec. 22, but no details were provided. There are just a few sightings of albatrosses from the Region, all at such a long distance from observers that photos or complete and convincing descriptions have yet to be made to establish beyond doubt which species (Black-browed, Yellow-nosed, or both) are involved. This same trip encountered a N. Fulmar, a first for North Carolina in December, as well as a rare-in-winter Greater Shearwater, and several Manx Shearwaters (DL, WI et al.). Perhaps the most significant pelagic record for the season was Lee's sighting of five+ **Audubon's Shearwaters** off Oregon Inlet in the dead of winter (Jan. 22); this was the state's first winter record. Also apparently new to that state's winter birdlist were Wilson's Storm-Petrels and Leach's Storm-Petrels, although individuals off Oregon Inlet Dec. 5 (DL) might well have been late-lingering migrants.

One of the few Regional winter records for **Masked Booby** was provided by one found dead on Cumberland I., Ga., Feb. 2 (BP, CH). Surprisingly, the only report of **Am. White Pelican** was of one at Hatteras Inlet, N.C., Dec. 26 (HL, RD et al.), likely a repeater from a previous winter. Great Cormorants were more numerous than ever before, although all were limited to the coast of North Carolina and n. South Carolina. A Regional record count was of 12, all adults, at Zeke's I., N.C., Jan. 20 (BB, PBro). Fussell had nine still there Feb. 28 and six more the following day at Wrightsville Beach, N.C. Very late was an imm. **Magnificent Frigatebird** Dec. 1 at Folly Beach, S.C. (C & RT). Quite rare in the Region, especially in winter, was a white morph Great Blue Heron near the N. Santee R., S.C., Jan. 20 (TG). It became the state's first specimen record Feb. 22 (WP, *C.M.). Three Cattle Egrets were seen in January at Knotts I., N.C. (PO, fide JF), as was a Green-backed Heron near Clemson, S.C. (SW).

WATERFOWL — South Carolina reported the only Fulvous Whistling-Ducks; the few birds at Savannah N.W.R. (PN et al.), McClellanville (PN), and Magnolia Gardens near Charleston (SG, WP) this season may have been lingerers from the fall flight. There is no denying that Tundra Swans are increasing every year. This abundance is in stark contrast to the continent-wide decline in populations of most waterfowl species. Mattamuskeet N.W.R., N.C., reported 28,325 on its C.B.C. (fide AB), and there were at least 4 records for Georgia, where the



species is quite rare. A first for n.w. South Carolina was a Greater White-fronted Goose Feb. 23 near Townville (SG, CW), and seven were at Santee N.W.R., S.C., Dec. 28 (RC et al.), where seen almost every winter now. There were several notable Piedmont counts of Snow Geese—15 at Townville, S.C., Feb. 9–16 (CW) and 10 at Peachtree City L., Ga., Dec. 21 (fide TM). Apparently the first report in the Southeast of a Ross' x Snow Goose hybrid was of an individual at Pea I., N.C., during the last one-half of December (HW, CWi, HL, MT, BL). No "pure" Ross' Goose was noted this season.

Single Eur. Wigeons, males of course, were near Beaufort, N.C., Dec. 22 (BH, BBe) and far inland at L. Wallace near Bennettsville, S.C., Feb. 26 (DM). Single Greater Scaups were notable in inland Georgia at Stone Mt., Dec. 8–14 (PB), in Clayton County Dec. 14–Feb. 8 (PB et al.), and at Augusta Jan. 10 (AW). No Harlequin Ducks were found this winter, but both eiders were encountered twice, about par for the season—single Kings at Pea I., Dec. 28 (BL) and Ft. Macon S.P., N.C., Dec. 15–Jan. 9 (JF et al.), an imm. ♂ Common at Folly Beach, S.C., Feb. 15–20 (PN et al.), and a Regional record seven Commons (no ad. males) at Bodie I., N.C., Dec. 28 (DH, NB). Inland scoters, always notable, were a Surf at Falls L., N.C., Dec. 8 (HL) and a White-winged at nearby Jordan L., Jan. 5 (RD, MT). One of the best indicator species of severely cold weather is the Com. Merganser; the peak count of just three attested to the above-normal temperatures in January and February.

HAWKS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Bald Eagle numbers continue to recover, and almost every sizable lake is now visited by an eagle at some time during the year. The best counts, in Piedmont North Carolina, were 10 seen by Brown in early January in an air survey of lakes along the Yadkin and Pee Dee rivers, and nine at Jordan L., Feb. 1 (BW, MW et al.). At many feeders this winter, Sharp-shinned Hawks were unwelcomed pests. Reports of an ad. Swainson's Hawk and a Rough-legged Hawk, both from South Carolina, contained fair details but were not convincing enough for me. I fear that Red-tailed Hawks have been misidentified often as these species in the Southeast. There was only one report of Golden Eagle, at Pungo L., N.C., but it was present for much of the winter (Jan. 1–25—BL, HL, RD). Merlin and Peregrine Falcon numbers seemed near normal, but Am. Kestrels continued their slow decline; and many C.B.C.s are now having difficulty tallying them in double figures.

A lucky birder (SM) flushed a Yellow Rail Dec. 1 at Pea I.,

and Black Rails were tallied on at least 3 coastal North Carolina C.B.C.s.—Bodie-Pea Is. (JF), Morehead City (JF), and Wilmington (MB, GM). The use of tape recorders has shown over the past few winters that Black Rails are permanent residents in that state, with the rails perhaps retaining year-round territories. Always of interest in the Carolinas, two Sandhill Cranes were seen in flight near Conway, S.C., Jan. 22 (ST), and another was flying over U.S. 276 in n. Laurens Co., S.C., Feb. 4 (DM).

A few months ago, the Piping Plover was officially listed as Threatened along the Atlantic Coast by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This designation was made even more appropriate, as numerous coastal birders mentioned that reduced numbers seem to winter on our coast each year. A good count of 30 was made at Cumberland I., Ga., Feb. 2 (CH, BP). Banded Pippings were reported at Tubbs Inlet, N.C. (PJC, JS), Huntington Beach S.P., S.C. (PN), and Hilton Head, S.C. (MC). There were at least 5 reports of Whimbrels, 4 from North Carolina; a few apparently overwinter in each state. Perhaps overwintering was a Long-billed Curlew at Zeke's I., N.C., Jan. 12–20 (KK et al.), the only report for the season. Davis counted 220 Marbled Godwits at this island Jan. 4, a very good winter total. Perhaps because of the mild winter, Least Sandpiper numbers inland were near record levels. Good counts were of 17 at Pineville, N.C., Dec. 28 (DW), 10 near Dublin, Ga., Feb. 22 (TKP), nine at Clemson Jan. 5 (CW), and seven near Fayetteville, N.C., Feb. 3–17 (PJC). Long-billed Dowitchers, seldom seen in winter in s.e. North Carolina, were noted on both the Wilmington (MB, GM) and Southport (RD) C.B.C.s. Apparently a first winter record for South Carolina was provided by 46 Red-necked Phalaropes Feb. 5 off Charleston (DMF), perhaps not unexpected in light of Haney's recent sightings off Georgia [see Haney, 1985, *J. Field Ornithol.*, pp. 321–333]. Red Phalaropes, which might be the most common wintering pelagic species in the Region, were seen on most offshore trips, including “hundreds” off Oregon Inlet Jan. 22 (DL).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers were reported along the coasts of all 3 states. A pelagic trip off Jekyll I., Ga., Feb. 1 (TM party) encountered two Pomarines and about five Parasitics, and both were also seen from shore at Cumberland I., Jan. 3 (BP). The trend of increasing sightings of rare gulls was put on hold this winter, in part owing to lack of severe weather. There were no reports of Little or Iceland gulls, and just one each of Com. Black-headed Gull—at Pea I., Dec. 28 (AB, BL)—and Glaucous Gull—at Cape Hatteras point, N.C., Dec. 31 (BL). Even Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers seemed down, although several were seen at Cape Hatteras (RD, BL et al.) and Carteret Co., N.C. (JF), as well as at Huntington Beach S.P. (RC). Other gull records of interest were good Bonaparte's counts of 425 at L. Greenwood, S.C., Jan. 24 (DM) and 370 at L. Moultrie, S.C., Jan. 2 (BL), and 30 Black-legged Kittiwakes Feb. 18 off Charleston (DMF). Seldom seen in the Region after December were two lingering Sandwich Terns at Ft. Fisher, N.C., Jan. 4 (RD).

A trickle of alcids made it into Regional waters this season. They managed to elude all pelagic birders; and imagine Lee's surprise, after failure to see any alcids off Oregon Inlet Jan. 22, to find five+ Dovekies in Roanoke Sound, N.C., just a few minutes before docking the boat! A Thick-billed Murre was reported from Huntington Beach S.P., Jan. 4 (PN party), but the details failed to mention bill shape. The other alcid report was a well-described and illustrated Razorbill—the most frequently seen member of the family—at Pea I., Dec. 28–30 (AB, LP et al.).

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — For the 2nd straight winter Short-eared Owls were seen at a farm inland near Cordele, Ga.; at least three were there Feb. 16 (BP, PB). A road-killed goatsucker near Shallotte, N.C., Jan. 15 (DMo) was identified as a Chuck-will's-widow, but the specimen was not saved. Another bird at Ft. Macon S.P., Dec. 19–25 was also

thought to have been a Chuck (JF, JM). Birds identified as Whip-poor-wills—which do overwinter regularly near the coast—were seen at McClellanville, S.C., Dec. 21 (T & NS) and in Francis Marion N.F., S.C., Dec. 29 (PN). Birders should be cautioned that the identification of silent goatsuckers, especially when seen at night, is difficult and often somewhat speculative. Some light was shed on an even stickier identification problem: \emptyset *Archilochus* hummingbirds. Adult males are seldom seen in winter, and in the past most observers have called \emptyset birds Ruby-throateds. One such bird at a Wilmington, N.C., feeder was studied in great detail and photographed during January (KK, WI, HL, RD). Some speculated that the bird may have been a Black-chinned. Fortunately, January and February were rather mild, and the bird survived the winter (a very rare situation). Kosh watched it in March, and luckily the bird was a male; it gradually assumed the adult male plumage of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird. This episode is of great significance; however, it is still too early to begin calling all \emptyset *Archilochus* in winter Ruby-throateds. Such birds were also reported from Bogue Banks, N.C., Dec. 21 (MR) and at Sumter, S.C., in December and January (fide ED). A \emptyset *Selasphorus* appeared at a Greenville, S.C., feeder late November to late December (GC, CW et al.). This bird was captured and measured in the hand and, not surprisingly, identified as a Rufous Hummingbird. Another *Selasphorus* at Whispering Pines, N.C., during the winter (JHC et al.) was not captured or photographed, but it was likely a Rufous also. Two Red-cockaded Woodpeckers were rare at Congaree Swamp N.M., S.C., Jan. 25 into February (RC).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH VIREOS — A Say's Phoebe near Lillington, N.C., Dec. 7–12 (CA, HL et al.; DW ph.) provided the 2nd state record and the first for the Region to be photographed (although at a great distance). It should never be assumed that any yellow-bellied kingbird in the East is a W. Kingbird. Such was the initial identification of a kingbird near Fairfield, N.C., Dec. 29; but a closer inspection by a team of experienced birders (KKn, RD, AB, LP, m.ob.; BL, MT ph.) revealed it to be a Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*), apparently for a first confirmed record for the eastern United States. The bird's high, sputtering call clinched the identification, but the long bill, deeply notched tail, and back



Tropical Kingbird at Fairfield, N.C., Dec. 30, 1985. Identification was confirmed by voice. First record for the Carolinas. Photo/Bob Lewis.

coloration were also of aid in separating it from Couch's Kingbird. It was seen by dozens of birders until Jan. 3 as it chased insects around a pig feedlot; it even made front-page headlines in Raleigh newspapers. Two Tree Swallows near Fayetteville, N.C., Feb. 8 (PJC) provided a first winter record for that city. An excellent midwinter count of Fish Crows for inland North Carolina was of 200+ Jan. 19, with smaller numbers throughout the winter, in c. Halifax County (FE). A detailed report of two "probable" Black-capped Chickadees, including description of the call, was made in n.e. Greenville Co., S.C., Feb. 11 at 2200 ft elevation (RC). The species has never been confirmed in the state, although they breed within 30 mi of the border. This was one of the better winters for Red-breasted Nuthatches in the 1980s. They were at least "fairly common" over nearly all the Region, although few observers talked in terms of record-breaking numbers.

All reports of Swainson's Thrushes (four) and Gray-cheeked Thrushes (two) were unconvincing. When will we get a specimen or photo of such a wintering bird? Cedar Waxwings were inexplicably scarce this winter, a view shared by many observers. There must have been an excellent berry crop farther to the north. Although a few birders reported daily counts of Loggerhead Shrikes of five or more, the species has become a real rarity, especially in the Carolinas. However, its status is best determined during the summer, as many of our wintering birds likely breed farther to the w. or northwest. There were several out-of-range reports of White-eyed Vireos, the best being of one near Townville Feb. 9 (CW). Solitary Vireos continue to be seen on many C.B.C.s in the Piedmont. Although most are just lingering fall migrants, a few were noted in late January and February and were clearly overwintering.

WARBLERS — Piedmont records of Orange-crowned Warblers included one near Liberty, S.C., Jan. 27 (CW) and another in Charlotte, N.C., Feb. 3 (HWa). North Carolina got its 2nd and 3rd winter records of **Nashville Warbler**, both under similar circumstances. Birds were seen in shrub thickets adjacent to tidal marshes on coastal C.B.C.s. Fussell saw one Dec. 22 along North R. in Carteret Co., N.C., and LeGrand *et al.* had another Dec. 28–31 at Wanchese, N.C. (I had a suspicion that many winter records of this species were actually misidentified Orange-crowns, but that view has mellowed since I encountered a bright male at Wanchese!) Few birders go afield on Christmas Day, but it paid off for Hart when he saw a Cape May Warbler at Crowders Mountain S.P., N.C. The most exciting warbler of the season was a ♀ **Black-throated Gray Warbler** at Wilmington Jan. 5–22 (KK, m.ob.). This was the 2nd sighting for North Carolina, but despite its lengthy stay it was too elusive for photography. A **Black-throated Green Warbler** at Sapelo I., Ga., Dec. 28 (AW, VW) was one of just a few ever for the Region in winter and perhaps the first for that state. A Yellow-throated Warbler was unusual near Durham, N.C., Jan. 3 (J & EP), and there were at least 4 sightings in North Carolina of the Prairie Warbler. A well-described **Bay-breasted Warbler**, seen by an experienced observer (CW), was noted Jan. 5 near Anderson, S.C.; it also has been seen in the Region at this season only several times previously and also might be a first for that state. Very rare also, though not quite "boldfaceable", was an ad. ♂ Wilson's Warbler found by Kosh at Wilmington Jan. 10–17 (m.ob.).

TANAGERS THROUGH CARDUELINES — Both W. Tanagers were at North Carolina feeders—at Wilmington Dec. 24–Jan. 3 (KK, MB, GM) and at Beaufort Feb. 23–28+ (G & AL, JF). Another feeder visitor was a Painted Bunting during the season at Jekyll I. (LT); but the season's only Dickcissel report was away from a feeder, near Duck, N.C., Dec. 21 (DL, WI, BBa). Another lone report was the Am. Tree Sparrow near Greenville, S.C., Dec. 28 (CW), one of just a handful of good sightings ever for that state. Vesper Sparrows have greatly declined as wintering birds in the last decade; thus, it was gratifying to note that Charlotte birders found them more numer-

ous than usual, including 40–50 in Cleveland Co., N.C., Feb. 2 (HWa, HWh). Among other notable records were a Lark Sparrow near Charlotte Dec. 28–Jan. 11 (DW *et al.*) and a Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow at Jekyll I., Feb. 2 (TM *et al.*). Near the n. edge of the winter range were two+ Grasshopper Sparrows all season at Columbia, S.C. (RC), and another at least until Feb. 1 in Banks Co., Ga. (JP). The even more elusive Henslow's Sparrow was seen at 2 places on Sapelo I., Ga., Dec. 28–29 (AW *et al.*), and two were observed near Santee Dam at L. Marion, S.C., Feb. 12 (RC). The always-notable Le Conte's Sparrow was noted at Sapelo I., Dec. 29 (HK, JC), but unfortunately several reports from the South Carolina Coastal Plain were vague with few details. Lincoln's Sparrows showed up in numerous places, with about 10 reports, including five near Townville all season (CW), a regular wintering locale. Most importantly, revelations were made about the habitats and distribution of the species, at least in North Carolina. Birds were reported in that state's Coastal Plain at 5 places, all in recently-cleared land where thick herbaceous cover and (most importantly) brushpiles were present. Surprisingly, the only report of Snow Bunting was at the extreme s. end of our coastline, where one was at Cumberland I., Jan. 2 (HG *et al.*). However, it was a good season for Lapland Longspurs: one was in Orangeburg Co., S.C., Feb. 4 (DM); two were at Cape Hatteras Jan. 4 (VM); up to seven were present all winter at the Charlotte Motor Speedway near Harrisburg (DW *et al.*); and a remarkable Regional record 68, with a "flock" of two Horned Larks, was at First Colony Farms near Cherry, N.C., Feb. 23 (RD).

Single Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen at Pea I., Dec. 28 (KKn) and at Atlanta Feb. 7 (CMc). Purple Finches were fairly common in most areas, but they were surprisingly abundant near Oriental, N.C., where Foy banded 400 Feb. 13–14. To repeat a statement I have made often in this journal, "House Finches were more numerous than ever before." Birders are finding flocks of 150–300 in a single field, and the birds are the dominant species at many feeders. The promising winter finch flight in the fall was a winter season dud, and not a single crossbill or redpoll was reported. Pine Siskin numbers were spotty; they were uncommon in most places, fairly common in some, but common in very few. Evening Grosbeaks showed a most unusual distribution pattern—they were fairly common near the coast of North Carolina and adjacent South Carolina. Yet farther inland, where they are normally more numerous, they were quite scarce and were missed on many C.B.C.s.

EXOTICS — Presumed escapes were a Chilean Flamingo Feb. 9 at New R. Inlet, N.C. (MG, JH, m.ob.), a Mute Swan near Sunset Beach, N.C., Feb. 2 (KK), and a Blue-crowned Conure on several dates during the winter at Pea I. (JH, MG, JN).

OBSERVERS — Clyde Adkins, Maurice Barnhill, Benton Basham (BBa), Bill Bell (BBe), Ned Brinkley, Patrick Brisse, Bill Brokaw, Pat Brokaw (PBro), Dick Brown, Allen Bryan, J.H. Carter III, Robin Carter, Jack Cooper, Mike Cooper, Greg Cornwell, P.J. Crutchfield, Evelyn Dabbs, Ricky Davis, Frank Enders, D.M. Forsythe, Dorothy Foy, John Fussell, Mark Galizio, Hugh Garrett, Sidney Gauthreaux, Tommy Graham, Chris Haney, John Hardwick, Paul Hart, John Hay (JHay), Bob Holmes, David Hughes, Wayne Irvin, Herb Kale, Ken Knapp (KKn), Kitty Kosh, Dave Lee, Harry LeGrand, Bob Lewis, Greg & Ann Lovelace (G & AL), Greg Massey, Candice McCloskey, Douglas McNair, Jody Merritt, Darryl Moffett (DMo), Terry Moore, Vaughn Morrison, Sue Moske, Charleston Museum, Jeremy Nance, Perry Nugent, Paul O'Neil, John Paget, T.K. Patterson, Lance Peacock, Will Post, Bill Pulliam, James & Elizabeth Pullman (J & EP), Mary Roberts, Teddy & Ned Shuler (T & NS), Jim Sipiora, Conne & Reid Taylor (C & RT), Steve Thomas, Lydia Thompson, Mike Tove, Bill Wagner, Margaret Wagner, Steve Wagner, Heathy Walker (HWA), Anne Waters, Vernon Waters, Harriet Whitsett (HWh), Claudia Wilds (CWl), Haven Wiley, Charlie Wooten, David Wright.—**HARRY E. LeGRAND, JR., 331 Yaddin Dr., Raleigh, NC 27609.**

John C. Ogden

Although several area editors commented on a warmer-than-normal winter, the impression was probably influenced by the still-fresh memory of the back-to-back winters of 1984 and 1985, when severe cold waves swept across the Florida peninsula. Actually, the weather during the winter of 1985-1986 seemed fairly normal, although the official records showed it to be slightly cooler and drier than the long-term average. Two weeks in mid-February, however, were much warmer than usual, thus reinforcing the impression of an overall mild winter and possibly triggering some local movements by neotropical species that include Florida in their wintering ranges. Several southern Florida observers commented on the sudden appearance of Northern Parulas, Prairie Warblers, Ovenbirds, and Indigo Buntings in numbers and locations where they had not been earlier reported (see also Rose-breasted Grosbeak). Also indicative of a more normal winter, Common Moorhens, American Coots, and Pied-billed Grebes had all produced young by the end of February at a sewage treatment plant in Pinellas County (LSA).

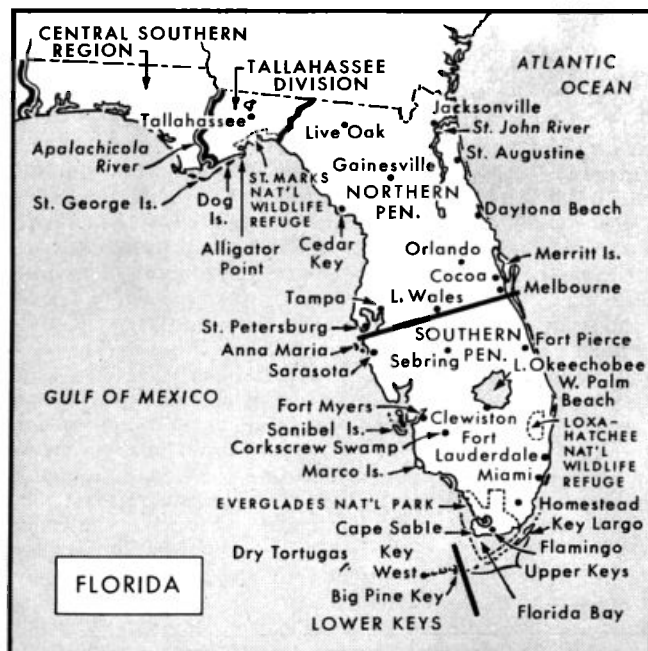
Regardless of what the weather records show, the number of warblers, neotropical finches, tanagers, etc., throughout the peninsula and throughout the winter season was high. For warblers, for example, I received comments on the unusual occurrence or high numbers for 12 different species (see also Great Crested Flycatcher, swallows, tanagers, Indigo Bunting). To illustrate the complexity of seasonal events, however, several of the more northerly wintering species (American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Goldfinch) were also in the peninsula in large numbers, and one sea duck, the Black Scoter, appeared in near-record numbers and as far south as Key West.

Otherwise, the season appeared to my unpracticed eye to be mostly uneventful. The few rarities included a Franklin's Gull near Tallahassee, Lesser Nighthawks, and a Couch's Kingbird at Loxahatchee Refuge and a Townsend's Warbler at Winter Haven. Details of these are contained in the text.

My final introductory word is a request that you have patience with my ignorance. I have written a good many Florida seasonal reports before, but they were all in the 1970s or earlier, and they were all breeding season reports at that. More recently I lived in California for five years, and have been back in peaceful Florida for little more than one year. It is surprising how much I have forgotten about bird status here, especially for the more common species.

ANHINGA THROUGH WATERFOWL — Anhingas are rare anywhere in the Florida Keys; one was at Rockland Key in the lower Keys Feb. 28 (JO). A high number for N. Gannets was 650 seen from the Lake Worth pier Jan. 9 (HPL et al.). A pair of Masked Boobies again attempted to nest at the Dry Tortugas, this time on Middle Key during February (DOL). Somewhat surprisingly, what appears to be the first record of Am. White Pelicans for Broward County was the sighting of two near Pompano Beach Dec. 25 (TH et al.).

Least Bitterns are rare in winter in the interior of the n. peninsula, so one at the Kanapcha Ranch, w. of Gainesville, Dec. 22 (SAN), and one at Lake Alice Jan. 12 (JCB) were noteworthy. A high count of Reddish Egrets, especially so far n. and on the e. coast, was of 14 (all dark) at Merritt Island N.W.R., Jan. 11 (LSA). Glossy Ibises are well known to migrate through the Florida peninsula, but one flying over Garden Key, Dry Tortugas, Jan. 8 seemed out of season (BS, CC). A concentration



of 137 Glossy Ibises in fields w. of W. Palm Beach Feb. 24 (HPL) could have been migrants, although the timing of the spring flight is poorly known. Relatively few Wood Storks attempted to nest in s. Florida during the winter as only 150 pairs were at Corkscrew (LR) and 300 pairs in Everglades N.P. (OLB) as of the end of the period.

Tundra Swans appeared in n. Florida, one near St. Marks Light Feb. 16 (DCB, RMW), and two on Orange L., Alachua Co., in mid-January (GKG). In the goose department, one Greater White-fronted was near St. Marks Light Dec. 21 (HMS), one Snow Goose was near Circus World, Polk Co., Jan. 29 (BWC), where the species is considered rare but regular, and three Brant made it far s. to Miller L., Miami, Feb. 25 (MC). One Am. Black Duck, rare in the s. peninsula, was found in Miami Dec. 21 (BN). An unusually high count of Green-winged Teal was 2600 at the Clear Springs phosphate mine (a contradiction in terms here!) near Bartow Feb. 22 (PJF). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon was at the Ding Darling N.W.R. throughout the winter period (m.ob.) and one was at Myakka River S.P., Jan. 21 (BZ). Among the sea ducks, unusual reports included an Oldsquaw in the Indian R. at Titusville Jan. 4 (DS) and two White-winged Scoters at Boca Raton Beach Dec. 5 (BH). But the overwhelming story here was the invasion of Black Scoters statewide; to have not seen one you would have had to either stay in the woods, or only visit the Gulf coast. Interestingly, the only winter report from the Gulf coast was of five in the Ten Thousand Is. region Dec. 27 (THB). Otherwise, they were all on the e. coast with a high count of 43, 3 mi off Cape Canaveral Dec. 9 (JJ), and as far s. as the Florida Keys: 20 or more at Key West Dec. 4 & 5 (JO), up to 10 in e. Florida Bay Dec. 11 and Feb. 23 (JCO), and 17 in s. Biscayne Bay in late December (FG).

HAWKS THROUGH TERNS — Short-tailed Hawks again wintered in the lower Keys, with two on Big Pine Key Dec. 17 and thereafter (JO, MB), and one on Sugarloaf Key Jan. 17 (JO). Swainson's Hawks, late fall-early winter migrants into s. Florida, appeared w. of Delray Beach, one Dec. 16 (BH), and in the lower Keys, one on Sunshine Key Dec. 2 (MB, JO). Peregrine Falcons seemed to have wintered in larger numbers and farther n. than usual, as evidenced by one near St. Marks Light Feb.

17 (CSG), two throughout the period at Ft DeSoto Park (m ob), one Dec. 25-Jan. 26 at the Pompano landfill (m.ob.), and at least four in the Naples-Marco I. region (THB).

Yellow Rails, identified by well-heard calls, were at Loxahatchee N.W.R., Dec. 8 (LSA *et al.*) and the Anhinga Trail, Everglades N.P., Jan. 3 (WJB). At the latter location, a Black Rail was reported Dec. 19 (KK). An Am. Oystercatcher, rare on the lower e. coast, was on Convoy Point, Biscayne N.P., Dec. 30 (m.ob.). High counts of Am. Avocets were of 230 at McKay Bay, Hillsborough Co., Jan. 21 (RTP), and 216 near Bartow Feb. 22 (PJF). The Bar-tailed Godwit, first reported from the fall at Honeymoon I. State Recreation Area, was rediscovered Dec. 28-Jan. 1 (DJD, LSA) at the same location. One each Whimbrel and Willet were on Long Key, Dry Tortugas, Dec. 27 (DOL) where neither species has previously been found in mid-winter. The Clear Springs phosphate mine near Bartow provided good habitat for wintering shorebirds, as indicated by high counts of 51 Dunlins and an amazing 857 Stilt Sandpipers Feb. 22 (PJF). The single date is misleading, as large flocks of shorebirds were present all winter at Clear Springs, and it was only on that date that close counts were made. At the same location, very unusual were two Red-necked Phalaropes Feb. 22 (PJF). The rare Purple Sandpiper was reported from Virginia Key, Dade Co., Dec. 21-22 (m.ob.) and the n. jetty of the Ponce Inlet, Jan. 25 (TR, CT).

Unusual near Lignum Vitae Key in Florida Bay was one Parasitic Jaeger Dec. 22 (JCO, SS). Extremely rare anywhere in Florida, a **Franklin's Gull** was carefully studied at the Tallahassee sewage ponds Dec. 31 (HMS). One Laughing Gull in Leon County Dec. 10 perhaps furnished the first winter record for that inland location (HMS). Lesser Black-backed Gulls continued to be reported on the e. coast and in extreme s. Florida, with total numbers perhaps increasing. Up to 11 were at the Pompano Beach landfill by late February (WG, BH *et al.*). Elsewhere two Lesser Black-backed were on Upper Matecumbe Key Dec. 9 (SS), and singles were at Virginia Key, Dade Co., Dec. 21 (m.ob.), and in e. Florida Bay Dec. 27 (SS). Finally, one of the more unusual reports of the winter was of a **Black Tern** at the Clear Springs phosphate mine ponds near Bartow Jan. 11 (PJF, CLG), reported as only the 2nd or 3rd winter record for Polk County.

PIGEONS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — A high count of White-crowned Pigeons for outside the Florida Keys in winter was of 11 in Miami Dec. 21 (m.ob.), while two as far n. as the s. part of West Palm Beach Dec. 25-Jan. 25 (CP, RP) were most unusual. One Groove-billed Ani near Bartow Feb. 22 (PJF), and two n.w. of Gainesville between Jan. 1 and early February (RDW *et al.*) represented the 2nd and 5th records for Polk and Alachua counties, respectively. Among the highlights of this winter season were two **Lesser Nighthawks** at Loxahatchee N.W.R. (BN *et al.*). One was first found Dec. 22 and seen most evenings until Jan. 4; two were together on the nights of Jan. 1-3. A few Com. Nighthawks winter in s. Florida, but these Lessers were thoroughly studied by many people; one habitat difference is that Lessers in Florida are usually found around wetlands, while Commons in winter are mostly around shopping centers (*fide* HPL). What may have been the first record of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds overwintering in the Gainesville area occurred when two were regularly seen in one Gainesville yard Dec. 26-Feb. 28 (DTF). A hummingbird of the genus *Selasphorus* wintered in Jacksonville Dec. 28 through the end of the period (PS *et al.*). Finally, a hummingbird on Plantation Key, s. of Tavernier, identified in the late fall as an imm. ♂ **Bahama Woodstar**, may or may not have spent the entire winter in the same area. Many people think that they saw the bird, but a growing debate over its identity raised the question of whether everyone had viewed the same bird, as well as some other, less-repeatable comments! I'll say no more.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS — Great Crested Flycatchers were considered unusually common throughout

the winter at the Archbold Biological Station, Highlands Co., in a region where in some other winters the presence of even one is noteworthy (FEL *et al.*). Vermilion Flycatchers again wintered in the Tallahassee Div., with one near St. Marks Light November through Feb. 20 (CSG *et al.*), and one at Lake Iamonia, Leon Co., Dec. 27-28 (CHW). Another rarity at Loxahatchee N.W.R. was a **Couch's Kingbird** Dec. 6-23 (RF, HPL *et al.*). The bird was well seen, and thankfully its identity was confirmed by its calls, as it formerly was considered to be conspecific with the Tropical Kingbird. Photos were taken. The high count of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers at Key West was 20, Dec. 4-Jan. 14 (JO). Swallows lingered into late December in the s. peninsula, including three to four N. Rough-winged Swallows at Ft. Jefferson Dec. 25 (DOL), one Bank Swallow at Loxahatchee N.W.R., Dec. 24-27 (TT, HPL *et al.*), for only the 2nd winter record for Palm Beach County, and one Cliff Swallow also at Loxahatchee Dec. 26-27 (HPL, TT *et al.*). A wintering Cliff Swallow in Palm Beach County is unprecedented, although this bird's huddled and bedraggled appearance on the 2nd day did not hold much promise for long survival. In the lower Keys, a rare **Bahama Swallow** was well seen on Big Pine Key Dec. 21 (G & HP), and a mid-winter Barn Swallow (the observer was looking for the former!) was on Boca Chica Key Jan. 17 (HPL). The first Veery ever found on the Coot Bay C.B.C. was near Flamingo Jan. 5 (JB, CP), and a Swainson's Thrush in Matheson Hammock, Dade Co., Jan. 11 (m.ob.) was unusual for mid-winter. American Robins were much more numerous in s. Florida this winter than last, with 183 banded in Nokomis, an 8-year high (S & AS), and a high count of 55 in Key West Jan. 26 (JO). Rare on the Dry Tortugas, a Cedar Waxwing was on Garden Key Feb. 13-14 (DOL, JRL).

WARBLERS — As mentioned earlier in this report, this past winter was a good warbler winter throughout the peninsula. Twelve different species received special mention by area editors, with the highlights as follows. A Tennessee Warbler was singing (!) on Plantation Key, Monroe Co., Dec. 6 (DB, HPL), and if that is not enough, a Black-throated Blue Warbler was singing in woods near Gainesville Feb. 5 (JTL). Northern Parulas were more numerous in the extreme n. peninsula, where two were near the Wakulla River Jan. 11 (JE), and more than usual were seen throughout the period in the Jacksonville area (m.ob.). Very rare in mid-winter in Polk County were a Yellow Warbler near Bartow Jan. 25 (PJF *et al.*) and a Nashville Warbler at Winter Haven Feb. 9 (PJF). Even more unusual was a Nashville Warbler at Jacksonville Feb. 19 (JPC). Magnolia Warblers must be regular but rare winterers in the extreme s. peninsula, where one was found at Flamingo Jan. 5-6 (JB, CP), and one wintered in my yard near Tavernier (extreme dates: Oct. 21-Mar. 20). A Cape May Warbler on Hypoluxo Island Feb. 18 to end of the period (PWS, HPL) was unusual so far n. in winter. Black-throated Green Warblers turned up at several relatively n. localities, including 2 sites in Jacksonville Dec. 8-Jan. 12 (PCP, JPC), four different birds in Pinellas County through the winter (LH, BW *et al.*), and two on the Lake Region C.B.C., Polk Co. (CLG). Quite rare in winter, a Blackburnian Warbler was near Flamingo, Everglades N.P., Jan. 11 (EMF). The first January record of an Am. Redstart for the Jacksonville area was of one Jan. 9 (RKR). And most unusual so far n., a Yellow-breasted Chat was along Route 345, e. of Cedar Key, Levy Co., Jan. 4 (JCB). Certainly in a different category from the above warbler reports were two **Townsend's Warblers** at the Audubon Nature Center in Winter Haven Dec. 8 (PJF), with one remaining until Feb. 26 (HMS, m.ob.). Finally, the number of Yellow-rumped Warblers throughout the peninsula was high, with many reaching the Florida Keys (none some winters?), and 472 banded at Nokomis throughout the period, the 2nd-highest number trapped at that station in 8 winters (S & AS).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES — The question asked one year ago by Wayne Hoffman was whether the Western was really the most common tanager wintering in Florida; this

season's reports suggest that it may be the Summer Tanager. All three of the regular species (Scarlet, Summer, and Western) showed up, including the following. Probably the rarest of the three, the Scarlet, occurred in Key West Dec. 23 & 28 (JO, FH). Summer Tanagers were reported from 2 specific localities, one w. of Delray Beach Dec. 16 (BH et al.), and one at a feeder n. of Tallahassee between mid-December and Feb. 11 (F & BS); in Dade County there were sightings of Summer Tanagers throughout the county and the winter period (m.ob., fide OLB). The only W. Tanager reported was one at Castellow Hammock, Dade Co., Feb. 11–20 (RH). Three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks on well-birded Anhinga Trail, Everglades N.P., Feb. 17 (HPL, BB) were considered possibly to have been recent arrivals—all three were sluggish; none had been seen there earlier in the winter! Rare anywhere in Florida in winter, a Black-headed Grosbeak was at a Jacksonville feeder Jan. 5–11 (JBH), and a Blue Grosbeak was at Gainesville Dec. 26 (TAW). Many observers reported on high numbers or the unusual presence of Indigo Buntings, including one in s. Jacksonville Jan. 20 and Feb. 21 (JPC), one at Archbold Biological Station Jan. 7 (DRS), and one at Nokomis Feb. 24 (S & AS). High counts of Indigos were 12 at Ft. Taylor, Key West, Dec. 5 (JO) and 20 at Myakka River S.P., Feb. 3 (LSA et al.).

It was not a winter for many unusual sparrow reports. A Vesper Sparrow turned up at out-of-the-way Ft. Jefferson N.M., Dec. 29 (DOL), and a White-throated Sparrow visited a feeder in Delray Beach Nov. 16–Feb. 28 (BH). White-throateds continue to decline as wintering birds in the Jacksonville area, where not one was found this year (PCP). One White-crowned Sparrow wintered w. of Lantana Dec. 21 to end of period (HPL), and single Lincoln's Sparrows were at Wellington, w. of West Palm Beach, Dec. 15 to end of period (HPL), and at Copeland, Collier Co., Feb. 23 (HPL et al.). Two **Lapland Longspurs**, most unusual in Florida, were at Wards Bank, near Jacksonville, Nov. 30–Dec. 9 (RST, PCP), and probably the same two birds, Feb. 23–March 4 (BJR). Photos were taken by Richter. One of

the largest flocks of Brown-headed Cowbirds ever seen in Florida was an estimated 20,000 in Leon County Jan. 16 (HMS) in a large cattle pasture. Unusual in the Florida Keys in winter (most leave by October) was a Common Grackle on Key Largo Dec. 9 (JCO). A high count of N. Orioles for winter was 10 at a Tallahassee feeder throughout most of the period (F & BS). Finally, it was not a good n. finch year, with only a few reports of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins. Purple Finches were in Jacksonville (fide JPC), and as far s. as the Titusville area where two were at a feeder Jan. 16 (DRS), and one was on nearby Merritt Island Feb. 5–8 (SC, JJ). The southernmost Pine Siskins were reported from several feeders in Gainesville Jan. 23 through the end of the period (JTD et al.).

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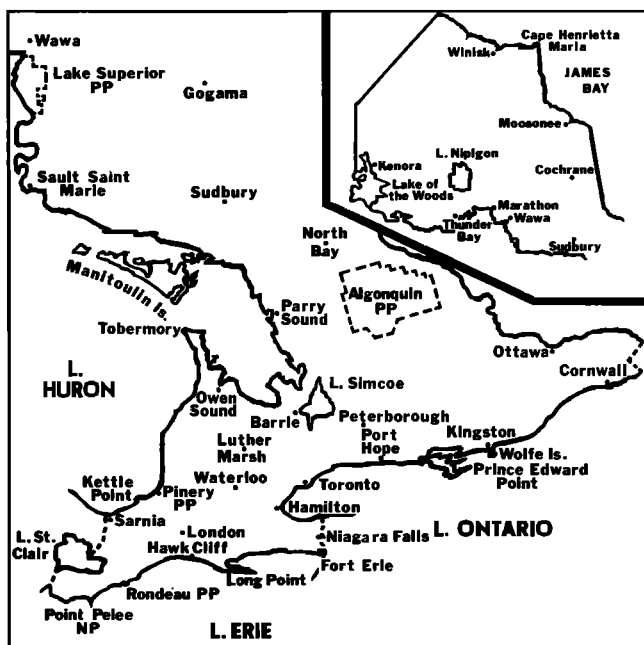
ONTARIO REGION

Ron D. Weir

Virtually all reporters described the season as poor and dull. Unusually early snow and cold in December over most the province, coupled with a wild food supply that failed, made for disappointing Christmas Bird Counts. Many of the lingerers remaining from autumn were either killed or forced southwards and heavy ice robbed waterfowl and gulls of their needed open water. As winter progressed, it became clear that northern owls were not going to irrupt. Presumably, abundant food supplies of small mammals kept them 'at home.' On the positive side, a strong showing was made by Bohemian Waxwings, Pine Grosbeaks, and redpolls. Among the rarities were Atlantic Puffin, Ontario's first since 1881, and Green-tailed Towhee, the fifth for the province.

ABBREVIATIONS — P.E.Pt. = Prince Edward Point; Pelee = Pt. Pelee National Park and vicinity; Algonquin Park, Presqu'île and Rondeau are provincial parks. Place names in *italics* denote counties.

LOONS TO HERONS — The last of autumn's Red-throated Loons were singles at P.E.Pt., Dec. 8 (JHE, RDW) and Kettle Pt., Dec. 12 (AHR). The bird at Whitby Feb. 25 (AGC) was likely an early migrant. Pied-billed Grebes were scarce, but



two lingered at Warton until late December (JW). Early Horned Grebes arrived at London and Peterborough Feb. 9 (AMcT, DCS) and Ottawa Feb. 28 (BMD). One tarried to mid-January near Minden (RPI, RGT *et al.*), where the species is unknown in winter. Four Red-neckeds were noted at Sarnia, P E Pt., and Peterborough, Dec. 2–21 (AHR, K.F.N., TBI), and one appeared at Ottawa Jan. 18 (BMD). The nine in Hamilton Bay Feb. 9 were early arrivals, (JG, WL, KMcL). A late Double-crested Cormorant was at Pelee Dec. 23 (AW) and two were at Pinery P.P. late in the month (TC). Two others remained at e. Hamilton Bay for the entire period (KMcL). The most northerly of the 14 reports of Great Blue Heron were of singles near Ivy Lea Jan. 30 (KR) and at Washago, Simcoe, Feb. 9 (TRM). A very late Green-backed Heron was still at Sarnia Dec. 27 (BS). Two imm. Black-crowned Night-Herons were late at Whitby Dec. 1–8 (HK, MJB) and may have been the same birds seen in nearby Toronto Dec. 1–3 (RY *et al.*). Four overwintering immatures were at e. Hamilton Bay Feb. 22 (WL, KMcL).

SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS — Two Mute Swans appeared at Presqu'île Dec. 19 (AGC) and another overwintered at W. Guilford, Haliburton (RPI). Four were seen at various times at Pelee Jan. 11–Feb. 28 (*fide* AW). Of the 54 Snow Geese reported, 30 were at Wallacetown Jan. 25 (RP) and 18 at Owen Sound Feb. 1 (TRM). Last of the retreating Canada Geese in e. Ontario were 2000 on Wolfe I., Jan. 1 (AEB), and spring arrivals Feb. 28 numbered 2000 and 1800 at Holiday Beach P.P. and Pelee, respectively (GTH, DAW). Overwintering Wood Ducks were three in the Kingston area (K.F.N.), at least one at London (DAM, AMcT), and another in Guelph (SRK). The 90 Green-winged Teal and 70 N. Pintails in e. Hamilton Bay Dec. 31 were by far the largest numbers reported (KMcL). A ♂ N. Pintail overwintered again at Manotick (*fide* BMD) and a ♀ Blue-winged Teal was last seen on Manitoulin I., Dec. 21 (T. Bell, JGL *et al.*). The first winter record of Gadwall at Presqu'île was furnished by one there Dec. 22 (AGC). Canvasbacks were scarce, but Redhead numbers seemed normal. Some 2000 Redheads were at Sarnia Jan. 10 (SAC) and arrivals were noted at Presqu'île Jan. 20–22 and Pelee Jan. 23 (*fide* RDM, AW). The ♀ Greater Scaup at Silver Islet Jan. 12 was a rare winter occurrence along the n. shore of L. Superior (NGE).

Up to six King Eiders, more than usual, were regular at Niagara-on-the-Lake during the period, and seven were counted there Jan. 1 (MEF, JB, GBe *et al.*). The only other report was of an imm. male in Hamilton Bay Feb. 15 (CE). The six Harlequin Ducks were one more than the 7-year winter average. Single females were at Southampton Dec. 19 and Port Elgin in mid-January (MP), probably the same bird, Winona Jan. 11–12 (MJ *et al.*), and Oshawa Feb. 15 (GAS). Single imm. males appeared off Amherst I., Jan. 4–12 (RDW *et al.*) and at the Cornwall power dam Feb. 17 (BMD). The sex was not reported for one at Sarnia Feb. 28 (DFR). The January thaw brought newly-arrived White-winged Scoters numbering 687 at Niagara-on-the-Lake Jan. 18–22 (GBE) and six at Pelee Jan. 23 (AW). Overwintering Com. Goldeneyes totalled 200 at Kenora (SRM), and two hybrids, Com. Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser, were at Niagara Falls Dec. 4 (DGa, WL, KMcL) and Pelee Jan. 23 (AW). Nine Barrow's Goldeneyes were reported, up over the average of five per winter since 1978. The same bird was thought to be involved in the sightings off Scarborough Bluffs and Mississauga during December (MRo, KBa). Another at Sarnia was present Jan. 19 and Feb. 22 (YRT, KVO, DFR). Ottawa hosted five in the period and two were at the Cornwall dam Feb. 17 (BMD). Single Hooded Mergansers overwintered at Kenora (SRM), Washago (RLB), Guelph (SRK), and Holiday Beach (*fide* GTH). Three were at Ottawa, but one was found dead in early March (BMD, RBR). The 2700 Com. Mergansers at the s.e. corner of L. Simcoe Dec. 8 were retreating from winter's advance (GMB). The only Ruddy Duck reports were of a female at Sarnia Jan. 10 (SAC, GBR) and another at Toronto for the entire period (BDP).

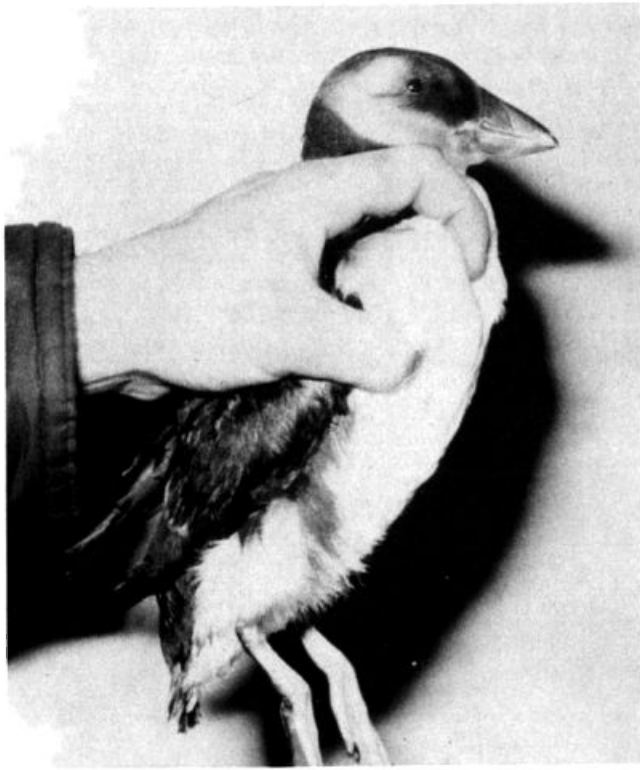
VULTURES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Late Turkey Vultures were a single at Port Elgin, Bruce, Dec. 12 (*fide* GMB) and two in w. Elgin Dec. 27 (WP). Winter totals of Bald Eagles have risen steadily since 1978 when only eight were reported. This winter's 64, of which 58 were in the s., represented another increase. One immature at Pelee Dec. 14–28 was wing-tagged (GTH *et al.*). Sharp-shinned Hawk numbers were unusually high as were the 69 reports of Cooper's. Many hunted at feeders in urban areas, reflecting the paucity of passerines elsewhere. Overwintering Red-shoulders were in Bolton (DM), Vittoria, Long Pt. (DSh), Middlesex (WRJ), and Essex (GTH, BMD). Rough-leggeds were in good numbers led by 26 at Pelee Dec. 20 (GTH) and up to 30 overwintering on Wolfe I. (K.F.N.).

The six Golden Eagles represented usual winter numbers. Singles were reported between Dec. 1 and late January at Port Alma, Kent (KJB), Cardiff, Haliburton (BHM), Cranberry Marsh (J & NL), New Glasgow, Elgin (NVM), Petroglyphs P.P. (PG), and Toronto's Pearson airport (TS). Up by a factor of three were the 14 Merlins seen at Pelee, London, Bowmanville (car kill), Oshawa, Peterborough, Kingstee, Pembroke, Ottawa, Port Bolster, and Thunder Bay. Single Peregrine Falcons were at Peterborough Jan. 3 (AGC), Whitby Jan. 5–15 (MJB), Belleville Jan. 11 (LSF), and Toronto Feb. 8 (KK). Four, possibly five, Gyrfalcons were found. One was in Sault Ste. Marie during December and January (AG, CS, TDM). Other singles were the dark-phase bird at Whitby Jan. 5 (L & DVW, RN), a gray bird near Kingston Jan. 11 (KH), and one or two at Ottawa Dec. 15–Jan. 15 (*fide* BMD).

Ring-necked Pheasants continued their steady decline in the Toronto area. The 295 in the 1965 census dropped to 176 in 1975 and only 23 this winter (*fide* GMB). Extremely unusual for the season were the overwintering single Am. Coots at Port Sydney, Muskoka, and Minden, Haliburton (*fide* RLB). The few late wader reports included a Lesser Golden-Plover and Lesser Yellowlegs at Pelee Dec. 2 (GTH), a Sanderling and Dunlin also there Dec. 7 (RS, GV, MM, JF), and another Dunlin at Oshawa Dec. 8 (GAS). A Killdeer was at Whitby to Jan. 18 (SR) and the first spring migrants were at Blenheim Feb. 18 (KJB) and Ottawa Feb. 20 (DSh). Following last autumn's strong showing, Purple Sandpipers numbered 16. Singles were at Pelee Nov. 30 (KO) and on Toronto's lakeshore to Jan. 6 (*fide* GMB). The two at Port Colborne were present to Dec. 8 (BC, DC) and the five at Presqu'île were last seen Dec. 2 (RDM, PHS). Six at Niagara Falls frequented the rock ledges above the falls to Jan. 26 (JBM).

JAEGERS THROUGH OWLS — Late Parasitic Jaegers were singles at Hamilton Dec. 1 (CE *et al.*) and Sarnia Dec. 24 (DFR). In contrast to last winter's strong showing, Little Gulls were scarce. Three at Niagara Falls Dec. 8–Jan. 18 (*fide* RFA), three at Sarnia Dec. 14 (DFR), and one at Whitby Dec. 19 (AW) made up the total. The only Com. Black-headed Gull was in the Queenston area of Niagara Dec. 1–Jan. 8 (*fide* RFA), making 14 birds in the past 23 winters. The 30,000 Bonaparte's Gulls along the Niagara R., Dec. 14 (*fide* RFA) were by far the most reported and the last ones were seven at Pelee Dec. 23 (*fide* AW). Migrant Ring-billeds arrived at Pelee and Presqu'île Jan. 26, numbering 118 and 800 respectively (GTH, RDM), but the latter group retreated S again by Jan. 31. The 10,000 Herring Gulls near Kingston Jan. 12 were also withdrawing to the S (K.F.N.). The five Thayer's Gulls noted were at Toronto Dec. 14 (GC), Niagara Falls Dec. 15 and Jan. 1 (AGC *et al.*), Wheatley Dec. 23 (GTH *et al.*), Guelph Dec. 31–Jan. 2 (ph., *fide* SRK) for Wellington's first, and Cobourg Jan. 12 (BCO). White-winged gulls were in typical numbers at 42 Icelands and 168 Glaucous but most departed by Dec. 31.

Some 19 Lesser Black-backed Gulls have been found in the past 3 winters so this season's five, or possibly seven depending on duplicate counting, were close to the average. Singles were at Rondeau Dec. 1 (PAW), Niagara Falls Dec. 1, 7, & 14 (RFA *et al.*), Jackson's Pt. on L. Simcoe Dec. 15 (GMB), Wolfe I., Dec. 22 (RDW), and Amherst I., Feb. 16 (P. Good). The last bird was



Atlantic Puffin found at Westmeath, Ont., Dec. 15, 1985. Photo/B. M. DiLabio.

an adult, thought to be of the British race. Record numbers of Great Black-backed were in the Ottawa area led by 150 along the river Dec. 11 (BMD). Inland in Grey-Bruce the species is usually rare, so singles at Port Elgin Dec. 3 and Feb. 9 and a single followed by 10 at Baie du Dore Feb. 20 & 28 were noteworthy (fide TRM). Black-legged Kittiwakes appeared at Sarnia Dec. 2, 14, & 24 numbering respectively three, two, and five (DFR). The species was not reported elsewhere. A late Forster's Tern flew along Niagara's Whirlpool Gorge Dec. 8 (fide RFA), the same date and location where the species was seen in 1984. The most bizarre occurrence this winter was of the imm. Atlantic Puffin found in a snowbank along a road at Westmeath, Renfrew, Dec. 15 (ph. DL, CT, JMB, BMD). This emaciated bird was transferred to the Avian Care & Research Foundation at Verona where it regained weight and health before it was flown by commercial air to Newfoundland for spring release. This occurrence provided Ontario's first substantiated record, as a previous specimen purportedly collected at Ottawa in 1881 is missing.

A ♀ E. Screech-Owl was found in a weakened state at Sudbury Dec. 3, but was rehabilitated (fide JCN), and eight of 11 admitted to the Owl Rehabilitation Research Foundation at Vineland were releasable (KMCK). The Snowy Owl flight was again light everywhere and the only area of concentration was Wolfe I., where only seven overwintered (K.F.N.). One found at Whitney Jan. 8 had been shot and subsequently died (fide RGT). The only reports of N. Hawk-Owls were of singles at Kaladar Dec. 14-16 (SO) and Atikokan Jan. 29 (DRC). Several Barreds were seen hunting by day during December in the Algonquin area, thought to be a result of food shortage after the collapse of the previously-abundant mouse population (RGT). Extralimital reports were of singles at Cobourg Jan. 1-7 (ERM) and Hamilton in January (DP). Single Great Gray Owls were seen near Wawa in December (C. Sumi) and at Carleton Place, Lanark, Jan. 1 (AS et al.), and another was dead on the road near Atikokan in the period (DHE). Long-eared and Short-eared owls were scarce. Single Boreals appeared at feeders picking off seed-eating rodents at Dwight Jan. 9-18 & 27-29

(ph. RGT et al.) and Whitefish near Sudbury Jan. 15 (HKn). Two were killed in animal traps near Atikokan (DHE). The N. Saw-whet Owl at a Sudbury feeder Feb. 11 provided their first live winter record (GHi, JCN) and this species was also scarce.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WRENS — A ♀ hummingbird that appeared at Perry Sound Oct. 21 was picked up Nov. 10 and released inside the greenhouse at a local flower shop, where it survived until Mar. 11. That it may have been one of the *Selasphorus* species cannot be ruled out, but identification awaited its delivery to staff at the Royal Ontario Museum (NC, RLB, MPW). Single Red-headed Woodpeckers overwintered at Owen Sound (TRM) and Niagara-on-the-Lake (GBe et al.) and another was in Rondeau Jan. 30 (PAW). The 30+ reports of Red-bellied Woodpeckers were comparable with numbers of the past few winters. Singles were n. to Ottawa until Dec. 20 (fide BMD), Kingston Jan. 12-Feb. 2 (DW), and at 2 sites in Peterborough Dec. 26-Feb. 28 and Dec. 1-Feb. 28 (fide DCS). The only Yellow-bellied Sapsucker noted was at Ruthven, Essex, Dec. 21 (MJO, MDO). The 11 Three-toed Woodpeckers made a better showing than in the past several winters. Four overwintered in Ottawa (BMD), four were in the Deep R. area Feb. 16-20 (JMB), and singles were found at Severn Bridge, Simcoe, Jan. 4 (PT), Uffington, Muskoka, Jan. 21 (RLB), and Atikokan Jan. 31 (SFP). The 24 Black-backed, most of which were s. of their breeding range, were the most since their irruption in 1982-1983. Observers found 15 at Ottawa and five in Simcoe, Muskoka, and Grey-Bruce, and singles pushed S to Stouffville in early December (EG), Thorold Dec. 22-Jan. 2 (RWK et al.), Stratford Dec. 14 (MPD), and Ivy Lea Feb. 14 (KR). Three Pileated Woodpeckers were killed by road traffic in the Sault Ste. Marie area during the period (TDM).

An Am. Crow roost in Chatham contained 16,000 birds Jan. 4 (PAW). Some 30,000 were tallied on fields near a roost site in Essex that was disturbed by shooting (GTH). Last autumn's influx of Tufted Titmice resulted in 11 winter reports. Away from the extreme s.w. were singles in Scarborough Dec. 8 (KF), at feeders in Newcastle Dec. 24-Feb. 28 for Durham's 3rd (DVR, FS), and at Ennismore, Peterborough, Nov. 23-Dec. 17 (ph. DCS). Few Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered, and several White-breasted were in the Thunder Bay and Atikokan areas where normally scarce (NGE). Following last autumn's good numbers, Carolina Wrens totalled 10, led by five at Leamington Dec. 23 (MJ). The only report away from the extreme s.w. was of one at Galetta, near Arnprior, Dec. 15 to early February



Tufted Titmouse at Ennismore, Ont., Nov. 23, 1985. Photo/D. C. Sadler.

(fide MR). At Leamington Dec 23, 31 Winter Wrens were counted (MJ).

THRUSHES THROUGH WARBLERS — A Hermit Thrush tarried at Wiarton Dec. 22 (TRM) and another suddenly appeared at Presqu'île Jan. 26 and Feb. 1 for a first midwinter record there (PHS, RDM). Up to three Am. Robins wintered at Sault Ste. Marie (TDM) and the last one to occur at Wawa was seen Dec. 19 (LC). The eight Varied Thrush reports were above the average numbers since 1978. Singles were at Chepstow, Bruce, Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (fide TRM), Amberly, Huron, Dec. 5–Mar. 3 (R & GW), near Marvelville, Russell, Dec. 12–Feb. 28 (ph ML et al.), Simcoe, Haldimand, Dec. 16–24 (GP), Pelee Dec 23 for their first ever (PDP et al.), Ipperwash, Lambton, Jan 23–Mar. 8 (ph. AHR et al.), Plattsville, Oxford, Jan. 6–Feb. 15 (JBM, EM), and Richmond Hill, York (fide JBM). Wintering mimids included five Gray Catbirds Dec. 22–Jan. 25 at Whitby, Hamilton, Walpole I. in Niagara, Wheatley P.P., and Gesto, Essex, and five Brown Thrashers through the period at Kingston, Cobourg, Pickering, Wiarton, and Forest. The 11 N. Mockingbirds occurred in the usual locations.

Late Water Pipits were three in the Cranberry Marsh Dec. 1–2 (HK, MJB), one in Toronto Dec. 12 (HS), and one at Peterborough Dec. 26–Jan. 6 (FH et al.) for their first in winter. The Bohemian Waxwing flight was one of the strongest on record. Flocks of 1000 birds were seen in Peterborough, Pembroke, and Ottawa to mid-January after which their numbers declined. They reached Ivy Lea and Kingston by the hundreds by year's end, but farther w. at Port Hope-Cobourg and Whitby numbers were much lower. Many were in Muskoka, Simcoe, and Grey by Dec. 31, but only a few moved farther s.w. Singles reached Stratford Dec. 7 (MPD) and Pelee Jan. 4 & 12 (S & AH, GTH). Two of the late warbler species noted in the autumn report lingered into the winter period. The Cape May at Aldershot was seen to Dec. 1 (D & TP) and the Bay-breasted stayed in Toronto's Mount Pleasant Cemetery to Dec. 3 (HK et al.). Single Pine Warblers remained at Thorold to Jan. 15 (RWK, MEF, C. Smith) and in Long Point P.P. to Jan. 21 (VF et al.).

CARDINALINES THROUGH FINCHES — Numbers of N Cardinals were sharply increased at feeders from Oshawa to Port Hope-Cobourg, Brighton, Peterborough, Gravenhurst, and Bracebridge, with up to 20 birds at some trays. The **Green-tailed Towhee** that appeared at a Windsor feeder last October remained through the period (ph. J & GL) and was seen by hundreds of observers. It was Ontario's 5th ever and first since October 1970. Eight reports of overwintering Rufous-sided Towhees were received, numbering two at Pelee (AW), two in the Oshawa area (DDC et al.), singles in Scarborough (GMB) and Smithfield (RDM), and two in Ft. Erie Feb. 1–28 (RLS). Single Chipping Sparrows spent the period at feeders in Kitchener (NT, JBM), Pickering (JMS), and Ottawa (ph. B. Revie), and one turned up at Kitchener Jan. 1 (fide SRK) and another at St. Williams Feb. 1 (JBM). The Vesper Sparrow at Presqu'île Feb 6, providing a first winter record there (RDM, JJD), was perhaps the same one that dined at a feeder in nearby Smithfield Dec. 15–22 (RDM, DJM et al.). The **Lark Sparrow** that appeared at a Camden East feeder Nov. 30 was still present Feb. 28 (ph. P. Good et al.) and may have furnished Ontario's first overwintering record. The Savannah Sparrow at Long Pt., Dec. 3 (SH) was late as were the Fox Sparrow at Wawa Jan. 3 (G & SK), Lincoln's at Leamington Dec. 23 (MJ), and the Harris' at a Port Hope feeder Dec. 2 (ERM). The only "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco reported was at Cobourg Feb. 16 (BCO).

