

The Winter Season

December 1, 1987–February 29, 1988

NORTHEASTERN MARITIME REGION

Blair Nikula

The winter of 1987–1988 throughout most of the Region was compressed into a period of a month or less, extending from late December into mid-January. December began mild and remained that way until the last week or so, when a cold, snowy pattern set in that persisted through the first half of January; heavy snow accumulated throughout the Region during this period. Temperatures were milder than normal from the last half of January through the end of the period, however, and although February was wet, only in western Newfoundland and interior northern portions did the precipitation fall as snow. Consequently, by the end of the month bare ground was prevalent even in eastern Newfoundland.

The season offered a mixed bag to birders in the Region. Of the irruptive species, only Snowy Owls and Northern Shrikes appeared in above-normal numbers, and many others were decidedly scarce. Seabirds, with one or two exceptions, were again few and far between, although an absence of reports from offshore waters may have tainted our impressions. Fruit-eating species were scattered with no obvious patterns emerging.

Among the rarities were two exceptional finds: the Region's first Hammond's Flycatcher and second (first this century) Eurasian Kestrel. Among the other notables were a problematical Chough, yet another Jackdaw, multiple Townsend's Warblers, a Le Conte's Sparrow, and a Harris' Sparrow. Two "Spotted" Towhees, four "Bullock's" Orioles, two "Audubon's" Warblers, two "Oregon" Juncos, and an individual of one of the western races of Fox Sparrow rounded out a distinct influx of western forms this season (most, presumably, holdovers from the late fall).

No reports were received from New Hampshire or Prince Edward Island this season, nor is any Christmas Bird Count data included in this summary.

ABBREVIATIONS — S.P.M. = The French islands of St. Pierre et Miquelon.



LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Loons appeared to be in rather low numbers throughout the Region, although 65 Red-throateds in Provincetown, Mass., Jan. 16 [WRP] was well above average. A Pacific/Arctic Loon was reported, without details, from Rockport, Mass., Dec. 12 [W. Drummond et al.]. Although the odds may strongly favor Pacific Loon in this area, until (if ever) reliable methods are developed for separating winter-plumaged Pacific from Arctic loons, it strikes me as presumptuous to assign individuals to one species or the other.

Horned Grebes were considered scarce in Nova Scotia, but numbers in Maine seemed up from recent lows. Further south, maxima of 48 were counted Feb. 27 at Sachuest Pt., R.I., (fide DLE) and 120 at Sherwood Island S.P., Conn., Feb. 28 [FWM]. Among the latter concentration was the only Eared Grebe of the season, Feb. 28–29 [FWM et al., ph.]. Two hundred Red-

necked Grebes at Herring Cove, N.S., Feb. 21 (fide LPMP) was notable, but otherwise the species was scarce at traditional sites in Nova Scotia and S.P.M. Counts of 150 Red-neckeds in Hull, Mass., Feb. 28 (P. Thayer) and 50 at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Feb. 27 (DLE) likely represented pre-migratory buildups, the latter total an exceptional concentration for that far south.

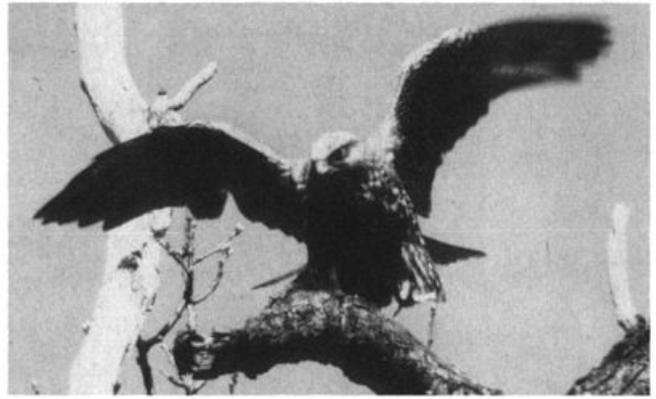
Double-crested Cormorants continued to be widely reported in s. coastal areas, with the northernmost (aside from 4 CBC reports in New Brunswick) at Schoodic Pt., Me., Jan. 30 (fide WCT). Totals of 32 in Boston Harbor Jan. 16 (fide RHS), nine on Block I., R.I., Jan. 5 (C. Raithel et al.), 18 throughout February in Jerusalem, R.I. (DLK et al.), and eight in Newburyport, Mass., Feb. 20 (D. Chickering) were indicative of the species' increase as a winterer in this area. As usual, several Am. Bitterns were reported from s. coastal sections, but one in St. John's, Nfld., through Dec. 14 (BM) was extremely late at that latitude. Otherwise, lingering herons were all but absent, with the exception of two Great Egrets in Westport, Conn., Dec. 1 (FWM) and a Green-backed Heron in Portland, Me., through Dec. 4 (R. Eakin).

WATERFOWL — The season's Tundra Swans were a weakened individual in E. Quabbin, Mass., Jan. 23–Feb. 10, which was eventually captured on the latter date (fide SK), and two birds in E. Providence, R.I., Feb. 8–29 (R. Farrell et al.). The mild weather early in the season apparently induced Snow Geese to linger at Plum I., Mass., as 107 were still there Dec. 10 (D. Oliver). Wintering birds included five individuals in e. Massachusetts and at least two in Rhode Island. Highest totals of Canada Geese came from Melbourne L., N.S., where 3000 were present in late December (fide LPMP), and Middletown, R.I., where 4000 were noted Jan. 23 (fide DLE).

Six Wood Ducks in Newfoundland this season was exceptional for that province (BM), and four in Nova Scotia was well above average also. Single "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal were in Seekonk, Mass., on 3 dates from Jan. 19–Feb. 26 (R. Bowen) and in Milford, Conn., Jan. 30 (fide FWM). A Blue-winged Teal was reported, without details, from Cherry Hill, N.S., Dec. 29 (fide LPMP), and two were at a traditional site in Barnstable, Mass., Jan. 30 (P. Trimble). At least 14 Eur. Wigeon (cf. 13+ and seven the last 2 years) were distributed among Newfoundland (three), Massachusetts (seven), Rhode Island (two), and Connecticut (two to three). Three Am. Wigeon in Nova Scotia were the northernmost reported; a maximum of 640 (cf. 650 and 450 the last 2 years) were found at the species' wintering stronghold at Watchemoket Cove, R.I., Jan. 21 (DLE).

A ♂ Redhead was a good find at Seaforth, N.S., Dec. 31 (fide LPMP), and a ♂ Redhead x Canvasback hybrid was carefully studied in Milford, Conn., Feb. 1–9 (D. Sibley et al.). Common Eiders appeared to be very scarce throughout the Region, with few counts exceeding 1000 birds; one notable exception was 15,000 in Hull, Mass., Dec. 14 (fide GWG). King Eiders were also below normal; around the St. John's area in Newfoundland, where last year 100+ were found, Mactavish saw none this winter, a circumstance he attributed to the mild weather. Elsewhere, one or two were noted in Nova Scotia, three in Maine, six in Massachusetts, and four in Rhode Island. Harlequin Ducks peaked at 58 on Feb. 8 at Sachuest Pt., R.I. (fide DLE), two less than last year's record at that location. Wherever the eiders went, the scoters apparently followed as all 3 species were found in very low numbers throughout the Region. Southernmost Barrow's Goldeneyes included a bird at Saybrook, Conn., through about Dec. 10 (when it was shot, fide FWM), and one or two birds in Rhode Island (fide DLE). Red-breasted Mergansers were abundant in the Truro-Provincetown area of Cape Cod, where the wintering population comprised some 5000+ birds (BN et al.), and in Rhode Island there were 1000 at Moonstone Beach Jan. 22 (DLK) and 1500 at Pt. Judith Jan. 30 (S. Getty, fide DLE).

RAPTORS — Turkey Vultures continued to winter in s. New England as indicated by a maximum of 15 in Hopkinton, R.I., in December, seven seen nearby in Alton Feb. 11 (fide



Gray-morph immature Gyr Falcon at New Haven, Connecticut. This individual remained for most of winter 1987–1988, and was seen by many. Photo/Ray Schwartz.

DLE), and a single bird in Southboro, Mass., Jan. 1 (E. Taylor). Exceptional, however, was a bird in Salisbury, N.B., Dec. 7 (J. Wilson, fide DAC). No details were received for an Osprey reported in Belfast, Me., on the extreme date of Jan. 15 (fide WCT). Bald Eagles have become far too numerous and wide-ranging to enumerate accurately, but the national eagle census taken during the 2nd week of January recorded 45 birds in Massachusetts and about 50 in Connecticut.

Northern Goshawks seemed to be present in modest to good numbers: approximately nine (cf. 12 last year) were present during the period at the dump in St. John's, Nfld., hunting rats (BM); they were numerous in Maine; and at least five in Rhode Island during the period was a good number for that southerly location. The northernmost Red-shouldered Hawk was in Brunswick, Me., Feb. 11 (fide WCT), and there were at least three in Massachusetts and four in Rhode Island. No details were submitted for single (same?) imm. Broad-winged Hawk(s) in Halifax, N.S., Dec. 8 and Jan. 16, and at Cow Bay, N.S., Dec. 9 (FLL). Rough-legged Hawks were found in good numbers in Nova Scotia, but farther south they were generally rather scarce. Golden Eagle sightings were of an adult in New Brunswick, one (age unspecified) in w. Massachusetts, and two adults and one immature in Connecticut.

S.A.

Certainly one of the season's premier highlights was a ♀ Eurasian Kestrel first identified Jan. 18 at Ft. Beau-sejour, N.B. (SIT), then rediscovered a short distance across the border in Minudie, N.S., Jan. 23 (ELM). Indications were that the bird may have been present for 3 weeks or more prior to its being correctly identified. Although quite wary, the falcon remained through at least Feb. 18, affording many observers a unique opportunity to see this North American rarity. This sighting furnished first provincial records for both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the 2nd Regional record (the first a Massachusetts specimen from 1887), the 2nd record for Canada, and the 4th from e. North America. Of about a dozen North American reports (half from Alaska), this was the first winter occurrence of the species.

Merlins numbered 22+ Regionwide (cf. 32 and 25+ the last 2 years), including at least two to three as far north as St. John's, Nfld. (fide BM), and 19+ Peregrines was a record winter total for the Region (cf. 10 and 14+ the last 2 years). In Newfoundland, Gyrfalcons were reported only from the traditional locations at the n. tip of the province. Scattered sightings farther south included a gray-phased bird at Grand Pre, N.S., Dec. 15 & 22 and Jan. 24 (fide IAM); a white-phased at Mary's Pt., N.B., Dec. 5 (M. Majka, fide DSC); one at Petit Manan N.W.R., Me.,

Dec. 14 (R. Widrig), white-phased bird(s) in Lamoine, Me., Jan. 16 (M. Stocking, *vide* JD) and Readfield, Me., Jan. 25 (*vide* WCT); and a very cooperative gray-phased immature seen by many in New Haven, Conn., Dec. 6 through the end of the period (P. Desjardins *et al.*, *ph.*).

RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Clapper Rail survived the season at Greenwich Pt., Conn. (*vide* FWM), and a Yellow Rail was a surprising and typically-fortuitous find in Chatham, Mass., Jan. 26 (R.V. Clem). Surely one of the most unexpected feeder birds this season was a Com. Moorhen that visited a Nantucket feeder throughout February, in the company of a ♂ Pintail (E. Ray, *vide* GWG)! Some 290 Am. Coots in Plymouth, Mass., Jan. 8 (D. Clapp) was the largest Regional concentration in many years; 200+ remained at least through January. A Sandhill Crane was in Grand Pre, N.S., Dec. 13 and, perhaps the same bird, at Lower West Pubnico, N.S., Dec. 14, and a different (apparently) bird was in Arcadia Jan. 7–Feb. 28 (*vide* IAM).

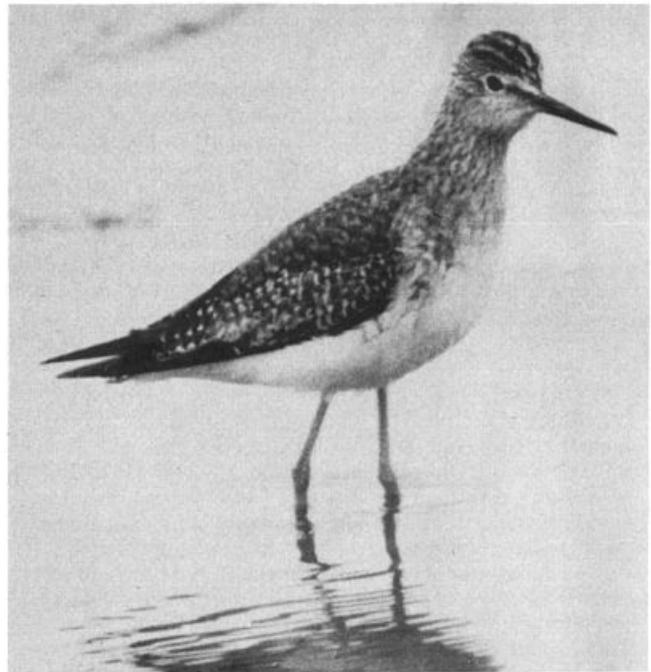
Three Am. Oystercatchers were present in Old Lyme, Conn., in early January with one remaining through February (D. Rosgen *et al.*), providing the first confirmed overwintering for the species in the Region. Of four lingering Killdeer in Nova Scotia in December, most surprising was an individual on Sable I. Dec. 27 (*vide* FS). Notably late shorebirds included two Greater Yellowlegs in Norwalk, Conn., through Feb. 10 (*vide* FWM); a Lesser Yellowlegs photographed in Cole Harbor, N.S., Dec. 20–23 (ELM *et al.*); a total of four Ruddy Turnstones in Newfoundland, three as late as Feb. 14 (BM *et al.*); single White-rumped Sandpipers at S.P.M. Dec. 13 (*vide* RE) and Duxbury, Mass., Dec. 12 (WRP); and single Long-billed Dowitchers in Massachusetts on Plum I. Dec. 10 (D. Oliver) and Duxbury Dec. 12 (WRP). An Am. Woodcock on Sable I. Dec. 27–Jan. 20 (*vide* FS) was a novel find at that remote outpost.

For the first time in recent memory, no Little Gulls were reported, mirroring a trend evident at other seasons and in other Regions. Is this species failing in its attempts to colonize North America? Common Black-headed Gulls, on the other hand, seemed to be doing just fine, with no fewer than 230 individuals across the Region. In Newfoundland, 70–90 were present daily in the St. John's area (BM), and up to 126 were in the Carbonear/Spainards Bay area (*vide* BM), concentrations that were up sharply over last year, perhaps reflecting the mild season. Elsewhere, 16+ Black-headed were in Massachusetts and 13+ in Rhode Island. A Bonaparte's Gull in Spainards Bay, Nfld., Jan. 2 was a very rare (but "almost annual") vagrant in that province (*vide* BM).

At least six Mew Gulls in s.e. Newfoundland in January and February included two adults, one 2nd-winter, and three first-winter birds, but the only other in the Region was an adult that returned to Quincy, Mass., Jan. 4 (R. Abrams). Three reports of Thayer's Gull this season unexpectedly included two adults, one in Gloucester, Mass., Jan. 18–21 (J. Quigley *et al.*) and one in Shelton, Conn., Jan. 25 (DS); a first-winter bird was in Galilee, R.I., Dec. 26 and Jan. 30 (R. Conway *et al.*). No fewer than 13 Lesser Black-backed Gulls was a record winter total for the Region. Three in Newfoundland included an adult in St. John's for the 4th consecutive winter (BM), and others included one in Maine, three in Massachusetts, and no fewer than six in Connecticut, primarily at landfills (*vide* FWM). Mactavish seems to be deriving some perverse pleasure in searching for hybrid gulls in Newfoundland: this season's apparent crosses included two Lesser Black-backed x Herring (ads.), a Great Black-backed x Herring (ad.), a Great Black-backed x Glaucous (first-winter), and two Glaucous x Herring (2nd-winters). Frightening!

The only tern was a very late Forster's Tern at Pt. Judith, R.I., Jan. 6 (RB).

Dovekies were "common as usual" in Newfoundland (BM), and small numbers were scattered south to Cape Cod, with two making it as far as Rhode Island. Following an all-time national high on the Cape Cod CBC, Razorbills remained abundant along oceanside beaches there, with highest counts



Lesser Yellowlegs at Cole Harbor, N.S., Dec. 23, 1987. Latest record ever for Nova Scotia. Photo/Ian McLaren.

of 3000 in Wellfleet Jan. 9 (W. Bailey), 1200 off Eastham Jan. 30 (RAF), and 2000 from Provincetown to Truro Feb. 15 (GWG). Elsewhere, Razorbills as well as the other large alcids were rather few and far between.

DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS — Monk Parakeets continued at their 2 established sites in the Region: eight were present at Warwick, R.I., Dec. 6 (DLE); Fairfield, Conn. (where they have nested for the last 3 years) had 11 birds Dec. 20 (*vide* FWM).

It was another big year for Snowy Owls, with totals in some areas exceeding last year's records. Throughout most of the Region, particularly so in the north, the vast majority of the birds were seen in November and December with a sharp reduction in numbers during the latter half of the season. In St. John's, Nfld., 50 birds at the dump in late November had diminished to 27 on Dec. 30 and to 10 birds through most of January and February (BM). On S.P.M., a maximum of 21 was present in November, but there were only five in December and three thereafter; about half of the birds on this archipelago were thought to have been shot (RE)! No fewer than 25 Snowies in Nova Scotia was a record for that province (IAM) as was a total of 39 on New Brunswick CBCs (DSC). In Maine, at least 33 Snowies in November and December dropped to eight or so after the first of the year. At Boston's Logan Airport, 35 owls were banded (and color-marked) this year, compared with 43 last year; elsewhere in Massachusetts 26+ in December declined to 11+ in January. At least five birds made it to Rhode Island and six or seven to Connecticut.

Two N. Hawk-Owls were in Maine, in Wilson's Mills Dec. 1–2 and Pembroke from November through Feb. 22+ (*vide* JD). Short-eared Owls were plentiful once again, representative totals including at least six in Nova Scotia, five in Maine, 17+ in Massachusetts, two in Rhode Island, and nine in Connecticut. Boreal Owls were apparently scarce, the only reports consisting of two dead birds, one on S.P.M. in mid-February (*vide* RE) and in Arichat, N.S., Jan. 2 (*vide* IAM). Northern Saw-whet Owls went nearly unreported as well, except in Connecticut, where a dozen or more was considered "average to good" (FWM).

At least 10 Red-headed Woodpeckers Regionwide was a

sharp increase following only one bird in each of the past 2 winters, northernmost were one at a feeder in Upper Burlington, N.S., Jan. 2-3 (*vide IAM*) and an immature through mid-January in St. John, N.B. (*vide DSC*). Red-bellied Woodpeckers continued their steady march northward, with single birds in Noel Shore, N.S., Dec. 20-Feb. 20 (*vide IAM*) and in Sackville, N.B. (*vide DSC*); a record six birds in Maine; and "many" in w Massachusetts (*vide SK*). Wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers included singles in S. Hadley, Mass., through the period (*vide SK*) and in Cowessett, R.I., through January (*vide DLE*). Only one Black-backed Woodpecker in Nova Scotia and five or six in Maine, with none farther south, clearly indicated a nonflight year for that species.

S.A.

Vying with the kestrel for honors as the seasonal highlight, and certainly the most fortuitous, was the appearance of a **Hammond's Flycatcher** in the backyard of a birder in Wellesley, Mass., Dec. 19-29 (K. Winkler *et al.*, ph.). Although constituting a first Regional record and only the 4th east of the Mississippi R., the occurrence was perhaps more remarkable for the events that followed discovery of the bird. On the 2nd day, the bird was eventually captured with a butterfly net (!), measured, weighed, banded, photographed, videotaped (!), and its fate debated (the bird's side won). By the time this had all transpired, it was late on a cold day so the bird was held overnight and released the following morning before a group of eager birders. Additional videotape was obtained of the bird in the field, including a series of its calls. The bird was viewed by well over a hundred observers through Dec. 29, but following a bitterly cold night (near 0°F temperatures) it failed to appear on the 30th. The documentation, including videotape, was sent west to several authorities (N.K. Johnson, S.F. Bailey, members of the California Bird Records Committee, *et al.*) all of whom agreed that based on the measurements, behavior, and vocalizations the bird was unquestionably a Hammond's. Surely, no bird has been so thoroughly documented—and lived (for a while, at least) to tell about it! We may have reached a new plateau in records documentation, one in which the VCR will play a central role!

Lingering E. Phoebes were in Holliston, Mass., Dec. 12 (R. Hildreth); Deerfield, Mass., Dec. 27 (*vide SK*); and Lonsdale, R.I., Dec. 24 (*vide DLE*); and a bird in New Milford, Conn., Feb. 20 (*vide FWM*) presumably was a successful winterer. The only W. Kingbird was in Marshfield, Mass., through Dec. 18 (D. Clapp *et al.*).

SWALLOWS THROUGH THRUSHES — Five tardy Tree Swallows were in Provincetown, Mass., Dec. 5 (S. Howell *et al.*). Perplexing was the appearance of a Chough in Newtown, Conn., Nov. 23-24 and again Feb. 15 (B. Devine *et al.*, ph.). The species apparently is sedentary throughout its European range and seems a very unlikely candidate for vagrancy; however, this bird's origins remain unknown. Yet another **Eurasian Jackdaw** appeared, this one Connecticut's first, at the New Haven dump Feb. 16-Mar. 13 (F. Gallo *et al.*, ph.).

Boreal Chickadees did not budge this winter and seemed scarce even within some of their normal range. Red-breasted Nuthatches were in small numbers throughout n. and e. portions of the Region but were described as "extremely abundant" in w. Massachusetts (SK). Carolina Wrens seem to have defied conventional thought: numbers remained very high despite the severe conditions of the 1986-1987 winter. Northernmost was an individual in Gorham, Me., Feb. 12 (*vide JD*). Golden-crowned Kinglets were widespread throughout most of the Region in modest to good numbers. Single Ruby-crowned Kinglets survived until Feb. 15 in Cooks Brook, N.S. (*vide JSC*);

through January in N Providence, R.I.; and Feb 19-20 in Jamestown, R.I. (*vide DLE*). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher through Dec. 10 in St. John's, Nfld. (BM), was unique in the Region this season.

Reports of wintering E. Bluebirds in s. New England have increased slowly, concurrent with the recovery of their breeding population; in Rhode Island sightings totalling at least 50 birds during the period were the most in 8 years in that state (*vide DLE*). Reports of Swainson's Thrushes at this season have always elicited skepticism among Regional Editors. However, a thrush in Wood's Hole, Mass., Dec. 10-12, ironically identified initially as a Hermit, struck a window on the latter date and proved to be a Swainson's, providing, I believe, the first winter specimen for the Region (G. Martin, BN). Another Swainson's was reported, without details, from Dartmouth, N.S., Dec 9 (FLL, *vide JSC*). Flocks of Am. Robins were widespread and numerous throughout the maritime provinces, with a maximum of 2000 at Anthony's Cove, N.B., Dec. 30 (J. Wilson, *vide DSC*). They were abundant in Rhode Island as well, where a maximum of 600 was noted in Little Compton Jan. 4 (*vide DLE*), but elsewhere in New England they were found in only modest numbers. Varied Thrushes were in Eddington, Me., Nov. 28 through late December (I.M. Boyd, *vide JD*); Locke Mills, Me., from late December through Feb. 29 (W. Howes *et al.*); S. Hadley, Mass., Jan. 8-15 (E. Trompke, *vide SK*); Concord, Mass., Dec. 26 (dead, *vide N. Clayton*); and Chaplin, Conn., Jan 4 (*vide FWM*).

PIPITS THROUGH WARBLERS — Late Water Pipits included 10 on S.P.M. Dec. 13, diminishing to one by Jan. 4 (RE), singles at Crystal Crescent Beach, N.S., Dec. 27 and Cherry Hill, N.S., Dec. 28; and two in Pubnico, N.S., Jan. 10-30 (*vide JSC*). Bohemian Waxwings were scarce around St. John's, Nfld., but were numerous in Nova Scotia (flocks of up to 50, *vide JSC*), New Brunswick (best CBC totals ever, *vide DSC*), and Maine (maxima of 300 in Orono and 250+ in Eastport, *vide JD*). Southernmost Bohemians were four in Hardwick, Mass., from Dec 28 through the period (*vide SK*). Cedar Waxwings were found in modest numbers in Nova Scotia and Rhode Island, but few were noted elsewhere.

Northern Shrikes staged a good invasion south as far as Massachusetts; up to six per day were seen in Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick recorded its best CBC total ever. However, Rhode Island and Connecticut reported only one shrike apiece. The appearance of at least three **Loggerhead Shrikes**, all reported to have been carefully identified, was reminiscent of years long past. Singles were in Wolfville, N.S., in early January (P. Smith, *vide JSC*), presumably the same bird in Wolfville Ridge, N.S., Jan. 12 & 19 and Feb. 11 (*vide JSC*); in Peggys Cove, N.S., Feb. 12 (JSC); and in S. Hadley, Mass., Nov. 25-Jan. 1 and Jan. 30-Feb. 2 (B. Dzwonkski *et al.*).

Amazingly, no fewer than three **Townsend's Warblers** appeared this season. In Halifax, N.S., at least two, and some thought three, different birds visited feeders Dec. 2-8 (m.ob, *vide KNK*), and another was photographed at a feeder in Framingham, Mass., Dec. 16-30 (Mrs. H. Holmes); the presence of the latter bird, unfortunately, did not become known to birders until after the bird's departure/demise, when the photographs were developed. Notably late warblers included a Nashville on S.P.M. Dec. 20 (RE); a Cape May in Wolfville, N.S., Dec. 22 (*vide KNK*); four Black-and-whites in St. John's, Nfld., one through Dec. 12 and three through Dec. 13 (BM); a **Bay-breasted Warbler** (very carefully identified, one hopes) in Fairview Cemetery, N.S., Dec. 3 (JSC); an Ovenbird in Dennis, Mass., Jan. 1-9+ (R. & E. Fisher, ph.); Wilson's Warblers in St. John's, Nfld., Dec. 18 (following a 15" snowfall, BM), Cambridge, Mass., Dec. 12 & 25 (L. Taylor), and Summit, R.I., Dec. 8 (*vide DLE*); two Yellow-breasted Chats in St. John's in December, one surviving through Jan. 10 on a diet of millet and turkey gravy (BM), and three chats in Nova Scotia in December (plus the usual scattering of reports in s. New England) A Yellow-rumped Warbler at a feeder in Greenfield, Mass.,

through the period molted into an "Audubon's" in March (fide S. Perkins), and another of this western race was reported from Nantucket in January (D. Brown).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES — Dickcissels were found in St. John's, Nfld. (two to three), Nova Scotia ("a number"), Maine (two), and Massachusetts (five). Two "Spotted" Rufous-sided Towhees were found in Massachusetts, one through most of the period in Scituate (fide RAF) and another in January in Acton (fide S. Perkins).

Rare sparrows included Newfoundland's 5th **Clay-colored Sparrow** in St. John's Dec. 13 (BM); a **Le Conte's Sparrow** nicely photographed in Canton, Conn., Dec. 27-Jan. 9 (J. Kaplan et al.); and a **Harris' Sparrow** in Buckfield, Me., Dec. 5-22 (P. Ledlie et al., ph.). Late were Vesper Sparrows in Sandwich, Mass., Dec. 7 (P. Trimble) and Matunuck, R.I., Jan. 11 (fide DLE) and a Grasshopper Sparrow on S.P.M. Dec. 13 & 15 (A. Desbrosse, RE et al.).



Le Conte's Sparrow at Canton, Conn., Jan. 9, 1988. Photo/Angela Dimmitt.

Remarkable were six Lincoln's Sparrows, five of them in St. John's, Nfld., through January, at least two of which survived through February (BM et al.). Mactavish pointed out that although Lincoln's are common nesters throughout most of Newfoundland they are absent as breeders and only occasionally seen during migration on the Avalon peninsula; the highest one-day count in that area now stands at four, on the unbelievable date of Jan. 10! The 6th Lincoln's was reported from a feeder in N. Berwick, Me., Dec. 1 and again Jan. 10 (D. Tucker, fide JD). Only two Fox Sparrows in Nova Scotia was a rather poor showing, but they were numerous in Rhode Island, and w. Massachusetts had the "most in 20 years" (SK). One of the western races of Fox Sparrow was reported from Falmouth, Mass., Jan. 2 (RHS). Single "Oregon" Dark-eyed Juncos were at feeders in Eastham, Mass., in mid-December (fide BN) and on Nantucket Feb. 13 (E. Ray, fide GWG). A flock of 2800 Snow Buntings in Minudie, N.S., Jan. 25 (FLL et al.) must have been an impressive sight.

The largest flock of wintering Rusty Blackbirds contained a maximum of 30 birds in Kingston, R.I. (fide DLE). Eight N. Orioles were seen in Nova Scotia, one of which survived until Feb. 22 (fide DAC); one was on S.P.M. Dec. 11 (fide RE), and they were "numerous" in Maine during December (WCT). "Bullock's" N. Orioles were reported from Port Monton, N.S.,

Dec. 3 (two birds, fide DAC), Frederickton, N.B., Dec. 13-19 (the first well-documented record for the province; M. Gibson et al., ph.); and Sherborn, Mass., Dec. 8-27 (A. Bolton et al., fide RHS).

Except for a modest incursion of redpolls and siskins during the latter half of the season, it was decidedly not a finch year. Small flocks of Pine Grosbeaks were scattered through Nova Scotia, and a few were noted from Maine south to w. Massachusetts. Purple Finches were in "fair to good numbers" in s.e. Newfoundland (BM) but were scarce elsewhere except for a "rash of reports" from Nova Scotia (DAC) in mid-January. Red Crossbills were sparsely distributed from S.P.M. south to n.w. Connecticut, as were White-winged Crossbills, except in Nova Scotia, where they were widespread and fairly common. A few Com. Redpolls popped up here and there throughout the Region during the first half of the winter, then beginning in mid-January a modest influx brought small flocks from S.P.M. to n. Connecticut. The highest count was of 300 at Petit Manan N.W.R. Feb. 17 (R. Widrig). Pine Siskins followed an identical pattern. Evening Grosbeaks were in "fair to good numbers" in s.e. Newfoundland (BM) and fairly common in Nova Scotia (up to 200 per flock) but were very few and far between elsewhere. A Eur. Goldfinch turned up in Montague, Mass., in mid-January (M. Fairbrother).

ADDENDUM — A Sandhill Crane was in Wallace Bay, N.S., through most of October (fide IAM, ph.).

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The Autumn Migration 1987 season report should have appeared in the Spring (Volume 42, 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 (1987) in this issue. We apologize for any inconvenience to our readers.

Richard A. Forster

Weather for the period averaged cooler than normal with temperatures in November varying from extreme highs to abnormal lows. September was very wet, but the remaining months were rather dry. Several northeast storms in November produced a few coastal pelagic species, but the storms were generally unproductive relative to results of a decade ago. For the second consecutive year, bait fish were lacking on Stellwagen Bank, Massachusetts, resulting in few pelagics and whales. A series of cold fronts the last few days of August and first few days of September produced excellent numbers of diurnal migrants.

In general, however, the land bird migration was again termed lackluster, and that designation extended to most other species groups as well. Typically, there were notable exceptions, and the usual cadre of vagrants was enough to instill interest throughout the season. Most of the Region was well reported on, although in some cases reports were very late.

ABBREVIATIONS — S.P.M. = The French islands of St Pierre et Miquelon.

LOONS THROUGH STORM-PETRELS — Red-throated Loons were widely reported in small numbers in October and November. In Massachusetts, a storm Nov. 10–12 produced the best numbers. Seventy-five+ Red-throateds were observed at Sandy Neck, Barnstable, Nov. 11 (*vide Gd'E*), and the following day 30 were noted at Southwick, Mass. (*vide SK*), a high count for an inland site.

Pied-billed Grebe showed a substantial increase, possibly a hopeful sign of recovery for a species many observers feel is in trouble. There were many reports from the s. portion of the Region, with peak counts of 37 at Lakeville, Mass., Nov. 1; 28 at Concord, Mass., Oct. 28; 20 at Plymouth, Mass., Nov. 14 (*vide Gd'E*); and 16 at Cross Mills Pond, R.I., Sept. 22 (*vide DLE*). Totals in w. Massachusetts were 88 beginning in mid-September (*vide SK*), and 54 were reported in October from Rhode Island (*vide DLE*). A total of 108 Horned Grebes were noted on inland ponds and lakes in w. Massachusetts beginning Oct. 14 (*vide SK*). Red-necked Grebe was likewise reported in small numbers beginning with several August reports in Maine. By season's end they were becoming somewhat more noticeable with 30 at Scarborough, Me., Nov. 21 (*vide JD*) and 30 at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Nov. 30 (*vide DLE*). The W. Grebe returned to Georgetown, Me., in November for the 12th consecutive winter (*vide WT*).

A meticulously described **Yellow-nosed Albatross** was seen from the Sydney, N.S., to Argentia, Nfld., ferry Aug. 5 (Tim Sabo). Northern Fulmars were sparsely reported with peaks occurring in August on the ferries to or from Newfoundland. Cory's Shearwater remained in the warm waters south of Rhode Island, where good numbers were seen in August and a maximum count of 200 was observed Sept. 1 (*vide DLE*). Reports of them were spotty, but when Greater Shearwaters were found they were seen in some numbers. Peak numbers were present in August with 2000+ seen from the *Bluenose* ferry in Maine Aug. 18 & 20 (*vide WT*) and 400+ seen about 15 mi east-southeast of Chatham, Mass., Aug. 2 (BN). On Oct. 25, 100+ were still present on Stellwagen Bank, Mass. (*vide GWG*). Sooty Shearwater was well noted with hundreds present at S.P.M. during August (*vide RE*) and 200 seen on a *Bluenose* crossing Aug. 8 (*vide WT*). However, after August numbers were greatly reduced. Wilson's Storm-Petrels were present offshore in good numbers from Maine to Rhode Island in August (max. 2000 Aug. 11 off Rhode Island) but declined rapidly after the beginning of September. Leach's Storm-Petrel is an abundant breeding species in the Maritimes but is seldom encountered at sea. Twenty-one were seen from the *Bluenose* ferry Aug. 20 (*vide WT*) and 47 from the *Shallow Bay* ferry Aug. 23 (BM). Almost none were seen in the south during storms, but two landed on a boat off the Massachusetts coast Sept. 22, were brought to shore, and were eventually released (*vide JB*).

TROPICBIRDS THROUGH HERONS — The **Red-billed Tropicbird** that graced the shores of Martha's Vineyard last fall returned for an encore appearance this year (*vide VL*). It was apparently first seen July 20 and last seen Aug. 30 but was only observed on several dates in the interval. The storm of Nov. 11 brought 1300 N. Gannets to Sandy Neck, Barnstable, Mass. (*vide Gd'E*), and 1000 were viewed at Dennis, Mass., in half an hour (BN). Both cormorant species are increasing dramatically in numbers with the result that more Greats are being reported inland and many Double-cresteds are remaining into the winter season. This year individual Great Cormorants were reported at many inland areas from Maine southward, and the maximum coastal count was 400 at Sakonnet Pt., R.I., Nov. 27 (*vide DLE*). Double-crested Cormorant begins migrating in August and continues into November with an obvious peak in mid-October. This year an early migration of 5000 was tallied at Ipswich, Mass., Sept. 17 (*vide GWG*), and a large movement through coastal Massachusetts Oct. 11–12 totaled in the tens

of thousands. For the Region's 2nd **Anhinga** report, following closely on the heels of last spring's report, a bird was seen overhead at Westport, Conn., Sept. 25 (FM).

Reports and numbers of Am. Bitterns continued low. Only 12 were reported from Massachusetts in October. The only Least Bittern reported was from Block I., R.I., Oct. 5–6 (*vide DLE*). Great Blue Herons were reported in excellent numbers throughout the Region and throughout the period. They were widely commented on, being present in n. areas until the end of November. Great Egret is now very well established in the Region, based on reports of postbreeding congregations. Up to 82 were at Tiverton, R.I., Aug. 2 (*vide DLE*), and a minimum of 90 was reported in Massachusetts in September (GWG). Several individuals were still present in November, continuing a trend of recent years. Snowy Egret numbers remained high at Plum Island, Mass., 540 were tallied at an evening roost Aug. 2, and 400 were still there Sept. 1 (JB). Two hundred fifty were reported at Appledore I., Me., Sept. 5; out-of-place individuals showed up at S.P.M. Oct. 10 (*vide RE*), when two were seen; and one was present at Spaniard's Bay, Nfld., Oct. 13–15 (BMT, JW). Up to 37 Little Blue Herons were seen at Tiverton, R.I., Aug. 8 (*vide DLE*), and one at St. Catherines, Nfld., Oct. 15–19 (*vide BMT*) was late and unusual.

The typical postbreeding concentrations of Cattle Egret were reported Aug. 24 from Tiverton, R.I., where 24 were seen (*vide DLE*), and Ipswich, Mass., where 45 were noted Aug. 5 (JB). More significant was the number of late individuals as a result of reverse migration. Perhaps most notable was an individual that was present on an oil-drilling platform 150 mi southeast of St. John's, Nfld., Oct. 2 (*vide BMT*); others were present in Newfoundland Oct. 10–12 at Eastport (H. Deichmann) and Oct. 17–22 at Pouch Cove (JW). At least seven were present in Nova Scotia in October and November with four at Kentville Oct. 21, one of which remained until Nov. 16 (*vide IAM*). A flock of five was present at S.P.M. Oct. 22 (*vide RE*). A pronounced influx was noted in Massachusetts Nov. 5 with sightings at 4 different locations including five at Rowley, Mass. (*vide Gd'E*). Other late individuals were at Stratham, N.H., Nov. 20 (D Abbott) and at Trustom N.W.R., R.I., Nov. 14 (*vide DLE*).

No sizable concentrations of Green-backed Heron were reported, although several individuals were reported into October. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in Ramea, Nfld., in late August (*vide BMT*) was unusual, and four were observed in Nova Scotia until Oct. 18 (*vide IAM*). The most unusual report was of two immatures that came aboard a boat 70 km off Halifax, N.S., Aug. 20 (*vide IAM*).

WATERFOWL — Five **Fulvous Whistling-Ducks** observed flying at Chatham, Mass., Nov. 26 (*vide WB*) represented one of the few reports for this species in recent years. The season's only report of Greater White-fronted Goose was of one seen in flight with Canada Geese at Storrs, Conn., Oct. 16 (LB). The Snow Goose flight was poorly reported from inland hawk watches. Only 495 were seen at w. Massachusetts sites (*vide SK*), and 1075 were observed at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., in October and November (*vide JG*). There was a distinctly coastal flow to the flight this year: 300–400 were noted at Scarborough, Me., Oct. 11 (*vide JD*) and 750 at Marshfield, Mass., Oct. 22 with 110 seen there the following morning (*vide GWG*). The bulk of the migration passed through Nov. 7 with 2000+ migrating in the Bridgewater/Lakeville, Mass., area Nov. 7 (*vide Gd'E*) and 2000 at Napatree, R.I., the same day (*vide DLE*), although these may well have represented the same birds.

Green-winged Teal were present throughout much of the period in most locations, but no substantial concentrations occurred. Blue-winged Teal depart our Region earlier than any other duck species, and peak counts provided ample proof. At Matthew's L., N.S., 200 were seen Sept. 10 (*vide PP*); 200–300 were at Roque Bluffs, Me., Sept. 9 (*vide JD*); and 200 were at Monomoy I., Mass., Sept. 3 (BN). Numbers declined rapidly thereafter. Northern Shoveler was present but in unremarkable numbers except, possibly, 65 at Monomoy I., Mass., Nov. 15

(BN) Eurasian Wigeon totaled 11 for the season, about par for recent years. Up to three were present at St John's, Nfld., from late October through the end of the period (*vide* BMT) including some that would take bread with Mallards in a park situation. Rather surprising were an eclipse male that appeared at Plum I, Mass., Aug. 30 and one inland at Concord, Mass., that was present from Sept. 29 through at least the end of October (*vide* GWG). American Wigeon numbers were similar to those of previous seasons, the best count being 1000 at E. Providence Res., R.I., Oct. 11 (*vide* DLE).

The typical buildup of Canvasback occurred in s. portions of the Region with 500 at E. Providence Res., R.I., Nov. 18 (*vide* DLE) and 433 at Cambridge, Mass., Nov. 27 (*vide* Gd'E). Redhead was very sparsely reported throughout the Region until 100+ were seen at Nantucket I., Mass., Nov. 14 (*vide* Gd'E). Ring-necked Duck followed the typical pattern of being found on favored ponds in s. New England in excellent numbers but were lacking on most other ponds or lakes. Peak counts reached 500 at Lakeville, Mass., Nov. 1 (*vide* Gd'E); 330 at W. Newbury, Mass., Nov. 7 (*vide* Gd'E); and 250+ at New Sharon, Me., Oct. 18 (*vide* JD). Greater Scaup were late in arriving throughout most of the area but by Nov. 29 had reached 2010 at Falmouth, Mass. (*vide* Gd'E).

Common Eider in Maine, including large postbreeding aggregations, approached 10,000+ at Bar Harbor through October (WT), but farther south on Cape Cod 8000+ migrants were noted Nov. 12 (*vide* Gd'E). King Eider were in rather short supply in the Region with most being seen in the latter half of November. Two were shot at S.P.M. Nov. 26 (*vide* RE), and four were at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Nov. 19 (*vide* DLE). Four immature or possibly female Harlequin Ducks at Bonne Bay, Nfld., Aug. 25 may represent at least sporadic local breeding. By Nov. 20, 50 Harlequins were seen at Isle on Haut, Me., (*vide* WT), and on Nov. 17, 32 were observed at their s. stronghold at Sachuest Pt., R.I. (*vide* DLE). Scoter migration is most obvious in Massachusetts. Inland counts of Black Scoter peaked Oct. 22-23, when 225+ were seen at 5 locations (*vide* SK). Eight thousand Surf Scoters were observed at Barnstable and Eastham, Mass., during the storm Nov. 11 (*vide* Gd'E). Common Goldeneye were generally perceived as late in arriving with only small numbers present by late November. The same comment held true for Barrow's Goldeneye. One was shot at Greenbush, Me., Oct. 22 (*vide* WT), and one was present at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Nov. 30 (*vide* DLE). Common Merganser numbers began picking up in late November, and Red-breasted Mergansers totaled 10,000+ at Nantucket I., Mass., Nov. 2 (*vide* Gd'E). Ruddy Duck put in a very good showing in November with 510 at Middletown, R.I., Nov. 15; 310 at Trustom N.W.R., R.I., Nov. 4 (*vide* DLE); 525 at Braintree, Mass., Nov. 9 (*vide* Gd'E); and 300+ at Monomoy I., Mass., Nov. 1 (BN).

DIURNAL RAPTORS — A Black Vulture, either sick or injured, was captured at Baddeck, N.S., Oct. 10 (*vide* IAM). Little can be said about the current proliferation of Turkey Vultures in the Region. In Nova Scotia, the last was seen at Cape Sable Nov. 1 (*vide* IAM); 104 were migrating at Mt. Agamenticus, Me., Aug. 18-Oct. 14 (GNA); 361 were in w. Massachusetts during the period (*vide* SK); and 261 were observed at Lighthouse Pt., Conn. (*vide* JG), with a peak occurring Oct. 12. A Mississippi Kite was well observed at Bolton Flats, Mass., Sept. 14 (ES, *vide* GWG). Bald Eagle is now being well reported in the Region, mainly because of the increased productivity of wild breeding pairs and hacking programs. During the period, 21 were reported at Lighthouse Pt., Conn. (*vide* JF), and 52 were seen in w. Massachusetts, including birds hacked at Quabbin Res. (*vide* SK). Northern Harriers were well reported, ad males being noted in November. The season total at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., was 945 with 54 on the peak day Sept. 19 (*vide* JG). Sharp-shinned Hawk was well reported but not in the numbers of previous years. In s. New England, the best totals were in late September with 338 at Napatree, R.I., Sept. 25 and 301 at Sakonnet the same day (*vide* DLE). In Nova Scotia,

the peak was 950+ at Brier I Oct. 3 (*vide* IAM) The Lighthouse Pt., Conn., total was 8969 with the best day 782 on Sept. 22 (*vide* JG).

The Broad-winged Hawk migration was good but not exceptional. The best single-day total was 10,095 at Mt. Wachusett, Mass., Sept. 17 (*vide* GWG) with 2397 seen the same day at Mt. Tom, Mass. (*vide* SK). The 3-day total at Mt. Wachusett was 19,283 Sept. 15-17 (*vide* GWG). This reporter is constantly amazed at the late flight of Broad-winged in n. sections of the Region. Forty-eight Broad-winged were at Mt. Agamenticus, Me., Oct. 1 (*vide* GNA); 250+ were at Brier I., N.S., Oct. 3; and 42 were at Seal I. Oct. 13 (*vide* IAM). Unique for the season was a Swainson's Hawk carefully studied in Provincetown, Mass., Sept. 9 (R. Guthrie, *vide* WB). The usual few Golden Eagles were reported. One summered at Grand Manan I., N.B. (*vide* WT). Three were noted at w. Massachusetts hawk watches in September (*vide* SK), three were observed in Maine, and an immature was noted at Brier I., N.S., in October (*vide* IAM) Five were noted at Hancock, Mass., Oct. 10-Nov. 22 with two of those seen Nov. 7 (*vide* SK).

The falcon migration was strong but not exceptional. American Kestrel totaled 3757 at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Aug. 23-Nov. 28 with a peak of 470 Oct. 1 (*vide* JG), the same day 129 were counted at Mt. Agamenticus, Me. (*vide* JD). Nearly half the Region's Merlin reports were from Lighthouse Pt., Conn., with 240 seen during the period and 32 counted on Oct. 1 (*vide* JG). Thirty were seen at Brier I., N.S., Sept. 26-27 (*vide* IAM) and 20 at Block I., R.I., Sept. 14-16 (*vide* DLE). Peregrine Falcon reports were down somewhat from the past 2 years. Six in Newfoundland was considered an average fall total (*vide* BMT) In Nova Scotia, there were 19 reports of 31 birds. Gyrfalcons appeared to be more in evidence. In n. Newfoundland, the usual few were at L'Anse-aux-Meadows in November (*vide* BMT). A dark individual was present in Nova Scotia at Conrad Beach Oct. 18 (*vide* IAM), and two in Maine were singles at Mt. Agamenticus Oct. 10 (GNA) and Machias Nov. 11 (*vide* JD). Singles were also at Chatham, Mass., Oct. 27 (WB); Rockport, Mass., Nov. 15 (*vide* GWG); and Monomoy I., Mass., Nov. 28 (BN), where one has appeared almost annually in fall or winter or both for the past decade.

GALLIFORMES AND GRUIFORMES — Gray Partridge is present in the Region only in Nova Scotia, but reports are seldom included. This year 11 were at Port Williams Oct. 21, and 24 were at Wolfville Ridge Nov. 2 (*vide* IAM). Rails are certainly fairly common in most areas of the Region but are sparsely reported because of their retiring habits. Undoubtedly a regular migrant but rarely noted in the Region is Yellow Rail. This year one was at Cape Elizabeth, Me., Aug. 29 (*vide* WT), and another was seen briefly in flight at Scituate, Mass., Sept. 26 (*vide* GWG). The only King Rail, now rare anywhere in the Region, was seen and heard Aug. 2 at Milford, Mass. (*vide* Gd'E), where a count of 17 Virginia Rails the same day (*vide* Gd'E) was certainly a postbreeding gathering. An imm. Purple Gallinule was found at Monomoy I., Mass., Sept. 5-6 (BN), and another at Sable I., N.S., in late September was thought to have been dead about a month (*vide* IAM). Now annual, Sandhill Cranes were observed at Scotch Village, N.S., Oct. 1-6 (*vide* IAM); one or two were present at Scarborough, Me., from late July to early November (*vide* WT); one was observed migrating at Mt. Agamenticus, Me., Oct. 12 (*vide* GNA); and one found at Galilee, R.I., Sept. 15 (*vide* DLE) provided the 6th state record.

SHOREBIRDS — The shorebird migration was spotty with most species reported in below average numbers. The best count of Black-bellied Plover was of 1000 at Monomoy I., Mass., Sept. 18 (BN). Lesser Golden-Plover were generally scattered and few in number. Eighty-four, mostly adults, were at a sod

farm at Amherst, N.S., Sept. 12 (*vide* FS), and Oct. 6, 143 were at S.P.M., where 50 were still present Oct. 30 (RE). Reports farther south were mostly of juveniles and concentrated in October. The breeding population of Piping Plover departs in July, and only a few scattered individuals were reported in August and early September. Breeding Am. Oystercatchers remained well into October with 35 present at Monomoy I., Mass., Oct. 10 and seven still present at nearby Chatham, Mass., Nov. 7 (*vide* GWG). The high count for Rhode Island was 19 at Napatree Sept. 30 with one remaining to Nov. 3 (*vide* DLE). An Am. Avocet was seen at Thompson I., Me., Sept. 16–17 (Scott Weidensaul), and two were found in Massachusetts—one at Plum I. Sept. 5–7 and another at S. Dartmouth Sept. 10 (*vide* GWG).

A count of 80 Willets at Monomoy I., Mass., Aug. 8 (BN) included both races, but the eastern breeding form greatly predominated. Only one Upland Sandpiper was seen in Nova Scotia this season, at the Amherst sod farm Sept. 12 (*vide* FS). On Aug. 17, eight Uplands were at Newburyport, Mass., and 23 were also seen in Lexington. An evening roost of Whimbrels at Monomoy I., Mass., peaked at 675 Aug. 3 (WB) and then declined to 130 Aug. 18. A few Whimbrels were present into late October. Hudsonian Godwit reached peak numbers at Monomoy I., Mass., Aug. 8, when 100 were seen (BN), and on Aug. 16 at Plum I., Mass., there were 54 (*vide* GWG). A well-described **Bar-tailed Godwit** was noted at Petit Manan, Me., on the unlikely date of Nov. 21 (RW, *vide* WT). A Marbled Godwit was observed at Port Howe, N.S., Sept. 26 (*vide* FS), and in Maine possibly the same bird was noted at Scarborough Aug. 22 and again Sept. 10 (*vide* JD). At Monomoy I., Mass., the first Marbled was seen Aug. 1; they peaked at six Sept. 15, and one still remained Oct. 10 (BN). Red Knot again appeared in below average numbers. Only 350 were at Monomoy I., Mass., Aug. 8 (BN), and the high count at Duxbury Beach was of 650 Aug. 29 (*vide* GWG). Elsewhere they were largely not commented on.

Two W. Sandpipers were at Three Fathom Harbor, N.S., Nov. 2 (*vide* FS); a total of four were in Maine (*vide* JD); six were at Scituate, Mass., Aug. 28 (*vide* GWG); and the best count was of 15 at Eastham, Mass., Sept. 12 (BN). An ad. **Little Stint** was present at Plymouth, Mass., July 28–Aug. 8 (MK). This was the 3rd successive year that the species was reported in the same general area during the same time period and likely represented the same individual.

In Newfoundland, White-rumped Sandpipers were well represented with counts at St. Paul's of 340 Aug. 26, 210 Oct. 24, and 145 Nov. 11 (BM). However, in Nova Scotia they were sparsely reported, although in Massachusetts there were 250 at Monomoy I. Sept. 18 (BN). It was perhaps the best season ever for Baird's Sandpiper, especially in Nova Scotia. Only one was seen in Newfoundland (*vide* BMT), but one seen at S.P.M. Sept. 4 (*vide* RE) provided the first record for the location. The influx in Nova Scotia began Aug. 29 and lasted into early September. During this period, seven or eight were at Cherry Hill, six at Matthew's L., an amazing 12 at Brier I., and four or five elsewhere (*vide* FS). The last was seen at Hartlen Pt. Oct. 18. In Massachusetts, three were at Plum I. Aug. 30–31 (RAF) and 5+ at Monomoy I. Sept. 15 (*vide* BN). Inland in w. Massachusetts, six were recorded between Aug. 26 and Sept. 11 (*vide* SK). Rounding out the picture were two in Maine, one in New Hampshire, and four in Rhode Island.

S.A.

Unquestionably the bird of the season was a **Cox's Sandpiper** present at Duxbury Beach, Mass., Sept. 15–22 (MK, RAF). It was originally mist-netted in a routine shorebird banding operation during the evening and released the following morning. It wasn't until the evening of Sept. 18 that it was first tentatively identified, and by the time it was verified and the word spread, it had departed. Details of the discovery and identification of this little-known species appear elsewhere.

The season's only Curlew Sandpipers, both adults, were at St. Paul's, Nfld., Aug. 8 (BM) and at Galilee, R.I., Aug. 10 (Michael Fitzpatrick). Stilt Sandpiper is found consistently only at Plum I., Mass., where the high count was of only 23 Aug. 8 (*vide* GWG). Surprising was a flock of 12 inland at Longmeadow, Mass., Aug. 3 (*vide* SK). Normally most are gone by mid-September. Notably late individuals were at Grand Manan I., N.B., Oct. 27 (BD); Monomoy I., Mass., Nov. 1 (BN); and E. Providence Res., R.I., Nov. 11–14 (*vide* DLE). In contrast to Baird's Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper experienced a very poor migration with less than 20 recorded. Two were present in Newfoundland (*vide* BMT); five were present on outer Cape Cod, Mass., Sept. 5–16 (*vide* BN); four were inland in w. Massachusetts in September (*vide* SK), and a late individual was at Middletown, R.I., Oct. 1 (*vide* DLE).

Long-billed Dowitchers, like Stilt Sandpipers, can reasonably be found in appreciable numbers only at Plum I., Mass., where 60 were seen Aug. 20, 58 on Oct. 20, and 20 still present Nov. 3 (*vide* GWG). Perhaps noteworthy were one at Lawrencetown, N.S., Aug. 9 and another at Three-Fathom Harbor Nov. 21 (*vide* FS). Red-necked Phalarope was said to be in "unusually low totals" for Eastport, Me., where the August peak was of only 1000 (CDD). Off Mt. Desert Rock, Me., and the Bluenose ferry, 5000 Red-neckeds were reported in August, and flocks of 50–500 Red Phalaropes were seen off Mt. Desert Rock in the same month (*vide* WT). Otherwise, very few Red-neckeds were reported from pelagic trips in other sections of the Region. Red Phalarope is very rare inland, so one on the Connecticut R. in Hinsdale, N.H., Oct. 4 (J. Coleman) and another at Quabbin Res., Mass., Oct. 14 (*vide* SK) were exceptional and only less so was one at Napatree, R.I., Oct. 7 (*vide* DLE). A storm brought the only other appreciable numbers to shore, when 35 were seen at Eastham, Mass., Nov. 12 (*vide* GWG).

LARIDS, ALCIDS — Jaegers were very sparsely reported, possibly a function of few pelagic trips and the lack of bait food offshore. Parasitic Jaeger, the most prevalent species inshore, was almost unreported. Several Pomarine Jaegers were observed in waters off Rhode Island in early September (*vide* DLE), and as many as seven were seen on a Bluenose ferry crossing Sept. 17 (*vide* WT). Perhaps most surprising in a year when jaegers were seemingly scarce were 39 Pomarines seen at Eastham, Mass., Nov. 12 (*vide* GWG) during a storm. The skua picture, at least in this writer's mind, remained unresolved. Of seven skuas seen on a Bluenose crossing, two were identified as South Polar, and the other five were thought to be South Polar (*vide* WT). On a similar crossing Sept. 17, two Great Skuas and a South Polar were identified, and an additional six were thought to be South Polar (*vide* WT). Finally, a South Polar Skua was seen on the Block I., R.I., ferry Oct. 5 (BN). The only **Franklin's Gull** was an adult present Aug. 9–Oct. 23 at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, Nfld. (*vide* BMT), where it was seen by many and photographed, for the 7th provincial record. Very few Little Gulls were reported. One was at Frenchman's Cove, Nfld., Aug. 28 (Chris Brown, *vide* BMT), one was at Petit Manan, Me., Sept. 13 (*vide* WT); and only four were in Massachusetts August through October (*vide* GWG). Common Black-headed Gull was present in Newfoundland most of the period with a peak of 125 at St. John's in mid-November (m.ob., *vide* BMT). Farther south, respectable counts were noted at Portsmouth, N.H., where two to four were present (*vide* DD); three were seen at Winthrop, Mass., Aug. 8 (*vide* GWG); and four were reported at Watchemochet Cove, R.I., Nov. 22 (*vide* DLE). Most unusual was one inland at Southwick, Mass., Oct. 21 (SK). The large buildup of Bonaparte's Gulls at Eastport, Me., failed to materialize, and the maximum count was of 1100 in Falmouth, Mass., Nov. 27 (*vide* GWG). The only Mew Gull was one found in Newfoundland Oct. 26 to the end of the period; it was thought to be present for the 3rd consecutive year (*vide* BMT).

S.A.

While critically examining gulls at dumps in Newfoundland, Mactavish suspected that he may have had several oddballs. An individual at Renew's Aug. 9 and Sept. 20 was thought to be a possible Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gull hybrid as was an adult at Carbonear Oct. 15. An ad. Herring Gull seen at the St. John's dump Nov. 15 was thought to be of a European race, *L. a. argenteus*. Gull identification is difficult enough without adding these variables to the equation.

A stunning 9000+ Iceland Gulls were seen at a herring plant at Corner Brook, Nfld., Nov. 26 (BM). Lesser Black-backed Gull is now routine in the Region albeit in small numbers. Unusual sightings included two in w. Massachusetts, one each in October and November (*fide* SK), and two at the Hartford, Conn., dump Oct. 14 (LB). Black-legged Kittiwake can be especially common during storms, but the best count was of only 1000 at Eastham, Mass., Nov. 12 (*fide* EWF). An immature off Block I, R.I., Aug. 24 (*fide* DLE) was both unseasonal and out of place. The only Sabine's Gulls were singles at Cox's Ledge, R.I., Sept. 3 (*fide* DLE) and an immature off Provincetown, Mass., Sept. 27 (*fide* GWG).

A **Gull-billed Tern** was observed in Lynn, Mass., Sept. 23 and captured Sept. 25 with monofilament fishing line wrapped around its wing. It was later released and reported again at Provincetown, Mass., Oct. 13-14 and at Nantucket, Mass., Oct. 30 (*fide* GWG). Eight Caspian Terns were at Stephenville Crossing, Nfld., Aug. 30 (BM), and one to three individuals were noted in Massachusetts and Rhode Island on 4 occasions. These reports were much fewer than usual. Postbreeding concentrations of Roseate Tern included 2500+ at Monomoy I., Mass., Aug. 20 (BN), and a mixed group of 6000+ Common and Roseate terns at the same location in early September also contained a substantial number of Roseates (BN). Forster's Terns were reported in numbers only from Massachusetts. Thirty-one were seen at Plum I. Sept. 5 (*fide* GWG), 54 were in Eastham Sept. 17 (BN), 42 were in Chatham Oct. 5 (WB), 25 were in Wellfleet Oct. 10 (*fide* GWG), and 40 were at Acoaxet, Mass., Oct. 24 (*fide* DLE). A Black Tern was present at Frenchman's Cove, Nfld., in August (*fide* BMt), but the only substantial count was at Monomoy I. Sept. 15, when 20+ were seen (BN). A **Bridled Tern** was found "long dead" in s.e. Newfoundland Dec. 1 (Richard Elliot, *fide* BMt).

Thousands of Dovekies were flying S past Cape Spear, Nfld., Oct. 27 (BMt, SIT) with 700 passing by in 5 minutes, and hundreds were present at S.P.M. Nov. 24 (*fide* RE). Otherwise, Dovekies were again poorly reported farther south, with six at Wellfleet, Mass., Oct. 27 (WB) being fairly early. By late November, a few Razorbills began showing up with 60+ at Rockport, Mass., Nov. 29 (JB). The Shallow Bay, Nfld., ferry produced 190 Atlantic Puffins Aug. 22 (BM), and 200 were at S.P.M. Aug. 30 (*fide* RE). Puffins were present in Maine around breeding islands, and two adults present in Cape Cod Bay, Mass., Aug. 15 (*fide* GWG) were both unusual and unseasonal.

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — A White-winged Dove was present at Deer Island Pt., N.B., Aug. 20-27 (*fide* WT). Four Black-billed Cuckoos were seen in Newfoundland in September and October (*fide* BMt), and up to 17 were discovered in Nova Scotia (*fide* IAM). Farther south they were reported in the usual small numbers.

S.A.

One of the major events of the fall was the northward dispersal of Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Most reports were from late September to mid-October. In Newfoundland, 13 were observed during that time (*fide* BMt), and a minimum of 80 were in Nova Scotia, including seven dead and three alive at Seal I. Oct. 12 (*fide* IAM). One was noted at S.P.M. Oct. 12 (*fide* RE). Totals farther south were less impressive with 13 in Maine (*fide* JB), 24 in Massachusetts, and seven in Rhode Island (*fide* DLE).

S.A.

A major flight of Snowy Owls developed on the heels of last year's flight. They first appeared in late October and apparently peaked in mid-November with the bulk of the flight occurring in the Maritime provinces. Eight were at Cape Race, Nfld., Oct. 25; two appeared on fishing trawlers 50 mi offshore; and one or two were on oil-drilling rigs 100+ mi offshore. According to the lighthouse keeper, in early November 50+ were at Cape Race, where 27 were still present Nov. 28, and 50 were counted at the St. John's dump Nov. 15 (BMt). Three appeared at S.P.M. Oct. 17, and the November total may have been of 40+ (*fide* RE). Only nine were reported from Nova Scotia beginning Oct. 31, three of which were injured (*fide* IAM). Twenty-five reports from Maine totaled 33 birds beginning Oct. 28 (*fide* JD). Of 6 reports in New Hampshire, 5 were inland (*fide* DD). Three Snowies were reported from w. Massachusetts in November (*fide* SK), and at least 20 were in e. Massachusetts with nine banded at Logan Airport, Boston, beginning Nov. 15 (Norman Smith). Finally, one made it to Rhode Island by the end of the period with a bird at Sachuest Pt. Nov. 30 (*fide* DLE).