Rare for winter was the Red-winged Blackbird at a feeder near Dwight to Dec. 30 (PK). One Rusty Blackbird spent Jan. 21–Feb. 28 in the Ottawa area (BMD et al.) and another was at a Wawa feeder Feb. 7 (GE). The 260 were large numbers for Pelee Feb. 3 (AW). Grackles to overwinter successfully in the n were two in Kenora (SRM) and one in Virginiatown (JNi). Up to four were in Wawa Jan. 3–5 (G & SK, GE) and three in Minden Feb. 15 (RPi). Two N. Orioles lingered in the Cobourg-

Port Hope area into the first week of December (ERM) and at Elgin, near Kingston, to Dec. 21 (K. Sides). The Pine Grosbeak irruption of last autumn remained strong through the period from Atikokan e. to Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, and most of the south. The greatest numbers were in the s.e., but some reached Lambton, Middlesex, Haldimand-Norfolk, and Niagara. A shortage of wild seeds and fruit forced numbers to feeders in Kenora, Matachewan, Virginiatown, and Algonquin. By contrast, Purple Finches were virtually absent. Red and White-winged crossbills totalled only 24 and 26 respectively and were reported without any pattern in distribution, a dramatic change from the massive numbers of last winter. Common Redpolls were present almost everywhere and abundant in many locations. The extreme s.w. experienced a heavy influx led by 500 and 450 at Essex sites Jan. 3 & 5 (fide GTH), 1200 at Rondeau Jan. 1 (PAW), and a peak of 425 at Pelee Dec. 12 (AW et al), many of which likely passed farther S. Some 32 reports of Hoary Redpolls were received, normal during redpoll years. Most Pine Siskins had left the province by Christmas and the only location reporting numbers overwintering was Port Hope-Cobourg where up to 50 were at feeders (ERM). The single Eur. Goldfinches at Burlington late October to Jan. 25 (IR) and London Feb. 12–Mar. 7 (ph. TNH) were likely escapes. Evening Grosbeaks were scarce almost everywhere with observers in Kenora reporting the largest numbers (SRM).

CORRIGENDA — The Sabine's Gull assigned to Presqu'île P.P., Nov. 4, 1984 (AB 39:48) should be deleted (AGC).

The Marbled Godwit at Pelee (AB 39:294) was present May 14–28. The Hudsonian Godwit and 73 Little Gulls at Long Pt. (AB 39:907) were present July 28 (AW, AMcT, TS).

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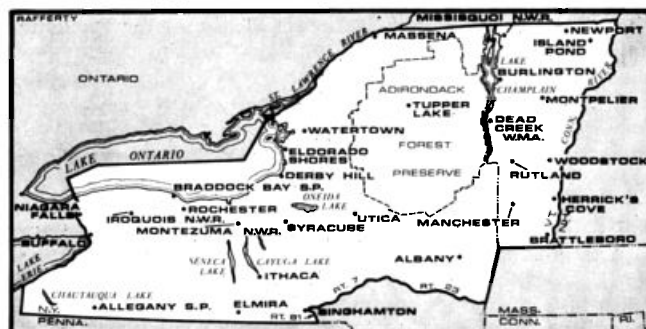
For the first time in many years the entire season truly qualified as winter. Many areas were snowclad the entire period and although a thaw occurred in January, it was too short and too early to induce a significant influx of early migrants. Despite the overall severity of the weather (many areas had two or more feet of snow the entire period), it was not extraordinarily cold, and there was no dearth of half-hardies. Rarer species, particularly westerners, were also well-represented.

LOONS THROUGH DUCKS — Several Red-throated Loons were found on the Great Lakes although the remainder of the Region went without. Higher than usual counts of Red-necked Grebes were evident at several locations, but it was an Eared Grebe in Dunkirk Harbor (TM, *fide* B.O.S.) that stole that family's show. The **Great Cormorant** at Rochester resurfaced repeatedly until Feb. 1 (R.B.A., G.O.S.), after which it either moved on or was lost among the Double-crested Cormorants that now attempt to overwinter. Observers who are becoming accustomed to Double-crested at all seasons should remember that the Great Cormorant is by far the hardier and, on maritime coasts, more common winter resident in the northeast. Fewer lingering Great Blue Herons were reported than usual although Black-crowned Night-Herons were sighted into January. Even more unusual was the Am. Bittern found injured on a snowy Fayston, Vt., roadside Dec. 12 (MQ, GM). Another, uninjured, in Clarendon was literally tracked down Jan. 18 (CF) at a spring-fed ditch.

Mute Swans, normally farther s. (or inside?) during this season, were present at at least 3 locations. Although most bodies of water were icebound much of the season and a blustery February retarded the waterfowl movements which in recent years have accompanied late winter thaws, a fine assortment of 31 species of waterfowl was reported. Wood Ducks were inexplicably common at many locations; 2 dozen were still present in mid-February at Webster (MR). Four Barrow's Goldeneyes were at the mouth of the Genesee R. (R.B.A.) and another at N. Hero S.P., Dec. 8 (WE, NM). An imm. Harlequin Duck graced Essex harbor Jan. 12-22 (*fide* MP). King Eiders were found at Oswego, Irondequoit Bay, and Niagara-on-the-Lake. Although most waterfowl counts were low, the latter location hosted upwards of 15,000 Oldsquaws in late December and 500 White-winged Scoters by mid-January (B.O.S.).

HAWKS THROUGH GAMEBIRDS — The Regional Turkey Vulture population increase is doubtless a factor in the frequency with which the species is now encountered during the winter months. About 50 were still present at Delmar Dec. 9 (RG) and there was at least one January report. Over 70 Bald Eagles have been released in the Region over the past decade. Consequently, winter sightings away from traditional concentration points continue to increase. There were more than 30 sightings reported this season, excluding 23 reports from the St. Lawrence River area, which hosts the majority of our wintering birds. The annual (since 1979) midwinter survey count was at an all-time high.

Relatively few N. Harriers or Rough-legged Hawks were present anywhere in the Region. While it is tempting to conclude that a low mouse population was the cause for the scarcity of both species, a variety of factors are probably involved. The N. Harrier, now considered a threatened species in New York, becomes even rarer in winters of high snowfall accumulation. Rough-legged Hawks are irruptive, their abundance at our latitude being inversely related to more northerly microtine populations. This year their scarcity was paralleled by



low numbers of Snowy Owls, Short-eared Owls, and N. Shrikes. Small accipiters were unusually abundant (e.g., up to a dozen on a single C.B.C.) but N. Goshawks stayed north. A Red-shouldered Hawk apparently wintered at Retsof (R.B.A.). Another at E. Glenville Feb. 2 (A & SS) was probably a very early migrant. Two Golden Eagles were reputedly seen at South Bay near Ft. Ann Jan. 27 (AK, *fide* RG). Normally a great winter rarity, Merlins pleased many by appearing at 3 areas near Rochester in December and January (R.B.A.). Peregrines, presumably Regionally-hacked birds, were sighted. A light Gyrfalcon was seen briefly near Bridgeport Dec. 21 (*fide* GH).

Ring-necked Pheasants remained very scarce, but reports of Gray Partridge were up, probably due to better coverage. Word was received of Wild Turkeys established on Grand Isle (DH). How they got there and whether they are the source of recent sightings in Quebec remains to be established. The species is now established throughout most of the Region, in many instances apparently beyond its historic range limits. The meteoric spread from initial release sites has been assisted by moderate winters and adaptation to existing agricultural practices (many flocks thrive on manure spread by northern dairy farmers).

RAILS THROUGH GULLS — This was not a good season for waders of any description. Only one Virginia Rail was found, at Greece (AS), despite searches at other traditional sites; but we wonder how many, inadvertently (but regularly) captured by muskrat trappers in the major marshes of the Region, are never reported. The only shorebirds hardy enough to brave this winter were Killdeer, Purple Sandpipers, Dunlin, Red Phalarope, and Com. Snipe, and even these were very scarce. Gulls offer many observers the only opportunity for exciting birding away from feeders (assuming dumps and sewage outfalls do not qualify as feeders). This time they outdid themselves, producing two jaegers and a Thayer's Gull plus an unusually fine assortment of the more usual rarities. While a Parasitic Jaeger at Braddock Bay Dec. 22 (JR, RS et al.) could have been an exceptionally late migrant, to call the **Pomarine Jaeger** at Buffalo Jan. 18-29 (B.O.S.) that would seriously stretch the imagination. The imm. Thayer's Gull at Minetto (MSR, *fide* PD) apparently was the only one convincingly identified. Other notables included the **Laughing Gull** that returned to Dunkirk Harbor (TM et al.), one Lesser Black-backed Gull at Niagara Falls through mid-December (B.O.S.) and another (?) at Conesus L., and Common Black-headed Gulls in Greece Dec. 5 (KG) and Oswego Dec. 29 (GW, *fide* PD). Perhaps the absence of exceptionally cold spells and the January thaw were responsible for the unusually late departure of the Little Gull concentration that occurs annually at Rochester. Up to 25 were present in January with the last stragglers leaving mid-February. White-winged gulls were in the usual low numbers while Great Black-backed Gulls continued their increase. Additional Regional breeding records of the latter seem inevitable.

DOVES THROUGH PARIDS — The steady increase in wintering Mourning Dove populations was well-reflected in the 1192 tallied on the Ferrisburg C.B.C. Whether these wintering birds represent a more successful segment of the overall population (e.g., those avoiding hunting pressure in s. states), or are simply responding to some environmental cue, remains to be resolved. Wintering doves often show signs of extreme cold stress (toes lost to frostbite), yet their increasing numbers indicate that it is a successful behavioral strategy. A single Com. Barn-Owl was reported, at New Baltimore Feb. 16 (RG). Although Great Horned Owl is generally the more frequently seen (= heard) owl on most C.B.C.s, witness the 33 on the Conesus-Hemlock-Honeoye Lake count, we still suspect E. Screech-Owl is the most abundant owl in the non-mountainous portions of the Region. Ferrisburg set a Vermont record with eight, and in New York, Rochester yielded 25. Snowy, Long-eared, Short-eared, and N. Saw-whet Owls were all scarce. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were unreported in Vermont but appeared to be holding their own in New York, where they exhibit a very patchy distribution despite their apparent hardiness. Red-headed Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and N. Flickers lingered in lower-than-usual numbers and only single Black-backed and Three-toed woodpeckers were sighted. The scarcity of the latter two species may be a result of snow cover that inhibited observer effort. An E. Phoebe at Burlington, Vt., Dec. 22 (WE, NM) was remarkable. Counts of Horned Larks were up, probably because complete snow cover concentrates them and makes them more conspicuous.

Many feeder watchers reported a plethora (plague?) of Blue Jays. As usual, however, no consensus of opinion could be reached, some observers in the w. tip of the Region citing a dearth of all feeder birds. Common Ravens were well reported although not in large concentrations. Fish Crows were found at Ithaca and the Colonie Landfill in January and March (KA, RG). The latter sightings make breeding along the Hudson River appear ever more likely. Only one extralimital Boreal Chickadee was reported, at Greece (JB *et al.*), and most counts within the species' limited Regional breeding range were lower than usual. Tufted Titmice continued to increase in numbers within their recently-expanded range.

NUTHATCHES THROUGH WARBLERS — Although the cone crop peaked last year, Red-breasted Nuthatches were still quite abundant, indicating their distribution may not be as tightly tied to conifer yields as is often believed. Winter Wrens, apparently recovered from recent winter kills, were seen on several C.B.C.s. While few, if any, probably survive even mild winters at our latitude, the number lingering is probably a crude reflection of general population conditions. Carolina Wren reports were also up. Four attempted to winter in Vermont. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet survived through February at a Parma suet feeder (PR). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Dec 8 at Catskill (RG) continued that species' string of late departures.

A Varied Thrush at Powell Sanctuary in late January (RG, KD, m.ob.) and one near Slaterville Springs in February (I &

MK) generated considerable interest. Although multiple occurrences were a relatively common occurrence a few years ago, they have been infrequent recently. Eastern Bluebirds were surprisingly abundant into January (e.g., maximum 15 at Canajoharie), particularly considering the relative scarcity of Am. Robins and Hermit Thrushes, which presumably eat many of the same winter foods.

There were early indications of a Bohemian Waxwing invasion that bypassed much of New York but resulted in a Vermont record count of 475 at Shelburne (WE, NM). Cedar Waxwings were fairly common but, as usual, localized. Only modest numbers of N. Shrikes were noted and no convincing reports of Loggerhead Shrikes were received. Warblers were, not unexpectedly, very scarce, although six species were found. Most notable were an Orange-crowned at Durand Eastman (JD *et al.*), a Yellow-throated at a Dryden feeder through Dec 13 (MB *et al.*), a Pine near Bridgeport through Dec. 15, and an imm. ♂ **American Redstart** in N. Syracuse the first week of January. The latter two were both photographed at feeders (*vide* PD).

GROSBEAKS THROUGH FINCHES — An imm. Rose-breasted Grosbeak brightened an Ithaca area feeder (WD *et al.*) in December. American Tree Sparrows set record counts in e. sectors but remained scarce farther west. Innumerable half-hardies were recorded, including at least three Savannah Sparrows, Savannahs, which seldom frequent feeders, probably linger in windswept fields far more often than available records reflect. Only small numbers of Lapland Longspurs were counted although flocks of up to 3000 Snow Buntings were found. A couple of N. Orioles attempted to winter in Vermont, one surviving until Jan. 4 in Proctorsville (TR), and a ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was present around Rochester through mid-February. The normal array, but lower than usual numbers, of half-hardy blackbirds wintered. The January thaw came too early to induce many to return.

Winter finches were represented by an invasion of Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls. Numerous Hoary Redpolls were also reported, some with relatively good details. Most other finches were very scarce, as were cones, but Am. Goldfinches flocked to feeders outside boreal areas. One weary Christmas Bird Count observer, however, best summarized the feeder situation as follows: "Ho hum, another feeder, another flock of House Finches."

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APPALACHIAN REGION

George A. Hall

Where have all the birdies gone? This question came in from one reporter and others may have felt the same way. It was a strange winter, but despite the low bird numbers in some places it was also an eventful one. The following account lists six boldfaced species, an unusually high number for this Region.

December was cooler than normal and drier, with minimum snowfall. Despite the cooler average temperature there were no hard cold spells. Both January and February were warmer than normal, January being drier and February wetter than normal. There were few big snowfalls in the north and none in the south.

The mild December induced many species to remain well past their normal departure dates, and many Christmas



Bird Counts had long lists and also record numbers of many species. Few of these species remained in the Region after the first of the year. During the colder part of the winter many observers found rather few birds at their feeders, and woodland birding was not especially rewarding. In the north most bodies of water froze up and waterfowl were scarce.

There was a nice influx of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Northern Shrikes, Evening Grosbeaks, redpolls, and Pine Siskins, but some of the usual wintering species such as the White-throated Sparrow, and in places the Northern Cardinal, were in low numbers.

There was little sign of the spring migration by the end of the period except in the far south. Several species that normally appear in late February had not appeared, and in the north the lakes were ice-locked.

ABBREVIATIONS — B.E.S.P. = Bald Eagle State Park, Pa.; P.I.S.P. = Presque Isle State Park, Pa.; P.N.R. = Powdermill Nature Reserve, Pa. Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — The Red-throated Loon reported in Augusta, Va., in the autumn report remained until Dec. 2 (RS), and on Dec. 3 what may have been the same bird was seen in nearby Rockingham (m.ob.). One was seen at Chattanooga, Tenn., Dec. 1 (m.ob.); the only reports of Com. Loons were from Bath, Va., Dec. 5 (LT), Elizabethton, Tenn. (GE), and Chattanooga, Tenn. (RRu). Horned Grebes were reported more frequently than normal with a count of 250 at Pymatuning L., Pa., Dec. 7 (RFL, ML). Unusual for the Region were reports of Red-necked Grebes from B.E.S.P., Pa., Dec. 15 (PS); Watauga L., Tenn., Dec. 18 and Jan. 15 (RC, RK); Lock Haven, Pa., Feb. 11 (PS); and State College, Pa., Feb. 18–21 (MW).

Double-crested Cormorants were reported at P.I.S.P., Pa., to Jan. 5 (SS, JM), Boone L., Tenn., Dec. 2 (RK), Huntington, W.Va., to Jan. 1 (TI), and Charleston, W.Va., Jan. 4 (GH). A freshly-dead Am. Bittern was at P.I.S.P., Jan. 4 (LS). There were many more reports of Great Blue Herons than usual for winter, including about 30 that remained at Presque Isle Bay, Pa., until early February even though it was frozen over (JM). By the end of the period a single heron returned to each of 3 Mercer, Pa., heronries (EB). One or two Great Egrets remained at Fort Loudoun L., Tenn., until Dec. 21 (JH, JO, PP). A Black-crowned Night-Heron was at State College, Pa., on the late date of Dec. 7 (TS).

WATERFOWL — A few Tundra Swans were still in the Region in late December. One remained at State College, Pa.,

all winter (MW). Swans at Wood, W.Va., Dec. 4 (JE) and Knoxville, Dec. 21 (K.T.O.S.) were somewhat out of normal range. One or two Snow Geese were present throughout the period at Pymatuning L., Pa. (RFL, SS), and one blue-phase bird (Dec. 22) and three whites (Dec. 8) were found at Mosquito L., O. (CB). At Pymatuning L., Pa., the 14,000 Canada Geese at the start of the winter were reduced to about 8000 at the end of the period, where 6000 would be normal (RFL). On the other hand, at Mosquito Lake, O., only about 6000 were present in December compared with 13,000 and 16,000 the past 2 years (CB).

The reports of most ducks were mixed: at Presque Isle Bay, Pa., wintering numbers were 70% below last year (JM), and they were in low numbers in Augusta, Va. (RS), but at Warren, Pa., Buffleheads, Hooded Mergansers, and Com. Mergansers were in record numbers on the C.B.C. (WH) and numbers were up at Huntington, W.Va. (LW). Some of the more unusual records follow. Fifty to 75 Gadwalls were present at P.I.S.P. throughout the period (JM). The seldom-reported Greater Scaup was found at Somerset L., Pa., Dec. 2 (RM), Swannanoa, N.C., Dec. 21 (RR), and Ft. Loudon L., Tenn., Feb. 27 (AK). Oldsquaws were reported from Huntington, W.Va., Jan. 12 (TI) and Watauga L., Tenn., Feb. 15 (RC). A Black Scoter was at Avis, Pa., Dec. 7 (PS), and up to six were at P.I.S.P., Dec. 14–15 (TS, SS); three White-winged Scoters were at Knoxville, Tenn., Dec. 21 (K.T.O.S.), and up to five were at P.I.S.P., Jan. 20 (JM, DD); Surf Scoters were found at P.I.S.P., Dec. 12–14 (SS, TS), Kyger Creek, O., Dec. 7 (MG), Bath, Va., Dec. 5–7 (LT), and on the Watauga R. near Elizabethton, Tenn., Feb. 16 (GE, GW).

RAPTORS — A Black Vulture was seen in Buncombe, N.C., Feb. 26 (RR). The only report of Osprey came from Guilford L., O., Dec. 8 (MB). It was a great winter for Bald Eagles, found in 12 areas from P.I.S.P. (JM) in the north to the Chattahoochee N.F., Ga. (LC), in the south. Of special interest were the several wintering along the Ohio R. from Marshall to Cabell, W.Va., and one or 2 records away from large streams or bodies of water. It was also a great season for N. Harriers, which were more widely reported than in any winter within memory. Of note were the 10 on the Lock Haven, Pa., C.B.C. (PS), and the seven on a strip mine in Armstrong, Pa. (R & MH). Reports of N. Goshawks were not unusual from n.w. Pennsylvania: Butler Dec. 21 (GWi), Pymatuning L., Jan. 11 (RFL), Stone Valley Jan. 29 (MF), and Akeley Feb. 1 (BH), but the reports from Tennessee were noteworthy: Knoxville Dec. 21 (first county record—CN, DH) and Chattanooga Jan. 21 and Feb. 21 (RRu). Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks apparently were in excellent numbers, unless the increased number of reports of these birds at feeding stations simply indicated a general food scarcity in the wild. There were more reports of Red-shouldered Hawks wintering in the area than is normal, and Red-tailed Hawks were in good numbers. A Broad-winged Hawk was reported at Salem, O., Feb. 22 (M & WB), and another was seen in Whitfield, Ga., Feb. 11–12 (DC). Rough-legged Hawks were in above-average numbers and were seen as far s. as Monterey (LT) and Roanoke, Va. (BK).

A Golden Eagle was brought to a rehabilitation center at Weyer's Cave, Va., Dec. 23 (RS). There were 5 sightings of Golden Eagles in Highland, Va., during December and January (LT), and four were listed on the Franklin, W.Va., C.B.C. (fide LW). More unusual were the ones at Pipestem State Resort, W.Va., Feb. 12 & 19 (JP) and at West Alexander, Pa., in late December (M & PM). Several observers reported unusually good numbers of Am. Kestrels. Merlins were reported from Stuart's Draft, Va., Dec. 7 (SR), Erie, Pa., Feb. 12 (first winter record) (TK), Youngstown, O., Feb. 22 (R & DL) and possibly the same bird at New Garden, O., Feb. 23 (L & DHa), and from Botetourt, Va., Feb. 22 (BA, JV).

RAILS THROUGH GULLS — An exhausted Purple Gallinule was picked up Feb. 9 at Blacksburg, Va. (Roanoke Times).

Four Sandhill Cranes were reported from the Chattanooga area Jan 20 (RRu), 62 were seen in Knox, Tenn., Feb. 20 (WS), and several flocks were in *Whitfield* and *Murray*, Ga., in late February with 100 seen on the 18th (*vide* HD).

Winter is not the time for shorebirds in this Region but this year there were several unusual sightings: Greater Yellowlegs, *Augusta*, Va., Jan. 13–Feb. 24 (MHe); Lesser Yellowlegs, *Kyger Creek*, O., Dec. 7 (MG); Solitary Sandpiper, three at *New Hope*, Va., Dec. 1 (SR); Dunlin, 10 in *Jefferson*, Tenn., Dec. 7 (AK); and dowitcher (sp.), *Knoxville*, Dec. 21 (HO, RW). Wintering Com. Snipe were in normal numbers at most regular places.

An imm. **Parasitic Jaeger** was at P.I.S.P., Dec. 21 & 28 (SS, CM, DF). On Dec. 16 some 200,000 gulls, of which 35,000 were Bonaparte's, were at *Presque Isle Bay*, Pa. (JM). Oddly, there were no white-winged gulls in this assemblage. Later in the season the white-winged appeared and were present at *Erie* until the end of the period, with nine Glaucous Gulls and seven Iceland Gulls present Feb. 15 (LS). A first-year Thayer's Gull was at *Erie*, Dec. 1 (JM) and what was probably a different bird was there Feb. 16 & 23 (SS). An apparent Glaucous x Herring hybrid was in *Presque Isle Bay*, Feb. 15–23 (LS, JM). Gull records elsewhere were highlighted by a **Black-legged Kittiwake** at *Ft. Loudon Dam*, Tenn., Dec. 15–17 (MD), and a Franklin's Gull at the same place Dec. 12 (MD). Bonaparte's Gulls were also reported from *Mosquito L.*, O., Dec. 1 (CB), *Boone L.*, Tenn., Dec. 21 (RK), and *Stuart's Draft*, Va., Dec. 27 (SR). A Laughing Gull was at *Blacksburg*, Va., Feb. 16 (CA).

CUCKOOS THROUGH NUTHATCHES — A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found dead at *Swannanoa*, N.C., Dec. 5 (RR).

It was an unusual winter for owls. Five nestings of Com. Barn-Owls were located at *Rockingham*, Va. (R.B.C.), and one in *Augusta*, Va. (RS). Snowy Owls were reported from *Pymatuning L.*, Pa., Dec. 29 and *Saegertown*, Pa., Jan. 6 (RFL) and from *Raccoon Creek S.P.*, Pa., Dec. 26 (LSm). Most remarkable was a good description of a **Northern Hawk-Owl** at *Union*, *Monroe*, W.Va. (*vide* GF), and another unverified report of this species from *Columbiana*, O. (*vide* NL). Long-eared Owls were reported from *State College*, Pa., where 2 roosts contained 13 birds through the period (TS), from *Smithton*, Pa., Jan. 1 (RT), from P.I.S.P., Jan. 5 (JM), and from *Youngstown*, O., Feb. 22 (R & DL). Short-eared Owls were unusually numerous: 11 on the strip mine in *Westmoreland*, Pa. (R & MH), eight at *L. Chilisquaque*, Pa., Feb. 27 (SSt), as many as five at the *Roanoke Airport* through the latter one-half of the period (*vide* BK), and four near *State College*, Pa., in mid-January (TS). Single records came from B.E.S.P., all winter (TS), and P.I.S.P., Jan. 19 (AE). A special effort at *State College*, Pa., located 92 N. Saw-whet Owls in 20 areas (JP), and one was seen at *Salem*, O., Dec. 20 (MB).

There were more reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers than usual, although no area had very many. At *Warren*, Pa., a record high 13 Pileated Woodpeckers were counted on the C B C. and there were at least 8 additional sightings (WH).

There were several records of E. Phoebes in December but only one later in the period (at *Huntington*, W.Va.—TI), but perhaps the record of the season was of a **Say's Phoebe** found at *Hightown*, Va., Jan. 17 (BP), seen later by many observers and still present at the end of the period. The bird was feeding on insects active around a warm chimney. Horned Larks were unusually abundant with 2200 counted on the *Lock Haven C B C*. (PS), and the 298 on the *Butler C.B.C.* (GW) and the 34 on the *Knoxville*, Tenn., C.B.C. (K.T.O.S.) were also record numbers. At *Shenandoah N.P.*, 693 Blue Jays were counted on the C.B.C. (DCa). At least 4 mated pairs of Com. Ravens were present in the *Warren*, Pa., region (WH).

It was a good but not spectacular year for Red-breasted Nuthatches. Reports came from throughout the Region, but no location could boast of very many. Several observers commented that they were common at feeders but hard to find in the "wild". At *Lock Haven*, Pa., 80 White-breasted Nuthatches were a C.B.C. record (PS). Brown-headed Nuthatches were ob-

served on the *Blue Ridge Parkway* near *Asheville*, N C., Dec. 21 (AB) and small numbers occurred in places near *Chattanooga*, Tenn. (RRu).

WRENS THROUGH VIREOS — The Carolina Wren seemed to be doing well as the winter started and early-season numbers were high, but no assessment came in as to numbers late in the season. Two Bewick's Wrens were reported from *Whitfield*, Ga., Dec. 21 (K & JS), and House Wrens were reported from *Ona*, W.Va., Dec. 20 (LW), *Botetourt*, Va., Dec. 21 (JV), and *New Market Battlefield*, Va., Mar. 2 (DCa). Ruby-crowned Kinglets were more common than usual for winter.

Both E. Bluebirds and Am. Robins were unusually numerous throughout the season at most places. Hermit Thrushes were also in good numbers and one at *Erie*, Pa., Jan. 9 (LS) was well n. of the usual range. More unusual was the Wood Thrush at B.E.S.P., Pa., Dec. 7 (TS). A Gray Catbird was seen at P.I.S.P., Dec. 14 (TS) and two were found in *Allegheny*, Pa., Dec. 28 (JVa), and a Brown Thrasher was at *Vienna*, W.Va., Dec. 28 (LR). Northern Mockingbirds were found as far n. as *Sheffield*, Pa. (NS), *Crawford*, Pa. (CNi), *Pittsburgh* (KP), and *Lock Haven* (PS).

Water Pipits were unusually numerous with many flocks of over 100 reported from throughout the Region. Northern Shrikes were reported from *Allegheny*, Pa., Dec. 28 (PH, AO), *Rector*, Pa., Dec. 28 (DS), *Linesville*, Pa., Dec. 29 (RFL), and *Union City*, Pa., Feb. 14 (DP). There were more reports of Log-headed Shrikes than can be individually reported. Numbers in the *Great Valley* of Virginia and the valleys of e. Tennessee were most encouraging, and one was reported near *Huntington*, W.Va. (TI). A Solitary Vireo was at *Kingsport*, Tenn., Dec. 7 (RK).

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES — Besides the usual Yellow-rumped Warblers that wintered as far n. as *Sheffield*, Pa. (TG) and *Clarksville*, Pa. (RB), Palm Warblers were found at *Whitfield*, Ga., Dec. 21 (HD), *Kingsport*, Tenn., Dec. 22, *Jonesboro*, Tenn., Dec. 23 (RK), *Norris*, Tenn., Dec. 29 (BS), and *Waynesboro*, Va., Dec. 30 (RS). More unusual were the Orange-crowned Warbler at *Knoxville* from Feb. 15 to the end of the period (LF), the Yellow Warbler at *Knoxville* (mentioned in the fall season report) that remained until Dec. 11 (MD), and the Cape May Warbler in *Wood*, W.Va., Dec. 17–Jan. 19 (JC).

Many observers felt that fewer N. Cardinals than usual were coming to their feeders, but about as many observers thought that there had been no decline in cardinals. Most unusual was the **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** (ph.) that came to a feeder in *Rowlesburg*, W.Va., for several days in mid-February (GFe). An Indigo Bunting was at a feeder at *Waynesboro*, Va., from Feb. 21 on (MHe).

There were many more December records than usual for such things as Chipping Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows, Fox Sparrows, and Swamp Sparrows. Field Sparrows were not very numerous, and once again Am. Tree Sparrows were very scarce, except that P.N.R. reported the best wintering population in years (RCL). Most places found White-throated Sparrows to be less common than they had been in recent years. A Lincoln's Sparrow was seen at *Guilford L.*, O., Jan. 18 (M & WB). "Oregon" Juncos were at *Stone Valley*, Pa., Jan. 30 (JPs) and at *University Park*, Pa., Feb. 18 (TS). The only reports of Lapland Longspur came from near *State College*, Pa., where some remained through February (HH, CS). Snow Buntings were numerous in the n. part of the Region and occurred as far s. as *Somerset*, Pa. (AM), and *Washington*, O. (LR).

Rusty Blackbirds were more widely reported than usual, but in general the wintering blackbirds were below normal in numbers.

Evening Grosbeaks staged their best flight in recent years, but it was not as heavy as in some past years. They occurred throughout the Region but distribution was spotty and some areas had only small numbers. Pine Siskins were also distributed throughout the area, but nowhere were the numbers great

and they were missing at many places Purple Finches were on the uncommon side and some observers wondered about the effect of the increasing House Finch populations on the Purple Finch.

There was a small influx of Pine Grosbeaks around State College, Pa., where up to six birds were seen off and on Dec. 21–Feb. 8 (TS *et al.*). The only other report was of one at Pymatuning L., Pa., Jan. 26 (SS). Red Crossbills were seen at 2 places on Shenandoah Mt., Va., where they are known to nest and seem to be permanent residents (R.B.C.). Elsewhere reports came from Highland, Va., on several occasions (LT), Waynesboro, Va., Jan. 31 and Feb. 27 (RS), Chattahoochee N.F., Ga., Dec. 19 and Feb. 13 (HD), and Watauga L., Tenn., Jan. 24 (RC). A small flock of White-winged Crossbills was at Ligonier, Pa., Jan. 13 (HS) and one was seen at Oak Ridge, Tenn., Dec. 20 & 30 and Jan. 18 (ph. LP, CS). Common Redpolls were unusually numerous at almost all w. Pennsylvania locations, even as far s as Somerset.

EXOTICS—The Ruddy Shelducks previously reported from Guilford L., O. (WB) and Kyger Creek, O. (TI) remained at these locations.

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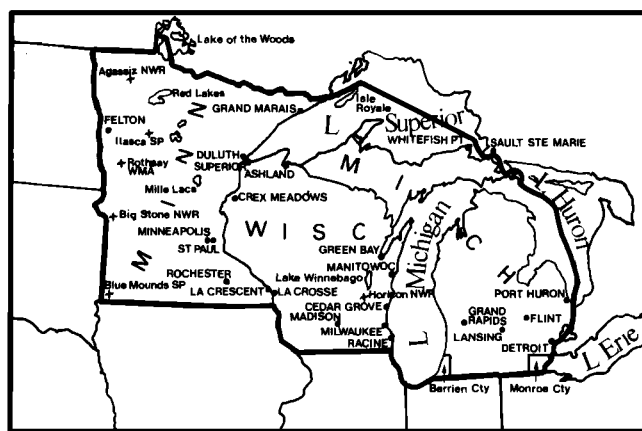
WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

David J. Powell

This winter reversed the pattern of last year, with snow and cold early and mild weather late. December was very cold with temperatures as much as 10 to 15 degrees below normal. An example of how abnormally cold it was came from Kalamazoo County, Michigan, where Gull Lake, a large deep inland lake, was completely frozen over by mid-December, the earliest in at least 30 years. Snowfall was also well above normal in Michigan and Wisconsin, with a blizzard November 30 to December 1 getting the season off to a smashing start. The extreme cold continued into early January, with temperatures of -32 at Isabella and -35 at International Falls, Minnesota, on January 7. After this, however, came a January thaw which sent temperatures into the 50s south and 40s north. At the end of January, temperatures returned to winter-like and it remained cold through February. This winter for the first time in several years the cold was not accompanied by strong winds, so the -50 to -70 wind chills of recent winters were avoided. However, because of the early and cold start to winter, it seemed to last "forever."

Observers from all three states commented on the lack of birds in general and rarities in particular. It seems like years since there has been a season when observers commented on an abundance of birds or rarities. The best birds of the season were cooperative western vagrants, a Black-headed Grosbeak in Wisconsin, and a Green-tailed Towhee in Michigan. Also impressive was the number of Black-backed and Three-toed woodpeckers in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

In the following account, place names in *italics> are counties. Also, only the most exceptional Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.) data are included in an effort to reduce duplication.*



LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL—Common Loons were scarce this winter with only a few reports, none after December. Horned Grebes lingered into January at 2 Michigan locations: Jan. 4 in Bay (TW) and Jan. 14 in Ottawa (GW). The only Red-necked Grebe of the season was one Dec. 10 at Holland, Ottawa, Mich. (KK). An Eared Grebe was seen on the Petoskey, Mich., C.B.C. A W. Grebe was at Reeds L., Kent, Mich., Dec. 4–11 (JM, m.ob.). An Am. White Pelican remained until the very late date of Dec. 8 at Albert Lea, Minn. (RG). Double-crested Cormorants have become increasingly common Regionwide. As might be expected, this increase has resulted in more winter records in the Region. This winter, there were 3 reports from Michigan, with one Jan. 1 at Monroe (KO) the latest, and birds overwintered at Green Bay, Wis. (two) and Rochester, Minn. (one). As usual, Great Blue Herons lingered in both s. Michigan and s. Wisconsin, with several overwin-

tering in s. Michigan. More unusual was the flock (up to 28) of Black-crowned Night-Herons at a power plant outflow in Monroe, Mich., with at least eight surviving until Feb. 22 (KO).

Waterfowl were generally uncommon, probably due to the early freeze-up of most water. Tundra Swans wintered in both Michigan and Wisconsin, but the numbers that normally linger along the Mississippi R. in Wisconsin were absent this year. Mute Swans continue to increase in the Region, with overwintering birds in 6 Wisconsin counties, and the flock that winters in Kalamazoo, Mich., reaching an all-time high of 218 in January (DP). Greater White-fronted Geese lingered until Dec. 20 at Rochester, Minn. (JB), and Jan. 1 in Hennepin, Minn. (AB). Snow Geese overwintered at Oshkosh, Wis. (TZ), and Allegan, Mich. The "Black" Brant that appeared at Manitowoc this fall remained until Dec. 7 (CS et al.). Despite the weather, Canada Geese were found in their usual numbers in s. Michigan and Wisconsin. A Blue-winged Teal lingered until Jan. 10 at Racine, Wis. (GD). Harlequin Ducks were found at 2 Michigan and one Wisconsin location. Black Scoters were reported in December from 3 Michigan locations. Surf Scoters were seen Dec. 7 in Ozaukee, Wis. (JBa), and Dec. 11 in Macomb, Mich. (DL). A flock of 100 Buffleheads found in Ottawa, Mich. (JM, PC), was surprisingly large for mid-winter.

RAPTORS — Accipiters of all three species were regularly reported in Wisconsin, but there numbers were felt to be average, the higher number of reports being due to the heavy snow cover forcing birds to feeders. Red-tailed Hawks wintered in good numbers in s.w. Michigan. One Feb. 21 in Marquette, Mich. (NI), was well n. of normal. Rough-legged Hawks were down in Minnesota, but more common than last winter in Michigan, with some wintering even in the Upper Peninsula. Three to five Golden Eagles wintered in the area of Monroe, Juneau, and Jackson, Wis. An imm. Golden Eagle was seen in the Allegan S.G.A., Mich., in February. Single Merlins were at 4 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations, with at least five in Minnesota, two or three spending the winter at the Duluth/Superior harbor. An ad. Peregrine Falcon overwintered in the Duluth/Superior harbor. It was felt that this was probably the same bird as last year, one of the birds hacked out in Cook, Minn., in 1984. Single sightings of Peregrine Falcons were Dec. 1 in Monroe, Mich. (TK et al.), and Jan. 26 in Ottawa, Mich. (KK). The only Gyrfalcon of the winter was a gray bird Feb. 26 in Wisconsin's Dane (ST). I suppose it is only appropriate, after my comments last winter that the Duluth/Superior harbor area was the best place to see Gyrfalcons in the lower 48, that this winter there would be none there for the first time since the winter of 1978-1979. Oh well!! Continuing the pattern of recent winters, several Prairie Falcons were found in Minnesota: two all winter in Moorhead (m.ob.); and for the 4th consecutive winter, one wintered at Rothsay W.M.A. (S & DM).

GROUSE THROUGH GULLS — Spruce Grouse were found in the same spots in Lake, Minn., as last winter, but they were not as reliable as last year, probably due to increased logging truck traffic. A Virginia Rail was found Jan. 19 in Hennepin, Minn. (TT), for only about the 4th winter record for the state, and particularly surprising this winter. A Sora lingered at Metrobeach, Macomb, Mich., until Dec. 25 (fide PY). A Purple Sandpiper was found along L. Michigan near Milwaukee Dec. 5-7, first at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center (MB) then for 2 days at McKinley Beach (MD, JI, DT et al.). A Parasitic Jaeger was near Port Huron, Mich., during the count period of the Port Huron C.B.C. A Laughing Gull found Feb. 8 at Grand Haven, Ottawa, Mich. (JM), provided one of the few winter sightings ever of this rare/regular species. The only Iceland Gulls of the winter were one Jan. 1-2 in Marquette, Mich. (NI, TR, GB); an immature Jan. 26 in Bay, Mich. (TW); and an adult Feb. 22 in Muskegon, Mich. (JM, PC). Thayer's Gulls were found in all 3 states, two in Minnesota, three in Wisconsin, and three or four in Michigan. Glaucous Gulls were fairly common on lakes Michigan and Huron with approximately 29 different individuals reported, a maximum of 11 on Jan. 4 in Michigan's



Purple Sandpiper at Milwaukee, Wis., Dec. 7, 1985. Photo/Tom Schultz.

Bay (TW, CF). Glaucous Gulls were also seen in early December in Minnesota (three) and early January on L. Superior at Marquette, Mich. (four). A Great Black-backed Gull at Marquette, Mich. (NI, TR, GB) was n. of normal. At least three and maybe as many as five Great Black-backed Gulls were in Michigan's Ottawa in late January-early February (PC, JM, KK), where they are considered uncommon. A Black-legged Kittiwake was found during the count period of the Port Huron, Mich., C.B.C. An imm. Sabine's Gull was found at Erie, Monroe, Mich., Dec. 1 (TK et al.).

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Two Com. Barn-Owls roosted in a barn in Polk, Wis., at least through December. This species has all but disappeared in the Region in recent years. Minnesota observers found Great Horned Owls more common this winter, especially in towns. Snowy Owls were very scarce Regionwide, as they were last winter. Northern Hawk-Owls were found in all 3 states, but the only one found in Minnesota was found dead in Wadena. Wisconsin's hawk-owl was seen in late December w. of Brule (BK), for one of the few state records. Michigan's hawk-owl, the first since 1979, was extremely cooperative, as it spent the entire season in the same general spot in Chippewa and was seen by many from various parts of the country. Barred Owls were found in larger than normal numbers in Minnesota, particularly in towns. Great Gray Owls were scarcer than normal, with only 4 Minnesota and 2 Michigan reports. Long-eared Owls were scarce in both Michigan and Wisconsin, but a roost found in Wayne, Mich., in late February contained up to 11 birds (fide JF). Short-eared Owls remained very scarce in Michigan and Wisconsin. The only Boreal Owl reported was one Feb. 16 in Cook, Minn. (DB). Many more N. Saw-whet Owls were reported than normal, with reports from 3 Michigan, 4 Wisconsin, and 6 Minnesota locations, with five or six in the Duluth area. By comparison, last winter there were only 3 reports for the entire Region.

A Belted Kingfisher overwintered in Marquette, Mich. (NI), well n. of normal for winter. Three-toed Woodpeckers staged what for them would be considered an invasion, with at least 15 in Minnesota and three in Wisconsin (more showed up in the spring), the southernmost individual being one in Isanti, Minn. (RG). Black-backed Woodpeckers were also more common than average in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Unfortunately, Michigan observers were not treated to a similar treat, as only one Three-toed Woodpecker was reported in the state, and it did not stay.



Three-toed Woodpecker n.w. of Medford, Wis., Feb. 8, 1986. Photo/John Idzikowski.

JAYS THROUGH WARBLERS — Again this winter Gray Jays were more common than normal in Minnesota, with individuals as far s. as Ramsey and as far w. as Kittson. Black-capped Chickadees were seen in good numbers this winter Regionwide, except in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Conversely, Boreal Chickadees were scarce. Red-breasted Nuthatches were down in numbers in Wisconsin. Carolina Wrens were found at 4 Michigan locations, more than in the last couple of years. Winter Wrens were seen more frequently in Michigan this winter. One was found in Houston, Minn., Jan. 1 (FL); there are few mid-winter records in Minnesota. Marsh Wrens overwintered in Macomb and Monroe, Mich. Golden-crowned Kinglets were very scarce in Wisconsin. Three E. Bluebirds overwintered near Mankato, Minn. (m.ob.); there are very few mid-winter records for Minnesota. The Townsend's Solitaire that appeared Nov. 24 in Door, Wis., remained until Jan. 5 (R & CL et al.). Varied Thrushes were reported from 3 Minnesota, 4 Wisconsin, and one Michigan locations, slightly fewer than normal. Out-of-range N. Mockingbirds were at Port Washington, Wis., Dec. 7 (DT) and Lake, Minn., Feb. 18 (LW). A Brown Thrasher lingered until Jan. 25 at the far n. location of Finland, Lake, Minn. (fide SW/MS). A Water Pipit was found Dec. 18 in Macomb, Mich. (fide PY). Bohemian Waxwings were widespread in the Region, with individuals as far s. and e. as s.e. Michigan. Although no huge flocks were reported, flocks of 30–100 were not uncommon. After several lean years, N. Shrikes were found more commonly than normal throughout the Region. In Minnesota, by January, most of the shrikes had moved into towns, where prey seemed to consist almost entirely of birds. This paralleled the Great Horned and Barred owls there. The only Loggerhead Shrike report of the season was of one on the Alpena, Mich., C.B.C. Minnesota had its first reports of non-Yellow-rumped warblers for winter with Pine Warblers lingering into early January in Minneapolis and until Feb. 14 in Austin, both at feeders. A Pine Warbler was also at a feeder in Grand Rapids, Mich., Dec. 19–Feb. 1 (JM).

GROSBEAKS THROUGH FINCHES — A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak survived until Jan. 30 in Taylor, Wis. (m.ob.). Mich-



Black-headed Grosbeak at Butler, Wis., Feb. 15, 1986. Photo/John Idzikowski.

igan and Wisconsin birders were treated to a pair of very cooperative rarities this winter: a young ♂ **Black-headed Grosbeak** at the Hernday feeder in Butler, Waukesha, Wis., early January into March was seen and photographed by many; similarly, a **Green-tailed Towhee** at a Sylvan Lake, Oakland, Mich., feeder throughout the winter was also seen and photographed by many. After last winter's unfortunate Green-tailed Towhee in Michigan, it is a pleasure to report on these two birds. A Rufous-sided Towhee was in Olmstead, Minn., Feb. 1 (fide JB), for one of the few mid-winter records for the state. American Tree Sparrows were noted as down in numbers in Wisconsin. A Field Sparrow lingered to the late date of Dec. 23 in Rochester, Minn. (AP). Five Fox Sparrows were found in Michigan during the winter, more than normal. Song Sparrows were quite scarce in Michigan and Wisconsin, but two lingered later than normal in n. Minnesota. A Lincoln's Sparrow lingered until Dec. 24 in Allegan, Mich. (SM, DS). White-throated Sparrows were at their usual levels in Wisconsin, but Michigan observers found them more common than normal. A White-crowned Sparrow survived the winter at a feeder in Mountain Lake, Minn. (fide LF), for one of Minnesota's few successful overwinterings. Harris' Sparrows were more common at feeders in Minnesota than in most winters, with one as far n. as Thief River Falls until Feb. 10 (JJ). Dark-eyed Juncos were scarcer than usual in Minnesota. Michigan and Wisconsin observers found Lapland Longspurs few and far between. Conversely, Snow Buntings were found in large numbers statewide in Wisconsin until mid-January and were locally very common in Minnesota, with an impressive 11,161 found on the Baudette C.B.C.

Blackbirds were noted as being down in numbers in Minnesota and Wisconsin, but were in normal numbers in Michigan. The first returnees were found in late February, but they remained scarce into early March. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was at the Sarett Nature Center in Berrien, Mich., Feb. 6 (DSc, CN). There were at least 4 reports of Rusty Blackbirds in Michigan's Berrien during the period (RS), more than normal. No fewer than 10 Brown-headed Cowbirds were still in Nicollet, Minn., Jan. 17 (JFr), where even one would be unusual in mid-winter. A N. Oriole was at a feeder in Grand Rapids, Mich., Dec. 11–24 (JM).

The winter finch picture for the Region was decidedly mixed. Pine Grosbeaks were found in excellent numbers in s. Michigan and n. Wisconsin, with good numbers found in n. Michigan and s. Wisconsin. Minnesota birders found them to be in average numbers, but fewer than normal out in the woods. Purple Finches were very common statewide in Wisconsin until mid-January, but were very scarce in Michigan. Crossbills were generally scarce this winter, particularly in Michigan. White-

wingeds were reported from only 7 locations Regionwide, and Reds were only reported from 20–25 locations, with very few birds at any one location. Common Redpolls were very common in Michigan and Wisconsin in December, however, only fair numbers remained after mid-January. In Minnesota, Common Redpolls were in average numbers, with low numbers in the n. offset by high numbers in the south. All 3 states reported scattered sightings of Hoary Redpolls essentially throughout, with the numbers about what would be expected considering the large numbers of Commons. Pine Siskins were scarce Regionwide, particularly in the n., where they were so common last winter. Evening Grosbeaks were more common this winter than last, but were certainly not abundant. In Michigan, most apparently moved through as few were seen in January or February, while in Minnesota, they were down in the n., but up in the south.

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MIDDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

Bruce G. Peterjohn

The winter of 1985–1986 closely resembled a number of recent winters. Its weather patterns consisted of contrasting extremes. December was unusually cold, in fact, it was the coldest month of the season with temperatures averaging 5 to 9 degrees below normal in most areas. Precipitation was nearly normal. The cold temperatures froze most lakes and signalled an end to the fall migration. Temperatures moderated during the last one-half of January and climbed into the 60s in southern portions of the Region. This thaw caused temperatures to average 3 to 5 degrees above normal for the month while precipitation was generally below normal. February fluctuated between unusually warm weather one week and unusually cold the next. Precipitation varied considerably but was generally heaviest in the western states.

As is true during most winters, the birding was rather dull. A few northern birds appeared in considerable numbers, particularly Northern Shrikes and Common Redpolls, as well as Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks in several states. However, there were few exceptional rarities to create much excitement. The moderating temperatures initiated an early start to spring migration, especially among waterfowl as early as mid-January. Other early migrants, including Killdeer, Horned Larks, longspurs, Snow Buntings, and blackbirds, were quite apparent by the end of February.

ABBREVIATIONS — O.W.R. = Ottawa Nat'l Wildlife Ref., O.; Spfld. = Springfield, Ill. To avoid unnecessary repetition, only the most exceptional Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.) observations were incorporated into this summary. *Italicized* place names are counties.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Red-throated Loons regularly linger into early December but there have been few mid-winter records during recent years. Hence, one at Oregon, O., Jan. 4 was quite unusual (†TK et al.). A **Pacific Loon** at Huron Dec. 7–10 provided a long-overdue first acceptable record for Ohio (†KA, †JP et al., m.ob.). Small numbers of Com. Loons tarried through Jan. 12–19 in 3 states but none wintered. One at Iowa City Dec. 21–Jan. 6 was unusually late for Iowa where there are few records after early December (T et al.). Horned Grebes were widespread during December with a maximum of 100 along L. Erie. Very few wintered with only



3 January sightings in Illinois. Early migrants were widespread following the warm weather of Feb. 8+, including a hen-pecked grebe rescued from a Madison, Ia., chicken coop Feb. 12 (fide E & EA). Red-necked Grebes may appear anytime during the winter season as evidenced by singles at Oberlin Res., O., Dec. 8 (JM) and Spfld., Jan. 5–10 and Feb. 22 (H). Migrant Eared Grebes remained along L. Erie and in Missouri through Dec. 6–8. Since wintering Eareds are accidental in all states, singles at Baldwin L., Ill., Jan. 10–11 (†TF et al.) and all winter at Springfield, Mo. (CB), were remarkable. No Am. White Pelicans were reported. While the expected small numbers of migrant Double-crested Cormorants were noted during December and late February, fewer wintered with only single January sightings from Illinois and Missouri plus two at Eastlake, O., through Feb. 1 [m.ob.].

Great Blue Herons were widespread with a maximum of 50 along w. Lake Erie. The cold late November weather forced most lingering herons to depart although a Great Egret remained at O.W.R., Dec. 1. However, more Black-crowned Night-Herons were noted this winter. In addition to their regular E. St. Louis, Ill., and Toledo, O., wintering locations, as many as six wintered at Hammond, Ind. (KB), while Louisville hosted four during December and two Feb. 26 (BP) and singles appeared at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., Dec. 23 (DR) and Lorain, O., Feb. 9 (MG).

WATERFOWL — The Tundra Swan migration across the Great Lakes states continued into December with maxima of 108 in n. Indiana and 177 along w. Lake Erie. Fewer wintered,

with January reports limited to one to five scattered along L. Erie plus singles at one s.w. Ohio and 2 Illinois locations. Early migrants appeared with February's warm weather including extralimital swans at 3 c. Illinois sites plus seven in extreme s. e. Missouri in Mississippi Feb. 9 (VM). Mute Swans are becoming more widespread each winter as the feral population continues to expand. The winter status of Greater White-fronted Geese is being obscured by confusion with similar-appearing domestic geese. Observers should carefully identify all extralimital White-fronteds to avoid possible confusion. Spring migrant White-fronteds also returned during February including a maximum of 24 at 6 Illinois locations and one at Land between the Lakes, Ky., Feb. 20 (CP). Wintering Snow Geese totalled 10,000 at Ballard W.M.A., Ky., and 6000 at Mark Twain N.W.R., Ill., normal concentrations for recent years. As many as three ad. Ross' Geese were associated with a flock of Snow Geese at Baldwin L., Ill., through Jan. 12 (m.ob.). Should present trends continue, Ross' Geese may become regular migrants in Illinois as they have in Iowa and Missouri. Remnants of this fall's Brant flight were noted through Dec. 8 near Lawrenceburg, Ind. (fide W) and Dec. 18 along L. Erie, while one at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Dec. 16 provided one of very few records for s. Illinois (†TF). Canada Geese peaked at only 62,000 in w. Kentucky and N migrants were quite evident in several states during the last one-half of January.

Wintering duck numbers fluctuated erratically in response to the variable weather patterns. December's cold weather sent most migrants to the s. However, the January thaw was accompanied by sizable flocks of ducks n. to s. Iowa. While subsequent cold weather forced some ducks to retreat, warm weather during late February enticed large numbers of migrants to return to all states. Wintering puddle ducks were reported in normal numbers with the exception of 60 Wood Ducks at Union County W.M.A., Ill., Jan. 7, a remarkable total for this Region (DR). Single Blue-winged Teal at 3 c. and s. Illinois locations Jan. 4-7 were surprising in light of December's harsh weather, although a few may linger into early winter during some years.

Large wintering concentrations of Canvasbacks did not develop this year, only flocks totalling 500-800 in Iowa, Illinois, and Ohio. Early migrants included a maximum of 4000 at Keokuk, Ia., Feb. 28 (RC). Since they are normally rare during mid-winter, flocks of 200 Ring-necked Ducks at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., Jan. 11 (DR) and 100 in Lee, Ia., Jan. 24 (RC) were exceptional. Large concentrations of the other bay ducks were scattered across the n. states after mid-January although these numbers were augmented by migrants. This fall's King Eider movement produced a few additional sightings. The imm. male at Port of Indiana, Ind., remained through Jan. 5 and was joined by a female Dec. 15-Jan. 27 (CF, †KB, m.ob., ph.), while another appeared at Evanston, Ill., Dec. 22 (†RB, MB). The only Harlequin Duck report was of two at Port of Indiana Dec. 16 (JL). A normal number of wintering Oldsquaws included L. Michigan peaks of 100-115 plus a maximum of three at 7 inland locations from all states except Indiana. A Black Scoter remained along L. Erie through Jan. 19 and the only inland report was from Alton, Ill., Dec. 22 (BR). The fall Surf Scoter flight produced inland reports of one to four from single locations in Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois, Dec. 3-15, plus lingering birds along L. Erie through Jan. 4. One at Huntington Res., Ind., Feb. 21 was probably an early migrant (GS, m.ob.). White-winged Scoters were widely scattered along L. Erie, where the largest flock was of 10, but they were very scarce along L. Michigan for the 2nd consecutive winter. Inland numbers were normal with 6 reports of one to four from Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. Wintering numbers of Com. Goldeneyes remained high on the Great Lakes with 1500 at Chicago Dec. 18 (RB, MB) and 2000 along L. Erie Feb. 15 (JM). As was true last year, Com. Mergansers were most numerous at inland locations where lakes in c. Illinois and w. Missouri hosted 2000-3000+ Dec. 29-Jan. 1.

HAWKS — Average numbers of Turkey Vultures were reported within their normal wintering range including roosts of 210 at Turkey Run S.P., Ind. (AB), and 280+ at Duck Creek W.M.A., Mo. (JW). However, mid-winter vultures are normally very rare in c. Illinois where small numbers were sighted at 8 scattered locations this year. Some of these birds may have moved N during January's warm weather. Migrants had returned to n. Illinois by late February. A late Osprey lingered in Pulaski, Ky., Dec. 1 (JE). Wintering Bald Eagles were generally found in improved numbers as compared with last year. January survey totals included a respectable 977 in Missouri and a record high 234 in Kentucky, while 254 were counted along a 55-mi stretch of the Mississippi R. in Iowa Feb. 15 (fide P). Northern Harriers received mixed reports but were not particularly plentiful anywhere. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were more widely reported, reflecting population increases of the latter species as well as the attraction of both to prey utilizing bird feeders. Northern Goshawks presented a mixed pattern with widespread reports from Iowa and at least 18 Illinois sightings throughout the state. However, they were virtually absent elsewhere with only 2 observations in n. Ohio.

Wintering buteos were generally found in good numbers. Even Red-shouldered Hawks exhibited modest increases in several states. Red-tailed Hawks staged a noticeable movement into many areas during the last 10 days of December and above-average numbers remained into February. A similar movement was indicated for Rough-legged Hawks. Their good numbers included concentrations of 15-20 Rough-leggeds in most states as well as an unusually high proportion of melanistic individuals. The expected small numbers of wintering Golden Eagles were found in Iowa and Illinois. They were unreported from Kentucky and Missouri, although small numbers undoubtedly wintered in both states. After the C.B.C. period, the only well-documented Merlins were one wintering in Summit, O (LR, ph.) and another near Shirland, Ill., Jan. 31 (DW). Only one Peregrine Falcon was acceptably documented, an immature wintering at Maumee Bay S.P., O., which was apparently a Peregrine Fund-released bird (m.ob.). Continuing the trend of recent winters, there were 6 reports of Prairie Falcons, one in w. Missouri, 3 in w. Iowa, and Illinois singles near Clifton Terrace Jan. 18 (SR) and at the traditional Lawrenceville airport wintering location.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS —

Gray Partridges are expanding in Iowa as evidenced by sightings at Burlington (JFu) and in Polk (DT) this winter. Efforts to reintroduce Wild Turkeys have proven successful in all states with increased reports of small flocks from many areas. Unfortunately, the outlook for N. Bobwhite remains bleak as their populations appear to be struggling, even in the s. states. Linger Virginia Rails remained through Dec. 8 at Spfld (H) and Jan. 5 at L. Rockwell, O. (LR), while two at Jefferson City, Mo., Feb. 25-27 may have wintered or could have been early migrants (DK, JW). The only late Sora appeared on an Iowa C.B.C. Mid-winter Sandhill Cranes were noted for the 3rd consecutive year with an immature at Horseshoe L., Ill., Jan. 4 (RAn) and three near Cincinnati Jan. 12 (DS, IS). Sandhills were formerly unknown after mid-December although an increasing population may be responsible for these recent winter records. Early migrants returned to Illinois and Indiana by Feb. 21-22.

Most shorebirds left with the advent of harsh weather in late November and December. The most noteworthy late record was of a thoroughly-studied Spotted Sandpiper at Campbellsville Res., Ky., on the exceptional date of Jan. 19 (†JE). Both Least Sandpipers and Dunlin remained into the C B C period in w. Kentucky. Migrant Purple Sandpipers have become regular along the Great Lakes during December and early January. They are less frequently observed along L. Michigan although the only reports this winter were of one to two at 2 n.w. Indiana locations through Dec. 25. A tardy Long-billed Dowitcher briefly appeared at Huron, O., Dec. 8 (m.ob.) Un-

usually early Am. Woodcocks returned with the warm weather of early February including single displaying males at Carbondale, Ill., Feb. 1 (TF) and Jefferson City, Mo., Feb. 6 (DK) plus three in Adams, O., on the latter date (K & SM). Migrants reappeared in many locations by the end of the month.

JAEGERS, GULLS — An unidentified jaeger at Barkley L., Dec. 3 provided one of very few sightings for Kentucky (†BP). Unfortunately, the bird was too distant for positive identification.

Gull movement patterns were fairly predictable in response to the fluctuating weather conditions. Harsh weather during December forced most Ring-billeds to the s. and produced the largest winter concentrations of Herring Gulls in c. Illinois between Dec. 26–Jan. 7. Ring-billeds returned with January's moderating temperatures. February's harsh weather was responsible for Herring Gull concentrations along L. Erie although they were not as evident elsewhere. Hence, most areas experienced the expected abundance and variety of wintering gulls at one time or another this season. Only w. Kentucky reported consistently below-normal numbers, apparently a result of open water conditions farther n.

A remnant of last fall's invasion, a late Laughing Gull remained at Lorain, O., through Dec. 1 (m.ob.). Numbers of Little Gulls were somewhat improved along L. Erie where as many as six were recorded through Feb. 3. Only one was detected in the Chicago area, Dec. 11 (RB). The only Com. Black-headed Gull was a widely-observed adult at Horseshoe L., Dec. 4–16 (BR, †RG, m.ob.), providing only the 2nd inland record for Illinois and the Region. Presumably, the same bird was rediscovered there Jan. 4 (RAn). As expected, large flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls congregated along the Great Lakes during December and departed in early January. **Mew Gulls** provided the principal excitement for the Region's gullwatchers. A cooperative adult was thoroughly studied among a large flock of Ring-billeds at Huron, O., Dec. 7–8 (†JP, †KA et al., m.ob.), providing the 2nd state record. Not to be outdone, another ad.



Adult Mew Gull at Carlyle Lake, Ill., Feb. 16, 1986. Note the small unmarked bill, the broad white trailing edge on the secondaries, and the distinctive arrangement of white in the primaries. Photo/David B. Johnson.

Mew Gull was discovered at Carlyle L., Ill., Feb. 12–16 (BR, †RG, m.ob., ph.). Thayer's Gulls were reported primarily from traditional locations with maxima of five to six along both Great Lakes, nine at Alton, Ill.-Mo., and four at the w. Kentucky dams. Smaller numbers were also detected in c. Illinois at various locations along the Illinois R. as well as Spfld. and Carlyle L. More unusual was a first-winter **Thayer's Gull** at Red Rock Res., Dec. 10–14 (†CBe, †T, m.ob., ph.), providing a long-overdue first confirmed record for Iowa. Iceland Gulls were more widely

reported along the Great Lakes with a maximum of three on L. Erie. Two were satisfactorily documented at Alton, Ill.-Mo., Feb. 16 (RW, †RG et al.), where they are becoming regular, while at least two were documented at several sites near the Des Plaines and Illinois rivers, Ill. A 2nd-winter Iceland in Scott, Ia., Dec. 22–28 (†m.ob.) provided only the 2nd Iowa sight record.

The expected small numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls were scattered along L. Erie throughout the winter including an adult thought to be of the *intermedius* race at Eastlake Feb. 9+ (m.ob.). The only other Lesser Black-backed report was of a subadult at Gary, Ind., Mar. 1 (EH, †KB et al.). Glaucous Gulls were reported in relatively good numbers with maxima of 10–14 along both Great Lakes, eight at Alton, Ill.-Mo., and three in w. Kentucky. Small numbers also appeared at scattered inland locations in Illinois, 3 sites in Iowa, and at Louisville. Large numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls returned to L. Erie as evidenced by 217 at Eastlake, O., Feb. 10 (DC). They were also more evident along L. Michigan with a maximum of three to four in the Chicago area. In addition, at least four different Great Black-backed were detected Dec. 26+ in the Alton-Carlyle L., Ill., area, where they are becoming annual winter visitors (BR, RG, m.ob.). Black-legged Kittiwakes were well-reported during early winter with a total of 6 sightings from the Great Lakes through Jan. 1 plus inland singles at Salamonie Res., Ind., Dec. 6–8 (†Haw et al., ph.) and L. Decatur, Ill., Jan. 4 (†RP).

OWLS THROUGH SWALLOW — Since wintering Com. Barn-Owls have virtually disappeared from the n. states, one at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., O., Jan. 5–11 was noteworthy (J et al.). A total of 3 reports from Kentucky and Missouri reflected their poor numbers in those states. It was the poorest year in recent memory for Snowy Owls with only 3 reports from Iowa, one in n. Indiana, and 2 c. Illinois sightings s. to Piatt (PMA). Their scarcity this year, plus the invasion of N. Shrikes, suggested a large movement of Snowy Owls is likely next winter. In contrast, the other migrant owls appeared in excellent numbers, especially in Illinois. Long-eared Owls were discovered at 11 Illinois locations and at scattered sites in the other states except Kentucky. The largest roost contained 16+ Long-eareds at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., O., where the owls were excessively harassed by thoughtless birders. Short-eared Owls were widespread in Illinois. Flocks of 13–16 were noted at several locations while a raptor survey in Morgan and Pike found 71 Short-eareds during the week of Feb. 3 (LS). Such large numbers were not apparent elsewhere. Northern Saw-whet Owls were also widely reported from all states except Missouri and Kentucky. An indication of their abundance was provided by 8 Chicago area reports (RB), 16 sightings in Boone, Ia. (SD), and 17 banded at Cincinnati this winter (RA).

Wintering Red-headed Woodpeckers were more numerous than last year in portions of Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois. The resident woodpeckers received mixed reports but the most excitement was generated by 2 **Black-backed Woodpecker** sightings. A female was photographed on the Ottumwa C.B.C., Dec. 28 (†B & MH) and remained for several days, providing Iowa's 3rd record. A very cooperative female was discovered at Thorn Creek Forest, Will, Ill., Jan. 5 and remained into March (BB, †m.ob., ph.). Several E. Phoebes lingered into the C.B.C. period at various s. locations. However, they wintered only in Kentucky at L. Cumberland (BA) and Glasgow (RS), while one in Hocking, O., Jan. 15 was n. of its normal range (JF). Horned Larks were numerous only in c. Illinois where 50,000+ were estimated between Decatur and Carlyle L., Feb. 15 (RP). These large numbers probably included many migrants. Early-returning swallows were detected in the s. states with three Purple Martins near Forsyth, Mo., Feb. 22 (PM) and a Tree Swallow in Ballard, Ky., Feb. 16 (BP).

CROWS THROUGH SHRIKES — Sizable Am. Crow roosts were reported from the traditional locations with the largest

estimated at 25,000 in Keokuk, Ia. (RC), and 14,000 at Lexington, Ky. (RM). A Black-capped Chickadee, identified by wing and tail measurements, was well s. of its normal range in Jackson, Ill., Dec. 31+ (†DR). This bird was surprising since S-moving Black-capped were unreported elsewhere in the Region. Wintering Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread in small numbers in all states. Largest reported concentrations were of 10–15. Brown Creepers were generally scarce for the 2nd consecutive winter. As a result of last winter's severe weather, Carolina Wrens were reduced in many areas. For example, Kentucky birders found nearly 33% fewer on their C.B.C.s. Bewick's Wrens are regularly encountered only in Missouri where there were reports n. to St. Louis and Jefferson City. Winter Wren numbers were generally low except in s.e. Missouri where the largest daily total was of 20+. Late House and Marsh wrens lingered into early December but the only mid-winter record was of a Marsh Wren at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., O., Jan. 26 (JM). Normal numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets were found this winter. While small numbers of Ruby-crowned Kinglets are found during December, they normally disappear by the month's end. This year, small numbers of wintering Ruby-crowns appeared in all states except Indiana. The most noteworthy record was of one in Ames Feb. 11 (SD); there were no previous February sightings from Iowa.

Last winter's weather may have also affected E. Bluebirds, which declined significantly in Ohio and Kentucky this year. A Townsend's Solitaire was discovered Dec. 23 in n.w. Iowa in Sioux, where they are casual winter visitors (fide JV). Wintering Hermit Thrushes were encountered more often in all parts of the Region. Either observers are becoming more adept at discovering winter Hermits or their numbers are slowly increasing. Following their normal 2-year cycle in abundance, wintering Am. Robins were relatively scarce this year although influxes during January and February brought flocks of 100–300 to most states. The 3 Varied Thrush reports were normal with singles through Nov. 29 at Cedar Rapids, Ia. (MBr) plus all winter at Des Moines (MP) and near Crane L., Ill. (m.ob.). Six Gray Catbird reports constituted an above-normal number for recent winters. As was true for other half-hardy residents, numbers of N. Mockingbirds were reduced in several states. A Water Pipit wintered in Clark, Ky. (BA); there were few previous winter records for Kentucky. The expected small numbers of migrants were detected during December and late February. A few Bohemian Waxwings were found among the large flocks of Cedars. There were 3 Iowa reports during December with a maximum of eight in the n.w. counties Dec. 20 (fide DH). Bohemians are casual winter visitors to n. Indiana where one was photographed at Chesterton Jan. 25 (†KB et al.).



Bohemian Waxwing at Chesterton, Ind., Jan. 25, 1986. Photo/ Jeff Moore.

Sizable numbers of Cedar Waxwings were encountered in most areas during December and January. Largest flocks totalled 200–400 waxwings. Their departure from most states during early February coincided with a large movement into Missouri, where flocks of up to 600 waxwings were reported during the last one-half of the month. Northern Shrikes staged a very large movement into Iowa and n. Illinois while lesser numbers appeared in other n. areas. Exemplary peaks included 19 during a winter raptor survey of Fayette, Ia. (fide RSi), and at least 16 wintering in the Chicago area (RB). A few wandered S of their normal range. Two c. Indiana reports included one at L. Waveland Dec. 21 (AB), while well-described N. Shrikes were reported from Illinois s. to Decatur Jan. 4 (†RP) and Clinton Feb 15 (†DR). Loggerhead Shrikes were reported in their expected low numbers of recent years.

WARBLERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — It was one of the poorest winters for lingering warblers, perhaps a result of December's harsh weather. Even Yellow-rumped Warblers were scarce. Winter Pine Warblers are casual in s. portions of the Region where singles were discovered in Ripley, Mo., Dec 31, Shannon, Mo., Jan. 1 (MR, L), and Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., Jan. 11 (DR). One photographed at Akron Dec. 26 (CW, LR) was unexpected in n. Ohio. While single Indigo Buntings periodically linger into early winter, a flock of four at Union County W.M.A., Ill., through Jan. 7 was unexpected (DR) The only Dickcissel was reported from a Saline, Ill., feeder Jan. 18 (†KP).

Despite a few local concentrations, numbers of wintering sparrows were generally disappointing. This scarcity was probably responsible for the absence of many noteworthy records. Two Vesper Sparrow sightings during early winter were normal while Savannah Sparrows continued to be regularly encountered in the s. one-half of the Region. A Le Conte's Sparrow in Ballard, Ky., Feb. 16 (BP) was locally unusual although they should winter in w. Kentucky in small numbers. A few Lincoln's Sparrows tarried into the C.B.C. period while wintering Harris' Sparrows wandered E only to 2 Chicago-area locations (fide RB). Lapland Longspurs were numerous including flocks of 1000–2500 from all states except Ohio and Kentucky. The largest concentrations were generally found during December and as migrants during the last one-half of February. The only Smith's Longspur report was of 12 early migrants in Boone, Ia., Feb. 27 (SD). Snow Buntings were plentiful in Iowa with flocks of 2000 in Story Jan. 4 (EM) and 1600 in Hamilton Dec. 8 (SD) while flocks of 350–750 were scattered across Illinois. Generally small numbers appeared in Ohio and Indiana, where 100–250 made up the largest flocks, while none was detected in Kentucky and Missouri.

A roost of 13,200 Red-winged Blackbirds at L. Calumet was unusual for the Chicago area (JL). In contrast, Kentucky's largest roost near Fern Creek was estimated to support 9,200,000 birds, of which 35% were grackles, 20% Red-wingeds, and 20% cowbirds (BM). A road-killed E. Meadowlark near Tana, Ia., Jan. 5 provided the first winter specimen for Iowa (fide JD). A few Yellow-headed Blackbirds are seemingly found each winter with a total of 6 sightings this year. Most noteworthy of these records were two at Snyder's Bend, Ia., Dec. 21 (JPr) and one at Chicago Jan. 26 (†CH). In w. Missouri, the only report of Great-tailed Grackles was of 12 in Buchanan during mid-February (fide L).

FINCHES — A Pine Grosbeak flight never materialized. The only reports were from an Iowa C.B.C. plus n. Illinois singles at Chicago Jan. 16 (fide RB) and in Will Jan. 19 (RB, †LH et al.). Purple Finches presented a mixed pattern. They were reported in good numbers from portions of Iowa, Missouri, and Kentucky, but were relatively scarce in the other states. The largest flocks totalled 50–60. House Finches continued to expand in Illinois while reports from the w. states consisted of one on an Iowa C.B.C. plus six wintering at Kennett, Mo (AS). Their population in Ohio is increasing exponentially as

evidenced by 2000+ House Finches in a sunflower field near Asheville, O., Dec. 8 (J, MG). Crossbills were universally scarce. As many as four Reds appeared at one or 2 locations in Iowa, Ohio, and Illinois into the C.B.C. period. Comparable numbers of White-wingeds appeared in all states except Kentucky with singles s. to Cincinnati (fide W) and Poplar Bluff, Mo. (GH), both on Dec. 7. Common Redpolls staged their largest movement since the winter of 1981-1982. They were widespread in Iowa and near the Great Lakes, generally in flocks of 50 or fewer. The largest flocks appeared in Iowa with hundreds in Sioux Jan. 1 (JV) and 175 in Boone Jan. 13 (SD). Smaller numbers filtered farther S with two to three at several Cincinnati feeders (fide W) plus singles at Ballard W.M.A., Ky., Feb. 16 (BP) and Buffalo, Mo., Dec. 3-5 (fjH), and two at Ironton, Mo., Feb. 26-27 (fML). The Pine Siskin flight was described as the "best in the last 10 years" in Iowa although they were only sporadically encountered and locally numerous in the other states. While there were several reports of 100+ visiting feeders, siskins were mostly observed in flocks of 30 or fewer if they were observed at all. Evening Grosbeaks presented a similar pattern. They were widespread in Iowa and Missouri with flocks of 100-200 in the latter state. However, Evening Grosbeaks generally appeared in small, scattered flocks in the other states where the largest flocks comprised 100-125 in n. Ohio during December and in Kentucky during mid-January.

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CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

David P. Muth

In much of the Region the weather was near normal, although after the last two winters that seemed almost balmy. Arkansas did experience exceptionally mild conditions, and that was reflected in the many reports of lingering birds there. It was unusually dry, with many areas reporting significant rainfall deficits by the end of the period.

The scatter of rarities definitely had a western flavor, along with a more difficult to categorize taste of unexpected lingerers and invaders. Three Western Grebes and three Rock Wrens indicated that those species at least seem to have been up to something. But the birding was peculiar: in Louisiana, at least, you would have been well advised to spend January and February well away from coastal hot-spots, combing the barren fields of the northern parts of the state.

This writer wishes that these truths were self-evident: That a record is not a record unless it is on a 3" x 5" card; that it is not a record unless names, places, and dates are all clearly and completely set forth on that card (neither your editor nor any future researcher is likely to know what county your favorite spot is in, nor whether Bob Smith is really Robert Tecumseh Smith or someone else entirely); that a record is not acceptable unless at least rudimentary substantiating details are set forth on the card, no matter how much proof you sent to someone else (at least let the editor know that you know how extraordinary the record is, and indicate to whom you have sent the proof); that reporting a bird at a C.B.C. compilation is not the same as sending a report to the winter Regional Editor; and, finally, that a picture is worth a thousand words: I see you out there snapping pictures of rarities all the time; don't you want to see them in print?

In this report, Christmas Bird Count data are used only



when too extraordinary to ignore, or when necessary to help demonstrate a broader pattern (and only when someone bothered to send it to me).

ABBREVIATIONS — L.S.U.M.Z. = Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology; N.H.P. = National Historical Park. Place names in *italics* are parishes (in Louisiana) or counties.

LOONS TO STORKS — Red-throated Loons were in Okaloosa, Fla., Dec. 21 (BP), in Perdido Bayou on the Alabama/Florida border Jan. 1 (RAD, RSD, MNo, MF), in Baldwin, Ala.,

Jan. 5 (GDJ), and finally in Santa Rosa, Jan. 11 They remain super rarities farther w. in the Region. An "Arctic" (read **Pacific?**) **Loon** found Jan. 1 on the Perdido Bay Ala./Fla. C.B.C., representing perhaps the 5th record for the Region, leaves one with a tiny doubt: can we be certain that the origin of these accidental birds in the n. Gulf is the nearctic? Good Com. Loon counts of 333 in Escambia, Fla., Dec. 4 (RAD) and about 100 Jan. 10 on the Mississippi coast (JAT, MB, GM, DKi) were heartening. Eighty-seven Horned Grebes on Old Hickory L., Tenn., Jan. 11 (CKC) made an impressive total. Eared Grebes were reported in moderate numbers e. of their normal wintering grounds, continuing recent trends. Three **Western Grebes**, carefully separated from Clark's, were found on 2 Cameron, La., C.B.C.s. The pair on Mud Lake was actually seen to take flight (departing?) Jan. 11 (DBC, LH, SHe). An imm. N. Gannet that flew from the beach in Harrison, Miss., Dec. 26 (JAT, MH) was quite unusual. Gannets were spotted on 2 Louisiana C.B.C.s, and a pair was seen off Cameron, La., Feb. 2 (DLD, SWC). Unexpected was an apparently healthy Am. White Pelican in Garland, Ark., Jan. 26 (HP, MP, ML). Encouraging reports of Brown Pelican numbers came from Hancock, Miss. (JAT), and Gulf, Fla. (SJS). Up to nine Double-crested Cormorants wintered in the Duck River Unit, Tennessee N.W.R. (JCR). Twenty-five hundred were counted at Fort Morgan, Ala., Dec. 27 (GDJ). Wintering Anhingas were again recorded in coastal Mississippi and in new Louisiana localities. Eight Magnificent Frigatebirds were late in Harrison, Miss., Dec. 1 (MH).

A late Am. Bittern was in Hot Spring, Ark., Dec. 4 (MP). Good n. concentrations of Great Blue Herons were 187 in Chicot, Ark., Jan. 10 (DRS) and 127 at Cross Creeks N.W.R., Jan. 29 (JCR). Great Egrets rarely winter in mid-Tennessee—one seen Dec. 13–Jan. 17 (JP, AT) was the first for the Nashville area in winter; another was in Stewart Dec. 21–Feb. 25 (JCR, DWB, VG). Cattle Egrets were later than usual in n. Mississippi and wintered in small numbers near the coast, which is unusual. A Green-backed Heron was well n. in Grenada, Miss., Dec. 18–21 (LCC, MD) & 29 (JAT, MH, m.ob.). A Wood Stork was extremely late in Pointe Coupee, La., Dec. 22 (DWG).

WATERFOWL — Perhaps a small echo of last year's Tundra Swan invasion occurred: three were in Perry, Ala., November to March (TAI); one stopped briefly in Jefferson, Ala., Jan. 4 (JRB, MS); six moved around Stewart, Tenn., Dec. 21–26 (JCR, DWB); seven, presumably Tundras, were in Washington, Miss., in February (fide JF); and, finally, four unidentified swans were in Independence, Ark., Dec. 13 (NFH). Greater White-fronted Geese continued to winter in good numbers on refuges well n. and e. of their historical range. Snow Geese migrate early: northbound flocks were noted in the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P., Feb. 2 (DBC, PS, KVR, DPM), in Baton Rouge, La., Feb. 4 (DBC), and in Pulaski, Ark., Feb. 26 (WS). The same pattern was apparent in n. Mississippi at Yazoo N.W.R., where the peak of Snows occurred Feb. 9 with 4000 (JF). Arkansas birders have caught the scent of **Ross' Goose** after last winter's hunter kill: three were found at Holla Bend N.W.R., Jan. 18–19 (HP, MP, CM, JES et al.), and two were there Feb. 1 (CM, CMA). Four was the peak count at Yazoo N.W.R., Miss., Feb. 19 (JF). The **Brant** at Alabama Point, Alabama's 4th, remained until mid-January (see AB 40:125).

Surprisingly, most observers felt that duck numbers were near normal. However, at Cross Creeks N.W.R., Tenn., numbers "fluctuated tremendously . . . and remained well below normal peak populations" (JCR). A Blue-winged Teal was late in Grenada, Miss., Dec. 21 (MD), and the first spring migrant reached Cross Creeks N.W.R., Feb. 25 (JCR). One **Eurasian Wigeon** was found at Cross Creeks N.W.R., Tenn., Jan. 22–25 (JCR, m.ob.). Good counts of Greater Scaup came from coastal Mississippi (JAT) and, especially, from Arkansas, as follows: up to nine in Benton Dec. 15–Feb. 15 (MM, BS), two in Washington Dec. 28 (TH, LH) and one there Jan. 12 (MM), and eight in Benton Jan. 25 (BS, JN) and two there Feb. 23 (TH, LH).

Twenty-five in Franklin Dec. 31 (SJS, BHS) were the only ones reported from Tennessee. Oldsquaw numbers were above normal, especially to the north. Tennessee reports came from Shelby, Lawrence, and 2 locations in Davidson. Two were in n. Mississippi in Grenada Dec. 7–21 (MD, GK). They are perhaps more common on the Mississippi coast than anywhere else in the Gulf, as a count of 132 in the lee of Horn Island Feb. 15–16 attested (JAT, AJ). Black Scoters remained from the fall in every coastal state. The single report of Surf Scoter was of two from Davidson, Tenn., Dec. 8 (DMc). White-winged Scoters were scattered: two in the Mississippi R. in St. John, La., Dec. 15 (MW); two at Fort Morgan, Ala., Dec. 27 (GDJ); and one in Shelby, Tenn., Feb. 17 (JRW). The highest count of Com. Goldeneyes was of 330 in Marshall, Ala., Jan. 26 (GDJ, HHK). Very high numbers of Hooded Mergansers were reported in n. Mississippi and adjacent w. Tennessee (JAT, BBC). Reports of Com Mergansers were received from every state except Florida

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES — After a year in which the Black-shouldered Kite invasion seemed to have ended (see AB 39:922), they were back—5 reports from Louisiana with 3 new locations: Caddo Dec. 15 (HHJ, LR), Calcasieu Feb. 9 (BO), and Jeff. Davis Feb. 16 (DBC, LH). They were also found again in Hancock, Miss., for the first time since February 1985 (JAT, MH, JSp, GM, CC). Reports of both wintering and nesting Bald Eagles were widespread: their painfully-slow increase seems to continue. Twenty years of C.B.C. data from mid-Tennessee shows steady population increases for Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks, and Rough-legged Hawk; others seem to be holding their own (SJS). An innovative new Winter Roadside Raptor Survey being conducted there promises to provide more needed data. An ad. N. Goshawk in Giles, Tenn., Jan. 17 (MDW) was the sole report. Broad-winged Hawks were found on the usual s.e. Louisiana C.B.C.s and on the Gulf Shores, Ala., C.B.C. A Swainson's Hawk was at Ft. Morgan, Ala., Dec. 2 (RAD); one was seen on the same date in 1984 in St. Tammany, La. (MM, RDP, NN, DPM), and inadvertently omitted from last year's report. The timing and location of these sightings suggest possible migrants toward s. Florida. One on the New Orleans C.B.C., and another at Eufala N.W.R., Ala., Jan. 21 (TJ, REM) were outstanding. A **Ferruginous Hawk** in Baldwin, Ala., Dec. 29–Jan. 7 (GDJ), well-described, was exceptional. Eight Golden Eagles were counted in mid-Tennessee (fide SJS), while one in Washington, Ark., Feb. 23 (JN) was more unusual. Marshall, Alabama's Prairie Falcon was back, Jan. 22 (AM, ALM). Does that tell us anything about its possible origin?

Stedman reported that Ring-necked Pheasants are fast being extirpated from Tennessee—alas! If only sportsmen would show an interest in starlings. On the other hand, an attempt is being made in Humphreys, Tenn., to reintroduce Ruffed Grouse (P. Kalla, fide SJS). Four King Rails, responding to a tape in Lafayette, Miss., Feb. 8 (MD, GK), provided a first winter record for the county, but they may be permanent residents. An unprecedented Virginia Rail was in Noxubee N.W.R. on the local C.B.C., while two were winter rarities in Stewart, Tenn., Jan. 1–25 (JCR, DWB). A Sora was there as well, despite the fact that when found Dec. 21, the marsh was frozen solid (SJS, BHS). Single Sandhill Cranes wintered in Tennessee in Maury (KA) and at Cross Creeks N.W.R., where one was seen Jan. 13 (JCR). Crider has been monitoring the flock of "Greater" Sandhills at Cheneyville, Rapides, La., for 12 years; the 72 he found this year were the most ever. For at least the 3rd year running, cranes were found away from Cheneyville: on the Tensaw N.W.R. in Madison (DBC, PMcK), and in West Carroll (DTK), both in n.e. Louisiana.

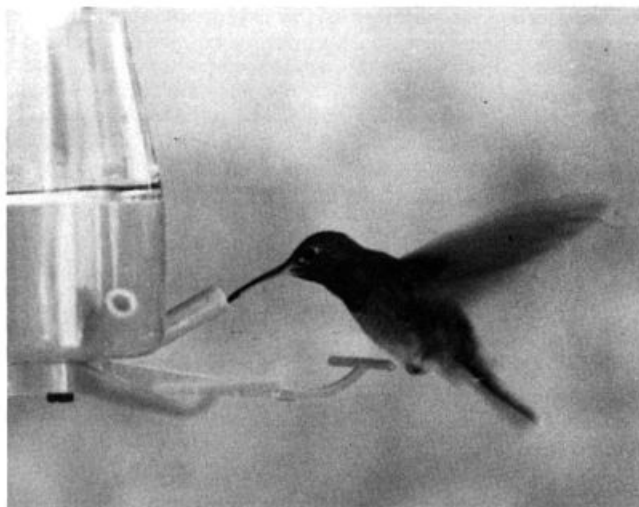
PLOVERS THROUGH TERNS — A Wilson's Plover Dec. 21 on the Jackson County C.B.C. was the first in winter for Mississippi. Two seen in Cameron Feb. 1 provided a rare non-C.B.C. date for the species in Louisiana (DLD). Seven Piping Plovers there the same date (DLD) were the only ones reported exclusive of C.B.C.s. For now, all observations in the Region

should be reported. Two Am. Oystercatchers on the beach in Hancock, Miss. (JAT), were found under the same circumstances as last year's rare mainland occurrence: strong n. winds causing low tides and much exposed mud-flat. (Their origin is from islands well south.) An Am. Avocet in Lincoln, Ark., Jan. 26 (JES, GH, WJD, BBG) was way out of place. A **Solitary Sandpiper** in Washington Jan. 4-9 was Arkansas' 2nd in mid-winter (RRB, DH, BS, MM, JN). One Least Sandpiper in Stewart Dec. 14-Jan. 4 (JCR) and six in Davidson (CGD, RCE) were rare but regular for Tennessee. One in Benton Jan. 19-Feb. 22 (MM, BS) was the first winterer for the w. Ozarks of Arkansas. Dunlins, also rare but regular winterers in Tennessee, were found at 2 locations in Davidson: two Dec. 7 (SJS, PC, DJS, JA, CKC) and two Jan. 4 (CGD, RCE). Stilt Sandpipers were found on C.B.C.s in every coastal state; significantly, 13 were in the same location in Cameron, La., Feb. 2 as a flock had been on the Johnson's Bayou C.B.C., Dec. 22, indicating actual wintering (SWC, DLD). The shorebird of the season was a Red-necked Phalarope found in a marsh pond on the Johnson's Bayou C.B.C., Dec. 22 (DLD, SWC,* L.S.U.M.Z.).

A Parasitic Jaeger was found on the St. Morgan, Ala., C.B.C. Searching for jaegers from shore in Louisiana can be a depressing business (believe me), but it paid off on 2 of 3 Cameron counts. Two pros succeeded there before and after the counts as well: from Rutherford Beach Dec. 8 and from w. of Holly Beach Feb. 2, single Parasitics were spotted (SWC, DLD). A Laughing Gull in Colbert Dec. 23 provided the 4th Tennessee Valley record for Alabama (DJS). Franklin's Gulls should not winter on the Gulf Coast; singles Dec. 4 in Harrison, Miss. (JAT, MH, JSp), and in Escambia, Fla., Dec. 11 (RM) may have been late migrants, holdovers from the widespread displacement observed in the wake of Hurricane Juan (see AB 40:127). A bird found on the Sabine Refuge C.B.C. in Cameron, La., Dec. 21, and still present at the ferry Jan. 11 (DBC, SHe), was wintering. Arkansas' first **Little Gull** (see AB 40:127) remained at magical L. Millwood until Dec. 8 (CM). Fifteen thousand Ring-billed Gulls, the largest number ever recorded in Alabama, were estimated near Muscle Shoals Jan. 8 (DJS). One thousand Herring Gulls at Wilson Dam Dec. 12 (DJS) constituted Alabama's highest inland count for the species. Despite intensive searches, New Orleans dumps have never yielded the numbers of **Thayer's Gulls** found there in early 1982; this winter, again, the only Regional report of a Thayer's was a single from the New Orleans C.B.C. A gull seen from a great distance on Dauphin I., Ala., Nov. 30 (KVR) was probably a late migrating **Lesser Black-backed Gull**. Last fall's inundation of s.w. Louisiana's beaches ended with no winter reports. Where do they migrate to? The only winterer reported was Mississippi's 4-time returnee, seen through the period in Harrison (JAT, m.ob.). Loyal "O!" One-foot" was back, of course, in Escambia, Fla., in January. The only report of a Glaucous Gull was from Limestone, Ala., Dec. 23 (GDJ, HK). A Great Black-backed Gull, also the only one reported, was in Colbert, Feb. 14 (DJS), for the 4th record in the Tennessee Valley of Alabama.

A Sandwich Tern in Harrison, Miss., Dec. 1 (MH) was moderately late. Fifteen Dec. 11 and one Dec. 24 on L. Salvador in Jefferson, La. (DPM), were quite surprising, the more so because the location is essentially inland. Twelve Com. Terns at Wheeler N.W.R. in Limestone, Ala., Dec. 1-2 were late (DCH). One immature still present at the ferry in Cameron Feb. 2 (DLD, SWC) demonstrated that not all C.B.C. birds are just late migrants.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS—The news that Rock Doves breed in winter as far n. as Cannon, Tenn., Jan. 24 (PBH, PSo, SG) is not good. A "singing" White-winged Dove at Rockefeller Ref. in Cameron, La., Feb. 24 was suspicious (PMcK, RiM). There is only one confirmed breeding record for the state. A rare Com. Ground-Dove for n.w. Louisiana was in Caddo Dec. 14 (SK, HHJ). Rarer still was a single Jan. 15 in Shelby, Tenn. (PBH, LCC, BBC). Groove-billed Anis were nor-



Buff-bellied Hummingbird at New Orleans, La., December 1985. Photo/Jack Smith.

mally scattered around Louisiana. A good count of four Long-eared Owls at Holla Bend N.W.R., Jan. 11 (HP, MP) in Pope, Ark., was the sole report. Short-eared Owls were more common than usual in coastal Louisiana (see C.B.C.s), but one was a low number for a traditional site at Roth Prairie in Arkansas, Ark., Jan. 4 (WS). The first report for the Nashville area since 1979, but the only report for mid-Tennessee, was of one Dec. 19 in Williamson (SJS, BHS). A Chuck-will's-widow at Ft. Pickens in Escambia, Fla., Jan. 1 was quite late (JB, DB, RB, SB). Goatsucker sightings were generally down in Louisiana, but a Whip-poor-will in Plaquemines Jan. 25 was a good find (SWC, DLD).

As indicated in the Autumn Migration Report (AB 40:128), Louisiana's Buff-bellied Hummingbird drought ended in a big way beginning about Thanksgiving; all told, 13 were reliably reported, of which three were banded by NLN. One of those was "collected" in St. John 3 days later by an adept cat (fide RJS) (to L.S.U.M.Z.). Another Buff-bellied in Baton Rouge Dec. 7-19 (for a first local record), (CF), did not manage to change its diet from flowers to feeder, and perished, probably of starvation, 4 days after a freeze decimated the *Abutilon* on which it had been feeding. It was found on the perch where it had been seen settling into a torpor each evening (L.S.U.M.Z.). Five Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were banded in Louisiana (NLN). More unexpected was an adult male in Santa Rosa, Fla., Dec. 21 (CK, BK, BD, JD). An effort is being made in coastal Mississippi to find wintering hummingbirds, and observers there are being admirably cautious about identification. The reports were: two *Archilochus*, two *Selasphorus*, and at least four unidentified at feeders (fide JAT). Fifteen Black-chinned Hummingbirds were banded (NLN), and several more were seen in New Orleans and Reserve. Of the many *Selasphorus* seen, 16 were banded and identified as Rufous Hummingbirds. An imm. ♂ **Allen's Hummingbird** was at McKenzie's in Baton Rouge (Dec. 7-12, for Louisiana's 6th documented record [*L.S.U.M.Z.]. (Last winter's record from the same home was Louisiana's 5th, not 4th, as I erroneously reported in AB 39:177.) Finally, another *Selasphorus* that appeared there the same day, was netted and keyed-out as an imm. ♂ Rufous Hummingbird (NLN). However, the bird proceeded to molt into ad. ♂ **Allen's Hummingbird** breeding plumage by Mar. 8. It also began making what appeared to be typical Allen's Hummingbird display flights to an uninterested ♀ Rufous (PMc, m.ob.). Tail feathers, which had been removed at the time of banding, were re-examined and still keyed-out as Rufous. While the possibility that a banded bird from elsewhere might have coincidentally replaced the Rufous, a more likely explanation is that the keys available, based on limited samples, are inher-

ently imperfect, and that as in any population, certain birds fall outside the range of measurements predicted by statistical probabilities. Incredibly, then, we are left with the likelihood that at one well-planted Baton Rouge home, three Allen's Hummingbirds have been recorded in 12 months. Anyone east of the Rockies, tempted to routinely pass off stray *Selaphorus* sp. as Rufous Hummingbirds should take note. My own experience is also instructive. I moved to a new location with unremarkable flora, in a New Orleans neighborhood Nov. 7. I planted a few desultory "hummingbird" plants which had been languishing in pots at my old apartment and hung up a feeder. On Dec. 7 my first Rufous arrived, Dec. 10 my first Black-chinned, and by the last week of December there were as many as 13 hummingbirds using 11 feeders, of which seven were banded by NLN: one Ruby-throated, three Black-chinneds, and three Rufous. What this implies about the density of western hummingbirds along the Gulf Coast in winter is staggering.

Twenty years of C.B.C. data for mid-Tennessee indicate a 20% decline in winter Hairy Woodpeckers, a trend not apparent in Breeding Bird Survey data (fide SJS).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — There were few reports of *Empidonax* away from C.B.C.s, but one found on the Creole C.B.C. in Cameron, La., Dec. 20 and identified as a Least, was confirmed as such in January (MS, AJC,* L.S.U.M.Z.). A first for the Shreveport area was a **Say's Phoebe** in Red River, La., Jan. 21 to at least Feb. 9 (HHJ, PD, m.ob.). It was an excellent year for Vermilion Flycatchers in Louisiana (five-plus) and Mississippi (two); easternmost was one found on the Port St. Joe, Fla., C.B.C., Dec. 28. An Ash-throated Flycatcher in Mobile, Ala., Dec. 6-7 (LD, GDJ), was an excellent find and the only non-C.B.C. report. The most intriguing flycatcher of the season was a "tropical"-type kingbird that got away near the mouth of the river in Plaquemines, La., Dec. 26 (MW, JW). The fact that both Tropical and Couch's have been documented for the state makes hazarding a guess pointless. There were few W. Kingbird reports: exclusive of C.B.C.s they were Dec. 8 in Jackson, Miss. (JAT, MH), and Dec. 14 & 17 in downtown Pensacola, Fla. (DB, JB). Three Horned Larks were in plowed fields Feb. 16 near where a flock of 17 had established a first W. Baton Rouge record back in November (KVR).

The first Purple Martins were in St. John, La., on the exceptional date of Jan. 23 (RJS); curiously, they were a male and two females. Four Tree Swallows had returned to a known breeding site at the Duck River Unit, Tennessee N.W.R., Feb. 26, very early for Tennessee (JCR). Northern Rough-winged Swallows were not nearly as widespread as last winter; the one non-C.B.C. report was of two Dec. 24 in the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P. (DPM). Fish Crows returning to Washington, Ark., were found Feb. 24 (JN, NW). Brown Creepers seemed to be in generally low numbers throughout. Red-breasted Nuthatches continued the pattern begun in the fall (see AB 40: 128), with some areas, especially to the n., enjoying an excellent year, but coastal areas reporting only moderate (perhaps diminished since the fall) numbers. A 20-year increase in numbers of White-breasted Nuthatches found on mid-Tennessee Breeding Bird Surveys is mirrored in C.B.C. data (fide SJS).

Louisiana's 4th **Rock Wren**, following last fall's 3rd, was on rip-rap at the Morganza Spillway in Pointe Coupee Feb. 22 (DWG). Arkansas' 6th and 7th were: Dec. 22 to Feb. 16 at L. Millwood, Hempstead (CM), and at a rock quarry in Washington Jan. 1-5 (BS, MM, NW). Bewick's Wren reports were, again, few; the single report on a mid-Tennessee C.B.C. was the lowest in 20 years. Stedman believes that the harsh winter of 1984-1985 may have all but wiped out the species in mid-Tennessee. A Sedge Wren in Grenada, Miss., Dec. 10 furnished the first winter record there since 1970 (MD). One Sedge and up to three Marsh wrens in Stewart (SJS, BHS, JCR) were the only mid-Tennessee reports. Both, of course, can be abundant along much of the Gulf coast. A **Mountain Bluebird** in Madison Dec. 18-Feb. 1? (EH, HC, m.ob.) was Louisiana's 4th. Cedar Wax-



Rock Wren at Lake Millwood, Ark., December 1985. Photo/Charles Mills.

wings were in excellent numbers, especially from mid-February on. Ben Coffey in w. Tennessee considered them more common than at any time in his experience (since 1928). Loggerhead Shrikes are down on mid-Tennessee C.B.C.s 50% over the last 20 years (fide SJS). So far, they are holding their own in s. parts of the Region. The good news is that Eur. Starling numbers are down in Tennessee (fide SJS).

It was a good winter for warblers; in the report following, most C.B.C. records are regretfully ignored. An Orange-crowned Warbler in Colbert Jan. 17 was the 5th in winter for the Tennessee Valley of Alabama (PK). An Orange-crowned in Pulaski Dec. 21 (WS) and one (rarer still) in the Ozarks, Washington, Jan. 4 (MM, RG), were both thought due to a mild Arkansas winter. A rare N. Parula was in Gulf Breeze, Fla., Dec. 26 (RAD). Two Yellow Warblers together in Orleans, La., Feb. 15 (KVR, SWC, DLD, DPM, MS) were completely unexpected. A Black-throated Green Warbler in the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P., Dec. 1 and Jan. 26 was, if the same individual, wintering in baldcypress, as they often do (DPM, CL). One was near a busy New Orleans intersection in live oaks Jan. 14-17 (JR, DPM). There were 2 reports from Mississippi, both in Hancock: at Bay St. Louis Dec. 16 (LS), and in Waveland Dec. 18 (GM, CC). One also wintered in Santa Rosa, Fla., Jan. 13-Feb. 16 (DB, JB). A Palm Warbler Jan. 4 in Washington (MM, RG, RJ) provided the first mid-winter record for the Ozarks and only the 5th for Arkansas. Black-and-white Warblers were widespread, of course, but outstanding was one in Union, Ark., Dec. 18 (MP). An ad. ♂ Am. Redstart was in Plaquemines, La., Dec. 8-Jan. 25 (NN, RDP, m.ob.). One found Feb. 20 in the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P., was still present Mar. 12 (DPM). Vying for the most spectacular warbler of the season was a **Prothonotary Warbler** incredibly late in 20° weather Dec. 2 in Stewart, Tenn. (DWB). An Ovenbird found on the Venice, La., C.B.C. was still present Jan. 25 (DLD, DPM, SWC). One was in the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P., Jan. 16 (DPM). A ♀ **MacGillivray's Warbler** first found on the Venice C.B.C., Dec. 26 (DN), was Louisiana's 4th, following the 3rd last fall (see AB 40:129), and was found shortly after MacGillivray's-like *Oporornis* were seen on the Sabine and Johnson's Bayou C.B.C.s in s.w. Louisiana. It was glimpsed by a host of observers as it would appear briefly in response to a MacGillivray's tape (yes), but was felt by most to show varying degrees of yellow in the throat. (I here publicly confess to having seen the most yellow of anyone.) In the end, Jan. 25 (DLD, DPM, SWC,* L.S.U.M.Z.), the specimen showed the merest trace of a yellow wash, but otherwise keyed out as a perfect *toimei*.

Nelkin and Purrington visited lower Plaquemines Dec. 8 and

found 13 species of warblers, including a Nashville (still present on the Venice C.B.C., Dec. 26), N. Parula, Magnolia, Prairie, Am Redstart (see above), and a **Louisiana Waterthrush** (RDP only); though similar in some respects to a Dec. 4, 1983 wave (see AB 38:328), the timing and variety suggested holdovers from the hurricane-induced late fall migration (see AB 40:129).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES — A Summer Tanager was a rarity in Okaloosa, Fla., Feb. 7–14 (BP). One was in Baton Rouge, La., Dec. 9 (KVR, MS, JG, SH); another tail-less female wintered at a Baton Rouge feeder Jan. 5–Feb. 25 (AG, FG, m.ob.). Finally, one first found on the Tunica Hills C.B.C., n. of Baton Rouge in W. Feliciana, was relocated Jan. 12 (PMcK, JK, DHu). A flock of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (three males, two females) wintered at a Mobile, Ala., feeder (PB)! One was at a feeder in Point Coupee, La., Feb. 8 & 13 (DWG). Three were found on the Venice, La., C.B.C.; one of those, or another, was in the MacGillivray's Warbler field (see above) Jan. 25 (DPM). A Black-headed Grosbeak wintered with the tanager at the Gudas' Baton Rouge, La., feeder Jan. 30–Feb. 25 (m.ob.). A *Pheucticus* (sp) was heard and seen briefly in the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P., Dec. 18 (DPM). A ♂ Painted Bunting at a feeder in Vicksburg, Miss., Feb. 23 was apparently present for the 2nd winter (SR, HM). One appeared very briefly at my feeder in New Orleans Dec. 28. Single Dickcissels were at feeders in DeSoto, Miss., Jan. 28 (IB, GB), and in E. Baton Rouge, La., Jan. 25–26 (GBe, EB). American Tree Sparrows were unreported except from mid-Tennessee, where there was a "poor echo of last year's banner flight" (SJS). Chipping Sparrows were n. in Arkansas, Ark., Dec. 28 (WS, MWh) and Stewart, Tenn., Dec. 17 & 19 (JCR). Vesper Sparrows were n. as well in Lawrence, Dec 15–Jan. 14, up to 20 (DJS), and up to eight in Coffee, Tenn., Jan 30+ (MDH). A Henslow's Sparrow was in Baldwin, Ala., Dec 8 (GDJ, DGJ, CDC, RAD, RSD). On traditional wintering grounds in St. Tammany, La., Henslow's have been difficult to find, after considerable searching Feb. 16, 10 were flushed from a small area not far from the now-unreliable Turf Farm (SWC, DLD). A Lincoln's Sparrow was n. & e. Dec. 30 in Grenada, Miss. (JAT). A Harris' Sparrow was a first for Henry, Tenn., Jan 11–Feb. 22 (JCR). Lapland Longspurs had a moderately good flight Regionwide, although no strong fronts pushed any to the coast. There was one Smith's Longspur report, a single from Benton, Ark., Dec. 8 (MM), a rarity in the Ozarks.

Up to 12 (!) Yellow-headed Blackbirds were in Evangeline, La., Feb. 18–19 (DL, AW). Thirty Brewer's Blackbirds were found scattered around Lawrence, Tenn., to the surprise of DJS, SJS, and MBe, Dec. 13–Mar. 7. Twenty-six Great-tailed Grackles in Washington Feb. 16 were the first for the Arkansas Ozarks in winter. Northern Orioles were not particularly well-reported: the most unusual were one in Memphis, Tenn., Jan. 21 (J.R. Wilson), and two seen feeding at sapsucker holes in Natchitoches, La., Jan. 5+ (CV et al.). An ad. ♂ **Scott's Oriole** wintered at the Dawson's feeder in Webster, La., and was seen by just about everybody who went to look.

It was a good year for Purple Finches, especially eastward. After a breather last winter, House Finches exploded again: "increasing exponentially in mid-Tennessee" (SJS); 142 banded

by the Coffeys in Memphis, an "invasion", widespread at feeders in n.e. Arkansas (fide EHa), and 375 at 6 feeders in Birmingham (TAI), but 1000 at a feeder in Decatur, Ala., in February (EdH). For the 3rd winter in a row, a **Common Redpoll** was at a feeder in n. Arkansas; this time in Sebastian Jan. 25 (CW, WBB, KMc). More than one observer remarked that Pine Siskins were widespread but in low densities. A **Lesser Goldfinch**, first seen at a feeder in the summer of 1984 in Benton, Ark. (and therefore edging out last winter's Louisiana bird for the 2nd Regional record, AB 39:178) was there Dec. 20 (AE, ph.) Evening Grosbeaks staged an impressive invasion, with good numbers widely reported; however, stay tuned for the spring, since for some areas the best was yet to come.

CORRIGENDUM — The **Green Violet-ear** reported for Ft Smith, Ark. (see AB 40:128) was seen in 1984, not 1985.

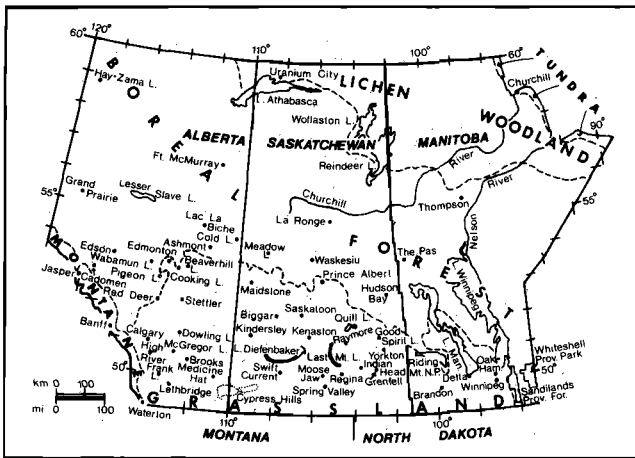
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PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION

Wayne C. Harris

T was a weird winter and a short one! Our winter consisted primarily of November, not even covered by this report. Spring arrived abruptly in mid-December and despite all predictions by the skeptics, winter never really

returned. In the south, most of the snow was gone by mid-January and never returned for any great length of time. In spite of the warm weather there were very few semi-hardy stragglers overwintering, primarily because of the extremely cold November which either resulted in death or forced them to move south. Those that survived to mid-



December, for the most part, survived through the winter. With the early spring-like weather came record-early arrivals of several spring migrants. The first Horned Larks began arriving in late January and European Starlings by February 1. By the end of February, Canada Geese, Mountain Bluebirds, and even swans had been reported. Enough of the spring arrivals; let us look at the winter species and the few stragglers who made it through the cold spell.

HERONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A **Great Blue Heron** seen on the C.B.C., Dec. 18 at Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills of Saskatchewan provided that province with its first winter record (WCH) and another survived until at least Jan. 22 at Calgary (IH, EH). There were still 60 Canada Geese on the open water below the power station on the S. Saskatchewan R. at Saskatoon Dec. 5 in spite of the cold weather experienced during November (REJ, JA). In Winnipeg two Canada Geese remained for the winter, without any open water; they were fed regularly (RFK). A ♀ N. Pintail in the Cypress Hills, Sask., provided the first winter record for that area, and another female was present at Rivers, Man. (WCH, NS). An amazing 14 Am. Wigeon were found at the e. end of Round L., Dec. 29 along with two Canvasbacks, both species extremely rare during the winter months in this Region (DF). Lesser Scaup are rarely present on the open water below generating stations in Saskatchewan, but six males and two females remained this year at the Estevan Power Station, while in Alberta, one remained at Ft. McMurray (CB, JG). A juv. male Bufflehead was seen at Waterton N.P., Dec. 31 and Jan. 4, and a pair remained at the Estevan Power Station, providing rare winter sightings (MOS, SS, CB).

DIURNAL RAPTORS — There were fewer Bald Eagles overwintering in the Region this winter, undoubtedly due to the harsh weather in November. There were only three on the Bow R. at Calgary and only three at Squaw Rapids, Sask., well below the numbers normally seen (DC, WCH). A Sharp-shinned Hawk was seen at Medicine Hat Dec. 22, for the only report this season (RG). **Cooper's Hawks** are very rare in this Region during winter; consequently, 2 reports worth noting were of one Dec. 21 at Wembley, Alta., and another that successfully wintered near Raymore, Sask., living on House Sparrows (KRL, WCH, SML). Northern Goshawk numbers were less than last year in s. Manitoba, with only 5 sightings, while in both Saskatchewan and Alberta numbers were above those of last year (GEH, KAG, WCH). An interesting note was of a N. Goshawk at White Bear that followed Rock Doves into their roost through 4 × 5-inch entrances (SOJ). Rough-legged Hawk numbers were down significantly with only 5 sightings in the Lethbridge area and virtually no reports for the other areas in

the s where they are normally found (*vide* MOS, WCH) The only area in this Region where Am. Kestrels regularly occur during winter is in s. Manitoba. This year there were three in Winnipeg and another at Niverville, for an average number of reports (GDG, SH, DF). Peregrine Falcons are very rare during winter with rarely more than one or two reported. This year there was one reported from Beausejour, Man., Jan. 25 (GDG, RFK, RT). Gyrfalcons were reported in average numbers with 12 sightings in Alberta, 4 in Saskatchewan, and 3 in Manitoba (DC, JBS, WCH, KAG, GDG, C. Wier, EK, KRL).

GROUSE THROUGH OWLS — Ruffed Grouse numbers, still very low, should be starting to show signs of recovery soon if the 10-year cycle is going to hold true this time around, as they last reached peak numbers during the 1976–1978 time period. The presence of four Ring-billed Gulls at Weyburn was very unusual, as freeze-up had occurred in early November and this species is usually gone at that time (NP).

After several years of extremely low numbers and reproduction, Great Horned Owls may be recovering. There were increases in sightings at Weyburn, Raymore, and between Watrous and Biggar in Saskatchewan (NP, WCH, GJW). Snowy Owls were at their lowest numbers in 10 years in the Raymore-Last Mountain Lake area, and the low populations were widespread, as virtually every reporting location noted a scarcity of this species (WCH, JMH, GJW, WN, PLB, FB, JDH, KRL, RM) Northern Hawk-Owls were more common s. of the boreal forest than usual. There were reports of singles from near Wainwright, Alta., Feb. 19, two seen from the highway while driving between Edmonton and Prince Albert in February, and two Jan. 4 and one Jan. 8 w. of Round L. (GJW, CD, DF). Barred Owls moved out of the forest onto the open plains in unprecedented numbers with singles being reported from Rivers, Winnipeg, and Niverville in Manitoba, and Regina and Southey in Saskatchewan (NS, RP, DF, CA, GH). There were excellent numbers of Great Gray Owls reported from s.w. Alberta with 17 sightings reported from Calgary and daily sightings of up to three at Sundre (*vide* DC, FH) but elsewhere they seemed to be slightly lower or similar in numbers to last year (WCH, RWN). In a small area with a radius of 60 mi centered around Saskatoon there was a relatively large wintering population of Short-eared Owls. There were 42 sightings reported from this area, compared to 17 for the remainder of the Region (GJW, RDW, WCH, CJE, MAG). A Long-eared Owl at Oxbow furnished the first winter report in several years (JHP).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH SHRIKES — For the 3rd time in the last 4 years, **Red-headed Woodpeckers** spent the winter at Kleefeld, Man., with two being present this year (DF) Black-backed Woodpecker reports from s. of the forest have become a regular occurrence in this Region in the past 5 years compared to virtually none in the preceding 5 years. This year there were reports from Scott, Sask., Moose Jaw, and Regina (GJW, RDW, GR, TR). The usual one or two N. Flickers were reported from Saskatchewan with singles at Saskatoon (RMB), while in Calgary as many as 13 may have wintered (*vide* DC)

Blue Jays were more frequently reported than usual and, judging from the reports received from Raymore, were indeed more common, as there were at least seven there compared to the normal one or two (WCH, SML). Common Ravens were, for the 5th consecutive year, present in numbers s. of the boreal forest. Reports were received from Biggar, Raymore, Hanley, Kenaston, Lanigan, Wynyard, Dafoe, Val Marie, Round L., Saskatoon, Elbow, Rosetown, Pike L., Dundurn, and Procter L. Is this species attempting to reestablish its former range, which included much of the great plains of North America? If so, we should be seeing a gradual increase in the number of summer sightings in this area.

Boreal Chickadee numbers were very low in the forested areas, a further reduction from last year's low populations, while in the foothills of Alberta this species was reported to be more common than last year (RFK, WCH, FH). Red-breasted

Nuthatches were very common in the foothills of s.w. Alberta, an excellent example being the 123 seen on the Sundre C.B.C., where 10 would be a more normal count (MOS, FH). There were no spectacular counts elsewhere, but there were more reports than are normally received. A Townsend's Solitaire survived the winter in Regina (TR) and in s. Manitoba there were two Varied Thrushes present throughout the period, one in Winnipeg and another in Brandon (A. Tait, D. Bates). A N. Mockingbird was seen in Winnipeg Dec. 15 (B. Gordon). Northern Shrike numbers were well below last year's in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan, while in Alberta they appeared to be normal. An interesting note was received from Grande Prairie where a N. Shrike took a Pine Grosbeak and, being unable to carry it, ate part of it on the ground and then carried the remainder to hang it in the crotch of a low dogwood shrub (KRL).

FRINGILLIDS TO FINCHES — A Rufous-sided Towhee was reported from Cypress R., Man., for a rare winter record (KD). A Field Sparrow at Saskatoon provided Saskatchewan's 2nd winter record (JBG, MDG, ARS). A Fox Sparrow at Moose Jaw furnished an unusual winter record (HMcl) as did a Song Sparrow, both firsts for that locality (SGW). Harris' Sparrows were reported from 3 separate locations in the Lethbridge area where usually there are none (GN, CR, CT). Southern Manitoba had more Lapland Longspurs lingering into December than usual with three Dec. 8 at Oak Hammock, three Dec. 21 at Delta, and 63 Dec. 21 at Winnipeg (KAG, CC, J. Morgan). A W. Meadowlark Feb. 12 w. of Saskatoon had probably wintered at a feedlot rather than being an early migrant (GJW). The largest number of Brewer's Blackbirds ever reported in Man-

itoba during winter was the seven found at Delta Dec. 21 (CC, GO, JO). In Weyburn a single survived at least until Jan. 18 by visiting a bird feeder with House Sparrows, rather than frequenting the more usual feedlots where most wintering blackbirds are found (NP). A single Com. Grackle overwintered in Regina, providing one of very few winter records of this species (TR).

Pine Grosbeak was the winter finch species that showed the greatest increase in numbers over last winter. Most localities reported increased numbers, particularly those areas within 150 mi of the forest edge and to a lesser degree to the s. of that line. The Winnipeg C.B.C. had 450, almost double their previous high (fide RFK). White-winged Crossbills were in good numbers only in the w., with Manitoba reporting this species to be very scarce. Other finches were present in good numbers but nothing as exceptional as the Pine Grosbeaks.

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NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

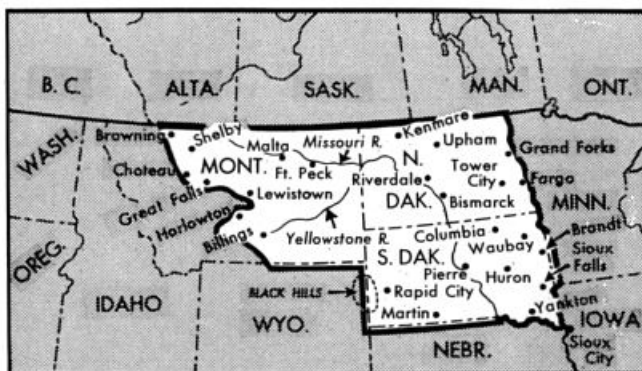
Gordon B. Berkey

The season's weather cannot be characterized simply. The severe cold of November continued throughout the Region well into December, but eastern Montana and North Dakota were very mild thereafter, with January being the second mildest on record in Minot. By contrast, it continued cold and snowy in South Dakota. No doubt the early cold pushed many birds south farther and faster than usual, and caused low wintering numbers of several species in at least a part of the Region. Some of those affected were Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Mourning Dove, Northern Flicker, Western Meadowlark, and Dark-eyed Junco.

Observers in North Dakota and eastern Montana generally found the birding unexciting. A particular lack of birds was evident in the Lewiston area (LM). By contrast, the winter in South Dakota was seen as very good. Among the more unusual sightings were the first state record of Thayer's Gull for South Dakota and the first winter record of Swamp Sparrow for North Dakota.

ABBREVIATIONS — Place names in *italics* are counties.

HERONS THROUGH RAPTORS — A Black-crowned Night-Heron in Turner, S.D., Dec. 7 (LJA) was very late. Very few Canada Geese wintered in the n., but migrants arrived Feb. 2 at Malta, Mont., 20 days earlier than average. By contrast, no February migrants were noted in North Dakota, and the first in South Dakota were Feb. 25. The variety of wintering ducks was smaller than in recent years. A Green-winged Teal at Garrison Dam Feb. 16 (D & CG) provided only the 2nd North



Dakota winter sighting. A ♂ Greater Scaup at Pierre Feb. 21–28 (ECM) seemed in good condition despite having a large rubber band between its mandibles and around the back of its head. For the 8th consecutive winter, a ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye wintered at Rapid City (JLB). By the end of February, migrating Green-winged Teal, N. Pintail, Am. Wigeon, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, and Ruddy Duck had all reached South Dakota.

Several species of raptor may have been affected by the early cold. Northern Harriers were very scarce in South Dakota. A late bird was in McLean, N.D., Dec. 1 (REM). For the 2nd consecutive winter several Sharp-shinned Hawks wintered in North Dakota, with two to three each in Bismarck and Minot. Siskin flocks at sunflower fields in late December and early January also attracted Sharp-shinned and Merlins. Northern

Goshawk numbers were good in all 3 states. One near Harlem, Mont., Jan. 23 made a new winter latilong record for L8 (DP). The **Red-shouldered Hawk** in Yankton, S.D., from Jan. 8 on provided a rare wintering record; another was in Chas. Mix Jan. 14 (WH). Rough-legged Hawks were down in all 3 states. There was much less December movement than normal through North Dakota, and fewer wintering birds in Montana and South Dakota. American Kestrels were observed in mid-winter in Sargeant (DGP), Fargo (GEN), and near Stanton (REM), all in North Dakota. New winter records for Montana's L9 were furnished by the Merlin at Malta Feb. 24 (JG) and the Peregrine Falcon at Bowdoin N.W.R., Jan. 2 (DP). Gyrfalcon sightings included one at Sand Lake N.W.R., Jan. 4 (DAT), one at Minot in January (GBB), one at Elgin Feb. 16 (D & CG), and singles at Lostwood N.W.R., Jan. 10 and Feb. 16 (RKM). All were of the gray phase except the last, which was of the white phase.

GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — With the early freezing of the Missouri mainstem reservoirs, gulls tended to depart earlier than normal. An exception was the Bonaparte's Gull at Ft. Randall Dam Dec. 7 (D & MS), the latest sighting ever for South Dakota. The latest Herring Gulls were at Garrison Dam, N.D., Dec. 15 (REM) and in Brown, S.D., Dec. 23 (RLB). The latest Glaucous Gulls were Dec. 7 at Gavin's Point Dam, S.D. (DS), at Fort Peck, Mont. (CC), and at Garrison Dam. The first-year **Thayer's Gull** Nov. 24–30 (WH) at Gavin's Point provided a long-overdue first state record for South Dakota. The report was held up until positive identification of photos could be made by Kim Eckert. There was one unconfirmed sighting several years ago.

Mourning Dove is a marginal wintering species in North Dakota, but there were also very few in South Dakota this winter, with only one of 14 C.B.C.s reporting them. A Great Horned Owl on a nest in Turner was the earliest ever for South Dakota (BKH), and one incubating on the early date of Feb. 17 in Grand Forks, N.D., had to endure subsequent -25°F temperatures (DOL). The number of Snowy Owls in the Minot area was the best in a decade with up to four per day but all other areas reported fewer sightings than normal. Short-eared Owl migration in North Dakota continued into December, but there were only 2 January sightings. A few wintered in the Malta, Mont., area, but South Dakota observers found them very scarce. A Boreal Owl at Hettinger Dec. 5 was well-documented (D & CG). A N. Saw-whet Owl at Bowdoin Jan. 19 and Feb. 27 was observed killing a sparrow at dusk (J & KS). An estimated four Pileated Woodpeckers wintered in Fargo (MAB). Northern Flicker was down over most of the area, but Brookings had more than normal (NJH). A flicker was seen foraging for midges on the ice at Fort Peck Dec. 14 (CC).

JAYS THROUGH STARLING — A Gray Jay was seen in Walsh, N.D., in January (MNN). A freshly completed Black-billed Magpie nest in Ward, N.D., Feb. 23 was made exclusively of greek oak branches, which had apparently been chewed from the trees (GBB). American Crows continue to winter in increasing numbers in North Dakota. About 75 were in Fargo. Out of the Red R. valley, numbers were small, but they were reported from many areas. A Com. Raven was feeding on road-killed Horned Larks in McLean, N.D., Dec. 1; a pair in Ramsey was feeding on a deer carcass Feb. 23 (RWS). Five E. Bluebirds were in Yankton Feb. 5. The only Townsend's Solitaire reports from the e. were in South Dakota's Yankton Dec. 5 (SvS) and Brown Jan. 25 (ECM). A ♂ Varied Thrush at Bowdoin Feb. 26 provided a new winter record for L9 (KS). Most Brown Thrashers that attempt to winter in North Dakota succumb to the weather, but one at Fargo was taken by a cat Dec. 26 (CHB). Bohemian Waxwings were generally distributed, with some flocks up to a thousand or more. Cedar Waxwing reports were sporadic, but fair numbers for winter were present at times. Most observers agreed that it was a good year for N. Shrikes. The several thousand Eur. Starlings (migrants?) that moved

into the shelterbelts at Bowdoin at the end of February were unusual for that time of year (JS).

CARDINAL THROUGH FINCHES — Northern Cardinals wintered at Fargo, Bismarck, and Mandan, and Bismarck birds are awaiting a possible nesting in the area, which is w of the normal range. A Fox Sparrow was present in Hettinger through at least Feb. 19 (D & CG). A **Swamp Sparrow** observed carefully at 20 ft in Ward Jan. 3 provided the first winter observation of the species for North Dakota (REM, GBB). Single White-throated Sparrows wintered at Fargo (RLK), New Town (BCH), and Wolf Creek G.M.A. (REM) in North Dakota, and in Yankton (WH) and Custer (DCW) in South Dakota. Harris' Sparrows were reported down in South Dakota. Two wintered at Riverdale G.M.A., N.D. (RNR). It was a poor year for Dark-eyed Juncos in North Dakota. Most were apparently pushed out by the early cold weather. Snow Buntings were present in good numbers throughout North Dakota, but were reported from only 3 South Dakota counties. Unharvested sunflowers in North Dakota induced more Red-winged Blackbirds than normal to remain, with a few flocks on the order of 100. Western Meadowlark numbers were low in South Dakota. Up to 10 Com. Grackles were in Fargo, and many made it through the winter (MAB).

This was another good year for "Gray-crowned" Rosy Finches in the w. Dakotas. At Badlands N.P., S.D., 225 birds were banded, with up to 200 present at the feeder at a time (KG, MG). In North Dakota, a flock of 175 was at Marmath Jan 1 (D & CG) and birds wintered at a New Town feeder for the 3rd consecutive year (BCH). Pine Grosbeak is quite common about every 4th year in North Dakota, but nearly absent in off years. Thus, it was surprising to have moderate numbers present this winter after last year's invasion. Purple Finches wintered throughout the Dakotas. A ♀ House Finch in Gregory Jan. 2–Feb. 15 marked the 3rd straight winter for the species there (GLS). Red Crossbills were very scarce, even in the Black Hills; the only report from North Dakota was of three at a Minot feeder in early January. The only report of White-winged Crossbill was of a flock of 11 that wintered at a Minot golf course. It was a very good year for Com. Redpoll; a flock estimated at 15,000 in an unharvested sunflower field near Dunsenith, N.D., in early January (REM) was an incredible sight. Hoaries were also present, although down considerably from last winter. Pine Siskins numbering in the thousands were found at unharvested sunflower fields in Ward and McLean, N.D., in late December and early January. They had departed by mid-January. Interestingly enough, feeders in Minot and Grand Forks noted significant increases at that time. Evening Grosbeak numbers were the best in several years, with sightings across both Dakotas.

CORRIGENDA — (All refer to the summer 1985 report.) The reference to cuckoo and thrasher nesting should have stated that 3 Black-billed Cuckoo eggs and one Brown Thrasher nestling were found in a thrasher nest. (I know of no nest parasitism by thrashers!) This was also mentioned in the Changing Seasons column.

The Changing Seasons incorrectly placed the North Dakota nesting of Com. Barn-Owl in South Dakota.

The nesting of Rufous-sided Towhee at Sica Hollow credited to PRS should have been of three to four birds in Newton Hills, credited to Paul Lehman.