A N. Hawk-Owl was seen at Milbridge, Me., Nov. 28 (RSH). Long-eared Owls were very scarce, being noted only at Brier I., N.S., Oct. 21 (*fide* IAM) and in Massachusetts at Brookline Oct. 21 (*fide* RHS) and at Northampton Nov. 17 (*fide* SK). Several Boreal Owls were reported during the season. One was killed by a car at St. John's, Nfld., in mid-September, and another was picked up injured there in November (*fide* BMt). A banding operation at Bon Portage I., N.S., netted a Boreal Nov 1-2 (*fide* IAM), which represented the first satisfactory record for the province in years. Northern Saw-whet Owls were also moving with 25 banded Oct. 29-Nov. 3 at Bon Portage I., N.S., including one that was banded in 1982 and recaptured in 1984 (*fide* IAM). At Manomet Bird Observatory, Mass., seven were banded Oct. 16-Nov. 3 (*fide* RHS).

The Com. Nighthawk migration was well chronicled again this year, but numbers in the Connecticut River Valley, Mass., where counts are usually greatest, were below average. Only 7010 were tallied there Aug. 15-Sept. 9 (*fide* SK) with 6108 in Worcester, Mass., Sept. 1-10 (*fide* RHS). A late nighthawk was at S.P.M. Oct. 11 (*fide* RE), and an immature found at Chatham, Mass., Oct. 15 (RAF, WB) was identified as the race *C. m. sennetti* from the n. Great Plains. Twenty-one Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were counted at Wachusett Mt., Mass., Sept. 4-17 (*fide* RHS), and 166 were migrating past Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Aug. 23-Oct. 3 with the peak occurring Sept. 2-12 (*fide* JG).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Red-headed Woodpecker was fairly well reported with an adult noted in Nova Scotia in October and two immatures observed in November (*fide* IAM). Farther south, reports were equally erratic, but 16 were tallied migrating past Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Sept. 15-Oct. 30 (*fide* JG). Red-bellied Woodpecker maintains its tenuous breeding status in s. New England. Strays occurred at Steep Falls, Me., Oct. 24-26 (*fide* WT), and five were present on Cape Cod, Mass., in October and November (*fide* BN). One appeared at Block I., R.I., Oct. 12 (*fide* DLE), and 14 were migrating at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., in September and October (*fide* JG). Black-backed Woodpecker numbers in Maine were thought to be high as a result of decaying trees killed by the spruce budworm (*fide* WT). The flicker migration peaked in late September with 200 seen at Seal I., N.S., Sept. 26-27 and 75 seen there Oct. 13 (*fide* IAM).

At Appledore I., Me., 52 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were banded Aug. 20-Sept. 15 with a peak of eight on Aug. 27 (DWH).

At Westford, Conn., an ad. Acadian Flycatcher was seen feeding a fledgling on Aug. 21 (LB), and a tardy individual was banded at Block I., R.I., Oct. 3 (*vide* DLE). An E. Phoebe at Gros Morne N.P., Nfld., Aug. 29 was considered a good find (BM), and 25 were at Block I., R.I., Oct. 2-5 (*vide* DLE). Two Say's Phoebes were located in Nova Scotia this fall—one at Brier I. Oct. 24 and another at Broad Cove Nov. 8 (*vide* JSC). A late Great Crested Flycatcher came aboard a fishing boat on Georges Bank off Nova Scotia Oct. 18 (*vide* JSC). Western Kingbirds were very scarce in the Region this year with none being seen in Newfoundland or Nova Scotia. Two were reported in Maine in September and one in October (*vide* WT), and two were in Massachusetts in September and two in November, one being an infrequent inland sighting at Bolton Flats Sept. 8-9 (*vide* RHS). Finally, two were seen at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., one each Oct. 1 & 8 (*vide* JG). The E. Kingbird flight failed to materialize at Digby Neck, N.S., this year, but excellent counts were of 109 at Bolton Flats, Mass., Aug. 16 (*vide* RHS) and of 464 migrating at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Aug. 22-Sept. 17 with a peak on Sept. 2 (*vide* JG). The only Scissor-tailed Flycatcher this season was one at Bolton Flats, Mass., Aug. 11-12 (*vide* RHS).

Late Cliff Swallows were at Blackhead, Nfld., Oct. 10 (JW), and three were at Cape Race, Nfld., Oct. 10 (BMT); at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Oct. 10 (*vide* JG); and at Concord, Mass., Oct. 12 (RAF). An individual at Cape Sable, N.S., Sept. 14 was thought to be of a southwestern race (*vide* JSC). Each year a small group of Barn Swallows appears in November after being almost totally absent in October. Two sightings in Nova Scotia were on Nov. 7 & 21; one was at Central Beach, R.I., Nov. 7; one was in Massachusetts Nov. 6; and four were at Lighthouse Pt. in early November (*vide* JG).

CORVIDS THROUGH THRUSHES — At Lighthouse Pt., Conn., 52,085 Blue Jays were tallied from early September to early November with peak numbers occurring between Sept. 21 and Oct. 11 (*vide* JG). A count of 35+ Fish Crows at Scituate, Mass., Aug. 23 (*vide* RHS) was a high late summer count. Along the Connecticut R. in w. Massachusetts, where they have only recently become established, about 10 Fish Crows were noted from August to October (*vide* SK). Common Raven is now also established in w. Massachusetts, where there were 15 reports totaling 31 birds from September to November (*vide* SK), and 12 were at Wachusett Mt., Mass., Oct. 12 (*vide* RHS).

A late House Wren was at Sachuest Pt., R.I., Nov. 30 (*vide* DLE). At least 12 Winter Wrens were present at 3 Massachusetts coastal areas Oct. 11-12 (*vide* RHS), and one banded at Appledore I., Me., Sept. 12 was early (DWH). Three Sedge Wrens graced the Region this fall—Sept. 14 at Bolton Flats, Mass. (*vide* RHS); Sept. 15 at Cuttyhunk I., Mass. (BS); and Oct. 5 at Storrs, Conn. (LB). Six Marsh Wrens in Nova Scotia up to Oct. 10 was a better than average showing (*vide* JSC). Golden-crowned Kinglet enjoyed a very good fall. At Bon Portage I., N.S., 340+ were present Oct. 6-10 (*vide* JSC). In Massachusetts, 110 were in the Salisbury/Plum I. area Oct. 11 (RAF), and 100 were at Scituate Oct. 12 (*vide* RHS) with 90+ at Rockport the same day (*vide* RHS). In w. Massachusetts, they were termed particularly numerous in October (*vide* SK). Northern Wheatear appeared only in Nova Scotia, where one was seen at Cherry Hill Aug. 29-30 (Cohrs, *vide* JSC), and in Newfoundland, where one was at Custletts Oct. 2 (Richard Elliot, *vide* BMT). Again the general impression this fall was that thrush numbers were way down this season. The possible exception was of Veery of which 66 were banded at Appledore I. Aug. 23-Sept. 11 (DWH). Most Gray-cheeked Thrush reports were in October with five at Block I., R.I., Oct. 3-4 (*vide* DLE), and three were banded at Manomet during the month (*vide* RHS). Banding totals for Swainson's Thrush at Appledore I., Me., Sept. 4-15 reached 25 (DWH). A late Wood Thrush was in Sudbury, Mass., Nov. 4 (RAF). A large movement of Am. Robins occurred in n. portions of the Region. A flight was noticeable in Nova Scotia during the first week of October at several locations with the high count 700+ at Brier I. Oct. 3 (*vide* JSC). Then another

flight materialized in early November with 2000+ at Peggy's Cove Nov. 15 (*vide* JSC). At S.P.M., there were several hundred present Oct. 23-24 (*vide* RE). In Maine during mid-October, there was a "great" migration with flocks of 100-300 common. Most impressive was a report of robins migrating at Black's Harbor, N.B., toward the Maine border at the rate of 4500 per hour Oct. 26 (*vide* WT). Lastly, robins were first observed moving at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., Oct. 6, and by the end of the period 11,938 had been tallied, the peak occurring Oct. 29-Nov. 1 (*vide* JG).

PIPITS THROUGH WARBLERS — Rather early were 26 Water Pipits at Brier I., N.S., Sept. 9, and 100+ were at Bon Portage I. Oct. 6 (*vide* JSC). Bohemian Waxwings put in a poor appearance except in Maine. None (!) were recorded in Newfoundland; one was at Annapolis Royal, N.S., Sept. 10; and seven were at Sable I. Nov. 17 (*vide* JSC). In Maine, arrivals were noted through November (*vide* WT) with the Orono campus hosting 335 Nov. 29 (RSH). Cedar Waxwing was singled out by most observers as not being particularly evident with no large migratory flocks being noted. However, the 17,329 Cedar Waxwings seen during the period at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., must have been coming from somewhere! Well-defined peaks occurred Sept. 15-20 and again Oct. 26-Nov. 1 (*vide* JG). By recent standards, it was a banner year for Loggerhead Shrike, with no fewer than six reported. One was seen in Dedham, Me., Aug. 26-Sept. 15 (MKL, *vide* JD); in Massachusetts individuals were observed at Marshfield Aug. 22-25 (*vide* RHS), S. Wellfleet Sept. 10 (*vide* BN), Bolton Flats Sept. 16, Provincetown Sept. 27 (*vide* RHS), and a late bird was at S. Hadley Nov. 24 to the end of the period and beyond (*vide* SK).

Most unusual were three White-eyed Vireos at Bon Portage I., N.S., two of which were banded, on the rather late date of Oct. 10-12 (*vide* DC). A Yellow-throated Vireo at Cape Spear, Nfld., Sept. 7 (Chris Brown, *vide* BMT) provided the first provincial record, and one at S.P.M. Sept. 11 (*vide* RE) was only the 3rd for that location. Twenty-one Philadelphia Vireos were banded at Appledore I., Me., Aug. 30-Sept. 14 (DWH). At Monomoy I., Mass., eight+ were seen Sept. 5 (*vide* BN), and four at Block I., R.I., Oct. 2-5 (*vide* DLE) were on the late side.

It was difficult to assess the warbler migration as most reports consisted of only extremely high counts or noteworthy late individuals. Consequently, banding reports provided the best basis for determining the migration. In Massachusetts, however, the warbler migration was considered one of the poorest showings in recent years perhaps because of a number of cold fronts and no bad weather to stall birds during the peak of migration. Three Blue-winged Warblers in Newfoundland in September (BMT, BM) brought the total of records for the province to 5. Only one was seen during September in Nova Scotia (*vide* DC), and 16 were banded at Appledore I., Me., Aug. 20-Sept. 9 (DWH). A Golden-winged Warbler at Grand Manan I., N.B., Aug. 21 (BD, *vide* WT) was an excellent find, and four in Massachusetts was higher than in recent years. Orange-crowned Warbler has now become annual in Newfoundland with one seen Sept. 24 and another Nov. 22, both at Cape Spear (BMT).

Adding to the few records for Chestnut-sided Warbler in Newfoundland were individuals at Cape Spear Sept. 26 (Chris Brown, *vide* BMT) and Cape St. Francis Oct. 11 (BMT). Black-throated Blue Warbler is as rare as Chestnut-sided in Newfoundland. Two were observed this fall (*vide* BMT), and a late individual was at Dartmouth, N.S., Nov. 11 (*vide* DC). **Black-throated Gray Warbler** is rare anywhere in this Region. Remarkably this season three were observed—at Mt. Desert Rock, Me., Aug. 31 (HC); at Chatham, Mass., Sept. 9-13 (Richard Guthrie, *vide* WB); and at Scituate, Mass., Oct. 21-23 (*vide* RHS). As most reports of the species are in October, the first 2 sightings were even more noteworthy. The Region's only Yellow-throated Warbler was seen at Seal I., N.S., Sept. 5 (*vide* DC). One **Pine Warbler** at St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 8 (BMT) provided the 5th provincial record, and the seasonal total of 17 in Nova Scotia included one in Halifax Nov. 23-24 (*vide* DC). Prairie

Warbler is also increasing in n. sections for less obvious reasons. Eighteen were recorded in Nova Scotia including one in Halifax Nov. 14 (*fide* DC). Other November reports came from St. John's, Nfld., Nov. 30 (BMT); S.P.M. Nov. 29 (*fide* RE); and Fogland, R.I., Nov. 15 (*fide* DLE). Newfoundland's first **Cerulean Warblers** were at St. John's Sept. 18-19 (BMT) and Sept. 24 at Blackhead (BMT, Paul Linegar).

Stunningly out of range was a Prothonotary Warbler at Goose Bay, Lab., Oct. 9 (BMT). One that came aboard a boat off E. Passage, N.S., Aug. 21 (*fide* DC) would have previously vied for that distinction. More normal was a Prothonotary banded at Nantucket I., Mass., Sept. 10 (*fide* RHS) and one or two present at Chatham, Mass., Sept. 12-13 (WB). A Worm-eating Warbler at Steep Falls, Me., was a surprise (*fide* WT), and the usual few were noted in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The 2nd provincial record for **Kentucky Warbler** was of one present in Frederickton, N.B., Oct. 16-20 (*fide* WT), and one was seen at Appledore I., Me. Sept. 12 (DWH). The usual scattered reports of Hooded Warblers occurred in s. sections of the Region. More unusual were birds at Biddeford Pool, Me., Sept. 6 (*fide* JD) and in Nova Scotia at Cape Sable Oct. 3 (*fide* DC) and Seal I. Oct. 11-13 (IAM). Yellow-breasted Chat can be found anywhere in the Region, but reports are concentrated in September and October. Indicative of the presence of this elusive species were banding totals of seven at Appledore I., Me., Sept. 5-14 (DWH) and of 16 at Nantucket I., Mass., Sept. 3-25 (*fide* RHS).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES — The only Summer Tanagers were in Nova Scotia, at Cape Sable I. Sept. 4 and Bon Portage I. Oct. 5 (*fide* DC), and in Maine, at Appledore I. Aug. 31 and Sept. 1 (DWH). Scarlet Tanager is less than annual in Newfoundland. Thus three in September and October were unusual (*fide* BMT), and a late individual was noted in Halifax, N.S., Nov. 19 (*fide* DC). A N. Cardinal in St. Stephen, N.B. (BD, *fide* WT), was considerably north of its range. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a feeder in Newfoundland Nov. 15-30 (*fide* BM). A well-observed Black-headed Grosbeak was in Tiverton, R.I., Oct. 14 (*fide* DLE). A Blue Grosbeak appeared at S.P.M. Oct. 24 (*fide* RE). Among the better finds of the season were two Painted Buntings, both males, at Moncton, N.B., Nov. 15 and at Halifax, N.S., Nov. 18-22 (*fide* DC). Another excellent find was a **Green-tailed Towhee** present at Seal I., N.S., Oct. 12-14 (*fide* DC).

A heavy movement of Chipping Sparrow was observed in Maine and Nova Scotia in early October. Five Clay-colored Sparrows were in Nova Scotia (*fide* DC), one was in Maine (DWH), and one was in Connecticut (LB). Of a total of 11 in Massachusetts during September and October, five were at 4 different locations Sept. 27 (*fide* RHS). A Regional total of 13 Lark Sparrows from Newfoundland to Rhode Island was very low compared to reports of 2 decades ago. Most noteworthy were individuals in Newfoundland, at Cape Spear Oct. 10-12 and Pouch Cove Oct. 11 (BMT). An unusual Grasshopper Sparrow was at Cape Spear, Nfld., Oct. 27-Nov. 7 (BMT, SIT), and Oct. 9 four were at Bon Portage I., N.S., where the rare Le Conte's Sparrow was found Oct. 5 (FLL, *fide* DC). Lincoln's Sparrow had departed Newfoundland by Sept. 14 (*fide* BMT). Six banded at Appledore I., Me., Sept. 4-13 (DWH) were fairly early, and they were plentiful in Massachusetts during early October (*fide* RHS). Lapland Longspur was better reported than in recent years with some unusually high counts. The usual scattered individuals filtered through beginning mid-September, but it wasn't until the latter part of October and November that numbers became significant. Especially favored localities were Cherry Hill, N.S., where 75 were present in late October and 120+ Nov. 7 (*fide* DC), and Monomoy I., Mass., where there were 40+ Oct. 18 and 30 Nov. 8 (*fide* BN). In w. Massachusetts, where they are scarce, 11 individuals were reported from 5 sites during the same period (*fide* SK). A truly impressive sight must have been the 3000 Snow Buntings at Quabbin Res., Mass., Nov. 1 (*fide* SK).

Like most of the western contingent, Yellow-headed Blackbird was poorly represented with the only reports being from Nova Scotia, with one each at Seal I. Oct. 14 and W. Pubnico Nov. 18 (*fide* DC), and from Massachusetts, with one at Chatham Sept. 13 (*fide* RHS). Now annual, this year's Brewer's Blackbirds were at Sable River, N.S., Sept. 21; Broad Cove, N.S., Sept. 26-27 (*fide* DC); and Truro, Mass., Oct. 25 (*fide* RHS). In Nova Scotia, there were numerous reports of single N. Orioles in late October and November (*fide* DC), and four were in Maine during November (*fide* WT).

Sandra Thun observed an orange and black finch-like bird feeding on the ground on the afternoon of Oct. 23 in Plymouth, New Hampshire. Thun, not an avid birder but a keen observer, prepared a colored sketch of the bird, which in virtually all aspects resembled a **Brambling**, most likely a female (DD). Red Crossbill fared little better than Pine Grosbeak. In Nova Scotia, they were fairly common during summer but by September had become much scarcer (*fide* DC). A few appeared in Maine in late November (*fide* WT), and 50 were at S.P.M. Nov. 20 (*fide* RE). In w. Massachusetts, a total of 62 were recorded at 6 locations Oct. 15-Nov. 30 (*fide* SK). White-winged Crossbill followed its own pattern. In Newfoundland, it was present in small numbers at traditional localities (BM), but in Nova Scotia it was present in the "thousands" in summer, had become less common by September, and only small flocks remained in November (*fide* DC). In Maine, White-winged were common in e. coastal areas in August and were still common there in November (when a good cone crop existed) but in diminished numbers (*fide* WT). Farther south there were only occasional small flocks, mostly in November. Common Redpoll was virtually absent in the Region. However, a flight developed at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., where 361 passed by Nov. 20-24 (*fide* JG).

The finch of the season was Pine Siskin. Good or excellent numbers of breeding birds were present in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia into September, at which point they began to pull out. The last was seen in Newfoundland Oct. 19 (BM), and siskins had departed S.P.M. by Oct. 16 (*fide* RE). A heavy flight was observed at Petit Manan N.W.R., Me., during the last 10 days of September (*fide* WT), and at Bon Portage I., N.S., 3700 were counted Oct. 5-12 (*fide* DC). Siskins began showing up in s. sections of the Region in late September and early October, but by mid-October the influx had begun. At Lighthouse Pt., Conn., where 10,081 were noted for the season, 2610 were seen Oct. 12-18, and another 1815 were observed Nov. 16-22 (*fide* JG). Along coastal Massachusetts, one day clearly stands out—Nov. 15. Observed that day were 300 at Plum I., 340 at Rockport, 255 in Marshfield, and 125+ at Monomoy I. (*fide* RHS). An indication that the migration was largely coastal was a total of only 1200 for the season in w. Massachusetts beginning Sept. 27 (*fide* SK). Many observers felt Am. Goldfinch was present in above average numbers, and the supposition was borne out with counts of 800 at Bon Portage I., N.S., Oct. 4-12 (*fide* DC) and of 7424 for the season at Lighthouse Pt., Conn., where the peak occurred Nov. 12-22 (*fide* JB). In summary, the finches remained nomadic and opportunistic, and their seasonal movements are impossible to predict.

UNVERIFIED REPORTS — A Chough was seen and photographed at Newtown, Conn., Nov. 23-24. Further details and documentation have not been forthcoming. The origin of this bird will remain suspect as it is a permanent resident within its range.

CORRIGENDA FOR WINTER 1986-1987 SEASON — The Red Knot reported from Mary's Point, N.B. (not N.S.), was on Dec 31, not in "early December." The Cocagne bridge location for Barrow's Goldeneye is in New Brunswick, not Prince Edward Island. The easternmost location for House Finches in New Brunswick to date is Sackville, not Moncton. Harlequin Ducks are rare in the upper Bay of Fundy only.

OBSERVERS — George N. Appel, Wallace Bailey, Jim Berry, Louis Bevier, Roger Burrows, J. Shirley Cohrs, Harriett Corbett, David Currie, Brian Dalzell, Diane DeLuca, Glenn d'Entremont, Jody Despres, Charles D. Duncan, David L. Emerson, Roger Etchberry, Richard A. Forster, George W. Gove, John Granton, Richard S. Heil, David W. Holmes, Mark Kasprzyk, Seth Kellogg, Vernon

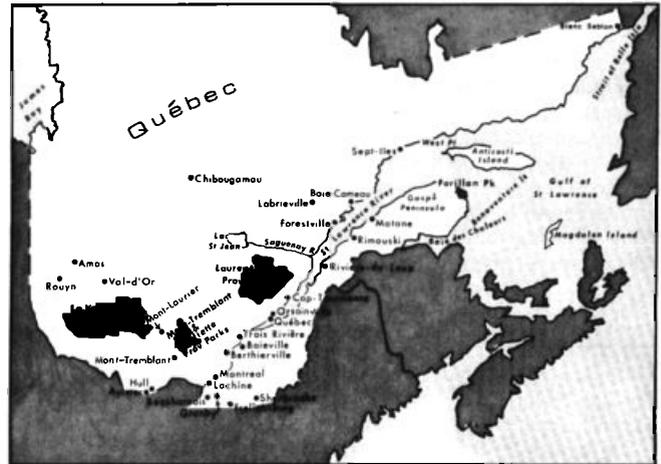
Laux, Fulton L. Lavendar, Michael K. Lucey, Bruce Mactavish (BMT), Frank Mantlik, Blake Maybank, Ian A. McLaren, Blair Nikula, Peter Payzant, Eric Salmela, Bruce Sorrie, Frances Spaulding, Robert H. Stymeist, Stuart I. Tingley, William Townsend, John Wells, Ralph Widrig.—**RICHARD A. FORSTER, 257 Exchange St., Millis, MA 02054.**

QUEBEC REGION

Yves Aubry, Michel Gosselin, and Richard Yank

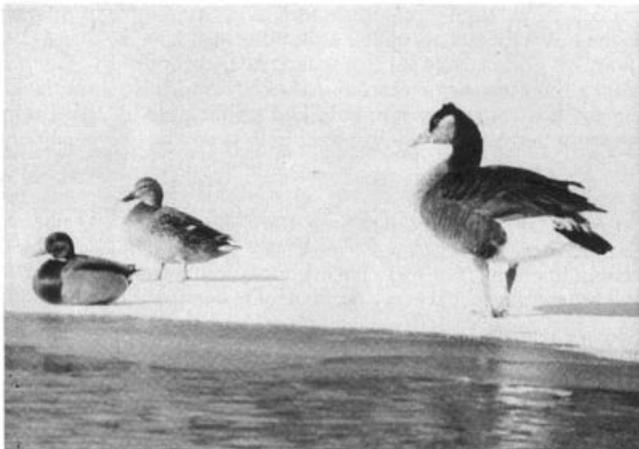
Following a cold November, mild weather prevailed across the Region in December, with average temperatures 2–4°C above normal recorded in the south. Temperatures fell below the mean in northern Quebec during January but continued mild in the southern one-half of the province. Precipitation levels were below average for both months. Cold temperatures and heavy snowfall predominated during February, which as a result proved to be the most wintry month of the season. Warm conditions and extensive areas of open water throughout much of the period induced a number of half-hardy species to linger farther north than usual.

GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL — Among submitted reports of late grebes, a Pied-billed at Chicoutimi Dec. 24 (GS, CC) and a Red-necked at Cap-des-Rosiers Jan. 4 (SA) are worth highlighting. A Great Blue Heron remained at Cap-Rouge until Jan. 4 (LM et al.). We can only speculate on the origin of a **Mute Swan** present at Pointe-des-Cascades Feb. 28 (PB). An ad. Greater White-fronted Goose of the Greenland race accompanied a small group of Canada Geese on L. Magog Dec. 21–27 (DL et al.), setting a new late departure record. A Snow Goose lingered at Berthier-sur-Mer on the record late date of Dec. 26 (DRo), and a flock of 15 that flew over Saint-Romuald-d'Etchemin Feb. 29 (YA et al.) was early; on the same day four Canada Geese were seen at Greenlay (DL, DP). Mid-winter sightings of Canada Geese included singles at Victoriaville Jan. 6–15 (RD), Wakefield Jan. 19 (EM, fide DT), Chambly Feb. 2 (LL), and Rouyn Feb. 12–26 (JLp, DDe); an injured bird also survived the season at Dégelis (JPL). The marked increase in



wintering Canada Geese during the past decade may be as much the result of the documented population explosion as of milder winters.

An imm. ♂ Green-winged Teal, for which we have very few wintering records, was observed at Châteauguay until at least Mar. 6 (PB, JLu), and a ♀ N. Shoveler was quite late at LaSalle Dec. 12 (KT). The group of 20 Gadwalls found at LaSalle Jan. 31 gradually dwindled in size, with the last two seen Feb. 14 (PB). Lone Com. Eiders appeared at the Beauharnois dam Dec. 6–12 (KM, m.ob.) and Côte-Sainte-Catherine Dec. 9 (GP). Also casual in w. Quebec, single pairs of Harlequin Ducks frequented rapids at Hull Dec. 13–Jan. 31 (MD, m.ob.) and LaSalle Dec. 28–Mar. 11 (JCS, PB). An impressive count of 27,500 Oldsquaws was made at Tadoussac Dec. 28 (GCh et al.); a Black Scoter was tardy at Alma Dec. 27 (NT et al.). The wintering of six Hooded Mergansers at Dégelis (PF) was worthy of mention.



Probable hybrid Canada Goose x domestic Graylag Goose (with a pair of Mallards) at Katevale, Quebec, Jan. 16, 1988. Photo/D. Perron.

RAPTORS THROUGH OWLS — Cooper's Hawk is seldom encountered in the Region during winter; this year, however, at least seven birds were located, at North-Hatley Dec. 31 (JP, ACy), Cap-Santé Jan. 10 (CV, GL, CN), Dorval Jan. 10–Feb. 29+ (BB, MMc), Bedford Jan. 31–Feb. 20 (PB, RY), Compton Feb. 6 (GGa), Ormstown Feb. 7 (PB), and Saint-Hubert Feb. 17 (JLu). Other sightings were submitted without supporting details. The mild weather prompted two Rough-legged Hawks to overwinter at Cap-Tourmente (fide CV) and one to tarry at Saint-Simon, Rimouski Co., until Jan. 16 (GGe, DRu). Uncommon in winter, a Merlin was noted at Hull Jan. 27 (DSH). At least 16 Gyrfalcons reached s. Quebec, representing the best showing in at least 6 years and the 2nd "good" winter in a row for this raptor.

On Jan. 11, a Com. Moorhen, recognized by old injuries, returned to the Léry backyard pond where it had overwintered last year; the bird was still there Mar. 3 (ALe). Among a small group of shorebirds still at Longueuil Dec. 2 (DDa) were a Black-bellied Plover, two Lesser Yellowlegs, and two Pectoral Sand-

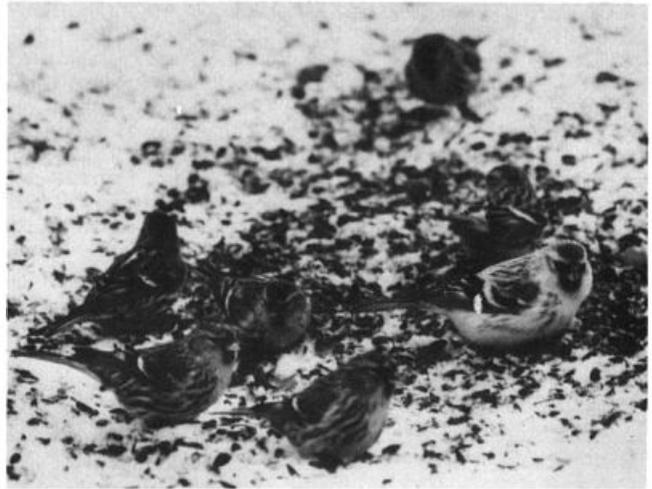
pipers, all record late. A Greater Yellowlegs was also unprecedentedly late at Baie-Comeau Nov. 28 (SM). Solitary Com. Snipes successfully wintered at Plessisville (ACo) and Beauport (CV); for some unknown reason, we receive a surprising number of winter sightings for this species from the Quebec City region compared to sites farther south. A gull in flight at Pointeau-Père Dec. 22 (DRu, GGe) was identified as an ad. Mew Gull by its all-yellow bill and extensive white mirrors on the black wing tips. An imm. Thayer's Gull was studied near Rimouski Dec. 13 (GGe), and an adult was observed at LaSalle Feb. 14 (PB). Equaling the late departure record, an imm. Black-legged Kittiwake paused at the Beauharnois dam Jan. 2-10 (PB). A Mourning Dove survived the season at a Baie-Comeau feeder (CH), the first such occurrence on the N. Shore.

While the Snowy Owls that invaded s. Quebec late in the fall gradually moved on, N. Hawk-Owl numbers continued to increase during the period. Some 15 were tallied in the Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean area in December (fide CC), and 16 more showed up at various locations in s. Quebec. Great Gray Owls also staged a widespread invasion with a total of 26 individuals reported, including eight along the North Shore. Two Short-eared Owls at Chicoutimi Jan. 16-17 (GS, CC, JI) represented the first local winter record, and an exciting concentration of up to 26 wintered at Brossard (PB, m.ob.)—many roosting in suburban backyards during the day! The total of five Boreal Owls was slightly more than usual, but noteworthy were solitary N. Saw-whet Owls detected at Neigette (GGe), La Pocatière (CA), Saint-Honoré (FG), Lévis (SL et al.), Sorel (PM), and Milby (fide SD) in January and February; this species is considered an uncommon and irregular winter resident in extreme s.w. Quebec.

KINGFISHERS THROUGH FINCHES — A Belted Kingfisher remained at Sherbrooke throughout the season (CD), and others lingered at Eardly (GDe, MR), Chelsea (MR), and Valleyfield (MMc, JLu, v.ob.) until mid-January. An imm. Red-headed Woodpecker was attracted to a feeder in Saint-Hyacinthe Nov. 22-Dec. 12 (ND), an ad. Red-headed was found at Sainte-Foy Jan. 31 (GDu), and a vagrant Red-bellied Woodpecker reached the Gaspé Pen. for the first time, at Bonaventure Dec. 13-Feb. 29 (RB). A wintering N. Flicker at a feeder in Bergeronnes (AB et al.) constituted another first for the N. Shore. A partially melanistic Black-capped Chickadee joined a Tufted Titmouse at feeders in Bedford throughout the period (PB et al., ph.), and other Tufted Titmice wintered at Saint-Césaire (AV) and in Sherbrooke (MMu, ALa). Locally rare were White-breasted Nuthatches at Chicoutimi Dec. 23-Jan. 9 (FBo, DDo et al.); Rimouski until Feb. 11 (CGa); and Saint-Eusèbe, Témiscouata Co., all season (MB). The Carolina Wren reported at Baie-d'Urfé during the fall was seen until at least Feb. 13 (WZ), and a late report was submitted of one on Saint-Bernard I. Nov. 15 (JB). Additional sightings involved singles encountered in Senneville Jan. 19 (fide JA), Dorval Feb. 20 (RG), and Sherbrooke Dec. 16 into February (RS, JR). Cap-Tourmente produced a late Winter Wren Jan. 3 (GL, CN).

A ♂ Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Bedford until Feb. 28 (PB) was truly exceptional, as only one previous wintering record existed for Quebec. Rare visitants to the Region, single Townsend's Solitaires wandered to La Baie Dec. 12-13 (GS, CC et al.), Lac-Beauport Dec. 29-Jan. 5 (YH, m.ob.), and Bristol Jan. 10 (JD); a feeder in Shannon enticed a Hermit Thrush to overwinter (HA). A ♀ Varied Thrush wintered at Aylmer (JD), and another came regularly to a Saint-Jean feeder until Jan. 18 (DE, m.ob.). Single Yellow-rumped Warblers visited feeding stations in Baie-Comeau Dec. 9-Feb. 3 (RL et al.), Dorion Dec. 27-Mar. 12 (PB), and Gatineau Dec. 20-Jan. 16 (ACI, EC).

A ♀ N. Cardinal at La Baie Dec. 1-10 (CB et al.) furnished a 3rd Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean record, and four others brightened localities around Quebec City (fide CV). Notable sparrow sightings were provided by a vagrant Rufous-sided Towhee of the w. race that wintered at Rimouski (GH), a displaced ad. Field Sparrow at Saint-Anaclet Dec. 13-Feb. 29+ (DRu, CR, GGe), a late Swamp Sparrow at Cartierville Dec. 20 (LL), and



Hoary Redpoll of the nominate race (*C. h. hornemanni*) with Common Redpolls at Alma, Quebec, Dec. 28, 1987. Photo/Michel Savard.

wintering White-crowned Sparrows at Beauport (JFR, SB) and Boucherville (FBL). Two meadowlarks (sp.) fed by the roadside near Ormstown Feb. 7 (PB), and the only Yellow-headed Blackbird to be noted in the Region was an imm. male that stayed at Léry Dec. 29-Jan. 24 (ALE). A ♀ Hoary Redpoll of the Greenland/Baffin nominate subspecies was present in Alma Dec. 26-Feb. 24 and was joined by another Feb. 7-21 (MS, CGi, ph.). To our knowledge, it was the first time that this subspecies was recorded in s. Quebec, although there are a few records from the Great Lakes and the East Coast (see AB 41:406 for further details). The n. finch invasion was not spectacular; nevertheless, Com. Redpolls, Pine Siskins, and Am. Goldfinches were very evident at feeders in s. Quebec. By contrast, Pine and Evening grosbeak numbers were below average.

S.A.

An ad. ♂ European Greenfinch turned up with flocks of Am. Goldfinches and Pine Siskins at a Pointe-Claire feeder Dec. 10-Feb. 29+ (MC, BB, MMc). When the same feeder greeted a Eur. Goldfinch Dec. 12-Feb. 29+, the simultaneous presence of two European finches was immediately attributed to escaped caged birds. This may well have been the case, as both species are kept in captivity by a number of local aviculturalists. However, with a Eur. Kestrel in the Maritimes and a Eur. Siskin in Ontario this winter, it is difficult to draw hard-and-fast conclusions. At least three other Eur. Goldfinches were seen on Montreal I. this season and, even more intriguing, one was present at Gaspé Jan. 9-Feb. 29 (G) et al., ph.). In the bird world, many things that at first seemed improbable have later proven to be true. In any case, the speculated origin of stray birds has no importance whatsoever; what matters are the patterns that ultimately develop from these occurrences.

The Eur. Greenfinch is resident as far west as the Azores and is an occasional visitor to Iceland. In October 1927, three birds managed to cross to Newfoundland on a ship (*Brit. Birds* 21:282). During the "European Express" winter of 1961-1962, birds were seen Dec. 30, 200 mi off the w. coast of Ireland (*Sea Swallow* 15:28), and one was present on Long Island, N.Y. (*Auk* 80:201). Another mid-Atlantic report comes from 59°00'N-19°00'W, Oct. 11, 1973 (*Sea Swallow* 24:33), and other records from continental North America include one in Lewis County, N.Y., in March 1878 (*Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club* 5:119) and one in St. John, N.B., in March 1977 (AB 31:977).

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HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION

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

The winter of 1987–1988 was similar in many respects to the preceding one; temperatures averaged near normal, with a mild December and moderate February sandwiched around a bitterly cold first half of January. Precipitation was somewhat above average, but much of it fell as rain during the milder parts of the season.

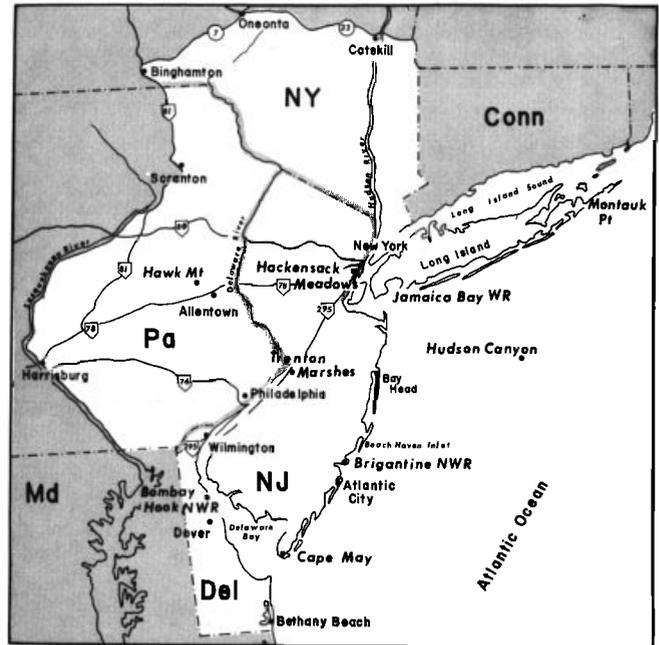
The moderate weather early in the season contributed to a good variety of late-lingering species through the end of the year, but the abundance of rarities that characterized the fall was not echoed in the winter. Pennsylvania's first Green-tailed Towhee was the highlight of the period, though a selection of other unusual records included a tantalizing report of a possible Yellow-billed Loon on Long Island. Except for some of the common waterfowl, the regular wintering birds were in short supply, especially songbirds. A modest winter finch flight in January and February brought both species of crossbills to the northern half of the Region.

ABBREVIATIONS — Bombay Hook = Bombay Hook Nat'l Wildlife Ref., near Smyrna, Del.; Brig = Brigantine Unit, Edwin B. Forsythe Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Atlantic, N.J.; Cape Henlopen = Cape Henlopen S. P., near Lewes, Del. Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — Hundreds of Red-throated Loons were still migrating past Avalon, Cape May, N.J., in early December (DW), and the species was well represented on coastal CBCs. Thereafter, they thinned out, except for the usual concentrations at Cape May and on e. Long Island. A Pacific Loon was seen for much of the day on the Barnegat, N.J., CBC for the 4th record in 6 years. Remarkably, the Common Loon with an extremely deformed bill (see photo, AB 41:261) returned to Manasquan Inlet, Ocean, N.J., for a 2nd winter. Apparently, a crossed bill can be used for fishing as well as for extracting seeds from cones.

After their big fall showing, Pied-billed Grebes were widespread and common over much of the Region, although the January freeze chased many south. Red-necked Grebes, on the other hand, were decidedly scarce. Eight were at Montauk for the CBC, some lingering later, and three were in coastal New Jersey during the same period; thereafter, the only reports were three singles in Cape May and two in Delaware, all in February.

A Brown Pelican was found alive at Quogue, Suffolk, L.I., Dec. 2 by a local landowner. By the time Carl Helms of the Quogue Wildlife Sanctuary arrived the next day, the bird, which was wearing a Fish & Wildlife Service Band, had died, but the specimen was preserved. Oddly, another Brown Pelican



was reported at about the same time sitting on a roof at Eisenhower Park, near Hempstead, Nassau, L.I. (fide TWB). With the recent summer influxes of Brown Pelicans into s. New Jersey, there have been several reports from Long Island, but a winter record is unheard of.

Each winter brings accounts of Great Cormorant even farther afield than in the preceding year; this season's pioneers were two on the Susquehanna R., Lancaster, Pa., Dec. 20 (fide RMS) and several birds along the Hudson R. in New York, including two at Newburgh, Orange (E. Treacy, B. Slechta); one at Cornwall Bay, Orange, Dec. 27; and four at Nyack Beach S.P., Rockland, Dec. 28 (PDe). Wintering Double-crested Cormorants are commonplace in coastal waters, but two birds at different sites in Dutchess, N.Y., were out of place (MVW, MY, DF).

Good numbers of Am. Bitterns were found in coastal New Jersey and Long Island, mainly on CBCs. With the mild weather, Long Island CBCs combined to locate most of the Region's herons and egrets, including a Tricolored Heron, several Green-backed Herons, a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, and two Glossy Ibises. Forty-five Black-crowned Night-Herons in the Hackensack R. marshes at Kearny, Hudson, N.J., was an unusually large winter concentration (RK). A very late Cattle Egret well inland at Pennington, Mercer, N.J., Dec. 3 was far from any Regional heronry (PR).

WATERFOWL — Tundra Swans were again reported wintering in large flocks throughout the s. part of the Region, and three were at 2 sites on e. Long Island, where the species is uncommon but has now become a regular winter visitor (*vide* TWB). The abundant flocks of Snow Geese wintering in Delaware and s. New Jersey included several Ross' Geese. Two were at Primehook N.W.R., Sussex, Del., Dec. 3 (NH); another was at Bombay Hook later in the month; and a blue morph was at Brig Dec. 26 (TC *et al.*). Six adult and one immature Greater White-fronted Geese of the Greenland race were at Bombay Hook Dec. 2 (NH), with one still present for the CBC. Another White-fronted Goose was at Cove Creek, Pa., Dec. 24 (B & NM). A Barnacle Goose was at Mannington Marsh, Salem, N.J., Jan. 31 with a flock of 16,000 Canada Geese (JH).

Seven Eur. Wigeon in coastal New Jersey, six on Long Island and one in Westchester, N.Y., were about average numbers. The familiar Tufted Duck returned to New York City's Central Park this winter but was seen only a few times; it presumably wintered on the nearby rivers with the abundant scaup. An impressive flock of about 12,000 Greater Scaup were at Sandy Hook, Monmouth, N.J., through the season.

After an excellent fall showing, eiders were surprisingly scarce. Two Com. Eiders were at Dewey Beach, Sussex, Del., Dec. 19–Jan. 6 (J. White, B. Lego), but the concentrations at Montauk, L.I., and at Cape May dwindled during December, with only a few birds found later in the season. About six King Eiders were on Long Island during January, with a similar number at Cape May during the season, including one that lingered into April; the southernmost was a first-winter drake at Indian River Inlet, Sussex, Del., Jan. 6–15 (WWF). Up to one dozen Harlequin Ducks were at scattered locations on Long Island during the winter, but only three were reported from New Jersey (none from the traditional Eighth St. jetty at Barnegat Light). Two were at Hereford Inlet, Cape May, in December, and a female wintered at Shark River Inlet, Monmouth. To the south, a drake spent the season at Indian River Inlet, Del. (m.ob.). A White-winged Scoter at Harvey's Lake, Luzerne, Pa., Jan. 16–22 was extraordinary for mid-winter (WR *et al.*).

RAPTORS — Recent winter summaries have noted the increasing number of well-documented reports of Ospreys lingering late into December, perhaps as some members of the increasing population are encouraged to linger by the mild weather and available open water. This season again produced 5 records, but this time the birds stayed later than ever. On Long Island, an Osprey spent the entire winter at Connetquot River S. P. (G. Bergen, m.ob.), and another was seen 15 mi east at S Haven Jan. 10 (Jack Ruscica). One at Dennisville, Cape May, Dec. 14 was not too unusual (CS), but the bird seen at Somers Point, Atlantic, Feb. 25 may have wintered around the open waters of Great Egg Harbor (P. Kosten). More remarkable still was an Osprey reported from Beltzville L., Carbon, Pa., Jan. 19 (D. Bell, A. Kronschnabel *et al.*).

Bald Eagles again wintered in excellent numbers, with dozens of reports coming from all parts of the Region, including 50 on a Feb. 16 census in s.e. New York west of the Hudson R (*vide* JPT). In Salem, N.J., a pair again showed interest in nesting; although they failed to follow through, their continued construction of 2 large nests spurs hope that they will soon become the state's 2nd breeding pair. Many observers again commented on the abundance of wintering Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks, especially at feeders. Numerous N. Goshawks included one on the Bombay Hook CBC (J. Miller). A sighting of a dark Red-tailed Hawk near Bethlehem, Pa., Dec. 26 furnished an unusual record of a color phase seldom seen in our Region (DDe). Five Golden Eagles wintered in New Jersey, and one was around Hawk Mt., Berks, Pa. (*vide* LG); another was seen along the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Morgantown, Berks, Jan. 3 (J. Walck, C. Brightbill).

The numerous reports of wintering Peregrine Falcons included birds in downtown Wilmington, Del., and in Philadelphia, a pair that has taken up residence on the Tappan Zee Bridge, N.Y., may increase the Regional breeding census. A

first-year Gyrfalcon was found injured at Pine Plains, Dutchess, N.Y., Dec. 3 in the same area where another Gyr delighted birders last winter; this female's broken wing was reset, but it is doubtful she will fly again. A dark-phased Gyrfalcon was seen hunting over the marshes at Brig Dec. 26 (TC *et al.*) but was not reported again; yet another dark Gyrfalcon was described from Jones Beach, L.I., Feb. 21 (M. Cooper *et al.*).

RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — A Virginia Rail wintered at a marsh in Lime Crest, Sussex, in n.w. New Jersey (JZ), but most unusual was a Sora discovered at Piermont, N.Y., Jan. 7 for the first winter record for Rockland County (CH, C. Weiss). A Sandhill Crane reported from Woodland Beach W.M.A., Kent, Del., Dec. 18 (*vide* APE) was seen again Dec. 31 (J. Thomas).

A Semipalmated Plover on the Montauk CBC Dec. 19 was the 2nd ever for that count (K. Fuestel) but was the only Regional report after last winter's five. American Oystercatchers again made many of the Long Island and New Jersey CBCs (with 108 at Cape May), and three were still at Hereford Inlet, Cape May, Jan. 17 (*vide* PS). Wintering Am. Avocets at Little Creek W.M.A., Kent, Del., declined from 81+ in early December to 23 on Feb. 28 (NH). Three Willets were on 2 Long Island CBCs, and a Hudsonian Godwit (not the same bird) lingered at Rye, Westchester, N.Y., into December for the 2nd year in a row (TWB). Like the three Marbled Godwits at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Ref., N.Y.C., that stayed until Dec. 12 (SW), the Hudsonian departed prior to the CBC period.

A White-rumped Sandpiper was a good find on the Bombay Hook CBC (DAC, SSp, WJW), but unprecedented was the **Baird's Sandpiper** found and photographed on the Cape May CBC Dec. 20 (DAC, C. Dooley, D. Jones, R. Mercer, ph. K. Seager). This apparently provided the latest record ever in the Region for this species, which is seldom found anywhere in North America at that date. A Pectoral Sandpiper at Woodland Beach W.M.A. Feb. 23 was presumably a very early migrant (P. Vanderhorst, JB).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Pomarine Jaeger standing in the parking lot at Captree S.P., L.I., was an easy find for that CBC, and a Parasitic Jaeger made the Sandy Hook, N.J., CBC. Little Gulls were more widely noted than in recent winters, especially on the Montauk CBC, where 10 were counted among an unprecedented concentration of 20,000 Bonaparte's Gulls (K. Able). Elsewhere during the season, at least three others were on Long Island in February and six were in New Jersey and two in Delaware. Numbers of Com Black-headed Gulls were about average, with five on Long Island, seven in New Jersey, and an immature at Indian River Inlet, Del., Dec. 22 (NH).

White-winged gulls were relatively scarce; only about seven Iceland Gulls were reported from New Jersey, with a comparable number from Long Island. One of the latter was an adult wintering at Shinnecock Inlet that showed no dark in the wingtips and was believed to be of the nominate race *glaucoides* (PGi). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were again plentiful, and the number reported was surely well below the number seen, since it is no longer considered a rarity. Other than about 15 in New Jersey and a half-dozen on Long Island, there were 2 reports from Lancaster, Pa. (RMS). The best gull of the season was an imm. Sabine's Gull Dec. 8 seen passing Avalon, Cape May, N.J., where Dave Ward mans an autumn sea watch (DW).

A Dovekie was picked up oiled at Island Beach S.P., Ocean, N.J., Dec. 27, cleaned, and released the next day (G. & J. Castro); a few others were seen on a pelagic trip off Cape May in January (PGu). A small scattering of Razorbills was seen off New Jersey and at Montauk, where one bird lingered to Feb. 27 (MO). A highlight of the Montauk CBC was a Black Guillemot (BS).

OWLS THROUGH SHRIKES — Most species of owls were not as abundant as in last winter, but there was a good variety in some areas; Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx had eight species for the season. At least five Snowy Owls were in accessible locations on Long Island; there were four reported in New

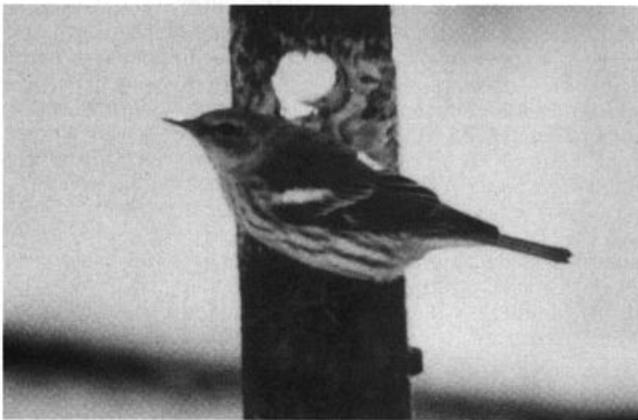
Jersey (only two of which lingered); and Lancaster, Pa., had four birds, mainly in December. A remarkable 16 N. Saw-whet Owls were found in the traditional groves at Thorofare, Gloucester, N.J., during the winter (EMa).

Six E. Phoebes on the S. Lancaster County CBC made an unusually high total, but one of the highlights of the season was a Say's Phoebe found on the Hamburg, Pa., CBC in the same location that one was found on the 1985 CBC (P. Saenger, D. Klem); unlike that bird, however, this one could not be relocated. Tree Swallows apparently attempted to winter in the Region, with two at Jones Beach, L.I., to Jan. 3 (fide TWB) and 150 retreating from the bitter cold at Higbee Beach W.M.A., Cape May, Jan. 10 (JDo). A Com. Raven seen on the Hamburg CBC and later in January around Hawk Mt. was not unexpected, given recent occurrences (fide LG), nor were four at Claryville, Sullivan, N.Y., Dec. 8 (S.C.A.S.). But one at Allentown on the Lehigh Valley CBC and two upriver at the Delaware Water Gap Feb. 24 (PDU) continued the trend of more frequent and widespread reports of this increasing species.

Fifteen Brown-headed Nuthatches on the Rehobeth, Del., CBC were indicative of a small but stable population at the n. limit of the species' range; a pair was observed storing seeds in the well-known nesthole in a piling at Henlopen Acres Feb. 20 (NH). Winter Wrens were reported in much better numbers than in recent years, especially on CBCs, and one or two Sedge Wrens at Gordon Pond, Cape Henlopen, Dec. 8–Jan. 16 were in a potential new nesting location for this very rare Regional breeder (NH).

A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was found on the Sandy Hook, N.J., CBC, but one at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx Dec. 22 managed to elude CBC searchers the following weekend. One **Bohemian Waxwing** in a flock of Cedar Waxwings at Tamarack, Dutchess, N.Y., Dec. 5 provided only the 4th Regional record for the past decade (MVW). Northern Shrikes were scarcer this year, with only two in New Jersey, one in Pennsylvania, and two on Long Island, except in Dutchess and Putnam, N.Y., which had a total of five (R.T.W.B.C.). A Loggerhead Shrike on the Wyncote, Pa., CBC furnished the only report of the season.

WARBLERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — Three Orange-crowned Warblers were on Long Island in December, and two were in New Jersey in January, including one that wintered at an arboretum in Eatontown, Monmouth (m.ob.). A Nashville Warbler was at Alpine, Bergen, N.J., Dec. 19 for the local CBC; another was in Pelham Bay Park Dec. 25 (SW); and two were found there on the Bronx-Westchester CBC Dec. 27. A December record of Yellow Warbler is practically unheard of in this Region as the species is one of the earliest of our warblers to depart for winter quarters; consequently, the presence of three different individuals borders on the incredible. One was a regular visitor to a backyard in Avalon, Cape May, Dec. 8–24



Male Cape May Warbler at a feeder in Philadelphia, Pa., December 1987. Photo/F. and H. Houser.



Green-tailed Towhee at Honey Hollow Environmental Ed. Center, Bucks Co., Pa., winter 1987–1988. Photo/Bob Mitchell.

(DW); another was seen by several parties at DeKorte S. P., Bergen, N.J., on the Lower Hudson CBC (E & GM et al.); and a 3rd was found at Little Creek W.M.A. on the Bombay Hook CBC (WJW, SSp, JB).

A ♂ Cape May Warbler first noted Oct. 26 remained for the winter at a Philadelphia feeder, being last seen Feb. 1 (fide P. Weirick, m.ob., ph. F. & H. Houser), but a ♂ **Black-throated Gray Warbler** that spent the morning of Dec. 13 in a Cranford, Union, N.J., backyard was seen only once more, on Christmas Day (ph. E.&W. Greenstone). A number of Pine Warblers were found on CBCs, as usual, but a Prairie Warbler on the Montauk CBC provided a first for that count (D. Houle). The Avalon, N.J., yard that harbored a Yellow Warbler also hosted a Wilson's Warbler Dec. 8 (DW), and another was found on the Bronx-Westchester CBC. Rounding out this long list of winter warblers were a Yellow-breasted Chat at Cape Henlopen Dec. 8 (NH) plus the usual scattering on several CBCs.

Northern Cardinal was certainly doing well, as evidenced by the high counts on many CBCs, such as 460 on the Princeton, N.J., count; 35 at a Coatesville, Pa., feeder at one time must have been a sight to behold (PH). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen on the Bronx-Westchester CBC, and a Dickcissel was found on the Hamburg, Pa., CBC; the only other Dickcissels were noted at Pt. Pleasant, Ocean, N.J., Feb. 14 (GH) and at Goshen, Cape May, Feb. 18 (CS). The highlight of the season, however, was the imm. **Green-tailed Towhee** first noted at the feeder at Honey Hollow Environmental Center, Bucks, Pa., Dec. 23. It was not seen again until Jan. 6 but became a regular visitor thereafter and was still present in early April. Providing the first record for Pennsylvania, this individual was seen and photographed by many (B. McNaught, m.ob.).

Perhaps owing to the mild weather, Chipping Sparrows were more widely reported than usual from the s. part of the Region, but a Clay-colored Sparrow on the Rehobeth, Del., CBC was unique (D. Shoch, J. Buckley). Two Vesper Sparrows were found on the Cumberland, N.J., CBC, and one in Dutchess, N.Y., Jan. 5 furnished the first winter record in many years, although these sparrows were once common (E. Pink, MVW, D. Smith). Two "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrows at Delaware City, New Castle, Del., Dec. 7 were far from the usual coastal haunts of this uncommon subspecies (JKM). The Cumberland CBC also produced the season's only Lincoln's Sparrow.

An "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco frequented the feeders at the New Jersey Audubon Sanctuary in Bernardsville, Somerset, during January and February (DF). A small scattering of Lapland Longspurs reached the Region, usually with flocks of Horned Larks or Snow Buntings; a count of 88 at Farmingdale, L.I., in February was exceptional (SW). The season's total of eight Yellow-headed Blackbirds included four in Salem and

one in Morris, N.J., two at Taylor's Bridge, New Castle, Del., Jan. 4 (N. Pulcinella, JF); and one at a Riverhead, L.I., feeder Jan. 9 (D. Sauers). The nearly 20 reports of *N. Oriole* included one female of the Bullock's subspecies at a feeder in Goshen, Cape May, Dec. 24 (CS).

FINCHES — Winter finches staged a moderate invasion, especially in the n.w. parts of the Region, mainly in late January and February. Eighteen Pine Grosbeaks were at Yellowframe, Sussex, N.J., Dec. 10 (G. Johnson), and 25 were at Mongaup Falls Res., Sullivan, Jan. 3 (S.C.A.S.), but they were otherwise absent from the flocks of northern visitors. Both species of crossbills were present in good numbers; Red Crossbills made their best showing of the decade, with numerous flocks of 2–3 dozen in n.e. Pennsylvania, s. New York, and n. New Jersey, including a high total of 130 at W. Milford, Wayne, N.J., Feb. 29 (RK). Seven Red Crossbills ventured as far south as Delaware, Pa., and were tallied on the Glenolden CBC Dec. 16 (E. Fingerhood *et al.*). White-winged Crossbills were less widespread, with a peak count of 75 at W. Milford in February, but a small flock visited a Millville, Cumberland, N.J., feeder in early January (RBA). Only a handful of Com. Redpoll sightings were reported, but the most abundant by far of the winter finches was Pine Siskin, which was present in flocks numbering in the hundreds throughout the Region.

EXOTICS — The list of presumed escapees included Monk Parakeet in New York; Ringed Turtle-Dove in Delaware; and Egyptian Goose (four), Bar-headed Goose, Chukar, Indian Hill Myna, and Eur. Goldfinch in New Jersey.

UNCONFIRMED REPORTS — A description and a sketch of a bird thought to be a Yellow-billed Loon, seen by a single observer at Montauk Jan. 30, was both interesting and tantalizing (†). Huff; although the dark ear patch was not noted, the details were otherwise accurate. The only confirmed record for the species from our

Region has been of a partial specimen found on Long Island in early 1930, but given its recent appearance in Manitoba, Illinois, and Michigan, its vagrancy to the east coast is certainly not out of the question.

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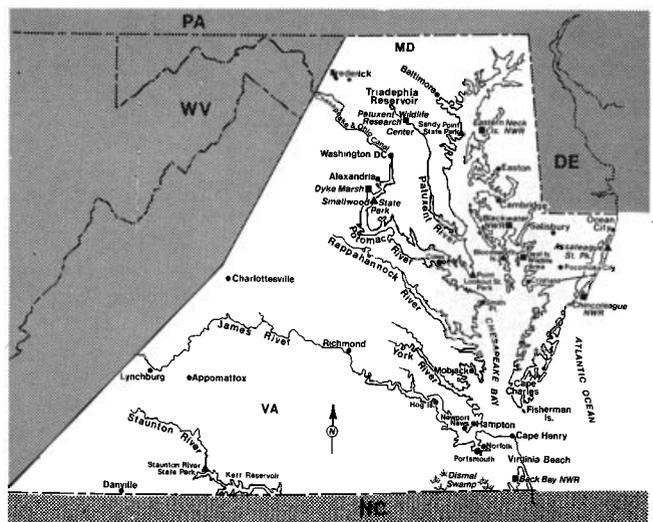
MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Henry T. Armistead

This was a dry winter with deficit rain, and the only major snowfall came at the end of the first week of January. The first half of January was bitterly cold, triggering late flights of waterfowl. December and February were mild. In spite of a mild December, few lingering birds were seen. Instead, most of the unusual birds were of western origin. It was a good winter for many waterfowl, eagles, gulls, woodpeckers, bluebirds, and after December at least, for goldfinches and siskins. It was not a good season for most northern irruptives.

ABBREVIATIONS — Back Bay = Back Bay Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Va.; the Bay = Chesapeake Bay; C.B.B.T. = Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel, Va.; Chinc. = Chincoteague Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Va.; Craney = Craney Island Disposal Area, Portsmouth, Va.; D.C. = Washington, D.C.; Fish. I. = Fisherman's Island Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Va.; Susq. = the lower Susquehanna R. area, Md., from Conowingo Dam downstream. Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — Unusual inland were single Red-throated Loons at Triadelphia Res. north of D.C. Dec. 12–26 (CS, JS); Kerr Res. on the North Carolina line east of Danville,



Va., Jan. 3 (SR); and up the Bay at Cove Pt., Calvert, Md., Dec. 6 (JLS). At Swan Pt., Kent, Md., 43 Com. Loons Dec. 4 were a good late fall count (JG). Horned Grebe numbers were up



Great Cormorant at Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, Va., Feb. 20, 1988. This species continues to increase as a wintering bird farther south on the Atlantic Coast. Photo/George Armistead.

somewhat with 800 at Back Bay, Va., Jan. 23 (BP, DTS); 338 on the Cape Charles CBC Dec. 27 (the most since 1971); and 200 at Craney Dec. 7 (EMW). Red-necked Grebes were in the Ft. Hunt, Alexandria, and Hunting Creek areas on the Potomac R. south of D.C. Feb. 13–29 with many seeing four there Feb. 27–29 (DFA, EMW, LMD, BP, JFF). One was at sea off Virginia Beach Jan. 31 (RLA, BP). An Eared Grebe was on the James R. at Lynchburg Dec. 19–Jan. 6 (TP, DPz, m.ob., ph.), the 2nd Virginia Piedmont record. Unique was a Manx Shearwater off Virginia Beach Jan. 31 (RLA, BP).

A pair of Am. White Pelicans, very partial to Swan Cove, was at Chinc. the entire period (m.ob., ph.). From one to seven Brown Pelicans were in the Cape Henry–Back Bay area Dec. 13–Feb. 25 (GTH, TRW, NB), and two were at Fish. I. Jan. 19 (RCb). One or two Great Cormorants were at Ocean City during January (MO, LMD); 14 were at Lower Machodoc Creek, Westmoreland, Va., Feb. 15 (JE); and at C.B.B.T. there were 30 on Jan. 30 and 29 on Feb. 20 (GLA, HTA, CW). Double-crested Cormorants increasingly lingered into the early winter on the upper Bay. In Maryland, eight were at Port Tobacco Dec. 20 (GBW); one was at Brandon Shores, Anne Arundel, Dec. 27 (RFR); and nine were at Love Pt. Feb. 2 (JG). More unusual was one inland on a lake at Columbia, Md., Dec. 6 (JS). As usual, the biggest numbers were at the mouth of the Bay, with CBC counts of 494 at Newport News, 207 at Williamsburg, 3050 at Little Creek, and 679 at Cape Charles.

Great Blue Herons were in good numbers on coastal plain CBCs, and at Susq. 125 were counted Dec. 7 along with 40 Black-crowned Night-Herons (RFR). Great Egrets were more common than usual on many CBCs in the s.e. section of the region with 72 at Little Creek Dec. 31 (PWS). Green-backed Herons were almost missed, but one was at Williamsburg Dec. 20 (BC, BE), and one at Lynchburg Dec. 19 (fide MM), far into the Virginia Piedmont, was most unusual. Deal Island W.M.A., one of the best places for herons in the Region, yielded 97 Black-crowned Night-Herons, an Am. Bittern, 12 Tricolored Herons, and two Glossy Ibises Dec. 30 (MO, JO). Czaplak found 30 Black-crowneds in D.C. Jan. 1, and 43 spent February in nearby Arlington, Va. (DFA). Four Little Blue Herons at West Ocean City, Md., were notable Dec. 29 (B & HC). Three Glossy Ibises were at Elliott I., Md., Dec. 31 (DJC).