OBSERVERS (Area editors in boldface). MONTANA — Charles Carlson, Jim Grensten, Larry Malone, Dwain Prellwitz, J. & K. Stutzman. NORTH DAKOTA — Connie H. Brakke, Mary A. Bergan, **Gordon B. Berkey**, Dave & Carolyn Griffiths, Bernice C. Houser, Richard L. Kiesling, David O. Lambeth, Robert K. Murphy, Ron E. Martin, Gary E. Nielsen, Marge N. Nygaard, **David G. Potter**, Robert N. Randall, Rick W. Schnaderbeck. SOUTH DAKOTA — Leon J. Anderson, Jocie L. Baker, Ralph L. Bryant, Marjorie Glass, Ken Graupman, Willis Hall, **Bruce K. Harris**, Nelda J. Holden, Everett C. Montgomery, Steve van Sickle, Dennis & Mark Skadsen, Galen L. Steffan, Dan A. Tallman. — **GORDON B. BERKEY**, Division of Science, Minot State College, Minot, ND 58701.

SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Frances Williams

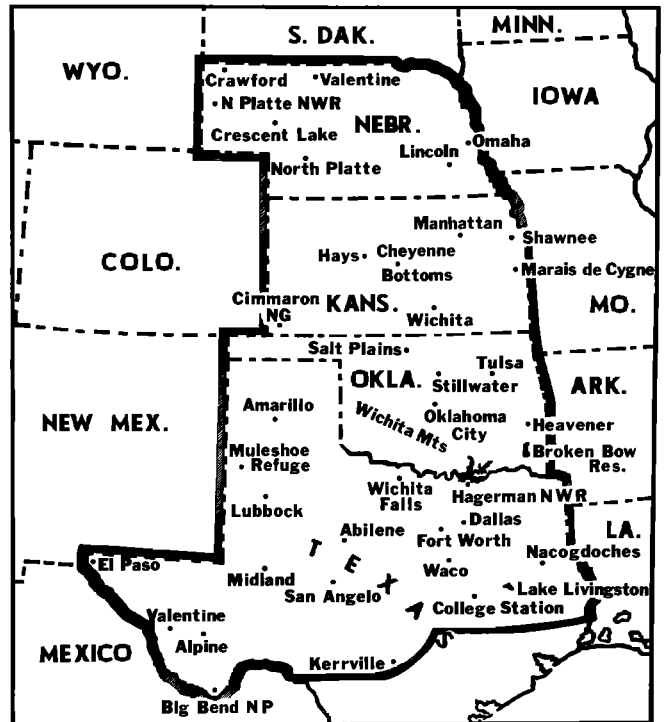
The winter started with extremely cold temperatures, followed by a spell of beautiful autumn-like weather. January and February were mild and spring-like with only brief sporadic periods of cold. It was very dry. In spite of the early cold, many migrants remained well into winter. Otherwise the season was uneventful except for the Evening Grosbeak invasion.

ABBREVIATIONS — B.B.N.P. = Big Bend National Park; G.M.N.P. = Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Place names in *italics> are counties.*

GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL — Horned Grebes in n.e. Oklahoma during late February provided the first area records for that month since 1976. Horned Grebes on Red Bluff L., Loving, Tex., Dec. 11 were rather far w. (BF). One Clark's Grebe accompanied two W. Grebes at El Paso Dec. 6 (BZ). Small numbers of Am. White Pelicans have established themselves as winter residents on a number of Texas reservoirs. Double-crested Cormorants were abundant, high counts comprising 1000 birds in Collin, Tex., Jan. 8, and 200 at Tulsa Dec. 7. Great Blue Herons were nesting at the Ft. Worth Nature Center Feb. 25 (JK, TW). Three Great Egrets were present in Hudspeth, Tex., during January and February (BZ, JD). A Little Blue Heron provided a first winter record at El Paso Jan. 23 (BZ, JD). Unusual for the season were Cattle Egrets in McLennan, Tarrant, Upshur, and Burleson, Tex. A late report noted that four imm. White Ibises provided a first record for Upshur, Tex., in August 1985 (MLK, *fide* FMW).

In Tulsa, Okla., Feb. 15, a rancher broke the ice on a shallow pond so his cattle could drink, and five Tundra Swans came to feed through the holes. This species also graced Marais de Cygnes W.M.A., Kans., Feb. 9 (MC, LM) and B.B.N.P., Jan. 25–Feb. 28. Ross' Geese visited Lancaster, Neb., Dec. 7 (BJR), Cimarron, Okla., Feb. 1 (JDT, JS), and Hudspeth, Tex., Feb. 28 (BZ, JD). Wood Ducks were unusually widespread in Texas: 19 at El Paso throughout the period, four at G.M.N.P., Dec. 16–Jan. 4, 15 at Ingram Jan. 10, and two in B.B.N.P., Dec. 9. This species is a regular winter resident at the zoo ponds in Garden City, Kans. (LH), and one was discovered in Colfax, Neb., Jan. 13 (BJR). Two Black Scoters were shot by hunters in Comanche, Okla., Dec. 8 (*Cameron Univ.—JDT). Surf Scoters visited Lake O' the Pines, Tex., Dec. 8 & 14, Tarrant, Jan. 26–Mar. 4, and Tulsa Dec. 28–Jan. 1. A White-winged Scoter remained at Oklahoma City Dec. 9–Feb. 28. A Barrow's Goldeneye in Keith Dec. 29 furnished the outstanding sighting of the winter in w. Nebraska (RCR, DJR). Hooded Mergansers wintered in El Paso and were also observed at Loving, Tex., Dec. 11, Llano, Tex., Jan. 16, and Colfax, Neb., Jan. 13. In Angelina, Tex., a Com. Merganser Jan. 21 provided a 2nd area record for the season (CDF), and one in Tarrant Feb. 8 was also noteworthy (RDC).

VULTURES THROUGH FALCONS — Black Vultures were nesting at the Ft. Worth Nature Center Feb. 25 (JK, TW). A roost of Black Vultures comprising almost 50 birds was discovered in Kerr, Tex., Jan. 3 (JM). Very early Turkey Vultures arrived in Comanche, Okla., Jan. 12 and Rogers, Okla., Jan. 25. Late Ospreys remained at Lake O' the Pines Dec. 11 (FMW, LC), Llano, Tex., Jan. 16 (E & KM), and Dallas Jan. 25 (m.ob.). Two Black-shouldered Kites were observed several miles apart in Cooke, Tex., Jan. 21 (YD). The Nebraska Game & Parks Dept. reported that 462 Bald Eagles were counted this winter. This compares with 746 in 1985 and 388 in 1984. Most contributors in areas with wintering Bald Eagles reported populations were about average or up slightly. Three Bald Eagles wintered in the Davis Mts. of w. Texas (JMi, PE), and 15 fished along the



Arkansas R. near Garden City, Kans. (LH). A raptor rehabilitator at Bartlesville had difficulty in securing enough fresh fish to feed three injured Bald Eagles. The Corps of Engineers shut the gates on Copan Dam one afternoon and seined for fish for the invalids (BS, *fide* MD). By Feb. 28, Bald Eagles were nesting in Grimes and Limestone, Tex.

In Kansas, N. Goshawks were sighted in Morton, Rush, and Scott in December (SS). A Red-shouldered Hawk remained in Knox, Neb., Dec. 20–Jan. 11 (EB, MB). The few Rough-legged Hawks reported were in n.e. Nebraska and n.e. Oklahoma. There was a good population of Ferruginous Hawks in Finney, Kans., where up to 14 could be found at one prairie dog town (LH). Crested Caracaras were sighted in Texas in McClennan Jan. 22 (YDn), Kendall Jan. 23 (E & KM), and Llano Feb. 6 (E & KM). Only seven Merlins were reported. A Peregrine Falcon in Midland Jan. 19 provided one of the few winter records there (BW, HF). Numbers of Prairie Falcons in w. Kansas were down (SS) but in w. Texas the species was unusually common. Near Tulsa, a Prairie Falcon caught a meadowlark on the wing, then when he landed to eat it, had his catch stolen by a Red-tailed Hawk.

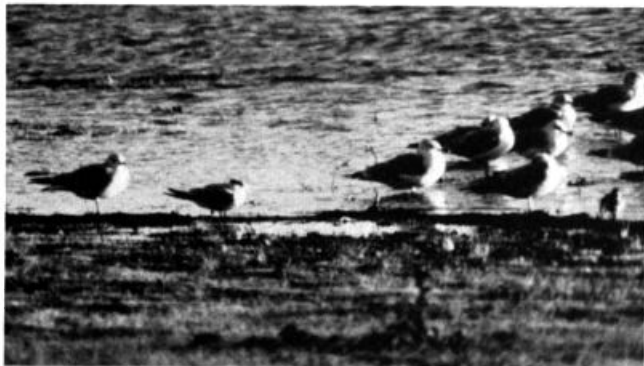
PRAIRIE-CHICKENS THROUGH TERNS — A Greater Prairie-Chicken in Morrill, Neb., Jan. 9 was farther w. than expected (RCR). In Bartlesville, 15 Greater Prairie-Chickens strolled through a subdivision that lies on the edge of the prairie. At least one Virginia Rail wintered at Scott County State L. in w. Kansas (SN, *fide* SS). At Midland, Com. Moorhens wintered for the first time.

Probably because of the mild weather, many shorebirds either remained late or arrived early. A Killdeer was seen in Antelope, Neb., Jan. 11 (EB, MB). At Midland, an Am. Avocet Dec. 14 was late (DK), while one at El Paso Feb. 23 was early (BZ, JD). In Hudspeth, Tex., Black-necked Stilts arrived Feb. 28, 3 weeks early (BZ, JD). A Greater Yellowlegs at Amarillo Dec. 27 provided one of the few winter records there (DM). Three Lesser Yellowlegs were seen in Llano, Tex., Jan. 16 (E & KM), and three wintered at El Paso (BZ). A Solitary Sandpiper

was found at Midland on the very early date of Feb. 11. At Amarillo, a W. Sandpiper Feb. 1 provided the earliest record ever by 56 days (KS) and one wintered at El Paso (BZ). Four Dunlins lingered through the season at El Paso. In n.w. Nebraska, where the early part of the winter was severe, two Com. Snipe in Dawes and three in Sioux Jan. 4 were surprising. Courting Am. Woodcocks displayed in Brazos, Tex., Jan. 20 and Washington, Okla., Feb. 3. Lone Am. Woodcocks tried to fly through glass doors at Midland Jan. 29 and Bartlesville Feb. 23. Unusual sightings of this species occurred in Gillespie, Tex., Dec. 15 and Jan. 23 (E & KM), Tarrant, Tex., Dec. 5 & 17 (JK, TW), and Del Rio, Tex. (no date given, E & GW).

At least 1000 Bonaparte's Gulls spent early December in Muskogee, Okla. (JMCM), and more than 50 wintered on L. Belton, Bell, Tex. (ML). Bonaparte's Gulls in Leon and Limestone, Tex., Feb. 4 established first county records (KA). This species was observed at El Paso Dec. 13 and Llano Feb. 6. A Thayer's Gull visited Tulsa Dec. 19 & 26 (E & KH, JA), and two were at L. Overholser, Oklahoma, Feb. 22-23 (JAG). An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull that was photographed at L. Hefner, Oklahoma, Feb. 22 (JAG) remained through Mar. 4 (JGN). It stayed in a cove back of Newell's home—what a bird to have on one's "yard list"! Another Lesser Black-backed Gull stayed in Denton, Tex., Dec. 20-Feb. 23 (CBH, m.ob.). At least three Glaucous Gulls visited L. Overholser and L. Hefner and the Oklahoma City garbage dump Dec. 21-Feb. 24 (m.ob.), and one was seen at Tulsa Dec. 22 (JA). A Glaucous Gull at Amarillo Dec. 7-9 provided a first record (DM et al.).

Unusual winter appearances of Forster's Terns in Texas were at Llano Jan. 16 and Feb. 6, Comal Feb. 27, and Tarrant Feb. 1. An Elegant Tern was reported Dec. 23 at Balmorhea L., Reeves, Tex. (KR). If accepted by the Texas Bird Records Committee, it would provide the first inland record for the state and one of the exceedingly few records ever away from the Pacific coast.



Possible Elegant Tern at Lake Balmorhea, Tex., Dec. 23, 1985. If confirmed this would be only the first or second far-inland record for North America, and at an odd season for such an occurrence. Photo/Kenneth V. Rosenberg.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Inca Doves had fledged young in Kimble, Tex., Feb. 25 (N & DJ). An Inca Dove visited Oklahoma City Dec. 15-Jan. 29 (DMo). Could it have been an escape? Five Monk Parakeets built a large nest on a utility pole in Tulsa. Both Long-eared and Short-eared owls were scarce. Northern Saw-whet Owls were seen at Omaha Jan. 16 (PC) and Creighton, Neb., Jan. 17 (MB). At the Wichita Mountains N.W.R., a nighthawk identified as a Common Feb. 20 was very early (DC). Common Poorwills at Black Gap W.M.A., Brewster, Tex., Dec. 17 (BMcK) and in B.B.N.P., Dec. 29-Jan. 3 (AB) were possibly wintering birds. Early records of Com. Poorwills occurred Feb. 22 in Kimble, Tex. (N & DJ) and in Tarrant Feb. 25 (JK). A Chaetura swift was observed in Bell, Tex., Feb. 21 (ML). An Anna's Hummingbird visited B.B.N.P., Jan. 15 (RKD). A pair of Green Kingsfishers was observed in B.B.N.P., Dec. 5 (AB et al.). A Lewis's Woodpecker stayed in

G.M.N.P., Nov. 10-Feb. 4, and one was sighted in B.B.N.P., Feb. 10. Two Golden-fronted Woodpeckers were e. of their usual range in Bosque, Tex., Dec. 31 (TG). A Red-bellied Woodpecker in Morrill, Neb., Feb. 27 was w. of its usual range (RCR) as was one that wintered at Midland. A Williamson's Sapsucker was discovered in B.B.N.P., Dec. 4. Pileated Woodpeckers appeared in Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy, Neb., Jan. 16 (MR) and in Caddo, Okla., Feb. 13 & 15 (AM).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH MIMIDS — An Empidonax flycatcher was discovered in Grimes, Tex., Jan. 5 & 12 (CC). A Vermilion Flycatcher was sighted at El Paso Feb. 11 (BZ, JD). Horned Larks moved through n.w. Nebraska by the tens of thousands Feb. 20-23. In Texas, N. Rough-winged Swallows were observed in Llano Jan. 16 and Real Feb. 20. A Blue Jay spent December in B.B.N.P. A Pinyon Jay that remained at Norfolk, Neb., Nov. 26-Jan. 20 was photographed (UM). A Black-capped Chickadee was reported in Cimarron, Okla., Jan. 30-31 (JS, JDT). If accepted by the O.O.S. Records Committee, this would provide a first state record. In Morton, Kans., a Mountain Chickadee was located Dec. 4 (SS). A "Black-crested" Titmouse in G.M.N.P., Dec. 30-Jan. 21 (OVO, SEA) provided a new park record. Pygmy Nuthatches irrupted to Morton, Geary, Saline, and Ford, Kans. (MS), and two were seen in El Paso Feb. 11 (BZ, JD). Red-breasted Nuthatches were common throughout. White-breasted Nuthatches remained in Amarillo and El Paso all winter.

A Rock Wren was found near Tulsa Jan. 20 and a pair was seen in Kerr, Tex., Jan. 3 and Feb. 4. A Canyon Wren was seen in Dinosaur Valley S.P., Tex., Jan. 25 (CBH). The population of Carolina Wrens was the highest in several years. A House Wren was banded in Comanche, Okla., Dec. 29 (LEM, JMM). Winter Wrens visited Fontenelle Forest, Tulsa, Bartlesville, and G.M.N.P. In the Chisos Mts., B.B.N.P., an Am. Dipper was seen several times Dec. 10-Jan. 10 (m.ob.). Golden-crowned Kinglets were present in good numbers throughout the Region. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers wintered near Lake O' the Pines (D & LB). There was a good population of E. Bluebirds in n.e. Nebraska, and two brightened G.M.N.P. through December. Six W. Bluebirds in Menard, Tex., Feb. 7 were the only ones reported, and Mountain Bluebirds were completely absent. Hermit Thrushes lingered in Sarpy, Neb., until Jan. 1. Thousands of Am. Robins flocked in Johnson, Tex., Washington and Osage, Okla., and Sarpy, Neb. A Gray Catbird was a surprising find in the Ft. Worth Nature Center Dec. 19 (TW). Sage Thrashers were abundant in G.M.N.P. and in Cimarron, Okla. A Brown Thrasher wintered at Blair, Neb. (MJ).

WAXWINGS THROUGH TANAGERS — Bohemian Waxwings arrived at Chadron, Neb., in early January, increasing to 300 birds in late February (RCR, DJR). Three Bohemian Waxwings were included in a flock of 1000 Cedar Waxwings in Tulsa and a single Bohemian was located in Geary, Kans., Jan. 1 (MC, LM). In n.e. Nebraska and w. Kansas, N. Shrikes were widespread and common. A Solitary Vireo was found in Tarrant, Tex., on the early date of Feb. 26 (JWS). An Orange-crowned Warbler wintered at Ft. Gibson, Okla., and one was seen at El Paso Jan. 14. Single Yellow-rumped Warblers were noted in Coffey, Kans., Jan. 31 and Sarpy, Neb., Jan. 28. A Black-throated Gray Warbler and a Townsend's Warbler were found in B.B.N.P., Dec. 28 (B & SR). Single Pine Warblers were seen at Keene, Tex., Jan. 1 (CE) and Tarrant Feb. 15 (CM). Two Am. Redstarts were sighted in B.B.N.P., Dec. 13 (BF). The Summer Tanager that was discovered during the B.B.N.P. Christmas Bird Count remained until Jan. 13. A ♀ W. Tanager was observed at Black Gap W.M.A., Dec. 21 (BMcK).

CARDINAL THROUGH FINCHES — In G.M.N.P., two N. Cardinals Jan. 16 provided a 3rd park record (JGr). A Pyrrhuloxia braved the worst snowstorm of the winter in Amarillo Feb. 8-11 (DM). An exotic Red-crested Cardinal (origin unknown) managed to survive December to early February in

Wichita, Kans (DSK) A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Midland Jan 16-19 was out of season (EBI, RMS), as were two Black-headed Grosbeaks in Chase, Kans., Dec. 17 (MS) and a Blue Grosbeak in B.B.N.P., Dec. 30 (IW). Winter records of Dickcissels included single birds in Wayne, Neb. (MB), Tulsa Feb. 7, and Tarrant Jan. 6, 7, & 9 (DJ). A Varied Bunting was banded at Black Gap W.M.A., Dec. 21 (BMcK). A Field Sparrow lingered in Antelope, Neb., until Jan. 11 (EB, MB). Vesper Sparrows remained in Finney, Kans., until Dec. 29 (LH, DR). Le Conte's Sparrows were discovered in Washington, Okla., Jan. 19, Bell, Tex., Feb. 1, and Tarrant Dec. 8 & 14. A Fox Sparrow visited a feeder in Omaha Dec. 10, one was found in G.M.N.P., Jan. 3-4, and two were seen in Llano, Tex., Jan. 6. Swamp Sparrows were abundant in Washington, Okla., and El Paso. White-throated Sparrows were unusually common in Trans-Pecos Texas.

"White-winged" Juncos were common in Scott and Trego, Kans. (SS). McCown's Longspurs were reported in Cleveland, Okla., and Hudspeth and Comal in late February. Lapland Longspurs provided a first El Paso area record Feb. 28 (BZ, JD). This species moved through n.w. Nebraska in unprecedented numbers Feb. 22-24. At Oklahoma City, a flock of Laplands comprising over 300 birds fed in a graveled parking area Feb. 1. Although Smith's Longspurs were scarce at Tulsa and Norman, Okla., a flock of 200 remained in Rains, Tex., Dec. 24-Jan. 19. Smith's Longspurs were also reported in Cowley, Kans., Osage, Okla., and Oklahoma City. In Box Butte, Neb., 75 Snow Buntings were counted Jan. 9 (RCR). Two were discovered in Scott, Kans., Dec. 26 (SS) and several wintered in Coffey, Kans. (DW).

A Yellow-headed Blackbird was found at Tulsa Dec. 29. Rusty Blackbirds were observed in Garden, Neb., Dec. 28-29 and Sheridan, Neb., Feb. 22. Over 500 Great-tailed Grackles were at Cheyenne Bottoms W.M.A., Feb. 15. This species wintered in Lincoln and visited G.M.N.P., Dec. 20. Northern Orioles were seen in December and January at Bartlesville, Dallas, and Midland. Purple Finches were present in above-average numbers in the e. one-third of the Region, uncommon in the c. one-third, and absent in the w. The only Cassin's Finch reported was at G.M.N.P., Feb. 1. Red Crossbills were seen only at El Paso Dec. 13, Comanche, Okla., Feb. 16 & 19, and Great Bend, Kans., Dec. 12. Common Redpolls wintered in Nebraska, with peaks of 200 in Knox Jan. 5 and 165 at L. McCaughy Jan. 10. Pine Siskins were in low numbers except at Lincoln and Keene, Tex., but Am. Goldfinches were abundant in the e. one-half of the Region.

S.A.

There was a massive invasion of Evening Grosbeaks. Perhaps many owners of feeding stations agreed with Melinda Droege, who wrote, "I have longed for an invasion of grosbeaks for years and now I wonder why. They litter the deck with sunflower husks and white-wash and have even gnawed holes in my squirrelproof feeders." They were most abundant in the e. one-half of the Region where flocks of 50 to 100 birds were often seen. A thousand were estimated in the woods of Hardin, Tex., Mar. 2. They were in relatively low numbers in the w., and often disappeared during January, returning in late February. The southwesternmost birds were at Mason, Tex.

CORRIGENDUM — AB 39(3):320. Prairie Falcons have been known to nest at Hueco Tanks S.P., Tex., for at least 5 years.

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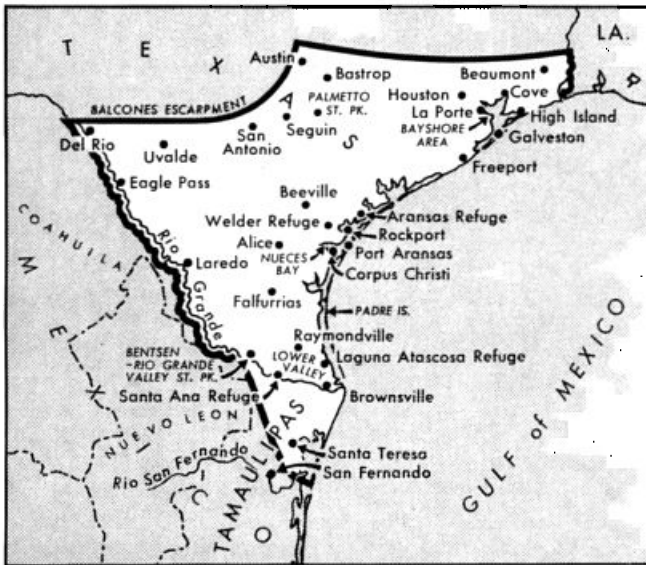
SOUTH TEXAS REGION

Greg W. Lasley and Chuck Sexton

We must start this column by chastising a few unnamed, inconsiderate birders who, by their rude behavior in search of the Northern Jacana near Bentsen State Park, managed to anger an accommodating landowner and close off a productive birding area to all observers. In another incident, the wintering Long-eared Owl at Bentsen was physically prodded by an over-zealous photographer in order to move the bird into a better spot for pictures, driving the bird away. The South Texas Region, and especially the Rio Grande Valley, are intensely birded in the winter. Such incidents as these cannot help but build a terrible reputation for birders (albeit undeserved by 99.9% of us) and continue the harassment of our avifauna. It would seem this should be unnecessary to recite: If you visit Texas

to birdwatch, please be considerate and respectful towards our land, people, and birds.

On a cheerier note, we had a generally mild winter. Mike Austin summarized the season tersely, if ungrammatically, with three words; "warm, dry, and Robins." The only cold spell of note consisted of a light freeze Regionwide December 14; Donohue reported "I have never seen so much color in Bentsen Park." In Austin, January passed without a freezing temperature—an unprecedented event. Everyone thought summer had arrived in mid-February with record temperatures on the 18th of 92° to 102° scattered throughout the Region, but the weather moderated afterward. December and January brought reasonable rainfall to much of the Region but February was quite dry. Much of the Lower Rio Grande Valley (and upriver areas) were virtually rainless through January and February.



Remarkably, we still receive reports without details or documentation for species such as Roadside Hawk and Elegant Trogon. Thankfully, other rarities were well-described and photographed, although the enigmatic Green Parakeets continue to be taken for granted despite our earlier pleas.

ABBREVIATIONS — Attwater = Attwater Prairie Chicken Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; Bentsen = Bentsen Rio Grande Valley State Park; Laguna Atascosa = Laguna Atascosa Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; L.R.G.V. = Lower Rio Grande Valley; Santa Ana = Santa Ana Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; T.P.R.F. = Texas Photo Record File (Texas A & M University); U.T.C. = Upper Texas Coast. Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A Red-throated Loon made a brief appearance in Galveston Feb. 15 (SW). Single Pacific Loons were found in Rockport Dec. 17-18 (CC) and at the Texas City Dike Feb. 26+ (MAN). A Masked Booby in Brazoria Jan. 16 (S & TC) provided a rare seasonal record. Northern Gannet numbers were exceptionally high from mid-January to early February with up to 180 off Galveston Feb. 1 (TE). Brown Pelican numbers continued to be encouraging with up to 40 in a day (usually two to 15) seen from virtually all coastal areas from Galveston southward. A Reddish Egret s. of San Marcos Dec. 3 may have been the same bird seen in the fall closer to Austin (JB). A Black-crowned Night-Heron in e. Travis Jan. 16 (BF) provided a rare county record. White-faced Ibises were notable by their presence in San Antonio through January (SH); 1800 White-faceds at a roosting colony at Rockport Dec. 27 (CC) was a remarkable concentration.

Fifteen Fulvous Whistling-Ducks in the surf at High I., Jan. 25 (RH, WG) was an unusual sight. Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continued their good showing with substantial numbers wintering locally in virtually all areas of the Region. Geese were in high numbers in the Kingsville area, especially Greater White-fronteds (N & PP, SB). Ross' Goose reports were perhaps more numerous and/or widespread than normal. Always the careful observer, C. Clark reported single apparent hybrid Ross' x Snow Geese near Rockport Jan. 13 and near Tivoli Jan. 27. Up to 30 Cinnamon Teal wintered at San Bernard N.W.R. (S & TC). Scoters were widespread and more numerous than usual on the U.T.C. The Galveston and San Luis Pass area seemed to hold more scoters than the more traditional locations eastward (RB *et al.*). Black Scoters continued to be most numerous, usually outnumbering White-wingeds and Surfs three or four to one. Representative counts in Galveston in mid-February included 60-75 Blacks, eight to 12 White-wingeds, and three to 15 Surfs (MA). A Com. Merganser in Austin Dec. 15 (J & BR) was a rare find.



Female Hook-billed Kite at Salineno, Tex., Feb. 16, 1986. Photo/ Alan Brady.

RAPTORS — Our regular raptors (e.g., Red-tailed, N. Harrier, Am. Kestrel) were mentioned in "normal numbers" on the U.T.C. and c. coast, and in "very high numbers" in the L.R.G.V., but in "lowered abundance" in the San Antonio area. Hook-billed Kites were very apparent in their usual haunts this season, delighting many visitors, although misidentifications of other raptors as this species still continued. Black-shouldered Kites were unusually abundant in Kingsville (N & PP, SB). A roost of 79 Black-shoulders in a cane field s.w. of Mission Dec. 30 (GD) was a remarkable concentration. A single Com. Black-Hawk was noted sporadically through the season at Santa Ana (*fide* JJ). Notably, an ad. Gray Hawk was seen carrying sticks at Santa Ana in late February, probably suggesting the initiation of nesting activity. Arvin found an ad. Swainson's Hawk at Raymondville Jan. 10, remarking, "if I had not seen it myself, I would never have believed it." A Zone-tailed Hawk was seen again at Bastrop Feb. 22 (*fide* EK). Golden Eagles made a showing in the L.R.G.V., starting with a belated fall report Nov. 6 at Santa Ana (JJ), followed by reports Dec. 23 at Bentsen and Jan. 22 near Mission (GD). Crested Caracara numbers were up notably in Freeport (S & TC) and Bastrop (BF). Prairie Falcons were reported somewhat more frequently with 2 or 3 Austin area sightings, and single birds at Kingsville Dec. 22 (EA, J & PS) and Santa Ana Jan. 23 (JJ).

QUAIL THROUGH SKIMMER — Northern Bobwhite numbers were reportedly very low on the U.T.C. (m.ob.). Purple Gallinules are casual, at best, on the coast in winter. An immature was found at Riviera Dec. 26 (BB), and an adult was

seen at Aransas Pass Jan. 16 (GL, DC, RF). Two imm. Whooping Cranes were discovered wintering in Brazoria during December. This brought the record wintering flock total to 96 (TS). Sixty-eight Snowy Plovers in a single group at Boca Chica Dec. 10 (BW, JPi) was a tremendous concentration for a species that can occasionally be "missed" on these beaches. The N. Jacana near Bentsen was last observed Dec. 26 (fide GD). The warm weather of January may have been responsible for the remarkably early arrival of four Upland Sandpipers in Hays Feb. 2 (DH). A few Dunlins wintered in Austin, where they are rare, and Stilt Sandpipers were reported from many areas. Of the latter, 70 near Houston Jan. 3 was the highest count (WC). A single Wilson's Phalarope wintered in Austin (JBo, RHei, BF) and two more were seen Feb. 15 & 16 near Sealy in Austin (BZ, ph. to T.P.R.F.). A first December record was provided by a Red-necked Phalarope at Austin Dec. 14 (WSt).

Jaeger numbers clearly hit a peak (for recent years) in February along the entire coast. Among the several reports were seven along Galveston I., Feb. 1 (two Parasitic, one Pomarine, and four unidentified—TE), and six Parasitics at Boca Chica Feb. 21 (GL, BZ et al.). An imm. Little Gull Feb. 9 at San Luis Pass was well-described but did not stay around (DD, DR). A first-winter Thayer's Gull discovered on the Freeport C.B.C. was resighted Feb. 8 at Surfside (fMA). Another first-winter Thayer's was seen in Corpus Christi Feb. 22–Mar. 3 (MH, ph.). Mustang I. had some interesting gulls: a first-winter California Gull was well-described there Feb. 12 (CC), a rare occurrence anywhere in the state. Lesser Black-backed were especially numerous on Texas beaches this season with three different adults on Mustang I. at various times (CC), another adult at Boca Chica Feb. 21 (GL, BZ), and a probable 3rd-winter bird at the Brownsville Dump Feb. 17+ (fide TP). Glaucous Gulls were also regularly reported in frequently-birded localities with first and/or 2nd-winter birds on w. Galveston I., Jan. 19–Feb. 23 and at the Brownsville Dump Feb. 18+ (ph. to T.P.R.F., m.ob.). We received a late report with good details on a **Bridled Tern** carefully observed on South Padre I., Sept. 20 (RAR, VT, DL). The species is regarded as hypothetical in the state. A late migrant Black Tern was seen at Raymondville Dec. 10 (BW, JPi). A Black Skimmer over the Rio Grande at Bentsen Jan. 2 (TM) was out of place.

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — Red-billed Pigeons were reported Jan. 17–31 at Laguna Atascosa (fide SR) and Dec. 28 at Bentsen. By mid-February, Red-billed were noted in small numbers at Falcon Dam, Salineño, San Ygnacio, and elsewhere (m.ob.). One to eight White-winged Doves were seen around residential feeders in Austin throughout the season, suggesting a slight population increase at the n. edge of their range. A White-tipped Dove was netted in Jim Wells Feb. 20 (KA) at the n. edge of that species' range, continuing a trend begun several seasons ago.

Green Parakeets and Red-crowned Parrots again were seen in flocks of 10–30 individuals in Brownsville, McAllen, and Harlingen throughout the period. Small flocks of two to five Yellow-headed Parrots were seen in Brownsville and at Bentsen during January and February. Observers are speculating on the origins of all these species. Groove-billed Anis wintered in fair numbers on the c. coast where C. Clark reported them common in Rockport; 28 were seen Dec. 28 near Corpus Christi (E & NA).

Keith Arnold found 4 active Com. Barn-Owl nests in deer blinds in Jim Wells Feb. 20–23, and located a Great Horned Owl incubating eggs on a hay bale in a barn at the same location Feb. 20.

Elf Owls are not generally thought to winter in the United States, but at least two and possibly more Elf Owls were seen throughout the period at Bentsen (TP, BO, LA, MH et al.). Burrowing Owls were reported to be more numerous than normal in localized areas throughout the Region. A Long-eared Owl was seen regularly at Bentsen Jan. 6–Feb. 7 (m.ob., ph. to T.P.R.F.) for a rare winter record.



One member of the pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls below Falcon Dam, Tex., Feb. 19, 1986. Photo/Greg Lasley.

S.A.

A pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls was again reported from the traditional area below Falcon Dam through the period. This is the only known regular pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls in Texas, and consequently they are sought out by birders on nearly a daily basis. Birdwatchers wander the area assaulting the owls with taped calls constantly, and the editors are amazed the pair remains in the area. This pair of owls is "taped out." Their typical response to a tape is to seek deep cover for long periods of time. Even when the owl calls on its own it is usually a quiet, mellow call, unlike what is typically heard in Mexico where the birds are not harassed so often. Please, if you go to the Falcon Dam area to seek out these birds, leave your owl tape in the car. The birds can be located and observed well by a careful birder.

A Com. Poorwill was heard calling on a warm evening at Austin Jan. 25 (C & MKS, FD), and four Whip-poor-wills were reported at Bentsen on the early date of Jan. 2 (CH, fide GD). A ♀ **Broad-billed Hummingbird** was well-described Dec. 11 at Santa Ana (BW, JPi). It was later seen by many through Jan. 19. Buff-bellied Hummingbirds were rather scarce in the L.R.G.V., but one was seen in Houston Dec. 8 (MAM). Two imm. Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were in Freeport Jan. 22 (FH, BHo), and two Rufous Hummingbirds spent the winter in Austin (GL).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH ROBINS — Single Least Flycatchers, rare in winter, were reported from Sarita Dec. 10 (fBW, JPi) and Feb. 19 (fBZ et al.). A Black Phoebe was seen hawking insects near the Anzalduas Dam Dec. 30 (TMac), a rare winter visitor to the Region. An Ash-throated Flycatcher visited Beaumont Dec. 14 (WG), two were in Gonzales Dec. 29 (B & GL), and a 4th was seen at Laguna Atascosa Jan. 1 & 11 (fide SR). Silent Tropical/Couch's Kingbirds were seen at Bentsen Dec. 4 (BB), Austin Jan. 20 (first area record—JBo, RHei), and Rockport Feb. 25 (CC). A W. Kingbird was in Chambers Jan. 4 (RT, JPar). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were reported in Needville Dec. 21 (GL), and at Laguna Atascosa Jan. 14 (fide SR). A ♀ Rose-throated Becard was seen in Bentsen Nov. 28–Dec. 6 (GC, BB et al.). Tree Swallows remained in Austin in small numbers during the period. Charlie Clark reported hundreds in the Rockport area, and 50 were seen in Brownsville Dec. 28 (BB). There were scattered reports of Barn Swal-

lows in small numbers in many parts of the Region. From 1000 to 1500 Mexican Crows were reported at the Brownsville Dump through the period. Red-breasted Nuthatches remained at scattered locations in Austin, Bastrop, and Houston during the period. A Red-breasted Nuthatch at Sarita Feb. 19 (fBZ) was new for Kenedy. Brown Creeper numbers were low Region-wide, and "almost nonexistent" on the U.T.C. (RB). Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned kinglets were seldom mentioned by contributors; they were apparently in normal numbers. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were in low numbers on the U.T.C. (fide RB). Clay-colored Robins were again conspicuous in the L.R.G.V. with at least three individuals throughout the period at Bentsen, and one at Santa Ana Jan. 15 & 22 (m.ob.). American Robins were "unchallenged as the invader of the year" on the U.T.C. (MA). The skies over Harris were virtually covered with robins at dawn and dusk (m.ob.). American Robins were also reported to be very numerous in the L.R.G.V. during the period. In contrast, McCracken and O'Neil reported that robins were scarce on the c. coast and in Falfurrias until Feb. 12-13 when many thousands passed through on their way N.

VIREOS THROUGH GROSBEAKS — Following on last fall's report of the first L.R.G.V. record of a *plumbeus* Solitary Vireo found at San Ygnacio, another (or the same?) *plumbeus* Solitary was seen Jan. 16 at the same location (MH). A Nashville Warbler was banded in Austin Jan. 15 (GL) for the 2nd January record for the area. Tropical Parulas were reported sporadically through the season at Santa Ana and Bentsen. A Black-throated Blue Warbler Dec. 30 at Santa Ana (SLaF) provided the first refuge record, and a Black-throated Gray at Freeport Dec. 22 (FC, VE, GL) was a rare find. There were 6 reports of Black-throated Green Warblers Dec. 7-Feb. 22 in the Region. A Palm Warbler in Gonzales Dec. 29 (B & GL), and another at Bastrop Jan. 1 (BA), were n. of their normal wintering range. Ovenbirds, rare in winter, were reported from Brazos Bend S.P., Dec. 16 (JBo, RHei), near McFaddin Jan. 21, and s. of Victoria Feb. 4 (CC). Canada Warbler is a casual winter visitor along the coast, so one in Del Rio Dec. 28 (LM, SW) was amazing. A Golden-crowned Warbler was seen briefly but well by an observer familiar with the species, Dec. 31 in Brownsville (CE); the bird could not be located later.

A probable Hepatic Tanager was studied carefully at Bastrop S.P., Jan. 1 (BF). The species has been recorded in this same area during recent winters. Harper and Hallett had a good tanager day Jan. 20 at Laguna Atascosa when they photographed both a Western and a Summer for very rare winter records (ph. to T.P.R.F.). Two additional W. Tanagers were seen in Weslaco Jan. 30 (DA).

A ♀ **Crimson-collared Grosbeak** was found in McAllen Dec. 27 (fPR, T & CH, ph. SLaF), touching off rare bird alerts all



Male Crimson-collared Grosbeak at McAllen, Tex., Jan. 4, 1986. Photo/Gerald Maisel.

over North America. A male was found in the same area several days later and the pair was seen sporadically through Jan. 4. Remarkably, another (or the same?) ♀ **Crimson-collared Grosbeak** was discovered and photographed in Laredo Jan. 7 (GW, ph. to T.P.R.F.) and seen regularly through Jan. 23. The information on the Laredo bird could not be shared with the birding public since the bird was on private property, and the landowner would not allow visitors. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in Houston Feb. 12 (DMu). Black-headed Grosbeaks were noted Dec. 25 at Bentsen (TMac) and Feb. 13 at Falfurrias (AO). The Blue Buntings again set up winter quarters in the campground at Bentsen, where they frequented the numerous bird feeders. At least two different males and one female were reported and photographed by many from early December through the period. A ♀ Blue Grosbeak at an Austin feeder Dec. 2-6 (BF) provided the first area December record, and another Feb. 15 in Fort Bend (PM) furnished the first February U.T.C. record.

SEEDEATER THROUGH FINCHES — White-collared Seedeaters were again present all period in small numbers in and around San Ygnacio. A Botteri's Sparrow responded to a tape Dec. 11 at Laguna Atascosa (BW, JPi). The winter status of this species is poorly known. A Brewer's Sparrow near Hebbronville Jan. 18 (GL, DC, RF) was at the e. edge of its wintering range. Lark Bunting numbers were low in the L.R.G.V. (GD) but reportedly higher than normal in the brushlands around Pearsall (DS). A Lark Bunting at Attwater Dec. 18 (JM) remained through the period for a very rare area record. Many grassland sparrows such as Savannah, Grasshopper, and Le Conte's were in low numbers on the U.T.C. and in Austin (m.ob.). It was generally thought that the mild winter had not pushed the bulk of the sparrows this far s. A Fox Sparrow netted Feb. 21 in Jim Wells (KA) provided only the 2nd county record. White-crowned and Harris' sparrows were in reduced numbers Region-wide. Lapland and McCown's longspurs thrilled observers near Houston during January and February (JM, RP et al.). Laplands were regularly seen in small numbers on croplands e. of Austin during December (GP, BF).

A Boat-tailed Grackle was studied at Harlingen Dec. 1 & 3 (JP). This was apparently only the 3rd record of this coastal species s. of the Corpus Christi area. American Goldfinches were thought to be in low numbers Region-wide. Evening Grosbeaks staged a moderate invasion into the n. part of our Region for the first time in more than a decade. Flocks of four to 25 were at several Austin area locations from Jan. 4 through Mar. 4. There were also several reports from just n. of the Houston area during the period.

ADDENDUM — On Feb. 23, 1983, Hillsman photographed a road-killed owl near Bentsen. During January 1986 the editors were discussing various Mexican vagrants with Hillsman when he reported he had a photo of an owl that he could not identify, but suspected was a **Mottled Owl** (*Ciccaba virgata*). His slide was sent to K. Arnold at Texas A & M, who forwarded it to V. Remsen at Louisiana State University for verification. The bird has been identified as a Mottled Owl, representing the first record for the United States. More details will be published elsewhere.

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NORTHWESTERN CANADA REGION

W. Gavin Johnston and Cathy McEwen

Although the winter season reported here ranges from December to February, in this Region winter legitimately arrives as early as mid-October with unpredictable yet usually freezing temperatures and commencement of snowfall. November 1985 was exceptionally cold, like a "mini-ice age," yet the following months were characterized by mild and indeed thaw temperatures. A few individuals of uncommon winter residents, such as Dark-eyed Junco and White-crowned Sparrow that survived November's wrath, attended feeders regularly throughout the winter in the Whitehorse and Teslin areas. However, these species are unusual winter residents and do not characterize trends of the common winter residents of the Region.

Weather in the Fort St. John area was unseasonably warm and dry in December and January with average conditions during February. In the southern Yukon, December's mean monthly temperature of -6.7°C was well above normal, as was January's temperature of -7.8°C (long term average is -20.7°C). February's mean monthly was normal, -12.8°C . Snowfall in Whitehorse was low in December (11.2 cm), normal in January (24.8 cm) and well below average in February (5.4 cm).

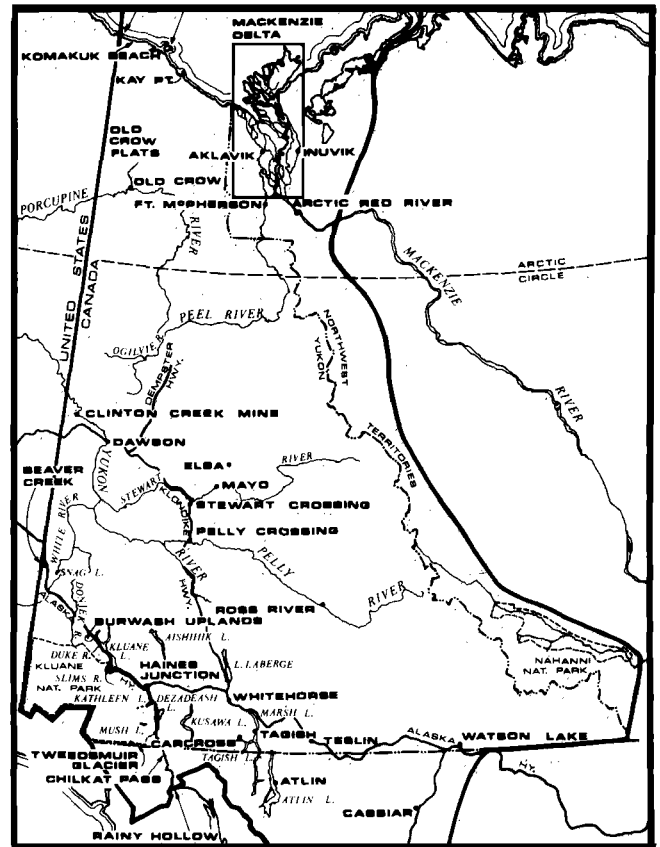
Thirty-five species were reported for the Region by 18 observers.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.S.J. = Fort St. John, British Columbia, F.N. = Fort Nelson, British Columbia, Whse. = Whitehorse, Yukon.

WATERFOWL — Small numbers of Com. Mergansers and Com. Goldeneyes regularly overwinter in traditional open water areas of the s. Yukon. This year was no exception. Common Mergansers were reported from Tagish when one male and two females were seen Feb. 2 (HG, WH), from Tagish Feb. 28 when one male was seen (GJ, CM), as well as from Hudson Hope, B.C. where four males were seen Feb. 23 (CS). Goldeneyes (max. nine) were noted regularly at Tagish by m.ob., and on the Teslin R. at Johnson's Crossing (PD, DD).

GROUSE — One Ruffed Grouse observation was reported from the s. Yukon, seen 2 km s.w. of Jake's Corner Feb. 1 (HG). A covey of four was noted in n. British Columbia at Graham Inlet on Tagish L. (MB). Several observations of Ruffed Grouse were reported during the season from the F.N. and F.S.J. areas (CS, JB). Spruce Grouse sightings were reported by several observers: at Haekel Hill in the Whitehorse area (KM), North Klondike R. (WC), Morley Bay (PD, DD), Tagish (WH, HG), and Cassiar (WH). A flock of 40 Sharp-tailed Grouse, otherwise uncommon for this season in the F.S.J. area, was seen Jan. 25 at Hudson Hope in an unharvested grain field (CS). Few Willow Ptarmigan observations were reported: one at Tagish Dec. 4 (WH) and a flock of six Dec. 16 at Cassiar (WH).

RAPTORS — An unusual sighting of a Bald Eagle occurred Feb 2 at Wolf L., Yukon (PD, DD). Bald Eagles often overwinter along the Peace R., in British Columbia and were again reported for the 1986 season. Two sightings of an individual and a pair



respectively, were made Feb. 23 (CS) and two eagles were seen at Taylor Jan. 26 (CS). Northern Goshawks, usually common in the F.S.J. area were not reported. One was reported from Squanga L., s. Yukon Feb. 21 and one from F.N. (JB). One Great Gray Owl was seen at Hudson Hope Dec. 26 (CS) and at mile 90 of the Alaska Hwy., Feb. 17 (JJ, *vide* CS). Great Horned Owls were reported from numerous locations in the Region by m.ob. The first calls heard in the F.N. area were Feb. 10 (JB). One sighting of a N. Hawk-Owl was reported from Teslin Dec. 11 (PD, DD).

WOODPECKERS — There were 4 sightings of Hairy Woodpeckers in F.S.J. and Dawson Cr. (CS). One resident pair was seen regularly at a feeder in Wolf Cr. subdivision in Whse (PW, JL), and one was seen at Tagish Feb. 28 where they tend to be common (GJ, CM, HG). Downy Woodpeckers, considered uncommon winter residents of the F.S.J. area, were seen at a feeder in Dawson Cr. (RD, *vide* CS). One was seen at F.N., Jan 17 and Feb. 28 (JB). Probably the most obvious and abundant woodpecker, the Three-toed Woodpecker, was reported throughout the season from different locations and observers

CORVIDS THROUGH FINCHES — The maximum number of Black-billed Magpies seen at one time at F.S.J. was 14

on Dec. 23 (CS). They are believed to have been not as common as in previous winters. Numerous sightings of magpies were reported from throughout the s. Yukon during the winter by m.ob. Similar to the 1985 season, a few Blue Jays were noted from n. British Columbia throughout the winter. Three pairs were seen regularly at a feeder at Stoddart Cr. (CS), two at North Pine (CS), and one about 45 km w. of Dawson Cr. (CS). There was no obvious shortage of Gray Jay sightings throughout the Region. Similarly, Com. Ravens were regularly reported from different localities. Maximum number of ravens seen at one time was 150 at Cassiar Dec. 16 (WH). Twelve Eur. Starlings were seen over the season at F.S.J. (CS).

American Dippers were seen at open water sites on the North Klondike R. (WC), on the Yukon R. in Whse., Feb. 9 (GH, PM, LH) and on the Lubbock R., Feb. 23 (WH). One dipper was noted eating salt from Airport Drive at F.N., Dec. 10 (JB).

Brown Creepers, unusual winter residents, were seen in n. British Columbia during the winter season. One was noted Dec. 15 at Stoddart Cr., and at F.S.J., Feb. 2 (CS). Equally rare for the area in winter was a White-breasted Nuthatch seen regularly at a feeder at Dawson Cr. (CS). This provided the 3rd record for the Peace R. area of British Columbia.

Three species of chickadees were reported for the area, all seen at feeders and away from them. Mountain Chickadees were regularly seen at Tagish (WH) and at a feeder in Whse. (PW).

Evening Grosbeaks were less common than usual at F.S.J. (CS). A group of 34 was seen Dec. 23 there (CS). In F.N., where no Evening Grosbeaks were reported in 1985, a group of five was seen Jan. 7 and Feb. 10 (JB). Maximum flock sizes of resident Pine Grosbeaks included: 25 at Teslin throughout the season (PD, DD) and 20 at Cecil L., B.C., Dec. 28 (CS). As in

winter 1985, crossbills which are usually common in the s Yukon, were not reported by many observers. Six White-winged Crossbills were observed Dec. 16 at Cassiar (WH) and one was seen at Tagish Feb. 28 (GJ). Crossbills were also noted at the North Klondike R. (WC). Redpolls, both Common and Hoary, were seen in abundance throughout the Region and season. Maximum flock sizes included: 80 Com. Redpolls at Teslin in February (PD, DD), 60 in Whse., Jan. 19 (HG) and 90 at F.S.J. (CS). Hoary Redpolls were identified in mixed flocks with Com. Redpolls and in separate flocks at F.S.J. (CS).

Snow Buntings, although not widespread and abundant during the season, are regularly seen in n. British Columbia. A flock of 400 was reported from Montney, n. of F.S.J., Dec. 8 (CS). Twenty-five were noted at Teslin Dec. 11 (PD, DD) and two were at F.S.J., Feb. 2 (CS). One Dark-eyed Junco was seen regularly at a feeder at Teslin throughout the season (PD, DD) and one was regularly seen at a feeder at Cowley L., s. of Whse (NB, *fide* CM). A White-crowned Sparrow regularly attended a feeder near the Hot Springs Rd., outside Whse. (CD, *fide* GJ). Bohemian Waxwings were reported from 4 locations: 45 at F.S.J., December (CS), 12 at Cassiar in December (WH), 20 in Whse. in January (CM, GJ) and 20 at Teslin in February (PD, DD). A family of six House Sparrows was noted in the attic of a heated building at the F.N. airport Dec. 10 (JB), while F.S.J. has a resident population of 300 ± House Sparrows (CS).

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NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN-INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

Thomas H. Rogers

December in the Region was bitterly cold, although only a little colder than the exceptionally cold November. December precipitation, although decidedly deficient, added to the persisting November snows, and below-freezing temperatures kept a continuous snow cover. January, normally the winter's coldest month, was warmer than both November and December, causing rapid melting. Precipitation was highly variable; in many places it fell as rain. February temperatures were generally normal or somewhat higher and the month was very wet.

The severe cold and snow were reported as causing hardship on gallinaceous birds in the Walla Walla, Washington, area and made pheasants at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Burns, Oregon, easy prey for hawks and owls. Yard feeders were heavily used and attracted unusual visitors. Heavy late-winter rains caused some flooding at Malheur but provided ideal waterfowl conditions. John Hill blamed a decided lack of birds at Minidoka National Wildlife Refuge, Rupert, Idaho, on the severe winter. Some areas reported record-early arrivals. Larry Malone reported an extreme dearth of birds in the Big Snowy Mountains south of Lewistown, Montana. He attributed this to the drought of the last two years. Highly noteworthy was the southern surge of Common Redpolls, accompanied by a few Hoary Redpolls. White-winged Crossbill numbers were also extraordinary and other "northern" and "mountain" finches appeared in good numbers.

We note with deep regret the passing of Jim Grant, who



not only has done an outstanding job reporting for southern interior British Columbia for many years but also was

highly respected for his extensive contributions to biological knowledge and natural history education. His life remains an inspiration to many.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A Yellow-billed Loon, photographed, appeared at Okanagan Centre, B.C., Dec. 2 & 30 (PR). A Red-necked Grebe was on the Snake R. at Clarkston, Wash., Dec. 14 (C.B.). A W. Grebe on the Columbia R. at Marcus, Wash., Jan. 11 apparently made the first winter record for that area (VB, BO). Montana's first wintering record of an Am. White Pelican was of one near Townsend from at least mid-January to mid-February (JB, DC, GH *et al.*). Unusual sightings of a few pelicans were made below McNary Dam e. of Pasco (CC, MC) and near Wallula, Wash. (REW, WH, BH, DW), and on American Falls Res. near Pocatello, Ida. (CHT). About 20 Double-crested Cormorants wintered at the Yakima R. mouth, Richland, Wash. (WH, REW), and an imm. bird was sighted on the Snake R. e. of Clarkston Jan. 11 and Feb. 25 (C.B., RN).

Waterfowl numbers were in general low because of frozen waters. The Jan. 12 Thompson-Shuswap swan count in the Kamloops, B.C., vicinity found 110 Tundra Swans and an amazing 57 Trumpeter Swans (RH). The mid-winter survey at Malheur N.W.R., Burns, Ore., recorded 33 Trumpeters, down from last year's 51 (CDL). At least one pair of Mute Swans wintered on Okanagan L., B.C. (PR). A Ross' Goose was killed on the Snake R. near Pocatello, and Idaho Falls, Ida., had one (CHT). A Brant was shot on the Ft. Hall, Ida., bottoms Dec. 9 (CHT). Wintering Canada Geese at Columbia N.W.R., Othello, Wash., numbered 7000 (JRR). Two Wood Ducks wintered at Helena, Mont., where the species is a rarity (GH). Mallards peaked at Columbia N.W.R. at 30,000 in early December but had decreased to 1200 by mid-February. An unusually large concentration of 1000 Mallards was noted near Incheleum, Wash., Jan. 5 (VB). Frenchglen, Ore., had 24 Gadwalls Dec. 18. The only Eur. Wigeons were one on the Columbia R. near Wenatchee, Wash., Jan. 19 (RO) and one on the Snake R. below American Falls Dam in Idaho Feb. 9 (BN). An ad. ♂ **Tufted Duck** on the Columbia near Wenatchee Jan. 17-19 was e. Washington's first (PM, BJ, RO *et al.*). A ♀ Greater Scaup was with Lessers near Pocatello Feb. 23 (CHT). Two ♀ Oldsquaws spent January on Kalamalka L. s. of Vernon, B.C. (PR) and a single bird was seen in December at Lewiston, Ida., and Wawawai, Wash. (JP, DP, PS, MK). A Black Scoter on a pond 10 mi s. of Union Gap Nov. 10 was apparently e. Washington's 3rd (DG, AS). A ♀ White-winged Scoter at Cascade Locks, Ore., Nov. 17 was only the 2nd there for the observer (DA). The Snake R. at Idaho Falls had an unusual concentration of 117 Com. Mergansers Dec. 21 (EC). Two to three Red-breasted Mergansers appeared on the Columbia R. near Northport, Wash., Jan. 11 and Feb. 1 (VB, BO, JT) and a very few were sighted in the s. Okanagan Valley, B.C. (PR, ME).

VULTURES THROUGH GULLS — A remarkably early Turkey Vulture flew over Panhandle L., w. of Newport, Wash., Feb. 24 (EJL). Bald Eagles wintered in good numbers. A pair returned to last year's nest at Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, Ida., in late February (LDN). There were at least 4 N. Goshawk sightings. A dark hawk observed at close range near Athalmer, B.C., Dec. 29 was believed to be a Swainson's (IJ, SR). A Ferruginous Hawk was sighted near Milton-Freewater, Ore., Feb. 6, well n. of its normal wintering range (TC, CM). An ad. Golden Eagle along the Columbia R. below Northport, Wash., Jan. 11 was noteworthy (VB, BO). An Am. Kestrel spent most of the period at Kootenai N.W.R., for a rare winter sighting there (LDN). Two Peregrine Falcon and 5 Gyrfalcon sightings were reported.

Malheur N.W.R. had a sighting of two Gray Partridges for one of only a few records there in recent years (BE). Deschutes County, Ore., had its first Wild Turkeys when some of the flock from Jefferson County appeared at Sisters (MBS). Seven N. Bobwhite came to a feeder near Walla Walla Dec. 27 (AL).

A Mountain Quail was found along Mill Cr Road s.e. of Walla Walla Feb. 8 (TG).

Unusual was the sighting of a Virginia Rail on Columbia N.W.R., Dec. 21 (JRR), and one wintered at Vernon for the 3rd year (MCo). A pair of Greater Sandhill Cranes arrived near Burns, Ore., Feb. 13 (*vide* CDL). Two Greater Yellowlegs lingered at Lewiston, Ida., Dec. 14 (PS, JP, DP, MK). Okanagan Landing, B.C., had a Mew Gull in mid-January (JG), single birds visited the Pasco and Richland, Wash., city dumps Dec. 4 (NB), and one to two were on the Columbia River at Richland, Wash., Jan. 19-Feb. 1 (REW). The Pasco dump had a Thayer's Gull Dec. 4 (NB). Up to 12 Thayer's, five Glaucous-winged, and three Glaucous gulls wintered at the Kelowna, B.C., dump and a California Gull appeared there Feb. 21 (PR). Up to six Glaucous Gulls were sighted in the Pasco-Richland-Wallula area Dec 4-Feb. 16 (m.ob.) and The Dalles, Ore., had one Jan. 19 (CC). An imm. Glaucous was at Wolf Lodge Bay on Coeur d'Alene L., Ida., Dec. 14 (S.A.S.). Eight Glaucous-winged Gulls were at the Pasco dump and two at the Richland dump Dec. 4 (NB).

OWLS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — Malheur had 2 winter records of Com. Barn-Owls, one Dec. 9 and one Feb. 10. A Flammulated Owl obtained in the Missoula area last summer as a helpless fledgling was in good health but not yet ready for release (JH). Great Horned Owls suffered high losses in the Helena vicinity, six becoming road casualties and one the victim of a trap (VY). Single Snowy Owls appeared near Invermere, B.C., Dec. 30 (RR); in the Fortine, Mont., area Dec. 20 (WW); and near Boardman, Ore., Jan. 25 (CC, MC). Northern Pygmy-Owls were decidedly scarce in the Okanagan but the Helena area had many more sightings than usual. The Pocatello area also had a good number of sightings. Single Great Gray Owls were found s. of Tetonia, Ida., Feb. 15 (JT, DF) and in Haskell Basin in the Whitefish, Mont., area (KL). A Boreal Owl found dead in a net at Vernon Dec. 24 made the only report for the species (JG). Helena had two sightings of N. Saw-whets (NN, CJ, ST). An Anna's Hummingbird ran into a window at Camp Sherman in the Bend, Ore., vicinity Feb. 28 (LR) and a male visited a Zillah, Wash., feeder Dec. 12-25 (DG, AS).

KINGFISHERS THROUGH MIMIC THRUSHES — A Belted Kingfisher along the Kootenay R., Jan. 30 (LH) provided the first winter record for Kootenay N.P. A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker was sighted near Sacheen L., Pend Oreille Co., Wash., Nov. 23 and Dec. 1 (JS). The only Blue Jays reported were one at Turah, 10-15 mi e. of Missoula, during November (JK) and one at a Robson, B.C., feeder Dec. 1-Feb. 23 (GD, LV). Common Ravens continued to flourish in s.e. Oregon. A roost site near Buchanan supported 1168 in January and another near Frenchglen had 169 in December. A Chestnut-backed Chickadee, rare in s.e. Oregon, appeared along the Middle Fork of the John Day R. downriver from Bates Feb. 5. A small colony exists in the Long Cr. District of Malheur N.F. (MA, AA). Two Bushtits along the Snake R. near Twin Falls Feb. 15 were Trost's first in s. Idaho in about 4 years (CHT, CW). A flock of 15 was observed near Frenchglen, Ore., Dec. 18 (CDL).

A Bewick's Wren was sighted at Toppenish N.W.R., Yakima Co., Wash., Dec. 18 (DG, AS) and one to two wintered along Asotin Cr., Asotin Co., Wash. (m.ob.). Pullman, Wash., had one Nov. 3 (IP). The species' numbers were normal at Walla Walla Marsh Wrens wintered in reduced numbers at Malheur. A Rock Wren was seen near Frenchglen Dec. 18 (CDL). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was near Fortine Jan. 6 for supposedly the latilong's first winter record (WW) and one was seen at Asotin Slough, Asotin Co., Jan. 18 (MK, LL, PP). Joseph Creek W.R.A. yielded four W. Bluebirds Jan. 11 (C.B.). Good numbers of this species wintered in the Okanagan Valley (PR). It was one of the better winters for Townsend's Solitaires in the Malheur area, with 97 counted among the junipers near Frenchglen. A Hermit Thrush visited a Yakima feeder Jan. 13 (JM). Pocatello had 3 sightings of single Varied Thrushes in December and February (JJ, BN, CHT). The valley around Fortine had several

sightings of this species for the first winter records there (WW) and two to three wintered at feeders in Libby, Mont. (DH). A N Mockingbird wintered at Kamloops, B.C. (PR), and a Brown Thrasher wintered at a Lumby, B.C., feeder (m.ob.).

PIPITS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — The only reports of Water Pipits were of one at Malheur Dec. 18 (CDL) and Jan. 1 (MA, AA). Bohemian Waxwings appeared in flocks of hundreds and even thousands in many places. Their numbers were especially high in the Okanagan. The usual sprinkling of Cedar Waxwings occurred at a few places, with the exception of Bend, where up to 10,000 waxwings, 90% Cedars, appeared for a few days in mid-February (TC). At Malheur 10–20 N. Shrikes wintered and seven Loggerhead Shrikes remained in the Blitzen Valley there. Three Yellow-rumped Warblers were found at Washington State University's Research Station near Wenatchee Feb. 17 (PM) and one showed up in Penticton, B.C., shortly before the Christmas Bird Count (PR).