WATERFOWL — The many birders who find ducks dull are in for a rough time. Areas of the Potomac R. south of D.C. where the exotic water plant *Hydrilla* grows were excellent for waterfowl. In addition, there were superior counts of many diving ducks. Virginia goose reports were unparalleled. It seems that waterfowl that nest in the boreal and tundra areas, whose principal adversary may be weather as opposed to weather and habitat destruction on the prairies, can still stage impressive winter concentrations in this Region, especially diving ducks and geese. However, divers such as Redheads and Canvasbacks, plus Am. Wigeon, which feed mainly on submerged aquatic vegetation, are now almost nonexistent in the Bay, seen in but a fraction of their former numbers. This is now also the case in the Back Bay, Va., area. Tundra Swans fed on these plants also but have adapted to others; in the winter of 1969–1970 they began going into winter croplands in huge numbers. A record 5232 were found on the Ft. Belvoir, Va., CBC Jan. 3 (JMA).

The area southeast of Richmond was intensely searched for geese. Up to three Greater White-fronted Geese were seen here in the Curles Neck area, at Land's End W.M.A., and elsewhere Oct. 9 through February (FD, MRB, TS). An ad. Ross' Goose was at Curles Neck from at least Feb. 17–21, seen flying with three White-fronteds Feb. 19 (FD, JFF, DTS, ph.), one of the few unequivocal Regional records, which eliminates any possibility of a Ross' x Snow hybrid. Almost as unusual locally was a Brant Nov. 9–Feb. 5 (FD). Single flying Barnacle Geese, one banded, one unbanded, were seen Dec. 23 and Jan. 12 (FD). Unprecedented numbers of *hutchinsii* Canada Geese were seen including four at Hog I. Dec. 22, six to eight in Charles City Jan. 27 and Feb. 5, two in Stafford Feb. 20, and seven at Curles Neck Feb. 25 (all by FD) plus at two other localities. Snow Geese continued to thrive east of the Bay. Canada Geese continue to shift north and west of their traditional Bay concentration areas: 6454 were seen in landlocked Howard, Md., Jan. 30 (JS); and 1000 wintered at Piney Run Park, Carroll, Md. (RFR).

It was unusual to receive 3 reports of Eur. Green-winged Teal, with singles at Cape Charles Dec. 27 (PD), south of Ocean City Dec. 29 (EM), and at Chinc. late January to early February (TD, LB, HTA). Ducks were outstanding in the *Hydrilla* on the Potomac south of D.C. as these figures for the Ft. Belvoir CBC Jan. 3 attest; 312 Green-winged Teal, 5299 Mallards, 1987 Am. Black Ducks, 28 Blue-winged Teal, 418 N. Shovelers, 1132 Gadwalls, 3855 Am. Wigeon, 11,815 Canvasbacks, 152 Redheads, 1825 Ring-necked Ducks, 12,878 Lesser Scaups, 26 Oldsquaws, 7196 Buffleheads, 382 Hooded Mergansers, and 6878 Ruddy Ducks (JMA). Many of these constituted the best Regional counts for this winter. Also present here from early November to Feb. 7 was a ♂ Eur. Wigeon (DFA, RAA). These counts included portions of both Fairfax, Va., and Prince Georges, Md. Six or seven of the Blue-winged Teal overwintered on the Maryland side at Piscataway Cr. (RFR, EPW), where 1250 Ring-necked Ducks were present Dec. 6 (RFR).

An early (?) pair of Blue-winged Teal was at Chinc. Feb. 21 (TD). Additional Eur. Wigeon were at Sunken Meadows, Surry, Va., Feb. 10 (FD) and at Lynnhaven Inlet, Va., Dec. 31–Jan. 23 (GMW, MRB). At Bethel Res., Newport News, 284 Redheads was a good count; these were present most of the winter (D & MM). Common Eiders were in record numbers in Maryland and Virginia, highs being 23 at Ocean City Feb. 14 (RFR), 15 at C.B.B.T. Jan. 26 (WLA), and 11 at Rudee Inlet, Virginia Beach, Dec. 6 (fide DTS). Grand slams of jetty ducks included four Common and one King eiders and one Harlequin Duck Dec. 6 at C.B.B.T. (DTS); eight Common and four King eiders and one Harlequin Duck Jan. 17 at C.B.B.T. (DTS, BP); and 19 Common and one King eiders, and one Harlequin Duck Jan. 24 at Ocean City (MO, LMD). A King Eider was also at Rudee Inlet Dec. 26 (BP), and two were at sea off Virginia Beach Jan. 31 (BP).

A total of 135 Oldsquaws at Triadelphia Res. Dec. 5 was exceptional for this inland body of water (JS). At Loch Raven Res. north of Baltimore Jan. 11, a count of 68 Hooded Mergan-

sers was of interest (SWS). Other excellent merganser concentrations were of 1000 Commons at Susq. Jan. 9 (MO, PO) and at Mason Neck N.W.R., Va., Feb. 4 (EMW); Red-breasted CBC tallies, all in s.e. Virginia included 1476 at Cape Charles Dec. 27, 1520 at Back Bay Dec. 28, 2170 at Little Creek Dec. 31, and 1500 at Craney Dec. 28 (non-CBC; SR, MMs). On the lower Patuxent R., Md., 14,000 Ruddy Ducks were present Jan. 20 (KR, MB), pushed downstream by frozen water and concentrated between the Thomas Johnson Bridge and Cedar Pt.

RAPTORS TO RAILS — Three Ospreys were seen: a late bird at Norfolk Dec. 13 (BWk); one at Assateague I., Md., Dec. 29 (HLW); and one at Lynnhaven Inlet Dec. 31–Jan. 17 (JGd, BP, NB). Bald Eagles had another superlative winter. Their numbers, many of them record counts, on most of the following CBCs would have been unbelievable until a few years ago. In Maryland, there were 16 at Salisbury Dec. 27, 46 at nearby Crisfield Dec. 30, 69 in s. Dorchester Dec. 31, and 26 at Rock Run Jan. 2. In Virginia, there were 29 at Williamsburg Dec. 20 and 59 at Ft. Belvoir Jan. 3 (distilled from 200 sightings); at D.C. there were 18 on Dec. 19. Interesting single observer counts were 20 at Pocomoke City, Md., Dec. 5 (CRV); 30 present at Susq. in mid-December (RMS); 14 at Pamunkey R., Va., Feb. 5 (WSP); 20 at Mason Neck N.W.R. Feb. 9 (EMW); 16 in the Crocheron area of Dorchester, Md., Dec. 12 (JGR); and 15 at Piscataway Cr., Md., Dec. 6 (RFR). Twelve immatures were at Hog I., Surry, Va., Jan. 9 (Cape Henry Audubon Society). All these in spite of at least eight being shot in Maryland this winter. There are still barbarians in our midst.

There were six N. Goshawk reports, all west of the Bay, three in Maryland and three in Virginia (v.o.). In Howard, Md., 68 Red-shouldered Hawks were seen Jan. 30, indicating their abundance in some Piedmont areas (JS). Not so for Rough-legged Hawk, so one at nearby Triadelphia Res. Jan. 11 was notable (MC), and a count of 16 in s. Dorchester, Md., Dec. 31, although the best for the Region this winter, was not unusual for this prime area (CSR). Rare in s.e. Virginia, two imm. Golden Eagles were at Brandon Dec. 12 (EH). One was found dead at Lothian, Anne Arundel, Md., Jan. 31 (fide GDT), and two were seen by s. Dorchester and one by Rock Run CBCs in Maryland.

Merlins at Thomas Johnson Bridge across the Patuxent R., Md., Feb. 1 (with a dead starling; KR) and in D.C. Jan. 10–31 (DC) were interesting, and Day saw a Peregrine trying to catch roosting starlings at Benjamin Harrison Bridge near Hopewell, Va., Jan. 13. Another Peregrine spent most of the winter near its favorite roost site, the Ocean City water tower (RFR), and a Regional high of six was reported on the Cape Charles CBC (distilled from 10 sightings).

A King Rail overwintered at Huntley Meadows County Park in Virginia south of D.C. (v.o.). The best Am. Coot counts were 4878 on the Ft. Belvoir CBC Jan. 3 (JMA; mostly in *Hydrilla*-infested waters) and 350 at Loch Raven Res. north of Baltimore Feb. 23 (SWS).

SHOREBIRDS — Table 1 summarizes numbers of shorebirds seen on 7 boat trips to Thoms Cr. east of Mockhorn I., Northampton, Va., east of Cape Charles (WSP, HTA), where for the 3rd consecutive year Marbled Godwits, Willets, Short-billed Dowitchers, and Whimbrels overwintered. These have been sufficiently chronicled by now so that this sort of tabular documentation will not be done after this year. Portlock has secured scores of photographs of birds massed at this exciting shorebird roosting and feeding area. At the Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R., 204 Am. Woodcock were banded, with sightings of 97 in one small area (America House and environs) Jan. 9 (LH, RC). Stasz found 66 Sanderlings at Flag Ponds, Calvert, Md., Dec. 6, and 26 were there Jan. 2 and four on Feb. 15, this species being scarce in winter on the upper Bay. In s. Dorchester, Md., 18 Least Sandpipers Dec. 31 were unusual (PB). Two very late Pectoral Sandpipers were at Back Bay Dec. 5 (DTS). Spitzer saw four Purple Sandpipers feeding with Dunlin on Poplar I., Talbot, Dec. 26, Purples being rare anywhere in the Bay away from the coast. Vaughn found 1300 Dunlin at Wallops I., Va., Feb. 22. Long-billed Dowitcher reports included singles at Curles Neck, Va., Dec. 18 (FD) and at Craney along with a Short-billed Dowitcher Dec. 28 (SR, MMs). Piedmont wintering Com. Snipe seen Feb. 6 included three at Lucketts, Loudoun, Va. (EMW), and two at Lilypons, Frederick, Md. (EPW, KH). A record Virginia count of 300± Red Phalaropes was secured during the Jan. 31 pelagic trip out from Virginia Beach (BP, RLA).



A mass of shorebirds, featuring Marbled Godwits and Willets, at Thoms Creek, Va., winter 1987–1988. This area is gaining recognition as an important wintering site for shorebirds. Photo/Bill Portlock.

Table 1. Shorebirds at Thoms Creek, near Mockhorn Island, Northampton County, Virginia, Winter 1987/1988

	12/8	12/27	1/31	2/17	2/21	3/8	3/13
Black-bellied Plover	210	215	520	61	10	88	35
Am. Oystercatcher	177	400	185	151	135	35	10
Willet	71	130	102	98	12	142	45
Whimbrel	—	1	4	2	4	5	2
Marbled Godwit	64	79	12	72	—	84	47
Ruddy Turnstone	—	13	30	12	8	49	5
Western Sandpiper	6	6	270	27	35	—	40
Dunlin	5000	3737	5100	5000	2200	×	400
dowitcher (sp.)	16	41*	62*	38*	35*	31*	1*

— = species not seen

× = species seen but not counted

* = Short-billed Dowitchers (often many) heard on these dates

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Parasitic Jaeger was reported from C.B.B.T. Dec. 6 (BT, BA). It was a superior winter for gulls west of the Bay, but the more common species were scarce at the mouth of the Bay. In D.C., a big fish kill in January attracted a high number of gulls, with Czaplak reporting 6800 Herring Gulls and 2700 Ring-billed Gulls Jan. 31, 600 Great Black-backed Gulls Jan. 10, five Lesser Black-backed Gulls throughout the period, four Iceland Gulls Jan. 11–Feb. 11 (only 7 previous records for the District), and six Glaucous Gulls (three on Jan. 31) Jan. 10–Feb. 20 (only 8 previous D.C. records). Laughing Gulls were in anemic numbers on lower Bay CBCs, but lingering birds farther up the Bay were two at D.C. Dec. 21 (DC) and four inland at Upper Marlboro, Prince Georges, Dec. 31 (JLS). Little Gull sightings were restricted to the C.B.B.T. and Cape Henry (Ft. Story) areas. One Little Gull was at C.B.B.T. Nov. 22 (HJL), and two were there Dec. 6 (BT, DTS, DLH). Most reports were from Ft. Story Jan. 17–Feb. 20 including six adults Jan. 30 (DFA) and an immature Jan. 17 (Shoch). Three Com. Black-headed Gulls were seen, with singles at Chinc. Dec. 29 (SR, MMs), Owl Creek in Virginia Beach Feb. 7–17 (BP, DTS, TRW), and Ocean City Feb. 14–28 (DC, PO, ph.), all first-winter birds.

The Susq. area was once again an outstanding place for gulls. Ringler found 300 Bonaparte's Gulls there Dec. 7, and one Thayer's, three Iceland, one Glaucous, and three Lesser Black-backed gulls were seen Jan. 23 (HLW, LB, LMD). As many as six Iceland Gulls were there Jan. 20 together with 20,000 Ring-billed and 500 Great Black-backed gulls (RMS). Herring Gulls peaked at 50,000 Jan. 6. An Iceland Gull was at Virginia Beach landfill Feb. 17 (DTS), two were at Salisbury landfill Dec. 30 (plus two Lesser Black-backed Gulls) and Jan. 16 (MO, PO), and one was at C.B.B.T. Dec. 26 (BP). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen at a minimum of 16 widely separated localities. Ten were seen by the Little Creek CBC Dec. 31 including six adults

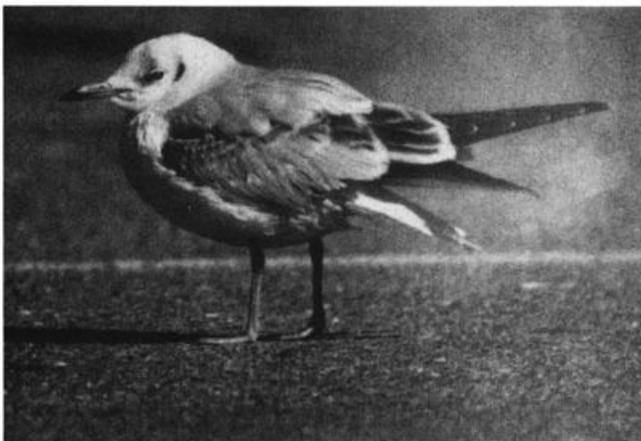
at Virginia Beach landfill (BP, PM), four at C.B.B.T. Jan. 31 (three on Dec. 6; BP), and single inland birds at Spotsylvania, Va., Jan. 17 (MRB) and Upper Marlboro Jan. 4 (JLS). Two were at Suffolk, Va., landfill Jan. 13 (BP) and at Williamsburg, Va., CBC Dec. 20 (BW). However, this species went almost unrecorded after mid-January.

Glaucous Gull was widely reported from 10 localities, very high for this bird. Singles were at a Spotsylvania, Va., landfill Feb. 11 (MRB), but most other reports came from more expected coastal localities except for the several in the D.C. and Susq. areas. Up to 1000 Great Black-backed Gulls were estimated in the D.C. area Jan. 23 (MO, GG). At Ocean City, 820 were a new high count for this longstanding CBC Dec. 29 (CSR). A late Royal Tern was at N. Beach, Calvert, Md., Dec. 13 (JLS), and singles were seen at Myrtle I., Va., Dec. 27 (WSP, EMW) and Back Bay N.W.R. Jan. 2 (GTH). Most remarkable were three Forster's Terns far inland at Kerr Res., Va., Jan. 3 (MP) with one obdurate individual still at Ocean City Jan. 24 (MO, LMD). A Black Skimmer was at Lynnhaven Inlet, Va., Dec. 6 (EMW), and seven were there on the Little Creek CBC Dec. 31 (fide PWS). A Dovekie was captured by Wierenga on Assateague I., Md., Dec. 29, and two were seen offshore from Virginia Beach Jan. 31 (BP, RLA). Koebel reported a murre (sp.) 38 mi east of Parramore I., Va., Feb. 3.

DOVES THROUGH SHRIKES — A White-winged Dove, feeding in a yard in Wachapreague, was observed at leisure and at close range Dec. 19 (CRV) but could not be found later in the month. This was only the 2nd Virginia report. Dyke found a huge, loose flock of 1500 Mourning Doves at Snow Hill, Worcester, Md., Jan. 31, and 1809 were seen by the Howard, Md., Jan. 30 census (JS). The sole Long-eared Owl report was of one at Arlington, Va., Feb. 13–14 (DFA). By way of contrast, N. Saw-whet Owls were seen at 10 localities, all in Maryland or D.C., an excellent showing. Three were on Assateague I., Md., Dec. 29 (HLW), and most of the others were singles in the D.C. or w. shore area except for one at Tuckahoe S.P. on the e. shore of Maryland Dec. 19–Jan. 4 (WR). Short-eared Owls were in mediocre supply with two at the Manassas, Va., airport through the period (MRB, RAA).

The outstanding rarity by almost any standard was an ad. Lewis' Woodpecker discovered near Lucketts, Loudoun, Va., northwest of D.C. Jan. 2 (VK). This dependable bird was present continuously through the rest of the winter and into the spring, was seen by multitudes, and photographed by many, furnishing about the 6th record east of the Mississippi River. It was new to this Region. It is an interesting comment on mob psychology that only one good written description of this singular bird was received (EMW). Photos are fine, but 300 years from now that description will still serve as close to proof as any image, preserving subtleties of appearance and context that no photograph can. More of us should take the trouble to contribute to the historical record for matchless occasions such as this delightful bird offered.

Woodpeckers were in fine numbers; many observers commented that they had all 7 expected species on one or more



Common Black-headed Gull in first-winter plumage at Ocean City, Md., Feb. 14, 1988. Photo/Dave Czaplak.

CBCs Pileated Woodpeckers seemed to be thriving There were record numbers, such as 86 on the Ft. Belvoir CBC Jan. 3 (JMA; previous high 67), especially in areas surrounding D.C. such as that one. This species does wander into unexpected areas. At Cape Charles, where they never used to occur on the CBC, a record seven were reported Dec. 27.

Eastern Phoebe was more common than usual on CBCs, for example, 18 were at Lynchburg Dec. 19 (MM). An Ash-throated Flycatcher was found near Onancock, Accomack, Va., Dec. 19 (CMc, D & CB) and seen by others through Dec. 26 (BP, JHB, CRV, DFA, ph.). It is remarkable that with only 3 CBCs on the E. Shore of Virginia this species has been confirmed there on 4 counts in the past 10 years. With a paucity of resident birders, this peninsula seems to produce a disproportionate number of western rarities including Rufous Hummingbird, W. Tanager, White-winged Dove, several reports of Yellow-headed and Brewer's blackbirds, and others all within the past few years. Eighteen Tree Swallows were at Back Bay Jan. 17 (NB). A brown Fish Crow with "white/buff wings" was seen and, one hopes, also heard at Virginia Beach landfill Jan. 16 (DTS); Reese estimated 3500 crows, mostly Fish Crows, at Crocheron, Md., Dec. 12.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were in poor numbers this winter, and Winter Wrens continued to be scarce (v.o.). Unexpected were Marsh Wrens at Lilypons Dec. 25-Jan. 7 (MO, PO), at Rock Run Jan. 2 (fide DLK), and at Kerr Res. Dec. 16-Jan. 3 (BP), where a Sedge Wren was also found Jan. 2 (PM). Single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were at Chester, Va., south of Richmond Jan. 1 (FD) and at Piscataway Cr., Md., Dec. 30 (CSK). The Rock Run, Md., CBC recorded a record 104 E. Bluebirds (DLK). The dramatic increase of bluebirds in the past 10 years is shown by Table 2. While most of these 18 CBCs were from coastal plain circles, the counts at Baltimore, D.C., and Lynchburg (and Rock Run also) show something of an increase for these attractive birds in Piedmont areas as well. There were more than the usual number of winter records for Gray Catbirds in the Piedmont. An imm. N. Shrike at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center near Laurel, Md., was a real rarity. This bird was present Jan. 3-Feb. 7, haunting a mist-netting operation there to the extent that it was trapped, banded, and then released at Mckee-Beshers W.M.A. in Maryland north of D.C. (MKK, ph.). A Loggerhead Shrike was at Lilypons Jan. 2-Feb. 6 (LB, PO, EPW, KH), and only one was found by the Kerr Res. CBC Jan. 3 compared with the 20± that would have been seen a dozen years ago (fide BP).



Immature Northern Shrike captured for banding at Laurel, Md., Jan. 3, 1988. Photo/Kathleen Klimkiewicz.

VIREOS THROUGH FINCHES — The only vireos were all CBC birds, with single White-eyed at Mathews, Va., Jan. 1 (PBr) and Cape Charles Dec. 27 (MO) and Solitaires at Lynchburg, Va., Dec. 19 (DPz) and Little Creek Dec. 31 (NB). This was a very poor winter for outré warblers, although Prairies were seen on CBCs at Little Creek Dec. 31 (GMW) and Crisfield, Md., Dec. 30 (fide CRV), and an Ovenbird was at Newport News Dec. 19 (fide D & MM). Unseasonal Yellow-breasted Chats included singles at Virginia Beach Dec. 15 (RJT) and Sandy Point S.P., Md., Dec. 24 (DMF). Remarkable was a Yellow-throated Warbler on the D.C. CBC Dec. 19 (fide JAB). Two

Table 2. Eastern Bluebirds on Selected Christmas Bird Counts, 1978-1987.

		1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978
MD	Baltimore Harbor	72*	11	—	—	—	1	2	24	2	—
VA	Back Bay	32	36	46	49	53*	33	41	12	5	5
VA	Brooke	107	29	85	150	55	200*	30	67	43	50
VA	Cape Charles	79*	42	21	25	17	52	16	3	7	24
VA	Chincoteague	239*	146	145	43	103	38	30	10	37	24
MD	Crisfield	193*	189	166	141	85	68	37	9	23	—
MD	Denton	249	276*	72	92	104	72	94	64	32	15
DC	Wash., D.C.	7	28*	8	2	4	1	13	3	—	—
VA	Fort Belvoir	59	106	174*	166	104	59	59	121	18	30
VA	Little Creek	5	8	3	21*	—	—	5	—	—	2
VA	Lynchburg	231	225	119	206	219	204	164	127	254*	182
VA	Mathews	558*	453	510	417	289	425	328	333	347	125
VA	Newport News	77*	6	12	8	13	3	—	16	9	—
MD	Ocean City	130	165*	142	128	40	162	100	13	21	25
MD	Port Tobacco	214*	168	86	128	×	80	141	41	115	54
MD	Salisbury	357*	252	155	204	274	216	96	37	44	19
MD	S. Dorchester Co.	210*	107	84	39	93	43	16	—	—	30
VA	Williamsburg	189	139	147	137	258*	126	77	78	66	—
	TOTAL	3008	2386	1975	1956	1711	1783	1249	958	1023	585

* = high total for a CBC

× = CBC not conducted this year

— = no bluebirds seen



Male Western Tanager at Accomac, Va., Feb. 21, 1988. Photo/George Armistead.

very late Com. Yellowthroats were at Lilypons Dec. 25 (MO, JO, PO), a good Piedmont bird for Christmas day. The star, however lugubrious it may seem, was the Pine Warbler, which was seen in record numbers on several CBCs. There were 35 at Salisbury Dec. 27 (CRV), and Michael O'Brien found 38 at Big Mill Pond in Worcester, Md., while participating in the Chinc. CBC Dec. 28. Scarce in D.C., one was present Dec. 24-Jan. 10 (DC). Singing birds were heard as early as Feb. 17 in Norfolk (WSP).

An ad. ♂ W. Tanager spent February in a yard south of Accomac, Va. (B & EN, BP, DTS, ph.), for about the 14th state record. Two Dickcissels were found by the Cutlers at W. Ocean City Dec. 29 at a feeder. An Am. Tree Sparrow at Kerr Res. Jan. 2-3 was unusual this far south (SR). On the Mathews CBC Jan. 3, 148 Chipping Sparrows was an excellent count even for tidewater Virginia (MPy). Twenty-six Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrows were found on Fish., Myrtle, and Smith islands, Va., Dec. 27 (CP, EMW, BW). Lincoln's Sparrows were at Kerr Res. Jan. 2 (SR), and two were at the Ocean City CBC Dec. 29 (fide CSR). In Howard, Md., the Jan. 30 county census tallied 145 White-crowned Sparrows, demonstrating their greater abundance on the Piedmont (JS). Such numbers on the coastal plain would be unheard of. Mathews CBC counters found 2128 Dark-eyed Juncos Jan. 3, a high count for an area that includes so much tidal water. Lapland Longspurs were seen at Lilypons Jan. 15 (three by JW); New Design Rd., Frederick, Md., Jan. 2-18 (one or two by JAB, MO); and Lucketts, Jan. 7 (one by DFA). Snow Buntings were reported from only 7 areas including 19 at Craney Dec. 6 (DTS).

Four Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen: an ad. male near Melfa, Va., Jan. 12 (RB); another at Bladensburg, Md., near D.C. Jan. 10 (MD); one at Chase, Md., east of Baltimore Jan. 9 and Feb. 15 (KJ, HK); and one at Rising Sun, Md., Feb. 20 (HF). There were also 4 reports of Brewer's Blackbirds: two at Townsend, Va., Dec. 27 (PWS, PD, B & HC); four at Back Bay

CBC Dec. 28 (DFA, NB), one at W. Ocean City Dec. 29 (B & HC); and a male at C.B.B.T. Jan. 23 (DL). Northern (Baltimore) Orioles were seen at 8 localities, much better than average, including one at Richmond Dec. 6-Mar. 13 (JWD, DTS). Reese reported a Northern (Bullock's) Oriole from Tilghman's I., Talbot, Md., Dec. 6.

Purple Finches were in low numbers (v.o.), but the House Finch continued to be a plague on the land. Witness such counts as 1588 in Howard, Md., Jan. 30 (JS); 1159 on the D.C. CBC Dec. 19 (JAB); and 1775 on the s. Dorchester, Md., CBC Dec. 31 in company with 715 Am. Goldfinches (CSR), the latter birds attracted by fields planted in sunflowers. At the banding laboratory at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Klimkiewicz had her best winter ever for successfully banding House Finches and Am. Goldfinches. Pine Siskins were in low numbers on most CBCs but increased moderately later. In some areas, however, they became abundant by mid-winter; at Lynchburg's Super Siskin Sunday, counters tallied 2190 in the area around that city Feb. 14, and the Hansrotes banded over 700 there from January to early March. The Lynchburg CBC Dec. 19 had recorded only 205 (MM). American Goldfinch was more common than usual on most CBCs. There were, for example, 687 at Mathews, Va., Jan. 3 (MPy) and 539 on the Salisbury CBC Dec. 27 (CRV). Evening Grosbeaks were in low numbers during the entire winter.

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SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.

December was somewhat wet and warmer than normal, but a heavy snowstorm hit the Region on January 7. A deep freeze occurred January 6-10, and the month remained quite cold. February was near normal, but precipitation was rather limited after early January.

Winter 1987-1988 was uneventful. Although there were many significant records, such as first, second, and third state winter records, it was not a season for truly out-of-range species. Sea ducks salvaged a rather lackluster waterfowl winter, and there was a hint of an alcid flight, but such coastal activity was generally limited to North Carolina. The winter finch flight was again rather mediocre—

not great but not a bust either. Several songbirds continued to winter in increased numbers, particularly Golden-crowned Kinglet and Chipping Sparrow. A red tide outbreak along the southern coast of North Carolina, a first for the state, and a tick outbreak on birds banded in northern South Carolina by Hilton and Conway, hopefully will not be repeated anytime soon.

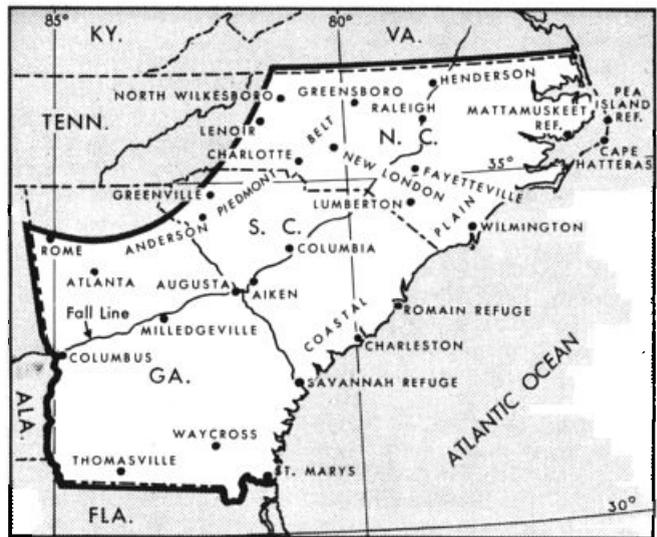
LOONS THROUGH STORKS—The only inland Red-throated Loon was one at L. Monticello, Fairfield Co., S.C., Jan. 16 (RC). The always notable Red-necked Grebe was encountered on 4 occasions: in North Carolina at Rodanthe Feb. 18 (JF) and Kure Beach Jan. 1–2 (JW, RD) and in South Carolina near Cape I. Dec. 20 (PN) and inland at the Savannah River Plant Jan. 27 (CD et al.). An Eared Grebe on a pond at Cape I., S.C., Dec. 20 (PN) furnished a very rare record for that state. Either few pelagic trips were taken or results had difficulty reaching my desk; the best tubenose sightings were made from shore. Perhaps the first N. Fulmar seen from shore in North Carolina, other than beached birds, was one over the surf at Carolina Beach Feb. 27 (ED), only the 3rd or 4th state winter record. Just as unusual was a Manx Shearwater over the surf at Cape Hatteras point, N.C., Jan. 30 (TP, DW); there are numerous state winter records, but the species is seldom seen from land.

Surprisingly, the only Am. White Pelican report was of one again present at Hatteras Inlet, N.C., for much of the season (CP, ML). Great Cormorants continued to increase in North Carolina coastal waters, with the best counts being a Regional record 22 at Ft. Fisher Feb. 10 (SC) and 12 at Masonboro Inlet Jan. 28 (SC). Again, the only report outside that state involved a few during the season at Huntington Beach S.P., S.C. (RC, CE). Hatteras Inlet has long been known to harbor thousands of wintering Double-crested Cormorants, but Sykes' estimate of 125,000 Jan. 2 was simply mindboggling! Rather far inland in winter was an Anhinga near the Wateree R., Kershaw Co., S.C., Feb. 20 (RC, CE).

For some strange reason, the Cattle Egret is regular in winter in mainland Currituck Co., N.C. This season, Fussell had singles at 2 sites near Currituck (Court House) Jan. 16. Cattle Egrets were also found in that state near Swanquarter (JF) and Buxton (TP, DW) as well as near Beaufort (LC et al.), where regular all winter. The Black-crowned Night-Heron roost at Augusta, Ga., peaked at 21 on Feb. 7 (AW), whereas elsewhere inland single immatures were notable at Columbia, S.C., Dec. 15 (RC) and in w. Bertie Co., N.C., Feb. 9 (ML, FA). Also unusual in winter at Columbia were three White Ibises Feb. 7 (RC), but the strangest wader record was of the imm. **Wood Stork** at Cape Hatteras point in late December (MaL et al.), one of just 2 or 3 winter records for North Carolina.

WATERFOWL—Despite this being another lackluster winter for the volume of waterfowl, it was noteworthy for sea duck species and numbers. Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks on the McClellanville, S.C., CBC Dec. 20 (PN) were the only ones reported. Tundra Swan numbers continue to increase in n.e. North Carolina, and records outside this corner of the Region included birds in North Carolina near Fayetteville (PJC), Greensboro (HH), and Goldsboro (ED); in South Carolina at Santee N.W.R. (RC) and Bear Island W.M.A. (DF et al.); and in Georgia at Augusta (AW et al.). A Mute Swan stayed at Goldsboro from October to Jan. 12 (ED, m.ob.), and three were near Charlotte, N.C., from late October to late December (TP et al.). Because the species was not known to occur previously at these sites, and because the swans appeared at a time when waterfowl begin to arrive in the Region, observers generally considered them "countable." Only one Greater White-fronted Goose was reported, at Santee N.W.R., S.C., Dec. 10 and Jan. 1 (RC, CE).

Perhaps the first ever inland record for the Region of **Green-winged (Eurasian) Teal** was one at Goldsboro Feb. 10–29+ (ED), and other "Eurasian" Teal were two at Pea I., N.C., Jan. 31 (ML, VM) and another the same day at nearby Bodie I. (MT).



Rare for the North Carolina foothills was a N. Shoveler Dec. 19 at Columbus (ST), and four were notable in midwinter at Raleigh, N.C., Jan. 23 (HL). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon appeared for the 3rd straight winter on the Morehead City, N.C., CBC Dec. 20 (BHo, BBE), whereas a female was reported, hopefully correctly, in n.e. Pamlico Co., N.C., Feb. 12 (PJC, MEW, TC). Notable waterfowl in n. Georgia included an excellent total of 2000 Ring-necked Ducks in December at Peachtree City L. (PB) and a peak of seven Greater Scaup Jan. 16 at Sweetwater Creek S.P. (PR).

Georgia got its first ever **Common Eider**—a female Dec. 24–27 at Tybee I. (JTP et al.), and imm. ♂ Commons were at Cape Hatteras Dec. 30 (MT, BL, JW) and Rodanthe, N.C., Dec. 31 (JF). Most significantly, a flock of both Common and King eiders spent the winter at Oregon Inlet, N.C., with five to six of the former and three of the latter being peak counts (JF, m.ob.). Interestingly, there were no other reports of King Eider, but it was a big winter for Harlequin Duck, even though all were restricted to North Carolina. One was present at Oregon Inlet Jan. 13–Feb. 29+ (JF et al.), one was at Ft. Macon S.P. Dec. 20 (JW), two were at Ft. Fisher Dec. 28 (GM, MB), and a remarkable five were at Masonboro Inlet Feb. 17 (SC), with two different birds at this inlet Feb. 21 (SC).

Several birders mentioned that White-winged Scoters were more widespread along the coast than usual, and two at Goldsboro Jan. 23 (ED) were very unusual inland in mid-winter. The better Com. Goldeneye records were of eight at Jordan L. Jan. 22 (RD) and one near Macon, Ga., Dec. 12 (TI). I must confess that I do not understand the distribution of Com. Merganser in the Region. In North Carolina, the birds are extremely uncommon and occur sporadically on the larger lakes in the n. portion of the state; they are genuinely rare on salt or brackish water. Yet, in South Carolina and Georgia the birds are not considered unusual in the bays along the coast, being rarer inland! A total of 18 on the Sapelo I., Ga., CBC seems questionable, but reports of others along the coast, all by veteran observers, were undoubtedly valid—two each at St. Catherines I., Ga., Dec. 19 (AW); Cape Romain N.W.R., S.C., Dec. 20 (TG); Folly Beach, S.C., Dec. 28 (DF, DC); and Charleston harbor Jan. 30 (RC, CE). The best inland total of Commons was six at Jordan L. Feb. 20 (C.H.B.C.)

EAGLES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS—Bald Eagle reports numbered several dozen, and the population continued to slowly increase in the winter season. The mid-winter eagle survey in North Carolina tallied only 19 birds, 10 fewer than in 1987, but this "decline" was probably an artifact of very bad weather in the first half of January, making thorough coverage difficult (fide TH). A winter Broad-winged Hawk Dec. 30 was again found at Buxton, N.C., but this bird was an adult

(PS, DH) The only Rough-legged Hawk reported with convincing details was surprisingly far south at a spoil area in South Carolina near Savannah, Ga., Jan. 17 (RC, DF, DC). The birders who saw it unfortunately did not have a camera with them, as the species, though seen on a number of occasions in the state, is still not documented by specimen or photo in South Carolina. The only Golden Eagle report came from the w. end of L. Mattamuskeet, N.C., during the winter (LD). Inland reports of Merlins and Peregrine Falcons were limited to one of the former west of Charlotte Dec. 26 (BB) and one of the latter at Augusta on the same date (CB).

Cely and party returned to a grassy Carolina bay east of Columbia, S.C., where a Yellow Rail was heard calling in October. Rock-clicking elicited responses by two Yellows there Dec. 9, and three more Yellows were heard calling at a nearby grassy bay on the same evening (JEC, RC, CE). Although these records do not prove that Yellows winter this far inland (because the dates are in early December), they certainly indicate that Yellow Rails can be found in numbers at sites away from the coastal marshes. Obviously, for those of us too lazy to carry tape recorders, it is comforting to know that a couple of rocks or quarters can elicit responses at sites other than on the breeding grounds. Other inland rails were a Virginia Rail in n. York Co., S.C., Dec. 26 (FC *et al.*); a Sora Feb. 29 at L. Edgar Brown, Barnwell Co., S.C. (RC); and several Soras all winter at Goldsboro (ED). Persons wishing to add Sandhill Crane to their state list in North Carolina had their chance this winter; the crane near Nebraska in Hyde County in fall remained inside and near the goose pen for the entire winter (m.ob.), and three were present in a cornfield west of Greensboro Dec. 5–Jan. 7 (HH *et al.*). In Georgia, notable was a crane at Augusta Dec. 25 (CB) and three cranes on the Peachtree City CBC Dec. 19 (CL, JH).

Quite late was a Black-bellied Plover Dec. 2 at Falls L., N.C. (RD). Completely unexplained, in season or locale, was a **Black-necked Stilt** at a sewage plant at inland Lillington, N.C., Jan. 3–5 (SE); this made possibly a first state winter record and perhaps the most inland record for the state. A Lesser Yellowlegs at Gaston, N.C., Dec. 24–27 (ML) was quite late, and Whimbrels were seen on a number of coastal counts in that state, including six at Morehead City Dec. 20 (*fide* JF). One to two Long-billed Curlews again spent the winter at Ft. Fisher (KKo, RD), and three were at Cape Romain N.W.R. Dec. 20 (TG), another somewhat regular wintering locale. Notable inland at this season were a Sanderling at Santee refuge Dec. 10 (RC) and a Western Sandpiper at Augusta Jan. 16 & 30 (AW, VW). The Least Sandpiper, somewhat regular inland in winter, was reported from at least 4 such sites, with the best counts being of 17 at Augusta Feb. 7 (AW, VW, CB) and six at Columbia Dec. 15 (RC). Possibly a first in winter for North Carolina was a very late **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Jordan L. Dec. 13 (HL). Very rare on the North Carolina Outer Banks, one to two Purple Sandpipers were present at the base of the Oregon Inlet bridge much of the winter (JF). Notable totals were of 12 Dunlins at Macon, Ga., Dec. 19 (TI) and 50+ Long-billed Dowitchers at rain puddles on the UNC-Wilmington, N.C., campus Jan. 4 (SC). What may have been another first in winter for North Carolina was a **Red-necked Phalarope**, a male with a remnant of a red stripe down the back of its neck, at a pond at Bodie I. Dec. 29 (MB, JT). As usual, Red Phalaropes were seen on pelagic trips off the North Carolina coast. This is the most common pure pelagic species in winter off the Region's coast.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — No jaegers were reported except on coastal CBCs, but Lee's series of pelagic trips out of Oregon Inlet in January yielded several Great Skuas, including one specimen. There are one or two previously confirmed records for North Carolina, but nonetheless this skua is one of the most sought-after pelagic species on the Atlantic Coast. A Laughing Gull at Augusta Dec. 26 (CB) was a good find. All Little Gulls were found from Cape Hatteras northward—two at Corolla Jan. 30 (HL, RH, JA), one at Rodanthe Jan. 23–24 (JF), and four at the cape Jan. 30 (C.B.C.). Whereas

the Little Gull is somewhat predictable in its occurrence, usually one per 1000 Bonaparte's Gulls, the Com. Black-headed Gull is unpredictable and is not tied to flocks of Bonaparte's Black-headed were seen 3 times, all in North Carolina: Dec. 10–Jan. 23 at Holden Beach (CA, m.ob.), at Hatteras Dec. 30 (BL, KK), and near Southport Feb. 4–10 (BB, ChB).

A count of 82 Herring Gulls at Falls L. near Durham, N.C., Dec. 2 (RD) was excellent. The 3 reports of Iceland Gulls were about par for the season, with first-winter birds at Morehead City Dec. 20 (DCa, MT) and Feb. 14 (DC, MT, HL) and a subadult at Hatteras Feb. 10 (JF). A Lesser Black-backed Gull at Sapelo I., Ga., Dec. 31 (DP, MH, BS) was a good find in that state. As usual, a handful of Lesser Black-backed records came from the North Carolina coast, and all five Glaucous Gull reports also were from this part of the Region. Three Great Black-backed Gulls were each found inland at Roanoke Rapids L., N.C., Dec. 27 (WI, BO, RY) and at Greenville, N.C., Jan. 10 (JW). Not often reported in the Piedmont in winter was a Forster's Tern Feb. 27 at Sweetwater Creek S.P. (PR).

This was one of the better winters of the decade for alcids, although all sightings were limited to North Carolina. Single Dovekies were seen at Atlantic Beach Dec. 20 (ED, DCa, MT), at Pea I. Dec. 29 (MT), and dead at Salvo Jan. 30 (JW); and a flock of eight was an excellent total in the surf at the Cape Hatteras lighthouse Mar. 5 (HH, PF). A live but oiled Razorbill was picked up at Cape Hatteras Dec. 31 (CP), and a live and clean one circled a boat 5 mi off Masonboro Inlet Jan. 29 (SC). A Razorbill or murre was seen Dec. 29 at Bodie I. (HL, PM)

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — A first record for the Region was of a **Eurasian Collared-Dove** shot by a hunter near Whigham, Grady Co., Ga., Jan. 9 (*fide* PWS, *T.T.R.S.). Presumably the bird was a vagrant from the rapidly expanding Florida population; would it have been "countable" if seen alive? Also in this state was a White-winged Dove noted at Sapelo I. Jan. 1 (AW, VW, DWa), always a good find, at least if it were from the native population in the Southwest and not from the Florida stock. No Long-eared Owls were noted this season, and the only N. Saw-whet Owl report was of a dead-on-road individual near Wanchese, N.C., Feb. 15 (JF). Inland Short-eared Owls were found in Northampton Co., N.C., Dec. 27 (JW) and near Cordele, Ga., Dec. 6 (JG, DHa); both are sites of previous winter records. Although Whip-poor-wills probably winter regularly in all 3 states, the only report came from Jekyll I. Feb. 21 (JP, JC).

What would a winter in the Region be without a few unidentified or controversial hummingbirds?! It can certainly be stated that more and more people are leaving up hummingbird feeders into late fall and winter, and consequently we are having more winter records of these birds. The Rufous Hummingbird, considered almost accidental 5 years ago, is becoming routine now. Of the rusty-plumaged hummingbird species, there is no evidence that the several specimens, numerous photographs, and several captured-measured-released birds in this Region have been anything but Rufous Hummingbirds. This winter, one to two [almost certain] Rufous Hummingbirds were at a Raleigh feeder from late fall to February (CC, RH). One was at a feeder Jan. 30–Feb. 29+ in Beaufort Co., NC (DFoy *et al.*); birds were at 2 locales in Greenville Co., S.C., much of the winter (*fide* PW); one was at an Atlanta feeder November into January (GS, MF); and two were at Albany, Ga., mid-December to mid-January (PoN, AA). None of them was an ad. male, but several were thought to be imm. males. As for the more problematical *Archilochus* hummingbirds, none of which was an ad. male, there were birds at 3 or 4 sites in Carteret Co., N.C. (*fide* JF), and at Hilton Head I., S.C. (GD). Most important, one was found dead at Surfside Beach, S.C., Jan. 11 (StT). Unfortunately, this specimen has not yet made its way to W. Post at the Charleston Museum for conclusive identification, if possible. One of the Carteret birds did have one bright red feather on the throat and was considered a Ruby-throated (DFoy, RF). Nonetheless, it is still not proper

to call all of these birds this species, and I hope that a few such feeder birds in the upcoming winters can be trapped, measured, photographed, and released.

SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS — Swallows are seldom seen far inland in winter; thus of note was a Tree Swallow near Halifax, N.C., Dec. 27 (FE) and an unidentified swallow Dec. 20 on the Marietta, Ga., CBC (AAT, JGo). One of the truly rare sightings anywhere in the continent this winter was of a **Cave/Cliff swallow** carefully observed by Fussell in c. Carteret Co., N.C., Dec. 17. The details clearly suggested Cave Swallow, but the birder had no previous experience with that species and less than thorough experience with Cliff. He hopes to closely examine Cliff Swallows this summer and perhaps can come to a conclusion in 1988. Neither species is expected in the East in winter, nor has Cave ever been previously reported from the Region.

Apparently for the first time, Fish Crows spent the winter in the Atlanta area, with records each month at the Morgan Falls landfill (*fide* TM). Red-breasted Nuthatches were rare to absent nearly everywhere, although scattered coastal counts tallied a few; most birders missed them completely. A Bewick's Wren at Albany, Ga., Dec. 26 (DB) was a welcome report for a species nearly extirpated in Atlantic Coast states. Golden-crowned Kinglets drew widespread comment from birders in Georgia and s. South Carolina; normally uncommon, they were common in many areas, even as far south as Thomasville, Ga. (RCr). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Gainesville, Ga., Jan. 6 (JP) was out of season in the Piedmont. The Loggerhead Shrike decline seems to have ended, but there has been little indication of any increases. Several double-digit counts were made in s. North Carolina and c. South Carolina, and the winter population density is very closely tied to latitude. Birders in the s. half of Georgia are probably wondering what all the fuss is about the shrike, because it is reasonably common there. There still seems to be no good answer(s) to the latitudinal decrease in shrike numbers. Several Georgia observers noted very large concentrations of Cedar Waxwings in February, such as 3000 at Athens Feb. 23 (CK, PS).

Orange-crowned Warblers at 2 sites near Charlotte (HW, PH), in Chester Co., S.C. (RC), at Gainesville (JP), and at Pendergrass, Ga. (JP), were of note. Northern Parulas were good finds in North Carolina at Wilmington Dec. 19 (KKo) and Southport Jan. 2 (SC), but an even better find was of a ♂ **Yellow Warbler** at Barnwell, S.C., Jan. 14 (PSt), one of just a few winter records for the Region. Also very notable was a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at St. Simons I., Ga., Dec. 23 (TKP), apparently establishing the 3rd state winter record. Yellow-throated Warblers spent the winter at feeders in Dublin, Ga. (TKP), and Gloucester, N.C. (KP, *fide* JF). The Ovenbird, essentially unknown in winter in North Carolina 5 years ago, might be regular in maritime forests at this season. Four were found by one party at Buxton Dec. 30 (PS, DH), and singles were also noted near Ft. Fisher Jan. 2 (RD), near Avon Jan. 13 (JF), and near Manteo Jan. 28 (JF). The lingering Ovenbird in Atlanta this fall was last seen Dec. 24 (PB). Seldom seen in winter, N. Waterthrushes were found at Santee N.W.R. Jan. 10 (N & HO), at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston Jan. 16 (DF, DC), and at Sapelo I. Jan. 1 (CB, HP). Despite it being a rather rare migrant in the Region, there are numerous winter records for Wilson's Warbler, and three more were added to the total—on the Wilmington CBC Dec. 20 (SC), on the Roanoke Rapids CBC Dec. 27 (HL), and near Charleston Dec. 9 (MA).

TANAGERS, EMBERIZID FINCHES — Disappointingly, no W. Tanagers were reported from feeders, but one was seen near Chapel Hill, N.C., Dec. 27 (MW, N & SO). The 3rd winter record in Georgia for Rose-breasted Grosbeak was of a feeder visitor at Gainesville Jan. 7 to the end of the period (GV, JP). An Indigo Bunting was detected on the Southport CBC Jan. 2 (BB), whereas Painted Buntings were noted at North Carolina feeders near the coast in Frisco in February (M & BM, MaL),

Morehead City (JT, JF), and Beaufort (up to four birds—EH) Seldom found in South Carolina in winter, two Clay-colored Sparrows were with a flock of Chipping Sparrows at a Simpsonville feeder Jan. 9; on Jan. 11 one hit a window and died (PW; *C.U.). Two more were in that state at McClellanville Dec. 20 (CW et al.), and one was with Field Sparrows on Currituck Banks, N.C., Jan. 29 (HL). Rarely found nowadays in the Piedmont was a Henslow's Sparrow near Gray Court, S.C., Feb. 14 (RC, DF, DC); and the equally elusive Le Conte's Sparrow was observed Dec. 5 near Cordele, Ga. (DH); at Cape I., S.C., Dec. 20 (PN); and near Halifax, N.C., Dec. 19–27 (FE, ML, et al.).



Two Smith's Longspurs at Charlotte, N.C., December 1987. Second documented record for North Carolina. Photo/Richard J. Davis.

Lincoln's Sparrows are not terribly rare as winter residents in much of the Region, now that birders are spending more time in prime habitat (such as brush piles in clear-cuts). Sightings in North Carolina were at Tryon (ST, HZ), Southport (SC), Pea I. (KK), Raleigh (KK), and near Morehead City (JF), with several near L. Mattamuskeet (*fide* AB), and in Georgia at Augusta (AW) and near Marietta (TM, KB). Lapland Longspurs often remain at inland sites for much of the winter, but most coastal birds are very "flighty" and seldom stay at a locale for a week or two. Surprisingly, a large group of 12–15 remained nearly all season at Huntington Beach S.P., S.C. (RC, PN, m.ob.). Two Laplands were at Oregon Inlet Jan. 30 (HL), and one to two were again found at the Charlotte Motor Speedway in December (TP, DW). However, the latter birds were outdone at the speedway by the **Smith's Longspurs**; one to two were present Dec. 2–20 (TP, m.ob.; ph. RD) for the 2nd documented and 4th state record. Davis had a Snow Bunting at Falls L. Jan. 9, and the best of the very few coastal records was a peak of 18 buntings at Salvo, N.C., in late January and early February (JF et al.).

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH CARDUELINES — One of the more significant discoveries of the season was the location of a sizable flock of Brewer's Blackbirds well to the northeast of the previously known winter range. Perhaps 65 birds were present in prime habitat—60 sq mi of cow pastures—at a "su-

perform" in e Carteret Co., N.C. (JF, LC, mob) Access to this private farm became very difficult by late winter, and it is uncertain if birders will be allowed to visit the site in upcoming seasons to check for the blackbirds and other open country species. This blackbird was previously considered a rare migrant and winter visitor, primarily to the w. half of the state. As many as three Brewer's were at Augusta Jan. 23 (CB, AW), and singles were reported near Charleston Dec. 27 (PN) and Jan. 13 (DHarv, BK). A Northern (Bullock's) Oriole was reported at a feeder in New Bern, N.C., from mid-January to mid-February (BHo), but the age and sex were not mentioned.

Purple Finch numbers were somewhat typical—fairly common over most of the Region. On the other hand, House Finch numbers are continuing to "get out of hand;" the birds even reached Thomasville for the first time, with as many as 12 at a feeder there (RCr). For about the 14th straight winter, Red Crossbills stayed on the breeding grounds, although there were 2 reports: of six in the Green Swamp near Bolton, N.C., Dec. 8 (SC), and of one on the Roanoke Rapids CBC Dec. 27 (JW). Pine Siskins were present in moderately good numbers and showed a distinct pattern in abundance as the season progressed. At most North Carolina sites, the birds were most numerous in December and decreased later on; these birds filtered into South Carolina and Georgia, where peaks were generally increasing in late winter. Evening Grosbeaks were mostly uncommon, but it certainly was not an off year. The highest numbers seemed to be in the Coastal Plain of the Carolinas, in the bottomlands.

ADDENDUM — A specimen of **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, taken Feb. 18, 1976, at Kingstree, S.C., by Samuel P. Rodgers, Jr., had been in a private collection; it is now at the Charleston Museum (fide WP). This provided the first confirmed record for the Region.

CORRIGENDUM — Post correctly informed me that the dummy nest of a Marsh Wren, with a singing male, at Greensboro (AB 41:1424) does not constitute a conclusive nesting record.

OBSERVERS — Mike Aldenderfer, Jeannine Angerman, Fred Annand, Alan Ashley, Anselm Atkins (AAt), Clyde Atkins, David Barber, Maurice Barnhill, Clarence Belger, Bill Bell (BB), Chris Benedict (ChB), Ken Blackshaw, Patrick Brisse, Bill Brokaw, Allen Bryan, Carolina Bird Club (C.B.C.), Derb Carter (DCa), Robin Carter, Jack Carusos, J.E. Cely, Chapel Hill Bird Club (C.H.B.C.), Donna Clark, Clemson University (C.U.), Flo Cobey, Clark Cockerham, Albert Conway, Sam Cooper, Larry Crawford, Robert Crawford (RCr), P.J. Crutchfield, Tom Crutchfield, Ricky Davis, Eric Dean, Chris Depkin, Larry Ditto, Graham Dugas, Caroline Eastman, Frank Enders, Steve Everhart, Peggy Ferebee, Dennis Forsythe, Mimi Foster, Dorothy Foy (DFoy), Roger Foy, John Fussell, Joe Gould (JGo), Tommy Graham, Joe Greenberg, Robert Hader, Dale Hardee (DHa), Paul Hart, Dave Harvey (DHarv), Herb Hendrickson, Tom Henson, Bill Hilton, Jr., Joel Hitt, Bob Holmes (BHo), Milton Hopkins, Edward Howland, David Hughes, Wayne Irvin, Ty Ivey, Cam Kepler, Ken Knapp, Kitty Kosh (KKo), Bruce Krucke, Chris Lambrecht, David Lee, Harry LeGrand, Bob Lewis, Merrill Lynch, Marcia Lyons (MaL), Greg Massey, Paul McQuarry, Terry Moore, Marge & Ben Morris, Vaughn Morrison, Perry Nugent, Polly Nunn (PoN), Nancy & Harry Ober, Bob Odear, Nigel & Sharon Oliver, Karl Pace, John Paget, Dick Parks, J.T. Parks, Hunter Patterson, T.K. Patterson, Carl Perry, Taylor Piephoff, Will Post, Paul Raney, Georgann Schmalz, P.W. Smith, Peter Stangel (PSt), Betty Stewart, Paul Sykes, Tall Timbers Research Station (T.T.R.S.), James Tate, Joyce Taylor, Steve Thomas (StT), Simon Thompson, Mike Tove, Gregory Valpey, Margaret Wagner, Heathy Walker, Charlie Walters, Anne Waters, Dan Waters (DWa), Vernon Waters, M.E. Whitfield, Peter Worthington, David Wright, John Wright, Randy Yelverton, Hughes Zweig.—**HARRY E. LeGRAND, JR.**, 331 Yadkin Dr., Raleigh, NC 27609.

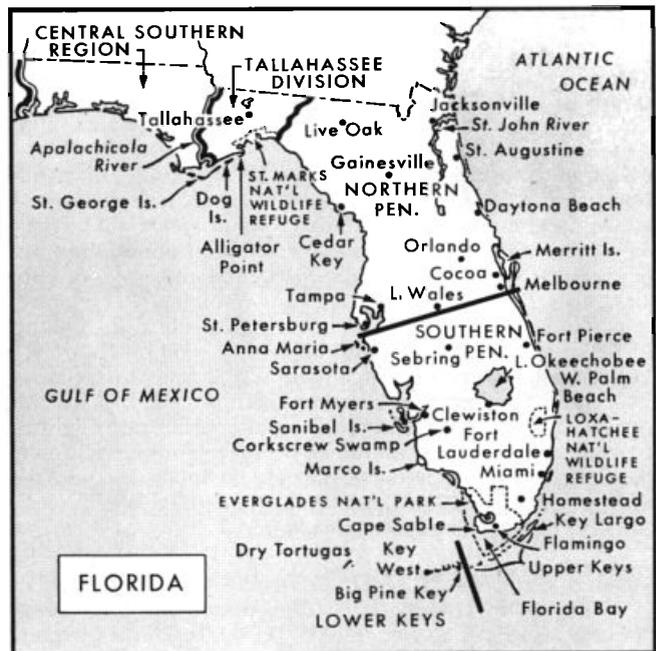
FLORIDA REGION

John C. Ogden

The winter of 1987-1988 was generally on the mild side, with average or above-average rainfall in most areas. Henry Stevenson reported only a single hard freeze in Tallahassee, and most other area editors considered the winter's weather too unremarkable to elicit any comment. An entertaining exception was Ted Below, who perhaps was trying harder than was necessary to think of something useful to say about the weather when he wrote, "I am sitting looking at this damn report and don't know what to say."

Ted also had an interesting comment regarding the number of birders in the Naples-Marco Island area, which, if true statewide, would be most disturbing. He notes that although the number of people living in his area has been increasing at a dizzying pace, the number of birders has not increased; in fact, Ted wonders if the number has not actually declined! I have been under the impression that bird-watching has become one of the most popular "sports" in North America; but is this growth producing steadily increasing numbers of serious birders, that is, those who understand the significance of their observations—and write them down?

As for the birds, this past winter was highlighted by an impressive invasion of western hummingbirds into northern portions of the Region, by a nice list of warblers wintering north of where expected, and by a surge of Pine Siskins that carried strongly into the Florida Keys. Among the rarer species were Ross' Goose, Common Eider, Fer-



ruginous Hawk, Iceland Gull, Black-chinned Hummingbird, LaSagra's Flycatcher, Cave Swallow, Black-faced Grassquit, and Lapland Longspur.

ABBREVIATIONS — C.S.M. = Clear Springs Mine, E.N.P. = Everglades Nat'l Park; S.M.L. = St. Marks Light.

LOONS THROUGH FRIGATEBIRDS — Common Loons are not often reported from the Florida Region except when unusually large numbers appear at unexpected places or times, including high numbers of dead birds on beaches. Missing is information that will help us understand normal numbers and distribution along the entire coastline, which is a criticism that could also be offered for what is reported for a great many regularly occurring, but less common, species in Florida. Can we review the record of "high counts" that have accumulated over the years for a species like the loon and infer from these data where the normal center(s) of abundance is (are) located? I doubt it, in part because even larger flocks at locations where such numbers occur annually are not reported. For many of the uncommon but not particularly rare species that occur in countable flocks (loons, waterfowl, sandpipers), or that are conspicuous enough to be counted along roadsides (raptors) or as they move in/out of roosts (wading birds, some raptors), there is considerable value in collecting and reporting these kinds of numerical data. It is one way of dealing with the chronic dilemma of trying to squeeze some trustworthy interpretation from such all too frequently made statements such as a particular species "is present in normal numbers" or that it "once was much more common."

The most notable loon reports from this winter were of 14 Com. Loons, freshly dead on the McArthur S.P. beach, Palm Beach Co., Jan. 5 & 6 (HPL), and one Red-throated Loon, also freshly dead, at Wards Bank near Jacksonville Jan. 25 (PCP). One Eared Grebe, very rare anywhere in the peninsula, was at the Delray Sewage Treatment Plant Feb. 2 (BHH, JH). The only tubenoses reported were Audubon's Shearwaters, two about 20 mi off Cape Canaveral Dec. 13 (JJ), and one freshly dead on the McArthur S.P. beach Feb. 3 (JBM, JNF, HPL). A White-tailed Tropicbird, rare anywhere in Florida away from the Dry Tortugas, was well seen along the beach at Hobe Sound Feb. 3 (JBM). After several tries in recent years, a pair of Masked Boobies may have successfully produced a chick on Hospital Key, Dry Tortugas. National Park Service (N.P.S.) personnel reported one downy chick there in March (fide WBR). An imm. Brown Booby, which perched regularly on the roof of the Lake Worth Pier beginning in October, was last seen Dec. 16 (HPL). This possibly furnished the first winter report of a Brown Booby for Palm Beach County. One of those "high counts" was of 520 N. Gannets off the Lake Worth Pier, on a day with strong NE winds, Dec. 9 (HPL, JB, DB). Two of 21 gannets found freshly dead along 1.8 mi of Juno Beach Jan. 13

(HPL) were necropsied and found to have had bacterial infections in the pericardium and liver (fide Mark Robson). There is one fewer Brown Pelican to report; one was killed and eaten by a wild Am. Crocodile at a Key West golf course pond Feb. 28 (fide MBR, local golfers beware!). Single ad. Great Cormorants (same bird?) were on the Banana R. Dec. 18 (CDC) and in Mosquito Lagoon, Merritt Island N.W.R., Feb. 25 (JJ, HHI); one imm. Great Cormorant was unusually far south at Flamingo, E.N.P., in mid-December (IM). Most unusual in the Florida Keys, one Anhinga remained on the Key West golf course ponds throughout the period (JO), and three were on Upper Harbour Key Feb. 12 (TW). The first nesting by Magnificent Frigatebirds on the Dry Tortugas was reported during March, when N.P.S. personnel found "several nests" on both Bush and Long keys (fide WBR). The nests contained eggs, except for one with a downy chick. The other known frigatebird nesting colony in Florida, on the Marquesas Keys, had about 35 nests with half-grown young in late March (TW).

WADING BIRDS, WATERFOWL — A surprisingly high winter count for so far north, of four dark-phased Reddish Egrets (one adult, three immatures), was made at S.M.L. Jan. 19 (JEC). Several hundred Great Egrets that initiated nesting at 2 colonies in E.N.P. during February deserted during the last week of the same month following passage of a relatively mild cold front (GTB). These 2 colonies, East R. and Rodgers River Bay, as recently as 10–15 years ago contained several thousand nesting egrets; thus, the slow start at nesting in 1988 continued the sad and infuriating commentary on the rapid decline of a once magnificent everglades ecosystem. Bitterns are uncommon and unobtrusive enough in the Florida Keys so that reports of either species are noteworthy. Thus, one Least Bittern on Stock I. Dec. 20 and Jan. 1 (JO), another on Big Pine Key Feb. 27 (LR), and two different Am. Bitterns in the lower keys Dec. 21 (JO) were of interest. At the other end of the peninsula, one Least Bittern was at L. Kanapaha near Gainesville Dec. 19 (MER), where the species is considered very rare in winter. In the "high counts" department for Glossy Ibis, there were 744 Jan. 2 and 1180 going into roost Feb. 27, both at C.S.M., Polk Co. (PJF, CLG); 250 at L. Woodruff, Volusia Co., Jan. 30 (JB); and 37, a high winter count for the Tallahassee Div. near S.M.L. Jan. 9 (CSG).

Roseate Spoonbills had a very good winter nesting season in w. Florida Bay, E.N.P., with 98% of 180 nests on Sandy Key producing large young (RB, GP). Although spoonbills nesting in the larger colonies in e. Florida Bay had only a 50% to 60% success rate, they still did much better than in the preceding 2 years. Up to 150 adult and newly fledged young spoonbills



Ross' Goose (the small white goose at center) with Snow Geese, mostly of the blue morph, near Tallahassee, Fla., Dec. 22, 1987. Photo/James E. Cavanagh.

feeding in a roadside canal along U S Hwy One east of Florida Bay caused "bear-jam" tie-ups in traffic for fully 3 weeks during late February and early March (m.ob.). Although spoonbills were producing good numbers of young, the familiar, dismal story of Wood Stork nesting failures seemed likely to repeat itself in s. Florida. Both the stork colonies at Cuthbert Lake, E.N.P., and at Corkscrew Swamp, Collier Co., waited until March to become active (WBR, EC). Such late starts, fully 3 months later than the historical pattern, almost inevitably lead to failure because summer rains in May and June flood the available feeding sites before nestlings become independent. Up to 11 Am. Flamingos were back at one of their frequent hangouts at Snake Bight, E.N.P., during December (CWB, PWS). It may require nothing less than a national referendum to settle the debate whether these flamingos, and the dozens that have been at Snake Bight in previous years, are wild birds from Cuba or the Bahamas, or escapees!