Two Chipping Sparrows photographed in the Okanagan Jan. 21 furnished the first winter record there (PR). Osoyoos, B.C., had a Swamp Sparrow Feb. 16 (PR). A very few White-throated and White-crowned sparrows visited feeders at Missoula, and Harris' Sparrows were becoming regular at feeders there (PLW). A White-throated Sparrow and a White-crowned Sparrow wintered at a Vernon feeder (PR). Harris' Sparrows wintered in record numbers in the Thompson R.–Okanagan valleys, B.C., with at least 30 present (PR). Harris' Sparrows were also seen frequently in the Richland, Wash., and Umatilla–Hermiston, Ore., areas (REW) and at Walla Walla (SM). One was at Frenchglen for the first winter record there (CDL). A very few appeared elsewhere in e. Washington and Oregon and s. Idaho. Lapland Longspurs appeared in the Pocatello area, a large flock being sighted on Michaud Flats during November and a few w of that city Jan. 7 (CHT, CW). Southern interior British Columbia had several sightings of one to two Lapland Longspurs (GD). A rare occurrence was of one Lapland visiting a Prineville, Ore., feeder Dec. 17–Jan. 3 (CS) and a very few appeared at feeders at Libby (BC, C, MS). At least three Laplands were with Horned Larks n. of Prescott, Wash., Dec. 29 (BH). Snow Buntings were sparsely reported except at Vernon where flocks up to 150 appeared, and in the Wycliffe, B.C., area, where 150 wintered (MVW).

Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds were sighted at Malheur Dec. 21 (GI) and one visited a Richland feeder Dec. 6 (REW). Coldstream, B.C., had a visit by three Rusty Blackbirds Dec. 16 (PR) and Pasco, Wash., had one in Fishhook Park Jan. 11 (BH, LM, DW, JN). Some 2000 Brewer's Blackbirds wintered at a feedlot near Princeton, Ore. A Com. Grackle was with a flock of Brewer's Blackbirds on Michaud Flats w. of Pocatello Dec. 22 but was not seen after that month (CHT). Six Brown-headed Cowbirds fed in a Coldstream feedlot with Red-winged and Brewer's blackbirds and starlings Dec. 16 (PR).

FINCHES — A **Brambling** was photographed as it frequented a feeder at Scotch Cr., Shuswap L., B.C., Dec. 26–Jan 10 (SR, PR). The largest aggregation of Rosy Finches was s e. of Twisp, Wash., Feb. 15 (PM). Most noteworthy were groups of up to 50 of this species at feeders at Libby in February (EE, AS, MS). Only a few Pine Grosbeaks were reported, the largest group being of 30 in the Bull L. vicinity, Lincoln Co., Mont (DH). A small flock of Purple Finches was carefully identified at Cheney, Wash., in February (FBH, BN), and one visited a Umatilla feeder Dec. 14 (MC). Cassin's Finches wintered in more than usual numbers in e. Oregon and Washington. Red Crossbills were reported in good numbers in many localities White-winged Crossbills staged a major incursion into the lowlands of the Region. Libby had up to 100 at feeders (DH) and e. Washington reported numerous sightings. One even got to Umatilla for a first there (MC). Virtually every reporting locality had Com. Redpolls, mostly in high numbers. Those in the Klamath Basin were the first verifiable ones in 100 years (SS). Those in Bend provided only the 2nd county record (TC) and two at Odell, Ore., reportedly made only the 2nd record there (NE). Hoary Redpolls were reported in the Okanagan (PR), in Grant Co., Ore. (BH), and in the Walla Walla area, including Oregon just s. of the state line (BH, JN, DHe). A redpoll near Milton-Freewater, Ore., was suspected to be of this species (REW). Wintering Pine Siskins were quite plentiful at several localities in n.w. Montana and e. Washington and in Kootenai N.P., B.C. American Goldfinches visited feeders, usually in abundance, at Libby, Kalispell, Missoula, and Idaho Falls. Evening Grosbeaks appeared to stay mostly in s. British Columbia, extreme n.e. Washington, and n.w. Montana.

OBSERVERS CITED — David Anderson, Anne Archie, Merle Archie, Nigel Ball, Jim Bird, Canyon Birders (C.B.), Vernon Byrd, Casperson (C), Eddie Chew, Don Childress, Mary Collins (MC), Craig Corder, Marion Corder, Bobbie Couvillion, Tom Crabtree, Gary Davidson, Nadine Eccles, Brad Ehlers, Maurice Ellison, Esther Enders, Dave Finkelnburg, Denny Granstrand, Jim Grant, Tony Greager, Warren Hall, Larry Halverson, Bill Hayes, Della Hermsmeyer, David Herr (DHe), John Hill, George Holton, Rick Howie, Judy Hoy, Frances B. Huston, Gary Ivey, Ian Jack, Joe Jeppson, Cedron Jones, Merlene Koliner, Earl J. Larrison, Louise La Voie, Audrey Lehman, Kris Lierboe, C. D. Littlefield, Larry Malone, Phil Mattocks, Larry McCloskey, Joan Miller, Craig Miller, Shirley Muse, Larry D. Napier, Jim Nestler, Ron Neu, Bruce Newman, Norma Nixon, Barbara North, Bill O'Connell, Ruth Ortiz-Torres, Deanna Palmer, Jeff Palmer, Ian Paulsen, Peggy Pedigo, Phil Ranson, Sandy Rathbone, Ruth Reed, James R. Rees, Lou Rems, Steve Rovak, Art Sheldon, Mary B. Smith, Spokane Audubon Society, Christy Steck, Andy Stepniewski, John Stewart, Paul Sullivan, Steve Summers, Marj Swanson, Joel Tinsley, John Trapp, Charles H. Trost, Linda Van Damme, Cheryl Webb, Winton Weydemeyer, Robert E. Woodley, David Wright, Philip L. Wright, Vince Yannonie.—**THOMAS H. ROGERS, E. 10820 Maxwell, Spokane, WA 99206.**

MOUNTAIN WEST REGION

Hugh E. Kingery

The Mountain West report has an abbreviated nature because observers simply did not see as many birds as in most winters. In the eastern portion of the Region, the cold November apparently induced many species to leave. Mild weather followed the November cold, but did not bring back those birds already gone. In Utah mid-winter deadened the season by blasting cold weather and sinking a month-long sea of fog onto the Utah and Salt Lake valleys, from Provo north to the north end of the Great Salt Lake.

Continuing studies of gulls in central Utah turned up new data on the composition of gull flocks there. A couple of first and second state records turned up: Iceland Gull in Colorado, Harlequin Duck in Utah. Northern incursors showed a mixed record—lots of redpolls and Snow Buntings (including Nevada's second or third), not many Bohemian Waxwings, and mixed records for Lapland Longspurs and Rough-legged Hawks. White-crowned Sparrows must have filled the "northern incursive" niche somewhere to the south—they largely left the Mountain West. Mountain finches did not drop from their conifer forests to the plains

and valleys, although they also seemed uncommon in the mountains.

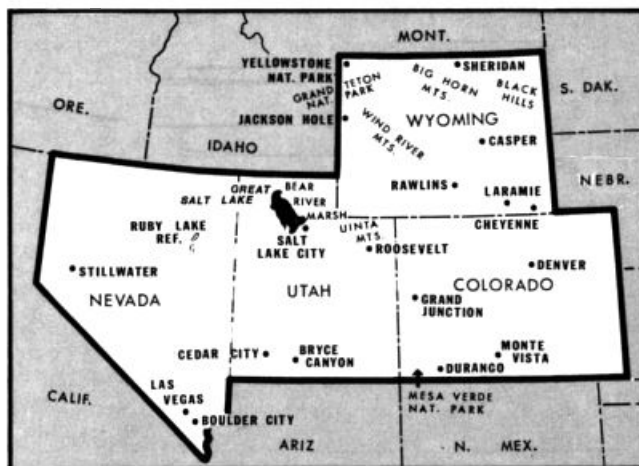
Our winter report usually contains an analysis of the common birds on Christmas Counts, but this year not enough data was available by the deadline.

ABBREVIATIONS — † = documentation submitted for review to state records committee; # = no written documentation received; DMNH = Denver Museum of Natural History; L/L/B/L = Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, Colo.

LOONS TO IBISES — The Region tallied only nine Com. Loons—comparable to last year, although Gunlock Res. in s.w. Utah had one Jan. 19, for the first winter record for that latilong (SH). A few Pied-billed Grebes wintered in the c. Colorado mountains at Delta, Durango, Salida, Eagle, and Grand Junction, in c. Utah from Salt Lake City to Fish Springs N.W.R., and at Ruby Lake N.W.R., Nev. A scattering of Eared Grebes in January occurred at Las Vegas, Ruby L., Ogden, Utah, Delta, and Wellington, Colorado. Grand Jct., Pueblo, Colo., and Wellington also saw W. Grebes in January. Pueblo had a Clark's Grebe Jan. 13 (BM). About 1500 Am. White Pelicans wintered in the Carson Sink s. of Fallon, Nev.; the first to winter at Stillwater W.M.A., they fed on unusually large numbers of dead and dying fish (ST). By February, 100 had returned to Pyramid L., n. of Reno (JB). Five Double-crested Cormorants stayed until Dec. 12 at Grand Jct., and by late February, north-bound cormorants had arrived at Stillwater and Kirch refuges in Nevada. Great Egrets graced Fish Springs Dec. 6 and Jan. 24–31 (CD), Stillwater Dec. 18 (ST), and Gardnersville, Nev., Jan. 11 (†EH). The Green-backed Heron that arrived Nov. 11 at Kirch W.M.A. stayed the first one-half of the winter (CS). One on Feb. 24 flushed from close range at the Hotchkiss, Colo., fish hatchery (†M). At Stillwater Dec. 18, three White-faced Ibises accompanied herons (ST).

WATERFOWL — Stillwater wintered 10,000 ducks (a drop), mostly pintails, Mallards, shovelers, and Green-winged Teal. Fish Springs, with 2500 ducks Jan. 10, had less than half last year's population of ducks, geese, swans, and coots. Monte Vista and Alamosa refuges in Colorado had 17,000 Mallards and 2000 Canada Geese winter. A paltry 6876 ducks in n.e. Colorado Dec. 12 (52,712 last year), increased by Jan. 8 to 38,747, cf. 47,185 last January (JD). A few hundred Tundra Swans wintered at Stillwater, about 15 at Pahrangat Ref., Nev., and 57 at Fish Springs. Two wintered at Durango and one at Grand Junction (EF, BT). The usual 25 Trumpeters wintered at their breeding site at Ruby L. An August count in n.w. Wyoming tallied 98 Trumpeters: 73 adults (low number) and 25 young (encouraging). Of the total, Yellowstone had 32, Grand Teton had 26, national forests had 24 (T.S.S.). The Region's 11 Greater White-fronted Geese compared with five last winter; this year's complement included five at Kirch Dec. 2–Jan. 6, the rest in Colorado (Grand Jct. and Delta, Pueblo, Lamar, and Ft. Collins). February saw Snow Geese moving through the Region: 300 at Minersville, Utah, Feb. 4, 3000 at Lamar Feb. 22, 126 Feb. 26–27 at Durango, and 15,000 at Stillwater Feb. 28. Five "Blue" Geese accompanied the Lamar flock, and one "Blue" sat on Flaming Gorge Res. in e. Utah Jan. 25 (FL). Ross' Geese visited all 4 states; one each wintered at Las Vegas (VM) and at St. George, Utah (JG), and others visited Seedskaadee N.W.R., Wyo., Grand Jct., Delta, and Denver. Early January saw 93,490 Canada Geese in s.e. Colorado and 34,829 in n.e. Colorado (JD). By the end of February the northward movement sent 8500 Canadas over Cheyenne on 3 days. A "Cackling" Goose joined Canadas at Reno Feb. 12 (JB).

A Eur. Wigeon swam in a waterhole in the ice at Barr L. near Denver Jan. 27–Feb. 1 (WL, †M] et al.). One Greater Scaup appeared at Denver Jan. 1 (WWB) and two at Farmington, Utah, Feb. 2 (†CK). A **Harlequin Duck** wintered at Logan, Utah, seen Dec. 21–Feb. 21 on the Logan River (†PB, ph., painting). Since two specimens allegedly taken in 1913, one allegedly identified by Alexander Wetmore, have both disappeared, this may



qualify as Utah's first documented record. The Region reported three Oldsquaws, at Great Salt L., Pueblo, and Ft. Collins. Pueblo reported a White-winged Scoter Jan. 13–16 (BM, WL, DS). By Feb. 22 both Com. Goldeneyes and Buffleheads were courting at Wellington (PO). At Denver, the number of Com. Mergansers plummeted—1378 counted over the period compared with 5109 last year; the peak count came with 400 Dec. 1—the peak last year 1200 on Jan. 29 (D.F.O.). In contrast, Stillwater wintered 3000 Com. Mergansers and 1500 Ruddy Ducks, unusually high numbers (ST).

RAPTORS TO CRANES — The revised format for the mid-winter Bald Eagle inventory makes comparisons impossible. Wyoming counted 199 (146 ad., 53 imm.), with 110 of them in the Yellowstone/Grand Teton corner (BO). Although s.e. Wyoming tallied only 27 on the official count, 40–45 used the roosts around Casper (JH). Colorado tried to duplicate previous years' counts, resulting in 463 Balds, 86% of the 6-year average. The counts of 189 from s.w. Colorado and 160 from n.w. Colorado were low, and 13 in s.e. Colorado was very low. Possibly open water due to the unseasonable warm weather and the lack of winter-killed big game dispersed the eagles from their typical lowland concentrations (JCr). We lack reports of statewide surveys in Nevada and Utah; specific reports during the survey period include 35 Balds at Stillwater, 45 at Morgan, Utah, and 104 in Cedar City, Utah. Several observers complained of low counts of N. Harriers—at Fish Springs and the w. Utah desert, Zion, and n.e. Colorado. A N. Goshawk ventured into urban Denver where it caught and fed on a duck in a city park (TJ). A Red-shouldered Hawk wintered at Kirch W.M.A.; they may nest in the area since one was collected near Ely, Nev., last summer (CS). Rough-legged Hawks must have altered their winter pattern, since some observers reported fewer, some saw normal numbers, and some more than usual, with no geographical relationship. Reports on Am. Kestrels reflected the same ambivalence: 43 observations cf. 85 last year at Zion, and 35 mi away, down 20% at Cedar City; observations down by 10 at Denver (36 cf. 46) and up by 10 at L/L/B/L (80 cf. 71). They seemed scarce in n.e. Colorado (CC). A Peregrine Falcon, originally released in Grand Teton N.P. and shot at Provo, Utah, went to Idaho for rehabilitation and release (DF).

The 200 Sage Grouse at Sheridan, Wyo., provided a record big count (RP), but they continued scarce in n.e. Nevada (CE). A wintering Virginia Rail at Grand Jct. was found dead Feb. 21 (BT). Sandhill Cranes began their northward move early—the San Luis Valley, Colo., had 500 by Jan. 18, 1000 by Jan. 22 (EM). Kirch W.M.A. saw 1600 in February in an erratic migration (CS). They reached Ruby L. by Feb. 23, and some had established territories by Mar. 4. By Jan. 18, five Whooping Cranes had arrived at Monte Vista N.W.R. (EM).



Mew Gull in juvenal/first-winter plumage at Orem, Utah, December 1985. Photo/David L. Fischer.

SHOREBIRDS — About five Killdeer wintered at Zion—probably the result of favorable new habitat (new sewer ponds) rather than mild weather, since Killdeer winter throughout the s. part of the Region. Delta attracted several unseasonable shorebirds; three to five Least Sandpipers stayed until Dec. 22. Five Dunlins stayed Oct. 20–Dec. 8 and four of them stayed over until Feb. 2 for the first Colorado wintering record (MJ). An Am. Avocet lingered there until, on Dec. 8, Janos found it dead. He speculated that possibly it could not probe in the mud like the Dunlins, could not find food, and consequently starved. Denver's Greater Yellowlegs returned to winter in the same spot where one has wintered since 1981 (D.F.O.). A Greater Yellowlegs also wintered at Fish Springs (CD). Early returnees included an Am. Avocet at Stillwater Feb. 26 (ST) and a Lesser Yellowlegs at Kirch W.M.A., Feb. 23 (CS). A solitary lingering Least Sandpiper appeared at Ogden, Utah, Dec. 12 (CK).

GULLS — A Mew Gull joined Ring-billeds in a Reno park Feb. 9 (fFP, ph.) and one or two visited Orem, Utah and Salt Lake City in December (ph. DF, MT, †ES). Pueblo, Colo., attracted two surprising January gulls. First, a flock of six to 13 Bonaparte's Gulls spent a good part of January there—at least Jan. 13–18 (†DS, †BM), for the first wintertime record from the Region. With them on Jan. 13, one Black-legged Kittiwake stayed even longer, to Jan. 22 (††BM).

Denver had a much-reduced gull population over the winter—D.F.O. counted 2002 Ring-billeds on its field trips, after 14,919 last year. In winter, Denver's gulls concentrate at Cherry Creek Res. The lake attracted California Gulls lingering into December (200 Dec. 1) plus 25 wintering Herrings (200 at the peak last year). In February it had 15–20 Thayer's Gulls, three Glaucous, and hundreds of Ring-billeds. Leitner discovered a prize at Cherry Creek: Colorado's first satisfactory record of



First-winter Thayer's Gull at Reno, Nev., Nov. 23, 1985. Photo/Frederic Petersen.

an Iceland Gull, well-described and documented, that stayed Jan. 22–Feb. 4 (††CC, m.ob.). The description, which suggests the Kumlien's race (JR), along with photographs, is circulating to C.F.O. and to national experts. The specimen (DMNH #18886) previously accepted as the first and only state record traveled east for examination by expert Roxanne Laybourne, and came back re-identified as a Thayer's Gull (C.F.O. *Journal* 12(4):9).

Gulls at Utah's inland sea (Great Salt L.), and at big freshwater Utah L. to the s., also decreased in midwinter. Cold weather and a month-long fog/smog combination, so thick the gulls could not see their way to the dumps, apparently drove them out. December's 8000 gulls (including 1000 Herrings) dwindled by Jan. 18 to 1300 (100 of them Herrings). By February the numbers picked up again to 11,000. The observers regard last year's discovery of other Larid species as typical rather than aberrations. This year they reported at least a dozen Thayer's Gulls, three Glaucous-wingeds (ph. DF), three to four Glaucous, three hybrid Glaucous-winged x Westerns, and one Glaucous x Herring (†MT, DF; details to be published elsewhere).

OWLS TO GNATCATCHERS — From Zion and Cedar City n. to Yellowstone and e. to Indian Peaks, Evergreen, and the n. Colorado Front Range, N. Pygmy-Owls made conspicuous appearances. At Eldora, Colo., observers saw one catch a Rosy Finch and at Dubois, Wyo., one caught a bigger starling, but couldn't get its talons out—observer Amoss Welty had to help it! Burrowing Owls arrived in Las Vegas by mid-February (VM). A Boreal Owl came into a Palisade, Colo., yard Dec. 13 (SD, #). Only last fall, several calling Boreals were discovered in the spruce-fir forest 10 mi away (and 4,000–5,000 ft higher). February brought early hummingbirds to s. Nevada: a Black-chinned Feb. 10 to Boulder City (PLo) and an Anna's Feb. 9 to a warm canyon near Las Vegas where manzanita had already started to bloom (KW). Red-bellied Woodpeckers wandered to Crook, Colo., Dec. 16 (D & JW) and Boulder Dec. 18 (RC). A very early ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker showed up in Florence, Colo., Feb. 10–18 (††RW).

Tree Swallows arrive early (like the two at Las Vegas Feb. 17) but Violet-greens ordinarily lag behind them; the two Violet-greens at Las Vegas Feb. 17 (J & MC) and two at Kirch W.M.A. in late February (CS) had come quite early. Pinyon Jays wandered away from pinyon pines to Reno, Sheridan, Casper, Cheyenne, and Loveland. In Utah, Am. Crows exhibit an odd distribution: thousands roost each night on the campus of Brigham Young Univ., typical numbers for Utah County where they commonly feed at the dumps. They rarely, if ever, appear to the n. in the Salt Lake Valley (DF). Mountain Chickadees visited feeders in Ogden, Casper, Cheyenne, Eagle, Denver, Ft. Collins, and L/L/B/L. Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers continued low, and few White-breasted Nuthatches came into the valleys. A Winter Wren journeyed all the way to Carrizo Canyon in extreme s.e. Colorado Dec. 29 (DB). Ruby-crowned Kinglets did not winter as usual at Zion, but one to two did winter in Grand Jct., and D.F.O. found one in Denver Jan. 18. A Black-tailed Gnatcatcher at Beaver Dam Wash gave Utah its first winter record (JBU, JL); observers now have found them there the first 7 months of the year.

THRUSHES TO WARBLERS — Pueblo sported 14 Eastern and 32 Mountain bluebirds Jan. 11 (BS). Twelve W. Bluebirds gave Beaver Dam Wash its first record, Jan. 18, and they increased throughout s. Utah by 50% (SH). Mountain Bluebirds probably wintered at Grand Jct., with six Dec. 16 and 57 Jan. 18 (BT). Wintering Townsend's Solitaires declined throughout the Region's valley and plains cities, but in the heart of the Rockies, Salida, Colo., reported 105 observed in December (RE). Utah reported three winter Hermit Thrushes: one at Ogden Dec. 18, banded and seen daily to Feb. 28 (MK), one at Logan Feb. 8 (JBa), and one at Zion Feb. 9 (JG). American Robins, like solitaires, went elsewhere; Denver and L/L/B/L reported 87 and 49 observations compared with 408 and 260 last year. The only large flock occurred in Pueblo—580 Jan. 31 (WWB).

Single Varied Thrushes stopped in Lyons, Colo., Dec. 1 (JGr) and Ft. Collins Dec. 26–31 (DL). Brown Thrashers stopped by Denver and Boulder in December, and one wintered at Hygiene, Colo. (VD). A Curve-billed Thrasher attended a Pueblo feeder daily Dec. 6–Feb. 28 (fide RW).

At St. George, Utah, wintering Water Pipits dropped to 1500 from the usual 3000 (SH). However, three wintered on the dam at Pueblo Res. (BM). The Bohemian Waxwing incursion occurred in much-diminished numbers and geography. Typical numbers occurred across n. Wyoming—400–600 at the peaks in Yellowstone, Cody, and Sheridan; farther s., up to 300 at Casper and 48 at Dubois, but only 20 at the peak Feb. 24 in Cheyenne. Ft. Collins had them all winter, including 500 Dec. 9, and they briefly ranged S to Colorado Springs, Denver, and Boulder. Grand Jct. reported a few flocks of five to 10 waxwings, and Salt Lake City had one report of three. Logan had 817 on its mid-winter count Feb. 8. Cedar Waxwings spread more widely—w. to Reno (200 Feb. 28, JW, BP), s. to Las Vegas Feb. 21, and 70 e. to Lamar, Colo., Feb. 19 (PL).

Colorado acquired its first rare bird documented by television cameras, when crews from two stations visited Jane Axtell's yard to videotape her **Cape May Warbler**, a first winter record for the Region. Propitiously the warbler arrived Dec. 12, shortly before the Denver C.B.C. He spent the winter feeding in her Lakewood yard on suet, sunflower seed, and fruit, but appeared only during cold and snowy weather. His whereabouts during clement weather baffled the observers. He also attracted coverage by U.P.I., USA Today, and the Prairie Home Companion! Axtell welcomed over 250 birdwatchers to watch the warbler. Paling in comparison, a rare winter Com. Yellowthroat appeared in Denver Jan. 18 (D.F.O.).

CARDINAL TO FINCHES — Two N. Cardinals wintered in Canon City, Colo. (fide RW). A Lincoln's Sparrow arrived at a Durango feeder Jan. 30+ (EF). Grand Jct. reported the only Swamp Sparrow, Dec. 20–Jan. 16 (m.ob.). The only winter White-throated Sparrows occurred in Denver Dec. 21–Jan. 16 (EW), and all winter in Las Vegas (VM), where there was also a Golden-crowned Sparrow in mid-February (MC). Winter flocks of White-crowned Sparrows diminished from normal numbers all over the Region. Even wintering Harris' Sparrows dropped—with only about one dozen reported. In contrast, huge numbers of Lapland Longspurs spent part of the winter n.e. of Denver—2080 counted Jan. 12 (D & JW). Yet fifty mi n. at Greeley, only six were seen, and Casper had but 2 small flocks observed. Grand Jct. had four Feb. 9 (the first since 1984—BT) and seven wintered at Provo (DF). Snow Buntings flocked S in greater numbers than usual. Farthest w., Nevada's 2nd or 3rd **Snow Bunting** stopped at Kirch W.M.A., Dec. 27 (CS, ph.). Single birds appeared at Provo, Logan, and Bear River N.W.R., and, almost as far s. as the Nevada bird, 30 flocked at Castle Gate, Utah, Dec. 19 (FL). For the Region's most southerly record, a group of four on Dec. 22 flew around the Wet Mt. valley near Westcliffe, Colo. (DS). Small groups plied the Colorado plains n. to Pawnee Nat'l Grassland, where observers saw up to 150 all winter (JC, D & JW). Wyoming had its usual scattered flocks.

Logan's mid-winter count Feb. 8 turned up 33 W. Meadowlarks cf. three last year. L/L/B/L reported 94 cf. 52 last year but they seemed scarcer at Ft. Collins where, during deep snow periods, they even roosted in trees (PO). Up to four Yellow-headed Blackbirds wintered at Florence, Colo., Denver had 6 winter observations, and Greeley, Colo., and Ogden, Utah each reported one, an unusually high winter tally. The San Luis Valley, Colo., had its first winter Great-tailed Grackles, peaking at 20 Feb. 1 (JJR), and one stayed in Florence Feb. 12–25 (fRW). A few Com. Grackles wintered in Cheyenne, Grand Jct., Denver, and Ft. Collins.

The Wyoming Bramblings [see AB 40:149], which came in November, soon left their feeders in Dubois (Nov. 26) and Sheridan (Dec. 1), but the one in Brigham City, Utah, stayed though Jan. 22 (CK, SA). Winter finches decreased in the high



Brambling at Brigham City, Utah, Jan. 12, 1986. Second Utah record. Photo/Cal Andrus.

country w. of Boulder; for example, replicated surveys produced .54 Pine Grosbeaks per transect after 6.7/transect in 1982–1983. This most likely reflected a shifting food supply (DH). Observers found Pine Grosbeaks in Cheyenne, Grand Jct., and Durango. A Purple Finch called at a Casper feeder Dec. 30 (JH). Cassin's Finches definitely did not spread onto the plains: L/L/B/L reported 32 after 1114 last winter. However, they did winter in the mountain valley towns of Salida, Grand Jct., and Durango. Killpack banded 256 House Finches in his yard—last year he banded only 140. Red Crossbills deserted the Region: only the Indian Peaks w. of Boulder, with several, Ft. Collins, with one Jan. 7, and Sheridan, with five to six Feb. 22–23, reported them. Common Redpolls, on the other hand, moved S in numbers. Sheridan, Cheyenne, and Brigham City, Utah, had regular flocks of 35–50. Scattered groups meandered S to L/L/B/L, Ft. Collins, Greeley, and Denver, into the mountains at Evergreen and Salida, and in Utah, S to Ogden. Pine Siskin numbers dropped in e. Colorado, but Utah had impressive numbers: 727 banded at Ogden (with a 15% recapture rate—MK) and 1000 Jan. 10 at Cedar City, where they became much less common in February. Many observers regarded Evening Grosbeaks as scarcer this year; D.F.O. found 14 on its field trips cf. 165 last year, and L/L/B/L counted 175 cf. 1048 last year. They occurred throughout the Region, but in much reduced numbers.

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Arizona, Sonora

Janet Witzeman, David Stejskal

After last winter's major invasion of "everything," the contrast this winter of the opposite situation (having no or low numbers of "everything") was startling. There were several phenomena at work this year.

Much of the make-up of the winter bird population in Arizona is actually determined two seasons earlier. The winter residents depend upon the food produced in summer, if they are to survive here. This year the very dry summer resulted in low food supplies over most of the state, of seeds, acorns, and berries; thus seed-eaters and berry-eating birds were affected. There were no, or few, Evening Grosbeaks, robins, bluebirds, solitaires, Hermit Thrushes, or waxwings anywhere in the state except in a relatively small area around Sedona and Camp Verde where the food supply was not as severely affected by last summer's drought.

Another factor is the cyclical nature of the cone crop. Every four or five years the pinyon and ponderosa pines produce a low crop of nuts, and this was one of those years. Red Crossbills were virtually absent. However, the crop was "patchy" and although there were no Pinyon Jays in most northern locations, they did not descend to southern Arizona because they found food—again in the area around Sedona and Camp Verde.

An early freeze in November in northern Arizona caused many birds that might have stayed for the winter to move on through. Also, there was very little movement down-slope of montane species to the lowlands. On a positive note, the mild weather (January was the warmest and driest on record) prompted the early arrival and early nesting of many species responding to the early spring.

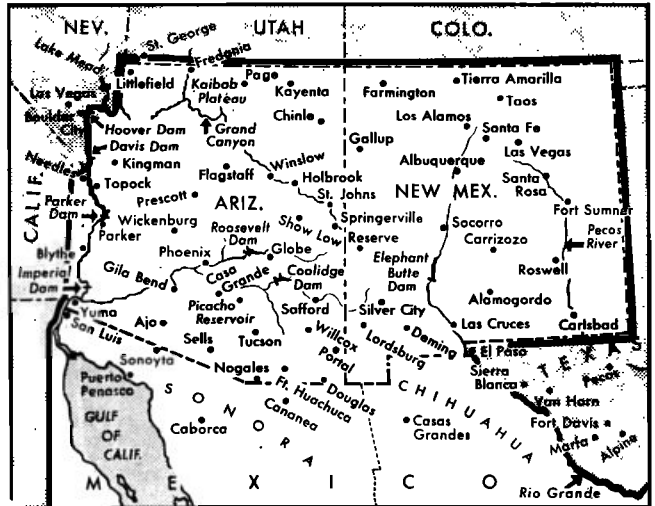
Despite all of the above, the winter was not uninteresting, and as always there were a few surprises.

ABBREVIATIONS — L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; P.R.D. = Painted Rock Dam.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Two Red-throated Loons at L. Havasu Feb. 8 (†CH, CB et al.) represented about the 7th state record; all but 2 of the previous records were also on the L.C.R. Common Loons away from the L.C.R. were two e. of Phoenix Dec. 20 (J. Margart et al.) and one at Many Farms L., n.e. Arizona, Jan. 19–23 (BrJ). Five Horned Grebes at P.R.D., Jan. 15 (PBe, RBr et al.) were more than usual for this scarce winter visitor. The first W. Grebe at Many Farms L. arrived on the early date of Feb. 2 (BrJ).

An imm. Double-crested Cormorant, uncommon away from the L.C.R. and larger lakes in winter, was observed in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 8 (RN, DS). A single Olivaceous Cormorant was at L. Patagonia again (as last winter) Feb. 17 (DSi). A Great Egret was at Solitaire (near Globe) Feb. 5, where it has been recorded only once before (J. Spenser). Great Egrets (two) and Snowy Egrets (four) were present again at McNeal all winter, and a Cattle Egret was recorded there Dec. 8 (AM). A high 150–200 Black-crowned Night-Herons were counted in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 8 (DS, RN). Three White-faced Ibises, uncommon in winter, were seen at Topock Marsh, L.C.R., Feb. 1 (DS, RN, RF).

Surprising was the flock of 17 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at Martinez L., Yuma, Dec. 21 into January (fide DR). Although the species was formerly a common winter resident there, sometimes occurring in flocks, since 1961 there have been fewer than 10 records, primarily of only singles or pairs. Black-



bellied Whistling-Ducks, uncommon in winter, were present at 2 locations s. of Phoenix; the flock of 13 at the Gilbert sewage ponds remained at least to Jan. 13 (DS, PBU), and 11 were at the Sun Lakes ponds at least through February (D. Ross).

A single Tundra Swan at San Simon Cienaga, s.e. Arizona, Jan. 27 to at least Feb. 8 (AM, TD, WS et al.) was the only one reported during the winter, but there was a belated report of a flock of eight photographed near Globe Nov. 16 that may have remained longer (S. Cooper). A single Greater White-fronted Goose, also uncommon, was at Davis Dam Jan. 26 (CH). Up to six Snow Geese, uncommon in n. Arizona, were present n. of Many Farms Jan. 5–19 (BrJ). A "Blue" Snow Goose, an uncommon form in Arizona, was observed at Horseshoe Dam, n.e. of Phoenix, Dec. 8 (W. Camp). Eleven Ross' Geese were reported during the period, the majority from s.c. Arizona (m.ob.), but one was n. of Many Farms Dec. 7 with 400+ Canada Geese, representing only the 2nd record for the northeast. Canada Geese are uncommon in n.e. Arizona also.

Migration of Blue-winged Teal sometimes begins in January; an early migrant or returnee was a ϕ Blue-winged Teal at Kayenta sewage ponds Jan. 4 (†BrJ). Three early returning δ Cinnamon Teal were at Round Rock L., n. of Many Farms, Feb. 1 (BrJ). Individual δ Greater Scaup were observed at Gila Farms pond s. of Phoenix Dec. 22 (CB) and at L. Havasu Feb. 8 (CH, CB et al.). There were three Oldsquaws reported: a male at McNeal Dec. 30–Feb. 15 (AM, J. Palmer et al.) furnished only the 2nd record for the s.e. corner of the state, an immature at Prescott Dec. 11 (BT) was the 3rd for n. Arizona, and one was at Parker Dam Dec. 27 to at least Feb. 1 (CH et al.). White-winged Scoter was recorded below Parker Dam again this winter; two were observed there, plus a 3rd individual at Bill Williams Delta Dec. 27 (CH et al.). Up to eight Barrow's Goldeneyes were recorded near Parker during the period (CH et al.), and a female was at Davis Dam Feb. 1 (DS, RN, RF). An ad. δ Hooded Merganser at Many Farms L., Dec. 21–Feb. 2 (BrJ, CL), represented the 2nd record for that area and one of only a few for the northeast. Individual η Hooded Mergansers were present all winter at park ponds in Tucson (m.ob.) and Mesa, e. of Phoenix (H. Jensen.)

RAPTORS — Three Black Vultures at Marana, n. of Tucson, Feb. 3 were farther n. than usual (J. Sa). Two Turkey Vultures, uncommon in the Altar Valley in winter, were seen at Aguirre L., Buenos Aires N.W.R., Dec. 7 (GM). Ospreys only occasionally winter in the lower-elevation river valleys; two to four individuals remained all winter along the Salt and Verde rivers e. of Phoenix (m.ob.) and one was seen at P.R.D., Jan. 18 (DS,

RN) A new location for Black-shouldered Kite in the state was at Yuma, where two individuals present during December (RBr *et al.*) may have been the two that spent the summer and fall farther s. of Yuma (DR). Up to three were at Arlington, w. of Phoenix, at least to mid-January (JSh, DS, RN), and individuals were recorded from s. of Tucson, Sonoita, Elfrida, and Kansas Settlement during the period (AM, m.ob.).

In s.e. Arizona, a few Bald Eagles (three adults, one immature) were found wintering as usual in the San Rafael Valley (GP), an adult and an immature were at Elfrida during February (AM, DSi), and an adult was at Parker Canyon L. all winter (m.ob.). In n. Arizona, results of an aerial survey over Anderson Mesa, s. of Flagstaff, Jan. 10 were 26 adults and eight imm. Bald Eagles counted (D. Todd). A pair of Harris' Hawks, observed mating Dec. 2 at Arlington where they had not been recorded previously (JSh), may have represented dispersal from the recent introductions on the L.C.R. Harris' Hawks at other new locales were up to two individuals at a Phoenix park during January and February (SD, HL), and two at Cook's L., Feb. 2 (GM). In s.e. Arizona, 10 Harris' Hawks were counted near Elfrida Jan. 1 (AM *et al.*), five were counted during the Sulphur Springs Valley Hawkwatch Feb. 8 (AM, DD *et al.*), and three were seen in the Dragoon Mts., Feb. 20 (TD). Again this winter, as last, there were two reports of **Red-shouldered Hawk**, a rare visitor to the state; one near Cottonwood Dec. 31 (CL) was the first for n. Arizona, at least since 1937, and the other was an adult seen near Poston, L.C.R., Jan. 17 (GM). Fifty-four Ferruginous Hawks and eight Golden Eagles were counted during the Sulphur Springs Valley Hawkwatch Feb. 8 (AM, DD, TD, M Evans).

A Crested Caracara at Hereford Nov. 19 (D. Richards, C. Barrett) was far e. of its normal range, and another, or the same, was seen there Dec. 14 (AM, DD, TD). Farther n. than usual were two on the w. side of Avra Valley, w. of Tucson, Jan. 4 (*vide* R. Dulaney). An ad. Merlin at Rock Point, n. of Many Farms, Jan. 18 (BrJ) was of interest as records from that part of the state are scarce.

TURKEY THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — Resident Wild Turkeys are seldom encountered, so of interest were one heard at Deering Park, near Prescott, Dec. 22 (R. Houser) and one at Jerome Jan. 4 (*vide* W. Osborn). Four Virginia Rails were found at San Simon Cienaga (where they had not been recorded previously) Jan. 27 (AM, TD, L. Siebert); another was recorded at Hereford Dec. 14 (AM, DD).

Numbers of wintering Mountain Plovers built up again in s.e. Arizona with 100 counted at Elfrida Jan. 6 and a new high of 120 at McNeal Feb. 7 (AM, DSi). Wintering Am. Avocets away from the L.C.R. and Gila R. were one at McNeal Dec. 4 (AM) and one at the Gilbert sewage ponds, s. of Phoenix, Jan. 13 (DS, PBu). The N. Jacana present near Nogales since June was last seen Jan. 3 (R. Duerkson). Unprecedented numbers of Long-billed Curlews wintered at McNeal; up to 90 were counted there in January (AM *et al.*). A small flock of about one-half dozen wintered at Gilbert as well (PBu). Twelve Greater Yellowlegs at Buenos Aires N.W.R., Dec. 7 were seen swimming like phalaropes (GM). A **Red Phalarope** at Puerto Lobos, Sonora, Feb. 28 (JBa, ph. RBo) may have provided the first winter record for that state.

Two Bonaparte's Gulls, uncommon in winter, were seen at P.R.D., Dec. 28 (CB). A first-year Heermann's Gull at Parker Dec. 28 represented the first winter record for the L.C.R. (CH). A 2nd-year California Gull was at P.R.D., Jan. 12 (RN). There are few winter records of Forster's Tern in the state, so of interest were two that remained from November at least to Jan. 17 at or near the Bill Williams arm of L. Havasu (M. Jakle, GM *et al.*). A single Inca Dove spent the winter at Portal again (B. Schaughency *et al.*).

A Spotted Owl, rarely reported in winter, was seen at Portal Dec. 18 and again Jan. 16 (S & WS *et al.*). Four groups of Long-eared Owls, uncommon winter residents, were found during the period. Three individuals were observed Jan. 18 at Rock

Point, n.e. Arizona, where the roost was first discovered last winter (BrJ). In s.e. Arizona, there were 3 roosts: eight birds in the Pedregosa Mts., n.e. of Douglas, in mid-December (AM, DD, TD), 12 in the Dragoon Mts. w. of Willcox in late December (K. Rosenberg), and nine in the Swisshelm Mts. n. of Douglas Jan. 1 (TD, A. Johnstone). A single Long-eared Owl was found Dec. 22 at Prescott, where the species is considered to be rare (CT). Four Short-eared Owls were recorded Feb. 20 at McNeal, where the species is not common (AM, RM). A N. Saw-whet Owl was found in a wash e. of Yuma Dec. 14 (†L. & B. Schmidt *et al.*); this furnished one of only a few lowland winter records, all of which have come from the w. part of the state.

Seven White-throated Swifts at Sierra Pinta, Cabeza Prieta N.W.R., Dec. 20 (AM *et al.*) represented the first desert record w. of the Growler Mts. Seventy-five White-throated Swifts at Elfrida Feb. 21 made a high number for that part of the state (AM, RBo).

The 5th and 6th winter records of Violet-crowned Hummingbird were provided by individuals at Green Valley, s. of Tucson, Dec. 5-Feb. 9 (D. Garver) and at Tucson in late February (B. Davis). A high of nine Blue-throated Hummingbirds remained at Portal feeders through December, but only two were there in January and February (S & WS *et al.*). A ♂ Anna's Hummingbird discovered in a cypress-juniper woodland near Oak Creek Canyon Jan. 22 (CT) was far n. and higher in elevation than its usual habitat; there have been only about 4 previous records overall from n. Arizona, and the only previous winter record from the n. occurred farther s. at Prescott.

TROGONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Two Elegant Trogons found just n. of the Mexican border in Sycamore Canyon, Atascosa Mts., Dec. 26 (JSa, JBa) represented one of only a few winter records. Three Green Kingfishers (more than usual) were recorded: one at Green Valley Dec. 19 (GP), one at Nogales Dec. 25 at least to Feb. 9 (JBo *et al.*) that may represent the same individual present at nearby Kino Springs in the fall, and the one at Arivaca in the fall remained at least to Dec. 30 (BrJ).

As in the fall, there were a few Lewis' Woodpeckers at lower elevations; one at Portal Dec. 28 (SS), one s. of Willcox Jan. 2 (BrJ), one at Ehrenberg Jan. 18 (GM, CH *et al.*), and three at Payson, n.e. of Phoenix, Feb. 17 (J. Poe). Two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported: one at Patagonia Jan. 6 (J. Dunn) and one at Molino Basin, Santa Catalina Mts., Jan. 14 (JBo) Individual ♂ Williamson's Sapsuckers in Tucson Jan. 28 (H Metcalf) and at Parker Canyon L., Feb. 15 (AM, DD, TD) were at low elevations and away from their usual wintering areas Five Downy Woodpeckers were reported from areas around Many Farms and Chinle in late December and January; "nearly every cottonwood grove in the Chinle Valley has one or two individuals; this is much increased over the last few years" (BrJ).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH CORVIDS — There were more wintering N. Beardless-Tyrannulets than usual; the species was found at 3 places around Tucson, and three individuals were recorded in the canyons w. of Nogales Dec. 26 (SM). The Greater Pewee at Tucson remained at least to Feb. 7 (m.ob.) There were two E. Phoebes reported this winter: one along the Verde R., e. of Phoenix, through the period (TG, S. Loch), and one in s.w. Phoenix at least to Jan. 12 (CB). Twenty Ash-throated Flycatchers counted at Cabeza Prieta N.W.R., Dec. 19 was an unusually high number for winter (GM, SR, AM) Individuals were also seen w. of Arivaca Dec. 7 (GM), at P.R.D., Jan. 15 (PBe), and at Tucson Jan. 26 (J. Drewick). A very late Cassin's Kingbird was observed at Green Valley Dec. 30-Jan. 1 (B. Buttery).

Early returning swallows were a Tree Swallow at Sells Jan. 26 (J & AP) that may have wintered there, two Violet-green Swallows Feb. 8, and 30 on Feb. 16 at a park in Tucson (GM) The first Cliff Swallows back at the University of Arizona campus were 2 weeks early; with them on the early date of Feb. 9 was the ♂ Cave Swallow, back for its 8th season (TH). Six

Barn Swallows were still in s w Phoenix Dec 8 (DS, RN)

The only lowland Scrub Jays reported were on the L.C.R. four at Parker Dec. 28 (CH *et al.*) and one s.w. of Poston Jan. 18 (GM *et al.*). A Black-billed Magpie was observed in a new location on Laguna Cr., Kayenta, Jan. 4 (CL). There were high numbers of Am. Crows and Com. Ravens around Flagstaff this winter; "both species have increased tenfold since 1969" (JM). Chihuahuan Ravens were abundant in the McNeal-Elfrida area Feb. 26; a flock of 400+ was seen feeding on seeds of unharvested pumpkins (GM).

CHICKADEES THROUGH KINGLETS — A Black-capped Chickadee at Chinle Wash, n. of Many Farms, Jan. 5–19 (ph., †Br] *et al.*) represented one of the few records of this sparse winter visitor to n. Arizona. The only lowland Mountain Chickadee reported was at Tucson through mid-February (m ob.). Common Bushtits were found nest-building at Patagonia Feb. 15, a month earlier than usual (J & AP).

Individual Winter Wrens were observed along the Verde R. e of Phoenix Dec. 18 (DS, RN) and near the entrance to Madera Canyon Jan. 25 to at least Feb. 28 (RF, GM *et al.*). There were relatively few at Prescott this winter (four), and one was in Oak Creek Canyon Jan. 9 (CT). Marsh Wrens have been found in winter in suitable habitat on the Navajo Indian Reservation; up to three observed at the Tsaille sewage lagoons e. of Chinle Jan. 3–Feb. 27 (Br]) appeared to be wintering at this new location.

Two Am. Dippers were found at a new location, below the dam at Tsaille L., Dec. 25, and up to three were observed singing and establishing territories there Feb. 1–28 (Br]). An Am. Dipper, uncommon in winter in s.e. Arizona, was seen in Sabino Canyon Jan. 21 (B. Wallmering); two and possibly three individuals were observed on upper Cave Creek at John Hands and above Herb Martyr in the Chiricahua Mts., Feb. 13+ (RP). The only Golden-crowned Kinglets reported in the lowlands were individuals in s.e. Phoenix Dec. 8 (DS) and at Pena Blanca L., Dec. 26 (SM).

THRASHERS THROUGH TANAGERS — A Brown Thrasher, an uncommon visitor to the state, was observed in n e Tucson Feb. 3 (S. Foster). Two Bendire's Thrashers at San Bernardino Ranch near Douglas Dec. 7 represented the first record for that area (AM, DD, TD).

Sprague's Pipits, sparse and local winter residents, continued to be seen at McNeal through the winter; six were counted there Dec. 1 (DD, RM) and three were still present Feb. 25 (AM, GM *et al.*). Six N. Shrikes (more than usual) were found in the area of Many Farms, Lukachukai, Chinle, and Tsaille in the northeast (Br]). An imm. N. Shrike near P.R.D., Dec. 28–29 (CB *et al.*) provided the 5th record for the Phoenix-Gila Bend area.

A Yellow-throated Warbler at the mouth of Madera Canyon from Jan. 21 at least into March (*fide* SG, m.ob.) provided the 2nd winter record for the state. There are now 11 records overall. There were two Louisiana Waterthrushes this winter—one at Patagonia again for the 4th winter, remaining at least to mid-February (m.ob.), and one below Herb Martyr Dam, Chiricahua Mts., Feb. 13 (RP).

A Nashville Warbler at Bill Williams Delta Dec. 27 (CH) and a ♀ Townsend's Warbler at Parker Jan. 17–Feb. 1 (GM *et al.*) both represented the first respective winter records for the L.C.R.

There were four Yellow Warblers reported: at Fountain Hills, n e of Phoenix, Dec. 7 (DS), at Arlington, w. of Phoenix, Jan. 18 (DS, RN), in s.w. Phoenix Jan. 24 (TC), and at Parker Feb. 1 (RN, DS, RF). One, possibly two, N. Waterthrushes were observed in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 8 (DS, RN). A ♂ Olive Warbler, discovered in a mixed flock foraging in the pine-oak forest at Granite Basin, Prescott, represented the first winter record for that area (CT).

Hepatic Tanager is a sparse winter visitor to s.e. Arizona. Two were reported this period: a female in Sycamore Canyon

Dec 26 (*fide* SM) and a male at Madera Canyon Dec 28–Feb 8 (M. Egger *et al.*).

BUNTINGS THROUGH FINCHES — An imm. ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was observed at Patagonia Dec. 1 (RS). Even more uncommon in winter were the two Black-headed Grosbeaks at Tucson, one Dec. 23 (†DD, AM) and another Jan 20 (P. Walters). A ♂ Blue Grosbeak, an irregular sparse winter resident in s. Arizona, was found at Patagonia Feb. 16 (JBo, BS *et al.*). Eleven Lazuli Buntings near Elfrida Jan. 1 (SR) was a large number for this uncommon winter resident. A ♂ Painted Bunting frequented a feeder n. of Green Valley Feb. 25–27 (C Graham *et al.*); the only other winter record (January 1965) came from the same general area.

A Rufous-sided Towhee, a sparse visitor to the L.C.R., was seen s.w. of Poston Jan. 18 (GM). Stray Abert's Towhees were found at San Simon Cienega, extreme s.e. Arizona: two Jan 27 (AM, TD) and three Feb. 8 (WS, RM, RP). American Tree Sparrows were found wintering again near Many Farms, with up to 10 at one area and one with a large flock of White-crowns at a 2nd location (Br]). A Clay-colored Sparrow, a sparse winter resident, was observed at Rincon Creek e of Tucson Jan. 2 (SM). Brewer's Sparrows are usually absent from n. Arizona in winter, so of interest was one with Am. Tree Sparrows n. of Many Farms Jan. 5–Feb. 23 (Br]).

Four Fox Sparrows were reported, one w. of Nogales Dec 26 (*fide* SM), one at Portal Jan. 27 into February (C. & A. Robbins) and two at Patagonia Feb. 27 (DSi). About eight White-throated Sparrows and four Golden-crowned Sparrows were reported from s. and w. Arizona during the period.

In this winter of the "un-vasion" there was one small invasion—that of Harris' Sparrow—mainly to n. Arizona. In addition to the ones reported in fall at Ganado (one) and Prescott (two), two were recorded at Flagstaff (R. Balda) and one at Sedona (AG) in early December, and one at Camp Verde Dec 27 (*fide* S. Hyde). Up to seven (one adult and six immatures) were seen along Chinle Wash, n. of Many Farms, Jan. 10 at least to Feb. 2 (†Br], DS, RN). In the s. an adult was present at Tucson through December (ph. N. Bock). Not since the winter of 1972–1973 have they been so numerous and so widespread

A Yellow-eyed Junco observed at Prescott Dec. 22 was far n. of its normal range; it represented the 2nd record for Yavapai County and the first in winter (CT). Fifty+ Yellow-eyed Juncos at and around a feeding station in lower Madera Canyon Feb 11 was an extraordinary number for that elevation (GM). High numbers of Chestnut-collared Longspurs (2000±) were found at Elfrida Feb. 13 (AM, RBo).

An imm. ♂ Hooded Oriole was present at a feeder in Tempe, s. of Phoenix, during January (*fide* CH).

Pine Grosbeak, an uncommon resident in the White and San Francisco mountains, was found in a new location 22 were counted in pinyon-juniper habitat at 7500' elevation near the rim of a canyon on Black Mesa near Kayenta, n.e. Arizona, Jan. 4 (CL). Surprising in a year when finches were scarce was the report of two Purple Finches; a male s. of Alamos, Sonora, Dec. 27 represented one of the few records for the mainland of Mexico (DS, D. Jones), and one was at Patagonia Feb 26 (DSi). There were only relatively small numbers of Evening Grosbeaks around this winter: a small flock of 15 at Portal Dec. 26+ (BS), 20± at Patagonia Dec. 30 (Br]), and one at Catalina S.P., n. of Tucson, Feb. 23 (CT).

ADDENDA — A belated report was of a road-kill turned in to the Univ. of Arizona of an imm. ♂ Philadelphia Vireo from n w Tucson, Oct. 5, 1985 (*fide* JBa). A record inadvertently omitted from the fall report was that of a Tennessee Warbler at Prescott Sept. 30 (E. & R. Backus, CT), for one of the few records for n Arizona. In AB 39:946, a ♀ Com. Merganser observed on the Gila R. e. of Safford June 7, 1985 was said to be in suitable breeding habitat. Proof of breeding there was actually obtained in May–June 1978 with up to 20 ducklings seen in the Gila R. "Box" between Safford and Guthrie; the adults nested on cliffs and exposed roots of mesquite trees and fed mainly on catfish (Tom Clark, *fide* GM).

CORRIGENDUM — AB 39,948, the Cave Swallow at Tucson was (is) a male (not a female as stated), and a 2nd attempt to nest with a ♀ Cliff Swallow in the summer of 1985 was successful (TH).

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New Mexico

John P. Hubbard

ABBREVIATIONS — Bosque Refuge = Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; T or C = Truth or Consequences. Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Extremely rare in the state, two **Red-throated Loons** were reported at Caballo L., Sierra Dec. 23 (BZ), while Commons were more frequent than usual—with up to eight in the n.w. (v.o.) and one at Bitter Lake N.W.R. (KW) in December. Also extremely rare in New Mexico, a **Red-necked Grebe** was reported at Zuni Feb. 10 (JT). Over 100 western-type grebes were at Caballo L., Dec. 23, with 24+ identified as Clark's and 10+ as Westerns (BZ *et al.*) Also notable were two to three of the latter at Evans L., Grant, Dec. 7 & 28 (RF), plus a "western" at Cochiti L., Jan. 5 (PI, CR). Three ad. Double-crested Cormorants at Caballo L., Jan. 28 were already sporting nuptial crests (JH), which seemed early. Late were a Cattle Egret near Tularosa Feb. 19 (O.C.B.C.), single Green-backed Herons at Farmington Dec. 21 and later (HL *et al.*), and six White-faced Ibises at Bitter Lake N.W.R., Dec. 10 (KW).

An ad. **Trumpeter Swan** was reported and non-definitively photographed near Radium Springs, *Dona Ana*, Dec. 14–21 (EW *et al.*); the only confirmed record of the species was of one in Grant in 1977, about 60 mi w.n.w. of the site of the present record. Greater White-fronted Geese in areas where infrequent were eight at Maxwell N.W.R., *Colfax*, Feb. 13 (JT) and two at Clayton L., Jan. 1 & 4 (WC *et al.*). Also notable were 55 Snow Geese near Farmington Dec. 13 and 30 there Jan. 6 (DMc), 225 at Maxwell N.W.R., Dec. 9 (DMc) and 75 there Feb. 13 (JT), 25 near Clayton Feb. 25 (WC), 603 near Las Vegas Dec. 9 (DMc), six to eight at Silver City December to January (RF *et al.*), and 20 near Alamogordo Dec. 19 and 50 there Feb. 26 (O.C.B.C.). Six Ross' Geese at Farmington Dec. 21 (AN *et al.*) represented the 3rd consecutive year of occurrence of the species there; also notable was one at Maxwell N.W.R., Feb. 13 (JT) and another at Sunland Park, *Dona Ana*, Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (JD, BZ). Canada Geese numbers continued to increase near Clayton, with over 1100 present Jan. 1 (MM *et al.*). Also notable were 99 Canadas at Zuni Dec. 21 (JT *et al.*), 16 near Cliff Dec. 7 and 11 there Dec. 28 (RF *et al.*), and 20 near Tularosa Feb. 4 (O.C.B.C.). Late were two Cinnamon Teal near Cliff Dec. 28 (RF *et al.*), while very early "spring" migrants were three at

Zuni Feb. 10 (JT). Greater Scaup were more frequent than usual, including a hunter-killed bird at Santa Rosa Dec. 21 (*fide* E. Martin). Well-detailed were a male at Navajo Dam Feb. 6–7 (PS, RT) and one to two at Caballo Dam, Dec. 23 (BZ) to Feb. 3 (DM). Other unusual ducks were a single **Surf Scoter** at Bluewater L., McKinley, Dec. 19–22 (AM *et al.*) and a **White-winged Scoter** at L. McMillan Dec. 10 (M.A. Chapman, B. Felner). Hooded Mergansers were more frequent than usual, with about 20 recorded in the state from the Rio Grande Valley *e.* (v.o.).

OSPREY THROUGH SWIFTS — Unusual in winter, an Osprey was near Cliff Dec. 28 (RF *et al.*) and Feb. 3 & 11 (SW). Aerial surveys in early January yielded 322 Bald Eagles at 7 study sites, compared to the 8-year average of 230 (G. Schmitt *et al.*). Lower-elevation reports of N. Goshawks were more frequent than usual, with at least eight in the period—including one to two adults in the Dry Cimarron Valley, *Union*, Feb. 12 (JT), Bitter Lake N.W.R., Dec. 28 (SB *et al.*) to Feb. 28 (KW), and in the Peloncillo Mts., Dec. 29 (RS *et al.*). Merlin numbers were also up, with 15–20 statewide in the period (v.o.). Thirty-nine Wild Turkeys were counted in the Dry Cimarron Valley Feb. 12 (JT) and 33 were at Bosque Refuge Dec. 21 (CH *et al.*) Maximum Sandhill Crane counts in the Gila Valley were 236 near Cliff Dec. 7 and 66 near Redrock Dec. 8 (RF). Some 29 Whooping Cranes were accounted for in the period (*fide* RT), including a straggler near Santa Rosa Feb. 23–28 (R. Hayes)

Early at Bitter Lake N.W.R. were two Black-necked Stilts Feb. 23 and two Am. Avocets Feb. 22 (KW). A high count of Greater Yellowlegs was 61 at this refuge Dec. 6 (KW). Up to five Spotted Sandpipers were in the Caballo L. area Dec. 23–Jan. 26 (BZ *et al.*). Also notable were one at Albuquerque Jan. 4 (D. Tomasko) and two near Cliff Dec. 28 (RF *et al.*). White-winged Dove counts included up to 27 at Socorro in December and 12 in February (JS), one at Roswell Feb. 26 (ES), up to 10 at T or C (DM), four at Percha Dam Jan. 21 (PS), and up to three in the Alamogordo area (O.C.B.C.).

S.A.

The White-winged Dove has been a regular warm-season resident of s.w. New Mexico for many decades, including *e.* to the lower Rio Grande Valley. By the mid-1970s, the species had become a permanent resident of the Las Cruces area. By the late 1970s, it had expanded n. and *e.* to summer locally in such areas as Socorro, T or C, Alamogordo, Carlsbad, and perhaps Artesia. By the early 1980s, it had become a localized resident of these areas, plus a summer bird at Roswell. The spread plus the development of permanent residency in the White-winged Dove may be related to environmental changes associated with urbanization in s. New Mexico. For example, the maturation of arborescent plantings may have expanded nesting cover for doves. Interestingly, the urbanization of the species in the state does not yet involve populations w. of the Rio Grande Valley, where birds are still resident only during the warmer months.

Maxima for Inca Doves in the Alamogordo area were of eight to 12 birds in the period (O.C.B.C.). A high count of three to four N. Pygmy-Owls was obtained in the Magdalena Mts., Feb. 25 (JS). Unusual was a Spotted Owl in downtown Santa Fe Dec. 31 (PI). Also notable were single N. Saw-whets at Roswell Dec. 28 (C. Lebeau) and San Simon Cienega Jan. 14 (RD). Early were 15 White-throated Swifts near Alamogordo Feb. 21 (O.C.B.C.).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH CORVIDS — South of the usual range were a Lewis' Woodpecker near Mule Creek, Grant, Jan. 30 (SW) and six-plus near Pleasanton, *Catron*, Dec. 26 (JH). On Dec. 21 an Acorn Woodpecker was at Zuni (JT), in which

area the species is very local. Also notable were two Ladder-backed Woodpeckers at Bluewater L., Dec. 19 (AM et al.). An *Empidonax* photographed near Las Cruces Jan. 21 (JD, BZ) was almost certainly a **Hammond's Flycatcher**, which is very rarely documented in winter in the state. Well n. of the usual range was a ♂ Vermilion Flycatcher photographed at Albuquerque Dec. 8 (L. Gorbet, E. Nicholson). Infrequent in winter, single birds of this species were near Cliff Dec. 28 and Redrock Dec. 8 (RF). The **Couch's Kingbird** present at Bosque Refuge in November was last seen there Dec. 5 (KW).

Horned Lark numbers were unaccountably low during December and early January in the Clayton area (WC et al.), but they increased to normal levels by mid-February (JT). Very early was an imm. Barn Swallow at Caballo Dam Feb. 2 (JH). A Blue Jay at Maxwell Feb. 13 (JT) was unusual; the only other reports were in the Roswell area (v.o.), where the species is now resident. Steller's Jays were still evident from the autumnal influx, with high counts of 103 at Albuquerque Jan. 4 (HS et al.) and 20 near Farmington Dec. 21 (AN et al.). Peripheral records included three-plus e. of Raton Jan. 4, eight-plus in Trujillo Canyon, San Miguel, Jan. 3 (JH), and two in the Peloncillo Mts., Dec. 29 (RS et al.). Scrub Jays also were in evidence in areas where normally scarce or absent, including 50 in Albuquerque Jan. 4 (HS et al.) and a few in the Roswell area Dec. 2–Feb. 15 (KW et al.). American Crows were common as usual in Albuquerque, but the 1077 at Bosque N.W.R. (CH et al.) and 180 at Farmington (AN et al.) Dec. 21 were unusually high counts for those areas. Other highs were 100+ at Folsom Jan. 4 (JH) and 50+ in the Dry Cimarron Valley Feb. 12 (JT). Easterly records of Com. Ravens included six at Weatherly L., Union, Jan. 4, one at Bueyeros, Union, Jan. 3 (JH), and two at Glenrio, Quay, Dec. 22 (RD).

CHICKADEES THROUGH SHRIKES — Mountain Chickadees were in evidence in the Rio Grande Valley s. to Percha Dam (EW et al.), and one was at Clayton Jan. 1 (MM et al.). Lowland records of Red-breasted Nuthatches included singles at Clayton Jan. 1 (MM et al.) and at Roswell Dec. 28 (SB et al.) to Feb. 25 (ES), plus at least 10 in the Las Cruces to El Paso area during the period (BZ et al.). White-breasted Nuthatches that presumably reached such areas during the autumn dispersal included two to three at Clayton Dec. 8–Jan. 1 (WC et al.), 30 at Albuquerque Jan. 4 (HS et al.), two at Roswell Dec. 28 (SB et al.), and two or more at Percha Dam Jan. 8 (DM) & 26 (EW et al.). Numbers of Brown Creepers were above normal in the period in s. *Dona Ana* (BZ et al.). Winter records of House Wrens included singles at Bitter Lake N.W.R., Feb. 28 (KW) and T or C Dec. 15 (DM). American Dippers dispersing to lower elevations included four at Bluewater L., Dec. 19 (AM et al.) and singles at Cochiti Dam Jan. 5 (PI, CR) and Zuni in mid-December (T. Rhoades).

Small numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets were present in several lower-elevation areas, including in the Rio Grande Valley s. to El Paso (v.o.). Records of the species in piedmont areas included two at Zuni Dec. 21 and Feb. 10 (JT), three at Bluewater L., Dec. 19 (AM et al.), 25+ near Pleasanton Dec. 3 (SW), and three-plus there Dec. 26 (JH). Eastern Bluebirds recorded outside the Pecos Valley were 24 near Clayton Jan. 1 (WC et al.) and two at Percha Dam Dec. 23 (BZ et al.). Western Bluebirds remained mainly in or near breeding areas, with notable exceptions being six near Clayton Feb. 20 (MM), five in the Peloncillo Mts., Dec. 29 (RS et al.), and a few in *Dona Ana* in the period (BZ et al.). Mountain Bluebirds were even more "stay-at-home", with none observed in *Dona Ana* (BZ et al.) and only one at Roswell—a male Dec. 14 (ES). Townsend's Solitaire and Am. Robin numbers were down in many areas where the species are typically rather numerous (v.o.). Rare in winter in the n.w. area, single Hermit Thrushes were at Farmington Dec. 21 (AN et al.) and at Zuni Feb. 10 (JT).

Rather unusual was a N. Mockingbird near Clayton Jan. 1 (MM et al.) and Feb. 12 (JT). Northerly were one to two Sage Thrashers at Espanola Dec. 29 (B. Lewis et al.) and near Galisteo,

Santa Fe, Feb. 17 (PI, CR), plus up to 14 at Zuni Dec. 18–21 and one to two there Feb. 9–14 (JT et al.). Single Brown Thrashers were present in the period at Albuquerque (C. & D. Carlson), Percha Dam (FW et al.), and Alamogordo (O.C.B.C.) A local first and well w. of the usual range was a Curve-billed Thrasher at Zuni Dec. 18–22 (JT). Also notable were singles of this species near Clayton Jan. 1 (WC et al.) and Feb. 13 (JT), plus one to two at Santa Fe Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (SBo et al.). The only Sprague's Pipit reported was one near Rodeo Dec. 29 (RS et al.). Small numbers of Cedar Waxwings were present locally almost statewide (v.o.). A Phainopepla at Sevilleta N.W.R., Socorro, in December (RT) was n. of the usual range, while a count of eight at Three Rivers, Lincoln, Feb. 15 (O.C.B.C.) was high for the area. Northern Shrikes made their best showing in several years, with 11 reported (v.o.)—including a southerly one at Bosque Refuge Dec. 5 (KW).

VIREOS THROUGH FINCHES — Highly unusual were a **Hutton's Vireo** and a **Northern Parula** near Las Cruces Dec. 21, plus a Solitary Vireo there Jan. 21 (BZ et al.). Also unusual was an Orange-crowned Warbler at Farmington Dec. 10–Mar. 31, where another had been present Jan. 22 through mid-April in 1985 (HL et al.). Another Orange-crowned was near Las Cruces Jan. 21, and a Com. Yellowthroat was there Dec. 21 (BZ et al.). Outside the normal range were a N. Cardinal at Silver City Dec. 12 (M. Zimmerman) and a Pyrrhuloxia at Sevilleta N.W.R. in December (RT). North of the usual range were single Green-tailed Towhees, Savannah Sparrows, and Lincoln's Sparrows at Zuni Dec. 21 (JT et al.). Southerly were single Am. Tree Sparrows in the latter area Dec. 19–21 and Feb. 11 (JT), four at Bluewater L., Dec. 19 (AM et al.), and one at Bosque Refuge Jan. 17 (F & RS). Ten Field Sparrows at Roswell Dec. 28 (SB et al.) made a high count for the area. Well n. of the usual range was a Lark Bunting at Bluewater L., Dec. 19 (AM et al.). A White-winged (Dark-eyed) Junco taken near Manzano, Torrance, Dec. 26 (RD) provided the southernmost verified record for that form in the state. Important information gathered on longspurs in the Clayton area included observations of two McCown's, an astounding 46 Laplands, and eight Chestnut-collareds Feb. 12–13 (JT). Also, two Laplands at Zuni Feb. 9 (JT) established a local first for the species.

Northerly for the season were the following: a Yellow-headed Blackbird at Las Vegas and 50+ Brewer's Blackbirds at Tucumcari Jan. 3 (JH); five Great-tailed Grackles at Zuni Dec. 21 (JT et al.), and 20 at Silver City Dec. 21 and 12 Feb. 4 (RF), four Com. Grackles at Socorro Dec. 28 (JS); and a Brown-headed Cowbird at Santa Fe Jan. 12 (SBo). The only Rosy Finches reported were about 50 near Crystal, San Juan, Jan. 12 (B. Jacobs). Cassin's Finches were scattered and uncommon in the period, with lowland records restricted to eight at Clayton Jan. 1 (MM et al.) and one at Albuquerque Jan. 4 (HS et al.). Pine Siskins were present outside the normal range in the northeast in the period (v.o.), with no lowland records received for the south. Northerly records of Lesser Goldfinches included four at Farmington Dec. 21 (AN et al.) and six at Cochiti L., Jan. 15 (F & RS). The few records of Evening Grosbeaks were mainly in or near piedmont or montane areas, with the exception being 29 at Farmington Dec. 21 (AN et al.).

CORRIGENDUM — The record of a Ladder-backed Woodpecker at Farmington on Mar. 15, 1985 (AB 39:337) should be deleted.

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D. D. Gibson

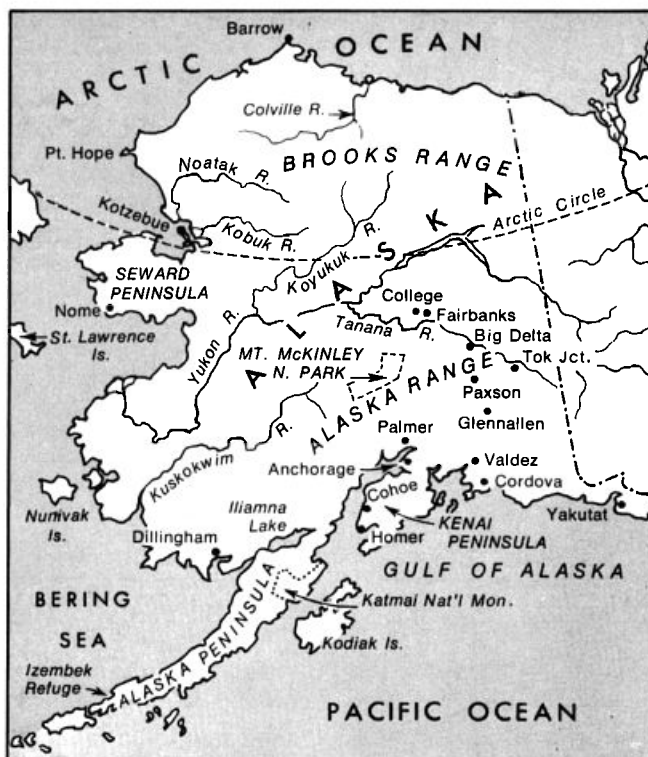
It was another mild, dry winter season in this Region. Winter 1985–1986 at Fairbanks, for example, was one of the warmest on record. In December, four high temperature records were broken and one was tied, the maximum a record +44°F on December 23. January was uneventful, and it was followed by the warmest February there since 1981, including a record-high +39°F on February 8. Indeed, during this period there were no temperatures as cold as –30 at Fairbanks until February 27. The very end of that month brought widespread cold, with temperatures to –60°F at Umiat, on the Colville River, and to –50 at Prudhoe Bay. But then, implications of the American Birds reporting schedule notwithstanding, spring has never been a serious threat in much of Alaska before April.

Precipitation—in most areas, snowfall—was below average everywhere.

WATERFOWL — Whooper Swans are always of interest because they are a peripheral species in Alaska and are never numerous here. Five were seen on L. Elwood, Attu I., Dec. 1 & 8, and 10 birds were seen there Dec. 12 (GFW, fide CFZ). For the first winter in many, no surface-feeding ducks but Mallards remained the winter at Anchorage (TGT). The only ones seen there this season, two Canvasbacks were found at Clam Lagoon, Adak I., Feb. 8 (BW), and two pairs were seen there Feb. 15 (CFZ) & 20 (GM, FD). A flock of 15–22 Ring-necked Ducks at Klawock I., Prince of Wales I., throughout the season (TEK) rivaled the Alaska winter maximum of 25—same locality and observer in winter 1980–1981. A subad. ♂ Tufted Duck with three Greater Scaup at Barry Lagoon Dec. 28 (FRAM) provided at least the 5th record for Kodiak (and see Corrigendum). Presumed to be the same bird that has wintered with Harlequin Ducks at Adak since 1982–1983, a ♂ Steller's Eider spent the current season off Zeto Pt. (GM et al.). The species is not a common winter bird in the Aleutians w. of the e. islands. A ♂ Smew reported at Kodiak in late December (DWS) was also presumed to be a repeating individual.

RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS — Northern Goshawks were commented on only in the Anchorage area, where their numbers were good (TGT). A Red-tailed Hawk observed at Craig, Prince of Wales I., Dec. 28 (TEK) was of interest; the species is no more than casual in winter anywhere on Alaska's Pacific coast. At the n. limit of range, a Merlin wintered in the Anchorage bowl, and a 2nd bird was seen at intervals all season near Turnagain Pass (m.ob.). Gyrfalcons were reported only along the Pacific coast, at Anchorage (two birds [m.ob.]) and Juneau (one Jan. 23 [MEI]). A decomposing **Virginia Rail** found at Klawock, Prince of Wales I., Feb. 17 (TP, TEK*) provided the first record of the species in Alaska. Its skeleton and an assortment of feathers have been preserved. The n. limit of the species' summer range in adjacent British Columbia is not far away, and this rail is apparently resident in southwesternmost parts of that province (see recent C.B.C.s). A record-high total for winter, at least nine Killdeer spent the season on the Mendenhall wetlands, Juneau (MEI). A Com. Snipe at Anchorage Dec. 21 furnished the 4th winter record there since 1980 (TGT).

GULLS TO KINGLETS — Although temperatures were moderate and Cook Inlet ice was minimal and late-forming, gulls departed Anchorage by Christmas, as is typical in a cold winter. Some reappeared in early January 1986, however, and numbers reached a seasonally-unusual 51 birds Feb. 12, including 44 Glaucous-winged, four Glaucous, and three Herring. A Short-eared Owl seen on the Knik River flats Feb. 16 (LLH)



provided the 4th winter record for Upper Cook Inlet (TGT). Lone N. Flickers visiting feeders at Seward (one "Yellow-shafted" spent the season [REM]) and Craig (one "Red-shafted" in late December [TEK]) were noteworthy, as almost all flickers depart Alaska entirely in winter.

Steller's Jay numbers at Anchorage reached a new high of 32 birds Dec. 21. Late fall-early winter numbers of this species in Upper Cook Inlet have been steadily increasing since 1979 (TGT). Red-breasted Nuthatches were mentioned only in Southeastern Alaska, where small numbers regularly visited Juneau feeders all winter (MEI) and where a few were noted in late December in the Craig-Klawock area (TEK). Single Golden-crowned Kinglets observed in flocks of Black-capped and Boreal chickadees at Horseshoe Creek, Denali State Park, at Mile 159.8 Parks Highway, Nov. 23 and Dec. 15 (DKP) provided the northernmost winter records of the species.

THRUSHES THROUGH FINCHES — At least two Am. Robins in the Sand Lake, Anchorage, area all season (TGT) and one first seen in a Fairbanks subdivision in early February (fide JMW) added to few overwintering records in those areas. No matter what subspecies, an "Aleutian" Song Sparrow that visited a feeder at King Salmon, Alaska Peninsula, Jan. 8+ (RJW) provided an interesting record. Although there have been (summer) reports in the recent past of this species at Hagemester I., in n. Bristol Bay, no specimens have been taken on the Bering coast n. and e. of Amak I.—the type locality of poorly-known *M. m. amaka*. A Lincoln's Sparrow that visited a Homer feeder in late December (DWS, RLS) furnished the season's only report. White-throated Sparrows at Juneau (RHA) and Homer (EPB) feeders (see Autumn) were both present through the close of the period. Golden-crowned, White-crowned, and Harris' sparrows overwintered at Auke Bay, Juneau, feeders (RBW). Small numbers of White-crowns were found as far n. and w. as Anchorage (TGT), and a few Golden-crowned, Fox, and Am. Tree sparrows wintered at Craig (TEK).

An imm. Harris' Sparrow was observed at Port Alexander, Baranof I., Dec. 2–Jan. 13 (AL, ph., *fide* RHA); there are altogether few records of this species in Southeastern Alaska away from the Auke Bay feeding/banding station of RBW.

Although individuals have been recorded in past years as late as the end of November, the first actual overwintering records of Red-winged Blackbird in Alaska were those made this season. An imm. male was present at a farm at Trapper Creek, 185 km n. of Anchorage, from mid-October through at least Mar. 11 (DKP, ph.); and a group of four spent the entire winter, often accompanying starlings, near Lemon Creek, Juneau (MEI).

To follow up on Alaska's wintering **Bramblings** (see Autumn), the Seward bird was not seen after Dec. 4 (REM); the individual banded at Auke Bay, Juneau, was joined by a 2nd Brambling Jan. 2 and both were present there through the close of the period (RBW *et al.*); and the Ketchikan bird was still present in March (REW). Pine Grosbeaks were not reported to be common anywhere in the Region. Juneau's **Purple Finch** (see Autumn) was not seen after mid-December (RBW). Red Crossbills continued to be scarce in Southeastern (MEI). White-

winged Crossbills were virtually absent in Central and South-coastal Alaska during the period, but were locally common in Southeastern. Redpolls were widespread in "average" numbers in Central and Southcoastal Alaska; redpolls and Pine Siskins were almost entirely absent from Southeastern this period.

CORRIGENDUM — "Cordova remains the only Alaska locality on the Pacific coast e. of the Aleutians where [Tufted Duck] has been found . . ." (AB 39:199) was a misstatement. The phrase should have read, instead, e. of Kodiak.

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NORTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Michael P. Force and Philip W. Mattocks, Jr.

The record-setting cold of November lasted into the first few days of December. Temperatures moderated abruptly at the Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, B.C., weather stations, but the trend was for below seasonal norms for the duration of the month. Precipitation was far below normal for all areas during December with Vancouver, B.C., recording its driest December ever. This was the result of a high pressure ridge over most of the province that set the conditions for 16 days of heavy fog, hampering observers' efforts considerably. January as a rule was warmer and wetter than usual; the Seattle weather station set or tied record high temperatures for four days that month. On January 18 a strong winter storm lashed the Oregon and Washington coasts. The resultant high winds (up to 90 mph coastally) and heavy rains caused much local flooding and property damage. High numbers of Red Phalaropes, a Laysan Albatross and Pomarine Jaeger seen from shore were all related to this weather system. February's temperature at Vancouver, B.C., was slightly below normal despite record highs at the end of the month. Unseasonably cold temperatures mid-month warmed to an amazing 18.4°C (65°F) on February 27, setting the stage for an early spring.

In the account that follows, Christmas Bird Count data have been omitted except where appropriate.

ABBREVIATIONS — C.B.C. = Christmas Bird Count; † = details on file; * = specimen; V.I. = Vancouver Island; S.J.C.R. = south jetty Columbia River, Oregon. Italicized place names are counties.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Of the ten Yellow-billed Loons reported, one was as far s. as Yaquina Bay, Ore. (D. & C. MacManiman), where one wintered last year, and one was a victim of the Port Angeles oil spill (*Burke Museum) providing one of four Washington specimens. The remainder of sightings were concentrated in the Vancouver, Victoria, Puget Sound-San Juan Island areas (v.o.). The Active Pass concentration of Pacific Loons in British Columbia's Gulf Is. was estimated at 2000+ Jan. 25 (J & RS) declining to only 200 Feb. 9



(BW). Fifty Red-necked Grebes sighted from Spanish Head, Lincoln, Dec. 28 were considered extraordinary for the Oregon coast (MH, SH). Eared Grebes continued to be reported in lower numbers than in previous years with the decline particularly noticeable in the Victoria area. With the elevation of Clark's Grebe to species rank we can expect a gradual clarification of its status in our Region. This winter the only records were from the c. and s. Oregon coast, all of single birds: Dec. 7, Rogue River Estuary, Gold Beach (AG, RE, MR); Jan. 18, Alsea

Bay, Waldport (JC, D Peterson), Jan 20 to mid-February, Boiler Bay viewpoint, Lincoln, (JC, VT *et al.*).

On Jan. 19 a Laysan Albatross passed a land-based observer at Boiler Bay viewpoint near Depoe Bay, Ore. (PP, no details). The bird had obviously been blown in during the previous day's intense wind and rainstorm, providing an unusual winter record. The only N. Fulmar report of the season was of six washed up on Sunset Beach, Ore., Dec. 4 (HN). One Buller's Shearwater and six Short-tailed Shearwaters were also found, the former providing a rare winter record. On Dec. 10 one Short-tailed Shearwater was well seen close off the bow of the MV Coho in Juan de Fuca Strait (JS, MC). Two at the n. jetty of the Siuslaw R., Dec. 27 (MH, OR, SH) and one at Haystack Rock, Cannon Beach, Jan. 24 (TC) were the only other reports received, both from Oregon. Five hundred Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels recorded on the Lincoln City, Ore., C.B.C. on Dec. 28 (DFI, SH) was an amazing winter concentration. Brandt's Cormorants were found in their usual high numbers in the southern V.I.-Gulf Islands area but the 4280 on the Sooke C.B.C. set a new Regional and Canadian high for this species.

Wintering Great Egrets were concentrated along the s. Oregon coast with few in the Willamette River Valley (HN). No Cattle Egrets were observed in British Columbia or Washington, continuing the trend noted in the fall report. If there were any around, November's cold cleared them out. Certainly surprising, then, was one sighted at Ankeny N.W.R., s. of Salem, Feb. 3+ (BB, W. Johnson *et al.*). A roost of Black-crowned Night-Herons on the Skagit Flats, Skagit, peaked at eight birds Jan. 19-20 (MS, BS). At Reifel Refuge, near Vancouver, B.C., three (one adult, two immatures) made it through the winter. The adult is believed to have been present for its 3rd consecutive year (JI *et al.*).

WATERFOWL — Trumpeter Swans were widely reported in small flocks in w. Washington; five at Ocean Shores were the first there in several years (G & WH). Farther s., 37 were tallied at Loomis Lake on the Long Beach Peninsula (J. & G. Knule *et al.*). In Oregon 16 near Airlee, Polk, was the largest flock reported from that state this season (ME, BS). A flock of Greater White-fronted Geese at Sauvie Island, Ore., plus scattered individuals throughout the Willamette Valley, continued a trend first noted 3 or 4 years ago as this species slowly regains its wintering status in w. Oregon. Three hundred Snow Geese reported from Sauvie Island during the winter (DB *et al.*) were unusual. Other flocks frequenting Willamette Valley refuges could have been some of these birds (HN). The single Ross' Goose seen at Ankeny N.W.R., Polk, in November was joined by another Dec. 13 (Bob Jarvis, *vide* EE, no details). Other sightings of this species in the Willamette Valley were probably attributable to these birds. An Emperor Goose first discovered at Dungeness Jan. 20 (K. & M. Gruebel) remained in the area until the end of the period (v.o.). This was the 2nd year in a row this species had been recorded from the n. coast of the Olympic Peninsula (see AB 39:342). A flock of 12 "Dusky" Canada Geese, wearing red neckbands, seen Dec. 27 at Tokeland had been banded at their Copper River delta, Alaska, nesting grounds (TB *et al.*). Another marked individual was seen on L. Sacajawea near Longview (FB).

Apparently 10% more ducks and geese than normal wintered in w. Oregon and some species were 25% above average. Many dabblers (Mallard, N. Pintail, N. Shoveler, and Green-winged Teal) appeared in healthy numbers (State and Federal Wildlife biologists, *vide* HBN). Very few Eur. Green-winged Teal were reported this winter (are observers giving up on this form?). One in Saanich, V.I., Feb. 17 (VG), 2 reports from Iona Island, Dec 7 and Feb. 22, and one at Eugene for at least the 3rd winter in a row (SH, DI) were the only ones reported. A hybrid Eurasian x American Green-winged Teal was studied at Reifel Refuge on the Ladner C.B.C. (BK, WW). Unlike the Eur. Wigeon, this form and its hybrids do not appear to be increasing in the Region. Two Am. Black Ducks were seen at Beach Grove, Boundary Bay, Delta, on Feb. 9 in an area where two wintered last year (BK, GA). A ♂ Cinnamon Teal had returned to Ocean

Shores by Feb. 26 (JS) and two female-plumaged Blue-winged Teal were studied at the Forest Grove ponds Dec. 11 (DFI, VT).

S.A.

Eurasian Wigeons continue to increase. To find a Eurasian Wigeon is not hard. Almost every Am. Wigeon flock has at least one Eurasian in it. Even a small wintering flock of about 60 Americans at Vancouver's Jericho Park contained four males and one female all winter. In Oregon, the number of reports received indicate at least as many as last winter if not more (*vide* HN). A careful count of 1500 wigeon at the Samish Flats on Feb. 17 revealed 37 Eurasians (28 male, nine female), the high seasonal count for the Region (BHT). Twenty-eight were tallied on the Victoria C.B.C. for a new North American C.B.C. high. Fourteen (13 males, one female) were picked out at Beach Grove, Delta, for this winter's high count for the Vancouver area (BK). Coincident with these high counts were increases in the number of reported hybrids. The Samish Flats flock contained three, another three were found on the Victoria C.B.C., and singles were at Vancouver, B.C., and at Bear Marsh, Lincoln. All were males, with some showing an even mix of Eurasian and American feathering scattered throughout the plumage while others were more clear-cut (American head with Eurasian body and vice versa). Nesting must surely be occurring somewhere in the Arctic.

Redheads were reported from favored winter locations in British Columbia and Washington with 12 at Ocean Shores Feb. 16 (BS). One on Capital Lake, Olympia (G & WH) and two nearby on American L., Tacoma (WWi) were in areas where rarely reported. Four Tufted Ducks were reported from the Region this winter. The first was a female at Lost Lagoon, Stanley Park, Dec. 8+ with two present Feb. 13 (BK†). An ad. male was seen Dec. 30 on the Long Beach peninsula, Wash., where one was present last winter (P. & B. Webster) and a first-year bird visited Green Lake, Seattle, Feb. 10-16 (M. Nixon). An imm. ♂ King Eider at Cape Arago, Ore., Dec. 19 "for about a week" (L. Thornburgh *et al.*) provided the 5th record for the state. The ♀ King Eider reported in the fall summary remained faithful to its Stanley Park location throughout the period and was seen by numerous observers.

VULTURES THROUGH CRANES — A Turkey Vulture over Corvallis, Ore., Feb. 24 was on schedule for a spring migrant (D. McGie). Winter reports of Ospreys are few so the sighting of one near Eugene Jan. 17 was of interest (TM). About 26 Black-shouldered Kites were reported from w. Oregon, down slightly from previous winters (*vide* DFI). In Washington two were seen on the Ocean Shores game range Dec. 18 and Jan. 11 (G & WH). One seen near Hoquiam, Grays Harbor, Feb. 17 may have been one of the pair which was resident here the last year (H. Spitzer, A. Scales). Two seen in February on the Columbian White-tailed Deer N.W.R., Wahkiakum, were behaving as though territorial (FB).

Northern Harriers were in good numbers in Oregon until about late January, then tapered down to a few in favored localities (HN). Reports of nine N. Goshawks were received: two in Oregon, three in Washington, two on southern V.I., and two on the Fraser Delta on dates spanning the reporting period. Three were listed as immatures, one as an adult, and the others did not mention ages (v.o.). The only raptor survey conducted this winter was on the Samish and Skagit Flats, Skagit, on 3 dates in late January and early February (D. MacRae, A. van der Geld). On Jan. 28 they found 31 Red-tailed Hawks, eight Rough-legged Hawks, 14 N. Harriers, and one Cooper's Hawk A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was seen on several dates in January and February at Boundary Bay, Delta (BK† *et al.*), and one wintered on the Lummi Flats, near Bellingham (BHT, TW). The Red-shouldered Hawk continued to consolidate its range

in s. Oregon as it becomes more common in coastal floodplain pasture edge (DFi). One was seen near Harbor, Curry, Jan. 3, near the n. edge of this species' range (DFi, DR) and another was seen Jan. 1 on the Port Orford C.B.C., where expected (DFi). Far n. was an adult at Drift Creek, Siletz Bay, for only the 2nd Lincoln record (DI, SH).

Merlin reports were up slightly, being more widely reported than usual from w. Washington. Gyrfalcon and Peregrine Falcon sightings were widespread with reports coming from traditional waterfowl concentrations. One of each species was trapped by Washington Game Department personnel in the Dungeness area and fitted with radio transmitters. Two Prairie Falcons from the s. Willamette R. Valley and another at Medford were in areas where a few are recorded every winter (DFi et al.).

According to C.B.C. data, Virginia Rails and Am. Coots were hit hard by the November freeze in s. British Columbia. Virginia Rails were very hard to find in the Vancouver area all winter (MF et al.) and the Victoria C.B.C. could find only one! They were mentioned as being common on the Oregon coast, however (DFi). Several coastal British Columbia counts posted record lows for Am. Coots. Numbers at Reifel Refuge were down by about 75% (JI). Interestingly, normal numbers of coots were noted from areas s. of here. The only Sora reported was one on the Port Orford C.B.C., Jan. 1, being DFi's first in winter. The Sauvie Island, Ore., Sandhill Crane population reached 150 Jan. 26 (S. Erickson), and hundreds were at nearby Ridgefield N.W.R., Wash., Jan. 1 (E. Norwood). Both locations encompass a regular wintering area for this species.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH GULLS — The first winter record of a **Lesser Golden-Plover** for Washington was obtained Feb. 8 at Dungeness Spit, Clallam (C. Provostf). Subspecific identification is not possible from the details received, but all west coast sightings in winter have been of the Siberian form *fulva*. Thirteen Snowy Plovers Jan. 6 near Siltcoos Creek were on the Oregon coast, where a few can be found every winter (C. Bunce). A Willet that made it through the winter (and an oil spill!) at Ediz Hook, Port Angeles, was in a now-traditional wintering location. A Long-billed Curlew studied at Dungeness, Wash., Jan. 18 (V. Timm, M.J. Cooper) was far from the traditional flock at Tokeland, Pacific, which numbered 21 on Jan. 21 (G & WH). No Marbled Godwits or Willets were reported from this area, a regular wintering locality for these species in the past. The sole Regional report for Red Knot was of one all winter at Siletz Bay, Ore. (m.ob.). One to 10 W. Sandpipers were found at 4 locations n. of the Columbia R. during December, with none reported beyond that month (v.o.). The shorebird highlight of the season was the coastal fallout of Red Phalaropes after the Jan. 18 storm. Hundreds were on the Willapa Bay N.W.R., Pacific, with at least one in full alternate plumage Jan. 19–21 (R. Widrig, M. Jordan). Twelve were in the Westport boat basin Jan. 19 (J. & M. Haseltine). In Oregon hundreds were along the Lincoln coast (DP, JC), plus 75 in Tillamook Bay (B. Schelmerdine) and 200 at the S.J.C.R., both Jan. 20. Numbers declined sharply thereafter; most coastal birds were gone within a week. Up to 40 at Boiler Bay were the only ones reported after mid-February (PP et al.). Singles were inland to Salem Jan. 18 (BB) and the Monmouth sewage ponds Jan. 19 (RC).

A Pomarine Jaeger at the Boiler Bay viewpoint, Ore., Jan. 19 was a product of the previous day's storm (PP). Two birds, one of each color phase, seen from the Ocean Shores jetty Feb. 21 (G & WH) were at an area where previous winter sightings have been made. A single bird was found washed up at Bay-ocean Beach, Tillamook, Ore., Feb. 26 (HN). The only Little Gulls reported were singles in Seattle, Dec. 3 (J. Zook) and Jan. 19 (Brian Pendleton, no details). One thousand Bonaparte's Gulls at the Colman Dock, Seattle, Feb. 1–7 (D. Lindstrom) was an impressive winter concentration. On Feb. 23 BHT's count of gulls attracted to the smelt run along the Cowlitz River between the mouth of the Toutle and the Columbia included 3300 Glaucous-winged, 400 each of Herring and Thayer's

(about 80% adult for both species), and 1000 Mew (greater than 70% adult), plus small numbers of California and Ring-billed and a first-year Glaucous. Surprisingly, the Glaucous-winged count was free of intergrade Glaucous-winged x Western types. A careful check of the gull roost on the Kennydale log booms, Lake Washington, revealed about 40 Thayer's Gulls and 30 Herring Gulls Jan. 10 (PM). A Glaucous Gull visited this site Feb. 2 & 7 (EH, PM). Of the approximately 26 Glaucous Gulls reported throughout the Region, none was noted as adult

S.A.

For the 3rd year in a row, birds fitting the description of *kumlieni* **Iceland Gulls** have been seen in the Vancouver and Victoria areas, either in the Hartland Ave landfill, Saanich or the Sea/Iona Island areas s. of Vancouver. This winter there was a "textbook" ad. *kumlieni* on Sea Island Jan. 26 (Michael Pricef), 27 (MFf), & 31 (H & JM), and a first-year bird at the Hartland landfill Jan. 11 (K. Taylor, C. Harper). This recent increase in sightings is not easily explained by the usual "increase in observer effort." Dedicated gull-watchers have for years scanned the multitudinous flocks of Thayer's, without discovering Icelands with any regularity. A handful of old records does exist, however.

Most of the Vancouver birds have had primaries very similar to Figures 213 and 214 in Dwight, The Gulls (Laridae) of the World, Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. Bull., 52: 63–402, 1925. Essentially, they were small, white-winged gulls, the gray markings were so reduced in size and extent. For additional comparison, a small Glaucous Gull (presumably a female *barrovianus*) seen in the Richmond landfill was slightly smaller than the Herring Gull it was standing next to but was easily identifiable based on overall structure, i.e., heavy proportions, primary projection, bill size, eye placement, head shape, etc.

A mind-boggling concentration of gulls (mostly Glaucous-winged and Thayer's) occurred along the lower Fraser River Dec. 1. As far as the eye could see in either direction were gulls, the majority roosting on ice floes, conservatively estimated at over 30,000. The unusual amount of ice in the river and the close proximity of the 2 largest landfills in the area, combined with the first day of above-freezing temperatures in over 2 weeks, contributed to the largest concentration of gulls either observer had ever seen (MF, BK). Equally impressive were the 2500–3000 Black-legged Kittiwakes reported at the Ocean Shores jetty, Feb. 21. Present at 10:30 a.m., this flock, the largest kittiwake flock G & WH had ever seen, shrank to 100 birds by 11:00 a.m.

ALCIDS THROUGH OWLS — The high count of Marbled Murrelets s. of the V.I. area was of 60 at Boiler Bay, Ore., Jan. 26 (D. Lusthoff, VT). The **Kittlitz's Murrelet** first reported in November remained in the Ogden Pt./Victoria Harbour area until Dec. 30, much to the delight of many observers. It was absent during January despite intensive coverage, reappearing at its original location Feb. 2+ (TZ ph., m.ob.). The 25± Ancient Murrelets at Boiler Bay Jan. 18 to mid-February were probably storm-related (PP et al.). An interesting mid-winter movement of Ancient Murrelets was noted Jan. 20 off Saanich, V.I., where 500, in groups of up to 35, were seen heading N (VG).

An increase in Band-tailed Pigeon and Mourning Dove sightings in Oregon during early February may have indicated an early start to spring migration (HN). A pair of Band-tailed Pigeons in Discovery Park, Seattle, was nest-building Feb. 17 and incubating a single egg by Feb. 25 (DB)! Reports of Snowy Owls suggested an echo flight year with the highest counts coming from the Skagit Flats, an important raptor wintering area. Nine tallied here Feb. 2 was the high count for the entire Region (MS). Washington had a total of 22 reports, with 73% of these from the Skagit/Samish Flats area (m.ob.). One to two



Kittlitz's Murrelet at Victoria, B.C., Dec. 8, 1985. Besides the extensively white face that distinguishes this species from Marbled Murrelet in winter plumage, note also the very short bill. Photo/Tim Zurowski.

at Ocean Shores throughout the period (G & WH et al.) and two at Leadbetter Point, Jan. 12 (M. Brady) furnished the only outer coast reports. One at the S.J.C.R., Dec. 21 (SH et al.) disappeared when the coastal storm flooded its favored area. A Snowy Owl seen here Feb. 7 was possibly the same bird returning (V. Brown). One was on Sauvie Island, Feb. 8 & 14 (N. & C. Bonin). Only seven to eight wintered in the lower Fraser Valley (DK et al.).

Were N. Pygmy-Owls actually scarce this winter or just unreported? There was only one report from Oregon and two



Barred Owl at Mercer Island, Wash., Feb. 17, 1986. Photo/Robert Ashbaugh.

each from Washington and British Columbia. All were during February except for the one on the Terrace C.B.C., Dec. 22 on the n. British Columbia coast. Single Barred Owls were reported from 3 Vancouver areas (fide DK) and from traditional locations around Seattle. One was photographed on Mercer I., Feb. 17 (W. Crill, R. Ashbaugh). The status of a Great Gray Owl seen in s. Langley, B.C., during the White Rock C.B.C., Jan. 5 is questionable (G. Ryder). The bird was sighted very near where one escaped last year which the owner was prohibited from recapturing. It's very possible that this bird remained undetected within the dense woodlots of this rarely-birded area. The only Long-eared Owl report was of one heard calling on the Forest Grove C.B.C., Dec. 22 (fide HN). In western Oregon Short-eared Owls were said to be scarce all winter (HN) and it was considered to be another poor year around Fern Ridge Res. (DFi). However, there were more than usual at the Nisqually N.W.R. this winter (G & WH). In the Fraser Delta they were in slightly above average numbers on the Ladner C.B.C. but almost absent everywhere else (fide WW). Nine N. Saw-whet Owls were recorded on the Tillamook C.B.C., Dec. 27 (fide DFi). Six seen in w. Washington (fide PM) and three from southern V.I. (fide DFr) were the only others reported.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH JAYS — Following the long November freeze, numbers of Anna's Hummingbirds were reduced in some areas. Victoria's C.B.C., however, tallied a new Canadian high for the species—26. An Anna's Hummingbird nest hatched 2 eggs Feb. 14 in Medford (fide M. Paczolt), for one of less than 5 nests for the state. Two Rufous Hummingbirds at Federal Way, Wash., Feb. 21 were the first spring migrants reported (P. Fredrickson).

Two **Red-naped Sapsuckers** seen during the Seattle C.B.C., Dec. 29 were new to the count and provided one of the few winter records for the Region. Plummetting winter temperatures traditionally drive Red-breasted Sapsuckers into the relative warmth of the lowlands, but this winter many perished upon their arrival. At Reifel Refuge, B.C., JI and GA reported picking several off the trees and warming them up in their hands. Nine were brought in frozen to an animal care facility near Vancouver, B.C. This is one more than Vancouver's entire C.B.C. total (fide MF)! Freeze mortality was also noted among N. Flickers at Reifel Refuge. JI found four dead inside Wood Duck boxes in late November-early December. The Roseburg, Ore., Black Phoebe did not show for what would have been its 5th winter (DFi). One seen on the Port Orford C.B.C., Jan. 1 was not surprising as this species continues to increase from central Curry s. (DFi). The 3rd winter record of Say's Phoebe for Curry was of one along the lower Winchuck R., Jan. 25 (RE). The first Tree Swallows reported were in the n. Willamette R. Valley Feb. 23, when a warm, wet storm passed over the state. They were then quite scarce well into March (HN). In the s. British Columbia mainland, Puget Sound, southern V.I. areas, arrival was uniformly Feb. 25-27. Violet-green Swallows followed a similar pattern. A Blue Jay visited a feeder near Vancouver, Wash., Dec. 6-20 (E. & N. Baird) and another spent the winter in a residential section of Gibsons, just n. of Vancouver, B.C. (G. Smith).

CHICKADEES THROUGH WARBLERS — The first confirmed **Boreal Chickadee** for Vancouver, B.C., was discovered Dec. 22 during the C.B.C. (Mrs. J.E. James, fide D. Brown†). Apparently the bird had been visiting the feeder sporadically for several weeks. It was last reported Jan. 1. The 5th record for V.I., and only the 2nd for the Victoria area, of a **White-breasted Nuthatch** was obtained on the Sooke C.B.C., Dec. 28 (R. Williams et al.). The bird patronized a feeder throughout the rest of the reporting period, being seen by many. Winter and Marsh wren numbers were down 30-50% (Bewick's Wren less so) in s.w. British Columbia and V.I., probably a result of the November freeze (C.B.C. data).

Western Bluebirds were reported from traditional wintering localities in Oregon. The first spring arrivals at Fort Lewis, Wash., were on time around Feb. 20 (J. Beall). A ♂ **Mountain**

Bluebird spent the month of December in s Vancouver for one of the few winter records for the area (J. Foster *et al.*, C. Riskey†). Five Townsend's Solitaires were reported from the Region with two in Oregon, one in Washington, and two on southern V.I. (v.o.). Hermit Thrushes appeared to be unaffected by the cold weather with reports coming from many areas. DFi mentioned high numbers in coastal Oregon. A N. Mockingbird that visited feeders near Vancouver, Wash., during December was also recorded on the Sauvie Island C.B.C. (*fide* HN).

Fall reports of Bohemian Waxwing suggested a winter influx. But it failed to materialize—unless one happened to be in Terrace or Kitimat on British Columbia's n. coast. A coastal invasion there was clearly evident with Terrace recording 3037 on their C.B.C., Dec. 22 (*fide* WW). Nine at Pt. Roberts, Wash., Dec. 3 (GA) and one in Victoria, Feb. 17–18 (P. Becker) were the only others reported. Northern Shrikes were widely reported as usual. In w. Oregon, numbers appeared normal (DFi) and remained that way all winter in all areas (HN). A **Loggerhead Shrike** seen well on the Tillamook Bay C.B.C., Dec. 21 was a county first (DFi† *et al.*) and provided an unusual Regional winter record.

The usual numbers of hardy winter warblers were reported, mostly from Oregon. Single Orange-crowns were on southern V.I. (*fide* DFr) and at Bellevue, Wash., Feb. 12 (B. Meilleur). Yellow-rumped Warblers were common on the Oregon and Washington coasts in Wax Myrtle thickets where expected, but in the s. Willamette R. Valley DFi believed numbers were down as a result of the November freeze. A flock of 11 at Reifel Refuge Jan. 8 surprised observers there (JI *et al.*). A bright ♂ **Black-throated Blue Warbler** graced a Medford, Ore., feeder mid-December to Jan. 30. The bird was attracted to a peanut butter mixture and probably would have stayed longer were it not for a windstorm that passed through the area. This represented the 11th record for Oregon (C. & H. Loveness *et al.*, *fide* HN).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES—The Am. Tree Sparrow was reported from 4 locations in Washington, mostly singles except for a wintering flock at the Marysville sewage ponds that peaked at six birds Jan. 30 (BHT *et al.*). Two birds in s. Saanich, V.I., throughout the period (G. Crowther *et al.*) furnished one of just a handful of records for southern V.I. Three spent the winter at Jericho Park in Vancouver (J. Vanderlinde *et al.*). Two Clay-colored Sparrows were found in Oregon this winter, both during C.B.C.s: one in Florence Dec. 27 (DFi†, SH *et al.*) and another at Sauvie Island also Dec. 27 (DBa, RF, details?). There are now about a dozen records for the state. A few wintering Savannah Sparrows were found as usual. One at the Marysville sewage ponds Feb. 6 was noted as being less yellow, bigger-billed, and flatter-headed than the usual breeding Savannahs of the area (PM). The 5th record of Swamp Sparrow for Vancouver, B.C., was obtained at Reifel Refuge Dec. 27 (JI†, G. Sunderland) in almost the exact spot and on the same date as the first one in 1979. The bird was very hard to find in the extensive cattail marsh, but a brief sighting as late as Feb. 2 (GA) suggested it probably wintered.

White-throated Sparrow numbers were well below the wintertime norm in Oregon (*fide* HN). Two reports from Washington, one from Ladner, B.C., and 4 from the Victoria area, mostly of one to two birds, indicated low numbers throughout the Region. On the other hand, the nine Harris' Sparrows seen in the Vancouver, B.C., area was the highest number there since 1972 (v.o., *fide* DK). Washington observers reported only four individuals, while in Oregon they were in above-normal numbers with many reports received (*fide* DFi). Small flocks of Lapland Longspurs were reported s. of British Columbia. The 14 at Ocean Shores Feb. 8 & 21 was the largest number reported (R. Egbert, G & WH). Fifty Snow Buntings at Manzanita Beach Feb. 17, 75 at Nehalem Bay Jan. 14 (both *fide* HN), and 67 on the Tillamook Bay C.B.C., Dec. 21 (SH *et al.*) were all unprecedented counts. Forty Snow Buntings in Delta, s. of

Vancouver, B.C. (JI, R. Phillips *et al.*) throughout the winter and another 40 at Dungeness, Clallam, Dec. 20 (D & SS) were the highest seasonal totals reported from those areas.

A flock of up to 21 W. Meadowlarks wintered on the Martindale Flats in n. Saanich, V.I. (v.o.), and more than usual wintered in the Ocean Shores area of Washington (G & WH). Two reports were received for Yellow-headed Blackbird, a rare winter visitor. One was seen in early January in Seattle (*fide* PM), and another was in w. Delta Jan. 28, providing one of the few winter records for the Vancouver area (GA). The Martindale Flats blackbird flock contained a Rusty Blackbird Dec 12 (DFr), and another seen just s. of there Jan. 19 may have been the same bird (TZ).

Purple Finches were more numerous than usual this winter in s.w. British Columbia and n.w. Washington. Almost all coastal British Columbia C.B.C.s recorded extremely high numbers (*fide* WW). Red Crossbill reports were widespread in Oregon and southern V.I. In Washington, they were common only in the southern Cascades. On Jan. 29–31 two males collected there were in full breeding condition (MD, CW, * Burke Museum). Only the s. Cascades of Washington contained large numbers of White-winged Crossbills from last summer's invasion. Flocks of 100 and 200 were seen just e. of Snoqualmie Pass Jan. 20 (M. Breuninger), dozens were on Mt. St. Helens Jan. 3 (S. Bachhuber), and similar numbers were noted in the Wind River Ranger District Jan. 29–31 (MD, CW). Some trickled down into the Coast Range in Oregon where flocks of up to 80 were reported in areas of heavy Douglas Fir cone production (*fide* HN). An interesting sea-level sighting of White-winged Crossbills was made on Protection Island, Wash., Dec. 20 when a flock of 16 was described (BHT†, T. Schooley).

Fairly large flocks of Common Redpolls were present all winter at Reifel Refuge, peaking at 100 birds Jan. 23 & 26 (BK, WW); 129 on the Ladner C.B.C. was a record total. Farther s., 18 were tallied on the Bellingham C.B.C., a few were with siskins at Green Lake, Seattle, Jan. 24 (MC), and a single was seen at Nisqually N.W.R., Jan. 3 (D. LaCasse). An ad. female made it s. to a Portland feeder Dec. 25 to mid-February, but was absent most of January (D. & J. Kobb *et al.*). Lesser Goldfinches were present in their usual small numbers in the Willamette Valley. Up to 20 were seen in a 2-week period during early December in Corvallis (A. McGie). Evening Grosbeaks were nowhere numerous. The largest flock was of 45 at Sooke, V.I., Dec. 29 (TZ).

Two ♂ Eur. Tree Sparrows in the Vancouver, B.C., area created the expected arguments regarding their origin. One visited a feeder in N. Vancouver at least Oct. 30–Jan. 20 (C. Littler, BK† *et al.*). A 2nd one was discovered at Lost Lagoon, Stanley Park, Dec. 22 (BK†) and remained through at least Jan. 31. The two birds could be distinguished by bill color: one was mostly black while the other was mainly yellow with a dark tip (BK *et al.*, ph. P. Yorke). Both localities are within 2 mi of the Vancouver docks, and the birds were certainly ship/sailor assisted

EXOTICS—A situation that requires watching is the expanding Mandarin Duck population in winter at Stanley Park's Lost Lagoon. The compilers of the Vancouver CBC included it in the official count results for the first time. Four males and three females were located Dec. 22, and vanished as early as mid-February. Two escaped Barnacle Geese continued to wander around n. Puget Sound and Willamette Valley refuges, the latter individual believed to be the same one as last winter (ME *et al.*). Monk Parakeets were not reported from their traditional Portland roost, but instead, one was at Tacoma, Feb 2 (E. Newbold).

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The Autumn Migration 1985 season report should have appeared in the Spring (Volume 40, Number 1) issue. Unfortunately, at press time, we had not received the report from our Regional Editor(s). Therefore, we are publishing the previously unpublished regional report on the Autumn Migration (1985) in this issue. We apologize for any inconvenience to our readers.

The Autumn Migration August 1–November 30, 1985

Eugene S. Hunn and Philip Mattocks, Jr.

August was warm and dry. An Upland Sandpiper, two Hudsonian Godwits, one Bar-tailed Godwit, and two Curlew Sandpipers appeared August 17–23, perhaps associated with a strong front that came ashore the night of the 17th. September was a bit cool with average precipitation. October was cold and wet. The arrival of three Tropical Kingbirds on southern Vancouver Island October 22–26 followed the strong front of October 22. November was dry and very cold with monthly average temperatures 8–9°F below par at Portland and Seattle and dropping to 25° sub-par from November 20 on. Four Gyrfalcons turned up November 9–16 with Common Redpolls not far behind, November 17, as if they had early warning of the big freeze. We welcome detailed reports from M. Hearne and S. Johnston for the Queen Charlotte Islands, at the poorly-documented northern edge of our Region.

ABBREVIATIONS — Q.C.I. = Queen Charlotte Is.; S.J.C.R. = south jetty of the Columbia River; V.I. = Vancouver Island. Place names in italics are counties.

PENGUIN THROUGH HERONS — An ad. Humboldt Penguin Aug. 27–Sept. 4 off Willoughby Rock, Grays Harbor, Wash. (S. Speich, S. Jeffries, P. Martin) must have been ship-assisted. Two were reported off V.I. some years back. The sumnering Yellow-billed Loon at Yaquina Bay, Lincoln, Ore., was found dead Aug. 15 (Hatfield Marine Science Center, *vide* HN). Two others arrived in late fall. The one seen Oct. 24 at White Rock, B.C. (JW), may have been the same bird seen off Pt. Roberts, *Whatcom*, Wash., Nov. 10+ (H & JM *et al.*). Another appeared Nov. 9 at Sequim Bay, *Clallam*, Wash. (DS). Although Clark's Grebes nest in e. Washington and Oregon, they are rare among the numerous wintering W. Grebes of the bays and coast. Three single birds were noted in s. Oregon, at Heceta Head, Lane, Aug. 21–24 (fSH, MH), at Gold Beach, Curry, and at Coos Bay Nov. 12 (VT, *vide* HN). Two were in the San Juan Is., Nov. 9 (TW) for one of very few w. Washington records.

We received reports (more or less complete) from 17 offshore trips this fall, 14 of those between Aug. 25 and Sept. 21, with none after Oct. 6. Homeports ranged from Brookings, Ore., at 42°N, to Bamfield on southern V.I. at 48°30'N. There were no surprises among the tubenoses. Black-footed Albatrosses were at par with 111 Aug. 25 off Grays Harbor, Wash. (TW), the high count. Northern Fulmars were abundant, especially off Bamfield, V.I., where 6000 were tallied Sept. 5 (*vide* VG). Pink-footed Shearwaters were also numerous, with 773 off Grays Harbor Aug. 30 (TW) the peak count. One to two Flesh-footed Shearwaters were picked out among these flocks on 6 Grays Harbor and 2 Bamfield trips. Buller's Shearwaters continued the gradual upswing first noted in 1983. They were first noted Aug. 31 off Grays Harbor and peaked there at 123 Oct. 6 (TW). A trip out of Newport, Lincoln, Ore., Oct. 5 reported 150 (SH) Short-tailed Shearwaters were scarce, reported on just 2 trips. Three were seen off Grays Harbor Sept. 8 (TW) and at least one was off Tillamook Bay, Ore., Sept. 15 (*vide* HN). Two or more were reported from shore at Florence, Lane, Ore., in an unusual inshore concentration of 75 N. Fulmars Nov. 2 (DF, SH, VT). A Buller's Shearwater was seen there with a few N. Fulmars Nov. 5 (DF). The only Leach's Storm-Petrels were three off Grays Harbor Aug. 10 (TW). Fork-taileds were abundant off Bamfield, V.I., with a high count of 1760 Aug. 29 (*vide* VG). The 660 off Grays Harbor Aug. 10 tapered off rapidly to just one to four from there after Aug. 30 (TW, ESH).

Four Am. White Pelicans strayed W this fall. Two were at Surrey, B.C., Sept. 25 (P. Jones), a single was nearby in Vancouver Sept. 28–Oct. 14, and one was on Agate L., near Medford, Ore., Oct. 25 (OS, *vide* MM). They are of less-than-annual occurrence in the Region. Brown Pelicans had another good year from our perspective. There were several V.I. reports, with six as far n. as Pachena Pt. on the w. coast Aug. 29 (MS, *vide* DK). High counts included 83 over Tatoosh I., *Clallam*, Wash., Aug. 29 (B. Paine *et al.*), 285 at Grays Harbor in late September (M. Price), and 1500 at the S.J.C.R., Sept. 28 (PP). Of those at the S.J.C.R., 30–35% were judged adult. A strong S movement was noted Nov. 5–16 at Florence, Ore. (DF, SH, S. Gordon).

Single Great and Snowy egrets reached s. Washington; the Great Egret was on the Palix R., *Pacific*, Aug. 24+ (B. & G. Ramsey, m.ob.) and the Snowy—the 3rd for w. Washington—was seen at Camas, Clark, Oct. 1–2 (fW. Cady). For the first fall in many years no Cattle Egrets were found. Black-crowned Night-Herons have established a few winter roosts w. of the Cascades. The Stanwood, *Snohomish*, Wash., roost has steadily grown, with 17+ there Sept. 11+ (C. Howard, m.ob.).

SWANS THROUGH CRANES — Tundra Swans arrived Oct. 24 at Renton, King, Wash. (J. Sanford), and Nov. 2+ elsewhere. Anomalous early sightings were of 46 Sept. 13 over Ashland, Ore. (MM), and of one Sept. 19 at Delta, B.C. (H & JM). Trumpeters were first noted Oct. 28 at Kent, King, Wash (R. Hazard) and Oct. 29 in the Q.C.I. (P. Slobodvian, *vide* SJ). After Nov. 9 they were widespread. The Greater White-fronted Goose migration was on time and heavy this September. High counts were of 65 Aug. 30 at Grays Harbor (PWM), 250 on Sauvie I., Sept. 3 (HN), and 100 at Victoria, V.I., Sept. 15 (H Vander Pol, *vide* VG). Many of these w. slope migrants apparently cross over to the Klamath basin near Diamond L. on the Cascade crest n. of Crater L., as DF and R. Menke counted 1000+ there Sept. 26 flying SE and noted smaller flocks Sept 4–Oct. 3. A blue-phase Snow Goose turned up Nov. 10–15 at Dungeness, *Clallam*, Wash. (D & SS, ph.). It was either an escape or far w. of its usual haunts, as no blue-phase birds are known from the Siberian populations that normally winter here. The Ross' Goose at Ankeny N.W.R., Ore., Nov. 16–23 (*vide* EE) likewise was far w. of its normal route.

Three Tufted Ducks were reported, an imm. male in Seattle Oct. 19–Nov. 8, another male at Iona I., B.C., Oct. 22 (AS), and a female in Vancouver, B.C., Nov. 13–20 (BK *et al.*). A ♀ King Eider Nov. 17+ at Vancouver provided the 7th local record (JH, fBK). Single Oldsquaws at Delta, B.C., Aug. 3 (RC) and off

Protection I, Jefferson, Wash., Sept 18 (ESH *et al.*) apparently summered. The Capitol L., Thurston, Wash., fall concentration of Barrow's Goldeneyes reached 2000+ Nov. 6, exceeding previous years' counts by 500+ (G. & W. Hoge).

The Turkey Vulture parade through southeastern V.I. was record-setting. The total passage was estimated at 1884 Aug. 12–Nov. 10, with daily counts of 82–343 during the peak movement Sept. 17–25. A 2nd peak occurred Oct. 2–3 with the passage of 225 more (*vide* VG). Rogue Valley, Jackson, Ore., observers also monitored this migration, counting 525 vultures Sept. 2–29, with peaks of 200+ Sept. 19 and 105 Sept. 25 (*vide* MM). Black-shouldered Kites continued to consolidate their position in Oregon and s. Washington. Thirty-two were seen in Oregon, with immatures reported among the 15 in the Rogue Valley (*vide* MM) and at Nehalem, Tillamook (B. Bellin *et al.*, *vide* HN). An immature photographed near Elma, Grays Harbor, Wash. (F. Bird)—one of 7 sightings in s.w. Washington—may have been raised by the pair that wintered w. of Hoquiam last year. *Accipiter* reports were up from previous years with the usual ratios holding: 131 Sharp-shinned reports, 117 of Cooper's, and 24 of Goshawks. The Oregon Red-shouldered Hawk population is holding its own. Four birds were seen on the Curry coast, including immatures at the mouths of the Winchuck and Pistol rivers (m.ob., *vide* RE), likely locally-reared. Two others were n. on the coast at Coos (P. Sullivan, *vide* HN) and Tillamook bays (JG, *vide* HN). Another immature was inland near Medford (OS, T. Wicklund, *vide* MM) and one to three were reported near Eugene (m.ob., *vide* SH). A concentration of 37 *buteos* Nov. 18 in a field near Coburg, Linn, Ore., included one to two *harlani* Red-tailed Hawks and seven Rough-legged Hawks (†DI, †DF, †SH). Rough-leggeds arrived nearly simultaneously in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon Sept. 27–29. HN described it as a “very good year” for this species in w. Oregon.

We received 97 reports each of Merlins and Peregrine Falcons, roughly comparable to the previous several years, allowing for increased observer density. Both species seemed decidedly less abundant in Oregon than to the n., as Oregon observers accounted for 14% of Merlin and 9% of Peregrine reports, versus 24% of *Accipiter* sightings. The Merlin migration was strongly concentrated in September, with that month accounting for 47% of the fall sightings. Peregrine reports were more evenly distributed throughout the fall season. Four Gyrfalcons appeared in the short span of Nov. 9–16, all gray or brown birds: Nov. 9, C. Saanich, V.I. (AS, *vide* DK); Nov. 12, Iona I., B.C. (BK); Nov. 13, Dungeness, Wash. (†SS); and Nov. 16, on the Lummi Flats, Whatcom, Wash. (BS, M. Scuderi). This suggested a good flight year. TW watched a gray Gyr—without jesses—fly by on Bellingham Bay, Wash., Aug. 18, an exceptionally early date for a wild bird. Prairie Falcons, as usual, were reported from the Cascade crest area in Washington—a migration path—and from the Rogue R. valley of s. Oregon—a regular wintering area. One at Sheridan, Yamhill, Ore. (R. Gerig, *vide* HN), escaped the pattern.

Mountain Quail are indigenous residents only from the Columbia R. s., yet they are seldom remarked upon. DF reported a brood Aug. 10, a flock of six Sept. 23, and a calling bird Oct. 17, all in the Diamond L. Ranger District, Douglas, Ore. Sandhill Cranes were first noted at Sauvie I., Sept. 7 (RSm, *vide* HN), where flocks built to 100 by Sept. 15 (S. Jagers, *vide* HN), and to several hundred at nearby Ridgefield N.W.R., Clark, Wash., Oct. 6 (S. Saul, F. Hanson). A few lingered there through November (HN).

SHOREBIRDS—Several uncommon migrants were reported in exceptional numbers. Vancouver, B.C., observers had record totals of Lesser Yellowlegs and Baird's and Stilt sandpipers. Buff-breasted and Semipalmated sandpipers broke records both at Vancouver and in coastal Oregon. These five species are all common intermountain and Great Plains migrants. Red-necked Phalaropes were exceptionally abundant in s. British Columbia and in Puget Sound. By contrast, Red Phal-

aropes went virtually unreported, while Ruffs were below par

Three Am. Avocets in mid-August on Agate L. near Medford, Ore. (*vide* MM), were not far from avocet breeding sites in the Klamath Basin. Four **Upland Sandpipers** were on Sea I., Richmond, B.C., Sept. 7 (*DG) and another was described from Westham I., nearby at Delta, Sept. 15 (†LH, †A. Schutz) for the Vancouver area's 6th and 7th records. Another was seen briefly Aug. 17 at Victoria (*E. Davidson). The species nests in c. British Columbia. Rare godwits include single juv. **Hudsonian Godwits** Aug. 21, at Mud Bay, Delta, B.C. (†JH), Aug. 23–Sept. 10 at the S.J.C.R. (JG, ph.), and Oct. 18–27 at Bandon, Ore. (†RE, †AB, †DI, m.ob.); and single **Bar-tailed Godwits** Aug. 20 at Ocean Shores (†M. Carmody, †J. Skirletz) and Sept. 17–19 at Dungeness, Wash. (†ESH *et al.*, SS). Oregon observers saw three **Curlew Sandpipers**. One first seen July 27 remained at Bandon until Aug. 2 (OSc, ph.). A molting adult was at Tillamook Aug. 17–18 (AC, MH, ph., m.ob.) and a juvenile was there Aug. 20–24 (OSc, ph., JJ, ph., m.ob.). One to four juv. Wilson's Phalaropes were at Iona I., Aug. 4–14 (RC, m.ob.) with singles at Surrey, B.C., Aug. 8 (RC *et al.*) and at Florence, Ore., Aug. 14 (SH, MH)

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS—High counts of jaegers included 83 Pomarines Oct. 6 off Grays Harbor (TW) and five Long-taileds Sept. 5 off Reedsport, Umpqua, Ore. (DI). A total of just 21 Long-taileds was tallied on all pelagic trips reporting, somewhat below par. Five S. Polar Skuas Aug. 25 off Grays Harbor was the high count, but only nine were noted on 8 Washington trips. Three off Tillamook Bay Sept. 14 (JJ, ph., *vide* HN) provided the only Oregon sightings. Franklin's Gull numbers were “the lowest in many years” around Vancouver, B.C., and the six (including one adult) Oct. 20 at Everett, Wash., was the largest concentration (BS). Depending on how you count them, there was either one ad. Little Gull in the Region Aug. 25–Nov. 17 or a dozen. Single birds were noted on various dates about Victoria Aug. 25–Nov. 17 (*vide* VG), at Iona I., B.C., Sept. 9 and Nov. 9 (*vide* DK), and at Everett, Wash., Sept. 20–Oct. 20. The bird had at least 3 days between any 2 separated sightings, so we favor the minimalist hypothesis. In the wake of last year's **Iceland Gull** invasion we have received reports of at least three adults and one immature in the Vancouver, B.C., area, of another adult and immature on V.I., and even of a suspected Iceland x Thayer's hybrid! Of the descriptions studied, the three adults seen at Iona I. and Vancouver Nov. 4–19 (†BK, †WW, DP, ph.) matched the description of *kumlieni*. However, identification rests wholly on the amount and distribution of black, gray, and white in the wing tips, a feature that appears to vary substantially among individuals. Glaucous Gulls were few. The first report was of one Oct. 13 at Clallam Bay, Wash. (ESH *et al.*). Others were in Masset, Q.C.I., Nov. 12 (MHe, PH, SJ), about Victoria Nov. 9+ (m.ob., *vide* VG), at Delta, B.C., Nov. 24 (BK, JH), and at Eugene, Ore., Nov. 9 & 14 (J. Carlson, T. Mickel, *vide* SH). All were immatures.

Something about the seas off Bamfield attracts Sabine's Gulls. As usual MS had by far the highest totals with 2100 Aug. 28. This declined to 325 by Sept. 5. By comparison, the best count elsewhere was of 43 off Grays Harbor Aug. 25 (TW). The latest were two off Grays Harbor and three off Tillamook Bay Sept. 15. There were 800 Caspian Terns Aug. 4 at Yaquina Bay, Ore. (D. Lustoff, *vide* HN), with 120 still at the S.J.C.R., Aug. 30 (HN). Three there Sept. 25 were the last reported (HN). Common Terns were at 10–50% of 1984 numbers at most locations reporting. The high count was of 355 at Victoria Aug. 13 (RS, M & VG). Late stragglers were singles Nov. 4 at Florence, Ore. (SH, DF, VT) and Nov. 9 at Seattle (D. Hutchinson, D. Norman), and two Nov. 8 at Victoria (*vide* VG). TW's assessment of the Arctic Tern situation was “awful, terrible!” He had two off Grays Harbor Aug. 30 and none on his 6 other trips. Ten off Grays Harbor Sept. 15 (ESH *et al.*) was the high count. One at Florence Nov. 4 was exceptionally late (SH, DF, VT). The only Forster's Terns noted were four at Sauvie I., Sept. 14 (RS, *vide* HN) and one at Florence Sept. 15 (SH, MH, AC). Four Black Terns also drifted W with singles noted Sept. 2 at White City,

Jackson, Ore (*vide* MM), Sept 9 at Victoria (*M Edgell), Sept 14 at Ocean Shores (ESH *et al.*), and Oct. 23 at Nehalem, Tillamook, Ore. (HN).