A Brant, uncommon anywhere in Florida, was at Cocoa from the beginning of the period until Feb. 10 (JJ). Most of the goose news, however, came from the Tallahassee Div., including one Greater White-fronted Goose near S.M.L. Jan. 9 & 26 (CSG, JEC), and a first for Florida, one **Ross' Goose**, photographed near Tallahassee Dec. 22 (JEC). The important Ross' field marks showed well in the photos, and its identity was verified by at least one goose expert (Barry R. Zimmer). Interestingly, the Ross' was with an impressive flock of 61 Lesser Snow Geese (mostly "blues"). Much farther south, where they are rare, one Lesser Snow was at the C.S.M. Jan. 2 (PJF). Three Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were unusually far north at Mayport, Duval Co., Feb. 22 (PCP), and the rare Eur. Wigeon was near S.M.L., one on Jan. 30 (RS, BS). High counts from the C.S.M. included 2000 Green-winged Teal and 400 Hooded Mergansers Jan. 23 (PJF, MHW). Buffleheads, always rare in c. and s. Florida, reached Polk County Dec. 13 (PJF, CLG); Hog Key in the Ten Thousand Is., with one Dec. 21 (THB, WBB); and Snake Bight, E.N.P., with six Dec. 6 (BDN). A real surprise for the season was 2 reports of **Common Eiders**. One was inland of all places, in a flooded phosphate surface mine at C.S.M. Jan. 17-23 (PJF, MHW *et al.*), and the other was at Round Key, Ten Thousand Is., Jan. 18 and Feb. 21 (THB). Rare on the Florida Keys, one Hooded Merganser was at Key West Dec. 5 (PB, CW).

DIURNAL RAPTORS — In spite of their abundance in mainland portions of E.N.P., Black Vultures very rarely join the daily foraging flights of Turkey Vultures moving in and out of the Florida Keys during winter. Thus, one Black Vulture on Big Pine Key Dec. 14 (TW) was most unusual. A pair of Black-shouldered Kites remained in one area of w. Broward County from the beginning of the period until mid-January, when construction of another shopping center drove them away (WG). A winter report of an Am. Swallow-tailed Kite, but without details, was of one at Lake Wales Dec. 13 (DS); otherwise, Swallow-taileds first returned on schedule in late February, one near Flamingo, E.N.P., Feb. 23 (E.N.P. staff), and the first in the lower Florida Keys Feb. 26 (MBr). Rare in the Florida Keys, one Red-tailed Hawk was at Key West Dec. 6 (JO); and across the bay at Flamingo, one Red-shouldered Hawk surprised the onlookers by attacking and killing a Laughing Gull Feb. 27 (BDN, BLM, WFN). Broad-winged Hawks were relatively numerous throughout the Florida Keys this winter, with up to 15 hunting along the length of Key Largo throughout December (JCO, MBi). A late flight of Broad-wingeds was suggested by reports of 24 moving SW over Key West Dec. 6 (JO) and as many as three in Palm Beach County Dec. 12 (HPL, BHH *et al.*). One s. Florida area editor (BDN) has suggested that most wintering Swainson's Hawks are dark phased, an observation that does not agree with my memory of Swainson's I have seen. The truth is, however, that most that are reported do not include mention of color phase, which prompts me to include one light phased at Snake Bight, E.N.P., Dec. 6 (CWB *et al.*), one light bird at Key West Dec. 4 & 6, and one dark phased at Key West Dec. 23 (both JO). Short-tailed Hawks again

wintered in the lower Florida Keys, including one ad dark bird on Sugarloaf Key Jan. 15 (HPL, DP), and single ad light birds at Key West Dec. 17 (JO) and on Cudjoe Key Jan. 15 (JCO). Indications of northward migration by Short-taileds that wintered in extreme s. Florida were three over the E.N.P. Research Center in mid-February (WBR), one dark immature on Plantation Key Feb. 29 (WRH), and one in w. Broward County, Feb. 20 (WG). **Ferruginous Hawks** showed up again, at both ends of the peninsula, only 4 years after the first confirmed sighting for the state (AB 38:309). One Ferruginous was seen on at least 5 dates between Dec. 10 and Feb. 16 near S.M.L. and apparently was in a plumage similar to the immature photographed in 1983-1984 at Zellwood (*ibid.*). The S.M.L. Ferruginous was seen by many (JEC, DPY, CSG *et al.*). A 2nd Ferruginous Hawk, also an immature, was in eastern E.N.P. on several dates between Dec. 15 and Jan. 1 (PWS, OLB); a 3rd was in a flock of soaring raptors over Boot Key in the Florida Keys Dec. 18 (PWS, SAS). The three this winter apparently provided the 5th through 7th records in Florida, all since December 1983! One imm. Golden Eagle was near S.M.L. Jan. 3, 17, & 22 (CF, SD, CSG), and another imm. Golden was in w. Volusia Co., Dec. 16 (CWB *et al.*). A large winter roost of Bald Eagles, of up to 73 birds, was in Alachua County (*fide* BPM). A noteworthy count of Crested Caracaras was of 38 flying into a roost east of Lake Placid Dec. 17 (GEW), and two caracaras along the Tamiami Trail in e. Collier County Dec. 15 (JLN) were unusually far south.

CRANES THROUGH SKIMMER — What appears to have been record numbers of Sandhill Cranes wintered in n. Florida, as demonstrated by an all-time high count of 2030 cranes on the Gainesville CBC Dec. 20 (m.ob.), a count of 250 in a stubble field along I-10 east of the Live Oak-Jasper exit Jan. 30 (PCP, MJW), and 500 east of Greenville, Madison Co., Feb. 21 (LH *et al.*). One Black Rail was flushed from a spartina patch in Dania, Broward Co., Dec. 8 (PWS). I am fascinated by the estimate of "hundreds" of Am. Oystercatchers "migrating" through the Cedar Keys Feb. 27-28, including 110 roosting on North I. Feb. 28 (LLA). Where could such numbers have come from, and where were they going? A large concentration of the endangered Piping Plover was on Ohio Key, Monroe Co., where 21 were counted Dec. 19 (GP, CW), with 19 still there Jan. 16 (DL *et al.*). A possible wintering Lesser Golden-Plover was on Hog Key, Ten Thousand Is., Dec. 21 (THB, WBB). The secretive Am. Woodcock was again discovered in extreme s. Florida, this time displaying each evening at dusk in the e. Hole-in-the-Donut, E.N.P., Feb. 27-29 (EH, PWS). A very high count of 47 Whimbrels, presumably a late migrating flock, was on Little Swash Key, Monroe Co., Dec. 7 (TW). The C.S.M. ponds again produced a high number of wintering Stilt Sandpipers, 160 on Jan. 2 (PJF). High counts of Am. Avocets were of 84 at the C.S.M. Feb. 27 (PJF, CLG), and 204 at Port Canaveral Feb. 26 (JJ, MHI). Does the fact that both of these high counts occurred at the same time suggest that avocets were migrating then? Two avocets remained through the period unusually far north at S.M.L. (HMS, m.ob.). Black-necked Stilts were also north of their usual wintering grounds (E.N.P.), with two in w. Broward County Dec. 5 (EMF, BHH, WG) and one through the period at Port Canaveral (JJ, FF *et al.*).

Strong easterly winds Dec. 9 resulted in a very high, late count of 43 jaegers (species?) moving S off the Lake Worth Pier (HPL, DB, JB). An **Iceland Gull** on Wards Bank, at the mouth of St. John R. Jan. 1, was described in good detail by an observer experienced with northern gulls (RHC). It was in the first-winter, mottled plumage, was slightly smaller in size than nearby Herring Gulls, and had pale flight feathers and a relatively small, all-dark bill. Great and Lesser Black-backed gulls have recently become regular enough along the Atlantic coast of the Florida peninsula so that, beginning this year, I will no longer attempt to report all sightings. High counts of note, however, were of 17 Greats and nine Lessers at the Pompano Beach landfill Feb. 20 (WG). Both species again reached extreme s. Florida, including Greats on Stock I. between Dec. 31

and Feb 12 (WRH, PWS, CW) and Lessers at several Florida Keys locations including three at Rockland Key Dec. 11 (IM) and three in n.w. Florida Bay Jan. 3 (WRH). On the Gulf coast, where Lesser Black-backed Gulls are much less frequently encountered, one was at Cedar Key Jan. 2 (MER *et al.*).

One Franklin's Gull at the St. Lucie County landfill Dec. 3 (HD, WD), prompts the reporting of a late but detailed account of one Franklin's Gull at Ft. Myers Beach Dec. 28, 1986 (RLF). Flooded surface mines in the phosphate country near Bartow attracted 3 species in unusually high numbers for an inland locality: eight Royal Terns Jan. 23 (PJF), 1214 Forster's Terns Jan. 17, and 402 Black Skimmers Feb. 23 (PJF). Another high count of skimmers was made at Key West, with 400 Feb. 28 (JO).

CUCKOOS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — A Mangrove Cuckoo may have wintered on the mainland, as suggested by one at Convoy Point, s. Dade Co., Dec. 22 (FT) and again at the same location Feb. 27 (EH). A pair of Great Horned Owls had fledged young by mid-January near Lake Placid (*vide* FEL).

Upon examining the batch of area editor reports received from throughout the Florida Region, my first interest is to identify those "special stories" in which several observations from different parts of the state show some geographical or taxonomic pattern. This winter, the big story has been of an invasion of western hummingbirds of unprecedented strength. Unfortunately, Floridians have little opportunity to hone their hummingbird identification skills without traveling west (however, I lived in California for 5 years but would still prefer to look the other way when fall or winter Rufous/Allen's come my way!). Although this hummingbird invasion apparently did not reach s. Florida, one area editor in the south highlighted the chronic nature of the problem when he used the word "acrimonious" to describe some aspects of the dispute over the identification of hummingbirds that winter commonly in the lower s. peninsula (99% Ruby-throated?). It is clear from reading the lengthy plumage descriptions in this winter's area reports that hummingbird identification experts could have set their own price had they gotten here in time. Without them, we have ended up with some records that are solid but, perhaps, too many that must be shrugged off.

I will only include here what seem to be the best documented, although some less certain identifications are included as illustration of the scope of the invasion and the confusion it caused. One ad. ♂ Rufous Hummingbird was well seen in Tallahassee Jan. 21 (JEC); apparently the same bird was present at the same location from early December through the winter period (*vide* DPY). With fewer details, Rufous Hummingbirds were reported from 3 other locations in Tallahassee, with each bird remaining for an extended period during the winter (*vide* DPY). Also in Tallahassee, at one of the 4 Rufous sites, a different, female-plumaged bird was identified as a **Black-chinned Hummingbird** (JEC, m.ob.). The Black-chinned was present Jan. 17 to Feb. 8 and was photographed, described feather by feather, and its voice recorded; based upon these data, one expert confirmed its identity (Nancy L. Newfield). Another Rufous-type hummingbird, a female, was daily at a feeder in Gainesville throughout the winter period (DTF), at the same location where a similar-looking bird was present during February and March 1987.

On somewhat weaker grounds was the report of an Allen's Hummingbird at a feeder on Cedar Key Feb. 27–19 (DTF, BPM, JHH). Although it was an ad. male and described as having a "green back," at the time my report was being written there was word that some hummingbird experts considered it a Rufous. It is hoped that the final opinion on this one will be included in the spring Regional report. Much weaker was the report of a Calliope Hummingbird at one of the Tallahassee feeders. Although this bird had purple or violet spots on its throat, a consensus on its identity was clearly lacking.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRUSHES — Vermilion Flycatchers appeared at 2 locations this winter, one near S.M.L. Dec. 5 through Jan. 26 (GN, RS *et al.*) and one unusually far south at Sun City, Hillsborough Co., several dates in late January (*vide* EVM). A Brown-crested Flycatcher, which apparently is a rare but regular wintering species in extreme s. Florida, was at Snake Bight, E.N.P., Jan. 13 (PWS, WJB *et al.*), and another was somewhat north of where usually found, in the Big Cypress Seminole Reservation, Hendry Co., Feb. 20 (EMF, BHH). The 4th and 5th records in the United States for the **LaSagra's Flycatcher** were provided by one on Elliott Key, Biscayne N.P., Dec. 22 through Jan. 9 (PWS, SAS, JO, m.ob.) and one seen and heard on n. Key Largo Jan. 15 (PWS, WJB *et al.*). High counts of western flycatchers wintering in c. Florida were three Scissor-tailed Flycatchers east of Lake Placid Dec 27–Feb. 6 (FEL) and three W. Kingbirds at C.S.M. Jan. 17 (PJF). What may be the southernmost Purple Martin nesting colony in Florida is located at the "Robert-is-here" intersection in the highway to E.N.P., about one mi west of Florida City; martins returned to this colony Jan. 22 (PWS, SAS). About 12 Cliff Swallows at Seahorse Key Feb. 21–22 (LLA) presumably were early-arriving spring migrants. Light-rumped swallows encountered at unexpected locations or dates should be closely studied, however, in view of the increasing frequency of Cave Swallow records in Florida. **Cave Swallows** appeared this winter at 2 widely separate locations: one was at Loxahatchee N.W.R. Dec. 12 (HPL, CK), and two were far to the north, near S.M.L., Jan. 8 (CSG), followed by one at the same location Feb 7 (DM). Late, straggling Barn Swallows in the n. peninsula were one over Paynes Prairie, Alachua Co., Dec. 3 (BPM) and one at Adams Beach, Taylor Co., Dec. 6 (TAW, LLA). A Brown Creeper, very rare in Alachua County, remained from late December through the period in one area of Gainesville (DTF). Also outside of its normal range, a Carolina Wren was found dead on Windley Key, Monroe Co., Dec. 15 (WRH). Golden-crowned Kinglets were considered more common than usual in Tallahassee (HMS), up to five were at one locality in Alachua County (RDR), and Polk County had its first-ever Golden-crowneds, two on Dec. 19 (PJF, PS). A Wood Thrush, rare anywhere in the peninsula in winter, was closely watched at Mahogany Hammock, E.N.P., Jan. 17 (PWS, SAS).

WARBLERS, TANAGERS — The most common theme among the more noteworthy warbler records from the winter season was of species that occurred farther north in the peninsula than expected. From north to south, the species in this category included Ovenbird, one along the Wakulla R. (JE) and two near Jacksonville (JPC), both records from throughout the winter period, and one Wilson's Warbler in Orange Park, Clay Co., Dec. 13 through the end of the period (LNM). There was also an impressive list from the Alachua County area: one Blue-winged Warbler Feb. 25 (BPM, JTD); one Black-throated Blue Jan. 19 (DTF); one Black-throated Green Dec. 19 (DBM, CAL); two ♂ Am. Redstarts Dec. 20 (REA); one Worm-eating Warbler on the Suwannee R., Hamilton Co., Jan. 27 (PDS); and three Wilson's Warblers in Alachua County Dec. 20 (BPM, m.ob.), including one that remained through Feb. 25. In Polk County, one each Louisiana Waterthrush and Yellow-breasted Chat were at Saddle Creek Park Feb. 20 (PJF). A Cape May Warbler was unusually far north on Hypoluxo I. Feb. 20 & 28 (HPL, GSH); a high winter count of Cape Mays was of five in Dade County Dec. 19 (m.ob.). Worm-eating Warblers were at 2 Dade County locations, one on the Biscayne N.P. CBC Dec 22 and one in Castellow Hammock Jan. 9 (MCW). Finally, and in keeping with the high number of wintering warblers, the normally abundant but more temperate zone Yellow-rumped Warbler was noticeably less common in the s. peninsula according to several area editors (EVM, JCO *et al.*).

Perhaps a part of the warbler trend for this winter, one ♂ Summer Tanager was southeast of Lake Placid Dec. 27 (DMz, JWF), and, more unusual in winter, one Scarlet Tanager was

in Coral Gables, Dade Co., Dec. 22 (DO). Perhaps not part of the overwintering trend, a new record for Polk County was of one W. Tanager Dec. 19 (KE, FE, AMB).

BUNTINGS THROUGH SISKINS — Very rare in the n. peninsula in winter, one Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in Tallahassee Jan. 30 (CT), and one Painted Bunting wintered in s. Jacksonville Dec. 13 through Feb. 10 (MCD). Dickcissels are rare anywhere in the peninsula in winter, but one was found near the Archbold Biological Station, Highlands Co., Jan. 8 (FEL), and two were in the Ft. Lauderdale area Jan. 3 (HPL). A very rare **Black-faced Grassquit** was discovered in Dania, Broward Co., between Dec. 6 & 13 (WG, BHH, JH *et al.*). Clay-colored Sparrows were found more commonly than usual in Broward-Palm Beach counties, with a high count of seven at the Delray Sewage Treatment Plant Jan. 25 (EMF, BHH); farther north, one was near the Archbold Station Dec. 27 and Jan. 22 (WRH, HPL). The true status of two of the more secretive sparrows remains uncertain, so records of one Henslow's Sparrow at Bartow Feb. 11 (BC, m.ob.) and one Le Conte's Sparrow near S.M.L. Jan. 3 and Feb. 23 (JEC, BC, LC) were noteworthy. Not often found in the Florida Keys, one Sharp-tailed Sparrow was in Key West Dec. 20 (WRH, GP). Another secretive species, Lincoln's Sparrow, probably is a regular winter resident in s. Florida, as evidenced by sightings at 3 different Broward-Palm Beach county locations, including three in Broward County, Jan. 3 (EMF, BHH). Much rarer in the n. peninsula, one Lincoln's was at Payne's Prairie, Alachua Co., Jan. 17 (MER). Rare so far south, one Dark-eyed Junco was at Titusville Jan. 23 (FF, JJ). A **Lapland Longspur** was photographed at Merritt Island N.W.R. Dec. 21 (BL, JJ), a very rare but increasingly reported species for Florida. The Bronzed Cowbirds at Flamingo, E.N.P., this fall remained until the last were three on Dec. 15 (PWS). One ♀ Orchard Oriole found at Payne's Prairie Feb. 25 (JTD, MEK) was, considering the plumage, probably a bird that had wintered in the peninsula rather than an early migrant from the tropics. Purple Finches made no strong showing this winter, with only one report from Jacksonville and only small numbers reaching as far south as Gainesville (PCP, BPM). A House Finch, described as the "yellow variant," and considered by some to be an escaped bird, was at a West Palm Beach feeder Dec. 12 through the period (m.ob.). House Finch numbers increased sharply at some Tallahassee feeders, with of up to 30 at one location (NW).

The winter of 1987-1988 was a major invasion year for Pine Siskins throughout the peninsula. Siskins have such a distinctive flight note that their continued presence at any one

locality rarely goes undetected for long I assume, therefore, that the rather puzzling timing and distribution patterns revealed by the area editors honestly reflected siskin movements through the winter. Two disjunct areas of the state, Highlands County and the upper Florida Keys, both had numerous reports of siskins but only during early winter, Dec. 6 through Jan. 2 (FEL, GEW *et al.*) and Dec. 11 through Jan. 9 (JCO), respectively. Four other areas, even more scattered about the peninsula, had numerous siskin reports only during mid- and late winter: "Jan. and Feb." for Jacksonville (*fide* PCP); "early Jan. through end of the period" for Gainesville (JTD, RDR *et al.*); Jan. 3 through Mar. 18 for Flamingo, E.N.P. (PWS *et al.*); and Jan. 8 through Feb. 29 for the lower Florida Keys (JO, MBr *et al.*). To add to the confusion, Polk, Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade counties reported no siskins! A couple of high counts were of 34 at Merritt Island N.W.R. Jan. 13 (JJ, SJ) and of 50 or more on Big Pine Key Jan. 28 and Feb. 29 (MBr, SF).

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ONTARIO REGION

Ron D. Weir

Mild weather prevailed over most areas of Ontario during December and January, which kept water open and encouraged waterfowl, waders, and gulls to linger much later than normal. Several species of insectivores tarried into winter. When the cold snap did arrive, it did so everywhere, but relatively warm weather systems passed at frequent intervals to make the winter a fairly easy one for overwintering birds. Snowfall amounts were much less than normal south of Sudbury, and the 20 forest fires burning in the Kenora area during mid-February were indicative of the drought conditions in the northwest.

This was the second consecutive winter with mild conditions, and species at the northerly edge of their breeding

range in Ontario, which are sensitive to harsh winters, responded by surging northward. These include Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, and Northern Cardinal. From the other direction came irruptions of Gyrfalcon, Snowy Owl, Northern Hawk-Owl, Boreal Owl, and Bohemian Waxwing. Overwintering successfully were larger than usual numbers of Mourning Dove, Hermit Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and several species of sparrows. The winter finches were well represented once again. Rarities included a Great Cormorant, Black Vulture, California Gull, Rufous Hummingbird, and Yellow-throated Warblers.

ABBREVIATIONS — Pelee = Pt. Pelee Nat'l Park and vicinity, Algonquin, Presqu'île, and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* are counties.

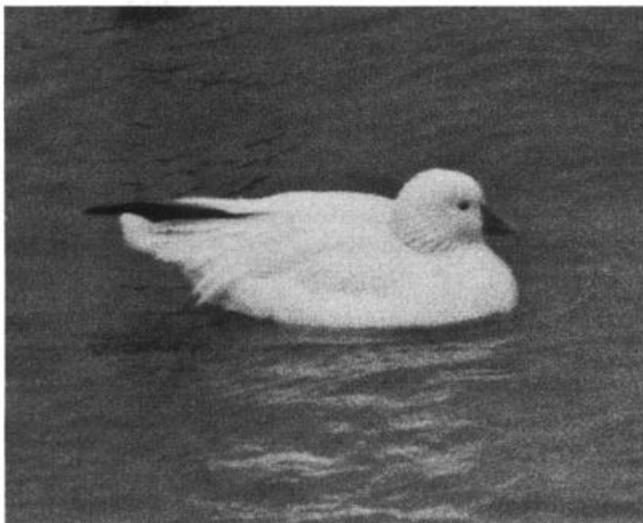
LOONS THROUGH HERONS — More than the usual number of Com. Loons lingered, the most noteworthy among which were one in Kenora until Feb. 15 (SRM) and another frozen in ice at Espanola Jan. 9, which was freed without injury (CGB). The single Pied-billed Grebes at Toronto Dec. 1–27 (GFa, DCP), Cambridge Dec. 19–Feb. 13 (WW), and Port Rowan Jan. 23 (fide GEW) were fewer than usual. However, Horned Grebes were numerous in the south until year's end, and the last report was of one at Ajax Jan. 10 (MW). Red-necked Grebes totaled 93, for their best showing during early winter in many years. The largest groups contained 38 on Manitoulin Dec. 12 (JCN) and 15 at Burlington Dec. 2 (DGa, KAM). The only ones noted at sites along L. Erie were singles at Erieau Dec. 5–10 (KJB et al.), Pelee Dec. 1 & 12–16 (DEP, AW et al.) and three at Long Pt. Dec. 19 (fide GEW). The Eared Grebe at Pelee Dec. 5 & 11–12 (AW et al.) raised the species' total for Ontario during 1987 to 15, which compares with an average of seven over the past 15 years. Ontario's first **Great Cormorant** since winter of 1985 appeared near Kingston Dec. 31–Jan. 3 (TFMB, BL et al.), and judging from the description, the subadult at Pickering Feb. 29–Mar. 3 (HK, DM et al.) may have been the same bird. The latest Double-crested Cormorants were singles at Tobermory Dec. 17 (TRM), Manitoulin I. Dec. 18 (JCN), and Sarnia Jan. 9 (DFR) and five in e. Hamilton Bay Dec. 26 (RC et al.). Several Great Blue Herons overwintered successfully at Perth, Westport, Camden East, Meaford, and Pelee. However, the Great Egret at Wheatley Dec. 1–26 (AJM et al.) was found dead Jan. 17 and is now in the Royal Ontario Museum (AW). At least one of the three Black-crowned Night-Herons in Toronto's Humber Valley Dec. 7 was still present in early January (HE, HK). The only other report was of a single in Cobourg Dec. 20 (ERM).

WATERFOWL — Thirty Snow Geese passed over Westport Dec. 20 (WBJ), and a single tarried at Thunder Bay to Dec. 26 (BA). Among the many other reports, 47 were counted on the Essex, Kent, and Lambton waterfowl survey Dec. 30–Jan. 7 (KJB), and one was near Huntingford, Oxford, Jan. 16–Feb. 29 (JSk, JMH). The Ross' Goose noted in the autumn report was thought to be the same individual in the St. Catharines area Jan. 27–Feb. 12 (WCD et al.). Two Brant swam along the lake-shore from Burlington to Oakville Dec. 26–Jan. 21 (DGa, WS et al.), and singles were in Niagara-on-the-Lake Dec. 27 to late January (RC, GBe) and St. Catharines Jan. 16–Feb. 7 (KR). A Canada Goose, *B. c. hutchinsii*, the small short-billed race that is common along the James Bay coast but rare in s. Ontario, appeared at Whitby Oct. 17 and overwintered to Mar. 7 (ph. GC, DS). A drake Wood Duck successfully overwintered at



Burlington (KAM), and two remained at Guelph Dec. 17–Jan. 10 (RVT). The singles at Pelee Dec. 21–27 (JL et al.) and Turkey Point Jan. 8 (TW) were late. A healthy female was in Westport Jan. 30 (JHE, RDW). Late Green-winged Teal numbered 10 at Pelee Dec. 21 (AW, DAW et al.), a record by 10 days, and 13 in Hamilton Jan. 3 (AGC). A female survived the winter in the lagoon of a paper mill at Thunder Bay (NGE). Nearby along Thunder Bay's waterfront, the 250 Am. Black Ducks Dec. 30 and 381 Mallards Dec. 26 constituted extraordinary numbers for the late date, and by the first week of January most had pushed S because of the advancing cold. Other late puddle ducks included the single Blue-winged Teal at Pelee Dec. 2–11 (PB, RS et al.), a record late by one day, and two N. Shovelers at Pelee Dec. 27 (JL et al.), a record by 14 days. Overwintering N. Shovelers numbered five in Toronto (VH et al.), 20 in Hamilton until Jan. 3 (AGC et al.) and one in Sarnia until early January (DFR, SAC).

The largest groups of Canvasbacks were 2500 above Niagara Falls Dec. 4 (AGC), and 1148 tallied during the Kent, Essex, and Lambton waterfowl survey Dec. 20–Jan. 7 (KJB). The 80 Redheads at Presqu'île Jan. 4 were a surprise (SML, RDM), and successful overwinterers were four in Owen Sound (TRM) and a female in Peterborough (DCS). The 10 King Eiders were more than usual, led by at least five females and one male at Sarnia Dec. 4–29 (DFR, AHR), 2 females at Presqu'île Dec. 24–Jan. 1 (RDM, DMi et al.), and singles at Ajax-Whitby Dec. 26–29 (SM et al.) and Erieau Jan. 1 (PAW, KJB). The 12 Harlequin Ducks reported were more than twice the 10-year winter average of five birds as the trend to increasing numbers since 1981 continues. Up to three were along Toronto's waterfront Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (EJ, JM et al.), up to five were in Sarnia Dec. 11–29 (DFR), one was at Turkey Point Dec. 11 for the Long Pt. area's 3rd ever (fide GEW), two were in Ottawa Dec. 20–Feb. 1 (fide BMD), and one appeared at Niagara Falls Jan. 10–20 (RFA). Ten Black Scoters, which were normal numbers, were reported Dec. 4–Jan. 3, but the 11 Surfs were more than usual. The latest were singles near Kingston Jan. 16 (KC) and Sarnia Jan. 13–27 (DFR, SAC). White-winged Scoters numbered 300 at Prince Edward Pt. Jan. 3 (JHE, RDW) and 28 along the Toronto Is. Jan. 10 (GC, WE). For the 2nd consecutive winter, Barrow's Goldeneyes made a strong showing. The 13 birds compared with last winter's record of 21+ and the 16-year winter average of only four. A male was at Lakefield Feb. 19–29 for Peterborough's first winter record (AGC et al.). At least four males and two females were in Ottawa Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (BMD et al.), and up to five males and a female were at the Cornwall dam Jan.



Ross' Goose at St. Catharines, Niagara County, Ont., Feb. 7, 1988. Photo/Alan Wormington.

24–Feb. 25 (BMD, CWT). One Hooded Merganser survived the winter in Ottawa (BMD). A female Ruddy Duck at Thunder Bay Dec. 3–11 furnished a latest record (BA et al.).

Early spring waterfowl arrived at Long Pt. Feb. 25 and included Canvasbacks and 1740 Redheads (GEW). A ♂ Greater Scaup was very early at Ottawa Feb. 28 (BMD), and the following day single Ring-necked Ducks were at Pelee and Peterborough (AW, AGC). Also appearing at Pelee Feb. 29 were seven N. Pintails, two Gadwall, four Canvasbacks, and 49 Redheads (AW).

VULTURES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Ontario's 9th Black Vulture and 2nd in winter roosted within a conifer grove Dec. 26–Jan. 3 in a residential area of Aldershot (ph. E. & MB, PH et al.). A late Turkey Vulture, thought to be sick or injured, was at Pelee Dec. 5–6 (PB, RT et al.). Others were at Long Pt. beach Dec. 30 (fide GEW) and in e. Elgin Jan. 30–31 (GEM). Returning migrants were early at Vittoria Feb. 18 (GEW et al.) and Moscow Feb. 27 (JB). An Osprey tarried along the Credit R. at Cheltenham Jan. 18–Feb. 3 (RAG). Bald Eagles numbered 60 in the south and 14 in the north, which were typical figures for recent years. Up to 20 wintered along the St. Lawrence R. between Ivy Lea and Brockville (LID). Normal numbers of Accipiters were reported. Noteworthy were single Sharp-shinned Hawks at Kakabeka Falls Jan. 10 (AGH) and Minden Feb. 22 (RJP), where the species is rare in winter, and four N. Goshawks at Woodstock Dec. 18 (JMH). Returning Red-shouldered Hawks were at West Lorne Feb. 10 (JRM), Forestville Feb. 17 (DAS), and Trenton Feb. 20 (AGC et al.). The seven Golden Eagles, all in the south, were typical numbers, led by three in Petro-



Black Vulture at Aldershot, Ont., December 1987–January 1988, an odd place and date for this southern species. Photo/Glenn Coady.

glyphs P.P. in the period (DCS) and singles in w. Elgin Dec. 27 (fide WRJ); Nottawa, Simcoe, Jan. 19 (DSc); Wiarton Jan. 22 (JT); and Amherst-Wolfe I. Jan. 27–28 (CF et al.).

The 13 Merlins in the south were normal numbers. Two were in Ottawa, where they are rare, during December and January (BMD). An ad. Peregrine Falcon, *F. p. tundrius*, without bands, overwintered in Ottawa roosting on buildings (BMD). Singles were in Peterborough, seen eating a pigeon Jan. 24 (RP), on Wolfe I. Feb. 3 (FA, EG), and in downtown Toronto Feb. 29 (HGC). Gyrfalcons irrupted in a fairly strong flight. Two white birds were in Sault Ste. Marie Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (TDM, AG, CS et al.), and one white plus a gray remained in Sudbury Dec. 18–Feb. 29 and Dec. 6–Feb. 24, respectively (CGB, JCN et al.). The species has occurred during most recent winters in those 2 areas. Farther south, one passed Hawk Cliff Dec. 5 (BAh), another was at Cobourg Dec. 26 (BCO), and an intermediate plumaged bird was on Manitoulin I. Feb. 24 (ST). Single gray Gyrs frequented the Pickering area Jan. 16–21 (LR et al.) and the Kingston area Dec. 11–Mar. 5 (MM, GM, GY et al.).

One Willow Ptarmigan had made its way as far south as Hannah Bay on the lower James Bay coast during January, the first there since 1971 (EH). Four coveys of N. Bobwhite containing 21 birds were reported in w. Elgin through the winter (WP). The only Virginia Rail sightings were of a single at Pelee Jan. 15–Feb. 4 (AW, JL) and two overwinterers in Kingston (RR). Late Am. Coots were two at Presqu'île Jan. 4 (AGC) and singles in Ottawa to Dec. 24 (BMD), near Kingston Jan. 2 (WLB, RDW), and Long Pt. Feb. 3 (TW). The lone Sandhill Crane surprised observers at Port Rowan Jan. 25–31 (GEW et al.) as the species is not supposed to be in the province during mid-winter.

The warm weather during December encouraged a number of waders to linger. The 67 Killdeer in the Pelee area Dec. 21 were a high (AW), and the latest were birds at Sarnia to Jan. 9 (SAC, DFR), Wheatley Jan. 10 (AW), and Hamilton Jan. 31 (KAM). Other tardy littorals included the Greater Yellowlegs at Whitby Dec. 2–4 (MMcE, HK et al.), Lesser Yellowlegs at Shrewsbury Dec. 20 (AW, MW, SP), single Sanderlings at Rondeau Dec. 6 (KJB, PAW) and Presqu'île Dec. 8 & 19 (PD, TB), a Least Sandpiper at Turkey Point Dec. 19–23 (AW), and Dunlin at Pelee Dec. 14 (AW), Oshawa Dec. 26 (MMcE et al.), Kingston Dec. 26 (RW), and Port Colborne Jan. 2 (RKW). Purple Sandpipers, among the most likely shorebirds to occur in winter, were scarce following their poor showing last autumn. The species was reported in Kent to Dec. 8 (AW), one was in Goderich Dec. 13 (TL), and one was at Niagara Falls to Jan. 9 (JBM, JMH). Consistent with the non-wintery weather in December, Am. Woodcocks were found at Kingston, Port Colborne, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Long Pt., and Rondeau around Christmas.

JAEGERS THROUGH OWLS — The only reports of Parasitic Jaeger were from the Sarnia area, where single light- and dark-plumaged birds appeared Dec. 4–Jan. 4 (DFR). The 43 Little Gulls at Long Pt. Dec. 19 (fide GEW) accounted for most of the sightings for this species. An adult was in Sarnia Dec. 23 (DFR), and the peak tally amounted to only seven on Feb. 4 in the daily flypast of gulls at Niagara-on-the-Lake (GBe). The lone Com. Black-headed Gull there Dec. 4 & 27 (HGC, GBe) compares with 17 during the past 24 winters. The only significant numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls were in the flypasts at Niagara-on-the-Lake, where 18,500 passed Dec. 19, which were reduced at 8000 by Jan. 3, 830 by Jan. 12, 196 by Jan. 29, and none Feb. 12 (GBe). The California Gull in first-year plumage at Sarnia Dec. 28 furnished Ontario's 4th record (DFR). Herring Gulls retreated S as winter's cold advanced, and flocks included 3500 at Maple Dec. 19 (GMB), 2450 at Ottawa Dec. 24 (BMD), 1019 at Thunder Bay Dec. 26 (NGE), 3160 near Woodstock Dec. 27 (JMH), and 2000 at Glenora Jan. 3 (JHE, RDW). The 12 Thayer's Gull reports were a few more than usual, but the 57 Icelanders were a good number. The largest flock of Iceland Gulls contained 32 birds at the Cornwall dam Feb. 15 (BMD, CWT).

Expansion in numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls continued unabated. The 16 this season were over double the winter



Northern Hawk-Owl at Sheffield, Ont., Feb. 14, 1988. Photo/
Brian Keelan.

average of 7 birds since 1981 and are too many to list individually. They were present at Kingston, Peterborough, Lindsay, Cobourg, Pickering, Toronto, Niagara Falls, Guelph, Sarnia, and Wheatley Dec. 1–Feb. 29. The 204 Glaucous Gulls were a high number of which 83 were in Ottawa Dec. 24 (BMD). One was seen at a deer kill in Rainy River Dec. 6 (fide SFP), and another was at the Moosonee dump Jan. 3 (EH). Great Black-backed Gull numbers also continued to climb. Many frequented the dumps in Gravenhurst and Bracebridge during December, thereby furnishing the first ever for Muskoka (RLB), and near Woodstock Dec. 27, representing greatly increased numbers for Oxford (JMH et al.). The 522 at Ottawa Dec. 24 were the largest number reported, and 200 at Glenora Jan. 3 were thought to have been forced SW out of the St. Lawrence R. as freezing occurred (JHE, RDW).

Overwintering Mourning Doves were in greatly increased numbers through Grey, Bruce, Peterborough, Frontenac, Leeds, Lanark, and at Sault Ste. Marie. One survived the period at a feeder in Englehart (JW), and up to three were at the grain elevator in Thunder Bay, where the species is rare in winter, to Jan. 1 (NGE). The 13 E. Screech-Owls at Owen Sound Dec. 26 (TRM) and the 16 in w. Elgin Dec. 27 (fide WRJ) mirrored the findings of the Breeding Bird Atlas 1981–1985 for this fairly common species. The flight of Snowy Owls was fairly strong with 96 reports, the greatest concentrations of which were 25 in the Kingston area and up to 20 in Ottawa.

The irruption of N. Hawk-Owls led to at least 13 birds south of range, which provided sightings for the first time in some areas since the massive invasion of 1962–1963. Those that set up territories included singles at Westport, Leeds, Nov. 15–Feb. 28 (K.F.N.); Sheffield, Hamilton-Wentworth, Jan. 6–Feb. 28 (RJB, IWW et al.); Pefferlaw, York, Dec. 19–Feb. 16 (GMcK et al.); Columbus, Durham, Dec. 27–Feb. 28 (DJM et al.); and up to six in the Ottawa area in the period (BMD). The others were two in Algonquin Jan. 2–3 and Feb. 17 (JSk, IR, RH et al.) and one near Cornwall Jan. 2 (BAM). In the north, another was near Red Rock Dec. 19–Feb. 13 (NGE et al.), and one was

killed along a road near Matachewan in late December (LT). Low populations of rodents were likely the reason for the many sightings of Barred Owl within the urban areas of Pembroke (JMB) and in Algonquin hunting by day (RGT). Nine Great Gray Owls were reported within the breeding range. Six of the seven south of range were in e. Ontario with singles at Merrickville, Leeds, Nov. 30 (BB); at Pembroke, Bonnechere, and Beachbury, Renfrew, Dec. 18–Feb. 27 (fide JMB); and two in Algonquin Feb. 16–28 (ph. fide RGT). The 7th was found shot at Lyon's Head, Bruce, Feb. 21 (TRM). The largest flocks of Short-eared Owls were of 30 on Amherst I. Jan. 18 (K.F.N.) and up to 12 each at Melbourne Feb. 1–18 (BR) and near Selkirk Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (GEW). Omens of an irruption of Boreal Owls were noted last autumn, and the six found this winter south of their breeding range were the most since the great invasions of 1983–1984 and 1977–1978. Two were on Amherst I. Feb. 6–28 (K.F.N.), and singles were at Whitby Jan. 30–Feb. 28 (RSh et al.); Mindemoya, Manitoulin I., Feb. 1–29 in a barn (JMi, CTB); Tiny Marsh, Simcoe, Mar. 6 (DH); and Ottawa Jan. 15, hit by a vehicle (BMD). Another was killed in a conibear trap near Matachewan Jan. 7 (LT). The mild winter aided the survival of overwintering N. Saw-whets, and 25 on Amherst I. dined well on the abundant vole population there (K.F.N.).

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WRENS — The ♂ Rufous Hummingbird at Battersea near Kingston, which first appeared Sept. 16, remained healthy well into December. It fed actively at the heated feeder, supplemented with the necessary protein, even after nights when the temperature fell to -15°C . Then to the dismay and surprise of the Kingston naturalists, disaster struck when 2 overzealous bird rehabilitators suddenly interfered. They trapped the bird Dec. 19 and removed it to Ottawa, where it was confined, and it was dead by Dec. 21. The specimen has been retrieved by staff at the National Museum. Single Belted Kingfishers were well north of winter range at Dunrobin Jan. 3 (CWT) and in Sault Ste. Marie during January and February (MO). A Red-bellied Woodpecker was also well north in Sudbury Jan. 3–Feb. 15 (CGB et al.).

The 71+ Red-bellied Woodpeckers were more than were tallied the previous winter and were distributed differently. Their expansion to the northeast continued in the mild winter. Some 47+ were at sites along L. Erie and in Niagara, which were increased numbers over those prior to 1986. Twenty-four were north of this traditional range, and singles reached North Bay Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (RTa), Manitoulin I. Dec. 19–Feb. 29 (ET et al.), and Sault Ste. Marie Oct. 28–Feb. 29 (ph. DD), and a male and female were in the Sudbury area Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (DAP et al., A & EG). Single males in Gravenhurst and Bracebridge Dec. 1–Feb. 29 were firsts for Muskoka (RLB). The remaining 17 extralimitals were two in Toronto, one in Grey, one in Peterborough, seven in Durham, two in Prince Edward, one in Lennox & Addington, and three in Leeds. Virtually all the birds were at suet feeders throughout the period.

Single Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were at Pelee Dec. 6 (FD et al.) and in Toronto during December (RSc). The only Three-toed Woodpecker south of range was in the Meadowvale Conservation Area near Toronto Dec. 19 (MB). The five Black-backed Woodpeckers in Ottawa during the period were considered a poor showing (BMD), and consistent with that were four others south of the nesting range. Singles were on Manitoulin I. Dec. 20 (CTB, RPo); Orillia Jan. 18–Feb. 18 (WEZ); Silent Lake, Peterborough, Feb. 19 (AGC); and Bancroft Feb. 19 (AGC). Wintering N. Flickers were in greater numbers as far north as Simcoe and Leeds.

Late departing insectivores were the E. Phoebe at Langton near Long Pt. Dec. 27 (fide GEW) and three Tree Swallows at Pelee Dec. 21 (JRC, JMcA et al.). Earlier than normal Horned Larks returned to Pelee Jan. 16 (AW, JL) and reached Ancaster Feb. 1 and Wolfe I. Feb. 8 in higher than usual numbers for the date (RC, JHE). Several Am. Crows overwintered successfully at a Moosonee feeder (AMM) as did others at the dumps in Kirkland Lake and Matchewan (LT). Observers report rising

numbers of Com. Raven especially along the s edge of the Canadian Shield. The 11 near Kingston Dec. 14 (WLB) were unprecedented, but predictable from the species' range expansion since 1975, and the 34 at Warton Dec. 20 reflected the increase there (TRM). The 22 Tufted Titmouse sightings are also a big rise. Three were away from the traditional range in the southwest and were at Hamilton Dec. 30 (AGC), Whitby Dec. 1–Feb. 28 (fide MJB), and Ottawa Nov. 15–Feb. 29 for that area's 2nd ever (PRM et al.). Late House Wrens were at Erieau Dec. 8 (AW) and Wheatley Dec. 21 (KO), and a Winter Wren was in Ottawa Dec. 20–Jan. 3 (BMD et al.).

The Carolina Wren is another species sensitive to the severity of Ontario's cold, and its history here has shown fluctuating numbers in successive winters. The 58+ this winter represented a further increase that began in 1984–1985 and a nearly 5-fold rise over the post-1981–1982 winter average of 12 birds. Some 41+ were in the warmer southwest including Niagara, but the 17 beyond this normal range were remarkable. Singles were in Richmond Hill, Gravenhurst, and Parry Sound Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (GMB, AS, NC); Seeley's Bay Nov. 27 (MK); near Kingston Jan. 3–13 (GB); and at Port Hope Jan. 21 (ERM). Two were in the Pickering-Whitby area Jan. 2–Feb. 28 (JMS, DJM et al.), and three were in Toronto-Oakville throughout the period (MWD). At least three appeared in Sarnia Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (SAC), and three clung to feeders at Ottawa until Jan. 3 (fide BMD).

KINGLETS THROUGH WARBLERS — More than usual numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets overwintered as far north as Algonquin, and lone Ruby-crowneds were in Clarkson's Rattray Marsh Dec. 18 (MWD) and Pelee Feb. 9–20 (AW, JL et al.) An ad. Townsend's Solitaire made a brief stopover in n.w. Toronto Dec. 8–10 (D. Long et al.), making the 2nd consecutive winter the species has been found in the metropolitan area. Hermit Thrushes were also more common than usual and seemed to fare well. Five were at Pelee Feb. 9 (AW, JL), and another ensconced itself in the gorilla cage of the Toronto zoo, where it survived heartily (GMB). The traditional mid-winter influx of Am. Robins at Pelee failed to occur again (AW) as birds remained all winter north to Thunder Bay, Manitoulin I., Sudbury, Georgian Bay Islands N.P., and Westport. Some 60 Varied Thrushes have been reported in the last 10 winters so this season's six are right on the average. Singles stayed at feeders in Algonquin Nov. 22–Dec. 13 (ph. RH et al.) and Timmins from early December to Mar. 7 (ph. SG). The others were at Sault Ste. Marie Dec. 15–Mar. 3 (ph. TDM et al.); near Hepworth, Bruce, Dec. 25–Feb. 15 (PM, TRM); Aldershot Dec. 27–Jan. 3 (DSt, AM et al.); and Eden, Elgin, Feb. 10 (MHF).

Only two Gray Catbirds were noted, a low number for such a warm winter, and were at Thornhill Dec. 27 (GFa) and west Toronto Feb. 25–27 (DL). The 10 Brown Thrashers were a respectable winter number of which three frequented feeders in Sault Ste. Marie Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (TDM) and two were at Thunder Bay feeding trays Dec. 1–31 and Dec. 19–23 (NGE). The others were in North Gower Jan. 7–9 (SW); Kingston Jan. 5–Feb. 29 (HKu); Erin, Wellington, Dec. 15–Jan. 23 (JV, TO et al.), Mono Mills, Peel, Dec. 1–Feb. 29 at a poultry farm (JD); and Toronto Dec. 24 (HK). For the 3rd consecutive winter, the flight of Bohemian Waxwings was very strong. The birds were common throughout the period at Thunder Bay, and large numbers reached Sudbury, Manitoulin I., Matachewan, Orillia, Peterborough, Westport, and Ottawa, where flocks containing up to 750 birds were noted until early February. Only a few strayed SW of these areas of which the 86 at Claremont were noteworthy (EP). One was found in Sarnia Jan. 3 (DA, MS).

Two of the late warbler species noted in the autumn report lingered into early winter. The single Cape Mays stayed at Port Rowan to Dec. 7 (DAS et al.) and at Strathroy into early December (fide GMB), and the Am. Redstart at the Mountsberg Conservation Area was seen until Dec. 12 (BKW et al.). Seven other warbler species were noteworthy for their late dates. Lone Orange-crowneds were near Wheatley Dec. 23 (RC, JLO) and Bronte Jan. 26, and a Nashville tarried in Kitchener to

Dec. 19 (CN). Well north were the single Yellow-rumped Warblers in Kakabeka Falls Dec. 1 to early January (RHO) and North Bay Dec. 11 (RTa). The rarest of the *Parulinae* were the two **Yellow-throated Warblers** that appeared at feeders in Trenton Dec. 18–Jan. 5 (ph. C & GG, RTS et al.) and North Bay from December to Jan. 3 (ph. RTa, fide GMB). Pelee's 2nd ever winter Pine Warbler survived Dec. 23–Feb. 29 (RC, JLO et al.). The four Palm Warblers included birds at Port Hope Dec. 20 (fide ERM), at Guelph Dec. 19–20 (RVT), near Wheatley Dec. 21 (JL et al.), and one of the yellow form at Bronte Dec. 5 (GN), which was foraging with juncos. An Ovenbird, caught by a cat, was retrieved alive in Gloucester Dec. 3 (fide BMD), and singles were at a Toronto feeder Dec. 12–28 (JSI) and in Presqu'île Jan. 2–4 (AGC et al.).

CARDINAL THROUGH FINCHES — Single ♂ N. Cardinals overwintered at feeders in Thunder Bay and nearby Hy-mers (NGE), and two were in Sault Ste. Marie Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (TDM). An influx was noted at Perth and Smith Falls during early December, providing unprecedented numbers there (MH) as the species continued its range expansion northward. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks overwintered for the first time since 1984–1985 with an ad. male at Owen Sound Dec. 26–Feb. 29 (E Johns) and an imm. male near Owen Sound Dec. 25–Jan. 6 (DF). Two others were seen at Port Stanley in early December (fide GMB). The four Dickcissels in the period are a high number and were in Brampton Dec. 15 (M. Shram), Wolfe I. Dec. 20 (RDW), Bradford in mid-January (RK et al.), and Ajax Feb. 4–28 (N. Pike et al.). Single Rufous-sided Towhees remained at Rednersville, Prince Edward, and near Owen Sound Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (RTS, TRM); at Ottawa Dec. 15–Feb. 15 (fide BMD), at Kitchener Dec. 25–Jan. 1 (NT); and at Claremont Feb. 12–18 (GU), which was a low total. The 12 Chipping Sparrows were a good number, and only three were away from the southwest, at a Harwood feeder Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (fide ERM), Peterborough Dec. 24–27 (DMo), and Ajax Jan. 1–20 (MW, JMS et al.). Field Sparrow numbers were up sharply in the southwest, and the 27 in the Pelee area Jan. 29 were an exceptional count for mid-winter (AW). Late Vesper Sparrows were singles at Pt. Petre Dec. 12 (RTS), Guelph Lake Dec. 17–28 (RVT), and Selwyn, Peterborough, Dec. 23 (fide DCS). Savannah Sparrows tarried at Whitby Dec. 13–28 (DB et al.), Leamington Dec. 21 (SAC et al.), and Pelee Dec. 21 (KO). The first winter records of Fox Sparrow for 2 years were at opposite ends of the province. One survived at a Kenora feeder Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (JC), and another appeared at Pelee Dec. 21 (PDP et al.). A Lincoln's Sparrow dined at a Peterborough feeder until Jan. 17 (ASK, AGC), and another was at Arkana Dec. 19 (SAC).

The 33 reports of White-crowned Sparrows seemed more typical of late fall than of winter and were topped by the 20 at Leamington Dec. 21 (SAC et al.). One on Amherst I. Jan. 17 (MG, TFMB) and four at Portland Feb. 5 (MA) were north of their usual winter range. Harris' Sparrows are rare anywhere in Ontario during winter, and this season two overwintered. An adult was in Pembroke Dec. 17–Mar. 2 (JMB et al.), and an immature in Huntingford, Oxford, Dec. 19–Feb. 25 (JSk, RSk et al.) was only the 3rd county record. Dark-eyed Juncos overwintered in greater than normal numbers at Thunder Bay (NGE), and one with pink sides visited a Woodstock feeder Feb. 2–5 (JMH). Snow Buntings were common in most of the south. The 15,900+ at Kincardine Jan. 2 (TRM) were the largest numbers noted and contrasted sharply with the one bird that turned up in Moosonee in the period, on Christmas Day (AMM).

A ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird at Pelee Dec. 6–21 (AW et al.) was the only report. One Rusty Blackbird spent the entire period at a feeder in Moosonee (AMM), and the 175 on Walpole I. Dec. 27 was a large number for the late date (DP, SAC). Tardy Brewer's Blackbirds were singles at Whitby's Cranberry Marsh Dec. 5 (fide MJB), at Manitoulin I. Dec. 20 (DBF, BF), at Delta Dec. 23–25 (A. Mess), near St. Williams Dec. 30 (RC et al.), and at Thunder Bay Jan. 8–9 (JK). A lone Com. Grackle survived at a Moosonee feeder Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (AMM), and another

turned up in Atikokan Jan. 4 (DHE). An imm. N. Oriole fed on catfood at a Whitby feeder Dec. 1–Feb. 29 (DDC), and the only other report was of a male at Pelee Dec. 27 (DA_t et al.).

The story of winter finches was nearly identical to that of last winter. Pine Grosbeaks were widespread from Thunder Bay southeast to Westport, and smaller numbers moved from this main axis southwest to Kingston, Pickering, and Pefferlaw, York. Purple Finches remained scarce, but ones and twos were noted from Thunder Bay south to Pelee and east to Smiths Falls. An influx of House Finches was detected in Toronto by late January, and a major expansion occurred into rural areas of Prince Edward, Peterborough, and at Wiarton. From Dec. 20 to January, a few Red Crossbills were seen in Atikokan, Thunder Bay, North Bay, Sudbury, Westport, and Kingston, but from Feb. 22 to the end of the period a modest influx was reported at Sarnia, Ingersoll, Long Pt., Toronto, Whitby, Port Hope, and Ottawa. White-winged Crossbills were in modest numbers within Algonquin and from Sudbury to Thunder Bay, but they were far fewer everywhere in the south.



Male Eurasian Siskin at Etobicoke, Ont., Feb. 7, 1988. The status of this species in North America continues to be controversial. Photo/Alan Wormington.

Common Redpolls poured into s. Ontario by late January, augmenting the small flocks present since December. They appeared at Moosonee Jan. 15, which is an early date (AMM). As usually happens with redpoll flights, a few Hoary Redpolls were noted. Once again, the Pine Siskin was the most common finch in many areas. They were common from Kenora to North Bay and abundant as far south as a line joining Toronto to the Bruce peninsula. Only a few pushed southwest of this boundary. The thousands at feeders brought interesting reports of plumage variations, including an extremely yellow xanthochroistic individual at a Woodstock feeder Jan. 14 (JMH) and three in Peterborough Feb. 4–21 with streaked yellow rumps (fide DCS). A ♂ Eur. Siskin entertained many observers at a n.

Toronto feeder Feb. 6–29 (TO'D et al.), but its origins remained in doubt. Evening Grosbeaks were common only in the north, and relatively few were seen south of Sudbury.

CORRIGENDUM — AB 41:427, col. 1, l. 14, delete "followed by two May 19 (NGE)."

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Douglas P. Kibbe

This was, by most accounts, a relatively open winter with little significant snow accumulation outside areas which typically experience "lake effect" snowfalls. Many bodies of water remained open and there were at least two major warm spells between late January and mid-February. In the face of relatively open conditions it is difficult to ascertain whether the apparent scarcity of numerous species, particularly half hardy species like sparrows, was a true reflection of their actual population levels. Observers' perceptions are frequently biased by what, and how many, appear at the well-stocked feeder. Since feeder visitations are known to decline under open conditions, the actual number of birds wintering may have been poorly reflected in feeder counts.

Although most observers ranked wild food availability as low, there was, as usual, little consensus as to why, or even which, species were as a result less abundant than usual. Few observers seemed inclined to name food availability as a causal factor, although a poor berry crop was clearly implicated in the dearth of Hermit Thrushes, American Robins, and Cedar Waxwings. Most winter finches were scarce although one was termed "insanely abundant" and set local records from one end of this Region to another.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Generally open water conditions result in a paradox—more waterfowl over-winter, but because they're dispersed totals reported are frequently lower. Perhaps as a consequence tallies of loons, grebes, and Double-crested Cormorants were all meager. The latter was particularly surprising given that species' population explosion. The N. Gannet seen Dec. 19 on L. Champlain eluded subsequent surveillance efforts. While certainly extremely unusual, this species' occurrence is not totally unexpected given the recent L. Ontario appearances and increasing evidence from offshore observations on L. Champlain which indicate many similarities between the avifauna of these two major lakes. Numerous Great Blue Herons overwintered throughout the Region. At least one of them shifted to upland foraging (presumably for mice). An imm. Black-crowned Night-Heron was photographed in late February along the Clyde R. in Newport to become Vermonts first winter record (m.ob.).

The Canada Goose population on Cayuga L. swelled to 50,000 by mid-winter while other areas commented on their apparent scarcity. The Snow Goose at Saranac L. in mid-December (H.P.A.S.) would have been exceptional at any season. Forty lingered on L. Champlain to mid-December. Winter feeding of waterfowl, although potentially an expensive proposition, can generate aesthetic rewards, witness the 51 Wood Ducks which wintered at a Penfield suburb pond. Most other puddle ducks were also found in above average numbers in the Region although the attraction was usually less obvious. Best diving duck concentrations included 2000 Redheads at S. Canandaigua L. (RM) and 2500 Canvasbacks at Beaver Island S.P. on the Niagara R. (B.O.S.). A half dozen Barrow's Goldeneye below Moses-Saunders Dam on the St. Lawrence R. was by far the best region total this winter.

HAWKS TO DOVES — There was a belated report of a **Black Vulture** seen Sept. 2 near Oxford (RW fide JL). The regional increase in Turkey Vultures often given as the reason for increasingly regular mid-winter sightings seems inadequate to explain the 16 birds present at Letchworth S.P. in mid-January (DB et al). There were three other regional sightings this winter. Equally surprising were two Osprey reports. A peak in the small mammal populations along L. Ontario and the St.



Lawrence R. resulted in extraordinary raptor concentrations, at least until lake effect snowfalls forced the concentrations to disperse. On Pt. Peninsula at the eastern end of L. Ontario the following daily tallies are illustrative, 20 to 40 N. Harriers, 80-130 Rough-legged Hawks, and 15-30 Red-tailed Hawks. There were also 6-10 Bald Eagles along the St. Lawrence R. throughout the winter. The latter's occurrence is of course unrelated to the microtine outbreak but reflects instead the success of eagle hacking efforts. All four of the possible falcons were reported, some of the rarer ones with adequate details. Merlins continue to be a particular problem because of their size, plumage, and behavioral similarities to the smaller accipiters. Gyrfalcons were reported from the Champlain valley and c. New York although none could be repeatedly located. Conversely at least one of the three Peregrines reported wintered locally. Presumably all fared better than the bird reported from Rensselaer Falls Oct. 2, which was found unconscious in a rat trap (LC). We hope the bird, eventually rehabilitated, was wrier thereafter.

Gray Partridge were seen twice in Vermont's Champlain valley. Eight at Aurora, N.Y., apparently represent results of the trap and transport program that was instituted in an attempt to increase the species' range in the state, particularly in areas where Ring-necked Pheasants have declined drastically. Whether they become abundant enough to qualify as a game-bird (and justify the expense incurred in the stocking effort) remains to be seen.

Six species of shorebirds were reported during the winter season. These included a Semipalmated Plover at Braddock Bay through Dec. 9 (SC et al.) and Red Phalaropes were present on L. Erie through most of December (JG fide TM). Can Niagara Falls be the only area in the Region where Purple Sandpipers winter or is it the only one accessible to observers? A Dunlin was also found there in mid-February (fide SE). Common Snipe apparently overwintered at several locations and Am. Woodcock started displaying so early (by the end of January) that there is suspicion that they, too, never left.

Winter represents a season of bounty for Regional larid lists and this one was no exception. A Little Gull on L. Champlain in mid-December was exciting, but scarcely unexpected since the species often peaks on the Great Lakes during mid-winter. For example, there were seven at the mouth of the Niagara R. in February (B.O.S.). Other notables included Com. Black-headed Gull at the mouth of the Niagara R. Dec. 27, Lesser Black-backed Gull at Adam Beck Hydro Dam Jan. 2 (fide SE) and Rochester Dec. 16 (RS), and a 1st winter Thayer's Gull at Moses-Saunders Dam in mid-February (BDL fide KC & GS), plus eleven on L. Ontario (FS). Although white-winged gulls remained relatively scarce, except at Moses-Saunders Dam where 32 Icelands were found, there were several other species which registered significant tallies. These included 18,000 Bonaparte's at the mouth of the Niagara R. Dec. 19 (B.O.S.), and over 500 Great Black-backed Gulls at Rochester. Fall reports received belatedly included two Black-legged Kittiwakes

and an astonishing six **Arctic Terns** at Moses-Saunders Dam (BD fide KC & GS), plus a **Razorbill** there Nov. 27 (BD & RB fide KC & GS). Coverage of this major concentration point on the St. Lawrence R. has been scanty in the past but should increase significantly if it continues to produce rarities of this stature. Mourning Doves continue to overwinter in record numbers. Although the birds frequently suffer frost-bitten toes, they appear to benefit as a species, particularly in relatively open winters like the past one.

OWLS TO SHRIKES — This proved to be an excellent winter to observe owls in the northern portion of the Region. Only Com. Barn-Owls escaped mention. Both Snowy and Short-eared Owls were numerous; Barred Owls were frequently observed. Hamlin led all areas with 82 Short-eareds in early January (RD), but it was suggested that a shortage of woodland prey may have forced them to become more diurnal (BK). Northern Hawk Owls were found at N. Troy, Vt. (FO et al) and Kuchville, N.Y. (WL fide RS) in mid-February and a **Great Gray Owl** may have wintered at Potsdam, New York. It was, in any event, present Dec. 15-17 (BC) and March 3 (NA). Apparently the furor usually created by the latter species' appearance only a decade ago has abated considerably.

Wintering E. Phoebes were reported throughout the season and migrants had begun returning north by mid-February. The Ithaca Fish Crow colony peaked at 16 in early January. While this is the best tally ever for this isolated population, there is no way of ascertaining whether it accurately reflects the full growth of the colony which was only discovered a decade and a half ago. A Com. Raven at Sherburne, N.Y., was unusual, but this species could occur virtually anywhere in the Region during the non-breeding season. The open conditions made locating half hardy species more difficult than usual, nevertheless, counts of Winter Wrens appeared to be back up after several years decline. Mimic thrushes were well-reported and N. Mockingbirds strengthened their hold on the northern portion of the Region.

Despite a mediocre fruit and berry crop, 350 Am. Robins could be found at Aurora and wintering E. Bluebirds were widely reported for the first time in over a decade. A Varied Thrush spent the season at Stowe, Vermont (DP), and one appeared mid-January in Barton, Vt. (R & FB) but another found this fall at Owego, N.Y. (C & JB fide JL) failed to overwinter.

More Ruby-crowned Kinglets were reported than in any previous year. Although Cedar Waxwings were generally very scarce, over 400 Bohemian Waxwings were found at St. Albans, Vt. (DH), and there were at least two other Regional reports of the latter species in excess of 100 birds. This was another good year for N. Shrikes.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES — Yellow-rumped and Pine warblers and Com. Yellowthroats were the only warbler species to be reported, none in exceptional numbers. American Tree Sparrows remained well below their long-term averages. Why this species has apparently declined in the Region, despite the increased prevalence of feeders, is puzzling. One hundred N. Cardinals feeding on wild grapes at Salamanca, N.Y. (TB), is a remarkable total. All the usual lingering sparrows were well-represented at feeders although counts might have been higher if winter conditions had been more severe. Other notables included a couple of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and several N. Orioles including the "**Bullock's**" Oriole in St. Johnsbury mentioned in last season's report. The "winter finch" picture was about as bleak as it could be with one notable exception. The entire Region was inundated by a Pine Siskin invasion of unprecedented proportions. In some instances they even outnumbered the now ubiquitous House Finch. Only one Hoary Redpoll was reported (FS).