A **Thick-billed Murre** was reported Aug. 29 w. of Pachena Pt., V.I. (†MF *et al.*). The species nests at the n. tip of V.I. (*vide* DK) but is very rarely seen southward. Oregon pelagic trippers got close looks at a pair of **Xantus' Murrelets** Aug. 31 off Reedsport, *Umpqua* (†DI, SH, DF, m.ob.) and another was photographed off Tillamook Bay Sept. 14 (JJ). All three were of the n. race *scrippsi*. Last, but certainly not least, a **Kittlitz's Murrelet** in basic plumage appeared in Victoria harbor Nov. 24–26 (RS, TZ, ph., m.ob.). This furnished the 2nd record s. of Alaska. The first was of one Jan. 2, 1974 at Friday Harbor, San Juan I., Wash. (Roberson, *Rare Birds of the West Coast*). Resident alcids generally remained below pre-El Niño levels. Cassin's Auklet and Tufted Puffin numbers were judged "not good" and "low!" respectively by TW. However, Oregon pelagic boats reported 400 Cassin's Sept. 8 off Brookings and "good numbers" off Tillamook Sept. 14 (JJ *et al.*, *vide* HN). As usual, Victoria reported the only large numbers of Ancient Murrelets, 3000 Nov. 2 off Victoria and 1500 there Nov. 16 (RW, KT, *vide* VG). A Tufted Puffin off Protection I., Sept. 18 (ESH *et al.*) was the last noted.

DOVES THROUGH CHICKADEES — A Mourning Dove that spent most of September at Skidegate, Q.C.I. (M. Morris, *vide* SJ), was unusual there. A juv. Flammulated Owl taken in for rehabilitation near Ashland, Ore. (*vide* MM), provided one of very few Regional records of this east-slope species. Snowy Owl sightings suggested an echo flight on the heels of last year's invasion. The first report came from Victoria of one Nov. 5 (R. Crowther, *vide* VG) and of a 2nd Nov. 11 (J & RS, *vide* VG). November 11 brought an immature to Delta, B.C. (R. Phillips), then an adult Nov. 30 (LH). By the end of November there were three each on the Lummi, Samish, and Skagit flats in n.w. Washington (*vide* TW) and two at Ocean Shores (B. Harrington-Tweit, G. Walter), with one s. to the S.J.C.R. (L. Craig *et al.*, *vide* HN). A Burrowing Owl drifted w. of the Cascades to turn up on the beach at Florence, Ore., Oct. 13 (DF), as did the Long-eared Owl found at Sea I., B.C., Sept. 12 (KE). Seven Barred Owls were reported in s. British Columbia and n.w. Washington. Migrant Short-eared Owls returned to southern V.I. by Sept. 19 (R. Baird, *vide* VG), to Arlington, Wash., by Sept. 29 (A. Schultz, J. Leatherman), and to Vancouver, B.C., by Oct. 14 (BK). Two sighted well offshore out of Grays Harbor Oct. 6 (TW) were far from the nearest mouse.

Our few Com. Nighthawks had departed by Sept. 17, date of the last reports from the San Juan Is. and Seattle in Washington and from the Rogue valley of s. Oregon (MM). A **Common Poorwill** Sept. 20 at Mowich Park high in the s. Cascades of Oregon provided one of few w. side records (DF). Victoria area birders saw the last Black Swifts Sept. 22 (L. Roberts, *vide* VG) and the last Vaux's Swifts Oct. 13 (KT, CH, *vide* VG). The last *Selasphorus* hummingbird lingered until Nov. 18 at Harbor on the s. extremity of the Oregon coast (*vide* RE). Five Lewis' Woodpeckers at Gold L., Lane, near the crest of the Oregon Cascades may indicate a high country migratory path (AP, *vide* SH). Elsewhere singles strayed to s.w. British Columbia at Sea I., Sept. 11–12 (KE) and at Vancouver Nov. 14 (BK). Another was at Philomath, Benton, Ore., Nov. 24 (DE, *vide* EE). The Red-naped Sapsucker, another migratory woodpecker nesting e. of the Cascade crest, turned up Sept. 28 on San Juan I., Wash. (ML), for a first county record, and Oct. 1 at Langford on V.I. (G. Briggs, *vide* VG).

Flycatcher departures were as follows: Olive-sided, Sept. 15 near Portland, Ore. (B. O'Brien); W. Wood-Pewee, Sept. 25, Richmond, B.C. (PSp); Willow, Sept. 27, Skagit flats, Wash. (SA, MGu); Hammond's, Sept. 26, Seattle, Wash. (SA, MGu); and Western, Sept. 20, Ocean Shores, Wash. (SA, MGu). A **Least Flycatcher** Sept. 1 at Cape Blanco, Curry, Ore. (†SH, MH), provided a first fall record for the Region. Strays from e. of the Cascades included six Say's Phoebes between s.w. British Co-

lumbia and s.w. Oregon, with one late straggler Nov. 14–26 near Corvallis, Ore. (DE, *vide* EE). Also straying W. were an Ash-throated Flycatcher Aug. 17 at Cape Blanco (JR, CO, *vide* RE), and three W. Kingbirds between Sept. 14 and Oct. 18 in coastal Washington and Oregon. Three Tropical Kingbirds appeared Oct. 22–30 at Tofino and Ucluelet on V.I.'s west coast for our annual late fall visitation. A good count of Eur. Skylarks in C. Saanich, V.I., Nov. 30 totalled 108 (A. MacLeod, D. Stirling, *vide* VG).

The single-brooding swallows departed by mid-September with the exception of two late Tree Swallows at Richmond, B.C., Oct. 27 (H & JM) and a late Cliff at Kent, Wash., also Oct. 27 (ESH, BM). That left flocks of Violet-green and Barn swallows, such as the 300+ over Sauvie I., Sept. 17 (DF). A substantial passage involving 30–40 individuals of the normally-scarce Bank Swallow was noted at Victoria and Vancouver Aug. 23–Oct. 3 (*vide* VG, DK). One to two were noted as well at Kent, Wash., Aug. 17–Sept. 15 (BM, m.ob.). A **Blue Jay** Nov. 15–22 at Gibsons, 35 km n.w. of Vancouver, B.C., furnished our only report. Ten Boreal Chickadees on Mt. Baker's Ptarmigan Ridge in early September were at that species' s.w. limit (DG).

BLUEBIRDS THROUGH WARBLERS — Western Bluebirds were noted only in the Rogue valley, with 50 Oct. 8 the high count (A. Briggs, *vide* MM), and on southern V.I., where the high count of 18 Oct. 22 (A. Barber, *vide* VG) was also the latest report. Single Mountain Bluebirds turned up on San Juan I., Wash., Nov. 3 (F. Sharpe), and at W. Vancouver, Nov. 6 (L. Taylor). The last Swainson's Thrushes were seen at Seattle, Sept. 26 (SA, MGu), on V.I., Sept. 29 (J. Tatum, *vide* VG), and near Eugene, Ore., Oct. 2 (SH). A Gray Catbird Aug. 15 near Emigrant L., Jackson, Ore. (R. Storey, *vide* MM), was well to the s.w. of known nesting areas in e. Oregon. The only N Mockingbird reports came from the far s. of Oregon. Singles were at Harbor Oct. 26 and at the Pistol R. mouth Oct. 27 (DI, SH), and Oct. 27+ at Central Point, Jackson (*vide* MM). A Sage Thrasher was at Tillamook Bay Oct. 23 (HN).

An imm. **Yellow Wagtail** was at Burnaby Lake, B.C., Oct. 6 (†BK, †DJ) for the first Regional record. The day before, MF had reported an imm. **Red-throated Pipit** (†) at the same location. The pipit furnished a first provincial and 2nd Regional record. Four Bohemian Waxwings Aug. 19 at Rainy Pass, Skagit, Wash. (TW), and flocks of six Aug. 15 and Sept. 20 in the mountains just n. of Vancouver, B.C. (JJ), suggested a S extension of their normal Canadian nesting range. Sightings Oct. 1 at Portland, Ore. (S. Jones, *vide* HN), Oct. 13 n.e. of Mt. Rainier (P. Iacobazzi, D. Lester), and in the lowlands at Edmunds, Wash., Nov. 30 (D. McCabe), may have foretold a good winter's movement. Two flocks of Cedar Waxwings, five Sept. 8 and eight Nov. 11, at Queen Charlotte City, Q.C.I., may have furnished the first records for the Q.C.I. Northern Shrikes returned a few days early this fall, with single immatures noted at Surrey, B.C., Sept. 24 (JW, J. Evans) and at Tillamook, Ore., Sept. 27 (JG, *vide* HN).

A Solitary Vireo Oct. 27 at Lone Ranch Beach, Curry, Ore. (DI), was nearly a month later than its nearest rival. Warbling Vireos were last seen Oct. 5 at Vancouver, B.C. (BK). The Red-eyed Vireo slipped away unnoticed after Aug. 28, when one was at Colwood, V.I. (JGa, *vide* VG). Eleven Nashville Warblers were reported Sept. 4–24 in s.w. British Columbia and n.w. Washington. Warbler departures may be briefly summarized as follows: Yellow, Oct. 5; Black-throated Gray, Oct. 12, with one Nov. 11 at Eugene, Ore. (AP, *vide* SH); Hermit, Sept. 12, MacGillivray's, Sept. 18, with one Oct. 19 at Toketee Ranger Station, c. Douglas, Ore. (DF); Com. Yellowthroat, Oct. 12; and Wilson's, Oct. 10. Just five Palm Warblers were reported, four on the Oregon coast Sept. 28–Nov. 18, and one at Masset Nov. 12 (†SJ) for the first Q.C.I. record. Seven N. Waterthrushes Aug. 13–Sept. 13 in s. British Columbia was unprecedented. The one at Colwood, V.I., Aug. 21–22 (JGa, M & VG, RS) was the 3rd for the Victoria reporting area, while the six about Van-

count more than doubled the number of historic sightings there (fide DK; specimen from Port Coquitlam to UBC Museum). A fine ♂ **Hooded Warbler** Aug. 29–Sept. 28 at Harbor, Curry (†RE, †AB, m.ob.), provided Oregon's 4th record.

TOWHEES THROUGH CROSSBILLS — Reports of Green-tailed Towhees came from the Cascades of Lane (MR), Douglas (DF), and Jackson, Ore., with several w. to near Mt. Ashland, Jackson, Sept. 14 (MM) also the latest reported. Nine Am. Tree Sparrows were reported, a good number. One Oct. 29+ at Saanich, V.I. (TZ, ph., VG, m.ob.), was the first, followed by four in the Vancouver, B.C., area Nov. 13+ (fide DK), three Nov. 20 at Masset, Q.C.I. (†MHe, PH), and one n. of Seattle, Wash., Nov. 30 (DB). Two Clay-colored Sparrows turned up in late October on the s. Oregon coast. One was found at Harbor Oct. 25 (†SH, †DI, DF) and the 2nd 2 days later at Bandon (†AB, †DI, †RE, †SH, †MR). These were the 4th and 5th state records. One to two Vesper Sparrows at Seattle Sept. 5–13 were unusual there (K. Aanerud, m.ob.). A few stray Lark Sparrows were reported, as usual. One Aug. 30 at Vancouver, B.C., was the 2nd ever for that area (†BK, DJ, fide DK); and the latest report, of one Oct. 7 at the Elk R. mouth, Curry, Ore., was a county first (JR, CO, fide RE). An imm. **Black-throated Sparrow** Sept. 25–28 at Harbor, Ore. (†RE, †AB, m.ob.) was thought to provide the first fall record on the coast n. of c. California. Two Swamp Sparrows were noted, one on Sauvie I., Ore., Nov. 11 (JJ, fide HN), and the other at Pt. McNeill, V.I., Nov. 18 (†SJ).

The summering **Chestnut-collared Longspur** remained at the S.J.C.R. through Sept. 29 (fide HN). Early Snow Buntings were reported at Richmond, B.C., Oct. 7 (KE) and at Everett, Wash., Oct. 12 (D. McNeeley), the earliest ever for Washington. Flocks of 30–50 were seen near Victoria, Bellingham, and Ocean Shores during November, with five s. to Yaquina Bay, Ore., Nov. 10 (T. Schonerdynne, fide HN). Six Yellow-headed Blackbirds Aug. 23–Sept. 30 were typical. One Nov. 23 at Edmonds, Wash. (D. McCabe), was late. Four Rusty Blackbirds

were reported in s. British Columbia Oct. 11+, with a female photographed Nov. 23 at Saanich, V.I. (TZ, KT, fide VG). There are very few records in this Region s. of Canada. A "Bullock's" N. Oriole Nov. 30 at Sutton Beach, Lane, Ore. (B. Sharp, fide HN), was nearly 3 months late in leaving. A noteworthy influx of Com. Redpolls to the Vancouver, B.C., area began Nov. 17 (T. Freebairn) with 40 at Richmond by Nov. 24 (H & JM).

The "dicky bird" event of the fall was the White-winged Crossbill incursion. This began in mid-July with reports in the N. Cascades. By Aug. 16, White-winged were reported in the c. Oregon Cascades in Lane and Douglas, with numbers to 40 there throughout September (fide HN, SH). Meanwhile, they were reported in the hundreds at Manning P.P., B.C., and on Mt. Baker and at Rainy Pass in Washington. They spread w. to Strathcona P.P. in the high mountains of central V.I. and to Hurricane Ridge in the Olympic Mts. of Washington. Some were noted at sea level near Seattle Aug. 15 (DB) and in Vancouver, B.C., Aug. 26–31 (BK). None, however, was noted in the Q.C.I. Similar late summer movements were recorded in 1974 and 1978.

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MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

Kurt F. Campbell, Alan D. Barron,
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For most of the Region the season began colder than usual, became milder than usual, and ended very stormy, with severe flooding in many coastal areas during February. Another major oil spill devastated already-depleted alcid populations (see S.A.). Few irruptives appeared, but see Northern Shrike, and the Region's first-ever "chasable" Common Redpolls. As always contributors and sub-regional editors are to be thanked for the thousands of important records received this season. Only a small fraction of Christmas Bird Count results were seen by us, however, greatly weakening this report, as in past winters.

The status and distribution of Monterey County birds has now been thoroughly summarized in "Monterey Birds" (1985, Monterey Pen. Audubon Society, P.O. Box 52022, Pacific Grove, CA 93950, \$17 postpaid).

ABBREVIATIONS — C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.V. = Central Valley; O.S.P. = Open Space Preserve; S.F. = San Francisco; W.M.A. = Wildlife Management Area; ph. = photo on file with the Regional Editors. *Italicized names refer to counties.*

All of the many sightings from Palomar and S. E. Farallon I. (hereafter F.I.) should be credited to Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (hereafter P.R.B.O.). References to the Gull refer to Golden Gate



Audubon Society's publication, whose observations column is currently written by Helen Green.

LOONS THROUGH PELICANS — Eight loons were reported inland, including a Pacific at Redding Dec. 28 (SAL, MDH). A Yellow-billed Loon was $\frac{3}{4}$ mi s.w. of Moss Landing Dec. 30 (†ph.SFB, †AB, m.ob.). Pied-billed Grebes nested successfully in December at Monterey, as proven by the striped fledglings following adults there Dec. 26–27 (BW, DR). A Red-necked Grebe at L. Shastina Dec. 5 (RE) was the 2nd of 1985 for Siskiyou. A peak of only 11 Eared Grebes appeared at F.I., where up to 400 normally winter. Western Grebes suffered substantial mortality along the coast during the stormy, oily February (see below). The 1000+ Westerns wintering on L. San Antonio, Monterey (DR, BW), must have fared better. Clark's Grebes are now being reported in small numbers almost everywhere, including the n. and s. coasts where they are still considered scarce.

S.A.

We are learning more about the tendency of Laysan Albatrosses to appear in S.F. Bay. One off Cypress Pt., Monterey, Dec. 29 (LSc, *fide* DLS) was the only report before a wave appeared Feb. 2–4, apparently due to a storm. At Cordell Bank, Marin, one was found Feb. 2 (StW, *fide* Gull) but five were there the next day (RoM, *fide* Gull). A flightless bird one mi off Monterey Feb. 4 was thought perhaps oiled from the recent spill (RT, *fide* DLS). However, the same day three Laysans arrived in Oakland by freighter. Reportedly a total of 10 landed on the ship Feb. 1 during a storm off Hawaii. Three refused to leave the ship, and were fed by the crew. In Oakland, they were rehabilitated at the Rotary Natural Science Center, where two courted "constantly". On Feb. 14 they were sent back to Hawaii by freighter (*fide* R. Kaufman & Oakland Tribune). Two Laysans were 10–14 mi s.w. of Davenport, Santa Cruz, Feb. 23 (DLS, RS, AB).

Northern Fulmars were found in small numbers the full length of the coast, with a peak of 47 on the Monterey Bay pelagic C.B.C., Dec. 30 (DLS, SFB). The Monterey Bay C.B.C. also recorded the only Flesh-footed Shearwater and the peak counts of Pink-footed (four), Sooty (27), and Short-tailed shearwaters (26), along with 19 Black-vented Shearwaters (DLS, SFB). A few Black-vented were seen on most Monterey boat trips, with 48 Dec. 1 and 47 Feb. 16 the maxima (DLS, m.ob.). A Buller's Shearwater seen from Pt. St. George, Del Norte, Jan. 14 (ADB) was an exceptional winter bird. The winter's only storm-petrel report was of a Leach's being blown past Crescent City Harbor Jan. 16 (JK).

The banded Am. White Pelican was seen at the Mad R. mouth through Dec. 4 (*fide* JSt). Only six or seven Brown Pelicans remained into late December, and one through January (at Monterey). A small return flight was detected Feb. 11–19 at F.I. (two), Monterey (10—DLS), Pescadero (six—PJM), and Pt. St. George (one—JK et al.).

HERONS THROUGH DUCKS — Sixty Cattle Egrets were in a roost at Gray Lodge W.M.A., Dec. 7 (BED) but the species was otherwise found in very low numbers in the Sacramento Valley and along the coast; their status in the San Joaquin Valley was unreported. The last of the fall's coastal White-faced Ibises were singles (the same?) in San Mateo at Pescadero Marsh Dec. 14 and Half Moon Bay Dec. 28 (both *fide* Gull). At Colusa N.W.R., a count of 225 ibises Dec. 17 (GM) was nearly double any previous Sacramento Valley total we are aware of.

It was a good year in general for swans and geese in the Region with numbers along the coast well above average. In the C.V., 14,303 Tundra Swans on the Sacramento C.B.C., Dec. 29 (*fide* TM) was an impressive total. Four ad. Trumpeter Swans in the Smith River/Fort Dick area, Del Norte, Dec. 2–

Mar 14 (†RAE, †m ob.) were especially welcome, as the last "chasable" individual in California was in Los Angeles over 10 years ago. More like other recent records were two ad Trumpeters seen one day only at King I., San Joaquin, Feb 1 (†DY).

About 100 Greater White-fronted Geese but only seven Snow Geese were reported from the coast. Ross' Geese continued their strong coastal showing from the fall with six-plus in Del Norte, one to four in Humboldt, five in Marin, and 10 in Monterey.

S.A.

Ten years ago there was only one known form of "Blue Goose". Today, some confusion still exists concerning blue-phase Snow Geese and Ross' Geese and intermediates between the two. The recent field guides have completely ignored the latter form despite the fact that intermediates were found to outnumber pure blue-phase Ross' Geese by nearly two to one in California (McLandress & McLandress. 1979. Blue-phase Ross' Geese and other blue-phase geese in western North America. Auk 96:544–550). Reports this winter from the C.V. included 10+ blue Snows (Sacramento N.W.R., Gray Lodge W.M.A., Merced N.W.R.), two-plus blue Ross' (Merced N.W.R.), and one intermediate (Gray Lodge W.M.A., Nov. 24, †BED) but details provided on two of the Ross' clearly indicate they were actually intermediates. Observers are urged to provide details on any blue-phase geese believed to be Ross' or intermediate.

Four Eur. Green-winged Teal appeared coastally, at San Leandro Bay, Dec. 13–Feb. 22 (JM, SFB, BB et al.), Alameda Feb. 8 (*fide* Gull), Palo Alto, Dec. 22 (*fide* Gull), and Elkhorn Slough Jan. 11 (DR, BT) for the 3rd Monterey record. High counts of Eur. Wigeon in S.F. Bay were three males and one to two females on San Leandro Bay Dec. 13 (SFB, JM, BB et al.) and three at Charleston Slough, Santa Clara Dec. 8 (LT, AR), while a male near Terminous Jan. 15+ (DY et al.) was, surprisingly, only the 2nd for San Joaquin.

Most interesting was a ♂ Canvasback x Ring-necked Duck at Abbott's Lagoon, Marin, Jan. 13–23 (RS). Male Tufted Ducks near Glenburn, Shasta, Jan. 18 (†RE, MR, BY, CY) and on O'Neill Forebay, Merced, Feb. 17 (†J. Kiernan, *fide* JM) provided first county records. Female Tufteds included one at Arcata Marsh, Humboldt, Nov. 22–Feb. 1 (MH et al.) and one at the S.F. Zoo Jan. 25–Feb. 13 and Golden Gate Park Feb. 24–Mar. 4 (†JM, †LE et al.) apparently being the same bird. Greater Scaup numbers were exceptional at many inland localities with 150 at O'Neill Forebay Feb. 23 (MJL) being the high count.

A King Eider made a brief appearance at Moss Landing Jan 12–13 (ph. FRC, *fide* JM). A count of 22 Harlequin Ducks at Pt. Saint George Dec. 15–Mar. 3 (JML, ADB et al.) was apparently the state's highest ever. Common Goldeneyes had very high n. coast counts with 28 at the Smith R. Estuary, Del Norte, Dec. 22 (DnS) and 23 there Jan. 25 (RAE). Barrow's Goldeneyes occurred Regionally in record numbers with highs of 60–70 at Belvedere Lagoon, Marin, Jan. 18 (DAH) and 60 at the L. Merritt outflow, Alameda, Feb. 15 (JM).

HAWKS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Immature Red-shouldered Hawks at Chester Dec. 28 (DAA) and Modoc N.W.R., Jan. 22–25 (†JML, SAL, MDH) were noteworthy sightings. An imm. Broad-winged Hawk wintered at Chualar Jan 17–Feb. 24 (†KVV et al.). Was a dark-phase ad. Swainson's Hawk near Sacramento Feb. 19 (†BED) wintering or an early migrant? Five "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawks were found in the interior Oct. 20–Jan. 18 and there were 2 records from the coast: dark adults near Smith River (first for Del Norte) Nov. 6–Feb. 24 (†RAE, †JML et al.) and at Nicasio Res., Jan. 11–Feb. 19 (†DAH, RS et al.). Two Humboldt reports lacked details. Rough-legged Hawks were found in record numbers in the Sacramento Valley

and n e California (BED, SAL, JLo, BY) but were unimpressive along the coast.

A **Yellow Rail** was convincingly described from San Leandro Bay Dec. 12 (†DRi et al.). Although this species formerly nested in e. California and wintered on the coast, this was the first Regional record since 1970. Wandering individual Sandhill Cranes reached the S.F. Bay area at Crystal Springs Res., Dec. 28 for San Mateo's 2nd record (fide PJM), Livermore Valley Dec. 24 (ALE) and over Tilden Regional Park Dec. 22 (fide Gull). Cranes are "very unusual w. of the Sacramento R." in the n. Sacramento Valley so 65 at Sacramento N.W.R., Feb. 27 were probably migrating (fide BED).

Lesser Golden-Plovers (all *fulva*) wintered on the coast in Del Norte, Humboldt, Marin, and San Francisco. In the C.V., one again wintered at the Lodi sewage ponds (DY, m.ob.) and two were with 600+ Black-bellied Plovers at the Modesto sewage ponds Feb. 9–23 (ECa). Eight Snowy Plovers in the Tulare L. basin Dec. 22 (RHG) represented the 3rd inland winter record for the Region, all from the San Joaquin Valley. Mountain Plovers were found on the coast at Pacifica Dec. 1–7 (PJM et al.), for San Mateo's 2nd record, and Pt. Reyes Dec. 21–Jan. 1 (RS et al.). Another at the Jepson Prairie Preserve, Solano, Dec. 19 (JLo) was in the C.V. but away from traditional sites. Counts of 13 Lesser Yellowlegs in Eureka Dec. 18, 20 in the Loleta Bottoms Jan. 11, and two in the Arcata Bottoms Jan. 18–20 (all fide GSL) were exceptional numbers for Humboldt.

A Ruddy Turnstone at the Hollister sewage ponds Jan. 20 (SAL, MDH) was only about 20 mi from the coast but in an area generally considered the interior of the Region. There are no previous winter records from such an area. Apparently Sanderlings regularly frequent the Hollister ponds in winter; 35 were there Jan. 20 (SAL, MDH). Sanderlings also regularly winter at the Salinas sewage ponds (40 there Dec. 26—DR) where the Salinas R. presumably provides a corridor of suitable habitat from the coast. No such claim, however, can be made for the Pajaro and San Benito rivers in the case of the Hollister ponds. Farther inland there was only one previous Sanderling winter record, from the San Joaquin Valley, but this year one was in the Tulare L. basin Dec. 22 (RHG) and two were at the Modesto sewage ponds Jan. 26–Feb. 23 (†ECa). Western Sandpipers are generally rare and local in the interior so 100–300 at L. Washington, Yolo, Dec. 29–Jan. 1 (fide TM) were significant. A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper on S.F. Bay at Alviso Nov. 17–Jan. 5 (PPe, ph. NJ, †RAE, †JM et al.) furnished the Region's first "winter" record. However, the bird was still mostly in juv. plumage and could not be found on later visits, so it may actually have been only a lingering migrant.

A Ruff was again found in Merced, a female at Merced N.W.R., Dec. 9–27 before overflowing made the area unsuitable (RJB). A Wilson's Phalarope n. of Terminus Jan. 15–Feb. 19 (DY) was the 6th to be found in the period December–February, all in the last 6 years.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Pomarine Jaeger counts of 18 Dec. 30 and 16 Feb. 22 off Monterey (DLS, m.ob.) were large counts for winter. An ad. Parasitic Jaeger at Charleston Slough, Santa Clara, Dec. 9–Jan. 18 chased birds ranging from Forster's Terns to Glaucous-winged Gulls (MWS, WGB, m.ob.). A 2nd ad. Little Gull joined the one present since fall at Stockton sewage ponds Jan. 10+ (JSL). Although two or three have occurred together during recent springs, this was the first multiple observation in winter. Both Little Gulls and the Com. Black-headed Gull remained there through the period (†JML, †JML, m.ob.). At least 750 Heermann's Gulls off Monterey Dec. 30 (SFB, DLS) was a remarkable number for winter. Otherwise the highest number was 70 off Monterey Feb. 22 (DLS), and only 14 individuals were reported from 5 sites farther north. Mew Gulls were found at 8 C.V. sites, in numbers up to 10. The only Thayer's Gull reports farther inland than Sacramento were of singles at Redding Dec. 28 (SAL, MDH) and at Merced N.W.R., Feb. 10 (RJB). The largest concentration reported was of 65 at Sausalito Jan. 17 (DAH); contributors should monitor

this species closely and report their counts. Five Glaucous-winged Gulls were noted in Sacramento (TM, EH et al.). Farther inland were individuals at Chico Landfill Dec. 29–Jan. 5 (BED, PBS, JS), Whiskeytown L., Dec. 28 (SAL, MDH), and Redding Dec. 31 (BY). Single Glaucous Gulls occurred at F.I., along the coast in Humboldt, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Monterey (two), by S.F. Bay in Santa Clara (one or two), and inland to Yolo (two) and Sacramento. Black-legged Kittiwakes were few except off Del Norte, where up to 80 were found off the Klamath R. mouth (Jan. 29—GSL).

A startling number of large terns appeared this winter. Up to two Caspians inhabited Moss Landing Dec. 11–Jan. 18 (†DGe, PJM) and one was at Asilomar Jan. 29 (DF, CG). December 29 found single Caspians at Sunnyvale sewage ponds (DC et al.) and at Yolo Bypass (CS, ES, TH). Up to five Caspians lingered around Humboldt Bay into mid-December, and at least one stayed to Feb. 15 (fide JSt, GSL). One Caspian was as far n. as Crescent City Harbor Dec. 25 (GSL, LPL), but eclipsing all Caspian Terns was an **Elegant Tern** there Jan. 9 (†ADB, GSL, JK). The latter was the first for Del Norte later than October.

A scrippsii Xantus' Murrelet off Monterey Dec. 30 was seasonally rare (SFB, AB, DLS), but another inside Crescent City Harbor, Jan. 23 (ph. JK, †ADB) was more so, providing the 4th Del Norte record and first winter record n. of Cordell Bank

S.A.

After suffering repeated heavy population losses due to gill netting, El Niño, the "Puerto Rican" oil spill, etc., Common Murres and Rhinoceros Auklets were dealt a truly devastating blow by the February oil spill from the "Apex Houston". Murre numbers had been particularly tiny in the Monterey Bay area for several years, but by Dec. 29–30, boat trips censused aggregate totals of at least 4300 Com. Murres and 9500 Rhinoceros Auklets, probably the highest numbers in about 10 years (DLS, BLAb, SFB, m.ob.). These species remained concentrated in this area through January, when there were also 3000–5500 Red Phalaropes present (DLS, m.ob.). These concentrations became a death trap when the "Apex Houston" leaked oil along our entire coast s. from S.F., beginning Feb. 1. Immediately and for over a month large numbers of oiled seabirds were found dead and alive, both at sea and on beaches. Numbers of these species seen offshore plummeted 80–98% (DLS, m.ob.). Although the "Apex Houston" spilled one-quarter as much oil as the "Puerto Rican" had in 1984, an estimated 5 times as many birds were processed at cleaning centers because the oil spilled into such dense concentrations of birds (P.R.B.O.). The majority of birds treated were Com. Murres, but hundreds of Rhinoceros Auklets were also dead on many beaches (BW, m.ob.). Published estimates of seabird mortality ranged up to 30,000. However, DLS noted that these estimates were based solely on the birds taken to cleaning centers. If the numbers already dead on the beaches are added to the calculations, the true losses may have been much greater! Fortunately only small numbers of Cassin's Auklets were wintering locally before the spill; hopefully they were not hit too hard farther south. Common Murre and Rhinoceros Auklet populations may show the effects of this disaster for years to come.

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Short-eared Owl reports were again few and of very small numbers this winter. CSt commented on "not one . . . seen at (Tule L. or Lower Klamath) refuges" in our Great Basin district, where they used to be most numerous. As has been the rule in recent years, Com. Poorwills appeared to winter at Palomarin, with two seen both Feb. 20 & 26. Seven Vaux's Swifts were seen over Santa Cruz Feb. 21 (DSu); the species is now being recorded every winter in the Region. It is easy to suspect a connection with their use of man-made habitats. Certainly a group of

White-throated Swifts were grateful for the shelter of the highway drainage holes from which they were heard twittering Dec. 7 in a storm in Sacramento (TM, KS).

A ♂ hummingbird studied in Salinas November to February (†BG) was a possible Anna's x Costa's hybrid. Observers should be cautious in reporting this hybrid, however, as several past reports in the Region apparently pertain to pure imm. ♂ Costa's (including one published, AB 31:219, as the Region's first such hybrid, and a bird not published this fall from Santa Clara). Fall imm. males of both *Calypte* hummers (Anna's and Costa's) can give unformed "practice singing" from perches, giving rise to pure Costa's being called hybrids. A ♂ hummingbird present at Shasta Sept. 2–Jan. 26 was reported as Black-chinned, but photos and written details strongly indicate Costa's—certainly more likely, as Costa's is a rare but annual winterer in the Region, while Black-chinned has not been acceptably recorded at this season. A ♂ Allen's Hummingbird in Salinas Jan. 18 (KVV) was 4 days earlier than the average first arrival date, 1973–1985, and "several" there the next day (BG) were noteworthy. Lewis' Woodpeckers were present in better numbers than usual, with impressive counts of 116 on the Mt. Hamilton C.B.C., Jan. 2 (*vide* DSc) and 87+ at Copco Res., Siskiyou, Feb. 26 (DAA). An ad. ♂ **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** returned to near Nicasio Jan. 5–Feb. 9 (JWh, RS, DDeS, †KLH *et al.*) where it spent last winter as an immature. This bird is only the Region's 9th Five Red-naped Sapsuckers were reported, to Feb. 23. Four were in the coastal district, while the earliest bird, present to at least Dec. 15, was an apparent first for Sutter, along N. Butte Rd (PBS *et al.*).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WRENS — An incredible four species of Empidonax flycatchers were discovered in the Region. A **Willow Flycatcher** at Watsonville Jan. 1–2 (†PJM) was our first for December to March (there are 2 such s. California records). A **Least Flycatcher**, studied on the Pt. Reyes C.B.C., Dec. 21 (†PP) was also the first ever identified at this season here. A **Dusky Flycatcher** provided our 2nd-ever record for the period, appearing at Carmel R. mouth Dec. 3–8 (DaS, †DR), while single W. Flycatchers were along Pebble Beach Dec. 27 (BB) and in Sebastopol Dec. 22 (LCB). An E. Phoebe along the San Joaquin R. in Fresno Mar. 1 (JLo, ZL) was notable inland, but most of the 8+ interior records are from the San Joaquin Valley area. A Say's Phoebe near Ft. Dick Dec. 22–Mar. 4 (RMu, RAE, GSL, RST *et al.*) gave Del Norte its first record of an overwintering bird. Exceptional in winter, Ash-throated Flycatchers were noted at Año Nuevo State Reserve Dec. 12 (†GJS) and returning for a 2nd winter to O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area, Merced, Dec. 19–20 (†CB, JSL, KFC). Two Cassin's Kingbirds were found in San Benito: at Paicines Feb. 8 (BSH, m ob.) and on New Idria Rd., Feb. 15 (JZa).

Tree Swallows n. of their expected range at this season were three near Smith R., Jan. 17 (RST). Migrants were in evidence in Butte (BED) and at Palomar by Feb. 4. At L. Kaweah, Tulare, 20+ Violet-green Swallows Jan. 5 were said to be first arrivals there (LLN). Closer to typical "first migrant" dates for most of the Region, but still a little early if migrants, were 80–100 over Piedra, Fresno, Feb. 5 (JLo). More impressive was the Region's first-ever winter **Bank Swallow**, Jan. 1 at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey (†PJM, BS). Illustrative of the discrepancy in arrival dates for Cliff Swallows between C.V. and coastal areas were our first birds this year. One was over Merced N.W.R., Feb. 5 (RJB), while 25 at Chualar Feb. 23 (RR) gave Monterey its earliest-ever arrival date by 5 days. A Barn Swallow investigated Stanford University's linear accelerator Dec. 26 (KK), while very early migrants were two Feb. 24 at Palomar (earliest ever there) and one Feb. 28 in Jameson Canyon, Napa (MFR). An Am. Crow at Palomar was said to be "exceptional—very rare in winter." Six House Wrens in the central coastal district was probably par; the species is regular in small numbers in s coastal and southern C.V. areas. In addition to three Winter Wrens on the C.V. floor (where rare), unexpected birds were at Pinnacles N.M., Jan. 10 and Salinas Jan. 18 (both KVV).

BLUEBIRDS THROUGH WARBLERS — In contrast to last winter's invasion of Mountain Bluebirds, very few were reported this season. Noteworthy were two each at Red Bluff Dec. 1 (KVV) and L. San Antonio, Monterey, Jan. 17 (RR). Quite unexpected was a Wrentit on L. Almanor Peninsula, Plumas, Dec. 29 (SAL), said to be a local first. Despite last fall's good show, only one coastal Sage Thrasher was uncovered, in Jameson Canyon Dec. 24 & 26 (MFR). Our 6th **Bendire's Thrasher** was a cooperative bird present n. of Lodi Dec. 21–Feb. 15 (TM, †JML, m.ob.). California Thrashers are generally very rare fall/winter wanderers to the C.V. floor, although they do breed at Caswell S.P., San Joaquin (*vide* DY). Thus 3 C.V. records this winter was an exceptional number: Feather R. near Oroville W.M.A., Dec. 28 (BED), Broderick Dec. 29 (KS, HCU), and Jelly's Ferry Rd., Tehama, Feb. 24–28 (BED).

No reports of Bohemian Waxwings reached us, and the few Cedar Waxwing reports were of low numbers. Northern Shrikes irrupted into the Sacramento Valley in better numbers than ever before, with at least 13 birds found there Dec. 4–Feb. 21. A coastward bird was an immature at Stafford L., Marin, Jan. 5–6 (PP, PH, RS *et al.*), and the southernmost report was of an immature in Panoche Valley Feb. 21–22 (BT, DaS, KVV, BG), the latter a San Benito first, *vide* KVV. The n. coast, which had most of last year's excellent numbers, reported "few" (RAE). Numbers may have been good in our Great Basin area, for although only one report came in, it was of six on the Fall River Mills C.B.C., Dec. 22 (BY, CY *et al.*). A late Solitary Vireo was at Inverness Dec. 3 (cassinii—RS), while a winterer was in Merced Dec. 12–Jan. 15 (race?—RJB). The Region's first clearly wintering **Warbling Vireo** was at Watsonville Community Hospital Jan. 1–19 (†PJM, JM, LCB, m.ob.). There are 2 previous one-day-only records from December.

Only four Tennessee Warblers were reported (all coastally), although more were likely found on C.B.C.s not reviewed by us. Twelve Nashville Warbler reports is well below average. Of eight Yellow Warblers reported for the period, an impressive four were at L. Merced, S.F., Dec. 30 (PJM). A very tardy Magnolia Warbler passed through Inverness Dec. 2 (RS). Of only 5 Black-throated Gray Warbler records, 3 were in the central C.V., one on the n. coast (Crescent City, Feb. 4—GSL), and one on the central coast (L. Merced, Dec. 30—PJM). Unexpected away from the regular wintering range on the coast, a Townsend's Warbler was at Cedar Ridge, Nevada, Dec. 28 and Mar 22–24 (RAE). The **Blackburnian Warbler** studied at the Carmel R. mouth late last fall remained to Dec. 6 (REM, DaS) but apparently not thereafter, providing the state's latest record. A **Prairie Warbler** vacationed at Neary's Lagoon in Santa Cruz Dec. 8–Feb. 15 (†DGe, †PJM, †JML, m.ob.), only the 3rd definitely wintering individual for the Region. After a poor fall, a mere six Palm Warblers reported for the period was the fewest in 7 years; one on Matadero Cr., Santa Clara, Dec. 11–18 (DSu) was noteworthy away from the immediate coast. An Am. Redstart along the Pajaro R., Monterey and Santa Cruz, Jan. 1 (BB) had few precedents for this season. Even less expected was an **Ovenbird** wintering on Woody L., Eureka, Dec. 18–23 (JSt, †RAE); this was the first Regional record between Nov. 11 and May 16. Northern Waterthrushes are clearly more prone to winter in the Region than the former species, as one near Fort Dick Dec. 22–Feb. 2 (RAE, ADB, GSL, JM *et al.*) gave us our 10th definite such record. A Com. Yellowthroat near Smith River Dec. 22 (ADB, NCI) was n. of the expected coastal range in winter. Three Wilson's Warblers reported were only half the average.

TANAGERS THROUGH SPARROWS — Two Summer Tanagers were discovered: an ad. male at Watsonville Jan. 2–19 (PJM, m.ob.) and a female at L. Merced, S.F., Dec. 30 (PJM). Of seven W. Tanagers reported, six were in the coastal district (to Jan. 2), and one in Chico Dec. 29 (JHS) was the 4th in 6 years for that C.B.C. There are very few Regional records for late winter for this species, due to some combination of mortality, movement, and observer bias.

Three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found this season: Foster City Dec. 1–21 (PJM—“2nd San Mateo record”), Smith River Dec. 8–9 (GSL, LPL, RAE, ADB et al.), and near Fort Dick Jan. 10–22 (RST, RAE, ADB, LCB et al.). The latter records were only the 3rd and 4th ever for Del Norte.

S.A.

Indigo Buntings are quite unexpected in winter (4 previous Regional winter records) so two were surprising: a male at Half Moon Bay Dec. 28 (†PJM) and a female/immature banded on F.I., Dec. 13. What then came as a shock was the appearance of a banded ♂ Indigo Bunting in Inverness (29 mi from F.I., “as the bunting flies”), Dec. 21 (RS); later close examination allowed the band to be read, proving it to be the F.I. bird (see spring report for last dates; RS plans to publish full details). This was apparently only the 2nd bird ever proven to return to the mainland from F.I., the first having been a House Sparrow banded Apr. 4, 1973 and recovered in S.F., Mar. 8, 1974. Observers are strongly encouraged to watch for bands on all vagrants (even to remarking on their absence when clearly not present) as this can be an invaluable aid in judging whether reports refer to more than one record.

Two Chipping Sparrows were at the n. locale of Dairyville, Tehama, Dec. 21 (SAL, MDH). A Clay-colored Sparrow Dec. 5 on F.I. was the latest ever there, and provided the 11th Regional December/January record (there are no records Jan. 23–Apr. 28). Single Lark Buntings were n. of Lodi Jan. 31–Feb. 2 (DY, ECa, m.ob.) and at Merced City Feb. 12–15 (ECa). At Palomar, Fox Sparrows were reported as “severely reduced compared to all previous years.” Interestingly, three of four Swamp Sparrow reports (very low total) were away from the immediate coast: Salinas R. near Salinas Dec. 19–26 (BG), Lewiston L., Trinity, Jan. 5 (adult, SAL, MDH), and Mapes Ranch near Modesto Mar. 1 (†ECa). No Swamp Sparrow reports were sent in from Marin, where several are normally found. Reports of White-throated Sparrows totalled only seven—exceptionally low. Both Golden-crowned and White-crowned sparrows were reported in “remarkably low numbers” by P.R.B.O., but no other mention was received for either species. Two Harris’ Sparrows were away from Great Basin areas: Bolinas Lagoon Dec. 24–Jan. 1 (RS, JP, DAH) and Carmel Dec. 27 (N. Frodsham). Six “Slate-colored” Juncos were reported, surely only a fraction of those found. Reports of seven to 11 “Pink-sided” Juncos were received without details. As stated earlier (AB 38:956), there are no documented records of this form for the Region, although it is probably a rare visitor. There is a great deal of misunderstanding concerning the distribution and identification of this form in our area, much of it due to bad field guide illustrations. Lapland Longspurs were found at another new locale when seven were at Bayfront P., Menlo Park, Dec. 18 (DSu), with six there as late as Feb. 23 (JMS). As noted in the fall report, 16 in Moss Landing Dec. 6 (REM, DR, BW et al.) was an unprecedented number for Monterey. Fifty Laplands at Glenburn Dec. 30 (SAL, MDH) were excellent for the edge of our Great Basin areas, while a Chestnut-collared Longspur there Dec. 30–Jan. 26 (SAL, MDH, BY, CY, BVdM) was a Shasta first. A Snow Bunting near L. Talawa, Del Norte, first seen Nov. 14 & 16 (C & WC, †ADB, †RAE), was refound there Dec. 3 (C & WC, fide RAE).

ICTERINES THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW — Rusty Blackbird sightings continued on Cloverdale Rd., San Mateo, with one each Dec. 6 (JSL) and Feb. 1 (S. Finnegan). A sighting of 100+ Brown-headed Cowbirds at L. Merced, S.F., Dec. 30 (PJM) would be exceptional anywhere in the Region at this season. Single Hooded Orioles were on San Franciscuito Cr., Santa Clara/San Mateo, Dec. 18 (DSu) and in Auburn Feb. 22 (BBa). Records of 10 N. Orioles included one definite “Baltimore” (Pacific Grove, Dec. 27–28, LCB, DR et al.), and two



Common Redpoll at Tule Lake N.W.R., Cal., Dec. 29, 1985. Drawing by Alan D. Barron.

interior “Bullock’s”: males at Los Banos Dec. 19 (KFC) and Dinuba Jan. 2 (RHG). This is probably only a fraction of the total seen in the Region this period, many on C.B.C.s.

Purple Finches were clearly in poor numbers coastally, but a small irruption into the C.V. was evident: two near Fair Oaks Dec. 7 (JML), three in Merced Dec. 19 to February (RJB), 12 on the Sacramento C.B.C., Dec. 29 (fide TM), and two in Modesto Jan. 19 (ECa). Last winter’s Cassin’s Finch irruption was not repeated. The only reports were of one ϕ -plumaged bird in Merced Dec. 19 (RJB) for a first Merced record, and two on Low Divide e. of Smith River Dec. 22 (GSL, LPL). Two reports of Red Crossbills were received (versus 52 last winter): one at Monte Bello O.S.P., Santa Clara, Dec. 18 (BRb, A. Kratter), and two at L. Merced Dec. 30 (PJM). The Region received its 4th record of **Common Redpolls** (2nd this century), when 18 were discovered at Tule Lake N.W.R., Dec. 29 (†ADB, NCI). Numbers appeared to decrease, with six to 10 on Jan. 11 the last there. On Jan. 20, 22 were discovered at Lower Klamath N.W.R. (DSi), only 5–6 mi away; varying numbers (up to “30–35”) were then seen here through Mar. 2. This is best assumed one (very cooperative!) flock. As with Cassin’s Finches and Red Crossbills, Pine Siskin numbers were apparently low or normal after last winter’s irruption. No reports of Evening Grosbeaks were received (versus 34 last winter). A House Sparrow on F.I., Dec. 10 was seasonally unprecedented there; most records are late March through May.

CORRIGENDUM — In last winter’s report the **Mottled Petrel** should have been boldfaced (AB 39:204).

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The Autumn Migration 1985 season report should have appeared in the Spring (Volume 40, Number 1) issue. Unfortunately, at press time, we had not received the report from our Regional Editor(s). Therefore, we are publishing the previously unpublished regional report on the Autumn Migration (1985) in this issue. We apologize for any inconvenience to our readers.

The Autumn Migration August 1–November 30, 1985

Kurt F. Campbell, Stephen F. Bailey,
Alan D. Barron, and Richard A. Erickson

ABBREVIATIONS — C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.V. = Central Valley; O.S.P. = Open Space Preserve; S.F. = San Francisco; W.A. = Wildlife Area; ph. = photo on file with the Regional Editors. Italicized names refer to counties. All sightings from Palomarin and S.E. Farallon I. (hereafter F.I.) should be credited to Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (hereafter P.R.B.O.). References to The Gull refer to Golden Gate Audubon Society's publication, whose observations column was written by SFB through January; beginning in February it is by Helen Green.

LOONS THROUGH PELICANS — Inland Pacific Loons occurred on L. Shastina Aug. 14 (early—RE) and Nov. 29 (†JSt), and at Redding Nov. 30 (KVV). Two Horned Grebes at Woodland Sugar Ponds, Yolo, Aug. 6 (EH) summered or were very early, while 50 at Shasta Dam Nov. 22 (BV) represented a high inland count. An imm. Red-necked Grebe at Tule Lake N.W.R., Oct. 12 was the first in Siskiyou in 9 years for this former breeding species (RE, MR).

A first-year **Short-tailed Albatross** was watched closely over the w. edge of Cordell Bank, 24 mi w. of Pt. Reyes, Nov. 3 & 5 (ph. RS, m.ob.). Only examination of photos revealed that this albatross carried a dark band on its left foot (ph. SFB), proving that it fledged from the known colony on Torishima. Off Monterey Black-footed Albatrosses declined as expected through Sept. 4, but singles Oct. 9 & 20 (all DLS et al.) and one seen from Pt. Pinos Nov. 30 (DaS) were unexpected as this bird is

not regular in fall on California boat trips. Up to 10–15 were found at Cordell Bank Nov. 3–5 (RS, m.ob.). All 5 trips to Cordell Bank (Nov. 3, 4, 5, 7, & 17) recorded one or two Laysan Albatrosses, and plumage differences indicated that perhaps four or five individuals were involved (RS, KFC, JW, m.ob.). Northern Fulmars off Monterey gradually increased to 28 Oct. 27 (DLS et al.), but this area did not show the big invasion seen at Cordell Bank: 200–300 Nov. 3–7 (KFC et al.).

The **Streaked Shearwater** 3.5 mi w.s.w. of Pt. Pinos Sept. 22 (JD, DLS et al., ph.) was the 5th for North America, all at the same season, but the first away from the Moss Landing area. Pink-footed Shearwaters were very scarce, with 130 off Monterey Sept. 18 (RS, DLS) the largest number reported. Single Flesh-footed Shearwaters were off Monterey Sept. 18 & 22 and Oct. 6 & 20 (DLS et al.). Two Flesh-footeds were at F.I., Oct. 19, and one or two were at Cordell Bank Nov. 3–5 (RS, KFC et al.). Usually a deep-water species, Buller's Shearwaters were unexpectedly seen from Pt. Reyes Sept. 14–Nov. 1 (LCB, m.ob.), with a peak of 75 Sept. 29 (JML). An all-time F.I. high count of Buller's was 700 Sept. 23. Buller's Shearwaters at Cordell Bank decreased from 210 Nov. 3 to 35 Nov. 17 (KFC et al.). Conversely, off Monterey the only counts above 30 were 70 Sept. 18 (RS, DLS et al.) and 216 Oct. 27 (DLS et al.). Off Monterey one to three Short-tailed Shearwaters were seen on most trips Oct. 6 to Nov. 17 (JML, DLS, m.ob.). Similar counts were obtained from shore between Monterey and Pt. Pinos Nov. 11–30 (DaS, DR). At Cordell Bank, Short-tailed Shearwaters increased from one Nov. 3 to 50 Nov. 17 (KFC, m.ob.).

As usual, the Monterey Bay storm-petrel flocks contained up to two Wilson's Storm-Petrels Aug. 31 to Oct. 6 (JML, DLS, †SFB, m.ob.). One observer (JML) noted rump-patch characteristics suggesting that these two individuals were the same ones seen in September 1984. The astounding discovery was that of unprecedented flocks of **Wilson's Storm-Petrels** at Cordell Bank Nov. 3–7. Seven Nov. 3 (RS, KFC, m.ob.) raised eyebrows, but on Nov. 5 there were at least 45, including 35 in one flock (PP, SNGH, †SFB, †RAE, †DR, m.ob.)! On Nov. 7, 15+ were noted (REW, †JM, m.ob.). Associating with these Wilson's in mixed flocks and in roughly equivalent numbers on the 3 days were Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels (KFC, RAE, m.ob.). Following storms at Monterey, one Fork-tailed was inshore Nov. 10–11 (AB, DLS, m.ob.), and up to three Leach's Storm-Petrels were inshore Nov. 10–17 (AB, m.ob.).

A banded Am. White Pelican was seen Nov. 13–30 at Arcata, where the species is rare (LJB et al.). Brown Pelicans showed a high percentage of immatures, for example 95% of 375 flying N past Bodega Bay in 30 minutes Aug. 28 (NTC). An ad. Brown Pelican flying over Salinas Aug. 11 was a surprise so far inland (KVV).

HERONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Great Egrets increased to 18 at 4500' L. Almanor Aug. 1 & 28 (DAA) for the highest number ever recorded anywhere in the mountains of this Region. Similarly, 28 Snowy Egrets at L. Earl, Del Norte, Nov. 12 (RAE et al.) represent the largest concentration ever on the coast n. of the breeding grounds on Humboldt Bay. The last Little Blue Heron seen on south S.F. Bay was unusually late, Sept. 22 near Alviso (PN). High counts of 100+ Cattle Egrets at Colusa N.W.R., Nov. 11–14 and at Gray Lodge W.A., Nov. 17 (both *vide* BED) both came from the C.V. where a substantial resident population is developing. Ten White-faced Ibises on the coast in Marin, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Sept. 14–Oct. 30 was a good showing and corresponded with the current health of the Region's breeding populations. A single ibis at the Galt sewage ponds Oct. 14 (TM) furnished "probably the first record for Sacramento", surprising for this C.V. county.

A very early Tundra Swan appeared Aug. 10 at L. Almanor, Plumas (DAA). An ad. "Bewick's" Swan Nov. 9 at Modoc N.W.R. (†JSL) provided the first Regional record e. of the Sierra-Cascade crest. A huge influx of Greater White-fronted Geese for the n. coast, mainly Sept. 25–Oct. 25, was the "best on record" (RAE). First detected were 100 in the Arcata area Sept

25 (*fide* JSt) and 20+ near L. Earl Sept 26 (ADB) Peak numbers were 488 in the Arcata area Oct. 4 (JSt) and 350 at L. Earl Sept. 28–29 (SS, ADB). Ross' Geese made an excellent showing the length of the coast with 14–17 Nov. 10+, including six at Moss Landing Nov. 10 (CH).

Blue-winged Teal were in regular numbers in Monterey with 19± birds Sept. 26+ (DR *et al.*). A male at Modoc N.W.R., Nov. 9 (JSL) was very late for the Great Basin. A ♂ Eur. Wigeon at Palo Alto Sept. 9 (DSu) was the earliest ever for the Region by a day. The bulk of the 23± others reported were coastal with no C.V. reports received. An apparent Eurasian x American Wigeon at L. of the Pines Nov. 22 (†JML) exhibited many likely characteristics of a true hybrid and not just the often-reported Eur. Wigeon variant with green head markings.

The ♀ King Eider at Richmond, found June 29, 1984, was reported again Sept. 4+ (BR, †JML, †JM *et al.*). A ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye at Arcata Marsh Nov. 26 (MH *et al.*) provided the first Humboldt record in 13 years. Ninety-seven Hooded Mergansers at McLaughlin Pond near L. Earl Nov. 19 (PHo) was a new state high count, the previous high being 60 at Tule Lake N.W.R., Dec. 5, 1982 (MR *et al.*).

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — A Bald Eagle Nov. 19–27 at F.I. provided the 3rd island record. Sharp-shinned Hawks established a F.I. high count of seven Sept. 20. Single Red-shouldered Hawks at Troy Meadows Sept. 1 (SAL, MDH) and Sequoia L., Oct. 24 (RHG) were at 7000' and 5000' respectively in the s. Sierra, well above their normal range. Broad-winged Hawks set a record of 45 at Pt. Diablo. Peak counts of 12 occurred Sept. 28 and Oct. 4, including two dark-phase birds Sept. 28. Singles at Lawson's Landing, Marin, Nov. 13 (GF, *fide* Gull), Alamo, *Contra Costa*, Nov. 26 (GA, *fide* Gull) and Inverness Nov. 29–Dec. 4 (RS *et al.*) were the only others seen. Three Swainson's Hawks seen together near Thornton Nov. 15 were late and "perhaps a local nesting family" (RH, *fide* DY).

A pair of Ring-necked Pheasants with five young on Pt. Saint George Sept. 27 (RAE) established the first *Del Norte* nesting record. A Blue Grouse "hooting" Nov. 4 in the Warner Mts. e. of Likely, Modoc (JML) was an interesting and seldom-reported non-breeding season behavior.

Eighteen Sandhill Cranes at Gray Lodge W.A., Sept. 8 were the earliest for *Butte* by a week (*fide* BED) and rare coastal sightings included an immature near Ft. Dick Oct. 8–19 (RST *et al.*) and one flying S over the ocean at McKinleyville Nov. 12 (JSt).

Nominate and *fulva* Lesser Golden-Plovers were reported in equal numbers from the C.V. An ad. *fulva* at the Lodi sewage ponds Aug. 30+ was believed to be the same individual that has wintered there for the last 3 years (DY *et al.*), a juv. *dominica* was there Nov. 1 (DY), and up to three each *fulva* and *dominica* were at the Modesto sewage ponds Sept. 4–Nov. 17 and Oct. 6–Nov. 17 respectively (EC, †HMR). On the coast, *dominica* reports outnumbered *fulva* 3:2. A possible juv. Com. Ringed Plover was at F.I., Sept. 13–14 (†PP *et al.*); the C.B.R.C. will judge the record. Black-necked Stilt counts of 45 at Novato Oct. 15 (LCB) and 37 at Sacramento N.W.R., Nov. 29 (JML) were apparently record highs for these times and places.

Topping the fall's impressive list of vagrant shorebirds was the **Wood Sandpiper** at F.I., Aug. 20 (†PP). It was seen and heard only briefly, but by a competent observer familiar with the species. Long predicted to occur, this will nevertheless represent the first w. North American record s. of Alaska if accepted by the C.B.R.C. Inland Wandering Tattlers were found at L. Shastina Sept. 9–10 (†MR, ph. RE), for a Siskiyou first, and the Stockton sewage ponds Sept. 14–17 (†DY). Ten Ruddy Turnstones were found inland Aug. 8–Sept. 5, four of which were in the Tulare L. basin Sept. 3 (GG).

A Red Knot at Pt. Saint George Nov. 24 (ADB, RE, MR) was very late away from a known wintering area. Of 11+ inland Sanderlings Sept. 2–15, six were in the Tulare L. basin Sept. 3 (GG). Ten Semipalmated Sandpipers were found inland with

29+ along the coast, all apparently juveniles. One at Sacramento N.W.R., Sept. 15 (MR) furnished Glenn's first record. Taking 2nd honors among the shorebirds, but no less exciting to the hundreds who saw it, was the juv. **Little Stint** at Moss Landing Sept. 10–21 (ph. JMa, †DR, m.ob.). The only previous w. North American record outside of Alaska was of the juvenile in *Marin* in September 1983, unanimously accepted by the C.B.R.C. About 15 mi away from the stint was the Region's 4th (first fall) **White-rumped Sandpiper**, an adult at the Salinas sewage ponds Sept. 14–16 (†SHo, m.ob.). What must have been the same individual was found 12 mi downstream at the Salinas R. mouth Sept. 18 (†PJM).

The only major concentration of Pectoral Sandpipers this year was 110+ near Ft. Dick Sept. 19 (ADB) and the only adult reported was on Pt. Reyes Aug. 23 (RS). Five juv. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were found: Pt. Reyes Sept. 21 (RI, *fide* Gull); Arcata Marsh Oct. 4–6 (FBr *et al.*); Zmudowski State Beach Oct. 8 (DGe); and up to two at the Salinas sewage ponds Oct. 16–Nov. 6 (BG, †JML *et al.*). A juv. **Curlew Sandpiper** at the Salinas sewage ponds Sept. 8–14 (CT, ph. †m.ob.) completed an incredible threesome for those fortunate enough to see the Little Stint and White-rumped Sandpiper as well on Sept. 14! Four Stilt Sandpipers were reported for a typical season; singles were on the coast at Arcata Marsh Aug. 17–24 (BED *et al.*) and the Carmel R. mouth Aug. 26 (†BT *et al.*) with inland birds at L. Shastina Aug. 24–Sept. 2 (RE, †MR) and the Modesto sewage ponds Sept. 29 (†EC).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper was unrecorded in the Region until 1976 but has been found every fall since. This year was the best since 1978 with two in *Del Norte* Aug. 24–Sept. 6 (†ADB, †RAE *et al.*), two in *Humboldt* Sept. 9–26 (†JSt *et al.*), two at F.I., Aug. 30–Sept. 6 (†PP *et al.*), and two in *Monterey* Aug. 23–31 (†CT, †JML, ph. †DR *et al.*). The number on Pt. Reyes is difficult to determine, with birds at Abbott's Lagoon Aug. 24–Sept. 13 increasing from one to a peak of four Sept. 8 (DQ, ph. EG *et al.*), and at the Spalletta Ranch three Sept. 14 (BDP, LCB *et al.*) were followed by one Sept. 20–29 (PLaT, †JML, †JM *et al.*). A Ruff in the Arcata Bottoms, *Humboldt*, Sept. 8 (KI) was the only one seen away from *Monterey* where an impressive four were found Sept. 10–Oct. 12 (†PJM, †DR *et al.*).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — A good flight of Long-tailed Jaegers combined with unmatched coverage of the waters well off *Monterey* produced sightings on 11 boat trips Aug. 9 (†DBF) to Oct. 13 (DLS, m.ob.), with highs of seven Aug. 28 and 13 Sept. 7 (DLS *et al.*). The good summer flight of S. Polar Skuas continued into early fall. Most *Monterey* trips Aug. 9 to Oct. 6 found skuas, with a peak of four Aug. 10 (DLS, AB, m.ob.). Single skuas were at F.I., Sept. 26 and Oct. 8, and one was over Cordell Bank Nov. 4 (JW).

Only a single Franklin's Gull was reported, from Sacramento N.W.R., Sept. 24 (†MR). A (the?) ad. Little Gull returned to the Stockton sewage ponds by the early date of Oct. 9, but the ad Com. Black-headed Gull could not be found there until Nov. 10 (both DY). October 11 brought a record high count of 700 Heermann's Gulls to F.I. A first-year Heermann's at Palo Alto Sept. 18 (DSu) appeared to furnish the 2nd *Santa Clara* record, but the real surprise was the ad. Heermann's Gull at the Stockton sewage ponds Nov. 9–11 (ph. EH, †JML *et al.*), for the first inland record for the Region. A bleached 2nd-year Mew Gull at Salinas R. mouth Aug. 20–28 was suspected of summering locally, but the fresh juvenile Sept. 4 at Princeton Harbor was obviously an early arrival (both PJM). Possibly the highest count on record for *Monterey* was the 55 Thayer's Gulls at Moss Landing Nov. 22 (DaS). Ten Glaucous-winged Gulls were at the Davis dump Nov. 30 (JML *et al.*), and four were on the Sacramento R., *Sacramento*, Oct. 14 (TM). The very worn first-summer Glaucous Gull on *Monterey Bay* Sept. 2 may have summered locally (†ph. KJZ *et al.*). An ad. Black-legged Kittiwake over the Guide Seamount, *San Mateo*, Sept. 1 (RT, AB, DLS) was the only kittiwake reported between May and November, when scattered immatures appeared. Four juv. Sa-

bine's Gulls were discovered at inland sewage ponds two at Tracy Sept. 25–27 (TR), one at Ukiah Oct. 2 (GSL, LPL), and one at Stockton Oct. 3 (DY). Onshore juveniles were found dying at Rodeo Lagoon Sept. 26 (RS *et al.*) and at King Salmon Oct. 31 (SH *et al.*). Even later was a juvenile inshore at Monterey Nov. 5–11 (CD, m.ob.).