ESCAPEES — A stalwart Budgerigar first seen in July frequented a West Rutland, Vt., feeder until mid-January (JCh).

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APPALACHIAN REGION

George A. Hall

It was a generally mild winter, although a fairly dull one for birders. At the Pittsburgh weather station, December was much warmer than normal, and January and February had slightly above normal temperatures. All three months were drier than normal, and although the amount of snow was normal, there were no heavy snowfalls. At Erie, Pennsylvania, similar conditions prevailed; at Knoxville, Tennessee, precipitation in December and February was well below normal. January had below-normal temperatures, and there was only one significant snowfall.

The mild early winter weather induced a great many species to remain long past their normal departure dates. Gray Catbirds and warblers of several species were present well into December, and the following account lists several other species in this category. Many apparently stayed through most of the winter. Besides these "half-hardy" species, numbers of some regular wintering species were higher than normal, and most Christmas Bird Counts listed several species in record high numbers.



S.A.

On January 2 an oil tank rupture spilled approximately one million gallons of diesel fuel into the Monongahela River some 23 miles above Pittsburgh. The resulting oil slick flowed into the Ohio, playing havoc with the water suppliers of many towns downstream. There is apparently no good estimate of how many waterfowl perished in this event. The best guess that I have seen came from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, which estimated that as many as 5000 birds died. Most of these were Mallards and Canada Geese, but a few other species were also represented. The Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania began a rescue and rehabilitation operation and in 10 days managed to treat 81 birds, of which 75 were released. Farther downstream the slick had attenuated enough that apparently there was less mortality.

ABBREVIATIONS — B.E.S.P. = Bald Eagle State Park, Centre Co., Pa.; C.N.F. = Chattahoochee Nat'l Forest, Ga.; G.S.M.N.P. = Great Smoky Mountains Nat'l Park; K.C.P.P. = Kyger Creek Power Plant, Gallia Co., Ohio; P.N.R. = Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., Pa.; P.I.S.P. = Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., Pa. Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — There was only one report of a Red-throated Loon, at Watauga L., Tenn., Dec. 19 (FA, CS). Common Loons were widespread but in small numbers, with the highest count being of eight at Tellico L., Tenn., Feb. 14 (JK). Horned Grebes were more common than usual with some high counts of 243 on the CBC at P.I.S.P. (JM); 64 at Huntington, W.Va., Jan. 9 (TI); and 63 at Moraine S.P., Pa., Dec. 6 (HL, JPa). The Eared Grebe reported from P.I.S.P. Nov. 30 in the autumn report remained until Dec. 29 (EK, SS, JM).

The boom in Double-crested Cormorants noted in previous reports continued with winter records in 2 locations in Pennsylvania, 2 in Tennessee, and 3 along the Ohio River. The high count was of five at Fort Loudon L., Tenn., Dec. 6 (JK).

Great Blue Herons were unusually numerous throughout the Region, with some high counts of 25 on the Warren, Pa., CBC (WH); 20 in Mason, W. Va., Jan. 10 (WA); and an average of 19 per trip at the Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan, Ky., (FB). Single Great Egrets were seen at the Clark Fish Hatchery Dec. 18 and Jan. 8 (FB). A Green-backed Heron at Roanoke Dec. 19 (MP) and a Black-crowned Night-Heron in Wood, W.Va., Feb. 21 (JB) were noteworthy.

The maximum number of waterfowl at Erie Bay, Pa., was



Eared Grebe at Presque Isle State Park, Pa., Dec. 6, 1987. The peaked crown, thin bill, and extensive black below the eye are all evident here. Photo/Ed Kwater.

3500, compared with 24,000 last year (JM). The decrease was attributed in part to the presence of open water in places on L. Erie. Numbers were normal in the Knoxville, Tenn., region (CN), but at Elizabethton, Tenn., both numbers of birds and numbers of species were below normal (GE). At Somerset L., Pa., there was a big southbound flight Dec. 6 just before freezeup, and an influx Feb. 6 suggesting the start of the northbound flight (AM). At Huntington, W.Va., migration began Feb. 27 & 28 (WA).

Unusual numbers of Tundra Swans remained in the area through December with 20 at Somerset L., Pa., Dec. 5 (AM); 17 at Conneaut L., Pa., Dec. 20 (RFL, ML); 50 in Allegheny, Pa. (JG); and 46 in Fayette, Pa., Dec. 30 (E & MW). Swans were present all winter at Mosquito L., Ohio (CB); at Warren and Tidouite, Pa. (JK); and at Linesville, Pa. (RFL). Ten were at P.I.S.P. Jan. 21 (LO). A Mute Swan was at Confluence, Pa., Jan. 17 (AM). A Greater White-fronted Goose (possibly the same one as last winter) was present at Mosquito L., Ohio, Dec. 20 (CB, NB). Snow Geese were reported from Pymatuning L., Pa., Dec. 20 (ML, RFL); Mosquito L., Ohio, Dec. 20 (CB) and Dec. 31 (NB); Mahoning, Ohio, Jan. 17 (NB); Allegheny, Pa., Jan. 31 (JH); K.C.P.P. Dec. 13 (WA); Mason, W.Va., Jan. 5; Huntington, W.Va., Jan. 11 (TI); and L. Moomaw, Va., Feb. 18 (LT). Canada Geese continue to thrive in the Region. At Pymatuning L., 8000 were present from early December to mid-February, and then the number dropped to 5000 (RFL). There were several other large concentrations: 744 at Huntington, W.Va., Jan. 10 (TI); 500 at K.C.P.P. Feb. 14 (WA); and 400 at North Park, Pa., through the period (JG). An individual of the small "Cackling Goose" subspecies was seen at the Quemahoning Res., Pa., Dec. 7 (AM).

Mallards were generally fewer than normal, but Am. Black Ducks showed some improvement. Both Gadwall and Wood Ducks wintered in higher than normal numbers, and Blue-winged Teal were reported from the Kinzua Res., Pa., Dec. 1 (WH) and from Ripshin L., Tenn., Dec. 20, the first local winter record (FA, CS). There were more than the usual number of Canvasback sightings. Lesser Scaup were scarce at Huntington, W.Va., (WA). Eight Greater Scaup (rare in the Region) were at Moraine S.P., Pa. (HL, JP). Oldsquaws were at Starbrick, Pa., Dec. 2 (MB); Somerset L., Pa., Dec. 6 (AM); Latrobe Res., Pa., Dec. 6 (E & MW); and Wood, W.Va., Feb. 16 & 20 (JE). A Black Scoter was at P.I.S.P. Dec. 5 (JM), and up to 12 Surf Scoters were there through December (m.ob.). White-winged Scoters were at P.I.S.P. Dec. 5-Jan. 4 and Feb. 24 & 25 (JM, LM). More unusual were White-winged Scoters at Donegal L., Pa., Dec. 5 (E & MW); Parkersburg, W.Va., Feb. 16-27 (JE); and Glenwood, W.Va., Jan. 9 (WA). Both Red-breasted and Hooded mergansers were in above-normal numbers at most places.

RAPTORS — Eighteen Black Vultures were seen at Huntington, Pa., Dec. 26, and singles were there Jan. 5 and Feb. 26 (DK). Four Black Vultures were seen in Buncombe, N.C., Dec. 22 (RRz). Turkey Vultures were also seen in Centre, Pa., Jan. 17 and Feb. 15 (JP, DK) and at Williamstown, W.Va., Jan. 23 (LR). Ospreys were reported from Mason, W.Va., Jan. 27 (WA); Wood, W.Va., Feb. 21 (JB); and Pleasants, W.Va., Feb. 21 (NW). It was another great winter for Bald Eagle sightings, with reports of at least 45 birds from 15 locations, from P.I.S.P. in the north to Murray, Ga., in the south. The largest number was at the Clark Fish Hatchery, Ky., where up to six were seen. There were more than the usual number of wintering N. Harriers. Cooper's Hawks and Sharp-shinned Hawks continue to be reported in good numbers. The only reports of N. Goshawks came from Erie, Pa., Dec. 5 (JM); Waynesboro, Va., Jan. 31 and Feb. 16 (SR); and State College, Pa., Feb. 17 (DP).

Red-shouldered Hawks normally do not winter with us, but this year reports came from several areas. Red-tailed Hawks were more common than usual in the Meadville, Pa., area (RFL), but elsewhere they seemed to be in below-normal numbers: the lack of snow cover to concentrate them along the highways may have been the reason for this. Rough-legged Hawks were in normal numbers in the north and may have

been more common than usual in the south, where they occurred as far south as Highland, Va. (LT), and Mason, W. Va. (TI). As many as six Golden Eagles wintered in the Blue Grass Valley of Highland, Va., and they were found at 2 other locations in that part of Virginia and in Pendleton, W. Va. (LT). There were 2 sightings in Shenandoah N.P. Jan. 9 (R & MSi) and Jan. 16 (feeding on a deer carcass) (DKi), and one at Burke's Garden, Va., Jan. 1 (JPh).

The lack of snow cover also kept Am. Kestrels from congregating near the highways, so at some places they seemed to be in low numbers. More than usual, however, were found at P.N.R. (RM, RCL). A Merlin was seen at Gallipolis, Ohio, Feb. 8 (TI), and one was at Niles, Ohio, Feb. 3., presumably the one seen in November (CB). A gray-phased Gyrfalcon was seen at P.I.S.P. Jan. 31, for the 4th county record (JM).

PHEASANT THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Ring-necked Pheasants are rare south of the Mason-Dixon Line so three birds at 3 locations near Roanoke, Va., are noteworthy (BK). One contributor mentioned the N. Bobwhite, uncommon at Huntington, W. Va. (TI). Wild Turkeys were doing well at most places, and a flock of 70 was seen at Green Ridge, Md., Jan. 30 (RR), and 30 were seen on the Jefferson, Greene, Pa., CBC (RB). Sandhill Cranes were seen in the C.N.F. Feb. 17 (HD) and in Whitfield, Ga., Dec. 20 and Feb. 17 (VG, BB). More unusual was the crane at Mosquito L., Ohio, from Dec. 31 to late January (NB, CB).

A Lesser Yellowlegs was seen at Lakin, W. Va., Feb. 25 (TI). Common Snipe wintered at State College, Pa. (MWO); at K.C.P.P. (WA); at Huntington, W. Va. (TI); and in Highland and Bath, Va. (LT). The earliest Am. Woodcock was at Huntington Feb. 10 (TI), and by the end of the month they had appeared in Shenandoah N.P. (AS); Washington, Ohio (LB); and Austin Springs, Tenn. (RK).

On Dec. 19 at Gull Point on Presque Isle, Pa., 20,000 Bonaparte's Gulls passed in one hour (JM). At Mosquito L., Ohio, a record high of 263 was tallied on the CBC (CB), and 2575 were listed on the Linesville, Pa., CBC (RFL). More unusual were records at Centre, Pa., Dec. 26 (JP); Augusta, Va., Dec. 31 (RS); and Kingsport, Tenn. (JBr), and Boone L., Tenn., Jan. 1 & 3 (RK, JBr). High counts of Ring-billed Gull were 4000 at Pymatuning L., Pa., Dec. 20 (RFL); 3600 on the Mosquito L., Ohio, CBC (CB); and flocks of 1000, 600, and 400 on 3 e. Tennessee lakes (CN et al.). Herring Gulls were uncommon in Erie, Pa. (JM), but as usual this location produced the rarer gulls. Fifty Great Black-backed Gulls were seen at P.I.S.P. Jan. 31 (HL, JPa). At the Erie Public Dock, there were two Little Gulls Jan. 10 (EK), an Iceland Gull Feb. 6 (JM), and a Glaucous Gull Jan. 9 & 23 (JM, LM). Glaucous Gulls were also seen at P.I.S.P. (JBa) Dec. 27 (DF).

Wintering populations of Mourning Doves continue to increase; for example, there was the record CBC count of 286 at Warren, Pa., in the north of the Region (WH). The only report of a Com. Barn-Owl came from Washington, Pa., Jan. 18 (MM). A Snowy Owl was at P.I.S.P. Jan. 16-Feb. 3 (DS, JM), and another was seen at another Erie location from Jan. 15 to the end of the period (SS). Long-eared Owls were reported from P.I.S.P. Dec. 19 (DD) and Allegheny, Pa., Jan. 17 (MM). Short-eared Owls continued to be numerous in the recovered strip mine areas, such as those in Clarion, Pa. (WF), and near Elders Ridge, Pa., where as many as eight were seen on Jan. 19 (MH). At Roanoke, Va., their favorite locations have been converted to a shopping mall (BK). Short-eared Owls were also found on the CBC at B.E.S.P. Jan. 3 (CH); at Colyer L., Pa., Jan. 3 & 30 (K & JJ); and at Fishersville, Va., in mid-February (M & RL). Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported from Centre, Pa., Dec. 10 and Jan. 3 (JP) and at P.I.S.P. Dec. 21 (JH).

There was a belated report of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in Erie, Pa., on the late date of Oct. 17 (BBo). A Rufous Hummingbird was found comatose sitting on a front-door wreath at Dalton, Ga., Dec. 2 (AH, BB). The bird, which later died, was perhaps the same one reported at Dalton in the fall.

A Red-headed Woodpecker was at a feeder in Warren, Pa.,

in early February (fide WH). Four reports came from the Knoxville, Tenn., area (CN) and one from Elizabethton, Tenn. (GE). These were the only reports of this species. Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue to do well in the north.

FLYCATCHERS TO THRUSHES — Eastern Phoebe were reported from Pinto Marsh, Md., Dec. 19 (RR); Bath, Va., Jan. 12 (LT); and McClintic Wildlife Station, W. Va., Feb. 27 (WA). A count of 200 Horned Larks in Greene, Tenn., Jan. 10 was noteworthy (JK). An early Purple Martin in Anderson, Tenn., Feb. 29 (fide JO) just made this seasonal report.

At Front Royal, Va., Blue Jays were absent for the first time in memory (RA), and they were also scarce at Bristol, Va. (JHe). Flocks of up to 300 Am. Crows were common at Ligonier, Pa. (RM, RCL). Fish Crows arrived at State College, Pa., in mid-February (JP). Two Com. Ravens were habitual in downtown Lock Haven, Pa. (CH), and one was observed near Ashville, N.C., at the low elevation for this species of 2300 ft. (BD).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were very numerous at high elevations on Roan Mt., Tenn. (BE), but they were decidedly uncommon at low elevations throughout the Region. Brown Creepers were somewhat more common than usual during the winter. Carolina Wrens appear to be in good shape with numerous reports from the n. parts of the Region at Niles, Ohio (CB); Lock Haven, Pa. (CH); Meadville, Pa. (RFL); and Warren, Pa. (WH). A House Wren was in Bradford, Pa., as late as Dec. 10 (RY).

It was a great winter for Golden-crowned Kinglets, who wintered in far above normal numbers, and the usually scarce Ruby-crowned Kinglet was also widespread and in fair numbers. Eastern Bluebirds were about 50% below normal numbers in the Elizabethton, Tenn., area, presumably because of the heavy mortality from the snowstorm during the early nesting season last April (GE). They were scarce in Shenandoah, Va. (DDa), but they appeared to be in increased numbers in the Youngstown, Ohio, area (NB). Hermit Thrushes were more common than usual at Elizabethton, Tenn. (GE), and reports came from the C.N.F. Dec. 27 and Feb. 24 (HD); Highland, Va., Dec. 6 and Jan. 17 & 29 (LT); P.I.S.P. Jan. 14 (JHS) & 17 (JM); and on the Parkersburg, W. Va., CBC (LR). A Wood Thrush was at a "grape-feeding station" at Markleton, Pa., Dec. 20-30 (ph.) (AM), and another was at Stahlstown, Pa., Dec. 20-29 (JW). The mild weather induced many Am. Robins to winter, with flocks of 300 near Ligonier, Pa. (RCL, RM), and 3000+ in Claiborne, Tenn., Jan. 1 (GM). There were 2 reports of Varied Thrushes: Duboistown, Lycoming, Pa., from mid-December to the end of the period (ph.) (PS, SST), and the CBC at Shenandoah N.P. (WB).



Male Varied Thrush at Duboistown, Pa., Feb. 26, 1988. Photo/Morton Cluster.

MIMIDS THROUGH WARBLERS — A probable result of the mild weather was the unusual number of reports of Gray Catbirds: on CBCs at Charleston, W. Va. (GH), and Waynesboro, Va. (SR); at an elevation of 2500 ft. on Roan Mt., Tenn., Dec. 20 (FA, CS); at State College, Pa., during January and February (MWO); and at Headwaters, Va., Feb. 14 (LT). Brown Thrashers were reported from Wood, W. Va., Dec. 6 (MS) and the McClintic Wildlife Station, W. Va., Feb. 27 (WA).

Wintering Water Pipits were lower than normal at Knoxville, with only two seen on the CBC (T.O.S.). Other winter records came from Jonesboro, Tenn., Jan. 15 (RK) and Glenwood, W. Va. (WA). Cedar Waxwings were in good numbers in w. Kentucky (FB), in e. Tennessee (GE, CN), and in n. Georgia (HD) but were unreported at most places in the north.

A N. Shrike was at P.I.S.P. Dec. 5–Feb. 6 (JM *et al.*). The word on Loggerhead Shrikes was less gloomy than usual. The intensive ongoing survey in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley turned up 25 new birds during the season (KF). They were above average at Elizabethton, Tenn. (GE); four were wintering near Monterey, Va. (LT); two were on the Lewisburg, W. Va., CBC (CHA); and there were sightings in Murray, Ga., Dec. 12 & 13 and Jan. 14 (HD). A White-eyed Vireo was seen at L. Moomaw, Va., Dec. 7 (LT), and a Solitary Vireo was in the C.N.F., Feb. 23 (HD).

It was an unusual winter for warblers. Orange-crowned Warblers were in Whitfield, Ga., Dec. 20 (BB), and for the 3rd successive winter one was at a feeder in Knoxville, from Jan. 15 to Feb. 27 (LF). A Cape May Warbler was seen on Warrior Mt., Md., Dec. 19 (RR). Yellow-rumped Warblers were more numerous than usual and were found even in the north, at Lock Haven, Pa., through the winter (PS) and in Bradford, Pa., Jan. 6 (RY). Pine Warblers were reported from Botetourt, Va., Dec. 20 (BK); Murray, Ga., through the season (HD); Norris, Tenn. (four singing) Feb. 4 (CN); and Glenwood Swamp, W. Va., Feb. 28 (WA). A Palm Warbler was in Blount, Tenn., Feb. 1 (JK). An Ovenbird was at Warren, Pa., until at least Jan. 27 (RRi). Most unusual were the 5 reports of Com. Yellowthroats: at Lycoming, Pa., Dec. 19 (SSt); P.I.S.P. Dec. 19 (JBa); Pleasant Gap, Pa., Dec. 19 (MH); State College, Pa., Feb. 6–20 (JP); and Shenandoah, Va., through Dec. 13 (DDa).

GROSBEAKS THROUGH FINCHES — There were two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (2nd and 3rd winter records for the county) in Erie, Pa. One was present Dec. 16–25 (Je & JiS), and another was present at the same time and remained until early February (DM).

There were more than the usual number of Rufous-sided Towhees coming to feeders during the season, and a bird apparently of one of the western "Spotted" races was at P.I.S.P. from Jan. 3 to the end of the period. This bird was joined by another on Jan. 16 (JM *et al.*). Most observers found that Dark-eyed Juncos, Song Sparrows, and White-throated Sparrows were in below-normal numbers, and the Am. Tree Sparrow was almost nonexistent at most places. White-crowned Sparrows were more common than usual, and there were many more reports of wintering Fox Sparrows. Unusual winter records were Chipping Sparrow at Hopwood, Pa., an injured bird present until the end of December (GC), and one at Vinton, Va., Jan. 3 (MD); Vesper Sparrow, Claiborne, Tenn., Jan. 18 (GM); Savannah Sparrow, Clark Fish Hatchery, Ky., Feb. 24–29 (FB); and two "Oregon" Juncos in Erie, Pa., through the period (Je & JiS, DT) and one at the same Duboistown, Pa., feeder as the Varied Thrush (PS, SSt). The only report of Lapland Longspur came from Kylertown, Pa., Feb. 14 (ES). The only reports of Snow Buntings came from Mahoning, Ohio (NB), and Warren, Pa. (MB), and a small flock was seen as far south as Preston, W. Va., in late February (LG).

A roost of 200,000 blackbirds in Putnam, W. Va. (TI), was the only report of a large icterid concentration. Rusty Blackbirds were seen at Canfield, Ohio, Jan. 5 & 11 (NB), and they were more numerous than usual at Knoxville (CN).

S.A.

The winter of 1987–1988 can best be described by calling it a Pine Siskin season. Starting in mid-December and continuing past the end of the period, siskins staged an invasion of unprecedented size. Flocks of 50–100 were coming to feeders throughout the Region, flocks of 200–300 were common, and some CBC counts topped 1000. A bander near Huntington, W. Va., banded over 500 birds in just over 100 net-hours (LW), and dealers in niger seed made a killing. The total number of Pine Siskins in this Region alone was extraordinarily high. If nearby Regions experienced anything similar, the total numbers are mind-boggling.

Besides the irruption of siskins, the finch situation was on the dull side. There was one report of Pine Grosbeak from Williamsport, Pa., Dec. 19 (*vide* PS). Purple Finches were generally in low numbers, but the 100 on the Rockingham, Va., CBC was the highest count since 1981 (KF). House Finches continued to spread and increase and were coming to feeders in Dalton, Ga. (HD). There was a modest influx of Red Crossbills: 2 small flocks on the CBC in the Pipestem S.P., W. Va., area, Dec. 19 (JPh); two in Bath, Va., Feb. 29 (LT); 3 sightings at Shenandoah N.P., Dec. 22 and Jan. 9 & 21 (WB *et al.*); eight at Dennis Cove, Tenn., Feb. 19 (FA, CS); 25 at Cove Ridge, Tenn., Dec. 19 (SG, GS, RLe); 10 in G.S.M.N.P. Jan. 3 (T.O.S.) and 15 there on Jan. 10 (CH); two at C.N.F. Dec. 27 (JPK, RRu); and 50 on the Blue Ridge near Dalton, Ga., Jan. 11 (JJ). A few individual Com. Redpolls accompanied some of the siskin flights, but there was no general influx. The numbers and distribution of Evening Grosbeaks were spotty. At higher elevations in West Virginia, Virginia, and e. Tennessee, they were fairly common, but in the lowlands some places had small numbers and other places had none. Nowhere were there the large flocks typical of an invasion year.

CORRIGENDUM — The three Short-eared Owls at Fishersville, Va. (AB 41:432), were seen Mar. 16–19 (MLa).

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David J. Powell

This winter was certainly harsher than last year's, but with last year's being all but nonexistent that was to be expected. It was essentially a "normal" winter, with winter-like temperatures throughout the season. The weather was basically mild in December, particularly in Minnesota. An unusually heavy, wet snow fell over much of Wisconsin, but snow was not especially evident in Michigan. Late December produced a significant snowfall throughout the Region. This led into a cold January, until late in the month, when a "typical" January thaw occurred. Snow was particularly heavy in Wisconsin, with much less present in Michigan. As usual, Minnesota got the worst of the extremely cold weather, with temperatures in southern Minnesota in early February dropping to 20 degrees below zero with highs of only zero. Northern Minnesota was even colder, with -40° at Isabella on Feb. 2 (no self-respecting groundhog would even check for his shadow at that temperature) and -35° at International Falls Feb. 10 and 11. Late February was quite mild, and there was little snow on the ground by the end of the month. There were few rarities in the Region; the most exciting event (which actually occurred in the fall) was the first regional occurrence of Cassin's Finch, which was accepted by the Minnesota Records Committee. The next best bird was Michigan's first confirmed (second report) Mew Gull.

ABBREVIATIONS — Place names in *italics* are counties. Only the most exceptional Christmas Bird Count data are included, to reduce duplication.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — The only Red-throated Loon of the period was seen Dec. 12 at Sheboygan (DT). The normal few Com. Loons lingered into December in all 3 states. A Horned Grebe was at the far n. location of Marquette, Mich., Dec. 5 (NI). Two Red-necked Grebes were seen at the Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Mich., Dec. 12 (JG *et al.*). For the 3rd consecutive year, Am. White Pelicans overwintered at Albert Lea. Two were also seen on the Duluth CBC. With the population increases that Double-crested Cormorants have undergone in the Region, more winter records are to be expected, and this winter was no exception, with reports from all 3 states. However, two on the Duluth CBC and another at Knife River, Lake, Minn. (SW/MS), were the first for n. Minnesota. An Am. Bittern was in Alpena, Mich., Dec. 20 (BP, EP). Wisconsin had its first-ever winter report of Least Bittern, when one was seen Dec. 20 in Madison (*vide* RH).

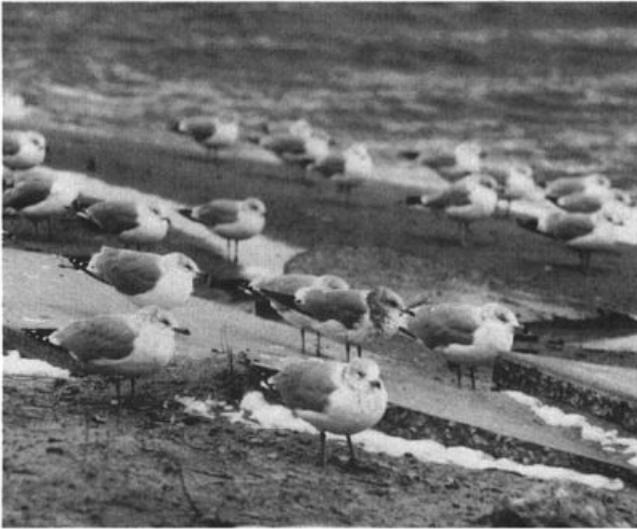
Tundra Swans lingered into mid-December in good numbers in Wisconsin and were also present in Michigan and Minnesota to mid-December. Mute Swans continued to increase, with more overwintering birds in Wisconsin and reports from Delta and Marquette in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The Ross' Goose found during the fall period at Rochester, Minn., remained until the CBC. After the major snowstorm of Dec. 15, on Dec. 16 thousands of Canada Geese, a constant stream of southward moving flocks, were noted in s. Wisconsin, as they exited Horicon Marsh and other congregating areas. Wood Ducks were found in above-average numbers in Michigan and Wisconsin. An Am. Wigeon wintered in Virginia, St. Louis, Minn. (KL), north of normal. Three King Eiders were found in Michigan: one from late November to at least Dec. 6 at New Buffalo, Berrien (KM, m.ob.); one on Dec. 12 at Holland (DD *et al.*); and one on Dec. 21 in Alpena (R & SS). Three Harlequin Ducks were found at Racine, Wis., Dec. 19 through the end of the period (JD), although they became very difficult to find after early January. Two Harlequins were seen in Minnesota and



two in Michigan: one Dec. 17–Jan. 1 on L. Harriet and Black Dog L. in the Twin Cities (m.ob.); one Jan. 14 at Whitewater W.M.A., Winona, Minn. (*vide* AMP); one at Port Huron, Mich., Jan. 1 (MW); one on Jan. 17 & 28 at Grand Haven, Mich. (MH, CM, SM, GW). Oldsquaws were in less than normal numbers in Michigan. The only reports of Black Scoters were from 2 Michigan locations, and the only report of Surf Scoters was from one Wisconsin location. A Hooded Merganser was well north of normal in Cook, Minn., Dec. 19 (WP, TW).

RAPTORS — Turkey Vultures returned to Washtenaw, Mich., Feb. 26 (VB, JS). Bald Eagles overwintered in good numbers in both Michigan and Minnesota, with more in n. Minnesota than normal. Northern Harriers were seen in several Michigan and Wisconsin locations in December and January, with overwintering birds in at least 2 Wisconsin locations. The first returning birds were in Monroe and Wood, Wis., Feb. 27 (EE, KMe). Sharp-shinned Hawks were north of normal in Michigan in Marquette Feb. 13 (NI) and Delta Feb. 14 (CT). Northern Goshawks were generally scarce, not unexpected after the high numbers of recent years. Red-shouldered Hawks were seen at 6 Wisconsin and 5 Michigan locations, providing an encouraging number of sightings for this increasingly scarce species. Rough-legged Hawks were scarcer than normal in Michigan but seen in excellent numbers in n. Minnesota in December, with as many as 73 on one CBC. Golden Eagles were seen in their usual south- and west-central Wisconsin wintering locations. Three were seen in Michigan, more than normal, with one wintering at the Allegan S.G.A. (DD, JG), a sometimes wintering location. An Am. Kestrel was in Baraga in Michigan's Upper Peninsula Feb. 5 (MR, TR), a very unusual report. Merlins were found at 4 Wisconsin locations and several Minnesota locations, more than normal for this once unknown winterer. A Peregrine Falcon was in Ann Arbor, Mich., Jan. 20 & 25 (MK, RP), possibly one of the birds hacked out in Detroit? The old reliable ♀ Prairie Falcon returned to Rothsay W.M.A., Minn., for the 6th consecutive winter (S & DM). Three Gyrfalcons were seen in the Region: a white phased Dec. 29 at East Troy, Walworth, Wis. (DT); a gray phased Jan. 23 to at least Feb. 19 at the power plant in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. (MP, m.ob.), where Gyrs have been seen irregularly over the last 10 winters; and a gray phased near Kinross, Chippewa, Mich., Feb. 28 (SM, JB, TWi).

GROUSE THROUGH GULLS — Spruce Grouse were noted at one Wisconsin and 2 Michigan locations, about normal for this secretive bird. The only non-CBC Virginia Rail was one Jan. 2 in Colombia, Wis. (AS). Sandhill Cranes lingered in both Michigan and Minnesota, with one in Washtenaw, Mich., until Jan. 14 (RM). The first returning cranes were in Calhoun,



Mew Gull in second-winter plumage (center) at New Buffalo, Mich., Dec. 4, 1987. In comparison to the surrounding Ring-billed Gulls, the smaller size, much smaller bill, and slightly darker back of the Mew Gull can be seen here. Photo/Kip Miller.

Mich., Feb. 25 (MI). Surprising numbers of shorebirds were found in the Region this winter, primarily in Michigan. In addition to the usual Com. Snipe and Killdeer reports, 4 other species were found. A Sanderling was at Muskegon S.P., Mich., Dec. 14 (GW). A Pectoral Sandpiper was at New Buffalo, Berrien, Mich., Dec. 21 (PC, JK, KM). No fewer than seven Purple Sandpipers were found, with two at Muskegon, Mich., Dec. 24 (SM); two at Sheboygan, Wis., Dec. 24–25 (D & MB); and singles Dec. 10–11 at Sheboygan (KLe), Dec. 13 at Manitowoc (CS), and Dec. 22 at Racine, Wis. (m.ob.). Red Phalaropes were seen at New Buffalo, Berrien, Mich., with one Dec. 15, three Dec. 22, and one Dec. 29 (DM, m.ob.).

Two Parasitic Jaegers were at Port Huron, Mich., until at least Dec. 23 (JPI, PC, m.ob.). An imm. Laughing Gull at Milwaukee Jan. 31 (JBa)-provided the first winter record for Wisconsin. A Ring-billed Gull that stayed at Duluth until Jan. 23 (KE) was the first-ever n. Minnesota winter report. A 2nd winter Mew Gull at New Buffalo, Berrien, Mich., Dec. 4 & 6 (PC, KM, JG) was only the 2nd ever for Michigan and the first well documented (photos). Not to be outdone, Wisconsin observers found three Mew Gulls: an adult and a first winter on Jan. 31 (JBa) and a 2nd winter Feb. 28 (RSu), for the 3rd and 4th Wisconsin records. Thayer's Gulls were seen in above average numbers with several reports from each state. They were noted as being "very easy to find" in the Milwaukee area with as many as 10 birds there. Iceland Gulls were also seen in all 3 states, with one at Grand Marais, Minn., Dec. 10 (K & MH); one at Superior, Wis., from November until Dec. 5 (RJo); and another or the same bird Dec. 28 (LS), all on L. Superior, particularly noteworthy. Glaucous Gulls were in possibly their best numbers ever in Wisconsin, with birds at essentially every major city on lakes Superior and Michigan. Particularly impressive were 10–15 at Milwaukee and 20–25 at Superior. Also surprising were four Glaucous Gulls inland at Lansing, Mich., Dec. 19 (JK, BC). Minnesota's 2nd and 3rd Lesser Black-backed Gulls were single birds Nov. 28 at Grand Marias (KE, PE) and Dec. 20–25 at Black Dog L., Dakota (RJ et al.), both photographed. An ad. Great Black-backed Gull was at Sheboygan Dec. 11 (KLe). At least two and possibly three Great Black-backed Gulls ranged from Milwaukee to Racine during January and February (DT, JD, ST et al.).

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Snowy Owls were seen in excellent numbers in both Michigan and Wisconsin in the late fall, but the numbers quickly diminished in early winter. Northern Hawk-Owls were seen in impressive numbers

in Minnesota, with at least 10 individuals at at least 8 locations. One was also in Cheboygan, Mich., during January and February (m.ob.). Great Gray Owls were seen at 2 Michigan and 7 Minnesota sites, comprising about 20 individuals—not an invasion year, but more than average. About half of the Great Grays were in the Sax-Zim bog, St. Louis, Minnesota. Short-eared Owls were more common than normal in w. Minnesota but were quite scarce in Michigan and Wisconsin. There were 3 reports of Boreal Owls: the first in years in Wisconsin was of one at a feeder in Rhinelander Jan. 26–28 (WV); two were along the Gunflint Trail in Cook, Minn.—one Feb. 1 at a feeder and one calling on territory Feb. 13 (K & MH). Red-headed Woodpeckers were very scarce in Michigan and Wisconsin. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker lingered until the first week of December in Marquette, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (SO). Eight Three-toed Woodpeckers were found at 6 locations in Minnesota, more than usual.



Boreal Owl at Rhinelander, Wis., January 1988. About the 30th record for Wisconsin. Photo/Cedric Uig.

RAVENS THROUGH WARBLERS — A Common Raven in Outagamie, Wis., Feb. 7 (JA) was unusually far south. Red-breasted Nuthatches were quite scarce in Wisconsin but in above average numbers in n. Minnesota. Carolina Wrens were more widely reported this winter with four individuals in Minnesota, where they are still considered casual. An extremely cooperative Mountain Bluebird was in Cudahy, Wis., Dec. 10–Jan. 1, where it was seen and photographed by many for the 10th Wisconsin record. Townsend's Solitaires were found in 4 Minnesota locations, three in Cook. A Townsend's Solitaire was also at Devil's Lake S.P., Wis., Dec. 13 (KLe). Hermit Thrushes were scarcer than normal in Michigan and Wisconsin. Varied Thrushes were seen in higher than normal numbers with four in Michigan, eight in Wisconsin, and at least 11 in Minnesota. A N. Mockingbird at Escanaba, Delta,



Mountain Bluebird at Cudahy, Wis., Dec. 20, 1987. Tenth record for Wisconsin. Photo/John Idzikowski.

Mich., Feb. 6–29 (CT) was north of normal. Two Brown Thrashers wintered well north of normal at Grand Marais, Minn. (K & MH). A Water Pipit survived at a Berrien, Mich., sewage treatment plant until Jan. 30 (RS). Bohemian Waxwings were seen in good numbers in the n. portions of the Region, with a flock of 2000 in Grand Marais, Minn., in December (K & MH). Northern Shrikes were quite scarce in both Michigan and Wisconsin. A relative abundance of warblers was seen this winter, with 7 species seen. Contending for the rarity award were a Tennessee Warbler found on the Grand Marais, Minn., CBC (K & MH); a Worm-eating Warbler at the extreme n. location of Escanaba, Mich., Dec. 1 (CT); and a Yellow-throated Warbler until at least Dec. 31 in Jackson, Mich. (DBr); the latter two unusual in the Region, even in the spring. Not quite so unusual were a Cape May Warbler Nov. 27–Jan. 5 in Troy, Mich. (DB), and Orange-crowned Warblers Dec. 2 in Milwaukee (DV) and until Dec. 27 at Grand Marais, Minn. (TW et al.). Bordering on regular, except in Minnesota, Com. Yellowthroats were seen in all 3 states, as was the only normal winter warbler, the Yellow-rumped.

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES — Amazingly, there were not one but two **Summer Tanagers** in the Region this winter, both females: one Dec. 1 at East Jordan, Antrim, Mich. (JAR), and one until Dec. 22 at Carlos Avery W.M.A., Anoka, Minn. (m.ob.). Northern Cardinals were found at 3 Cook, Minn., locations, well north of normal. American Tree Sparrows were present in very low numbers in both Michigan and Wisconsin. A Chipping Sparrow in Eau Claire, Wis., Feb. 12–18 (JP) was unusual, since most Regional records are on the CBCs. A Lark Sparrow Dec. 19 on the Racine, Wis., CBC (JD) was the first in the winter for Wisconsin. Song Sparrows were present in December and January in above average numbers in the s. third of Wisconsin. Lapland Longspurs were very scarce in Wisconsin. The only large flock of Snow Buntings this winter was 5000 Feb. 14 in Lenawee, Mich. (SS). A N. Oriole came to a feeder in Chippewa Falls, Wis., until late December (fide JP). Pine Grosbeaks were in fair numbers in n. Michigan and n. Wisconsin, but few were found in the s. portions of either state. More Purple Finches than normal were in n. Minnesota, but very few were in Michigan or Wisconsin. House Finches continued to expand rapidly in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with individuals found in many areas in the s. half of Wisconsin. Both crossbills were found in good numbers across the n. part of the Region, although Reds were certainly less common than White-wingeds. Few crossbills were seen in the south. Common Redpolls were seen in fair numbers in the north, but few south. A few Hoary Redpolls were found in n. Michigan

and n. Wisconsin. Pine Siskin was clearly the finch of the winter, with many found throughout the Region, even in the north, where there were no feeders. Reports of “hundreds” were not uncommon, and several birders reported “thousands” in wooded swamps in Wisconsin. Good numbers of Am. Goldfinch were found in Wisconsin and n. Minnesota. Evening Grosbeaks were in very low numbers in both Wisconsin and Michigan.



Probable Cassin's Finch at Duluth, Minn., November 1987. Although the identification was only partially endorsed by out-of-state experts, this was accepted as the first Cassin's for the state by the Minnesota Records Committee. Photo/Don Kienholz.

ADDENDUM — The first Minnesota record of **Cassin's Finch** was provided by a female at the Kienholz feeder in Duluth Nov. 10–12. After reviewing the photographs and field notes, this bird was accepted by the Minnesota Records Committee, for probably the first record of this species in the Region.

CONTRIBUTORS — (I wish to thank the many individuals who submitted records; however, the nature of this summary precludes listing everyone who sent in reports. Only those individuals with cited records are listed.) Jim Anderson, Jane Arnold (JAR), John Barr, Jeff Baughman (JBa), Vi Benner, David Bowden, David & Margaret Brasser, Don Brooks (DBr), Phil Chu, Bruce Cohen, Jerry DeBoer, Dave Dister, **Kim Eckert** (Minnesota), Paul Egeland, Eric Epstein, **Jim Granlund** (Michigan), Madeline Heibel, Ken & Molly Hoffman, Randy Hoffman, Nick Inicky, Mabel Isham, Robert Janssen, Robbye Johnson (RJo), Joe Kaplan, Karl Legler (KLe), Michael Kielb, Ken La Fond, R. Mast, Keith Merkel (KMe), Steve & Diane Millard, Kip Miller, Steve Minard, Chris Muldoon, S. Octaluk, Jeff Phippen (JPi), Anne Marie Plunkett, Janine Polk, Walt Popp, **David Powell** (Michigan), Bob Preston, Eric Preston, Rick Prum, Michael Peczynski, M. Royal, T. Royal, Larry Semo, Al Shea, Ron & Sharron Smith, Roy Smith, Scott Smith, Charles Sontag, Roger Sundell (RSu), John Swales, Charlotte Taylor, **Daryl Tessen** (Wisconsin), Steve Theissen, Wesley Vike, Tim Webb, George Wickstrom, Tom Will (TWi), Miles Willard, Steve Wilson/Mary Shedd.—**DAVID J. POWELL, Kalamazoo Nature Center, 7000 N. Westnedge Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007.**



MIDDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

Bruce G. Peterjohn

It was a winter of few extremes. Temperatures were generally seasonable with no prolonged periods of sub-zero cold or unusual warmth. Precipitation was also close to normal in most areas. The large winter storms generally bypassed this Region, and snow cover mostly persisted for only a few days.

These average weather conditions produced an average season for birders. Since most winters are judged by their flights of northern species, a smattering of Snowy Owls, numerous Pine Siskins, plus a few Red Crossbills did not generate much excitement. As expected, a small variety of hardy late migrants remained into December, but most disappeared before the end of the month. Wintering waterfowl and gull populations conformed to expected patterns, yielding few surprises. Only a few rarities were discovered, such as a Northern Wheatear in Ohio, a *Selasphorus* hummingbird in Kentucky, and an Inca Dove in Missouri, causing local interest.

This season also marked the passing of Floyd Lawhon on December 26. For 35 years, Floyd contributed thorough and careful observations from northwestern Missouri to innumerable seasonal summaries, greatly expanding our understanding of bird distribution patterns in that area. His significant contributions to Missouri ornithology will not be easily duplicated, and his good-natured approach to life will be missed.

The following summary includes no information from Iowa, whose statewide winter report was never received.

ABBREVIATIONS — S.C.R. = Squaw Creek Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Mo.; O.W.R. = Ottawa Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Ohio; Spfld. = Springfield, Ill. Place names in *italics* are counties. † are documented single-party sight records still pending review and acceptance by state records committees.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Migrant loons included a fairly late Red-throated at Hoover Res., Ohio, Dec. 20 (J, MG) and a maximum of 57 Commons at Michigan City, Ind., Dec. 1 (LH). The expected small numbers of Com. Loons lingered through January 10–11 in Kentucky and Illinois, but wintering reports were restricted to Ohio with one throughout the season at East Fork Res. (TL) and three at Caesar Creek Res. Feb. 3 (LGa). Grebes also staged a rather late migration with flocks of 30–45 Pied-billeds in Kentucky and Indiana through Jan. 1 plus 76 Horneds at Baldwin L., Ill., Jan. 9 (SR). At least 25 Horned Grebes remained at Baldwin L. through Feb. 7 (RG), a sizable mid-winter flock for this Region. Red-necked Grebes were represented by two at L. Wappapello, Mo., Dec. 18 (†BR, SD) and one at Springfield L., Ohio, Feb. 28–29 (LR *et al.*). For the 3rd consecutive year, Eared Grebes lingered into early winter; singles were at 2 L. Erie sites near Cleveland through Dec. 24 (TL, LR *et al.*), and one was at Baldwin L., Ill., Jan. 9–16 (SR *et al.*). One of the fall W. Grebes remained at Carlyle L., Ill., through Dec. 6. The only report of Am. White Pelicans consisted of 70+ early migrants at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., Feb. 29 (KM). As expected, small numbers of Double-crested Cormorants were scattered across all states during December, but most departed by Jan. 10–13. One cormorant wintered at Columbus, Ohio (JF), and singles at Port of Indiana, Ind., Jan. 23 (AB *et al.*) and at Danville, Ky., Jan. 30 (FL) may have overwintered. Double-cresteds appearing in Illinois and Missouri Feb. 13–20+ may have been early migrants.

A surprising variety of herons were detected this year, mostly as lingering visitors in December. The only Am. Bittern appeared on an Illinois CBC. Great Blue Herons were particularly



plentiful, especially during the CBC period, when totals of 33–72 herons were reported from all states except Indiana. A concentration of 60 Great Blues at Louisville Jan. 23 represented an exceptional mid-winter total for Kentucky (FK). Single Great Egrets remained at O.W.R. through Dec. 6 and in Holmes, Ohio, until Jan. 6 (BG, DL, ph.). Other lingering herons included a Little Blue on an Illinois CBC and a Cattle Egret in Franklin, Ohio, Dec. 4 (*vide* JF). Small numbers of wintering Black-crowned Night-Herons were detected only at traditional sites in Toledo, Ohio, and Horseshoe L., Ill.

WATERFOWL — Waterfowl provided few surprises this winter. Tundra Swans continued to pass through the n. states during December, producing flocks of 22–25 swans in n. Illinois, 33–44 in n.e. Ohio, and a maximum of 117 in St. Joseph, Ind., Dec. 20 (M & VR). Wintering Tundras were detected in all states. Locally noteworthy records included three Tundras wintering at L. George, Ind. (KB, m.ob.); four at Creve Coeur L., Mo., Dec. 29 (AJ *et al.*); two at Pony Express W.M.A., Mo., Jan. 26–27 (LG *et al.*); and 3 Illinois reports with a maximum of five to seven in Mason Jan. 9+ (RC, m.ob.). Three Trumpeter Swans appeared near Forest City, Mo., Feb. 19–23 (JV *et al.*) and five at Mingo N.W.R., Mo., Feb. 20 (BL). This population from Minnesota may be establishing a pattern of regular movements into this Region. The feral Mute Swan population is expanding dramatically in the n. states. Although they were most numerous near both Great Lakes, individuals and small flocks were appearing farther south and produced flocks of seven to 11 Mutes in s.w. Ohio plus single swans in Missouri and Kentucky.

Favorable conditions allowed unusually large numbers of geese to winter in most states. December reports of Greater White-fronted Geese included a maximum of 150 on a Missouri CBC plus 3 Illinois sightings including five at L. Calumet Dec. 26, very surprising within the urban Chicago area (JL, CM). Winter records were limited to 10 White-fronteds at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., Jan. 26 (KM) and one to three in Mason, Ill., Jan. 16+ (LA, m.ob.). Northward migrants in February produced flocks of 25–45 Greater White-fronteds in Missouri, smaller flocks at 4 Illinois sites, and 18 in Gibson, Ind., Feb. 21 (CK). Snow Geese were exceptionally abundant, with wintering flocks of 80,000+ at Pony Express W.M.A., Mo. (m.ob.), 10,000+ at Mark Twain N.W.R., Ill. (RG *et al.*), and 12,000 at Ballard W.M.A., Ky. (CW). Smaller flocks passed through Illinois during December and wintered elsewhere in Missouri. Spring migrants were also quite evident by late February. Not surprisingly, these flocks harbored small numbers of Ross' Geese. Apparently rare but regular in Illinois, one to three Ross' Geese were detected at 3 locations as migrants in December and February, and two to three wintered at Baldwin L. (RG). More noteworthy in Kentucky, pairs of Ross' Geese at Danville Feb.

14+ (WK, m ob , ph) and Ballard W M A Feb 21 (†BP, DP) established the 2nd and 3rd state records. Wintering Canada Geese were plentiful, with 80,000 at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo. (KM); 58,750 at Ballard W.M.A., Ky. (CW); and a whopping 611,000 on s. Illinois refuges Jan. 11 (DT).

Ducks were most apparent as migrants during December and late February. Wintering numbers were not remarkable, perhaps reflecting their low populations throughout the continent. The 35 Wood Ducks at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., Jan. 9 constituted a large winter flock for this Region (KM). Lingered Blue-winged Teal were noted on 2 Illinois CBCs, plus a male was reported at Pickerington, Ohio, Jan. 1 (JF). Both N. Shoveler and Gadwall were fairly numerous as December migrants with smaller numbers remaining through the winter. Fewer wintering Canvasbacks were reported, with the largest flocks composed of 1000+ along L. Erie and 200 in Illinois. A migrant flock of 1150 Canvasbacks at L. Barkley Feb. 14 was exceptional for Kentucky (BP *et al.*). Since most Ring-necked Ducks normally depart in November, flocks of 130–750+ scattered across Illinois, Kentucky, and Ohio through December were surprising. These large flocks eventually migrated farther south. Inland Greater Scaup were detected only in small numbers. The only King Eider appeared on an Ohio CBC. Harlequin Ducks were limited to one intermittently appearing along L. Erie between Vermilion and Cleveland Dec. 19+, plus another at Port of Indiana, Ind., Feb. 25+ (CF *et al.*). Oldsquaws peaked with a maximum of 135 along L. Michigan, and a normal number of inland records consisted of one to three at 7 sites scattered across all states.

Black Scoters were noted only along L. Michigan in Illinois during December. Most Surf Scoters appeared as late migrants in December including 3 inland sightings from Illinois plus one at Maryville, Mo., Dec. 13 (DE). The only wintering Surf was reported along L. Michigan in n.w. Indiana. No large flocks of White-winged Scoters were sighted along the Great Lakes and only one or two scoters were detected at 5 inland locations. Common Goldeneyes were plentiful in Illinois and Ohio with a maximum of 1450 at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., Feb. 13–15 (DR). Another Barrow's Goldeneye was discovered along L. Erie, for Ohio's 4th record in the past 5 years. This female at Lorain Feb. 20 (††MG, J *et al.*) was thought to be from the western population. Hooded Mergansers were locally numerous into early January with a maximum of 623 in w. Kentucky. Most apparently departed during January with the advent of freezing temperatures. Common Mergansers staged good flights along L. Erie and into Illinois with 1000–4000 reported from several locations, mostly during December and February. Red-breasted Mergansers were also plentiful along both Great Lakes through mid-December.

RAPTORS — Black Vultures wintered in unusual numbers, perhaps reflecting expanding populations in several areas. Noteworthy were winter concentrations of 18 in s.w. Missouri; 17 in s. Ohio; 15 at Brookville Res., Ind., Dec. 20 (BB); and eight at Mingo N.W.R., Mo., Feb. 16 (BR, BL). Wintering Turkey Vultures were generally reported at or near traditional roosts although six in Clinton and Bond Feb. 3 (SR) plus two in Henderson Jan. 30 (MBa) were unusually far north in Illinois. Migrant vultures returned to n. Ohio by Feb. 22. An accidental winter visitor in s.w. Missouri, an Osprey apparently wintered at Table Rock L. (†PM). Bald Eagles continued to increase as winter residents in most states. An impressive 1016 eagles were tallied in Illinois during the mid-winter survey although similar data were unavailable from the other states. Wintering N. Harriers were generally fairly scarce, and the only sizable roost consisted of 35 in Knox, Ill. (MBa).

Few N. Goshawks were detected with only 4 sightings from Illinois and 2 undocumented Missouri reports. Single goshawks apparently wandered S to the St. Louis area and Carlyle L., Ill. Red-shouldered Hawks were reported in representative numbers for recent years and wintering Red-taileds were locally plentiful in Illinois. Only Illinois supported large numbers

of wintering Rough-legged Hawks with 45 in Knox (MBa) and 18–26 at 3 other locations. Normal numbers of Golden Eagles consisted of 8 sightings in Missouri, Kentucky, and Illinois, plus one east to Willow Slough W.M.A., Ind., Jan. 2 (KB). No wintering Merlins were adequately documented. With the advent of Peregrine Falcon release programs in several states, wintering Peregrines have become fairly regular visitors at or near large cities scattered across the Region. This winter produced records from Kansas City (*vide* KH); Toledo, Ohio (TK); Columbus, Ohio (m.ob.); Spfld. (RV); and several in the Chicago–n.w. Indiana area (m.ob.). In contrast, wintering Prairie Falcons, more likely to be encountered in rural farmlands, had 3 reports from Illinois and one from Missouri through Jan. 9, a normal number of sightings for recent years.

RAILS THROUGH GULLS — Wintering rails were limited to two Virginias at Atterbury W.M.A., Ind., Jan. 3 (SJ) plus one on an Illinois CBC. Large numbers of Am. Coots lingered in Kentucky and Illinois through December, but only the expected small flocks remained after early January. Migrant Sandhill Cranes continued to pass along their traditional corridor in Indiana, Kentucky, and s.w. Ohio through Jan. 2 with a maximum of 120 near Dayton, Ohio, Dec. 6 (PK). Continuing a trend established in recent years, cranes apparently wintering included two at Jasper-Pulaski W.M.A., Ind., Jan. 16 (DH) and one near O.W.R. through Jan. 15 (JP). The first northward migrants returned to Kentucky and Indiana Feb. 17–27. Extralimital Sandhills consisted of three at Rend L., Ill., Dec. 23–Jan. 5 (TF, DR) and two at Ballard W.M.A., Ky., Feb. 21 (BP, DP).

Killdeer were locally plentiful during December with 212 at Brookville Res., Ind., Dec. 12 (BB) and flocks of 40–123 scattered across the other states. They departed in early January, and only the expected singles attempted to overwinter. An unusual variety of shorebirds lingered into December with single Greater Yellowlegs at Spfld. Dec. 3 (H) and Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., Dec. 4 (KM), plus a Spotted Sandpiper on an Ohio CBC and three Westerns on a Kentucky CBC. Tardy Least Sandpipers remained at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., through Dec. 11, and CBC reports from Illinois and Kentucky included at least 25 Least in w. Kentucky. Single Pectoral Sandpipers at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., Dec. 9 (KM) and in Steuben, Ind., Dec. 10 (Haw) were exceptionally late. The most surprising shore-



Purple Sandpiper in Gibson County, Ind., Jan. 16, 1988. Extremely rare in this Region away from the Great Lakes. Photo/Jim Campbell.

bird was a **Purple Sandpiper** photographed in Gibson, Ind., Jan. 16–Feb. 14, providing only the 2nd inland record from the state (JC, ph.). A Dunlin at Carbondale Jan. 27–28 established one of few mid-winter records from Illinois (†DR et al.). Lingerer Com. Snipe were fairly widespread with a maximum of 64 at Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., Dec. 7 (KM). Most snipe eventually departed since only singles were reported after early January. American Woodcock were mostly noted as spring migrants, returning to Louisville by Feb. 9 (BP); Swan Lake N.W.R., Mo., by Feb. 22 (KM); and Dayton, Ohio (SH), and Mt. Vernon, Ill., by Feb. 23 (TF). Two Red Phalaropes at Michigan City Dec. 19 provided the latest fall record for n.w. Indiana (BJ, KB).

An ad. Pomarine Jaeger was closely studied at Cleveland Jan. 4, establishing one of few winter records from Ohio (†TL et al.). The distribution and relative abundance of gulls generally followed well-established patterns this winter, producing few surprises. In general, mid-winter concentrations were not particularly remarkable, and “white-winged” gulls were not as evident as in previous years.

The only Laughing Gull was discovered at Barkley L. Feb. 13–20 for Kentucky's 4th winter record (BP et al.). Surprisingly, Little Gulls were noted only along L. Michigan with two on an Illinois CBC plus one at Michigan City, Ind., Dec. 16 (LH). Their absence along L. Erie was disturbing, although their numbers had been declining for the past few years. The only Com. Black-headed Gull was documented Jan. 4 at Cleveland, where they are rare but regular late fall and early winter visitors (†TL). Bonaparte's Gulls were unusually numerous on inland lakes during December with flocks of 100–500 scattered across all states. They mostly departed during the first week of January with only scattered stragglers remaining through the winter. Ring-billed Gulls were most plentiful along L. Erie and lakes in w. Kentucky and s. Illinois, where concentrations of 10,000–25,000+ were reported. An ad. California Gull at Cleveland Feb. 21 continued a pattern of mid-winter sightings along L. Erie (††, MG). Herring Gulls were widely scattered along L. Erie, but large flocks did not develop along the Mississippi R. as they have during many previous winters.

Thayer's Gulls were most evident in Illinois with scattered sightings along L. Michigan including a maximum of six at Chicago Jan. 3 (JL) plus reports at various sites along the Illinois R. system with at least seven in Mason during January (m.ob.). Surprisingly, none was reported from the Alton–St. Louis area although three Thayer's appeared south to the Kentucky L.–Smithland Dam area in w. Kentucky Jan. 9 (BP et al.). Few Thayer's Gulls were discovered along L. Erie; the immature in Gibson, Ind., remained into mid-December. Iceland Gulls were detected only as scattered singles along the Great Lakes. Inland reports were limited to one or two Icelands scattered along the Illinois R., where they may be rare but regular winter visitors, plus two first-winter Icelands at Barkley L. Feb. 13 for one of few records from Kentucky (†BP et al.). The expected small numbers of Lesser Black-backed were scattered along L. Erie. Other sightings consisted of two adults and one first-winter Lesser Black-backed at the Kentucky L.–Barkley L.–Smithland Dam area of w. Kentucky Dec. 19–Jan. 9 (†BP et al.) plus the first-winter bird in Gibson, Ind., remaining into December. Glaucous Gulls were not numerous along the Great Lakes, where only one to four were occasionally noted at scattered locations. Similar numbers were encountered along the entire Illinois R. system (where they may be regular winter visitors), the Alton–St. Louis area, and the w. Kentucky lakes. Single Glaucous Gulls at Oberlin Res., Ohio, Dec. 31 (LR, TL) and Rend L., Ill., Jan. 29 (TF) were locally unexpected. Relatively few Great Black-backed Gulls appeared along L. Michigan this winter. Inland sightings were restricted to Illinois during January with at least three Great Black-backed in the Alton–E. St. Louis area (m.ob.) plus one or two near Joliet (JM) and at Pekin (LA) along the Illinois R. system. Black-legged Kittiwakes were noted only along L. Michigan near Chicago, where one or two were reported from 2 locations Jan. 1–3.

DOVES THROUGH SWALLOWS — One of this winter's few surprises was provided by an **Inca Dove** regularly visiting a Mound City, Mo., feeder from mid-December through Feb. 6 (GR, JW, ph.). Excellent photographs confirmed this first state record, which fits well with a pattern of postbreeding vagrancy established by records from Arkansas and Oklahoma. A very late Yellow-billed Cuckoo lingered at Maryville, Mo., through Dec. 1 (GS). Wintering Com. Barn-Owls were detected at only one location in Missouri and 2 in Ohio, a normal number of winter reports for this declining species. The Snowy Owl movement was not remarkable, producing a similar number of sightings as last winter. There were 4–10 records scattered across each n. state plus 2 in Missouri and one in Kentucky, mostly during December and January. The s. limit of this “flight” extended to Platte and Clay, Mo. (m.ob.); Carlyle L., Ill. (m.ob.); and Trimble, Ky. (fide BM). Casual in Illinois at any season, a wintering Burrowing Owl was completely unexpected when one was discovered in McLean Jan. 24–31 (DBi, m.ob., ph.). It established the first mid-winter record for the state. Long-eared Owls appeared in fairly good numbers with reports from at least 14 Illinois locations plus 2–5 sites in all states except Kentucky. The largest roosts were composed of 15+ owls in Illinois and Ohio. Short-eared Owls were also widely distributed with sightings from all states. Not surprisingly, they were most numerous in the n. states, where local concentrations of 12–24 owls developed. Northern Saw-whet Owls were rather scarce; they were restricted to only 2–5 locations in each n. state with maxima of three to four in Illinois and Ohio.



Burrowing Owl in McLean County, Ill., Jan. 30, 1988. Photo/Jim Landing.

A ♂ **Selasphorus** hummingbird appeared at a Jeffersontown, Ky., feeder during November. It unexpectedly decided to overwinter at this feeder, where it was widely observed through Feb. 5 (RW, m.ob.). This hummingbird proved to be quite hardy and survived a number of subfreezing nights with temperatures as low as 3°F. Since it was never captured, its specific identity cannot be positively determined. Judging from CBC reports, most woodpeckers were reasonably well represented with surprising numbers of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers from s. Illinois. Pileated Woodpeckers continued their local range expansions in portions of Ohio and Illinois. Lingerer E. Phoebes remained in all states except Indiana during December with the last individual in Ross, Ohio, Jan. 15 (JF). An early migrant returned to Franklin, Ohio, by Feb. 27 (TB). Horned Larks formed few sizable concentrations, reflecting a general lack of snow cover in most states. An early Purple Martin returned to L. Taneycomo in s.w. Missouri by Feb. 26 (PM).

CROWS THROUGH SHRIKES — Few large Am Crow roosts were reported with 25,000+ at Danville, Ill. (m.ob.), plus 2500 in Clark (DO) and Lucas, Ohio (TK). Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce and rather locally distributed for the 2nd consecutive winter. Carolina Wrens benefited from another relatively mild winter. Their populations have essentially recovered in most s. areas, judging from the large numbers reported on many CBCs, although additional improvement is still possible in all n. states. The declining Bewick's Wren was discovered only on 2 Kentucky CBCs. House Wrens remained into the CBC period in Ohio and Illinois. The fortunes of Winter Wrens have not improved substantially with only small numbers reported from most areas. Lingering Sedge Wrens appeared on an Illinois CBC; the more expected Marsh Wrens were detected on Ohio and Illinois CBCs. Wintering Golden-crowned Kinglets were not plentiful anywhere, apparently decreasing from last year, and the expected small numbers of Ruby-crowneds remained into January in most states. An exceptionally late Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was discovered in Mariemont, Ohio, Dec. 27–28 (MB, RK).

Without a doubt, this winter's prize was a **Northern Wheat-ear** discovered in Ottawa, Ohio, Jan. 4. It was banded 2 weeks later and observed through Jan. 21 (†MS, m.ob., ph.). While some of the measurements suggest this individual was of the Greenland race, its subspecific identity has not yet been positively established at this time. Full details will be published later. Needless to say, it represented the first record from Ohio and one of very few winter records from North America. Fairly good numbers of E. Bluebirds wintered in most areas. A **Mountain Bluebird**, an accidental visitor to Illinois, was carefully studied near Manito Dec. 13 (†LA, KR). The expected small numbers of Hermit Thrushes were scattered across most s. areas this winter. Wintering Am. Robins were locally distributed with flocks numbering in the hundreds at some locations and rather small numbers at others. In general, they were most numerous in December and February, but few flocks were encountered during January. Varied Thrushes invaded Indiana with singles in the Indiana Dunes area Dec. 6 (DN) and Feb. 21+ (KC), at Willow Slough W.M.A. Jan. 6–Feb. 26 (fide EH), and in St. Joseph Jan. 6 (M & VI). The only other Varied Thrush appeared near Macomb, Ill., Jan. 4 (†EF).

Wintering mimids included 2 Gray Catbird sightings, increased numbers of N. Mockingbirds in s. areas, plus the expected small numbers of Brown Thrashers in all states. Water Pipits remained into December in Kentucky and Ohio, and one in Tuscarawas, Ohio, Jan. 22 provided an unusual mid-winter record (ES). Cedar Waxwings elicited mixed responses. They were scarce in some states, and flocks of 50–200+ waxwings were evident only in Kentucky and Ohio during December and the last half of February. The N. Shrike movement was unremarkable with only 6 reports from Illinois plus single sightings in Ohio and Indiana. The expected numbers of Loggerhead Shrikes were reported, mostly from s. areas.

WARBLERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS — A few late migrants were enticed to remain into the winter season. An Orange-crowned Warbler was an unexpected guest at a Louisville feeder Jan. 18–Mar. 10+ (J & PB), providing one of few winter records for Kentucky. A lingering Cape May Warbler was reportedly photographed on an Ohio CBC. Yellow-rumped Warblers were locally numerous with reports of 130–150+ on Ohio and Illinois CBCs plus as many as 42 north to the Chicago area. Wintering Pine Warblers may not be as unusual as previously thought. They were detected on CBCs in Missouri, Illinois, and Ohio, and single Pines were also observed in Murray, Ky., through Jan. 2 (WB); at Crab Orchard N.W.R., Ill., Feb. 9 (DR); and at a Worthington, Ohio, feeder Feb. 3+ (BMA, m.ob., ph.). A Palm Warbler was reported on an Indiana CBC, and another lingered into early January in Frankfort, Ky. (fide BP). In addition to CBC reports, a Com. Yellowthroat lingered at Ft. Wayne, Ind., through mid-January (TY). Wintering Dickcissels consisted of two intermittently observed in Huntington, Ind. (fide SS), plus one in Radcliff, Ky., Jan. 10–13 (RH).



Wintering male Pine Warbler in Franklin County, Ohio, Feb. 14, 1988. Photo/Mary Gustafson.

Wintering sparrows received mixed reports with no detectable pattern to their abundance. Although local concentrations were encountered during the CBC period, many observers commented on the scarcity of most sparrows later in the winter. American Tree Sparrows were particularly scarce in most states. Except for CBC reports, the only documented wintering Chipping Sparrow was noted at a Wilmington, Ohio, feeder Feb. 4+ (†LGA). Among the few reports of wintering Vesper Sparrows, one in Winnebago Jan. 1–15 was noteworthy in n. Illinois (DWI). Small numbers of wintering Savannah Sparrows were also scattered north to the Chicago area. Le Conte's Sparrows were discovered only at traditional sites in s. Illinois. December concentrations of 100+ Fox Sparrows were reported from the Cincinnati area and in s. Illinois, but substantially smaller numbers remained later in the winter. A Lincoln's Sparrow survived the winter by accepting handouts in downtown Cleveland (DB, CKI, †m.ob.), perhaps the first to have successfully overwintered in Ohio.

White-throated Sparrows were numerous at only a few localities. Except for 1000+ White-crowneds in the Cincinnati area during December (fide TLe), their numbers were generally reduced in most areas. Harris' Sparrows did not wander from the w. edge of the Region this winter. Dark-eyed Juncos were not plentiful either although individuals of the "Oregon" type were more widely reported than normal. The absence of prolonged snow cover resulted in another poor winter for longspurs and Snow Buntings. Lapland Longspurs appeared in all states, mostly as scattered individuals and small flocks with a maximum of 500 at Carlyle L., Ill., Feb. 7 (SR, MP). A flock of 75 Laplands in Mississippi Feb. 16 was unusual in s.e. Missouri (BR, BL). Except for 2000 Snow Buntings in St. Joseph, Ind., Feb. 28 (M & VR et al.), they were also mostly encountered as individuals or flocks of 50 or fewer buntings. Casual winter visitors to the s. states, five Snow Buntings were noted at Maryville, Mo., Dec. 13 (DE) and one or two appeared at Louisville Feb. 12–14 (BP).

Large blackbird roosts were noted mostly in the s. states. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has initiated a program of spraying these roosts with Tergetol in order to control blackbird populations. Significant mortality was reported from several roosts, and the effect of this control program on Regionwide blackbird populations remains to be seen. Wintering W. Meadowlarks were noted in Missouri and Illinois, where they are

expected in small numbers This winter's complement of Yellow-headed Blackbirds consisted of singles in St. Joseph, Ind., Dec. 13 (TN); near S.C.R. Jan. 26 (LG); and on an Ohio CBC. Brewer's Blackbirds are casual winter visitors in Ohio, where a flock of 24 remained in Ross Jan. 10+ (J, MG, m.ob.), and smaller numbers appeared in Clark and Madison. Equally noteworthy in Illinois, two to three were noted at Carlyle L. Jan. 8-18 (RG, RP). Wintering Great-tailed Grackles peaked with 16 in the S.C.R. area this year (LG) but were unreported elsewhere in Missouri. Lingering N. Orioles consisted of singles in Boone, Mo., Dec. 14+ (D & NW); at Algonquin, Ill., through Dec. 5 (ph. JK); and near Macomb, Ill., Dec. 18 (EF).

FINCHES — It was another poor year for most finches. Pine Grosbeaks were absent except for one Illinois CBC report. Even Purple Finches were scarce in most states. Only Ohio and Illinois hosted local concentrations of 40-50 Purple Finches, and they were essentially absent from many areas. With the rampant spread of House Finches throughout the Region, observers should carefully monitor the status of Purple Finches. Their relative scarcity during the past few winters suggests their wintering numbers may be declining. House Finches are no longer noteworthy e. of the Mississippi R. except to mention that their numbers seem to be increasing exponentially each year. In Illinois, the flock of 280 House Finches at Crab Orchard N.W.R. Dec. 19 (DR) represented a sizable concentration, although I would not hesitate to predict that larger flocks will appear in the near future. Flocks of 20-50+ finches are regularly encountered throughout the state. In Missouri, their numbers are increasing near St. Louis and in the s.e. counties. House Finches are nearing the w. boundary of the state with one at Rosendale Feb. 19-21 (JHi) and two at Springfield Feb. 26 (JHo).

Red Crossbills staged a minor movement with 7 reports from Illinois plus single records at Kansas City and Toledo, Ohio. The largest flocks were composed of 36-50 Reds at 3 Illinois sites, and they wandered S to Gallatin, Ill. (DR). White-winged Crossbills were restricted to Illinois, where one or two were noted at 3 locations Jan. 20+. Few Com. Redpolls wandered

into this Region with only a few scattered reports from the n. states. No large flocks were reported although two appeared s. to Dayton, Ohio, Feb. 23 (NG). By far, Pine Siskins were the most widespread of all winter finches. Although they were fairly locally distributed, good numbers appeared in all states, and flocks of 75-280+ siskins wintered at a number of localities. In contrast, Evening Grosbeaks were hardly visible. They were detected at only a few localities in all states, mostly as flocks of 10 or fewer grosbeaks. An estimated 100 grosbeaks wintering at Cumberland Falls S.P., Ky., were exceptional for this year (GRi).

CORRIGENDUM — The Herring Gull concentration at L. Calumet, Ill., Mar. 1, 1987, was actually of 2000, not 20,000 gulls (AB 41:439).

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CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

David P. Muth

This last Christmas, Bob Newman failed to participate in a single Christmas Bird Count. His friends knew that the frail body that he kept moving by the force of his will and his love of birds must be failing at last, and on January 28, 1988, Robert J. Newman died. He was the father of this Regional Report. For 30 years, he was also a guiding force in Louisiana ornithology and with his mentor George Lowery at the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology, succeeded in marrying professional and amateur ornithology in the state in a way that nurtured both, a marriage that is sustained today by his successors at the museum. His professional accomplishments will be chronicled in the appropriate journals, but here we will remember him as a quiet wit, a raconteur with an ear for nuance and idiom, a meticulous editor, an insatiable birder, a skilled field observer who added several new birds to the state list, and an unflinching friend.

Bob had the longest state list of anyone in Louisiana, and the drive toward the magic 400 seemed to sustain him as his health failed over the last 10 years. Despite serious heart problems, he remained remarkably active, attempting to



track down each new potential state bird. I remember a crisp February morning in 1982 a crowd of birders was racing around the dump in search of the state's first Lesser Black-backed Gull. With Newman on my arm, I attempted to keep him moving behind the crowd as we struggled across the quagmire of putrefying garbage and jagged chunks of discarded metal. At one point, he collapsed in exhaustion and sat gasping on an old tire. The headline flashed through my mind: "Distinguished L.S.U. Professor Emeritus Dies in New Orleans Dump," but Bob, seeing my concern, laughed and said he intended to die birding. Soon the shout went up, and Bob saw the gull. I remember another day when I waited anxiously by a roadside in Cameron to show the state's assembled ornithological cognoscenti the Tropical Parula I hoped was still there. I pished, and up popped the bird. Expecting to hear any minute from one of half-dozen skeptical neo-tropical ornithologists assembled there that I had made an egregious error, I heard instead Bob say quietly "I'll be damned" and watched him lower his glasses and walk slowly back to the car for a much-needed rest. And I remember a week later, when Mac Myers found the state's first Rock Wren in New Orleans, how Bob arrived the next afternoon, angry because it had taken so long to find someone to drive him down from Baton Rouge. The wren would not cooperate, and Bob wasn't fast enough to see its occasional brief appearances. Finally, one of us got under each of his shoulders while someone else went to flush the bird; each time the bird appeared, we lifted him to face the right direction, until he finally got a satisfying look at it.

We all have memories of Bob Newman to cherish; we also have his legacy of ornithological excellence to sustain us. Our thoughts go to his wife and long-time field companion, Marcie.

Despite some unexpected snow and ice, the weather was fairly average across the Region. Some weather-related records are outlined in the text.

ABBREVIATIONS — L.S.U.M.Z. = Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology; L.O.S. = Louisiana Ornithological Society; M.O.S. = Mississippi Ornithological Society; B.R.C. = Bird Records Committee; N.H.P. = Nat'l Historical Park. Place names in *italics* are counties or parishes.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — The only unusual loons were two Red-throats and three Pacifics rumored from the Gulf Shores CBC. Common Loons were late in Clark, Ark., Dec. 19 (MP) and Oktibbeha, Miss., Dec. 10–15 (TS). For the 3rd year running, a **Western Grebe** was found during the Sabine CBC in Cameron, La., Dec. 19 (JW *et al.*). The extraordinary increase in the number of N. Gannets detected by observers along the w. gulf coast continued unabated; diligent searching with scopes from the beach is now so often rewarded from December to April that many sightings are no longer reported. American White Pelicans staged an unprecedented invasion of the interior, wintering for the first time in numbers away from the Louisiana coast. *Jefferson, Orleans, St. Tammany, Ascension, E. Baton Rouge, W. Feliciana, Point Coupee, Catahoula, and Madison* all reported numbers of this species that is normally confined in winter to the coastal marshes. At L. Chicot, Ark., they were both late and early: 43 Dec. 12 (CB), 10 Dec. 14 (DRS), and 25 Feb. 5–7 (JF, DRS, JBe). Brown Pelicans continued their steady comeback: the number present in Cameron, La., went from one last year to as many as five together this year (m.ob.); at least one immature wintered on the New Orleans lakefront (m.ob.), and one was seen on L. Salvador, Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte N.H.P., Jan. 23, for the first time since reintroduction (DPM). Most astonishing was

one in Point Coupee, La., Dec. 25 (DWG) in the company of White Pelicans about 70 mi from the nearest brackish water. The species also continued to recover in Mississippi (m.ob.).

Here are some inland counts of Double-crested Cormorant: 300+ in Tunica, Miss., Dec. 30 (BBC, LCC, CHB); 2000+ on L. Chicot in extreme s.e. Arkansas from mid-January to Feb. 27 (DRS); 780 Dec. 16 (KVR) and 675 Feb. 6 (JVR) on University L. in Baton Rouge; 600 in Point Coupee, La., Dec. 27 (DWG) and 730 in St. Martin, La., Jan. 16 (JVR). Records of Anhingas in Louisiana and adjacent Mississippi and Arkansas are too numerous to list; it was an exceptional winter for the species as an examination of the CBCs will reveal. The only non-CBC report of a Least Bittern was in Cameron, La., Feb. 1, where two were heard calling in the marsh (SWC). For the 2nd year in a row, a white morph Great Blue Heron was observed during the Port St. Joe CBC Dec. 29 in Gulf, Fla. (BHS). Unseasonal Great Egrets included 95 during the Lonoke CBC in Arkansas Dec. 20; 11 on the Moon L. CBC in Tunica, Miss., Dec. 30 (LCC, CHB); 35 Dec. 5 at Noxubee N.W.R., two Jan. 16–20 in Oktibbeha and one in Choctaw, Miss., Jan. 23 (TSc). Louisiana Herons were rare inland in *Jeff. Davis, La.*, Dec. 10 (SWC, DLD) and in Baton Rouge Feb. 11 (JVR, JB). A Reddish Egret on the Hancock beach during December and January was a Mississippi rarity (m.ob.). A toxic-looking pond in the middle of an industrial area of New Orleans has traditionally hosted a large roost of night-herons, always with a few of the rarely wintering Yellow-crowned Night-Herons mixed in. This year, there were no Black-crowns, but up to nine (eight adults, one immature) Yellow-crowns were present through the period (DPM, JH, LN); nearby, another roost of six adults was found Jan. 10 (GO, DC) and was still there Feb. 7 (NN, RDP, GC). More unexpected was one adult well inland at Eufala N.W.R. Jan. 16 (CK, SL), for the 5th winter record for interior Alabama.

WATERFOWL — Six Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks seen at Lacassine N.W.R., Cameron, La., Feb. 10 (DPM, GS, CKe) were part of a flock that has been growing in size for several winters; it numbered about 70 this season (*vide* BBr). A single Tundra Swan at Cross Creeks N.W.R. in Stewart, Tenn., Jan. 16–29 (JCR, DWB) furnished the only report. Two ad. and two imm. Mute Swans at nearby Barkley Waterfowl Management Area (B.W.M.A.) were thought to be a wild family group (JCR, DWB)! Greater White-fronted Geese continued to turn up in new areas east of their former range: two in the B.W.M.A. Feb. 7 were the only ones reported from Tennessee (DWB); one in Colbert Dec. 26 (TD) and another in *Lauderdale* Dec. 27 (NP) were new for their respective areas of Alabama; 11 in Oktibbeha, Miss., Feb. 18 was a new high for that area (TSc, MC, JBr). Numbers were high in Louisiana, as represented by counts of 4000 in *Acadia* and *Jeff. Davis* Feb. 10 (GS, CKe, DPM) and 4200 in a survey of *Acadia* and *Vermillion* Feb. 21 (JVR, MSw); 100 was more unusual in *Point Coupee* Jan. 31 (DWG). One of the most exciting avian events of the season was an invasion of **Ross' Geese**. In Arkansas, two were at Holla Bend N.W.R. Dec. 5 (CM), five Jan. 16 (CM, DB), five adults and two immatures Feb. 14 (CM), and one was in *Yell* Feb. 15 (CM, DAJ, FM, DM, MML, JN, H & MP). Tennessee had its 2nd state record Dec. 23–Jan. 24 (JCR, m.ob.), an adult at Cross Creeks N.W.R., followed by three for a 3rd state record in *Henry* Feb. 25 (JCR). Alabama's 3rd state record was in *Colbert* Feb. 22–23 (DJS, PK, NP, m.ob.). In Louisiana, where they are considered very rare, probably regular, and easily overlooked in the vast flocks of *Snows*, the first inkling came Dec. 25 when three were picked from a flock in *Jeff. Davis* (PL, SF). Another was seen in *Acadia* Jan. 16 (JVR, PSc), but on Jan. 31, 17 were counted in 2 large flocks of *snows* (SWC, DLD). Thereafter, numerous birders made the pilgrimage to the rice country of south-central Louisiana, and it became apparent that every large flock of *Snows* contained *Ross'*—about 50 were counted in 5 flocks Feb. 10 (CKe, GS, DPM, DBC, LH), 10 were in one flock Feb. 20 (BMM, NN), and 5 parties logged about 150 birds throughout the Region Feb. 21, with the one-day Regional prize going to DLD and SWC, who counted 82 birds that day. Most extraordinary

was the report of a blue-phased Ross' Goose Feb 21 in a flock on the Cameron-Vermillion line in the company of other Ross' and Snows (†DBC). At one time, a significant proportion of North America's Canada Geese wintered in Louisiana, and they were a common sight. Since the early 1960s, though, most of the birds that formerly wintered here have been short-stopped on "refuges" (read: feedlots) in the interior, and during most of the last 20 years wild Canadas have been a genuine rarity here. In recent years, however, more and more Canadas are being seen in s.w. Louisiana, although their origin is somewhat mysterious. One possibility is that they are expanding from, or being displaced from, the Texas coast; populations peaked in the area of Lacassine N.W.R. in late January and February (fide BBr). This winter, like Ross' Geese (perhaps here for the same reason?), large numbers of one of the smaller races were noted: 1200 Feb. 10 in 2 flocks with white-fronteds in Vermillion (DPM, GS, CKe) and 500+ there Feb. 21 (JVR, MSw). A somewhat more wayward flock of 17 was seen in Point Coupee Feb. 13 (DWG).

An Am. Black Duck was a rare coastal find along the Mobile Causeway in Alabama Feb. 13 (GDJ). A Black x Mallard hybrid was in Richland, La., Jan. 13 (MMH et al.). Finally, two Blacks were in Monroe, Ark., Jan. 2 (RHD, DMc), where they are uncommon but more expected. Three Blue-winged Teal were well north on the Sumner CBC in Tallahatchie, Miss., Dec. 22 (MFH, GTL). A female was also a rare winterer in Oktibbeha, Miss., Jan. 16 & 23; the first two northbound migrants arrived there Feb. 25 (TSc). A ♂ Cinnamon Teal brightened a flock of northbound Blue-wingeds Feb. 21, in a flooded rice field in Vermillion, La. (KVR, CLC). The Eurasian Wigeon reported in the fall from Cross Creeks N.W.R. was still present Dec. 27 in Tennessee (DWB). Twenty-five Canvasbacks were unexpected in Lauderdale, e.c. Miss., Feb. 11 (JMcG et al.). As usual, there was a scatter of coastal and semicoastal Oldsquaw reports from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. A late report of a pair of Black Scoters from Craighead Nov. 6 (ELH) constituted the 2nd record for n.e. Arkansas. Other non-CBC scoters were three Blacks off Rutherford Beach in Cameron, La., Jan. 6 (PMC, JKI); a ♀ White-winged Scoter in Gulf Shores, Ala., Dec. 6-Jan. 2 (PBL, m.ob.); another off Bellefontaine Beach in Mississippi Jan. 9 (CD, CC et al.), and one off Pass Christian Feb. 5 (m.ob.). Common Mergansers, as usual, strayed sparingly in the Region.

VULTURES TO CRANES — Eight Black Vultures in Washington was a good count for n.w. Arkansas (BSa). Osprey populations continued to recover and spread. After a period of apparent consolidation, Black-shouldered Kites were spreading again. The number of sightings is increasing in strongholds such as Hancock, Miss., and Cameron, La., and there were first reports for New Orleans during the CBC there Dec. 27 (MH, SH) and *De Soto* in n.w. Louisiana Feb. 26 (HCH). As with the Osprey, there is room for quiet optimism about Bald Eagle numbers, as evidenced by the many reports received spanning the Region this winter. As usual, the lone N. Goshawk report was from Tennessee, Dec. 18 in Memphis (VBR, MGW). Immature Broad-winged Hawks were tallied on both the Venice and Grand Isle CBCs again, but one in Perry, Ala., Feb. 21 was either very early or an exceptionally rare winterer (TAI, et al.). An even rarer winterer would be the light-phased Swainson's Hawk immature in Lafayette, La., Dec. 10 (DLD, SWC); the noncoastal location and date suggested a possible late migrant. One of the Region's rarest raptors, a **Ferruginous Hawk**, was seen in Colbert Feb. 24 (DJS), for a 3rd Alabama record, the first inland. There were 3 reports of Rough-legged Hawks from w. Tennessee (LCC et al.), and 5 totaling about seven individuals from mid.-Tennessee (fide SJS). The southernmost was in Colbert, Ala., Jan. 10 (NP). Five Golden Eagles were reported from mid.-Tennessee, slightly above normal (fide SJS); there were no other reports. Reports of both Merlin and Peregrine Falcons were steady but not overwhelming; many observations from coastal areas now go unreported. A crippled imm. Purple Gallinule first reported on the New Orleans CBC Dec. 27 was still present Jan. 1 (RDP); the only other reported

was from the Sabine CBC in Cameron, La., Dec. 19. Sandhill Cranes showed up in new areas of Louisiana this year, two in St. Tammany in January and February (m.ob.) and three in Evangeline, La., during the Pine Prairie CBC both provided 2nd parish records. The flock at Cheneyville in Rapides, La., was counted at 120 Jan. 29 for a new state high (AS, GS, NLN, JSe). Numbers were normal in mid.-Tennessee (fide SJS).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH GULLS — A **Lesser Golden-Plover** was present at a catfish farm in Hancock, Miss., Nov 15-Dec. 29 (JAT, m.ob.). Lehman considered it of the race *dominica* and not a vagrant *fulva*; it was perhaps delayed in its migration by injury, as it limped. One, still in basic plumage, seen in Vermillion, La., Feb. 21 (KVR) tied for the earliest date for the state. A Semipalmated Plover was very early inland in Vermillion, La., Feb. 21 (JVR, MSw). Both yellowlegs were reported north in Arkansas (H & MP), Louisiana (DWG), Alabama (DJS), and a Greater for Mississippi (MFH, TSc). Two Spotted Sandpipers were north in Tennessee, one in Shelby Dec. 20-Feb. 2 (MGW, JRW), and one in Lakes Dec. 22 (BMc). Two were found on the El Dorado CBC Dec. 19 (LSh), and one was in Hot Springs, Ark., Feb. 4 (WFK, DMo). A first area winter record for *Oktibbeha*, Miss., was present Jan. 19 to the end of the period (TSc). Three Long-billed Curlew wintered along the Mobile Causeway in Alabama (m.ob.). Two hundred sixty Least Sandpipers was the highest number ever recorded for the season in Memphis during the CBC Dec. 20. Other reports from the n. portions of the Region indicated that the careful observer should be able to find them in appropriate habitat. A **Pectoral Sandpiper** in Memphis Dec. 20 during the CBC (JRW) was the first in winter for the area and one of few for Tennessee and the Region. Very early spring migrant Pectorals were recorded in Vermillion, La., Feb. 20 (BMM) and simultaneously in 3 locations Feb. 27: one in Lonoke, Ark., (H & MP); eight at Noxubee N.W.R. (TSc, JMu), and 18 in Humphreys (MFH), these last two the earliest for Mississippi by over a week. Stilt Sandpipers were unexpectedly found by staff of the L.S.U.M.Z. during shorebird surveys of the rice country of south-central Louisiana Dec. 10-Feb. 21; one-day counts of as many as 38 by a single party were made on both the above dates on surveys of 4 parishes (SWC, DLD, KVR, MSw). Only future surveys will tell if this situation is anomalous. A **Ruff**, the 4th for Louisiana and first in winter, was found with Stilt Sandpipers during a freak snowstorm Feb. 7 in a rice field in Vermillion (ph. KVR). Louisiana's 3rd winter **Wilson's Phalarope** was also found during the surveys Feb. 21 in *Jeff. Davis* (DLD, SWC). Examination of the specimen indicated a wintering bird rather than a migrant. About 25-30 *Phalaropus* were seen at the end of the Mobile ship channel in Alabama Dec. 1 (RH). Species could not be determined, but past patterns would indicate Red Phalaropes.

Both Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers were recorded offshore during the Sabine N.W.R. CBC in Cameron, La., Dec. 19 (DBC, PN). A jaeger was seen at the end of the Mobile ship channel in Alabama Dec. 1 (RWH). A Laughing Gull was well inland in Baton Rouge Feb. 6 (JVR). And, for the 3rd year running, an immature was at Wilson Dam in Lauderdale, Ala., Dec. 8 (DJS, TMH). An astonishing three **California Gulls** were reported before and during the Creole CBC (JBO et al.) Dec 17-18, seen in the marsh away from the gulf beach, where all previous records have been. The record will be reviewed by the L.O.S.B.R.C. Mississippi's first record of a **Thayer's Gull** Feb. 5 in Harrison (JAT, GM) is pending review by the M.O.S.B.R.C. There were 2 sightings for Louisiana: an adult in *Plaquemines* Feb. 26-27 (DLD, SWC, GS, AS, PW, m.ob.) and an immature in St. Bernard Mar. 3 (DPM, GS). Probably returning for its 5th winter was Mississippi's first Lesser Black-backed Gull, first seen Oct. 27 (m.ob.). In Louisiana, a 2nd-year bird was in New Orleans Jan. 6 (NN, RDP) on the lake, a 3rd-year was there Feb. 7 (NN, RDP, GC); and, finally, that or a different 3rd-year was at the dump in nearby St. Bernard Feb. 27 (SWC, DLD, GS). There were 2 reports of **Great Black-backed Gull**: one first-year offshore on the Sabine C.B.C. in



Gray Gull (*Larus modestus*) in Cameron Parish, La., Dec. 19, 1987. This South American species had never been recorded before on our continent, but there was debate over its means of arrival. Photo/Paul Lehman.

Louisiana Dec. 19 (DBC, PN) and another at Wilson Dam in Alabama Feb. 12 (DJS). An imm. **Black-legged Kittiwake** there Dec. 8 (DJS) was the first inland sighting for Alabama. There were two Kittiwakes on the n.w. Florida coast: Dec. 10–Feb. 26 in Santa Rosa (SD, m.ob.) and one in Escambia Dec. 26–Feb. 2 (BB, SD).

— S.A. —

The most astonishing sight of the season was vouchsafed to DBC and PN in heavy seas off Cameron, La., during the Sabine C.B.C. Dec. 19: a first-year **Gray Gull**, *Larus modestus*, studied and photographed as it fed in the wake of their small boat. The apparition was independently discovered and photographed later that day about a mile inland at the Cameron Ferry by PL and SF. It was seen and photographed by many observers the following morning. This species breeds in the desert of Chile and is known only from the Pacific coast of South America. Needless to say, it is previously unrecorded in North America. Unlike California's Swallow-tailed Gull, the bird was in the right plumage for a vagrant, but, unhappily, it was in the wrong ocean. Although it is difficult to measure just how vanishingly small a possibility can be, the odds are not good that it made it to the gulf, and the mouth of a busy ship channel, unassisted. Still, hope springs eternal, and I spent the afternoon of the 20th and the morning of the 21st standing in a cold drizzle, tossing white bread and other offal into the Calcasieu R.—in good company, too, which included a distinguished member of the checklist committees of both the A.O.U. and A.B.A. The bird was never seen again.

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS— A breeding colony of what were previously thought to be Ringed Turtle-Doves turned out to be instead Eur. Collared-Doves (i.d. Paul Sykes et al.) in Walton, Fla., Dec. 6 (see AB 41:1379, 1448), a potential new scourge for the Region. An **Inca Dove** in Conway, Ark., Nov. 13–Jan. 6 was unexpected (JG, CL, O & LF). An extremely rare Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found during the

Venice, La, CBC Dec 31 (A & GS) A Burrowing Owl was north in a pipe yard Jan. 30 in Catahoula, La., (JMo). A Long-eared Owl was found at the West Sandy W.M.A. Dec. 13–Jan. 24 (JCR, m.ob.) in Henry, Tenn. Up to four were present at Holla Bend N.W.R. Jan. 16–Feb. 15 (CM, m.ob.) in Pope, Ark. There were 5 reports of Short-eared Owl for Mississippi, involving up to eight individuals; 2 reports involving three birds for Louisiana; and a single bird in Arkansas, for perhaps a slightly above average year. A single late Com. Nighthawk was reported, from Wilson, Tenn., Dec. 12 (LB).

— S.A. —

The Region's most astounding hummingbird invasion ever, begun in the fall, continued unabated. Florida had its 2nd **Buff-bellied Hummingbird**, at a feeder in Walton Dec. 5–18 (RAD et al.). A Black-chinned was in Escambia, Fla., Dec. 17–Jan. 24 (RAD, m.ob.). Alabama's 2nd mountain-region Rufous, a young male, was in Gadsen all winter (GDJ, m.ob.). Two *Selasphorus* were also present in Mobile (fide GDJ). A Black-chinned remained from the fall through the winter at a Hancock, Miss., feeder (see fall report). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was in the same yard from Dec. 18 on, as was a *Selasphorus* throughout the period (fide JAT). Arkansas's first **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was in El Dorado Nov. 7–Jan. 27 (LSh); its 2nd was in N. Little Rock Dec. 21–27 (H & MP, PF, BSh, LP, DHu, CM). Incredibly, an **Anna's Hummingbird** showed up at a feeder in Arkansas Jan. 27 & 30 (H & MP, BSh, CM, JS); this first Arkansas record was of an adult female. The species is unknown in the Region outside Cameron in extreme s.w. Louisiana. Finally, a Rufous was in El Dorado Jan. 21 until it was found dead Feb. 19 (LSh, *L.S.U.M.Z.)

All 8 species known from Louisiana were found this winter, and individuals of each species were banded by NLN. In the winter of 1983–1984, 7 species were recorded, but the numbers this season were unprecedented. More than 30 Buff-bellied were recorded from s. Louisiana—five were banded in NLN's yard alone. My Buff-bellied arrived at my New Orleans home Jan. 21 and was seen and heard daily until Apr. 10. There were three Ruby-throateds, all from the New Orleans area, one banded (NLN). Black-chinneds and unidentified *Archilochus* were everywhere; NLN banded 23 in s.e. Louisiana. Furthest afield was a member of the genus in Shreveport Feb. 3–26 (HHJ et al.). Louisiana's 4th, 5th, and 6th **Anna's Hummingbirds** were found in the town of Cameron. The season's first (PL, SF,



Immature male Calliope Hummingbird at Norco, La., January 1988. Fifth record for Louisiana. This bird was measured and identified in the hand, but the notable shortness of the bill and tail can be seen here. Photo/Harold Cambre.

NLN-band) and 2nd (NLN), both ad females, were found during the Sabine CBC Dec 19 and were last seen Feb. 21 (MT), the 3rd, an imm. male, was found a short distance away Dec. 21–27 (MT, DBC). **Calliope Hummingbirds**, numbers 5 and 6 for Louisiana, also joined the fray: an imm. male banded in St. Charles (NLN, MAy) Jan. 2 until the end of the period and a female banded in nearby St. John Jan. 23 on (RJS, MW, NLN). New Orleans, downriver, hosted Louisiana's 5th **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** (NLN-band, m.ob.) Feb. 23 on. Rufous, arguably the most common wintering hummingbird in the state, were also very widespread; NLN banded 24 in s.e. Louisiana, a fraction of the total *Selasphorus* reports. "Bertha" was back at PMc's in Baton Rouge for her 4th winter Dec. 17–Feb. 29. An ad. male was very far north in Shreveport until at least Jan. 23 (PLo, HHJ, JMc). Louisiana's 10th Allen's, an ad. male present since Aug. 8, remained through the period in Baton Rouge (m.ob.); the 11th was in St. John Dec. 12 on, and the 12th was in St. Charles Feb. 8–?, both banded (NLN).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — One Least Flycatcher was found during the Johnson's Bayou CBC in Cameron, La., Dec. 20 (PL, *JVR). A probable Least was seen in Plaquemines Feb. 26 (SWC). There were no other reports of this genus. A Vermilion Flycatcher was very far east in Okaloosa, Fla., Feb. 23 (RAD). Two were in Mississippi: a male Dec. 1–Jan. 28 and an imm. male Feb. 13–29 (MB, m.ob.), both in Hancock. It was not a big year in Louisiana; a few were found on CBCs, but otherwise the only reports were from St. John of two males Nov. 6 & 7 and a female Jan. 26 (CW, JSi). An Ash-throated Flycatcher was found during the Johnson's Bayou CBC Dec. 20 (PMc, DHu); another was reported without details from Jeff. Davis Dec. 25 (MJM, LD); and, finally, one was found during the New Orleans CBC Dec. 27–Jan. 1 (DPM, LN, JiH). None were reported outside Louisiana. Two W. Kingbirds were strays in Hancock, Miss., Dec. 29 (CC, DH, JD) during the CBC. Horned Larks turned up unexpectedly south in Point Coupee Dec. 5 on and off to Feb. 13, up to 11 birds (DWG); in Acadia Dec. 10, two (DLD, SWC) and Feb. 21, seven (JVR); 10 were in W. Baton Rouge Dec. 13 (KVR). An Am. Crow in Humphreys, Miss., Feb. 20 was in an area of the "delta" where this species is not resident (TSc, MFH). Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread but in insignificant numbers (m.ob.). It was an excellent year for Winter Wrens in Louisiana; RDP heard 29 in 5 hours in a swamp near New Orleans Jan. 2. Marsh Wrens were unusual in Madison, La., Jan. 2 (GTL, JaW) during the Vicksburg CBC and in Oktibeha, Miss., Feb. 12 (TSc). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on the Savannah CBC (DJS) Dec. 22 was only the 5th for a Tennessee CBC. Eastern Bluebirds were all over Cameron, La., during the CBCs and considered abundant away from breeding areas in s.e. Louisiana (RJS). A Wood Thrush, present since November was still around Jan. 3 on Grand I. in Jefferson, La. (AS). Another was in Cameron Feb. 1 (SWC, DLD). American Robins were, like bluebirds, noted as abundant in Louisiana (JVR). A Sprague's Pipit in Chicot, Ark., Jan. 29 was unusual (DRS); one in Hale, Ala., Feb. 8 was very far east (B & MS). A Bell's Vireo found during the New Orleans CBC Dec. 27 (DBC et al.) was last seen Jan. 10 (m.ob.); this species is extremely rare anywhere in North America in winter and is, in any case, only a vagrant in s.e. Louisiana at any season (see fall report). Solitary Vireos were north in Colbert, Ala., Dec. 19 during the Waterloo CBC (GDJ) and in Webster, Miss., Jan. 31 and at Noxubee N.W.R. Feb. 27 (TSc).

A Tennessee Warbler was very late in Cameron, La., Dec. 12 (JiH, JaH). An Orange-crowned Warbler was late, north and east at Noxubee N.W.R. Dec. 4 & 12 (TSc) and Jan. 2 (SJS), during the CBC. Only one Yellow Warbler was reported—from the Johnson's Bayou CBC, La., Dec. 20 (JVR et al.). A **Cape May Warbler** in a Metairie, La., backyard Dec. 30 (PN, NLN) was the first ever in winter for the state (Region?). Perhaps more astounding was a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** way up in Columbia, Ark., Dec. 18–21 (H & SGo). A **Townsend's Warbler**, an imm. male, found during the Tunica Hills CBC Jan. 3 in W. Feliciana, La., (RJS, MW), provided the state's 4th record.

A Prairie Warbler was in lower Plaquemines, La., Dec. 6 (RDP), another was in New Orleans Jan. 10–12 (BMM, DC, GO, NN) in the Bell's Vireo field; and a 3rd was found during the Sabine CBC Dec. 19 (JiH, JaH), in the same isolated tiny patch of coastal scrub that in the past has harbored a Nashville Warbler and a Tropical Parula. Palm Warblers were north at Noxubee N.W.R. Dec. 5 in Mississippi (TSc) and at Cross Creek N.W.R. in Tennessee Dec. 7–Jan. 6 (JCR). The usual assortment of wintering Yellow-throated Warblers, Black-and-white Warblers, Am. Redstarts, Ovenbirds, and N. Waterthrushes came to s. Louisiana. Yellow-breasted Chats, one of our rare but regular winterers, were more common than usual in Louisiana this winter (see the CBC report).

TANAGERS THROUGH REDPOLLS — A ♂ Summer Tanager was at a feeder in Baton Rouge Dec. 26 (A & FGU), at the same locale where a bird in ♀ plumage has been seen the last 2 winters (?). They are sufficiently rare that no others were reported. A Black-headed Grosbeak visited a feeder in Escambia, Fla., Dec. 21 on (fide RAD, m.ob.). The only other report was from the Pine Prairie CBC Dec. 26, for a first *Evangeline*, La., record (HaG). Somewhat more than the usual numbers of Blue Grosbeaks, but typical numbers of Indigo and Painted buntings and Dickcissels were reported for Louisiana. North was a Dickcissel in W. Carroll, La., Jan. 8–9 (CMD), as was one in Tallahatchie, Miss., Feb. 12 at a feeder during a snowfall (MTW). In Tennessee, one was in Sumner Jan. 4 (D & PCR) and another was in Memphis Jan. 27–Feb. 1 (RW). Single **Green-tailed Towhees** were found in both Mississippi and Louisiana. The first was in a backyard feeding on a "suet" made from grits and corn oil Nov. 28–Feb. 19 in Harrison, Miss. (EJ, m.ob.) The 2nd was on a coastal cheniere in Cameron, La., Dec. 12–Feb. 1 (JiH, JaH, m.ob.). "Spotted Towhees" were found this season: one found during the St. Tammany CBC Dec. 28 (DBC) furnished the first record for s.e. Louisiana; one in Cameron Jan. 31 (DLD, SWC) followed fall reports there.

American Tree Sparrow numbers were "normal" for mid-Tennessee (SJS); five were seen in Jefferson, Ark., Dec. 29 (RHD), 17 were in 3 locations in Benton Feb. 11 (H & MP); and one was in Jefferson, Ala., Dec. 9–13 (B & MS) following an ice storm. A Clay-colored Sparrow found on the Venice CBC Dec. 31 (DPM, RDP) was only the 2nd in winter for s.e. Louisiana. A Lark Sparrow at Noxubee N.W.R., Miss., Jan. 16 (TSc) was a first area winter occurrence. A Rufous-crowned Sparrow in Yell, Ark., Feb. 14 provided the 2nd Regional winter occurrence (DAJ, JN, et al.); it, or another, was there Feb. 29 (MG). This is the area where the easternmost breeding population of this species occurs, but the birds withdraw to the southwest each winter. Many species of sparrow, including Le Conte's, Henslow's, Fox, Song, Swamp, Lincoln's, White-throateds, and juncos were reported in high numbers or in unusual locations; JBO speculates that this may be in part the result of the new Conservation Reserve Program, which rewards farmers for setting aside marginal farmland for conservation purposes. Let's hope he's right. A rare Harris' Sparrow was at the Bear Creek W.M.A. in Stewart, Tenn., Dec. 2–6 (TW, m.ob.); six were found at Holla Bend N.W.R. in Arkansas Jan. 29 not quite so far afield (B & PLi). Lapland Longspurs were south in W. Baton Rouge, La., Dec. 13 (KVR, JB); on the Johnson's Bayou CBC Dec. 20 (PMc, DHu); and in Hancock, Miss., Dec. 23–29 (SF, PL, JAT). The report of a **Chestnut-collared Longspur** in Madison, La. (JBa), awaits review by the L.O.S.B.R.C.; it would provide the first record for n.e. Louisiana.

Two W. Meadowlarks were east in Tallahatchie, Miss., Dec. 22 on the Sumner CBC (MFH, GTL); four were found in Humphreys Feb. 4 (MFH). One was found during the Johnson's Bayou CBC in Cameron, La., where it is extremely rare Dec. 20 (JMc, m.ob.). Four were found in 3 parishes in the rice fields Feb. 21 (KVR, CLC, SWC, DLD). A Yellow-headed Blackbird in Fayetteville, Ark., Jan. 10 (TM) was very far north; another at a feeder in Baton Rouge Feb. 7–8 was also unexpected (A & FGU). Blackbirds we will always have with us. Numbers continued to climb, and wintering ranges continued to expand

Brewer's Blackbirds are showing up with greater frequency in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama, 116 Great-tailed Grackles were counted north of Texarkana, Ark., Dec. 21 (CM, DLU); and 6500 Boat-tailed Grackles were in *Acadia* Dec. 10 (SWC, DLD), 50 mi inland. Bronzed Cowbirds are now becoming regular in Cameron in addition to New Orleans. Two Orchard Orioles wintered in uptown New Orleans; one ad. male, a repeat from last year (?), was at the Audubon Zoo; another made the rounds of several hummingbird feeders over a 20-block area from Jan. 22 into mid-April (DPM), loosely associated with a flock of four N. Orioles, including one ♀ "Bullock's." One morning I looked out my window and saw together in the feeder-tree a Buff-bellied Hummingbird, a Black-chinned, an Orchard, a "Bullock's," and a male and female "Baltimore," with a cardinal, a goldfinch, and four siskins thrown in for good measure. Reports of N. Orioles were generally above average for Louisiana, except in the lower delta, their traditional stronghold. A female wintered from Dec. 20 on to the north in Clark, Ark., visiting a feeder (G & EG).

Most observers felt it a below-average year for Purple Finches; in some areas they were scarce. On the other hand, House Finches exploded again, as they did in 1985-1986. In the Region's northeast, they were everywhere, but three made it to Mobile Feb. 13 (GDJ, DGJ). In Mississippi, there were 5 first county records. Outliers were reported from 6 Arkansas counties. And three showed up in Tangipahoa, La., Jan. 30 (CHu) and were seen to the end of the period by many observers. This is about the 5th record of **House Finch** for Louisiana. A flock of six to seven Red Crossbills was found in the only available pine stand on the Fayetteville, Ark., CBC Dec. 19 (-21) (NB, JN, MML, DSc). Pine Siskins were everywhere, and most observers characterized this as the best, or as good as the best, year ever. An estimated 525 were on Dauphin I., Ala., Feb. 14 (GDJ, DGJ), an incredible number for the coast. It was also an excellent year for Am. Goldfinches, but numbers were not quite so abnormal. Few Evening Grosbeaks were reported; mid-Tennessee reported "fairly good" numbers (*vide* SJS) but otherwise Alabama had eight Dec. 15 in *Jefferson* (B

& MS), Mississippi had small numbers at 3 feeders mid-February in Starkville (*vide* TSc), and Louisiana had two birds during the Tunica Hills CBC Jan. 3 (RBH). A ♀ **Common Redpoll**, reported from *Acadia*, La., Jan. 20 (MaF) would furnish, if accepted by the L.O.S.B.R.C., the state's first record.

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Prairie Provinces Region

We regret that at press time, we had not received the Prairie Provinces Regional Report.

NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

David O. Lambeth

Temperatures averaged 5–10 degrees above normal in November and December. This, coupled with the absence of even a short period of unseasonably cold weather, meant exceptionally mild conditions for early winter. By mid-January, however, the weather had returned to normal, or worse! Several record low temperatures were set in South Dakota, where some reporting stations had the dubious distinction of providing the daily low temperature for the nation. Except for isolated areas in the extreme eastern part of the Region, conditions were much drier than normal, and the very light snowpack will not adequately replenish the Region's potholes.

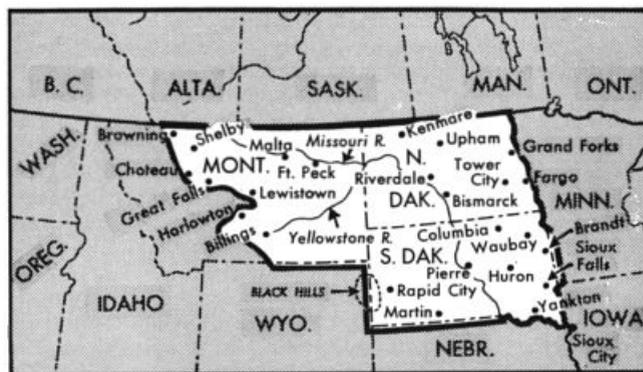
Many of the observations described below were clearly later and/or farther north than expected in a normal season. Many additional unusual observations will be found in the summaries of the Christmas Bird Counts. Most of the exceptional records were for birds associated with open water, which persisted a few weeks later than usual. Several species of waterfowl unusual in the winter in this Region lingered in significant numbers until about December 10, and this together with significant migration into South Dakota and even into northern Montana during the last week of February made this winter a short one. Collectively, the records for stragglers were a rather mixed lot representing unusually late migrants, individuals incapable of continuing migration but surviving longer than usual, and birds attempting to overwinter.

ABBREVIATIONS — Place names in italics are counties.

GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL — Two W. Grebes stayed on L. Sakakawea, N.D., through Dec. 20 (RM). Pied-billed Grebes wintered in Yankton, S.D. (WH), and perhaps also at Yellowtail Afterbay on the Big Horn River in Montana, where they were seen Feb. 15 (LM). Single Double-crested Cormorants at Ft. Peck, Mont., Dec. 11 and Sand Lake N.W.R., S.D., Dec. 12 were very late. In North Dakota, a Great Blue Heron remained at Long Lake N.W.R. until Dec. 7, when it was found dead, and one farther north at Salyer N.W.R. Jan. 4 (AV) was the latest ever for the state.

A flock of over 100 Snow Geese flew over the N. Unit of Theodore Roosevelt N.P. Dec. 8 (SS); a few remained in North Dakota into the CBC period. In South Dakota, nine were at Sand Lake N.W.R. Jan. 4 (WS). The 750 Canada Geese that wintered at Ft. Peck were the most ever there (CC). Late freezeup resulted in both Canada Geese and Mallards in large numbers lingering past the CBC period at many locations away from the Missouri R., where both species normally winter in the thousands at favored locations. Two hundred Mallards wintered at Upper Souris N.W.R., N.D., where they used a small patch of open water in the Souris R. for resting and a nearby sunflower field for feeding (GM). A December count of 2000+ Gadwalls was made in Yankton, S.D. (WH), and 50 Gadwalls and 100 Am. Wigeon wintered on Canyon Lake in Pennington, S.D. (NW).

The number of species of waterfowl recorded during the period in each state was 18 in Montana and North Dakota and 23 in South Dakota. The more unusual observations in South Dakota included three Greater Scaup in Yankton Jan. 11 (WH), an Oldsquaw on the Missouri R. in Charles Mix Jan. 9 (BH), and a ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye on Canyon Lake in Pennington for the 10th consecutive winter (NW). A *Harlequin Duck* and a White-winged Scoter were present at L. Audubon Dec. 6–20 (RM, GB), setting latest-ever dates for North Dakota. A ♀ Greater Scaup at the same location Dec. 13 was also a latest ever. In Montana, there were two Oldsquaws and two Barrow's Gold-



eyes (among 650 Com. Goldeneyes) at Yellowtail Feb. 15 (LM); and a ♂ Red-breasted Merganser was among the 85 Com. Mergansers that wintered at Ft. Peck, the Red-breasted being the first Carlson had seen there past October.

RAPTORS — In this Region, the numbers of wintering raptors are greatest in the south and west and diminish to almost nothing in the northeast. Bald Eagle sightings across North Dakota, away from the Missouri R. where they winter, continued through December, indicating a later than usual departure from n. areas. They also wintered in Brown, Perkins, Pennington, and Custer, S.D., and at the Bowdoin and Medicine Lake refuges in Montana. A N. Harrier in Grand Forks, N.D., Dec. 24 was very late for that area. Harriers wintered at Bowdoin, and spring migrants were seen Feb. 19 at Tewaukon (HH) and Feb. 27 at Audubon N.W.R. One Sharp-shinned Hawk and one Cooper's Hawk were present in Hettinger, N.D., Jan. 19 & 31, respectively (D & CG). A Sharp-shinned was seen in Bismarck Feb. 7 (RH). There were about 10 observations of N. Goshawk in the Region, which may be near a low in its cyclical occurrence.

One of two Rough-legged Hawks in Grand Forks in December stayed until Jan. 11 (EF); mid-winter records for Buteos in the Red River Valley are very rare. Impressive numbers of raptors were present in the w. Dakotas; perhaps the best indication was the Medora CBC in North Dakota, where 12 Red-tailed and 12 Rough-legged hawks and 23 Golden Eagles were tallied, each setting a new all-time high for the state CBCs. On Dec. 8 in a 20-mile stretch between Melstone and Vananda, Malone saw 38 Rough-leggeds, three N. Harriers, and a Ferruginous Hawk. Three Golden Eagles wintered at Ft. Peck, where they preyed on the 8000 Mallards that wintered there. Relatively few Am. Kestrels or Prairie Falcons were reported, although one of the latter used a condominium window ledge at Grand Forks for the 6th consecutive winter before departing Feb. 27. Merlins were reported from 18 different locations across the Region. An imm. Peregrine Falcon was at Long Lake N.W.R. Dec. 14 (DNS); the only other report was of one on a CBC. Reports of Gyrfalcon included a male at Shadehill Res., Perkins, S.D., Feb. 7 (D & CG); a probable ad. female at Lostwood N.W.R., N.D., Dec. 5 (RKM); one at Ft. Peck Jan. 1 (CC); and two, one of which was described as a beautiful slate gray above and very light below, at Benton L. Mar. 3 (DL).

GROUSE THROUGH OWLS — Nothing unusual was reported for the gallinaceous species other than sightings of presumably escaped N. Bobwhite at Fargo (fide MB); none of the many introduction attempts over the years has succeeded in North Dakota. Two Am. Coots at Upper Souris Dec. 12 were the latest ever for North Dakota (GB), and the 60 that wintered at Ft. Peck were the most in 20 years. Coots wintered in Yankton, where there was one count of 1300+ in December. A Vir-



Probable Thayer's Gull in first-winter plumage at Fort Peck, Mont., December 1987. Photo/Charles Carlson.

ginia Rail was found at a warm spring near Bowdoin Dec. 27 (J & KS). Killdeer were seen in South Dakota in Yankton Dec. 24 and Pennington Jan. 21, and in Montana near Nelson Res. Dec. 26 and Giant Springs near Great Falls Feb. 16 (LM). In January, Com. Snipe were found in Montana on the Milk River, near Bowdoin, and at Ft. Peck.

A medium-sized gull at Bowdoin N.W.R., Mont., Dec. 12 had the general characteristics of an imm. Bonaparte's except for a light-colored bill and light legs and feet. It was tentatively identified as a Com. Black-headed Gull (DP). Three immature and one ad. Thayer's Gull, and one first-year, one 2nd-year, and one ad. Glaucous Gull were all present at Garrison Dam most of December. A suspected Herring x Glaucous hybrid was present for the 2nd consecutive year (fide GB). The last Herring Gull left Ft. Peck Jan. 16, and the first returnees appeared Feb. 28. A first-year Thayer's photographed by Carlson was present at Ft. Peck the last half of December.

The only Mourning Dove reported after the CBC period was one Jan. 22 at Devils Lake, N.D. (DAL). Eastern Screech-Owls were calling in January and February at Hettinger and beginning in February in Ward, N.D. A Barred Owl was found Jan. 14 in Oakwood Lake S.P., Brookings, S.D. (DR, CS). An arctic Great Horned Owl again wintered in a Grand Forks cemetery; another was killed when it struck a guy wire in Pembina, N.D. Snowy Owls were reported in good numbers from North Dakota and Montana, especially at the beginning of December, when up to six per outing were being seen near Minot and a minimum of 13 were on Medicine Lake N.W.R. (SM). Numbers decreased thereafter as they presumably moved farther south. One Long-eared Owl was reported Jan. 16 in Fall River, S.D. (RP). Four Short-eared Owls were in Custer, S.D., Feb. 11 (MM). The total for North Dakota was approximately 20, but nine of these wintered, hunting mainly in one weedy square mile near Grand Forks (EF). Two Short-eareds were at Benton L. Jan. 4 (DL). A Northern Saw-whet Owl was photographed Feb. 15 in Edmunds, S.D. (JW).

KINGFISHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — A Belted Kingfisher in Grand Forks Dec. 15 was extremely late (P & RB), but the species was reported from 5 counties in South Dakota, where there have been a number of records for early winter. A Red-headed Woodpecker was found regularly in the Turtle Mts. through Feb. 20 and probably wintered (RM, DK); one

was in Day, S.D., Feb. 14 (CK). A half-dozen Red-bellied Woodpeckers frequented feeders in Fargo (MSM et al.), and they were reported from Roberts, Deuel, and Brookings, all counties on the e. edge of South Dakota. However, the report of one in Perkins, S.D. (D & CG), was very unusual considering the westerly location. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Yankton, S.D., Dec. 16 (WH) was extremely late. Northern Flickers wintered in good numbers; two males, one a red-shafted and the other a yellow-shafted, came to a birdbath in Harlem, Mont. (D & DH). Pileated Woodpeckers were present at Sully's Hill (IN), the current w. limit of its range in North Dakota, and at Sodak Park in Roberts, S.D. (BH). They were reported by 7 different observers in Fargo, where several are present each winter.

Flocks of several hundred Horned Larks were found throughout the winter in c. North Dakota. They were singing by Feb. 13, and pairs were generally distributed soon thereafter, which is the usual timing. In Montana, a Blue Jay visited a Lewistown feeder in January (fide LM), and up to nine visited a feeder in Malta (NH). There were no Clark's Nutcrackers in the Black Hills this winter (following the irruption there last year), but the number in Lewistown was considered unusual (LM). A Com. Raven was found Dec. 13 in the Turtle Mts. (DK). Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered widely and in exceptional numbers, the best count being of 20 in the Denbigh Experimental Forest Jan. 9. Brown Creepers wintered in both Dakotas.

A Marsh Wren was found Feb. 12 in Fall River, S.D. (RP), and three were at a spring near Bowdoin N.W.R. Dec. 27 (J & KS). An Am. Dipper was at Lewistown Jan. 23 (LM). Golden-crowned Kinglets were last reported Jan. 30 in North Dakota although a few usually winter. Fitting for the kind of winter experienced in South Dakota early in the season, four E. Bluebirds were in Charles Mix Dec. 27, eight in Gregory Dec. 30, and six in Yankton Feb. 8 (WH, TS). Mountain Bluebirds in South Dakota in Jackson Feb. 13 (KG), Custer Feb. 27 (MP), and Perkins Feb. 28 (D & CG) were almost certainly spring migrants. A Townsend's Solitaire was rather far east in Day, S.D., in December (DRS), and several wintered at Ft. Peck, where they fed on juniper berries. American Robins wintered in most areas with some daily counts in North Dakota reaching 25-50 and were considered abundant at Bowdoin, where Russian Olives provided the food source.

A N. Mockingbird was present Dec. 22-26 along the Red R. in the Fargo area (LF). A Brown Thrasher successfully wintered in Fargo (LF, KC), and there were sightings in South Dakota on Jan. 1 in Faulk (MM) and Jan. 10 in Day. Numbers of Bohemian Waxwings increased following the CBC period with flocks exceeding 500 birds reported. In Harlem, Mont., as many as 150 at a time tried to use a birdbath. Flock sizes for Cedar Waxwings in North Dakota exceeded 100 in some areas. Two N. Shrikes were mobbing a Golden Eagle Dec. 4 in the N. Unit of Theodore Roosevelt N.P. (SS). An Ovenbird in apparently good condition was found Dec. 4 in Grand Forks, the morning after 2 inches of snow and a temperature of 11°F (DOL). This may have been only the 2nd North Dakota record for a warbler in the winter season.

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES — American Tree Sparrows were reported for only a few locations, perhaps surprising given the nature of the early winter. However, the 20+ at Ft. Peck was more than usual. A Field Sparrow at Fargo Dec. 23-Jan. 24 (AL) furnished a first winter record for North Dakota. A Song Sparrow wintered in Fargo (JK), and a White-throated Sparrow was at the same feeder as the Field Sparrow Dec. 22-Jan. 9. A White-crowned Sparrow was at Ft. Peck Jan. 30 (CC), and a Harris' Sparrow was seen Feb. 21 at Dunseith, N.D. (DK). A "Gray-headed" Junco (*J. h. caniceps*) banded in Pennington Feb. 24 (NW) may have provided South Dakota's 2nd record for this subspecies. Snow Buntings were generally scarce although there was the occasional report of a flock of several hundred birds.

Three W. Meadowlarks were present in North Dakota as late as Dec. 22. Although there are 50 CBC records in North Dakota for this species, none has been known to overwinter.

Several were in a field near Ft. Peck during all of December but not after the arrival of cold weather in January. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was in Ward, N.D., through Jan. 9 (GB), and another was at Sand Lake N.W.R., S.D., Jan. 12 (RW). Rusty Blackbirds were fewer than normal. There were three Brewer's Blackbirds in Ward Jan. 9 and one at Sand Lake N.W.R. Jan. 10 (GB, RM). A ♀ Brown-headed Cowbird was seen Jan. 9 at Upper Souris (GB, RM), where both a male and a female had been seen earlier on the CBC. Unusually large flocks (for winter) of 20 Com. Grackles were seen Jan. 18 in Grand Forks and Feb. 29 near Jamestown.

A few Pine Grosbeaks were seen, but only in the n. third of North Dakota. Three House Finches were in Lewistown Dec. 13-Jan. 4, where they are unusual in winter. Red Crossbills were found mainly in c. North Dakota with the number at Denbigh exceeding 100 Jan. 17; they appeared to be distributed more widely in South Dakota, and 45 were counted at Lewistown, Mont., Dec. 13. White-winged Crossbills were widely present in North Dakota in flocks of up to 60. In South Dakota, 20 were in Deuel and 60 in Codington, both on Dec. 29 (BH). Common Redpolls were scarce to absent in North Dakota during the CBC period but arrived in numbers (some flocks exceeded 500) in both North Dakota and Montana during the

colder weather of mid-January. A few Hoary Redpolls were present in both Dakotas. Pine Siskins increased in numbers as the season progressed; approximately 1000 were in 2 flocks in Ward, N.D., Jan. 23. They became territorial and began pairing in mid-February. The most Am. Goldfinches in several years wintered in the Minot area, where flocks of up to 100 were seen. The highest count for Evening Grosbeaks was of 56 in the Turtle Mts. Feb. 20.

AREA EDITORS (boldface) AND CITED OBSERVERS.
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SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Frances Williams

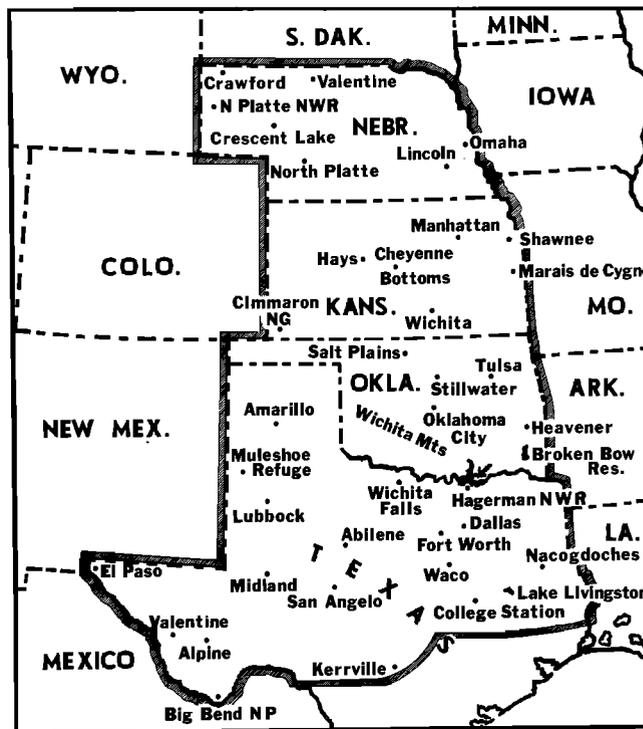
Plains weather is always highly variable, but this winter was outstanding—ice storms, record snowfalls, record low temperatures—all alternating with warm springlike days. Observers in Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma reported an average winter for birds, with a few unusual water birds providing the only excitement. In Texas, especially southwest Texas, it was a different story. The season produced three new species for the state (pending acceptance by the Bird Records Committee) plus 11 species on the state "Review List" of rare birds.

The first time I edited this report, I covered the 1965 breeding season. Even in the smaller format in which *Audubon Field Notes* was then published, my report took only four columns and just 41 observers were cited. The first draft of this current report included the names of 125 observers. (Only John G. Newell of Oklahoma City was on both lists.) The task has become too large and too complex, and after this issue I shall turn it over to younger, computer-equipped editors.

Henceforth, all of Texas will be in one Region, and all Texas records are to be sent to Greg Lasley, present South Texas co-editor, whose address is elsewhere in this issue. The Southern Great Plains Region will include Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and records from those states should be sent to Joseph A. Grzybowski, 1701 Lenox, Norman, OK 73069.

ABBREVIATIONS — B.B.N.P. = Big Bend Nat'l Park, Tex.; B.R.C. = Bird Records Committee; Buffalo L. = Buffalo Lake Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Randall, Tex.; G.M.N.P. = Guadalupe Mts. Nat'l Park, Tex.; Hagerman = Hagerman Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Grayson, Tex.; Lost Maples = Lost Maples State Natural Area, Bandera, Tex.; T.P.R.F. = Texas photorecord file at Texas A & M. Place names in *italics> are counties.*

LOONS THROUGH STORKS — Red-throated Loons remained at Balmorhea L., Reeves, Tex., Feb. 13-29+ (m.ob.) and



at L. Texoma Jan. 27-Feb. 29+ (KH). Details of a sighting of a Pacific Loon at Waco, Tex., Dec. 15 have been submitted to the Texas B.R.C. (JM). The Pacific Loon discovered at Oklahoma City in November remained until Dec. 12 (JGN, m.ob.). In Oklahoma, Com. Loons did not linger past early January. A Least Grebe visited the Kerrville, Tex., sewage pond Jan. 1-3 (TG, E & KM). Two late Pied-billed Grebes were found in Lancaster, Neb., Jan. 1 (TB). Two Horned Grebes at Ft. Hancock Res., Hudspeth, Tex., Feb. 24 were rather far west (BZ). The



Red-throated Loon at Lake Balmorhea, Texas, Feb. 16, 1988. Photo/Alan Wormington.

only Red-necked Grebe reported was at White River L., Crosby, Tex., Jan. 23 (KH). In Lincoln, Neb., a W. Grebe Feb. 21 provided the first record for that month (RCR, DJR). Twelve W. Grebes wintered on L. Buchanan, Llano, Tex., and at least 18 spent the season at Balmorhea L. One visited Midland Dec. 31-Jan. 7. A Clark's Grebe could be found at Balmorhea L. Dec. 16-Feb. 29+ (m.ob.), and one was observed at El Paso Feb. 27 (JSp).

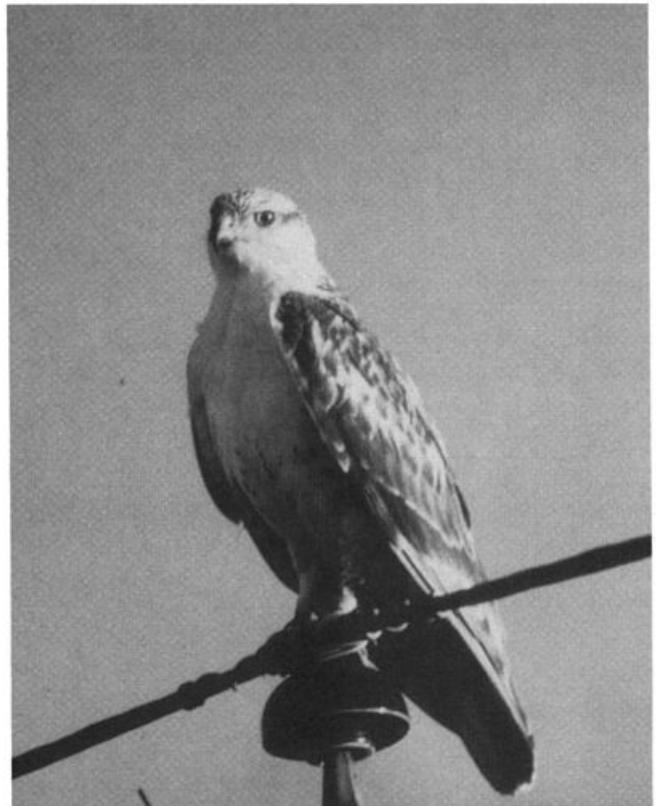
American White Pelicans were north of their usual winter range. In Kansas, two were in Sedgwick Feb. 28, and one visited Wyandotte Jan. 10; in Oklahoma, four wintered in Mayes, and two were observed in Wagoner Jan. 21. In Washington, Okla., 20 Double-crested Cormorants provided an unusual winter record Jan. 2 (P & SD). At least 100 congregated in Howard, Tex., Dec. 5, and 12 at Ft. Hancock Feb. 24 constituted an exceptional number there. An Olivaceous Cormorant provided a 2nd record at Balmorhea L. Feb. 25 (TL). Unusual winter sightings of this species occurred in Walker, Tex., Dec. 22 (RM) and Ft. Hancock Feb. 24 (BZ). A ♀ Anhinga in Van Zandt, Tex., Feb. 25 provided the first winter record there (RK). As many as 90 Great Blue Herons wintered along the Arkansas R. at Tulsa. Wintering Great Egrets included two at Ft. Hancock (BZ), one at Balmorhea L. (m.ob.), and one in Leon, Tex. (FMW). Four White-faced Ibises overwintered in Tarrant, Tex., and 20 spent the season at Midland. A Wood Stork visited Athens, Tex., Dec. 6 (MMA).

WATERFOWL, RAPTORS — Tundra Swans graced Wagoner, Okla., Jan. 21 and Feb. 6 (JD); Tarrant Dec. 1 (LMu, SC); McLennan, Tex., Dec. 16 (FDB); and Brazos, Tex., Jan. 11 (SS, ph. to T.P.R.F.). Ross' Geese were seen at Ft. Hancock Jan. 1-7 (PL, BZ), Balmorhea L. Feb. 25 (TL), Hagerman Jan. 13 (KH), and Wagoner Feb. 6 (JMcM, JNo). A Brant, first reported in the fall, remained at Hagerman to Feb. 19 (m.ob.). An Am. Black Duck was identified in Wyandotte, Kans., Jan. 15 (LM), and three visited Ft. Gibson N.W.R., Okla., Dec. 27 (JHa). Six Cinnamon Teal drakes were found in Kingman, Kans., Feb. 28. A Eurasian Wigeon in Lancaster, Neb., Feb. 26-29 was well described (KE, BP). A Redhead in Kingman Jan. 1 was unusual for the season. Greater Scaup were reported at Collinsville, Okla., Jan. 14-19 (JHo, m.ob.); Angelina, Tex., Dec. 12-Feb. 29 (LD, CM); and Kerrville Dec. 1-13 (E & KM). An unprecedented six Oldsquaws were seen in Nebraska Jan. 10—two in Lincoln and four in Keith (RCR, DJR). This species was also found in Osage, Kans., Jan. 20 (LM); Custer, Okla., Feb. 4-6 (BO, JB), and Oklahoma City Feb. 24 (J & TW). An Oldsquaw was shot by a duck hunter in Parker, Tex., Dec. 22. A White-winged Scoter rested on L. Ogallala, Keith, Neb., Dec. 12-14. Barrow's Goldeneyes were notable on L. Ogallala Jan. 1-10

(RCR, DJR) and in Osage, Kans., Jan. 14 (LM, MC). All 3 species of mergansers were common throughout the Region. Some large concentrations included 200 Hooded Mergansers in Crosby, Tex., Dec. 29; about 4000 Com. Mergansers on the warm waters of a power plant reservoir in Lincoln, Neb., Jan. 10; and 40 Red-breasted Mergansers at Red Bluff L., Loving, Tex., Feb. 14. In G.M.N.P., Com. Mergansers wintered on a small stock pond, providing a new park record (OVO).

Turkey Vultures made exceptional winter appearances in Comanche, Okla., Jan. 23 & 25, with 10 present on the latter date (SO, WB). Ospreys were sighted in Washington, Okla., Feb. 25 (MD); Balmorhea L., Jan. 1 (PL, SEF); Llano, Tex., Jan. 28 (E & KM); Tarrant Jan. 10-Feb. 15 (m.ob.); and Walker, Tex., Dec. 22 (SL, DF). A Black-shouldered Kite was discovered in Real, Tex., Feb. 18 (SW, MB). Bald Eagles were numerous at all traditional wintering sites. At least 75 concentrated at Sutherland Res., Lincoln, Neb., Feb. 21. An observer in n.e. Oklahoma counted 129 Bald Eagles in 5 counties Jan. 16 (PWW). In the Texas Panhandle, observers on a raptor count Jan. 30 found nine Bald Eagles at prairie dog towns.

A Com. Black-Hawk was reported in Kimble, Tex., Feb. 16 (DJ). Red-shouldered Hawks were seen repeatedly in Comanche, Okla., Jan. 10-Feb. 28. A White-tailed Hawk wandered to Kerr Dec. 3, providing one of the few records of this Buteo away from the Texas coastal plain (JMa). A Zone-tailed Hawk soaring with Turkey Vultures above a roost in Kerr Feb. 21 provided a first winter record there (JMa). A Ferruginous Hawk in Nowata, Okla., was photographed Jan. 17 (MG). Two Ferruginous Hawks remained near Tulsa Dec. 1-Feb. 9. A Golden Eagle in Douglas, Neb., Feb. 26 was east of the usual range (AG, SB). Crested Caracaras were located in Comal, Tex., Dec. 17 and Jan. 14 and in Hood, Tex., Feb. 19-20. Merlins were reported at 10 localities. Peregrine Falcons provided unusual winter records in Kerr Jan. 1 (TG) and Midland Dec. 12 (DK) and Jan. 10 (RMS). In n.e. Oklahoma, Prairie Falcons were recorded at Tulsa Jan. 9 & 31 and Washington Feb. 21.



Ferruginous Hawk notably far east in Nowata County, Okla., Jan. 17, 1988. Photo/Mike Gray.

GROUSE THROUGH GULLS — Lesser Prairie-Chickens that appeared at Muleshoe N.W.R., Tex., Jan. 22 provided the first record there since 1980. The Wild Turkey population is burgeoning. In Kearney, Neb., 100 were counted Jan. 16 (BP, LP), and in Crosby, Tex., 100 came to a ranch yard Dec. 29 (RE). Gambel's Quail were seen just west of G.M.N.P. Dec. 18 (BW). Virginia Rails wintered at Midland, and one was seen at Lubbock Jan. 31 (WO, GJ). Twenty Sandhill Cranes were east of their usual winter range in Douglas, Neb., Feb. 22. The juv. Whooping Crane near Amarillo noted in the fall report remained in the area until Christmas Day, in spite of deep snow, low temperatures, and frozen playas. There was concern over its ability to forage successfully and maintain its health and a fear that coyotes might get it. No word of its whereabouts came until Jan. 14, when a rancher in Kent, Tex., reported a Whooper with colored bands on its legs. However, it could not subsequently be located.

At Buffalo L., a Lesser Golden-Plover lingered until the late date of Dec. 5 (KS). Snowy Plovers were sighted in Howard, Tex., Dec. 20 (DK); Midland Jan. 9 (RMS); and El Paso Dec. 19 (JSp). In Comal, Tex., 38 Mountain Plovers were counted Dec. 17 (TG). Spotted Sandpipers provided unusual winter records at Lubbock Jan. 31 (WO, GJ) and Ft. Hancock throughout the period (m.ob.). A late Sanderling was discovered at Waco, Tex., Dec. 16 (FDB). An Am. Woodcock at Kerrville Dec. 8 provided an unusual record for the Texas hill country (TG).

A tattered ad. Laughing Gull with damage to the outer primaries was found at L. Texoma Jan. 2 (GEW). A Mew Gull was discovered at Ft. Hancock, Tex., Jan. 1 (PL) and photographed Feb. 13 (LB) to substantiate this new Texas record. A California Gull was also seen at Ft. Hancock Jan. 1 (PL, SEF). Undocumented reports of Thayer's Gulls came from Coffey, Kans., Jan. 21 (MMcH, BF) and Cherokee, Okla., Jan. 9 (MM). A Thayer's Gull at Oklahoma City Oct. 2–Dec. 7 was documented by photograph (MO). For the 5th consecutive year, a Lesser Black-backed Gull visited Oklahoma City area lakes. This year's bird,



First-winter Thayer's Gull at Oklahoma City, Okla., Nov. 9, 1987. The pale primaries with whitish edges are prominent here. Photo/Mitchell Oliphant.

a full adult, remained Jan. 15–Feb. 27 (m.ob.). Glaucous Gulls were observed at Osage, Kans., Jan. 20 (LM); Lincoln, Neb., Dec. 13 (RCR, DJR); Cherokee, Okla., Jan. 9 (MM); Tulsa Jan. 26 (EL); and Oklahoma City Jan. 15–Feb. 29+ (JGN). Details of a sighting of a Great Black-backed Gull in Lincoln, Neb., Feb. 21 have been submitted to the Nebraska B.R.C. If accepted, it will provide the first documented record for the state (RCR, DJR).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — An Inca Dove at Kearney, Neb., Oct. 25–Feb. 29 provided a first state record (EP, ph. MBr). Another wandering Inca was observed at Wichita several times during the season (DSK). A ♂ Ruddy Ground-Dove delighted visitors to B.B.N.P. Dec. 12–Feb. 29+ (m.ob.).



Ruddy Ground-Dove in Big Bend National Park, Texas, Feb. 17, 1988. As seen here, this species has a longer tail than Common Ground-Dove, and lacks the obvious dark scaling on the chest. Photo/Alan Wormington.

Monk Parakeets resided in Tulsa and Llano. A Greater Roadrunner was found in Barber, Kans., Feb. 28. Only two Snowy Owls reached the Region: one at Melvern Res., Osage, in early January and one at Branched Oak L., Lancaster, Neb., Jan. 1–3. A Spotted Owl was discovered in the Davis Mts., Jeff Davis, Tex., Feb. 29 (DSp, fide PE). A Long-eared Owl in Dallas Mar. 1, the first there in 10 years, was mobbed by both Blue Jays and birders. Congregations of Long-eared Owls included nine in Douglas, Neb., Jan. 29 (DB); five in Ottawa, Okla., Jan. 23 (PWW); and 15 in Crosby, Tex., Jan. 3 (KHi). A lone bird called in G.M.N.P. Jan. 2 (OVO). Short-eared Owls were found in only 3 localities: 12 in Tulsa Dec. 1–Feb. 29; 13 in Washington, Okla., Jan. 9; and eight in Midland Feb. 7–29. A flock of White-throated Swifts comprising about 20 birds was observed Dec. 25 & 28 in the n. part of Brewster, Tex., a previously-unknown wintering site for this species (FPB).

A Violet-crowned Hummingbird photographed at El Paso Dec. 8 provided a new Texas record. It remained at a feeder Dec. 2–12 (EMcC, BZ, m.ob.). As many as three Anna's Hummingbirds fed at the same feeder throughout the period. A hummingbird (sp.?) lingered at Lubbock to Jan. 2 (GJu). The Ringed Kingfisher first reported at Kerrville Nov. 30 was last seen Jan. 1 (TG, m.ob.). A Green Kingfisher visited the Kerrville sewage ponds—a strange habitat for this lover of clear-running streams—Dec. 5 (SW, TG).

It was the winter of **Lewis' Woodpeckers**. Single birds were located in *Comanche*, Okla., Jan. 3 & 21 (SO); Ft. Worth Jan. 17–Feb. 27 (KK, m.ob.); and *Alpine*, Tex., Dec. 17 (JS). At *Kerrville*, one was discovered Dec. 1 (TG, E & KM), then a 2nd bird was found Dec. 9 (KB, TG). The first bird remained at least until Feb. 24, but the 2nd was not seen after Jan. 3. The *Acorn Woodpecker* that arrived in *Midland* in November remained until mid-February. *Red-bellied Woodpeckers* were out of range in *Kendall*, Tex., Feb. 6 (SW) and *Lubbock* Dec. 9–17 (DS). *Red-naped Sapsuckers* were located in the *Davis Mts.*, Jan. 24 (ML); *Palo Duro Canyon S.P.*, Tex., Dec. 9 (KS); *Midland* Dec. 22–Jan. 2 (m.ob.); and *Lost Maples* Dec. 13 (DM, *vide* JMa). A *Ladder-backed Woodpecker* visited *Comanche* Dec. 11 (JMcG).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS — A *Least Flycatcher* and a *Dusky Flycatcher* were reported in *B.B.N.P.* Feb. 17 (AW). In *Oklahoma*, *E. Phoebes* were in *Cherokee* Dec. 16 (JMcM) and *Sand Springs* Feb. 26 (M & AB). A *Say's Phoebe* visited *Comal*, Tex., Jan. 14. *Scissor-tailed Flycatchers* remained until Dec. 8 in *Kerr* and Dec. 13 in *Bell*, Tex. *Horned Larks* are rare in the e. Texas piney woods and appear in multiples only during and after ice storms. Three were seen near *Nacogdoches* Jan. 9 and five on Jan. 10 (DW). A *N. Rough-winged Swallow* arrived in *Van Zandt* on the early date of Feb. 28, while two *Barn Swallows* at *Kerrville* Dec. 9 were very late. A *Blue Jay* at *Balmorea* L. Jan. 1 provided one of the few records there (PL). A *Green Jay* visited feeders in *College Station* Jan. 5–mid-February (CB, ph. to T.P.R.F.). Nearly 1000 *Pinyon Jays* foraged near *Alpine*, Tex., in early January, and 250 remained until Feb. 8 (JS, ML). In *Sioux*, Neb., 14 *Clark's Nutcrackers* were counted Feb. 27 (RCR, DJR). A *Clark's Nutcracker* in *G.M.N.P.* Nov. 27 was the first there since 1984 (RH, PM, SB). In *Potter*, Tex., a wandering *Com. Raven* was seen Jan. 16 (PA).

A *Carolina Chickadee* provided a first record at *Lubbock* Nov. 16–27 (DS, WO). At *El Paso*, the fall *Mountain Chickadee* invasion carried over into the winter. "Black-crested" *Titmice* were again found in *G.M.N.P.*, where *Plain Titmouse* is the expected species (ML, BWi). In *Nebraska*, *Red-breasted Nuthatches* were reported only once, at *Lincoln*, Jan. 24. The species was seen at 3 localities in *Oklahoma* and 5 in *Texas*. Unusual in w. *Texas*, *White-breasted Nuthatches* were recorded at *El Paso* all winter, at *Lubbock* Dec. 10 & 20, and at *Amarillo* Dec. 27. A *Rock Wren* was discovered in *Grimes*, Tex., Jan. 2 (JH, RT), and the *Rock Wren* that arrived at *L. Tawakoni* in the fall remained until Feb. 20 (RK). A *Rock Wren* in *Cherokee*, Okla., Jan. 18 was also frequenting a dam (JHa). *Winter Wrens* were discovered at *Bellevue*, Neb., Jan. 17; *Nowata*, Okla., Jan. 3, *Washington*, Okla., Jan. 5; *Crosby*, Tex., Dec. 29; *Kerrville* Dec. 22; and *G.M.N.P.* Dec. 17 & 21. An unusual winter record was provided by a *Marsh Wren* in *Keith*, Neb., Jan. 9. Two **American Dippers** were found in *G.M.N.P.* Dec. 2 (ML, OVO), and one was still present Jan. 17 (VD). *Bluebirds* and *solitaires* were scarce everywhere. *Birders* in *B.B.N.P.* were surprised to see *E. Bluebirds* instead of the expected *Mountain* and *Western bluebirds*. A *Townsend's Solitaire* was seen in *Keith* Feb. 27 (BP, LP). A **Varied Thrush** frequented a *Midland*, Tex., *birdbath* Jan. 8–Feb. 17, attracting *birders* from far and near (JWe, m.o.b.).

Brown Thrashers wintered in larger numbers than usual at *Bartlesville*, Okla., and one hardy individual was seen in *Polk*, Neb., Feb. 7. *Long-billed Thrashers* were a little north of their usual range in *Kerr* Dec. 1–Feb. 29 and *Kimble* Jan. 12–20. *Curve-billed Thrashers* were notable in *Washita*, Okla., Dec. 15–Feb. 29 and *Beckham*, Okla., Feb. 1–18 (*vide* IB). In *Nebraska*, *N. Shrikes* were found at 4 localities, and in the *Texas Panhandle* they were seen at 3 places. A *Solitary Vireo* at *Arlington*, Tex., Feb. 3 was unusual for the season, as were an *Orange-crowned Warbler* at *Ft. Gibson*, Okla., Jan. 4 and a *N. Parula* in *Angelina*, Tex., Dec. 7. *Pine Warblers* were widely dispersed and were noted feeding on everything from suet to crackers. One in *Rogers*, Okla., Feb. 28 provided a first county

record (DV), and one at *Lost Maples* Dec. 13 furnished a first park record (DM). Others were seen at *Lubbock*, *Arlington*, *Ft. Worth*, *Hurst*, and *Van Zandt*, Tex. A *Wilson's Warbler* delighted *birders* in *Walker*, Tex., Dec. 22 (DW).

CARDINAL THROUGH FINCHES — In *Washington*, Okla., *Melinda Droege* feeds about 30 *N. Cardinals* every winter. On Jan. 6, an all-time high of 59 was counted, and the next day 13 inches of snow fell, also an all-time high. During a severe ice storm in n.e. *Texas* Jan. 6, a *Black-headed Grosbeak* came to a feeder in *Upshur* (WMcN). A *Dickcissel* at a feeding station in *Hunt*, Tex., Feb. 21–27 was mildly surprising (JN), but one at a *Bellevue*, Neb., feeder Jan. 15–Feb. 29 was indeed startling (R & VH). The Jan. 6 storm brought lone *Am. Tree Sparrows* to *Ft. Worth* and *Sherman*, Tex., and seven were found near *Burkburnett*, Tex., Feb. 13. In s.w. *Oklahoma*, *Lark Buntings* were numerous, with flocks of up to 450 birds noted in *Comanche* and *Cotton* and smaller groups at *Washita N.W.R.* and *Elk City*. The number of *Lark Buntings* in the *Texas Panhandle* and southward was staggering. On a swing through *Randall*, *Armstrong*, *Briscoe*, and *Swisher* Jan. 30, 7500 were counted. All-time high counts were tallied on *CBCs* as far south as *San Angelo*. Small flocks were encountered as far east as *Wichita*, *Hood*, and *Johnson*, Tex.

A *Grasshopper Sparrow* was seen in *Ft. Worth* Jan. 17. *Le Conte's Sparrows* lurked in *Wagoner*, Okla., Dec. 5 (JMcM), *Hagerman* Jan. 2 (GEW); and *Dinosaur Valley S.P.*, Tex., Feb. 20 (CH). In *Ft. Worth* and *Nacogdoches*, flocks of *Fox Sparrows* frequented feeding stations during the ice storm of early January and quickly slipped back into the woods when the ice was gone. Unusual winter records were provided by *Lincoln's Sparrows* in *Lincoln*, Neb., Jan. 10 (RCR, DJR) and *Douglas*, Neb., Jan. 23 (TB). *Swamp Sparrows* wintered in *Sarpy* and *Douglas*, Neb., and *Washington*, Okla., and provided a first park record at *Lost Maples* Dec. 13 (DM). *White-throated Sparrows* were numerous at *El Paso* throughout the season, and one was photographed in *G.M.N.P.* Feb. 14 (AW). **Yellow-eyed Juncos** were located in *G.M.N.P.* Nov. 25 (SB, PM, RH), and photographs taken later (OVO) have been submitted to the *Texas B.R.C.* Perhaps at long last this species will be admitted to the *Texas* list.

All the *longspurs* were widely reported in *Texas*. In *Crosby* Dec. 28 there were 3000 *McCown's*, 500 *Lapland*, and 1500 *Chestnut-collared longspurs* (ML). About 600 *McCown's* remained at *Balmorea* Feb. 13. In *Comal*, where no *longspurs* had been seen in 15 years, there were 175 *McCown's*, 10 *Lapland*, 20 *Chestnut-collared*, and 10 *Smith's* Feb. 14 (E & KM, TG). A "blue norther" Dec. 15 brought *McCown's* and *Lapland longspurs* to *Tarrant*, and they remained to Jan. 8 (CH). The Jan. 7 ice storm pushed 15 *Laplands* into *Nacogdoches*, the flock increasing to 200 by Jan. 9. As soon as the ice melted, they disappeared and were not seen again all winter. A *Lapland Longspur* at *Midland* Dec. 14 provided only the 2nd record there (JMe, RMS). As many as 200 *Smith's Longspurs* wintered in *Rains*, some lingering to the late date Feb. 20 (RK). More than 400 *Smith's* appeared in *Hood* just after the Jan. 7 ice storm (CH). *Chestnut-collared Longspurs* were present in *Tarrant* Dec. 19–Feb. 13. *Snow Buntings* were present in *Lancaster*, Neb., Jan. 24 (GW) and in *Jefferson*, Kans., in early January (LM).

Rusty Blackbirds, seldom mentioned by *plains birders*, drew comments from 6 reporters. One was seen in *Keith* on the late date of Dec. 12 (RCR, DJR). In *Washington*, Okla., 200 were counted Jan. 5 (MD). Twelve were observed at *Buffalo L.*, Dec. 5 (KS). At *Ft. Worth*, the comment was, "First good year for *Rusties* in about 5 years." At *Nacogdoches*, numbers appeared with the January ice storm—2 flocks of over 100 birds each (D & MW). Two were noted in *Comal* Dec. 17 (E & KM). It was not a major invasion year for *Purple Finches*. The largest number reported was 40 in *Osage*, Okla., Feb. 16. In *Tulsa*, small numbers visited feeders Dec. 5–Feb. 27. After the January storm, a few came to feeders at *Ft. Worth*. Small numbers were seen at *Kerrville* Dec. 1 & 14. *Single Cassin's Finches* were

found in Dawes, Neb., Jan. 22 (RCR) and G.M.N.P. Jan. 21–31 (OVO). A House Finch took advantage of feeders in Bellevue, Neb., Jan. 1–31 (RKO). The fall invasion of Red Crossbills at El Paso carried over into winter. From two to eight Red Crossbills repeatedly drank water from a ditch in n.w. Oklahoma City in late February (JR, MO). In Nebraska, there were scattered records of Com. Redpolls in Knox, Douglas, and Sarpy Jan. 20–Feb. 29 (MBr, m.ob.), and one delighted observer at a feeder in Arkansas City, Kans., Feb. 9 (fide DSK). Although it was a good Pine Siskin year in Texas, there were few reports in the other States. A green-backed Lesser Goldfinch fed on niger seed in Comanche Dec. 13–Jan. 9 and Feb. 2–6 (JMcG, LEM). American Goldfinches descended on n. Texas in large numbers, and every feeding station had “hundreds.” Evening Grosbeaks were found in Walker, Tex., Dec. 22 (RM) and Cleburne, Tex., Feb. 14 (CE).

CORRIGENDA — AB 41:298—A Barrow's Goldeneye was collected in Comanche, Okla., Jan. 14, 1984, according to the *Bulletin of the Oklahoma Ornithological Society*, vol. 18, no. 4. AB 41:457—The Tennessee Warbler did not provide a new record for the Wichita Mts. Several previous records are cited in *Birds of Southwestern Oklahoma* by Jack D. Tyler.

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Long-time readers of *American Birds* will know that Frances C. Williams of Midland, Texas, has been writing the Southern Great Plains Regional Report for more than two decades—a record for endurance equalled by only a few other stalwarts. In that time she has never missed an issue, and her column has almost always arrived well before the deadline, something that is much appreciated by the editors.

But I had reason to be appreciative long before I was involved with the editing of this magazine. When I first started sending in observations to what was then *Audubon Field Notes*, I was a kid in Wichita, Kansas, and my reports went to a Mrs. Williams in faraway Texas. Frances probably guessed from my hand-scrawled notes that I was just thirteen; but not only did she acknowledge my contributions, she even took the time to write back. She gave me pointers on what birds I should be looking for, requested data on particular aspects of the migration, gently pushed for more details on my less likely sightings. She was one of my first influences in sharpening up my approach to birding. I am just one of the many hundreds of people who have benefitted from her years of hard work, but I'd like to say Thanks very much, Frances, for a job well done.

—Kenn Kaufman

SOUTH TEXAS REGION

Greg W. Lasley and Chuck Sexton

After the generally “dull” Fall of 1987 we were caught off-guard by this winter's ornithological events. In a job where superlatives should normally be taken with a grain of salt, we can resolutely claim that this was the most phenomenal winter birding season ever seen in Texas. Fortunately, we received pounds of documentation from many observers to back up the claim. Unfortunately, many trends or unusual sightings which might have been published in other seasons were regrettably left “on the cutting room floor.” There were significant avian influxes from literally all directions. Only the stunning complement of Mexican species could have overshadowed such events as major movements of western Fringillids and hummingbirds eastward, eastern species westward, and a variety of northern species far to the south.

Within the Region, weather patterns were not especially unusual. There were a few freezes in Austin but none par-

ticularly severe. Most of the Upper Texas Coast and Lower Rio Grande Valley escaped sub-freezing weather. From Austin and the edge of the hill country to the central coast and south Texas brush country, conditions were generally very dry through February. The Lower Rio Grande Valley was dry through December but had long spells of cold, rainy, windy weather in January and February. The Upper Texas Coast was described as “lush” with numerous flowering plants through the period. The real gap in our knowledge is of weather patterns or ecological events in north-eastern Mexico, perhaps in the summer and fall of 1987, which prompted such a pervasive movement of lowland and foothill species northward into Texas. We have virtually no clues. We know of no new sudden ecological disaster or habitat loss (although such losses undoubtedly continue). We would invite any readers who are interested and have appropriate contacts to correspond with Mexican weather authorities and ecologists to shed light on this topic.

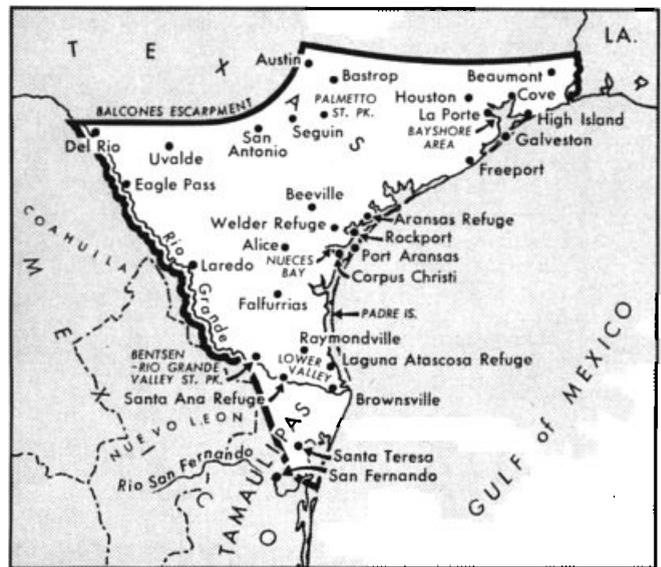
ABBREVIATIONS — Aransas = Aransas Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Bentsen = Bentsen Rio Grande State Park; Kickapoo = Kickapoo Caverns State Park; Laguna Atascosa = Laguna Atascosa Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; L.R.G.V. = Lower Rio Grande Valley; Palm Grove = National Audubon Society Sabal Palm Sanctuary, Brownsville; Santa Ana = Santa Ana Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; T.B.R.C. = Texas Bird Records Committee; U.T.C. = Upper Texas Coast. Place names in *italics* are counties. For all rarities listed in this report documentation is on file with the T.B.R.C. (c/o Greg Lasley, whose address is at the end of this report); reports of rarities submitted without documentation will generally not be published.

LOONS THROUGH STORKS — A Red-throated Loon was discovered at San Antonio's Calaveras L., Dec. 1-6 (WS et al.) for a rare state record. Common Loons were at scattered locations throughout the Region, but generally in lower than normal numbers, especially on the U.T.C. (TE). Two Com. Loons at L. Casa Blanca in Laredo Jan. 8 (MH) apparently furnished a new Webb record. Horned Grebes were virtually absent on the U.T.C., but three at Aransas Jan. 11 (CC) provided a rare c. coast record. Western Grebes were seen more often than usual with two at Aransas, two at San Antonio, and 11 at L. Buchanan near Austin (m.ob.) during the season. A few Masked Boobies again showed up on the U.T.C.; these birds were usually seen with flocks of N. Gannets. Single Masked Boobies were seen at Freeport Dec. 20, Galveston Dec. 26, and San Luis Pass Feb. 20 (fide TE). Another interesting record was of a Masked Booby found wandering through a residential yard in Aransas Pass Jan. 21 (TA). This bird later died, and represents the first winter specimen for the state (* to Texas A & M). Most surprising for winter was a well-described ad. Brown Booby near the mouth of the Rio Grande at Boca Chica Dec. 20 (TG). Northern Gannets again were common this winter along the clear water line between Surfside and Galveston, with high counts of 145 Jan. 28 (MB) and 125 Feb. 20 (TE). The species was also numerous farther south with groups of up to 35 seen off Mustang I., Jan. 21 (CBene) and 22 at Boca Chica Jan. 22 (EH) the most notable.

American White Pelicans were particularly widespread and common at numerous inland bodies of water through the season: As many as 1000 were noted at Falcon L., Feb. 21 (CS), and 500 wintered in San Antonio alternating between Mitchell L. and Braunig L. (MH). The Brown Pelican invasion on the U.T.C. last fall left birds distributed throughout that area during the winter as well, with the species reported as far east as High I. (WG). Perhaps these southern invaders will meet the Louisiana populations next year. An impressive 124 Brown Pelicans were noted at Rollover Pass Dec. 5 (BB), and U.T.C. area CBCs totalled over 200. Grantham reported that a pack of coyotes had been found on Pelican I. in Corpus Christi Bay in late February. Control measures are being taken, since this is the main pelican nesting area on the Texas coast.

The relatively warm winter on the U.T.C. held Little Blue Herons in better than average numbers (TE), and single Little Blues wintered inland in Karnes (WS) and at San Antonio's Mitchell L. (MH). A white-phase Reddish Egret was noted sporadically through January at Santa Ana (OC et al.) for an unusual inland record. A report of 15 Wood Storks in flight over Baffin Bay near Kingsville Jan. 21 (JRog, JS) was amazing, especially considering the November report in the same location reported in our last column. A Wood Stork with an injured wing was photographed in Brooks Jan. 3 as it walked across a pasture (TG).

WATERFOWL — Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks wintered virtually throughout the Region. Some notable counts included 800 in Waller Dec. 18 (TE, PL, JM) and 724 at Kingsville Dec. 24 (fide PP). Tundra Swans returned to a Chambers pond for the 2nd year in a row. The four birds were discovered Feb. 21 (DM) and were seen through the end of the period. Two Mute Swans were on Mitchell L., Feb. 7 through the period (MH), two were seen at Santa Ana Dec. 14 (fide JI), and a single bird was on a Kendall pond mid-January to Feb. 18 (ph. KC, fide



DC). We do not know the origin of these birds. Greater White-fronted Geese were in higher than normal numbers in Kleberg and Brooks despite dry conditions (N & PP). In contrast, the species was thought to be in low numbers in the Victoria area during the period (PR). A single Greater White-fronted Goose was photographed near Brackettville in Kinney Dec. 25 (TG, KB) for a new county record.

There were several reports of Muscovy Ducks along the Rio Grande in Starr and Hidalgo during the period. One of these birds, however, showed white on the head, and was of dubious origin. All reports of possible wild individuals of this species should be thoroughly documented for review by the T.B.R.C. Two Wood Ducks in San Ygnacio Dec. 17 (TG) were of interest, considering the scarcity of the species in Mexico. Two Mottled Ducks at L. Amistad in Val Verde Jan. 11 (KB, DStu) and two others Feb. 2 through the period in Lee (HB et al.) were at unusual inland locations. Cinnamon Teal were in good numbers and widely distributed over the Kingsville area (N & PP). Over 12,000 N. Shovelers on Mitchell L. during February made a notable concentration (MH). A ♂ Eurasian Wigeon was collected Jan. 3 at Laguna Salada in Baffin Bay, Kleberg (TH, * to Texas A & I Univ.), for one of very few records from this Region.

All diving ducks were again in very low numbers on the U.T.C. Eubanks remarked, "We cannot overemphasize the decline of divers on the U.T.C. in the past decade. Where only 10 years ago flocks of 5000 to 10,000 Lesser Scaup were annually observed, now one is lucky to find a raft of 100. These birds are disappearing from the U.T.C." A total of only 4057 Lesser Scaup was reported from the combined CBCs on the U.T.C. All scoter species were quite scarce, and Com. Goldeneyes were nonexistent. An Oldsquaw at the Texas City Dike Feb. 13 (LA, PG) furnished the only U.T.C. report of the species for the season. In contrast to those dismal reports, however, most other areas reported excellent numbers of divers. Laguna Atascosa reported that 74,266 Redheads and 5908 Canvasbacks wintered there (SL, SRi). Canvasbacks and Redheads were also abundant on Baffin Bay during the period (N & PP). Ring-necked Ducks were common throughout far s. Texas. In addition to the single Oldsquaw on the U.T.C., others included two reported at Copano Bay Dec. 7 (JRog), one to three on Baffin Bay Dec. 9-Jan. 2 (N & PP et al.), and one at Rockport Jan. 16 (CC). A ♂ White-winged Scoter wintered on Austin's Town L., from Dec. 19 through the period (FD et al.). A ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye was reported at Packery Channel in Corpus Christi Dec. 2 (SBu, HF). There are no currently accepted records of this species in Texas. Hooded Mergansers (in contrast to other divers) were more common than usual on the U.T.C. (TE), and eight wintered at Mitchell L. (MH). A Com. Merganser pho-

tographed at Woodlawn L. in San Antonio Jan. 24–27 (CB, SH et al.) furnished a rare area record.

RAPTORS — Ospreys and Black-shouldered Kites continued to increase as winterers on the U.T.C. (TE). At least two imm. Bald Eagles were seen at various San Antonio locations during the period (MH, WS et al.).

S.A.

As Paul Palmer dryly wrote, **Crane Hawk** numbers were certainly "higher than normal" this season. The first Crane Hawk for the United States was reported and identified Dec. 20 at Santa Ana by George Wallace and Bev Collier. A Com. Black-Hawk reported on the Santa Ana CBC the previous day is now thought probably to have been this same bird. Thanks to refuge personnel and various bird alerts, over 1000 people eventually viewed this sometimes elusive raptor (TSc, JI, m.ob.). The species had been previously recorded as far north as the Rio Corona in s. Tamaulipas. The bird remained through the period and a number of photos were obtained. Further details will be published elsewhere.

A Harris' Hawk at Freeport Dec. 20 was a bit northeast of its normal range (fide TE). Gray Hawks were noted regularly (usually one or two birds) at Rancho Santa Margarita, Salineño, Santa Ana, and Anzalduas (m.ob.). Winter Swainson's Hawks are typically suspect in Texas, even though they are sometimes reported on CBCs. We were surprised to receive excellent photos by William Clark of one imm. Swainson's in Victoria Dec. 22, and another in Calhoun Dec. 29. The latter bird was one of three Swainson's in the area. On the U.T.C. a Swainson's Hawk was discovered Jan. 3 at Brazos Bend S.P. (MB) and remained through the period. Single Zone-tailed Hawks were recorded at Santa Ana Dec. 19 (JI), in Willacy Dec. 23, and in Bastrop Feb. 6 (BAr et al.). A Merlin in Laredo Jan. 8 (MH) represented a new Webb record. Aplomado Falcons were reported occasionally at Laguna Atascosa through the period (fide SL, SRi). These birds are presumed to be recently-released individuals from a hacking program there. A Prairie Falcon in Kleberg Feb. 20 (PP et al.) and another at Attwater Prairie Chicken N.W.R. for the 3rd winter in a row (fide TE) provided interesting records.



Immature Swainson's Hawk at Point Comfort, Texas, Dec. 29, 1987. Documented winter records in the United States are scarce. Photo/William S. Clark.

TURKEY THROUGH SKIMMER — Palmer reports that the Wild Turkey population seems to be booming in the area near Kingsville; over 400 were seen in Kenedy Feb. 25 (SB, AO, PP). A King Rail near Austin Feb. 7+ (BBa) may have wintered. A Virginia Rail at Laredo Jan. 8 probably furnished a new Webb record (MH), and two in Bexar Dec. 20+ were unexpected (m.ob.). On Dec. 10 there were two ad. Whooping Cranes declared missing and presumed dead at Aransas. The flock currently numbers 132, with 130 in or around Aransas and two wintering elsewhere (BJ, TS). Three Snowy Plovers at McAllen Jan. 11 (MH) seemed out of place in winter. For the record, Piping Plover numbers were not unusual: Three U.T.C. CBCs totalled 90 Pippings. Other peak counts were: 27 on e. Galveston I., Nov. 29, 65 at San Luis Pass Nov. 8, 47 at Port Aransas Dec. 21, 12 at N. Padre I., Feb. 21, 15 at Laguna Atascosa Jan. 8, and five at Boca Chica Feb. 19.

Solitary Sandpipers are occasionally encountered in winter in small numbers in this Region; two were at Santa Ana Dec. 20 through the period (m.ob.), and one was seen in Gonzales Dec. 26 and Jan. 3 (ph. PH, SRu). Several observers remarked on increased numbers of Marbled Godwits on the c. coast, but C. Clark's count of 780 along the shoreline of Aransas Bay Feb. 13 was amazing. Two Baird's Sandpipers at Mitchell L. seen and photographed Feb. 7+ (MH, WS) were thought to have been the same two reported there Nov. 18 and probably wintered. A Pectoral Sandpiper at Santa Ana Jan. 9–12 provided the first documented winter record for the state (m.ob., ph. JD, MH). American Woodcocks staged a major incursion into deep south Texas this season. The first birds were noted in the fall season, but by December they were being seen all over the L.R.G.V. and elsewhere. Strangely, the species was not observed in increased numbers on the U.T.C. (fide TE). A Wilson's Phalarope at Santa Ana Feb. 14 (MP) was noteworthy.

Single Pomarine Jaegers were reported from Galveston Jan. 29 & 30 (TM, SW), and Mustang I., Feb. 3 (TA, * to Texas A & M). A single Parasitic Jaeger was observed near San Luis Pass Feb. 23 (AW). An ad. Laughing Gull at San Antonio Dec. 1 (WS) was unusual. Franklin's Gulls were encountered at several locations this winter including one at the Brownsville dump Dec. 8 (JR, CBene), three at Laguna Atascosa Jan. 8 through the period (KK, SR), one at San Antonio Dec. 20 and Jan. 2 & 31 (m.ob.), one photographed at McAllen Jan. 13 (MH), and an adult photographed at Laredo Feb. 21 (CS). The Lesser Black-backed Gull on Mustang I. remained through the period. An ad. Lesser Black-backed was seen in Brownsville Jan. 17 (LR), a first-winter bird was at Boca Chica Dec. 20 (TG), and another adult was at San Luis Pass Jan. 16–Feb. 24 (TE, AW). A Glaucous Gull was at San Luis Pass Jan. 17 (SG). The only Black-legged Kittiwakes reported were one at Canyon L., Dec. 10 and another at Freeport Dec. 20. Two Royal Terns at Bentsen Dec. 20 were out of place (GWal, BC), and a Black Skimmer at the McAllen sewage pond Jan. 11 (MH) provided an unusual record.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Red-billed Pigeons were seen occasionally at San Ygnacio and Falcon Dam, but single Red-billeds were well out of range at Victoria Dec. 22 (RM et al.) and Riviera Feb. 20 (PP). A White-winged Dove at Boerne Feb. 1 (PE, fide SWie) was at a new location, and the species continues a range expansion on the U.T.C. with reports from both s.w. Houston and Fort Bend in addition to the resident Galveston I. population (fide TE). We received a single-observer report of a Ruddy Ground-Dove in Starr Jan. 13. A White-tipped Dove Jan. 5 at Falfurrias was joined by another Jan. 12 (AO); they were seen through the period for the 2nd Brooks record. Several White-tipped Doves were noted in January and February in Live Oak (J & SHo, CR), n. of their normal range.

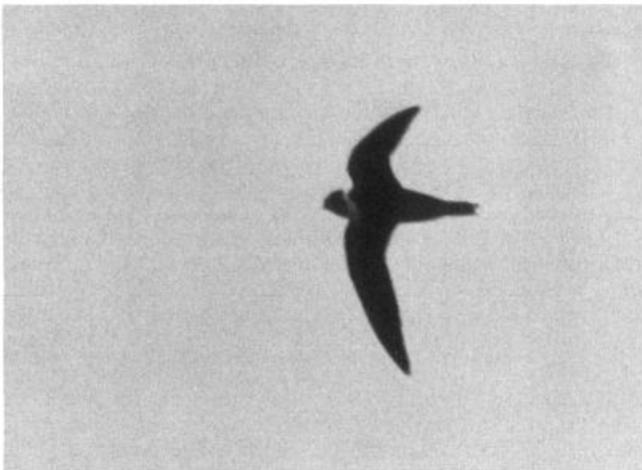
Green Parakeets were seen in McAllen in flocks of 20–60 through the period (SWe, m.ob.), with additional reports of two at Rancho Santa Margarita Dec. 18 (TG), one to four at Santa Ana Dec. 19+ (m.ob.), and three (origin?) s.e. of Corpus

Christi during the season (SBU). Red-crowned Parrots continue to increase in numbers with reports at many L.R.G.V. areas throughout the period. A flock of 80 in Brownsville Dec. 22 (GWal, BC) was the largest single concentration reported, with lesser numbers noted throughout the season there. Flocks of up to 25 Red-crowneds were noted in McAllen, with smaller flocks seen at Harlingen, Santa Ana, Weslaco, and elsewhere. A Red-crowned Parrot of unknown origin was at Welder Ref., Dec. 22 (fide PP). Other free-flying psittacids reported in the L.R.G.V. included Red-lore Parrot, Lilac-crowned Parrot, White-fronted Parrot, Black-hooded Parakeet, and Military Macaw (m.ob.). A Greater Roadrunner in Harris represented a very rare U.T.C. record (fide TE).

A roost of eight to 10 Com. Barn-Owls in a cane patch at Mitchell L. was an unprecedented concentration for the San Antonio area (MH). A few Burrowing Owls were noted in New Braunfels, San Antonio, and on the U.T.C. during the period, but a bird at the McFaddin N.W.R. Jan. 30 no doubt furnished the easternmost U.T.C. record ever (AM). A Barred Owl at Kingsville Dec. 20 (LH, fide PP) was a first for Kleberg, a little south of the species' regular range. A Long-eared Owl was heard calling at Bentsen Dec. 23 (OC), and another was found near Spofford in Maverick Jan. 6 (TG). This species is quite rare in this Region. A Lesser Nighthawk at Bentsen Dec. 18 provided an unusual record (TG). Bryan noted Com. Poorwills still present at Kickapoo as late as Dec. 10, with others heard calling in early February. Elsewhere, interesting Com. Poorwill records included one in Hays Jan. 13 (fide EK), two in Duval Jan. 15, and two in Castroville Jan. 26 (MH). We expect that these occasional January or February records represent hibernating birds. A Whip-poor-will was found at Freeport Dec. 20 (m.ob.), and another discovered at Houston's White Oak Bayou Feb. 12 (WC) remained through the period.

— S.A. —

A **White-collared Swift** discovered on the Freeport CBC Dec. 20 by 3 independent parties represented the 3rd record for Texas and the 5th for the United States. Photographs of this bird (TE, JM) were the first ever obtained of the species in this country. More details will be published elsewhere. Interestingly, high-flying "black swifts" were seen near Corpus Christi Dec. 19 (JG), at Aransas Pass Dec. 22 (SH), and near Mission Dec. 25 (WCI), giving rise to speculation of a vagrant White-collared Swift flock along the Texas coast during the last 10 days of December. The Freeport bird was last seen flying strongly over Galveston I. in the direction of Louisiana, not south toward Mexico.



White-collared Swift at Freeport, Texas, Dec. 20, 1987. About the fifth record for the United States, and the first to be photographed alive. Photo/Jim Morgan.



Male Costa's Hummingbird at Kingsville, Texas, Jan. 23, 1988. Photo/Anse Windham.

— S.A. —

The Region found itself inundated with hummingbirds this winter, and at final count an astonishing 10 species had been documented. A **Broad-billed Hummingbird** at Falfurrias Jan. 15 (AO) and another at Lake Jackson Feb. 7 (BB, TE, JM) furnished very rare state records. Buff-bellied Hummingbirds wintered at numerous locations all along the Texas coast and at Santa Ana, Harlingen, and Brownsville. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds visited Kingsville feeders Dec. 23–27 and Jan. 10–16 (fide PP), and were noted at Houston and Lake Jackson on the U.T.C. during much of the period. Black-chinned, Anna's, Broad-tailed, and Rufous were represented in excellent numbers on the U.T.C. Elsewhere, three Anna's Hummingbirds were in Kingsville Jan. 5+, one was at Sinton Jan. 21 (fide PP), and several were noted through the period at Falfurrias and Premont (AO). Broad-tailed and Rufous hummingbirds were fairly widespread throughout the Region in small numbers. A very rare record was provided by a ♂ **Costa's Hummingbird** photographed at a Kingsville feeder Jan. 21–24 (A & MW, N & PP). A ♂ **Calliope Hummingbird** delighted U.T.C. observers by remaining at a Freeport feeder from early January through the period (fide TE). The first two confirmed records of **Allen's Hummingbird** for Texas (both of ad. males) were obtained this winter. The first was a bird present in Helotes in Bexar Nov. 6–Dec. 20 (S Bay, PM). The bird was netted, measured, and photographed in the hand Dec. 5 (GL). The 2nd bird was discovered in Freeport Nov. 7 (S & TC). This individual was also later netted, measured, and photographed (FC, TE), and it remained until Mar. 6. Prior to this winter the only other "accepted" record of the species for Texas was of a specimen taken in Houston in 1976. That specimen, however, shows hybrid characteristics with Rufous.

A Ringed Kingfisher at the L. Corpus Christi Dam Jan. 13 (C & FD) was unusually far northeast. Several contributors called this the "winter of the woodpecker." Two Lewis' Woodpeckers wintered at Brackettville, Kinney, where they were seen and photographed by many (KB, TG, BH). A Red-headed Woodpecker was at Brackettville Jan. 9 through the period (TB), and another was at Ricardo, Kleberg, Dec. 20 through the period (fide PP). A Red-bellied Woodpecker at Welder Dec. 22 (PP et al.) was out of place. A Red-naped Sapsucker photographed at Kickapoo Feb. 10 (KB) was unexpected; we are still learning about the distribution of this species in Texas. Downy Woodpeckers dispersed well south of their usual haunts this season (e.g., to Nueces and Live Oak; JG, CS et al.).



Male Calliope Hummingbird at Lake Jackson, Texas, Feb. 24, 1988. Photo/Alan Wormington.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS — An extremely yellow Least Flycatcher vocalized repeatedly on Galveston I., Feb. 6 (FC, TE, WR). The extent of yellow on this individual gave rise to some speculation that Yellow-bellieds previously reported from Texas in winter may have been yellowish Leasts. A Black Phoebe photographed at Kingsville Dec. 8–9 (PP) provided a new Kleberg record and the first documentation of this casual species on the coastal bend. Ash-throated Flycatchers continued to be found in increasing numbers on the U.T.C. this winter in w. Harris, Waller, Brazoria, and Ft. Bend (fide TE). Great Kiskadees continue to increase in Kingsville; 73 were counted on the CBC there Dec. 20 (fide PP). One or two Great Kiskadees returned to San Marcos Jan. 13–30 (DH, DB); another near Brackettville Jan. 6 was out of place (TG, KB). A single **Tropical Kingbird** in the company of a few Couch's was identified by voice at Laguna Atascosa Jan. 8 (SR, KK) & Jan. 12 and stayed until at least Feb. 21 (AW), but proved difficult to single out. Unfortunately, the



Cave Swallow at Kingsville, Texas, Jan. 29, 1988. Wintering by this species in Texas is a new phenomenon. Photo/Charles Easley.

bird was not tape-recorded for additional documentation; the only accepted state record is of a specimen collected in 1909. Single Rose-throated Becards were at Santa Ana Dec. 28–29 (B & JBai, GM, PL) and at Salineño from early December through at least Jan. 28 (m.ob.).

A Bank Swallow in Gonzales Dec. 26 (PH, SRu) was unprecedented; and a dozen Banks at Anzalduas Jan. 9 (JD et al.) provided a very rare record for the L.R.G.V. We continue to rewrite the book on Cave Swallows. Substantial numbers wintered locally within the species' breeding range. Thirty-five wintered in a culvert near San Antonio's Braunig L., where they were found roosting at night in nests from last summer (WS, MH). Nine Caves were seen in Kleberg Dec. 20 (JG), and one was noted in Nueces Dec. 26 (PL, SF). A dozen Cave Swallows were seen at L. Gonzales Dec. 26 (PH, SRu) and 23 were found in Atascosa Dec. 25 (WS). As amazing as these December records are, the real news was yet to follow; Sekula and Heindel found 300 at Braunig L., Jan. 1, picking up insects just above the water's surface. The species was seen there in high numbers sporadically through the period. Laredo's L. Casa Blanca hosted 475+ Cave Swallows Jan. 8 (MH), with smaller numbers noted in La Salle, Frio, and Bexar the same date. Other notable counts included six coming into a culvert to roost in Duval Jan. 17 (MH), 10 over Atascosa Jan. 26 (TG, KB, GL), and 60 just s. of Kingsville Jan. 28 & 29 (CE et al.). By February it becomes difficult to distinguish wintering birds from the early arriving migrants. Curiously, swallows of all species were scarce to absent at Santa Ana in January and February (fide JJ).

Three Green Jays were out of range at Brackettville Dec. 1 through the period (TG, KB et al.). Gallucci had two Brown Jays above San Ygnacio Dec. 17, well above the species' usual haunts. Graber observed a sizable flock of 500 Fish Crows in Beaumont Dec. 4. "Black-crested" Tufted Titmice seemed to have recovered to numbers reminiscent of "pre-freeze" levels of 1983–1984 in Kingsville (PP). A White-breasted Nuthatch in Lee Dec. 21 furnished a rare record for the Austin area (HB). Three Rock Wrens in the rip-rap below Falcon Dam Feb. 27 were unusual (BM). Winter Wrens showed up in the L.R.G.V. in record numbers and were seen from Aransas to Brownsville to Laredo and at all points in between (m.ob.). Eastern Bluebirds were common Regionwide with many observers commenting on their abundance. A Townsend's Solitaire in Bexar Jan. 24 furnished an unusual Regional record (SHan). Two Wood Thrushes at Aransas Pass Dec. 13 (E & NA) were unusual.

Clay-colored Robins staged a virtual "invasion" into the Region this winter. In addition to the resident pair or two at Bentsen, they were observed at Santa Ana Dec. 5 through the period, McAllen Dec. 28 into January (GM, PL et al.), the Palm Grove Dec. 5 through the period (M & RF, m.ob.), Kleberg Jan. 21 (PP, AO), San Ygnacio in January and February, Falfurrias in January and February (AO), Victoria Feb. 28+ (RM), Aransas Feb. 7–12 (BJ), Brooks Feb. 20 (JDo), Corpus Christi during February, Sarita Dec. 8 (JRow), and Laguna Atascosa Dec. 18 (fide SL). American Robins were in very high numbers Regionwide all period. Single Sage Thrashers just west of Corpus Christi Dec. 19 (PP, FB), in Live Oak Dec. 20 (J & SHo, CR), and at Kingsville Dec. 23 (HS) were noteworthy. Long-billed Thrashers showed up a little north of their regular range with one seen Dec. 8 at Austin's McKinney Falls S.P. (JA), and two seen near Palmetto S.P. Dec. 26 (m.ob.). A **Bohemian Waxwing** stopped by briefly at Falfurrias Dec. 24 (AO); there are only 2 previously accepted state records. Cedar Waxwings were patchily distributed (e.g., low numbers in Kingsville and Comfort) but the majority opinion had them arriving early and in very high numbers.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — A Bell's Vireo at Santa Ana Dec. 5 & 6 (TG, CTh) furnished a very rare winter record, as did a Warbling Vireo at Bentsen Dec. 18 (SR). There were a great many notable winter warbler records with at least 27 species reported Regionwide! Regular wintering species such as Yellow-rumped (common) as well as Black-throated Green, Yellow-throated, and Ovenbird (all rare) were noted in larger than



Male Gray-crowned Yellowthroat at Sabal Palm Sanctuary, Cameron Co., Texas, Feb. 15, 1988. First confirmed record for the United States since 1927. Photo/Dave Heath.

normal numbers. Tropical Parulas staged a mini-invasion. Along with the usual one or two at Bentsen, Santa Ana, and Brownsville, four or five were present at the Palm Grove all season (M & RF, m.ob.), one was reported at Aransas (fide BJ), and one was at Lake Jackson Feb. 1 (DM, TMO) for the 2nd U.T.C. record. A late Yellow Warbler was in Aransas Dec. 14 (CC) and several reports were received of a ♀ Yellow that wintered at Santa Ana (m.ob., fide JJ). A single Black-throated Blue Warbler, also very rare in winter, was seen at Santa Ana in December. A Townsend's Warbler in San Antonio Dec. 20 and Jan. 16 was unprecedented.

Although Pine Warbler is more regular in the L.R.G.V. as a winterer than is commonly assumed, the species was apparently a bit more widespread and numerous this season. A Palm Warbler in Bastrop Dec. 29 was a rare find for the Austin area. A Cerulean Warbler Feb. 18 at the Palm Grove (SB) furnished an unprecedented winter record, but the bird was not otherwise reported in that heavily-birded location. Single Prothonotary Warblers at the Palm Grove Dec. 7 (fide M & RF) and at High I., Feb. 21 (fide TE) probably were late and early migrants, respectively. A MacGillivray's Warbler found by Lehman in Clute Dec. 26 overwintered and was photographed; we believe this to be the first documented winter record for Texas. Another hooded *Oporornis* sp. was described by birders at Santa Ana Feb. 13 & 19.

S.A.

A ♂ **Gray-crowned Yellowthroat** was discovered, photographed, and tape-recorded Feb. 15 at the Palm Grove near Brownsville (M & RF, D & JH): This is the first well-documented report of the species in the United States since 1927. The cooperative bird was seen by hundreds of observers through the end of the period thanks to Mike & Rose Farmer, the Audubon caretakers at the Palm Grove. Interestingly, another possible Gray-crowned was fairly well described at Falcon Dam also on Feb. 15 (KW et al.). Sightings elsewhere continue to be problematic. Furthermore information on this species in Texas will be published in an upcoming article.

An elusive **Golden-crowned Warbler** first discovered Dec. 31 at Santa Ana (PPr, JBa) stayed throughout the period. Almost anticlimactic after such a long list, Yellow-breasted Chats, casual in winter, were noted in mid-February at the Palm Grove (M & RF) and at Corpus Christi Feb. 19 (CC).

S.A.

The **Crimson-collared Grosbeak** documented at Bentsen in November was periodically reported without details in December and January. Remarkably, at least five other Crimson-collared Grosbeaks were reported during the season. A male was seen briefly at Santa Ana Dec. 28 (JL, GM, PL). A ♀-plumaged bird first noted at the Palm Grove Dec. 28 (MF et al.) remained through the period and attracted hundreds of visitors, but was terribly elusive at times (the species often forages and travels about on the ground under dense cover). Another ♀-plumaged Crimson-collared was discovered at Aransas Feb. 3 (BJ, m.ob.) and remained through the period, to the delight of hundreds of birders. Finally, another ♀-plumaged bird conveniently jumped into Krzywonski's field of view at his camera blind in Laguna Vista Jan. 31; documentation of rarities should always be so easy! We received word (without documentation) of yet another Crimson-collared in Weslaco. Interestingly, Barth, who spent Mar. 12-18 in s. Tamaulipas, Mexico, found Crimson-collared Grosbeaks more abundant than he had ever found them before in that area and season.

O'Neil reported a massive concentration of 5000 Pyrrhuloxias in Falfurrias Dec. 10. Not surprisingly, several single Pyrrhuloxias were scattered in the e. part of the Region in January, suggesting an influx of the species there. Blue Bunting was another of the invasive tropical species this season. Along with the "usual" two or three at the Bentsen campground through the period, two others were seen on one of the park's nature trails in late December (GM et al.). One or two males and a ♀ Blue Bunting were at different Santa Ana locations Dec. 10+ (m.ob.). A ♀ Blue Bunting discovered at Salineño Jan. 5 (TG) and photographed Jan. 30 (KK) was a first for Starr. A ♂ Blue Bunting found on the Freeport CBC Dec. 20 (TC, TMO) became difficult to locate in early January, but a female also discovered there Dec. 20 (MA, JB) obliged many observers through at least Feb. 12; these were first records for Brazoria. Finally, another female was at the Palm Grove Jan. 17 to mid-February (LR et al.), for a first Cameron record. Repeating a similar previous occurrence, the Swartzes in Corpus Christi played host to a pair of Lazuli Buntings and three Indigos Jan. 28; the ♂ Lazuli was seen again there Feb. 19 (CC).

Green-tailed Towhees were in notably higher numbers from Corpus Christi southward, and Rufous-sided Towhees were in higher than normal numbers in the L.R.G.V. At least 11 White-collared Seedeaters were found at 3 or more locations in and around San Ygnacio through the period. Other single White-collared Seedeaters were at Falcon Dam Feb. 15 & 16 (KW et al.) and notably far north at Laredo Jan. 8 (MH). There was a general consensus in the e. one-half of the Region that most regular sparrow species such as Chipping, Field, Fox, Swamp, and Song were in extraordinarily high numbers. Along with the Pyrrhuloxias Dec. 10, O'Neil observed 12,000 Lark Buntings in the Falfurrias area; 2 days later they numbered only 700-800. Again, the influx of Lark Buntings was noted virtually Regionwide (see our Fall report). Notable counts included up to 300 at Mitchell L. all season, 300 in Live Oak Jan. 17, and "large" flocks at Attwater, Waller and w. Harris. The species appeared as far east as Baytown.

Two Harris' Sparrows in Victoria Jan. 17 (PR) and another in Beaumont Jan. 20 (WG) were very unusual for those locations. Longspurs were not particularly abundant but a single McCown's at Victoria Dec. 24 (PR), a Lapland on N.

Padre I., Dec. 7 (SR), and a longspur sp. at Freeport were farther south than normal. The U.T.C. had its first good Rusty Blackbird year in many; a ♀ Rusty was far to the west at Brackettville Jan. 6–24 (TG, KB). One-half dozen Boat-tailed Grackles at the Padre I. Headquarters Jan. 3 were south of their normal winter range (TG). Bronzed Cowbirds were abundant in Kingsville even though the species was virtually absent in the L.R.G.V. A pair of Hooded Orioles apparently wintered at Kingsville (PP). Pine Siskins and Am. Goldfinches were widespread but somewhat patchy. For example, Kingsville had a 7-year high population of Am. Goldfinches (N & PP, SB), while O'Neil noted only 20–30 in nearby Falfurrias.

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NORTHWESTERN CANADA REGION

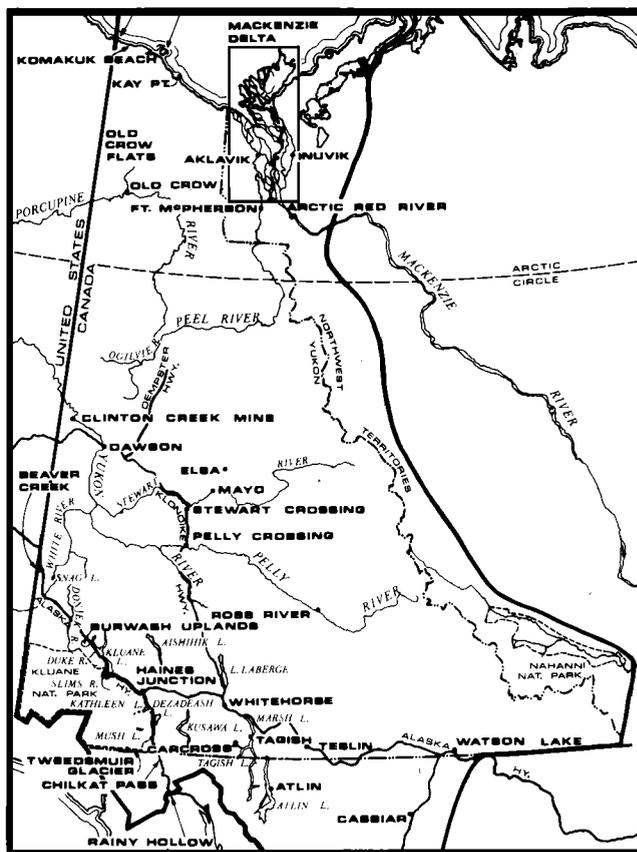
Chris Siddle

The winter was mild. Unlike recent years, there was no sudden cold snap in the late fall; however, almost no stragglers were recorded. This could have been a result of a lack of birders, since the presence of a Fox Sparrow at a Fort St. John feeder in early January may indicate what could have been seen. On the other hand, birds were spectacularly scarce in some areas. The Fort St. John area, covered well during its Christmas Bird Count, yielded only 700 individuals of all species even though the weather was "perfect"—mild and calm.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.S.J. = Fort St. John, B.C.

WATERFOWL, RAPTORS — As usual a few ducks were recorded on open water during warm spells. Two drake Mallards were seen at Two Rivers, s.e. of F.S.J., Jan. 10 (GP). An "obviously healthy, overwintering" hen Mallard was present on the Yukon River at Whitehorse Jan. 12–13 (HG). The last observation was of an unsexed Mallard also on the Yukon R. on Feb. 26 (HG). A ♂ Com. Goldeneye was on the Yukon R. below the dam at Whitehorse on Jan. 13 (HG). Two males were on the Peace River at Taylor, B.C., Dec. 26 (CS). Up to one male and two ♀ Com. Mergansers overwintered on the Yukon R. below the dam at Whitehorse (HG), while two males were on the Peace R. at Taylor Dec. 26 (CS). One unidentified duck at Whitehorse Jan. 9 & 22 was the only other waterfowl recorded in the Region this period (HG).