Elegant Terns were heard flying high over the hills of Belmont, San Mateo, on the evenings of Aug. 14 and Sept. 10 (PJM). The suggested trans-peninsula flights are common by Caspian Tern but unknown by Elegants. A high count inside S F Bay was of 425 at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza Aug. 10 (SFB). Common Tern numbers were low everywhere except in south S F Bay and inland. The latter were adults at Stockton sewage ponds Aug. 5 (†DY) and Corcoran sewage ponds Sept. 2 (†SAL, MDH). An oiled ad. Arctic Tern came ashore at Drakes Beach, Marin, Sept. 20 (RS), and single Arctics were also at Hayward Sept. 22 (BR) and at Palo Alto Sept. 24 (†DSu) for the first Santa Clara record. The **Arctic Tern** at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Oct. 30–31 (†BED, ph. RE), was exceptionally late, the first for Siskiyou, and established the only fall record for the interior of California. After breeding, most N. California Least Terns staged at the Baumberg Tract in Hayward and the Charleston Slough area. Peak counts were 80 Aug. 5 (PK) and 49 Aug. 13 (DSu), respectively. The year's only Black Skimmer was at Salinas R. mouth Sept. 13 (CF).

A Thick-billed Murre one mi w. of Asilomar Beach, Monterey, Oct. 20 (†AB, †LCB, m.ob.) was the first since December 1982 Along the Monterey-Pacific Grove shore Aug. 10 there were 19 juv. Pigeon Guillemots compared to the usual two or three (AB). Off Monterey, *hypoleuca* Xantus' Murrelets were identified Sept. 7 (two) and Oct. 6, and up to 20 *scrippsi* were present between the same dates (DLS, m.ob.). One to five Craver's Murrelets were there Sept. 22 to Oct. 20, and 3 trips found both species (DLS *et al.*). At least six Ancient Murrelets seen from Bodega Head Sept. 8 (JM) were early unless they summered; other arrivals were normal (Oct. 27+).

OWLS THROUGH SAPSUCKERS — A Com. Barn-Owl Oct. 19 gave F.I. only its 4th record. A Com. Poor-will seen Nov. 13 & 26 at Shasta (BY, CY) may have been wintering n. of any such Regional records for the species. Two Chimney Swifts over F.I., Sept. 27 ("details forthcoming"—P.R.B.O.) were another piece in the puzzle of this species' Regional status in fall. An imm. ♂ **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** on F.I. Sept. 21–22 (†PP—P.R.B.O.) was measured and released after 2 tail feathers were taken. Pending acceptance by the C.R.B.C., this would be only our 2nd Regional record (AB 39:959). A tail feather was also secured from an imm. ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird that frequented a feeder near Crescent City, Oct. 17–24 (ADB, †RAE; feather to Calif. Academy of Sciences). As well as providing a first *Del Norte* record, this was our latest acceptable Regional record. An ad. ♂ Costa's Hummingbird was studied in downtown S.F., Nov. 27 (†RH). A ♀ Calliope Hummingbird was at San Joaquin Experimental Range, Madera, on the late date of Sept. 18 (†JLo).

A significant movement of Lewis' Woodpeckers into the C.V. and nearby foothills was noted, with the earliest Sept. 7 (American R. Parkway, D. Munson), while a coastward flock of 26 was in Jameson Canyon, Napa, Sept. 13 (MFR). We can expect a clearer picture of the Regional status of Red-naped Sapsucker to emerge over the next few years, now that it has been recognized as a full species. Three individuals were away from their Great Basin range: at Carmel R. mouth Oct. 19 (†REM), near Gray Lodge W.A. "Nov. 23 or 24" (*fide Gull*), and on Jasper Ridge, San Mateo, Nov. 30 (C. Beck, *fide BCI*). Three Williamson's Sapsuckers were also far coastward: one just s. of Mines Rd., Sept. 27 (CB, †WGB) provided a first Santa Clara record and was remarkably early for a vagrant, a male on Hennessey Ridge, w. Trinity, Oct. 1 (†R. Reynolds) was less far from the known range, and a male on Young's Peak Nov. 1 (†ADB, GSL, LPL) was *Del Norte's* first.

FLYCATCHERS — The number of Willow Flycatchers reported (69±, Aug. 17–Sept. 28) was up strongly from last fall, even at locales carefully censused (F.I., Palomarin, etc.)—the result of an overdue good summer? Four Least Flycatchers were on F.I., Sept. 2–Oct. 6, and one on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 2 (†KFC, RoM). A Dusky Flycatcher along Matadero Cr., Sept. 19 (†DSu) was a first for Santa Clara. At Palomarin, 598 W Flycatchers were banded this season, 300+% of average, but only a few other observers commented on high numbers. Without good written field notes such events are hard for the individual observer to notice, let alone document. **Single Great Crested Flycatchers** (the 14th and 15th for the Region) were on F.I., Sept. 5 (†PP) and outer Pt. Reyes Sept. 23 (ph., †RS). Eight Tropical Kingbirds along our coast Sept. 22–Oct. 31 was only half the 1979–1984 average. A Cassin's Kingbird in Tulare L. Drainage District, Kings, Aug. 8 (GG, RHG) provided our first definite record in over a year away from their small holdout in the southern, inner coast range. Three E. Kingbirds were espied, all coastally: San Rafael Aug. 30 (*fide Gull*), Wilder Ranch S.P., Sept. 7 (DGe *et al.*), and Bodega Harbor Sept. 8 (*fide Gull*). Individual Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were enjoyed on F.I., Sept. 30 (†M. Morris—P.R.B.O.) and at the Mad R. mouth, Humboldt, Oct. 30–Nov. 1 (ph., †JSt, FBr).

S.A.

A record that will generate considerable debate is of an ad. *Empidonax* flycatcher carefully and thoroughly documented on F.I., Sept. 4 (†PP—P.R.B.O.). Documentation appeared to support the contended identification of Alder Flycatcher, but was based strongly on measurements in Stein, 1963 (*Proc. Am. Philos. Soc.* 107:21–50) whose value has been questioned (*fide LCB*), and the presence of "lores with large and distinct pale green patches" as a mark separating Alder from Willow flycatchers. This mark was said to have been confirmed in a look at some 150 museum skins, and vouched for by at least one skilled observer with relevant field experience (RS). No mention was made of call-note, said to be quite different in the two species. If acceptable, this will be California's first Alder Flycatcher.

SWALLOWS THROUGH VIREOS — All 12 Bank Swallows reported (Aug. 17–Sept. 29) were coastward; five at the Alviso Marina Sept. 28 (CB *et al.*) were the first recorded in Santa Clara in 17 years. At Palomarin, Barn Swallows were fledged on the very late date of Sept. 11, and one lingered at Arcata to Nov. 14 (FBr). Gray Jays were discovered in Butte for the first time Nov. 7, when five were at Cold Springs (JS). This is well s. of their known interior range. Common Ravens have been showing signs of increase through much of the Region for several years. This fall brought more good news: a flock of 60 over San Gregorio Beach Sept. 4 was "by far the largest concentration ever reported in San Mateo" (PJM), one at Pt. Sur Sept. 28 (DR) was, to the observer's knowledge, the first Big Sur coastal record, and a group of 14 at Sacramento N.W.R., Nov. 29 (JML *et al.*) was noteworthy on the C.V. floor.

A sharp drop in Blue-gray Gnatcatcher bandings at Palomarin—to 27% that of last year's invasion—belied an apparent general increase; this was still their 3rd best total ever. A **Veery** on F.I., Sept. 26–29 (†PP—P.R.B.O.) furnished California's 6th record, the Region's 4th. Interestingly it was an adult, apparently of the w. race (*C.f. salicicolus*), a form previously unrecorded in the state despite its breeding rather near our borders. Both Swainson's and Hermit thrushes were noted on F.I. in numbers well above average. An impressive 60,000+ Am. Robins were noted in Modoc, Nov. 29–Dec. 1 (TW, DRW). Twelve Sage Thrashers in coastal and C.V. lowlands Sept. 4–Nov. 6 made the best fall total ever. A Brown Thrasher at Tuolumne R. Regional Park Nov. 24–Dec. 1 (†HMR) was a Stanislaus first. A ♀ **Yellow Wagtail** at Abbott's Lagoon, Marin, Sept. 12–13 (†ALE, †RAE, †JE, †DDeS, m.ob) was California's 6th. All records

are from the immediate central coast Sept 4–19, in the last 7 years. Very early were two Water Pipits in Jameson Canyon, Napa, Aug. 15 (MFR).

A Phainopepla wandered to 7900 ft at Mineral King, Tulare, Oct. 14 (T. McLaughlin, *vide* LLN). A N. Shrike at the Palo Alto dump Nov. 4 (†B. Howe) was the only one out of range. Six of the 9 Solitary Vireo records received were of vagrant forms: four easterners (*V.s.solitarius/alticola*) were examined on F.I., Sept. 20–Oct. 3, and single *plumbeus* were at Pacific Grove Oct. 30 (DaS) and Little Sur R. mouth Nov. 19 (REM). A lingerer at Klamath Nov. 22 (JSt) was the more familiar *cassinii*. A Warbling Vireo tarried at Carmel R. mouth Nov. 15–27 (DaS); interestingly, 7 of 11 November/December Regional reports on hand are from here. Philadelphia Vireos were documented from Bodega Harbor Sept. 23 (†BDP) and outer Pt. Reyes Sept. 29–30 (†JML, †JM, †LCB, †BDP, m.ob.). Studied by many observers at Stinson Beach, Marin, Oct. 27–30 (†JM, †BB, †DDeS, m.ob.) was a “Yellow-green Vireo.” It fit the pattern of October occurrences for the handful of previous such records; nearly all other fall Red-eyed Vireo records are earlier.

WOOD WARBLERS — Most “eastern” warbler species were sparse. Comparing this fall with the 1979–1984 average (which includes both good and poor years) for the 5 most common such species tells the story: Tennessee Warbler 55%, Palm 65%, Blackpoll 80%, Black-and-white 85%, and Am. Redstart 85%.

The 17 Tennessee Warblers (Sept. 7–Nov. 25) were coastal except for one at Likely, Modoc, Sept. 12 (SAL). A Lucy’s Warbler loitered s. of Half Moon Bay Oct. 4–14 (†JML, PJM *et al.*), a first for San Mateo. Only two N. Parulas were discovered: an immature at Bolinas Lagoon, Marin, Aug. 20 (JE, DDeS), that could have fledged locally, and one on Pt. Pinos, Oct. 5 (JLD *et al.*). Chestnut-sided Warblers (coastal, Sept. 7–Oct. 16) were at half expected strength, with 9 records. Twelve Magnolia Warblers (coastal, Sept. 17–Oct. 20) were near par; one was inland at Redding on the late date of Nov. 10 (†WGE). A Cape May Warbler was on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 29 (RS). The only Black-throated Blue Warbler was there too, Sept. 30–Oct. 2 (LCB, RS, m.ob.). Two Black-throated Green Warblers had typical timing: Oct. 20 at Little Sur R. mouth (JML *et al.*), and Oct. 25–26 in Pacific Grove (†REM). Four Blackburnian Warblers was few, but the last, Nov. 12 to Dec. 6 at Carmel R. mouth (†REM, DaS), was apparently the state’s latest. Our only Prairie Warbler was in McKinleyville Sept. 26 (†JSt, LD). At 58, Palm Warbler turnout was better than last fall, but still well below the average. In striking contrast to other “eastern” warblers, Bay-breasted had the best total in 9 years, with five coastally Sept. 5–Nov. 3. The 42 Blackpoll Warblers Sept. 4–Oct. 13 were all coastal, as is the rule.

A modest 16 Black-and-white Warblers were found, Del Norte to Big Sur. A total of 36 Am. Redstarts Aug. 15–Oct. 20 was just twice last fall’s dismal total. Two were away from the immediate coast: in the C.V. one was in Merced Sept. 5 (RJB), and Santa Clara’s 3rd-ever was at Matadero Cr., Sept. 26 (DSu). A Prothonotary Warbler at Smith River Nov. 17–24 (†GSL, †RAE, ADB, m.ob.) tied the Region’s late record, and was new to Del Norte. Eight Ovenbirds Sept. 5–27 were at their most regular haunts: F.I., outer Pt. Reyes, and Moss Beach. Twelve N. Waterthrushes (slightly above average) were seen Aug. 30–Nov. 2, with two inland: Modoc N.W.R., Sept. 12 (SAL), and Siskiyou’s first, at Salmon R. s. of Forks of Salmon on the late date of Nov. 2 (†MR). The season’s three Connecticut Warblers were on F.I. (two adults Sept. 6–7, an immature Oct. 1–2, †PP—P.R.B.O.). The one Mourning Warbler was also on F.I., Sept. 4–6 (†PP—P.R.B.O.). An imm. Hooded Warbler was at outer Pt. Reyes Sept. 29–30 (†JML, RS, m.ob.) and an adult was on F.I., Sept. 30. A Canada Warbler was on outer Pt. Reyes Sept. 27–28 (RS, †JML, m.ob.).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES — Six+ Summer Tanagers (S.F. Bay and north coast) was the most ever in one season. Two different W. Tanagers were noted at Smith River

Nov. 17 and Dec. 14 (ADB, GSL) for the “first extratemporal records” for Del Norte. Seven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks coastwardly Sept. 2–Oct. 20 were few; an imm. male in Sacramento Aug. 14 (L. McCullough) was inland and early. A Crescent City Blue Grosbeak Nov. 20–26 (ADB *et al.*) was Del Norte’s 3rd, and provided one of few Regional late fall/winter records. An impressive four Dickcissels visited F.I. Aug. 31–Oct. 11, and one was at Eureka Sept. 7 (†FBr, †GSL). Three Green-tailed Towhees were on Pt. Reyes Sept. 23–Nov. 3 (RS, †MCM, *vide* Gull). Two Cassin’s Sparrows were studied on F.I., Sept. 17–30 & Sept. 29–Oct. 2 (both †PP—P.R.B.O.). In an echo of last fall’s coastal push, a Black-throated Sparrow was at outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 3 (RS *et al.*). Five Lark Buntings were coastal, F.I. to Humboldt, Aug. 26–Oct. 5. No Sharp-tailed Sparrows (a C.B.R.C.-reviewed species) were documented. An apparent hybrid Golden-crowned x White-crowned sparrow was examined along Shasta R., Siskiyou, Sept. 28 (†RE). A black-lored White-crowned Sparrow on F.I., Oct. 29–Nov. 6 could have been either the Sierran *Z.l.oriantha* or eastern *leucophrys* Harris’ Sparrows away from the Region’s northeast were at Arcata Bottoms Nov. 12–27 (SH, FBr, JSt *et al.*) and Smith River Nov. 17–19 (GSL, ADB *et al.*). Single Lapland Longspurs at Crescent City harbor and L. Earl, Del Norte, Sept. 7 (RST, RAE, JAR) were only 4 days later than the earliest-ever fall arrival for the state. In a county with only 5 previous records, 10+ Laplands (Nov. 21, Moss Landing, REM) made news in Monterey; by early December, 16+ were there (DR). Among eight to 10 Chestnut-collared Longspurs reported, one was away from usual haunts: Garcia R. mouth, Mendocino, Oct. 13 (†JSt)

Most Yellow-headed Blackbirds in the coastal district appear in fall, but 11–14 there Sept. 4–Oct. 27 were more than expected. Three Rusty Blackbirds are also many for us: Fairhaven Oct. 2 (†JSt, earliest record for the state by 9 days) and two on Cloverdale Rd., San Mateo, with sightings Oct. 31 (and earlier?) to Nov. 30+ (BS, PJM, †WGB, m.ob.). The 3 Orchard Oriole records could reflect fewer than three individuals: outer Pt. Reyes Sept. 26 (RS, †JE *et al.*), F.I., Sept. 27, and Bodega Harbor Sept. 29 (KFC). Hooded Orioles are almost unknown on the immediate coast, thus five there were amazing: four on F.I., Aug. 15–Sept. 13, doubled the island total, and an ad. female was at Bodega Harbor Sept. 29 (KFC); a male was very late in Pleasanton Nov. 17–21 (ALE). Four+ “Bullock’s” N. Orioles on the n. coast after mid-November (FBr, ADB, GSL *et al.*) were exceptional. Three Purple Finches made an early appearance on the C.V. floor Aug. 8 at Reichmuth P. (B. Haussler). A few Red Crossbills still wandered the Region after last winter’s irruption, with reports of small flocks in the high Sierra, and a few individuals on the coast. The fall high count of Pine Siskins at Palomarin was seven—as compared to 1600 last fall!

CORRIGENDUM — The Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Watsonville sewage ponds Oct. 6–21, 1984 (AB 39:97) was a first for Santa Cruz, not Monterey.

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SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie

The weather was characterized by alternate periods of very wet and rainy conditions in December and February and unusually warm and dry conditions in January, with the overall rainfall being above normal primarily due to three exceptionally wet periods in February.

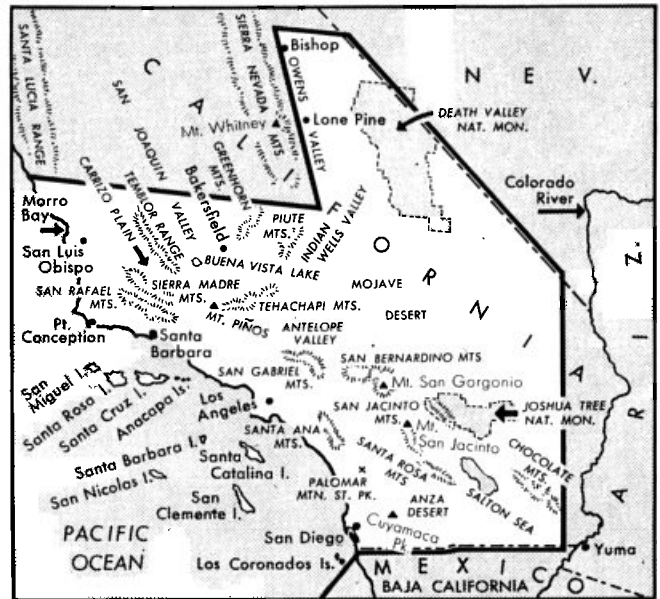
The season was in general uneventful. Pelagic birds were unusually scarce, particularly off the southern portion of the Region, and the numbers of waterfowl present were average at best. Berry-eaters such as the thrushes and waxwings were less numerous and widespread than usual, with American Robins being noticeably scarce and Varied Thrushes virtually nonexistent. Mountain finches were exceptionally scarce in the lowlands in contrast to last winter, with Pine Siskins virtually unrecorded away from areas of normal occurrence, and only one report of a Red Crossbill.

It becomes clearer each year that many "lost vagrants" are able to live full lives, living longer than many of us had considered average life-spans for such birds. Among the landbirds present this winter were at least 15 "lost vagrants" known to be spending their second winter or more at a given locality, and of these the male Broad-billed Hummingbird in San Diego and one of the Grace's Warblers in Santa Barbara are known to have spent six previous winters at these locations, now being at least seven years old! If nothing else, we can learn just how long some of these birds can survive under natural and unrestrained conditions by monitoring their annual arrival and departure from their chosen winter localities.

ABBREVIATIONS — N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.D.N.H.M. = San Diego Natural History Museum; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.; U.C.S.B. = University of California, Santa Barbara. 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 (% Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — All nine Red-throated Loons found inland were w. of the coast range, whereas two of the three Pacific Loons found inland, one at N.E.S.S., Dec. 9 (REM) and the other on L. Isabella, Kern Co., Jan. 4-5 (RS), were e. of the coast range as is normally the case for inland records of these two species. A Com. Loon on Ramer L. near S.E.S.S., Dec. 19-20 (CM) was at an unusual locality and 14 on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., Jan. 19 (JLD) was a high number for an inland locality in winter.

Two N. Fulmars off Morro Bay Feb. 23 (GPS) were the only ones found in s. California waters this winter. Five Pink-footed Shearwaters, rare in mid-winter, were off Morro Bay Jan. 26 (GPS). A Short-tailed Shearwater off Morro Bay Jan. 28 (JMcD)



was the only one reported. Single imm. Brown Pelicans at N.E.S.S., Dec. 10 (REM) and S.E.S.S., Dec. 12 (REM) were late for this inland locality, and an immature on Lopez L., San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 16-17 (JA) was at least 10 mi from the coast.

Two or three Little Blue Herons around San Diego throughout the period (EC) were the only ones reported. The single ad. Tricolored Heron near Imperial Beach Nov. 28+ (BR) was apparently the only one present in California this winter. The ad. Reddish Egret found on s. San Diego Bay Nov. 9 remained through Jan. 26 (EC). An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in La Jolla Dec. 5+ (JO'B) was believed to be the same bird that has alternated between La Jolla and nearby San Elijo Lagoon since October 1981.

A Tundra Swan at S.E.S.S., Dec. 9-19 (BHē) was quite far s., and one of a very few to be found in this area in recent years. Thirty Ross' Geese, now considered quite rare away from S.E.S.S., were found along the coast including 10 together near Oceanside during December and January (GMcC). The ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal found in Goleta Nov. 13 remained through Feb. 4 (GT), the one found in Huntington Beach Nov. 17 remained through Jan. 18 (GT_o), a 3rd was at the Santa Clara R. mouth Feb. 20 (KTS), and a 4th was in Long Beach Jan. 4 (BED). Eighteen Eur. Wigeon were reported from 10 different localities, fewer than normally expected. Tufted Ducks were more numerous and widespread than usual with up to three (two males, one female) on Lopez L., Jan. 25+ (TME), a male at Saticoy, Ventura Co., Jan. 2-25 (REW), a female there Feb. 20 (KTS), and another female at S.E.S.S., Feb. 1-3 (GH). A flock of 150+ Greater Scaup at S.E.S.S., Feb. 1 (GMcC) was a large number for an inland locality. The ♀ King Eider found on Morro Bay Oct. 28 remained through the period (TME) and a female

off Montana de Oro S.P., Jan. 12 (TME) was felt to be a 2nd individual, but was only 5 mi from Morro Bay. The ♂ Harlequin Duck at Bolsa Chica was still present at the end of the period (LRH); Harlequin Ducks occurring in coastal s. California frequently stay for extended periods of time, with one at Playa del Rey Mar. 3, 1977 to Mar. 31, 1982 setting the record. Ten Oldsquaws between Morro Bay and San Diego Bay during the period was above average. Black Scoters were virtually nonexistent along the coast, but one on Whale Rock Res., San Luis Obispo Co., Dec. 4 (KZ) was one-half mi inland. A ♀ White-winged Scoter, casual inland, was on Quail L., Los Angeles Co., Feb. 9 (RMcK). A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye, one of very few ever found along the coast of s. California, was near San Simeon Jan. 5-7 (TME).

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — A Black-shouldered Kite near Brawley Feb. 1-19 (EAC) was outside the species' normal range. An imm. Bald Eagle at Pt. Mugu Jan. 25 (JLD) was on the coast where now very rare. A Red-shouldered Hawk near Niland, Imperial Co., Feb. 3-9 (D & MH) was in an area where very few indeed have been found. An imm. Broad-winged Hawk at Dana Pt. Dec. 11 (JLD) was undoubtedly a late fall vagrant. Three ad. Zone-tailed Hawks, casual stragglers to California, were found with one on the Plano Trabuco, Orange Co., Dec. 22-Jan. 17 (DRW), another near Fallbrook, San Diego Co., Jan. 18 (KW), and the 3rd over Vista Feb. 21-24 (CW). A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk on the Plano Trabuco Dec. 29 (ML) was only the 2nd ever to be found along the coast of s. California. Rough-legged Hawks were slightly more numerous and widespread than normal with eight in San Luis Obispo County during the period and another at Pt. Mugu Jan. 25 (JLD) being right on the coast where considered very rare.

As usual a few Lesser Golden-Plovers wintered along the coast with up to 15 near Santa Maria during the period (PEL), one at Pt. Mugu Jan. 25 (JLD), and five at Seal Beach all winter (LRH), all believed to be of the Asiatic race *fulva*. One or two Black Oystercatchers in La Jolla Jan. 20 (BM) were away from areas of regular occurrence. A Ruddy Turnstone at S.E.S.S., Dec. 18 (REW) and another at Salton City Mar. 9 (GMcC) were both believed to be wintering locally; there were only 3 previous winter records from inland, but all were also on the Salton Sea. Two Red Knots at Salton City Feb. 1 (GMcC) were undoubtedly wintering locally; Salton City is the only locality away from the coast where this species has been found wintering, but one or two are found here each winter. Six Sanderlings at Salton City Feb. 1 (GMcC) were also believed to be wintering locally. The Rock Sandpiper found at Avila Beach, San Luis Obispo Co., Nov. 18 remained through Feb. 17 (CM). Stilt Sandpipers were more numerous than usual around

S.E.S.S. with up to 40 along the s. shore of the Salton Sea throughout the period and up to 100 near Brawley during February (GMcC). Two Ruffs were found at Goose L., Kern Co., Jan. 26 (MOC), with the male remaining to Jan. 28 and the female still present at the end of the period, and the male on s. San Diego Bay remained through Mar. 20 (D & MH). Wilson's Phalaropes are normally virtually nonexistent in s. California during the winter, but this winter four were at Goose L., Jan. 27+ (MOC), two were at Salton City throughout the period (GMcC), one was at S.E.S.S., Dec. 18 (REW), and another was near Brawley Feb. 1-16 (GMcC). A group of 750 Red Phalaropes off Morro Bay Jan. 28 (TME) was the only concentration reported.

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Laughing Gull 2 mi off Santa Barbara Dec. 10 (LBe, *U.C.S.B.) was only the 2nd ever to be found in Santa Barbara County. An ad. Mew Gull at Salt Creek on the e. shore of the Salton Sea Feb. 1 (GH) and a first-winter bird at S.E.S.S., Feb. 1 (GMcC) were the only ones found well inland, and nine together on L. Cachuma Feb. 25 (PEL) made an unexpected concentration for such a locality.



First-winter Iceland Gull in San Diego Co., Cal., Jan. 20, 1986. Perhaps the first uncontested California record, if such an event were possible. Photo/Arnold Small.



Adult Zone-tailed Hawk over the Plano Trabuco, Cal., Dec. 22, 1985. Photo/Douglas R. Willick.

S.A.

A pale first-winter gull in the s. San Diego Bay/Otay area Jan. 17-26 (DD, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was compared directly with a Glaucous Gull and Thayer's Gulls, along with other w. coast gulls, and was identified as an unquestionable **Iceland Gull**. The Iceland and Thayer's gulls nest together on Baffin Island (Neal G. Smith, 1966. *Evolution of some Arctic gulls. Ornithological Monographs* no. 4); hence, it is not too surprising that an occasional Iceland Gull would move across the continent to the w. coast with migrating Thayer's Gulls, rather than S to Newfoundland and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Indeed, Iceland Gulls have been found on the coast of British Columbia, Washington, and central California during recent winters (AB 39:202 & 206, 1985), and some "very pale Thayer's Gulls", such as one at Salton City Feb. 2-3, 1985, may also in reality be Iceland Gulls. It is clear Iceland and Thayer's gulls are very closely related, and studies may well show them to be races of a single species, thus putting an end to the debates as to the correct identity of these birds.

A W. Gull at Castaic Dam, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 16 (KLG) was 35 mi inland. Eight Glaucous Gulls were found along the coast with one at Morro Bay Jan. 10–19 (JSc), one at the Santa Maria R. mouth Dec. 27 (BS), up to two near Santa Maria Jan. 30–Feb. 8 (JLD), one near Ventura Feb. 18 (DSh), another at Malibu Dec. 22–Feb. 15 (AS), one at Playa del Rey, Los Angeles Feb. 4–23 (JKA), and the 8th around s. San Diego Bay Jan. 17–Feb. 21 (DD), and a 9th was 35 mi inland at Castaic Dam Feb. 16 (KLG). Black-legged Kittiwakes were virtually nonexistent with the only four reported being off Morro Bay.

Unexpected was a Gull-billed Tern near Brawley Feb. 1 (GMcC), providing only the 2nd mid-winter record for California. A Xantus' Murrelet was found off Morro Bay Jan. 26 (GPS) and another was found dead along the outer beach of Morro Bay Feb. 20 (MHa); few are found during the winter. The only Ancient Murrelets reported were two off Santa Barbara Dec. 10 (LBe). A dying Horned Puffin, a casual straggler to s. California, was captured along the outer shore of Morro Bay Jan. 2 (MW).

DOVES THROUGH SWALLOWS — Two White-winged Doves in Goleta Nov. 6–Mar. 23 (PEL) and one in Ventura during December and January (JL) were along the coast where casual in winter. A W. Screech-Owl in the residential area of Mt. Washington near downtown Los Angeles during late February (LBa) and another on the Palos Verdes Peninsula Feb. 7 (LF) were both away from areas of expected occurrence. A N. Saw-whet Owl at Cottonwood Springs in Joshua Tree N.M., Nov. 25–Dec. 3 (WT) was at a most unusual locality. The only Vaux's Swifts reported this winter were up to 70 around Whittier, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 12–30 (PSa) and 11 over Redlands Jan. 13 (RMcK). One or two Broad-billed Hummingbirds are now found in s. California each winter, and this winter was no exception with an ad. male in San Diego Dec. 1–Jan. 5 (EC) believed to be the same bird first found here during the winter of 1979–1980, an imm. male in nearby Coronado Jan. 11+ (REW), and another imm. male in Goleta Jan. 27–Feb. 22 (BHs). An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a rare straggler to California, was in Santa Barbara Dec. 8–Jan. 4 (KLG) and a female was at Morongo Valley Jan. 11 (SM). Single Red-naped Sapsuckers in Santa Barbara Dec. 28–Jan. 17 (KB) and near Ventura Dec. 28 (KK) were a little to the n.w. of the species' normal range. One or two Williamson's Sapsuckers in the Cuyamaca Mts. of San Diego County Jan. 19–25 (JZ) were at the s. extreme of their range in California. A Hairy Woodpecker near Lemon Heights, Orange Co., Dec. 16–Jan. 16 (DRW) was away from the mountains.

An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Santa Barbara Sept. 30–Mar. 11 (LBe) was evidently the same bird present here last winter. A Greater Pewee in Santa Barbara Dec. 28 (JEL) was in the same area where one spent all of last winter, but one in San Diego Dec. 21–Jan. 26 (REW) was at a different location than last year's bird. A Hammond's Flycatcher, most unusual in winter, was in Newport Beach Jan. 5–Mar. 11 (DRW). Only four Gray Flycatchers were found in coastal s. California this winter. A W. Flycatcher in Arcadia Dec. 30–Jan. 1 (BCo) and another in San Diego Dec. 27 (REW) were the only ones reported. An E. Phoebe, a rare but regular straggler to California, was in Twenty-nine Palms Jan. 4–19 (EAC). A Vermilion Flycatcher in Goleta Nov. 5–Mar. 9 (CDB) and two in Ventura Oct. 29–Feb. 8 (RJ) were the only ones found along the coast. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher in Goleta Dec. 1 (HR) was the 8th to be found in s. California, all occurring during late fall and winter. An Ash-throated Flycatcher in El Centro Dec. 18 (REW) and another at Yaqui Wells Feb. 8 (WDW) were both in the s.e. portion of the Region where small numbers may prove to be regular in winter, but one in Goleta Dec. 8–Jan. 4 (PEL) and another in Santa Barbara Feb. 3 (JSt) were along the coast where decidedly rare. A Tropical Kingbird, casual in winter, was in Santa Barbara Dec. 27–Mar. 17 (PEL) and another remained at Cabrillo Beach Dec. 7+ (MK). The **Thick-billed Kingbird** found in Peter's Canyon near Tustin Oct. 26 was still present Mar. 9



Eastern Phoebe in Twenty-nine Palms, Cal., Jan. 5, 1986. Photo/Brian G. Prescott.

(DRW), having spent its 4th winter at this location.

A N. Rough-winged Swallow, most unusual along the coast in December, was in Irvine Dec. 27 (DRW), and a Barn Swallow at the same location Dec. 27 (DRW) along with another near Santa Ysabel, San Diego Co., Jan. 9 (JLD) were assumed to be wintering locally.

WRENS THROUGH WOOD WARBLERS — Three Winter Wrens in coastal Orange County during the period and another in San Diego Dec. 21–27 (REW) were far south. Two Am. Dippers remained in Whitewater Canyon through Feb. 14 (DCH). A Bendire's Thrasher, rare to casual along the coast in winter, was on the Palos Verdes Peninsula Jan. 14–Feb. 14 (BL). An imm. N. Shrike at L. Isabella, Kern Co., Jan. 4–5 (RS) was a little w. of the areas of regular occurrence.

A Bell's Vireo found in Huntington Beach Sept. 7 (BED) was still present in March. Of 12 Solitary Vireos found this winter, six were of the gray form plumbeus. Six Warbling Vireos were more than normal, but one in Santa Barbara Dec. 27–Jan. 17 (JLD) and another in Arcadia Jan. 10 (HB) were the only two remaining past December.

Tennessee Warblers were more scarce than normal with one inland near Bakersfield Dec. 7 (MHe), and single birds along the coast in Oceano Dec. 20–Jan. 18 (PEL), Carpinteria Dec. 13 (DSi), and Ventura Feb. 2 (JSt). Seven wintering Nashville Warblers along the coast were fewer than expected. A Virginia's Warbler in Santa Barbara Nov. 30–Jan. 4 (PEL) was spending its 4th winter at this location. A Lucy's Warbler, exceptionally rare in winter, was in San Diego Jan. 7+ (REW). Twenty Yellow Warblers wintering along the coast was about normal. A Chestnut-sided Warbler found in Arcadia Dec. 4 was still present Mar. 19 (BCo) and another in Brawley Feb. 22–Mar. 30 (JO) was undoubtedly wintering locally. At least 30 Black-throated Gray Warblers were found during the period, as is about normal. Six Hermit Warblers, all n. of Orange County, made about an average number for the winter period. A Grace's Warbler in Santa Barbara Oct. 29–Feb. 21 (PEL) was spending its 7th winter at this location, and a 2nd only 3 blocks away Nov. 10–Feb. 21 (CM) and another 30 mi to the s. in Ventura Oct. 23–Feb. 1 (JSR) were both spending their 2nd winters at these locations. A ♂ Pine Warbler in Long Beach Jan. 1–Mar. 8 (JB) was the 6th known to have wintered in California. The only Palm Warblers found this winter were one at Dana Pt., Dec. 1+ (CD) and another in Santa Ana Jan. 21–Feb. 11 (DRW). Ten Black-and-white Warblers were found during the period including one inland at Brawley Feb. 1–22 (JO'B). An Am. Redstart in Huntington Beach Dec. 7+ (JO) and three around San Diego were fewer than expected for along the coast. A N. Waterthrush at Pismo Beach Sept.–Jan. 14 (JMcd) and one near Imperial Beach throughout the period were all that were found. A MacGillivray's Warbler, exceptionally rare in winter, was in Huntington Beach Sept. 28+ (DRW). Twenty Wilson's Warblers along the coast was about

Corps Air Station, Oahu, P H N W R = Pearl Harbor Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Oahu; P.M.R.B.S. = Pacific Missile Range Facility at Barking Sands, Kauai.

GREBES THROUGH HERONS — The year-long breeding activity of the pair of Pied-billed Grebes at Aimakapa Pond, H, reported last season continued unabated. The nest observed Dec 14 had at least one egg (RD). On Feb. 15 an adult was seen again on a nest with eggs, and two immatures (of different ages) were nearby (RD, PD, RLP). Ample cover around the pond could well have hidden other immatures. A **Horned Grebe** in winter plumage found at Mana Res., K., during the statewide waterbird census Jan. 15 (TT) provided only the 2nd record of the species for Hawaii, both on Kauai.

Laysan Albatrosses returned in increased numbers to Kauai this year. Of 22 nests started at P.M.R.B.S. in mid-December, 7 remained active at the end of March. Nine nests started at 3 localities near Kilauea, K., had been reduced to 3 by Mar. 31, all at Kilauea Point N.W.R. (DM). Dog predation was not so much of a problem this year. Rather, nest attrition was attributed to inexperience of the nesting birds, which are generally thought to be young birds forced out from saturated nesting colonies in the N.W. Hawaiian Is. (DM).

A Leach's Storm-Petrel was found freshly dead on the morning of Feb. 17 aboard a small boat near Disappearing I., F F S. (KM). Another found grounded on Tern I., F.F.S., Mar. 3 was identified in the hand and released (RV *et al.*). This species winters regularly in the central Pacific but is rarely recorded at or near islands in Hawaii. Fourteen Brown Boobies on 4 buoys near the entrance to Pearl Harbor, O., Dec. 22 (MO) was an unusual concentration. One Great Blue Heron, an accidental straggler to Hawaii, was at Kakahaia N.W.R., Molokai I., Dec. 12 and Jan. 15 (DW, JK). One reported at Kealia Pond on nearby Maui I., Feb. 28 (GY) might have been the same bird

WATERFOWL — A Fulvous Whistling-Duck, possibly from the new population on Oahu, was found at Kakahaia N.W.R., Jan 15 (DW), and was still there Mar. 1 (GY). A small white-fronted goose at Waiakea Park Pond in Hilo, H., Jan. 11 and Feb 16 (RD) was in immaculate plumage but may have been an escape.

It was a good season for Brant in Hawaii. Single birds wintered at Aimakapa Pond, H. (RD) and at Kakahaia N.W.R., Molokai I. (Dec. 5 into March—DW *et al.*). Two were found at K M C.A.S., Dec. 5 (DD), and two at a small ephemeral pond on Kalaupapa Pen., Molokai I., Jan. 9 (AE). One was seen again at K.M.C.A.S., Jan. 16 (DD). Some of these reports may have involved the same individuals. The Canada Geese at Amorion Ponds, O., last fall increased to six birds through the winter (PB *et al.*) and included one individual probably of the Endangered Aleutian Is. race. The others were identified as "Cacklings" and "Taverners." Another "Cackling" Goose was found Jan 3 (JL) & 10 (RD) at Whittington Park near the s. tip of H., an interesting locality. It had disappeared by Jan. 22 (JL).

Numbers of the commoner migrant dabbling ducks, N. Pintails and N. Shovelers, remained low through the winter at Aimakapa Pond, H. (RD) and at the major wetland areas on Oahu, but were better at Kanaha Pond, M. (AE). Ring-necked Ducks at Punamano Unit, J.C.N.W.R., had increased to an unusually high count of nine by Feb. 7 (PD, RLP). Greater Scaup, normally a rare straggler to Hawaii compared to the more regular Lesser Scaup, was reported in several localities this winter. The three at Kealia Pond last fall remained until at least Feb. 4 (RD), one was at Aimakapa Pond, H., through the season (RD, JL), one was seen at Lokoaka Pond, H., Jan. 11 (RD), and two were at Punamano Unit, J.C.N.W.R., Feb. 7 (PD).

A new species was added to the Hawaii state list when a **Common Goldeneye** in female plumage was studied carefully Feb 4, 14 & 23 (RD, PD, AE *et al.*) at Kealia Pond, M. A goldeneye seen earlier (Dec. 5) at Paialoa Pond on nearby Molokai I., but not identified to species (JK), was probably the same individual.

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS — A Peregrine Falcon was seen twice Dec. 27 in the Koolau Mts. back of Nuuanu Valley, O. (JC). Reports of this rare visitor to Hawaii have increased noticeably in the past decade. A Hawaiian (Common) Moorhen (Endangered) observed at Kakahaia N.W.R., Dec. 12 (DW) and Feb. 5 (JK) was probably a remnant of the six reintroduced to Molokai I. in 1983. This was the first sighting on that island since February 1984. Hawaiian (Am.) Coots (Endangered) at Kakahaia N.W.R. were significantly down in numbers this winter; only 30 counted there Jan. 15 compared to 150 last summer (JK).

The 12 Hawaiian (Black-necked) Stilts (Endangered) at Kakahaia N.W.R., Jan. 15 (DW) was also a low count. Stilts have been significantly down in numbers, too, at Waipio, O., where water conditions have been rather poor for shorebirds this winter. Single Black-bellied Plovers were noted in February at Kii Unit, J.C.N.W.R., and Kealia Pond, M. (m.ob.), and two Semipalmated-type Plovers wintered at Aimakapa Pond, H (RD, JL). Both species are casual migrants to Hawaii.

The adult Laughing Gull at Kanaha Pond, M., was joined in early February by two Ring-billed Gulls in 2nd-winter plumage (m.ob.); all remained into March. Another Ring-billed, in 1st-winter plumage, was across the island at Kealia Pond Feb. 4 (RD), but has not been seen since. Only three other gulls were reported this fall and winter. Two at Waita Res., K., Jan. 15 (TT) were too distant to identify to species, and one studied carefully at Tern I., F.F.S., during December and later found dead (RV, JS) awaits species confirmation. The Caspian Tern visiting K.M.C.A.S. remained until at least the end of January (DD, RLP), and a Least/Little Tern was observed at Waiawa Unit, P.H.N.W.R., Jan. 10 (JK).

SANDGROUSE THROUGH THRUSHES —

S.A.

The sandgrouse thriving on the n. Kona slopes of Hawaii I. have long been assumed to be Chestnut-bellied (*P. exustus*), which was the identification placed on the large number of immatures introduced there by the State Div. of Fish & Game in the early 1960s. In recent months, however, closer observation by at least 5 independent observers indicates many (but not all) of these birds seen in flight show very white underwings and are good candidates to be Black-bellied Sandgrouse (*P. orientalis*). State biologists have begun efforts to collect a series of specimens of both dark-winged and light-winged types, since apparently no specimens of the Hawaii population are now available in public institutional collections.

A Mourning Dove seen well at Pohakuloa, H., Jan. 29 (FD) was a significant record for this rarely-reported species introduced in the 1960s to the w. slopes of central Hawaii I. A Short-eared Owl flushed from the ground at Laysan I., Feb. 27 (MM, *vide* KM) was likely from Asia rather than from the race endemic to the main Hawaiian Is. A **European Starling** found Dec. 22 on this year's Honolulu C.B.C. at Sand I. Park adjoining Honolulu Harbor (PD) was at the same locality where the same observer found Oahu's first reported starling on the 1980 Honolulu C.B.C.

An 'Elepaio at Pohakuloa, H., Dec. 3 (FD) was a rare occurrence in this flat scrubland away from mountain forests. The very rare Kama'o (Endangered) was sighted again Feb. 16 in the area of Pihea and Kawailoa Trails on Kauai (AN), at least the 4th report there in recent years. This and the other "Hawaiian Thrushes" were recently split by the A.O.U. into separate species, and assigned to the genus *Myadestes* with the American solitaires.

FINCHES THROUGH ESTRILDIDS — Yellow-fronted Canaries are reported to be increasing and expanding their range around Kailua-Kona, H. (RD), where the Yellow-billed

Cardinal and Saffron Finch have recently become common. A number of young Yellow-fronted Canaries have been observed, some being actively fed by adults. The semi-annual survey of Palila (Endangered) in its Critical Habitat on the slopes of Mauna Kea, H., Feb. 25–27 yielded a population estimate of 2,221 birds, up from the estimate of 1317 a year ago (SM). After last November's observation of the super rare Nukupu'u (Endangered) in the upper Hanawi drainage area of Maui I., the species was sighted there on 2 more survey trips this winter: Jan. 7 (ME, JW) and Mar. 6 (BG). One Akiapola'au (Endangered) was seen near Pu'u Laau on the Palila Survey Feb. 26 (SM).

The all-white House Sparrow reported last season around the library in Kailua-Kona, H., was seen there again Jan. 10 (JL). One Red-cheeked Cordonbleu seen Jan. 19 at Pu'u'anahulu near Pu'u Wa'a Wa'a, H. (RD) demonstrates that this introduced

species is not yet extirpated, although it is rarely reported now and only at this one locality. Lavender Waxbills are also hanging on in this part of Hawaii I. RD had three come to his feeder in Kailua-Kona Jan. 7 and saw two more at Pu'u'anahulu Jan. 19. Six Warbling Silverbills in Niu Valley and four in Palolo Valley on this year's Honolulu C.B.C. are the only reports for Oahu since the species was first sighted on this island in 1984.

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WEST INDIES REGION

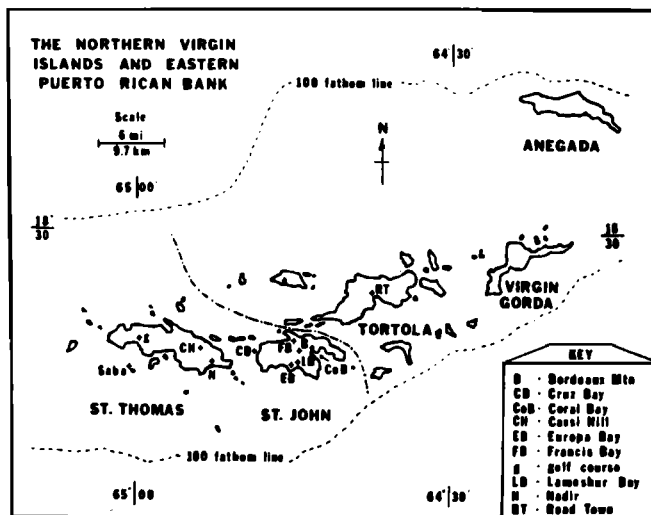
Robert L. Norton

Net rainfall during the winter season in the Virgin Islands as measured at Cruz Bay, St. John, 18°20'N, was an astonishing 43% below average: December –50%, January –25%, and February –58%. A pattern of rainfall dislocation, either drought or torrential rain, during the last 12 months is similar to that experienced in the 1983 El Niño year. Only three months in 1985 (February, March, and November) had average or above-average rainfall. The annual total was 14% below the 60-year average. Drought and/or flood along the west coast of South America also characterized this phenomenon. Peru's Lake Titicaca (16°00'S), for example, is 3m above normal shoreline after the heaviest rainfall this century (*Daily News*, March 1, 1986). Vegetation has suffered greatly on the eastern Puerto Rico Bank since November 1985 with little or no leaf or fruit production. Frugivores are at a great disadvantage during early spring nesting attempts. Territorial behavior on St. John has been virtually absent.

There are no major reports this season from the Greater Antilles, which is unfortunate. However, there are two interesting reports from western Puerto Rico, a report from Dominica and St. Lucia, contributions from the Virgin Islands, and a note from observers visiting Barbados hoping to get a glimpse of resident Western Reef-Herons. Two sets of comprehensive notes by Sykes and Howe from Eleuthera, Bahamas, updated Connor and Loftin (1985). The team of Sykes, Howe, Jett, and Taylor provided some 19 records from mid-December to late February. This type of day-to-day effort gives the best possible picture of avian migration on a small, dry islet in the eastern Caribbean. Aldridge has been providing day-to-day coverage from Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, during fall to early spring for many years. Little else is as rewarding as this activity for bird counters in the quiet-hot tropics and those fortunate to receive their reports.

ABBREVIATIONS — P.R. = Puerto Rico; Pr. = Providenciales (in the Turks & Caicos Is.); St. C. = St. Croix; St. J. = St. John; St. L. = St. Lucia; St. T. = St. Thomas; V.I. = Virgin Islands.

SHEARWATERS THROUGH TERNS — Audubon's Shearwaters were heard Dec. 30 at Pr. (BA) and seen and heard at Frenchcap Cay, St. T., Jan. 20 (WBS, LKS), which is 30 days before egg-laying in the V.I. (RLN). A Masked Booby was noted



within a kilometer of Tortola's n. shore in the British V.I. on Jan. 26 (RLN). There were only 5 active nests of Masked Booby at Cockroach Cay Feb. 14 while Brown Booby nests numbered 100+ on the same islet off St. T. (RLN). Sykes reported the occurrence of a white phase Great Blue Heron Dec. 16 to possibly Jan. 22, believed to establish the first record for Eleuthera. Two dark-phase Reddish Egrets were noted Dec. 17 at Eleuthera (WH, DJ, PS, DT), and four were at Pr., Dec. 22 (BA). Two **Little Egrets** were compared closely with Snowy Egrets and photographed Jan. 17–20 (RF et al.) at St. L., providing further evidence of a Lesser Antillean portal for the expansion of this Old World ardeid in the Caribbean region. A visit to renowned Graeme Hall Swamp, Barbados, in hopes of seeing a Western Reef-Heron Feb. 22–27 was unrewarding (PK et al.). A Glossy Ibis was seen Feb. 23 (PS) at Eleuthera.

The Blue-winged Teal is a common migrant and winter visitor in the Greater Antilles, but eight on Pr., Dec. 25 represented the first occurrence there (BA). A **Redhead** seen Jan. 4 at Pr. was a first for there (BA) and perhaps only the 2nd for the Bahamas Bank. A ♀ Hooded Merganser was noted Jan. 19 (WH, DJ, PS) at Governor's Harbor, Eleuthera, for one of the few confirmed reports from that island. Three **Red-breasted Mergansers** were seen (WH, DT) Dec. 23–Feb. 11 at Great Pond, Eleuthera, for possibly the 2nd record there since 1972. Ruddy Ducks observed by PS, DT, and WH from Dec. 14 (16) to Feb.

11 (11) may have included the resident subspecies *jamaicensis* as well as migrant *rubida*. The occurrence of a Ring-necked Duck at St. C., Dec. 28 (ER, RLN) provided a little excitement for the local C.B.C. A Turkey Vulture seen Feb. 23 (PS) represented the first record for Eleuthera, although it is common at Andros to the w. and Abaco to the n. At Paradise I., Nassau, DG noted a Sharp-shinned Hawk Jan. 30–Feb. 2. Sykes described light-phase Am. Kestrels seen at Eleuthera that resembled the dichromatic subspecies found on Cuba. Peregrine Falcons were noted on St. C. (FS) during December to February, and singles were seen (RF) at Dominica Jan. 25 and at Vieques, P.R., Feb. 13 (KG, PG, BB). Limpkins are apparently established at Eleuthera, according to PS *et al.*

Table 1 offers the occurrence of migrant shorebirds during the winter months from contributors on the Bahamas Bank, eastern P.R. Bank, and the St. C. Bank. Some notable single observations are provided below. On Feb. 17 at Cabo Rojo N.W.R., P.R., CC observed two Snowy Plover chicks, captured one and estimated it to be about 3 days old. This is one of the earliest nesting records of the species on the P.R. Bank. Voous (1983) gave evidence of breeding in February (19th) and March at Bonair and Curacao, but it is not known how frequently this occurs. Three Piping Plovers were observed near James Cistern, Eleuthera (WH, DT), on Dec. 23. A single Dunlin was also noted at James Cistern (ph. WH) Feb. 19. Sladen counted four **Red Knots** at St. C. on Feb. 5, providing one of the few winter records for this species in the Greater Antilles. A **Wilson's Phalarope** was observed closely at Eleuthera Feb. 16–22 (WH, TD, DJ, PS), providing the first record for that island and the first winter record for the Region. An unusual mid-winter occurrence of Pomarine Jaeger at St. L. on Jan. 19 was reported by RF. Two **Common Black-headed Gulls** were also noted at St. L. (RF) Jan. 17–20, possibly for the first records from that island. Forster also reported the occurrence of a Ring-billed Gull at St. L., Jan. 17 for one of the few reports from the Lesser Antilles. As many as four Caspian Terns were reported from Vieques, P.R., by KG, LG, PG, BB on Feb. 12 and compared with Royal Terns in the area. Three Sandwich Terns seen in Charlotte Amalie, St. T., Dec. 10–Feb. 5 appear to represent the first wintering of the species in the V.I. (RLN), although it is common during winter at San Juan, P.R. A **Common Tern** also wintered at Charlotte Amalie Harbor until Feb. 5 (RLN) for the first winter occurrence in the V.I. On Jan. 24, a Brown Noddy was seen at Frenchcap Cay, St. T. (RLN, LKS), for the first observation within neritic waters (less than 200 m) during winter in the V.I. Sykes *et al.* noted two Forster's Terns at Eleuthera Dec. 17 near Governor's Harbour for one of the few recent records from the Bahamas.

PARAKEETS THROUGH FINCHES — Monk Parakeets appear to be established at Eleuthera since their release about 6 years ago (*vide* WH) and are now nesting near Governor's Harbour, where 5 nests were found in one tree. A Chuck-will's-widow was noted Dec. 11 (WH, DT) at Eleuthera, and from Feb. 17 (WH, DJ, DT) to Feb. 27 (PS), providing the 2nd and 3rd known occurrences of the species there. A nighthawk sp. (*gundlachii* or *minor*) seen Feb. 15 at St. J. (RLN) provided the first post-C.B.C. winter record for the V.I. An *Empidonax* sp. was heard calling (PS, WH, DT) in dense vegetation at Eleuthera Feb. 7, but could not be identified safely according to its call note. La Sagra's Flycatcher, formerly Stolid Flycatcher throughout the Caribbean, was noted in widely scattered locations at Eleuthera (PS *et al.*) throughout the winter season. On the P.R. Bank, the *Myiarchus* in this complex is now known as the Puerto Rican Flycatcher and was seen at St. J. (TD, BH) Feb. 14. Two Tree Swallows were seen Feb. 23 (PS) and another Feb. 25 (WH *et al.*) at Eleuthera, providing one of the few winter records from the Bahamas and the Caribbean. Careful observing can produce several swallow species during winter in the V.I. as evidenced by Sladen's report of three uncommon migrants to St. C.: Bank (three), Cliff (six), and Cave (one) swallows

all on Dec. 1. A single Cuban Crow was noted at Pr from Dec. 1 to Feb. 20 (BA). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers breed as far s. on the Bahamas Bank as Pr. (BA), but breeding has not been recorded at Eleuthera (PS), where only the 2nd record was noted Dec. 18. A **Hermit Thrush** seen by DJ and WH on Eleuthera Feb. 11 furnished perhaps the 2nd record for the island. As many as three Am. Robins were observed at Eleuthera (PS *et al.*) Feb. 16–22, extending the known winter dates and providing the 3rd documented occurrence there. A Cedar Waxwing was noted as early as Dec. 22 at Eleuthera (PS, WH) with additional single sightings until Jan. 20. Apparently this irruptive migrant had been recorded from Eleuthera only once (Bond 1957, Suppl.). Yellow-throated Vireos made appearances at Eleuthera (WH) Dec. 18–Feb. 28. Two sightings of a Yellow-throated Vireo were made at St. J. (TD, BH) Feb. 7 & 21. A **Blue-winged Warbler** was noted at Eleuthera (DT) on Feb. 11; one on St. T. Dec. 11 & 19 (PB, FGB, RLN) provided a new record for that island. On Dec. 18 at Bordeaux Mt., St. J., a ♂ **Golden-winged Warbler** was observed (RLN) for several minutes, providing the first record for the V.I. and one of the few e. of Hispaniola. The first winter record of Tennessee Warbler at Eleuthera was noted (PS) Feb. 21, providing yet another record of the extraordinary migration that occurred in mid-February. Sykes *et al.* shared the details of 2 sightings of **Kirtland's Warblers**, a female and male, seen from Dec. 14 to Feb. 6. More details are expected elsewhere. The first winter observation of a **Swainson's Warbler** at Eleuthera Feb. 22 (PS) added to the number of sightings in the Caribbean region and to the extent of rarities noted in mid-February well e. and s. of normal migration routes. Another first winter occurrence of **Yellow-breasted Chat** at Eleuthera Feb. 28 (WH, PS) provided only the 2nd record for that island. On Jan. 21–22, PS, WH, and DJ observed a Summer Tanager at Eleuthera and again on Feb. 8 in 3 locations, suggesting more than one individual, and providing the first winter records in the central Bahamas. A ♀ Painted Bunting was noted by PS at Eleuthera in a flock of Indigo Buntings Feb. 23, further emphasizing the mid-February movement of passerines into the central Bahamas and to a lesser degree the V.I. If there is need for additional evidence to suggest a major mid-winter movement, please consider the following: the 5th record of Lincoln's Sparrow at Eleuthera (PS) Feb. 27, three Red-winged Blackbirds observed Feb. 21–25 (WH *et al.*) providing only the 2nd record for Eleuthera, and last but not least, the record of the year as of Jan. 17, the unprecedented occurrence of a **Common Redpoll** seen where else but Eleuthera (PS). This was the first record of the species in the Bahamas and the Caribbean region. Wingate (1973) records Com. Redpoll as frequent at Bermuda although variable (scarce to common) from mid-October to early April. The A.O.U. Check-list (1983) records an observation at Kure Atoll (28°30'N) in the Pacific. No records to our knowledge (PS, RLN) are available for Florida.

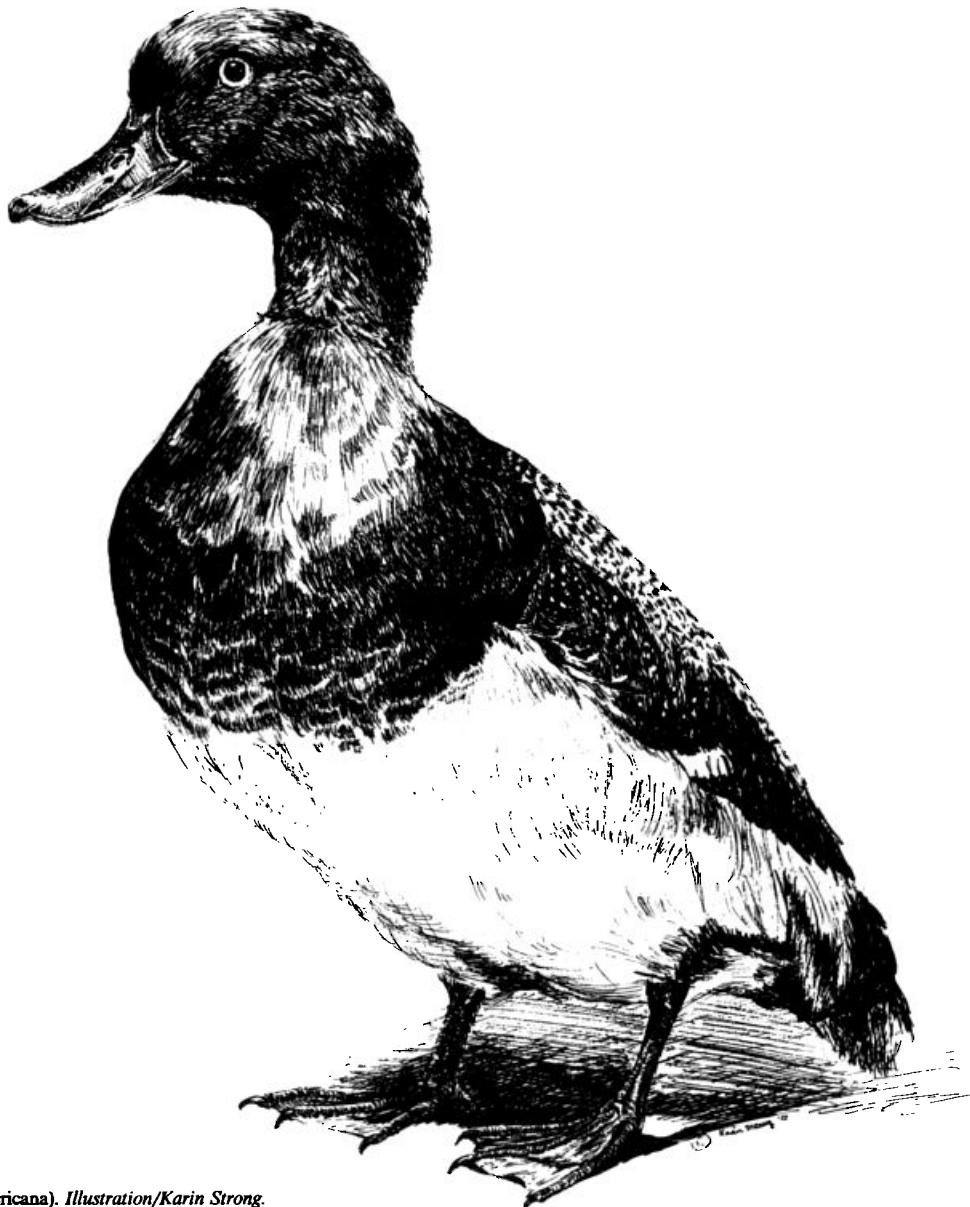
HYPOTHETICAL — Two observers (KG, BB) described what appeared to be an Am. White Pelican Feb. 12 at a little-visited mangrove lagoon at Vieques, P.R., which is located within a Naval Reserve. The description included all the salient field characteristics except the prominent black primaries. This occurrence would not be the first for the P.R. Bank (Bond 1979), but it did occur during the mid-February wave mentioned above and should not be discounted outright. Reports of an attempted follow-up visit to the restricted area have not been forthcoming.

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Table 1. Earliest high counts and dates (day/month) during winter (December to February 1985–1986) from the central Bahamas to the Virgin Islands.

Species	Eleuthera (PS, HW, DT, DJ)	Providenciales (BA)	Anegada (RLN)	St. Croix (FS)
Black-bellied Plover	75/12-2	24/NA	6/26-1	26/5-2
Wilson's Plover	1/17-12	20/2-12	2/26-1	32/28-2
Semipalmated Plover	14/25-2	—	10/26-1	6/28-2
Killdeer	14/25-2	6/11-1	—	41/27-12
Black-necked Stilt	6/24-2	30/25-12	—	199/27-12
Greater Yellowlegs	25/12-2	13/NA	2/26-1	29/27-12
Lesser Yellowlegs	90/22-2	50/19-1	5/26-1	135/29-1
Willet	3/12-2	—	—	3/1-12
Spotted Sandpiper	2/20-1	—	—	*
Ruddy Turnstone	30/18-12	20/2-12	13/26-1	*
Semipalmated Sandpiper	—	4/18-1	—	57/28-12
Least Sandpiper	66/25-2	—	—	7/28-12
Stilt Sandpiper	26/22-2	1/3-2	—	288/4-2
Short-billed Dowitcher	25/12-2	60/2-12	—	147/4-2

* Present but not counted



Redhead (Aythya americana). Illustration/Karin Strong.