Two Golden Eagles, both adults, occurred in the F.S.J. area. One flew from a possible source of carrion attended by magpies and ravens n. of F.S.J. Dec. 13. A second hung around a spot beside Hwy 29 about 38 km west of F.S.J. where ravens also indicated a road kill on Dec. 22 (both CS). Northern Goshawks



remained in low numbers During the F.S.J. CBC, two were seen. The only other reports were of one at Teslin in February (PD) and one adult at the Fort Nelson airport Jan. 23 (JB).

GROUSE TO WOODPECKERS — This was the “year of the Arctic chicken” according to JB of Fort Nelson. Reports began in early November from forestry crews and travellers that ptarmigan in flocks of three to five were occurring along the Alaska Highway between Fort Nelson and Pink Mountain (Mile 145). By the second week of December, flocks were being reported around Fort Nelson, the largest of 12 in front of the local taxidermist’s on Jan. 21. JB saw eight perched in the downtown area on Feb. 10. Species identification was not conclusive. All birds had black tails but one observer saw black lores, typical of the Rock Ptarmigan. JB wrote that he did not have the necessary field experience to reliably judge bill size. However, his flock of eight had no dark lores. The sightings dropped off in February.

Ruffed Grouse continued their gradual recovery from low numbers of 3–4 years ago in the Peace River area. The highest single count was of nine birds visiting a F.S.J. feeder on Dec. 27 (CS). A Sharp-tailed Grouse was seen at Mile 242 of the Alaska Hwy Dec. 26 (JB). Sharp-taileds were slowly recovering in the F.S.J. area. JM and HB watched two burying themselves in fresh, loose snow in fields at Two Rivers, s.e. of F.S.J., Jan. 17. When alarmed the birds would stick only their heads above the snow and look around. If frightened, the birds would explode into flight right out of the snow cover. The birds were seen to enter the banks by flying directly into the snow at some speed.

Three Rock Doves, probably previously overlooked, were seen in downtown Whitehorse Jan. 31 (HG) while F.S.J., Taylor, and Dawson Creek all had populations—Dawson’s the largest at 100–200 birds (CS). Snowy Owls wintered in very small numbers with one at Fort Nelson Jan. 26 (JB), one at Farmington, B.C. (Mile 18, Alaska Hwy), Jan. 9 (KB, CS) and one along the Alaska Hwy just n. of Taylor from Feb. 13 to late March (JM, CS).

A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** killed in a trap at Hudson Hope, B.C., in mid-January was the first of a winter–spring influx (JJ, CS). A small male was photographed attending a F.S.J. farmyard on Feb. 13 after he had been at that spot almost every day for 2 weeks of a cold snap (RMc, CS). These were the 2nd and 3rd winter records for the Peace River, B.C., area.

Downy Woodpeckers are rare winter birds in the Yukon. One male near Whitehorse Jan. 22 (HG) was a surprise. In the Peace River area, Downies are reliable suet feeders; however, only three were found during the F.S.J. CBC of Dec. 27 (CS). A Hairy Woodpecker was seen near Whitehorse Jan. 31 (HG). Two Three-toed Woodpeckers were found near F.S.J. during the CBC of Dec. 27 (CS). Two others were seen at Swan Lake, Yukon, Feb. 7 (HB). Fairly rare was a Pileated Woodpecker at F.S.J. Feb. 23 (Mrs. J. Unger).

PASSERINES — A Gray Jay with nesting material was seen at Teslin, Yukon in March (PD). Three Steller’s Jays, east of their usual range, graced the F.S.J. area this winter. A rumour that a farmer live-trapped six Steller’s Jays in the Rockies west of Chetwynd and transported them to his yard n. of F.S.J. where they all escaped has yet to be confirmed, but would explain the sudden rash of sightings (CS). A record-shattering 15 Blue Jays were seen on the F.S.J. CBC of Dec. 27, generally along the n. edge of town (JB, KB, BL, BC et al.).

A Red-breasted Nuthatch at Stoddart Creek, F.S.J., Feb. 20 probably overwintered, a fairly rare event this far north (CS). A pair of White-breasted Nuthatches frequented a feeder near Charlie Lake, F.S.J., all winter, continuing this species’ push into n.e. British Columbia (CS). Brown Creepers have been considered only casual in the Peace River, B.C., area. What to make of two birds chasing each other around dead spruces at Stoddart Creek Dec. 27 (CS)? Up to four Am. Dippers were recorded from Jan. 9 to Feb. 26 below the dam at Whitehorse, Yukon (HG).

Bohemian Waxwings were recorded in both F.S.J. and Whitehorse. The highest number was only 57 in Whitehorse, eating saskatoon berries and black gooseberries Jan. 31 (HG). Four records of N. Shrike in the Peace River area were about normal, indicating a small scattering of wintering individuals. None was reported for the Yukon. As usual the only records of Eur. Starling concerned a small flock wintering in F.S.J.; 27 were counted there on Dec. 27 (CS).

A **Fox Sparrow** appeared at a F.S.J. feeder for 3 hours Jan. 3 (JJ, CS) for the first Peace River, B.C., winter record. Snow Bunting numbers were down in the Peace River area. The only sizable numbers occurred during a storm Dec. 29 around Charlie Lake and F.S.J., with 500 at the lake (RK) and 75 in town (CS).

Pine Grosbeak numbers were about normal. Some 60–70 at a feeder in Teslin, Yukon, all winter must have been a sight (PD). Five were reported from the Yukon River at Whitehorse Jan. 22 (HG), and F.S.J. had only 20 on its CBC of Dec. 27 (CS et al.). White-winged Crossbills were in low numbers. Six were at Swan Lake, Yukon, Feb. 7 (HG), and 10 at Whitehorse Feb. 26 were singing (HG), while F.S.J. records ranged from one at Stoddart Creek Dec. 19 to 30 at the same spot Dec. 27 (CS).

Redpolls were scarcer than usual. Generally flock size seemed much smaller on the average than in past years. Only 25 were reported from Whitehorse on Jan. 22 (HG) while 51 Commons and 25 Hoaries were the best that F.S.J. could produce on Dec. 27 (CS). Evening Grosbeaks were restricted to feeders in the F.S.J. area where a population of about 100 was estimated during the winter at about 5 widely scattered feeders (CS).

House Sparrows continue to benefit from winter feeders. A population of about 200–400 was estimated for F.S.J. (CS).

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The Autumn Migration August 1–November 30, 1987

Chris Siddle

August to December was a mild season with almost no arctic outbreaks of cold air to cause avian “fallout.” Thus there were relatively few rarities; in fact, if a season could be called “normal,” this was it. Although November remained mild, there were surprisingly few passerine stragglers, except a Northern Waterthrush in Whitehorse on the very late date of November 4.

Geographical coverage for the season was heaviest in Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Whitehorse, and along the Dempster Highway.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.N. = Fort Nelson, B.C.; F.S.J. = Fort St. John, B.C.; N.W.T. = Northwest Territories.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — Red-throated Loons were noted along the Dempster Hwy at km 116 (one in breeding plumage and one unaged) and at km 125, all on Aug. 11 (HP, MP). More unusual were Red-throateds on Charlie Lake near Fort St. John, where they are rare migrants: an adult and a fledged juvenile were seen Oct. 3 (CS). The last Regional fall record was of an adult on Charlie L. Oct. 10 (CS). Two Pacific Loons in breeding plumage were seen 10 km s. of Inuvik,

N W T, Aug. 13 (HP, MP) as well as one or two in Inuvik Aug. 14–16 & 20 (HP, MP). Although more common in the Peace River area than Red-throats, Pacific Loons are still uncommon migrants. Eleven in breeding plumage on Charlie L. Oct. 3 (CS) furnished the highest count of the fall for the Region. The last bird of the fall was an immature on Charlie L. Oct. 18 (CS). Common Loons are considered rare summer visitors along the Dempster Hwy (Frisch, *Birds by the Dempster*, 1982); therefore of interest were five adults at km 80 of the Dempster Aug. 10 (HP, MP). An unaged **Yellow-billed Loon** at Schwatka Lake near Whitehorse, Yuk., on Oct. 24 was very unusual (HG).

A fairly regular waterfowl census of Charlie Lake revealed this fall that Eared Grebes, although more common as summer residents than Horned Grebes, leave much earlier than Horned Grebes for the south. For instance, the last Eared Grebe was at Beaton P.P. Sept. 13, whereas the last Horned Grebe was near there Nov. 1. Western Grebes staged a minor invasion of Charlie Lake. Small numbers (one to seven) were seen on the lake from Aug. 4 until Nov. 7 (CS).

An imm. Great Blue Heron was discovered standing at the edge of the F.S.J. sewage lagoons (N.) during a heavy morning fog on Aug. 21 (CS). This species is an irregular vagrant to n.e. British Columbia, and this was the only 1987 record.

Trumpeter Swans were fairly well represented in the s. Yukon and n. British Columbia. Five flew over the F.S.J. sewage lagoons Sept. 19 (CS). Two adults and six immatures were found at Swan L., Whitehorse, Oct. 25 (HG). A flock of 28 was present at a partially frozen lake at Scottie Creek near the Yukon-Alaska border Oct. 14 (JH).

Greater White-fronted Geese appeared during a well-defined period Aug. 20–Sept. 6, with 4 small flocks noted from Boundary Lake, Cecil Lake, and F.S.J. (CS). Also 10 were on Swan Lake, Yukon, Aug. 23 (HG), while three were at the F.N. airport Sept. 3 (JB). An adult and two immatures lingered at Charlie Lake Sept. 12–Oct. 18 (CS). Finally, another adult appeared at Charlie Lake Nov. 7–8 (CS).

Very rare in n.e. British Columbia was a flock of 42 Snow Geese (white morph) over Fort Nelson Oct. 4 (JB). The Peace River's first **Black Scoter** was recorded this fall. A female on Charlie L. Oct. 18 (CS) was studied at close range, while a waterfowl survey turned up two more ♀-plumaged Black Scoters on Charlie L. Nov. 8 (CS). A most unusual event was the occurrence of all three native merganser species at the s. end of Charlie Lake Nov. 1. A ♀ Red-breasted Merganser was associating with about 10 Com. Mergansers, some of which appeared to be imm. males and others females. Also present were four ad. ♂ Hooded Mergansers with two females. At best, Red-breasted Mergansers are rare migrants in the Peace River region, Hooded Mergansers are erratic in this area, and Com. Mergansers are normally restricted to the Peace River itself (CS). An imm. Hooded Merganser at km 90 Dempster Hwy, Aug. 8 (ML, LL) was very rare there. A Ruddy Duck was spotted Aug. 6 at Ft. McPherson, N.W.T., well n. of its normal range (ML, LL).

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES — A Bald Eagle appeared at Kelsall L., Haines Rd. area, Aug. 21 (RJC). Another was at Reindeer Station, 50 km n. of Inuvik, N.W.T., Aug. 16–19 (HP, MP). An interesting concentration of 18 Bald Eagles was noted along the Kluane River adjacent to the Alaska Hwy Oct. 30 (JH). The last fall observation occurred at Charlie L. Nov. 8 (KS). The last N. Harrier of the season was a brown, unaged bird at F.S.J. Nov. 7 (CS).

Northern Goshawk numbers remain low. In the whole reporting period, only seven were noted in n. British Columbia and the Yukon: one immature was at F.N. Sept. 22 (JB), one was at Haines Junction Aug. 16 (RJC), one immature was at Kluane, Yukon, Aug. 23 (RJC), one was at Whitehorse Sept. 5 (HG), one immature was at Boundary L., Peace River area, Aug. 20 (CS), one was at F.S.J. Aug. 26 (CS), and one adult was at F.N. Oct. 25 (JB).

Broad-winged Hawks are rare visitors to n.e. British Columbia. An adult and a begging, newly-fledged juvenile were found 30 km n. of Fort St. John Aug. 16 (CS, TG) for the 2nd suspected breeding in the Peace River area, B.C. During a trip along the Dempster Hwy, Helen and Max Parker noted 2 imm. Peregrine Falcons at km 222 (Yuk.) on Aug. 11, and an adult and one immature, the latter unfortunately a road-kill, at km 230 on Aug. 20.

Grünberg found six Spruce Grouse near Bare Loon L., Chilkoat Trail, B.C., Aug. 16, and singles along Long Lake Rd 15 km n. of Whitehorse Aug. 28 and Oct. 25. On Aug. 12 a female with six or seven well-grown young was spotted along Hwy 97 at Azouzzetta L., in the Pine Pass (CS). Six White-tailed Ptarmigan and five Willow Ptarmigan were at Kelsall L., Haines Rd., Aug. 21 (RJC, GM).

By Sept. 12, flocks of 200–300 migrating Sandhill Cranes were occasional in F.N. (JB). The species seemed to skip F.S.J. where only one bird was noted, a straggler at Two Rivers s.e. of F.S.J. on the late date of Nov. 2 (HB, *vide* CS).

SHOREBIRDS — During August 1987 the regular census of shorebirds was continued at the North sewage lagoons, F.S.J., however, dredging in September prevented CS from completing the census. Table 1 summarizes the species and numbers present in August.

The most exciting discoveries were of two (or possibly three) **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers**. The first juvenile was found at the North lagoon, F.S.J., Sept. 7 (CS). The bird was loosely associating with 14 Pectoral Sandpipers. Two Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were feeding together Sept. 12–13 at the lagoons (BMc, CS), where they were photographed. Also of note was a vagrant juv. **Dunlin** at the North lagoons, F.S.J., Sept. 4–13 (CS).

Other shorebird records elsewhere in the Region included nine Lesser Golden-Plovers at F.N. airport Aug. 29 (JB); two Semipalmated Plovers at km 116, Dempster Hwy, Aug. 11 (HP, MP), and four at the F.N. airport Aug. 31 (JB); three Solitary Sandpipers at Swan Lake, Yukon, Aug. 16 (RJC, GJ); one Upland Sandpiper at km 430, Dempster Hwy, N.W.T., Aug. 12 (HP, MP), another Upland over F.N. Aug. 18, and a flock of six at the F.N. airport Aug. 25 (JB). A Hudsonian Godwit was photographed at Gravel L., e. of Carmacks, Aug. 10 (HP, MP). A Semipalmated Sandpiper was seen at km 320, Dempster Hwy, Aug. 11 (HP, MP). Three Semipalmated Sandpipers were at Swan L., Yukon, Aug. 23 (HG, TM), with 10 Least. A flock of eight Baird's Sandpipers appeared at the F.N. airport Aug. 29 (JB). Twelve Pectoral Sandpipers were present at Swan L., Yukon, Aug. 23 (HG, TM), while seven juv. Stilt Sandpipers were present there Aug. 16 (RJC, GJ). Two Long-billed Dowitchers stopped at a water hazard on the F.N. golf course Sept. 4 (JB). Ten Wilson's Phalaropes were at Swan L., Yukon, Aug. 16 (RJC, GJ). Two Red-necked Phalaropes were at km 88, Dempster Hwy, Aug. 11 (HP, MP), and 39 were at Swan L., Yukon, Aug. 23 (HG, TM).

JAEGERS THROUGH OWLS — An ad. **Parasitic Jaeger** was discovered feeding on a road-killed porcupine on the Alaska Hwy, 198 km e. of Teslin, Aug. 31 (RMc). The only other jaeger record was of a Long-tailed Jaeger at km 100, Dempster Hwy, Aug. 11 (HP, MP). Sabine's Gull appeared in the Peace River area, B.C., for the 4th fall in a row. Six adults in breeding plumage were found at Charlie L. Sept. 12 (BMc, CS). A juv. Sabine's Gull was photographed at km 318 of the Alaska Hwy, between F.S.J. and F.N. (RMc). An ad. Arctic Tern, always uncommon in the Peace River area, appeared over Charlie L. on Sept. 7 (CS).

The season's only Snowy Owl was spotted n. of F.S.J. Nov. 22 (CS). Three N. Hawk-Owls were recorded in the Region, one at km 1936 of the Alaska Hwy Aug. 25–26 (HP, MP), one

Table 1. Shorebird survey, North sewage lagoons, Fort St. John, B.C., August 1987

August	13	14	18	21	22	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Black-bellied Plover				2									
Lesser Golden-Plover											1		
Semipalmated Plover					4	10	5	4	6	11			
Killdeer			8			2	3	4	1	2	1		
Greater Yellowlegs	1					1					3	1	
Lesser Yellowlegs	50	91	20	50	166	27	15	40	55	32	48	27	19
Solitary Sandpiper	1	3				1			2	1	1	1	1
Spotted Sandpiper	3		1				1		1				
Upland Sandpiper					2	2							
Sanderling										4	2	2	2
Semipalmated Sandpiper	40	22	3	9	88	44	29	40	28	48	35	14	1
Western Sandpiper										1	2	1	
Least Sandpiper	1	1		2	1	2	4	9	6			2	
Baird's Sandpiper						1	1	7	1				1
Pectoral Sandpiper	2	4	2	20	17	8	9	15	6	10	1	1	4
Stilt Sandpiper	26	44		21	133	60	25	40	73	88	55	62	24
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	2	1		7	4	2	2	1	5	5	3	7
Long-billed Dowitcher	30	21	1	36	47	39	20	40	24	29	27	40	62
Common Snipe	2		1	1	1	13	41	14	2	28	4		1
Wilson's Phalarope	4	2						1	8	1	1	1	
Red-necked Phalarope	150	150	50	50		13	14	23	42	47	31	6	

at km 465 of the Cassiar Hwy, B.C., Aug. 27 (HP, MP), and one at the F.N. airport Oct. 30 (JB). A Short-eared Owl migrated at about 300 m height over the F.N. airport at noon Oct. 5 (JB). A Boreal Owl was heard to give a "skiew" call (see S. Bondrup-Nielson 1984, "Vocalizations of the Boreal Owl, *Aegolius funereus richardsoni*, in North America," *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*, Vol. 98, no. 2) on Aug. 18 at Sulphur Creek, Yukon (RJ).

WOODPECKERS THROUGH WARBLERS — A Pileated Woodpecker, rare in n.e. British Columbia, was seen at F.N. Oct. 10 (JB). Three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers at F.N. Sept. 7 were the last of the season (JB).

At least three **Siberian Tits** were seen at Reindeer Station, 50 km n. of Inuvik, N.W.T., Aug. 17 (HP, MP). Detailed notes stressed the large white cheek patch and decidedly mouse gray crown of the bird seen the best of the three that were feeding in willow and alders. Two more were glimpsed Aug. 18. The Parkers had taken the trouble to familiarize themselves with Boreal Chickadees so that confusion was very unlikely. Boreals were also present at Reindeer Station but kept to the spruce stands.

Mountain Bluebirds are scarce transients in the settled areas of the Peace River region, B.C. An immature or female at Charlie L. Sept. 7 was of note (CS). Two Townsend's Solitaires were seen at Whitehorse Aug. 2 (HG). More unusual were two at the F.N. airport Sept. 8 (JB). A Gray-cheeked Thrush seen with migrating Swainson's Thrushes in red osier dogwood bushes at Taylor, B.C., Aug. 19 represented the 4th Peace River record for British Columbia (TG).

Philadelphia Vireos occurred, as usual, as uncommon migrants around F.S.J. this early fall, the best season locally in which to find this species as the birds seem readily drawn to 'pishing' and owl imitations. Six were found between Aug. 15 and Sept. 6 at Peace Island Park, Taylor, B.C. (CS, TG). Cape May Warblers are rare northern-eastern breeders and migrants. This August produced two records: an immature was seen just n. of F.S.J. Aug. 14, and an ad. male was at Charlie L. Aug. 12 (TG).

In n.e. British Columbia, Townsend's Warblers continue to be rare fall migrants, but they are probably regular in tiny numbers throughout the eastern Peace River area. A total of 5 sightings accumulated Aug. 8-30, with 4 of the records com-

ing from Beaton P.P. (TG, CS). An imm. Blackpoll Warbler was at Kelsall L., Haines Rd., B.C., Aug. 22 (RJC, GM). An extremely late N. Waterthrush appeared in downtown Whitehorse Nov. 4 (JH). The only Ovenbird of the fall was seen at Taylor Aug. 18 (CS). An imm. ♂ MacGillivray's Warbler was studied at point blank range at Taylor Aug. 18 (CS), representing only the 2nd F.S.J. record. The last Canada Warbler was a male at Taylor Aug. 18 (CS).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES — The first Am. Tree Sparrows to arrive at F.N. were seen Sept. 7 (JB), while a late Yukon record was of one at Swan L. on Oct. 25 (HG). An imm Golden-crowned Sparrow was at F.N. on Sept. 13. This was the first fall record for F.N., in spite of the species' breeding in the n. Rockies only 100 km to the west (JB). Lapland Longspurs arrived in F.S.J. Aug. 24 (CS).

One juv. Brown-headed Cowbird at Eagle Plains, Dempster Hwy, Aug. 12 was of interest (HP, MP). "Hundreds" of Pine Grosbeaks were noted along the Cassiar Hwy between Cassiar and Kinaskan L., B.C., Nov. 27 (JH). Single redpolls were recorded flying over F.S.J. all summer, including August about once a week, which is very unusual for a locality so far south (CS).

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NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN-INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

Thomas H. Rogers

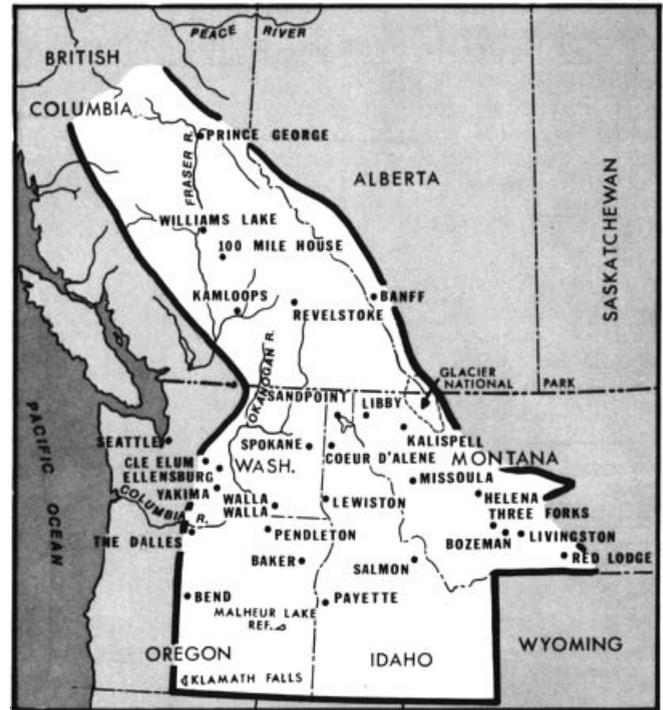
December in the Region started out unusually wet, but by mid-month dry conditions set in that persisted nearly everywhere through the remainder of the winter. Temperatures varied from normal to cool in December but tended toward the warm side in January and were decidedly above normal during February. The mild, open winter encouraged late lingering, wintering of species that normally migrate or remain in very small numbers, and early spring arrivals. Most of the unusual Christmas Bird Count sightings will not be duplicated here. Scant precipitation after the dry autumn made another summer of drought likely.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — Up to four Red-throated Loons were sighted in the Hood River–Mosier, Ore., area in January (DA, DL, JJ), and one appeared at the Yakima R. mouth, Wash., in early December (REW). Hayden L., Kootenai Co., Idaho, had one Jan. 2 and a Pacific Loon Feb. 23 (PH). Two Pacific Loons lingered into December at Wickiup Res. west of La Pine, Ore. (CM). One was on Potholes Res. south of Moses L., Wash., Dec. 19 (WRR), and another was on the Columbia R. at Richland, Wash., Jan. 22 (REW). Osoyoos, B.C., had one Dec. 28 (BL), and two wintered on the reservoir above Libby Dam, Lincoln Co., Mont. (MS). Single Yellow-billed Loons were noted at Vernon, B.C., Dec. 6 (PR) and at Osoyoos Dec. 28 (BL). A few Pied-billed, Horned, Red-necked, Eared, and Western grebes were noted, mostly in the w. part of the Region.

American White Pelicans wintered at a few localities. Up to 40 were on the Columbia R. near Wallula, Wash. Two to four were sighted on the Snake R. in the American Falls–Mindokoka area, Idaho, in January and February. Two appeared on Holter L. north of Helena, Mont., Feb. 26 (MJ). One at Malheur N.W.R., Harney Co., Ore., in December apparently was an injured bird. A few Double-crested Cormorants wintered at Malheur N.W.R.; up to 50 spent the winter in the Richland–Wallula area, Wash., and one wintered on the Snake R. west of Clarkston, Wash. A few were sighted on the Snake near Ontario, Ore., and on L. Lowell, Deer Flat N.W.R., Nampa, Idaho, in early December.

The only Am. Bitterns reported were one at Malheur N.W.R. Dec. 3 and one at Columbia N.W.R. Feb. 18. A Cattle Egret at Vernon Dec. 7 died that day (PG). One found in a pasture in W. Pasco, Wash., Dec. 13 disappeared before the month's end (REW). Montana's Bitterroot Valley had a Cattle Egret Dec. 7–8 (CP). A Green-backed Heron appeared at Logger Cr., Boise, Idaho, Dec. 16 (AL).

WATERFOWL — The Kamloops–Shuswap–Okanagan, B.C., area had 645 Tundra Swans Jan. 10. Tundra Swan numbers in the n. Columbia Basin, Wash., were nearly 6 times the average with 452 birds counted Dec. 2. Trumpeter Swans numbered 51 along the S. Thompson R. and Okanagan L., B.C., Jan. 10, and Savona west of Kamloops had 26 Feb. 8 [fide RRH]. At Malheur N.W.R., the peak Trumpeter count was 43 Dec. 19 (CDL). Over 450 of these birds wintered successfully on Henrys Fork on the Snake R. at Harriman S.P., Idaho (CHT). Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., Lima, Mont., averaged about 350 Trumpeters during the winter (CDM). Very unusual were the sightings of a Trumpeter on the Walla Walla R. one mi up from its mouth (MD) and two on the Columbia R. at Umatilla, Ore., Jan. 16 (KK). A single Trumpeter Swan appeared Dec. 1 on the Snake R. at Silcott I. west of Clarkston, Wash. (CG, OM). Lake Lowell had five Greater White-fronted Geese Dec. 10 (BWh) as did Mirror Pond, Bend, Ore. (TC). A very few wintered in the Pasco–Walla Walla, Wash., area (KK, REW), and one was at Toppenish N.W.R., Wash., Jan. 17 (DG). One at Kamloops Jan.



24–27 made the first winter record there (SR). A Graylag Goose sighted in Walla Walla Co., Wash., was presumably an escapee (MD). The Clarkston area had sightings of a single Snow Goose in December and February (m.ob.), and L. Lowell had two Dec. 17 (BWh). Two were sighted Feb. 21–22 near Burbank, Wash. (DG, AS, REW), and two blue-morph individuals were found near Paterson, Wash., Jan. 31 (L.C.B.A.S.). Over 10,000 Canada Geese were counted on L. Lowell Dec. 4. At Malheur N.W.R., their numbers dropped from 6400 to 4525 in early January. A winter wheat field west of Reardan, Wash., was supplying forage for over 35 “Cackling” Geese mixed in with a large flock of Lesser Canadas Feb. 28 (JA), and 4 pairs of the former were on the Kootenai R. near Libby, Mont., Feb. 27 (MS).

During early December, over 30,000 ducks and about 1500 geese were on Saddle Mountain N.W.R., Grant Co., Wash., but only 460 ducks remained there by early January. Columbia N.W.R., Othello, Wash., had nearly 40,000 ducks and 1100 geese in early December; most of the ducks were still there in early January. Waterfowl on the Columbia R. on Wells Pool and Azwell and Wanapum Pool, Vantage, Wash., totaled 32,000 Jan. 6. A Wood Duck that wintered at Kamloops supplied the first winter record there (RRH). Ducks, mostly Mallards, numbered over 33,000 at L. Lowell Dec. 4. A scattering of Eur. Wigeons occurred in e. Oregon and Washington. Two Ring-necked Ducks were sighted at Kamloops Jan. 28; they are rare there (SR). A ♂ Tufted Duck at Vernon Dec. 10–21 was the first for the Okanagan Valley (PR et al.). Two flocks, of 30 each of Greater Scaup were sighted flying up the Columbia R. at Mosier, Ore., Jan. 3 (JJ), and 30+ were counted from L. Chelan along the Columbia R. to Winchester Wasteway, Grant Co., Wash., Feb. 15 (EH, GG, S.A.S.). A ♀ Oldsquaw was on the Kootenai R. for n.w. Montana's first record (MS). One at Haystack Res. south of Madras, Ore., was a county first (DA, DL, TC, KC), and a winter-plumaged male was observed on L. Ewauna, Klamath Falls, Ore., Dec. 26–Jan. 3 (SS). A female was noted on the sewage ponds at Lakeview, Ore., Nov. 18–Dec. 7 (MA), and a male was on the Columbia R. at Wells Dam in n.w. Douglas County, Wash., Nov. 22 (GB). In Idaho, one was on Siphon Pond near Pocatello Dec. 19 (CHT), a male was on

the Snake R below Massacre Rocks Feb 25 (JL), and one was sighted on Hayden L Feb 23 (PH). The first ad ♂ Surf Scoter for Deschutes County appeared at Hatfield L., Bend., Ore., Dec. 13 (TC), and an imm. White-winged Scoter showed up there the next day (CM, KT). Holter L. north of Helena had two Jan. 7 (BK). Single Red-breasted Mergansers appeared at the Yakima R mouth (REW), at the Portneuf R. mouth near Pocatello (CHT), and at Vernon (PR).

RAPTORS — Turkey Vultures established new early arrival records at Bend (Feb. 23), Yakima (Feb. 24), and Malheur N.W.R. (Feb. 12). A remarkable observation was of a Black-shouldered Kite near Union Gap, Wash., Dec. 10 (CD). Bald Eagle numbers increased along the reservoirs in the Helena area, apparently because the collapse of the salmon population in the Flathead R. drainage of n.w. Montana forced eagles that normally gather in large numbers at Glacier N.P. to move elsewhere (VY). A peak of 102 was observed at Hauser Res. near Helena, where spawned-out Kokanee have become abundant and turbine-killed yellow perch were available (GA). Increased numbers were reported elsewhere also. Woodley remarked that it was a particularly good winter in the Tricities (Pasco-Kennewick-Richland), Wash., area for these birds. Malheur N.W.R. recorded up to 39 and Wickiup Res., 12. An increase was noted on the Wenatchee R., n.c. Wash., and the Rupert, Idaho, vicinity reported "a good many." High numbers were also noted in s.e. Idaho, where 34 adults and eight immatures were found south of Island Park Res. and along Henrys Fork and the Buffalo River. Bald Eagle numbers at Deer Flat N.W.R. reached 23. Bald Eagles were increasing along the Kootenai R. near Libby, where a peak of 82 was counted Feb. 18. One radio transmitter-fitted bird from Pend Oreille L., n. Idaho, showed up Feb. 7 on the Kootenai and remained for 6 weeks (MS).

S.A.

A ♀ wing-tagged Bald Eagle, last observed in Glacier N.P. in 1984, showed up along the Salmon R. near Challis, Idaho. She had been radio-tracked in past years from her wintering area there to her nest site near Yellowknife, N.W.T., Canada, a distance of about 1300 miles. She was at least 13 years old (LHa).

An unusual concentration of 12 adult and three imm. Bald Eagles was at Greaser Res. east of Adel, Ore., Feb. 20, and four adults and one immature were at Pelican L. to the northwest the same day (MA). The Columbia Basin in e. Washington had many sightings. A pair of Bald Eagles wintered and was nesting at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. (CDM), and a pair at Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, Idaho, did likewise (LDN). A pair was on a nest at Athalmer, B.C., Feb. 28 (LH). Single Ferruginous Hawks were sighted south of Crane, Ore., Jan. 10 (BH) and west of Ellensburg, Wash., Feb. 5 (B & GR). One or two adults of this species were sighted at the Raft R. mouth, n.e. Cassia Co., Idaho, where they apparently winter (DF, FR). One sighting of a Peregrine Falcon and eight of Gyrfalcons were reported. Some sightings of the latter likely were duplicates.

GROUSE THROUGH GULLS — Douglas County, Wash., had flocks of Sage Grouse totaling 67 for the only reports (RD, DZ, RF). Up to seven Wild Turkeys were seen at Black Butte Ranch near Sisters, Ore., in late January (TC), and Ft. Boise W.M.A., Canyon Co., Idaho, also had the species (DJ).

Virginia Rails wintered at Columbia N.W.R., Othello, Wash. Three remained at Richland until Dec. 19 (REW), and one was spotted at Banks L., Grant Co., Wash., Dec. 24 (RF). Sandhill Cranes were early. Single flocks had reached Malheur N.W.R. by Feb. 16 (CCa), Othello, Wash., by Feb. 23 (WRR), and Kamloops by Feb. 28 (RE).

Two Greater Yellowlegs were sighted at Summer Lake W.M.A., Lake Co., Ore., Feb. 12 (MA), and one was at Mabton, Wash., Feb. 14 (DB). Five W. Sandpipers were sighted at the

Walla Walla R mouth Feb 13 (BaB, BB) Bend's mill pond had a Least Sandpiper Jan. 9 (CM), and the Yakima R delta hosted up to 14 in February (REW). A Pectoral Sandpiper and four Dunlin appeared at Vernon Dec. 7 (PR). Ten of the latter species wintered at Kamloops until at least Feb. 21 (SR), and the Yakima delta counted up to 17 (REW). Moses L. had four feeding on partly frozen mud flats (HO). Ten Long-billed Dowitchers remained at the Yakima delta to at least Dec. 2 (REW).

Unusual were a Mew Gull at Richland Dec. 8 (REW), one at Kamloops Dec. 20 (RRH), and one at Silcott I. Jan. 30 (CG, OM). A Herring Gull appeared at Malheur N.W.R. Dec. 21 for the first winter record there (CDL). Also noteworthy were one at Rocky Reach Dam north of Wenatchee, Wash. (JT), and three at Wapato, Wash., in mid-January (DG, AS). Kelowna, B.C., had nine Thayer's Gulls Dec. 19 (PR). Five showed up at Coeur d'Alene's dump (ES, SHS) and one at Hayden Lake (PH). A Glaucous-winged Gull was along the Columbia R. below Grand Coulee Dam Jan. 16 (MD, MLD). Four Glaucous-winged Gulls at Kelowna Dec. 19 and one at Vernon the next day were notable as was a Glaucous Gull at Kelowna Dec. 19 (PR). One or two of the latter were sighted in the Tricities area Dec. 19-Jan. 29 (REW), and a very few appeared in the Coeur d'Alene area (PH, ES, SHS). Two first-year birds showed up at Spokane's dump Jan. 18 along with an imm. Mew Gull (JA).

DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS — A Mourning Dove was sighted in mid-February north of Helena (MJ, fide GH), and three were wintering at Windermere, B.C. (LH). Single Com. Barn-Owls were seen at Oliver, B.C. (BL); near Quincy (RF); at Malheur N.W.R. headquarters (CDL) in late December, and north of Shelley, Idaho, Feb. 27 (JM). Single W. Screech-Owls were found dead at Kamloops and Salmon R., B.C. (RRH). The Reardan-Davenport, Wash., area yielded up to six Snowy Owls on January-February trips (JA, BW). The only other report was of one near Withrow, Wash., Jan. 21 (DW). A N. Hawk-Owl, rarely seen in the Region, was at Vernon Dec. 30 (DP). A Burrowing Owl was discovered Dec. 25 near Richland, where the species rarely winters (BC). Barred Owls appeared to be on the increase in the Libby area, where 6 pairs were vocalizing within a 10-mile radius of the town (MS). One seen 12 mi northwest of Fortine, Mont., made Weydemeyer's 5th record for that vicinity. Northern Pygmy-Owls and Barred, Great Gray, and Boreal owls were reported at Lolo Pass on the Idaho-Montana border (DH). Two Great Gray Owls were found near Tetonia, Idaho, in late January (MDe). Eighteen different Long-eared Owls were counted in the Frenchtown Valley west of Missoula, and about seven Short-eared Owls wintered west of Missoula (DH). A remarkable concentration of 32 Short-eared Owls occurred along a 3-mile stretch of railroad north of Post Falls, Idaho. Identical counts were made there in mid-December last year (KE). Ten of the birds wintered at Salmon Arm, B.C. (FK et al.). A few Boreal Owls were found in s. British Columbia: Penticton Cr. had one Dec. 27 (DC), and three fell victim to traps for fur-bearers (DC, DD). Up to six N. Saw-whet Owls roosted together in conifers adjacent to an orchard in Parker Heights south of Yakima during the winter; several other reports of the species in orchards in the lower Yakima Valley suggested an increase in that area (AS, SSt, m.ob.). One was found in Grant Orchards near Soap L., Wash., Dec. 14 (AR).

The only report of Anna's Hummingbird was of an exceptionally early one at Bend Feb. 21 (J & AK). Three to five Lewis' Woodpeckers were sighted in Mosier, Oregon. They seemed to be doing well in Wasco County (JJ). An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was observed Nov. 26 and Feb. 25 in Yakima (CD, DG). A ♂ Red-naped Sapsucker, accidental in Oregon in winter, was sighted in Mosier Jan. 3, and about seven Red-breasted Sapsuckers were found in the Mosier-Hood R. area the same day (JJ). A Red-breasted was sighted near Summer L., Ore., Dec. 17 (MA), and one was in Bend Dec. 19 (VRa). A Williamson's Sapsucker and a White-headed Woodpecker were seen near Leavenworth, Wash., Dec. 15 (CMcC). A White-headed Woodpecker wintered at Summerland, B.C. (RRH), and one at

Bend Jan. 20 was unexpected (BC). A male of the species was sighted Dec. 19 and Feb. 15 along Cove Road southwest of Ellensburg (PM *et al.*), and one appeared in Burns for the 2nd consecutive winter (CDL). One along Asotin Cr., Asotin Co., Wash., Jan. 7 was the first for that locality (LP, CV). Downy, Hairy, Black-backed, Three-toed, and Pileated woodpeckers took advantage of a burn at Penticton, B.C., during the winter (DBr).

A Black Phoebe found Nov. 29 at L. Ewauna, Klamath Falls, was last seen Dec. 26 (PL). This furnished the county's 2nd record (SS). A Say's Phoebe on ice floes on the Grande Ronde R. in s.e. Asotin Co., Wash., Jan. 9 was a remarkable find (RG, MK, LP, CV). Other early records for this species were of one in Culver, Ore., Feb. 12 (CM); one at Osoyoos Feb. 13 (DBr); two at Malheur N.W.R. Feb. 12 (CDL); and a sighting at Mabton, Wash., Feb. 13 (AS). The first sighting of the species at Lakeview was on Feb. 22 (MA). Vernon had one Feb. 21 (RRH).

JAYS THROUGH STARLING — Blue Jays showed up in several spots in s. Idaho: in the Idaho Falls area (VR, ML); west of Terreton (SR); at Rupert, Ketchum, and Oakley (WHS); and in the Moscow area (DHo, C.B.). At Culdesac, Idaho, the bird that had arrived in October was still coming to the feeder at the period's end (WH). The Blue Jay that had appeared at Helena in the fall wintered there and was seen as late as Jan. 26 (GH). One wintered at feeders on Grant Cr. 6 mi northwest of Missoula (JD). Forty Pinyon Jays were counted at Silver L., Ore., Jan. 22 (CM). A Bewick's Wren was seen Dec. 19 at Malheur N.W.R., where the species is starting to become regular (CDL). A number of observations of Bewick's Wren in Asotin County and one in Whitman Co., Wash., suggest that the species is bordering on common in that area (m.ob.). One at Mosier, Ore., Feb. 14 was noteworthy (DL, VT). A Winter Wren, rare in winter at Kamloops, was sighted there Dec. 20 (RRH). One was found at Cherry Springs on Mink Cr. south of Pocatello Dec. 5 (CW), and another was at Knox Canyon east-southeast of Rockland, Idaho, Dec. 14 (CHT, CW).

A Ruby-crowned Kinglet apparently wintered in Lakeview (M & AA), and Frenchglen had two Dec. 19 (CDL). The species was sighted at Wenatchee and Tallant Cr. west of Okanogan in mid-February (PM, S.A.S.). A few made a short visit to Columbia N.W.R. in January (WRR). Grand Coulee, Wash., had a ♀ Mountain Bluebird Jan. 16 (MD). Single Hermit Thrushes were found near Wallula Feb. 9 (C.B.), near Wenatchee Jan. 1 (BJ), and on the Oliver-Osoyoos CBC Dec. 28 (SC *et al.*). Bend had two Dec. 19 (TC, CM). American Robins numbered in the thousands at several localities in e. Washington and the s. Okanogan Valley, B.C. At Yakima, first reported Jan. 26, their numbers were estimated at 40,000 within about a 5-block area Feb. 7 (BB). Lakeview had large numbers in mid-February. Wenatchee and Spokane experienced a tremendous invasion of Varied Thrushes, and n. Idaho had unusually high numbers. A scattering of the birds attracted attention in s. Idaho and s.e. Oregon.

Most remarkable were records of Gray Catbirds. One was identified at Helena Nov. 11, about Thanksgiving time, and Dec. 10 (HZ). One was at Vernon Dec. 27–Jan. 5 (PR *et al.*), and one was at Vaseux L. south of Penticton Dec. 29 (DC). The N. Mockingbird at Helena stayed for the CBC (GH), and one was observed east of Saddle Mountain Refuge, Othello, Wash., Dec. 18 & 22 (WRR, JC). One was sighted at Billingsly Creek W.M.A. near Hagerman, Idaho, Jan. 24 (BWe, CW). A very early Sage Thrasher appeared at Ft. Rock, Ore., Feb. 27 (TC).

Many Water Pipits appeared at Minidoka Dam near Rupert (WHS), and the species was noted at Ft. Boise W.M.A. (AL). Single birds at Bend Jan. 9 (CM) and Frenchglen Dec. 19 (CDL) made the only other reports. Bohemian Waxwing numbers were impressive at Klamath Falls, which had flocks of 400–500, and Silver L. had 240 Jan. 22. The largest number reported was over 2400 on the Idaho Falls CBC, and many were in the Rupert area. Elsewhere, moderate numbers to very few were reported—Spokane's CBC total of 650 was low for there. Tallant

Cr west of Okanogan counted 600+. The Idaho Falls CBC had 399 Cedar Waxwings, a high number. A Loggerhead Shrike near Oliver, B.C., was notable (DBr). Up to 20,000 Eur. Starlings wintered in Yakima.

VIREOS THROUGH BUNTINGS — A Hutton's Vireo was found in McNary Park, Umatilla, Dec. 5 for a very unusual record (TG). Single Orange-crowned Warblers were seen in Richland Dec. 3–Feb. 1 (REW), and one was found in Yakima Feb. 5 (B & GR). One was along the Link R. at Klamath Falls Jan. 3; there are at least 3 other winter records for that area in the last 10 years (SS). One or more Yellow-rumped Warblers were sighted at Vernon (PR), near Othello (WRR), at Bend (TC), at Frenchglen (CDL), in the Lewiston-Clarkston vicinity (C B.), and near Madras, Oregon (DA). A "Myrtle" Yellow-rumped Warbler was seen at a Boise feeder (DJ), and another appeared at Dworshak Fish Hatchery north of Orofino, Idaho (DBg, WH, MK, CV). Remarkable were a N. Waterthrush at McNary N.W.R. Nov. 28 (MD) and one in the Oliver area Dec. 28 (DC).

A Vesper Sparrow was photographed at a Klamath Falls feeder for the county's first winter record (SS). A Sage Sparrow at Ft. Rock was about 2 weeks early (TC). One was at Summer Lake W.M.A. on the same date (MA). Up to 20 Savannah Sparrows, not normally found in winter in the Klamath Falls area, were counted through early January at Miller I. (SS). One was at Osoyoos Feb. 13 (DBr), and Mabton had one Feb. 14 (DB). Yakima had three Fox Sparrows Feb. 5 (B & GR), and the Umatilla-Tricities-Walla Walla area had 4 sightings (TG, REW, CC, KK). One was in the Wenatchee area in January (RR), and one was along Joseph Cr., Asotin Co., Jan. 16 (J & DP). A Fox Sparrow and a Lincoln's Sparrow were reported at a Hayden L. feeder Jan. 1 (PH). Single Lincoln's Sparrows were identified at Osoyoos Dec. 28 (BL) and at Ft. Boise W.M.A. (AL). An amazing 6 sightings of Swamp Sparrows were obtained: one bird at Vernon Dec. 1–20 (PR *et al.*); one at Spokane Jan. 3 (JR, DR, BW); one in Walla Walla Dec. 20 to mid-January (CC) and another there afterward (LM); one near Umatilla (CC); and one at Miller I. Nov. 29–Jan. 3 for Klamath County's first record (PL, SS).

The only White-throated Sparrows reported were one at Vernon (PR) and one at Bend (TC, CM). Golden-crowned Sparrows, rare in winter in the Region, appeared at Billingsly Creek W.M.A. (CHT), in Bend (TC), in the Wenatchee vicinity (BJ, JT), and at Yakima (B & GR). The species was described as common through December and appeared once in January in Umatilla (TG). Several sightings were obtained in the Tricities area in January and February (TG, REW). Exceptionally high numbers of White-crowned Sparrows, 400+, wintered around Miller I., Klamath Falls (SS). The usual sparse scattering of Harris' Sparrows occurred. Twelve+ Lapland Longspurs accompanied large flocks of Horned Larks near Valley Falls, Ore., Jan. 18 (MA, AA), and one was with Horned Larks near Paisley, Ore., Jan. 9 (SS). One was with Horned Larks southeast of Creston, Wash., Jan. 16 (MD), and the species was seen west of Terreton, Idaho, on 2 dates in January (DM, TR). A scattering of Snow Buntings appeared in e. Washington, e. Oregon, and n. Idaho. They were more numerous in the Rupert area.

BLACKBIRDS, FINCHES — A very few Yellow-headed Blackbirds, rare in winter, were reported. Perhaps the most unusual were a few wintering in the Stevensville, Mont., vicinity (C & SC). At least two were at Columbia N.W.R. Jan. 11 (WRR); four to five appeared northeast of Warden, Wash., Dec. 31 (RF), and two visited a Kennewick feeder Jan. 9 (TG). One at Summer L. Feb. 15 was about 3 weeks earlier than the previous early date (CM). The only Rusty Blackbird sighted was one at Vernon Jan. 2 (PR). Brewer's Blackbirds, four males and one female, in Lakeview Feb. 10 were unusual (MA) as were eight at Fortine, Mont., Dec. 7 (WW). Two Brown-headed Cowbirds at Vernon Dec. 31 were noteworthy (PR, WWe).

With few exceptions, "northern" finches were in low numbers. Rosy Finches, however, appeared in good numbers, mostly in e. Washington-adjacent Idaho and at Kamloops. The

Neihart area of the Little Belt Mts., Mont., was visited by 30 Jan. 30 (LKM). That area also had three Pine Grosbeaks Jan. 31 (LKM), and a like number was sighted in the Joseph, Ore., area (MK, VM, PS). Lone Purple Finches were spotted in Umattilla Dec. 7 (MC) and at Lewiston Dec. 13 (CG). Up to 27 Cassin's Finches frequented a Lakeview feeder (MA, AA). Red Crossbills were virtually unreported. A female was noted at Waterville, Wash. (PM, S.A.S.), and 10-12 flew over the Lewis Peak road, Walla Walla Co., Jan. 17 (MD). Oddly, the count of White-winged Crossbills exceeded that of Red Crossbills. Mount Spokane hosted over 35 Jan. 24 (JA), and 10 were at Vernon Dec. 21 (RRH). Common Redpolls were decidedly scarce except at Fortine, where flocks of up to 130 were observed (WW). Pine Siskins were in short supply except for "thousands" on Mt. Spokane Jan. 24 (JA), 2 "large groups" found dead on Hwy 26 south of Troy, Mont. (MS), and a good number on the Indian Mt. CBC, Harrison, Idaho. Evening Grosbeaks were absent or in low numbers.

ADDENDUM — A window-killed Black-throated Blue Warbler was picked up in early November at Idaho Falls, * to Idaho State University (EC).

CORRIGENDA — The following sightings were not latilong firsts: White-fronted Geese at Tygh Valley, Ore. (AB 41:464)—the species is an uncommon but regular spring and fall migrant along the e. slope of the Cascades; Gray Jays at Idylwild Park (AB 41:465)—fairly common in the Blue Mts., in which this park is located; the Canyon Wren in Tygh Valley (AB 41:465)—fairly common in that area; the Three-toed Woodpecker, Hood River Co., and Black-backed Woodpecker, Idylwild Park (AB 41:465) (TC). Also, Panhandle L. (AB 40:1231) is in Pend Oreille Co., Wash., not in Idaho.

OBSERVERS — James Acton, Gil Alexander, David Anderson, Anne Archie, Merle Archie, Barbara (BaB) & Bob Boekelheide (BB), George Brady, Dwayne Brigham (DBg), Debie Brown (DB), Dave Brown (DBr), Chuck & Suzi Campbell, Dick Cannings, Canyon Birders (C.B.), Chris Carey (CCA), E. Chew, Barbara Clarke, Craig Corder (CC), Marion Corder, John Coykendall, Kathi & Tom Crabtree, Jeannette Davis, Mike Delate (MDe), Merry L. Denny, Mike Denny (MD), Christina Duchesne, Ray Duff, Dave Dunbar, Ros Eldridge, Ken English, Dave Finkelburg, Ron Friesz, Phyllis Galoway, Charlene Gamut, Russ Gebhart, G. Gerds, Devon Graham (DGr), Denny Granstrand (DG), Tony Greager, Lucinda Haggas (LHa), Larry Halverson (LH), Winnie Hepburn, Dave Holick (DHo), Denver Holt (DH), George Holton, Bill Hosford, Rick R. Howie, Peg Hughes, Eugene Hunn, Bert Jahn, Jim Johnson, Mike Johnson, Dean Jones, Jerry & Ann Kerr, Frank Kime, Ken Knittle, Merlene Koliner, Bob Krepps, Bill Lamont, Al Larson, John Laundre, Paul Lehman, C.D. Littlefield, Marty Littleton, Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society (L.C.B.A.S.), Donna Lusthoff, Larry K. Malone, Justin Mann, Phil Mattocks, Connie McCauley (CMcC), Larry McClosky, Opal McIntyre, Craig Miller (CM), Dale Miller, Carl D. Mitchell, Valerie Monschke, Larry D. Napier, Howard Oswald, Jeff & Deanna Palmer, David Pitt-Brook, Lou Potter, Colleen Powell, Wm. R. Radke, Bob & Georgia Ramsey, Sandy Random, Phil Ranson, Robin Rathman, Vida Ray (VRa), Virginia Reavill (VR), Frank Renn, Jan Reynolds, Tim Reynolds, Dick Rivers, Syd Roberts, A. Rushton, Seattle Audubon Society (S.A.S.), W.H. Shillington, Andy & Susan Seppiewski (SSt), Esther Stewart, Shirley H. Sturts, Paul Sullivan, Steve Summers (SS), Marjorie Swanson, Jerry Tangren, Verda Teale, Karen Theodore, C.H. Trost, Carole Vande Voorde, Dave Ware, Bill Webb (BWe), Cheryl Webb, Wayne Weber (WWe), Winton Weydemeyer (WW), Bart Whelton (BW), Barry Whitehill (BWh), Robert E. Woodley, Vince Yannone, Hugh Zackheim, D. Zeigler.—**THOMAS H. ROGERS, E. 10820 Maxwell, Spokane, WA 99206.**

MOUNTAIN WEST REGION

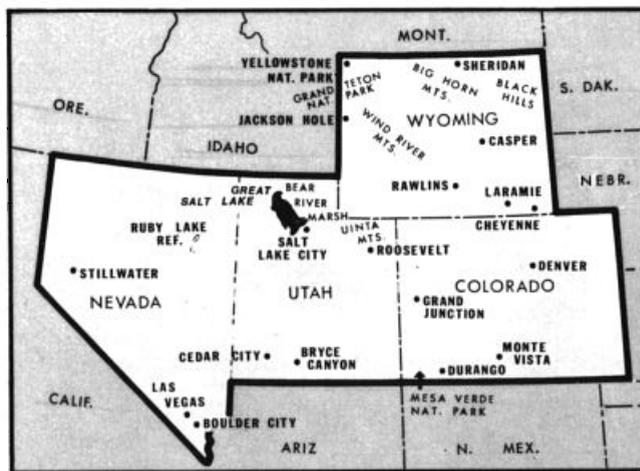
Hugh E. Kingery

A Bohemian Waxwing invasion and a number of surprising wintering passerines, but few northern incursors, marked a winter in which most of the Region experienced cold with unusually persistent snow cover. The snowpack kept temperatures down and ground-feeding birds away. The results of this generally severe winter were problematical, with 122 species recorded at Grand Junction, Colorado, up by 10 from a mild 1986-1987.

Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge, Colorado, experienced its second coldest January; that plus a limited grain supply put the waterfowl population of 17,000 into extreme stress. This caused a worse than normal avian cholera outbreak. By the end of the season, refuge personnel had picked up 4800 waterfowl victims. The victims included 17 Sandhill Cranes, but the three Whooping Cranes roosting with the infected Sandhills escaped (SBr).

Located on the treeless and windy short grass prairie near Wellington, Colorado, Hamilton Reservoir at the Rawhide power plant provided open water throughout the winter. Its relatively warm waters induced a number of water birds to winter in an unusual location. Most remarkably, individuals of all three scoter species wintered, a first for the Region. Colorado's second Lesser Black-backed Gull spent February plying its waters.

ABBREVIATIONS — † = written documentation submitted to Reg. Ed.; †† = written documentation submitted to state or local records committees; L/L/B/L = the Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area of n. Colorado; G.S.L. = Great Salt Lake; 1st Lat



= first record in a latilong (a 50 × 70 mile block outlined by one degree of latitude and longitude).

RED FACE DEPARTMENT — The Summer Regional Report omitted 2 significant records from Sheridan, Wyoming. On June 11, Downing and Widener observed the first Wyoming record of *Mississippi Kite*. They observed it flycatching almost like a nighthawk, preening, and in flight. The excellent detailed description attributed its presence to a strong weather front. The Summer Regional Report mentioned a nearly contem-

poraneous Mississippi Kite June 5 at Pierce, Colo., about halfway between Sheridan and the kites' closest nesting area.

Then on July 8, Collins and Downing discovered an **Orchard Oriole** family: two adults feeding three fledglings, with a first-year onlooker; this provided the first nesting record for n. Wyoming.

LOONS TO WATERFOWL — Las Vegas had its first Pacific Loons in 4 years, two on Feb. 19 with four Com. Loons. At Rawhide, one to six Horned Grebes and about 10 W. Grebes wintered (PO, DL), and three to four wintered at Pueblo, Colorado. Las Vegas, at the peak on Feb. 19, had 1000 W. Grebes and 50–100 Clark's Grebes (VM). The usual bunch of December records of W. Grebes included one at Sheridan that would dive and surface with 1"–2" ice crystals on its head. The rising sun created a rainbow-colored halo as the grebe shook its head trying to dislodge the ice (HD). Two Am. White Pelicans, incapable of flight, wintered on the Bear R. flats near Brigham City, Utah (KD, KA), and another wintered at St. George (Utah's "Dixie," JG). Two Double-crested Cormorants wintered at Pueblo, and one wintered at Boulder (A.V.A.S., B.A.S.). At Ruby Lake N.W.R., Nev., 115 Great Blue Herons wintered. An early Snowy Egret arrived at Fish Springs N.W.R., Utah, Feb. 21 (ES et al.). A Green-backed Heron wintered at St. George, for the 4th winter record there (SH).

Nevada's Lahontan Valley held 74,419 ducks Dec. 7, including 23,170 Green-winged Teal, 19,105 N. Shovelers, 10,200 N. Pintails, and 9070 Ruddy Ducks (ST, KM, TB). Ruby Lake's December ducks increased; the 3616 included 800 Mallards, 775 Ruddies, and 740 Green-winged Teal (SB). Rawhide on Feb. 9 had 6748 ducks, including 5600 Mallards (RR).

At the peak on Dec. 3, Stillwater Ref., Nev., had 1490 Tundra Swans; 25–30 wintered (ST, KM, TB). One that wintered at Salida, Colo., became quite tame (RE). Casper reported 60 swans Dec. 7 (M.A.S.). Trumpeter Swans produced 17 cygnets in Jackson Hole, Wyo., up from six last year. Wintering populations reached 40 at Yellowstone N.P. (TM) and 18–20 at Ruby Lakes (down—SB).

Colorado reported 15 Greater White-fronted Geese, twice last winter's total; eight were at Latham Res. near Greeley Feb. 26 (F.C.A.S.). A Brant stayed at Latham Feb. 21–Mar. 6 (JMa, ph. JC, 1st Lat). At Delta, Colo., 4000 Mallards on Dec. 19 was the biggest flock Janos had seen there. At Denver, two to four Greater Scaup wintered; single ones stopped at Casper Feb. 28–29 (†JL, LR, J & VH) and Pueblo Feb. 25 (VT). Oldsquaws stopped near Antelope I. on G.S.L. Feb. 21–Mar. 2 (CK), Denver Dec. 12 (D.F.O.), and Casper Feb. 16 & 21 (JH, LR). Rawhide's winter scoters numbered one to two Blacks, three Surfs, and one to four White-wingeds (RR, WH, PO); the Region has never



An uncommon comparison: male Lesser Scaup (left) and male Greater Scaup (right) on Prospect Lake, Wheat Ridge, Colo., Jan. 12, 1988. Note the obvious difference in head shape. Photo/Dave Leatherman.

had any scoter winter before. Other scoters included one Surf Dec. 3 at Grand Junction (CD) and one Surf plus six White-wingeds at G.S.L., Jan. 9 (CK). Hooded Mergansers wintered—four at St. George, two to six at Rawhide, and 20–25 at Pueblo.

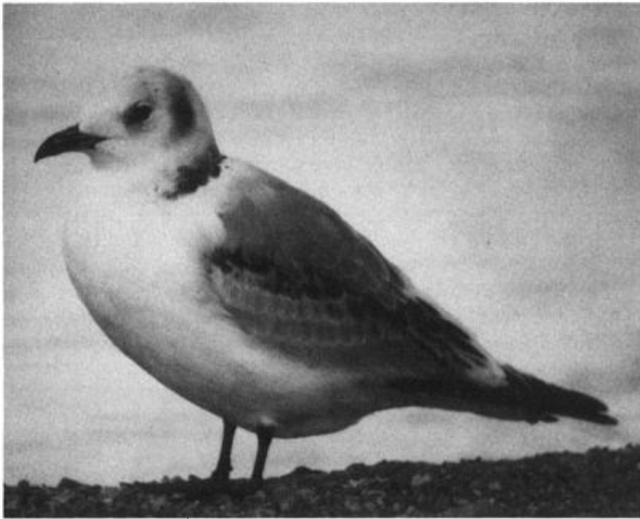
HAWKS TO CRANES — A big mouse and vole outbreak at Sheridan brought in especially high numbers of raptors (HD); the distribution Regionally, though, seemed spotty. Big counts of Bald Eagles included 109 at Salt Lake City Feb. 27 (MH), 65 in Lahontan Valley in February (down from last year, when a big fish die-off attracted them), and 70 at Glen Canyon Nat'l Recreation Area, Utah (VM). Regional observers have expressed concern about the status of N. Harriers, but they reported more this year than in either of the past 2 winters. Nevada reported four Red-shouldered Hawks, including one that wintered near Las Vegas. Denver reported more Red-tailed and fewer Rough-legged hawks (D.F.O.). Counts of Rough-legged Hawks varied depending on location: one trip Feb. 13 to n.e. Colorado found none, but another a few miles to the south found 20 (D.A.S., H & UK). Over the winter at Sundance, Wyo., Adams tallied 52 observations of Rough-leggeds—more than the 32 recorded by all B.A.S. observers. Ruby Lake counted a normal 10–15 wintering (SB, CB). At Logan, they decreased from the 31 found on the CBC to 17 on a mid-winter count Jan. 30 (Br. A. S.). At Sheridan, a Golden Eagle attacked a coyote; watching from a small airplane, the observer saw the coyote roll over from the impact and then get up and run (BW). Reports of Merlins burgeoned. They wintered throughout, from Las Vegas to Sheridan, and in both urban and rural locales. Top counts included seven that wintered at Logan and eight seen Dec. 6 on a 7-mi stretch of road near Rawhide (CC).

Gray Partridges have recovered from a low point in their cycle; reports came from Sheridan, Yellowstone, and Logan. A Blue Grouse wandered into a cemetery in urban Salt Lake City Feb. 21 (DJ). Grand Junction reported a mid-winter Sora Jan. 6–13 only (†CD). An early Com. Moorhen showed up at Fallon, Nev., Feb. 21 (ST). The Sandhill Cranes began to arrive in the San Luis Valley Feb. 11, 2 weeks early. Still locked in deep winter, temperatures nightly dropped to 10 below zero, with 6 inches of crusty snow. This put the cranes into stress, and 17 died of cholera before conditions ameliorated in late February (SBr). By then, some had started moving even farther north: at Grand Junction 19 flew over on Feb. 25 (BT). Two Sandhills wintered at St. George (BD).

SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS — The Region recorded an unprecedented number of winter shorebirds. Many of the records occurred at G.S.L., whose habitat may approximate that of the n. sea coast. The tally included 15 Am. Avocets to Dec. 20, 50 Greater and one Lesser Yellowlegs to Dec. 31, Least Sandpipers Jan. 4–Feb. 5, eight late Dunlins (date omitted from report), and three early Long-billed Dowitchers Feb. 27. As they have for several winters, Sanderlings wintered at G.S.L., with counts of 25 on Dec. 27 and 14 on Jan. 8 (KA, KD, MH, ES, CK). Photographs and detailed descriptions documented a **Baird's Sandpiper** found at G.S.L. Jan. 29–30, reviewed and confirmed by various national experts. It might have represented the first documented mid-winter record for North America (††ES, CK; details to be published elsewhere).

Two Am. Avocets wintered at Las Vegas (VM). They began arriving at Carson L., Nev., Feb. 24 (KM, LD). As usual, one Greater Yellowlegs wintered at Denver; two were at Boulder Dec. 6 (B.A.S.). An early spring Greater Yellowlegs and five Least Sandpipers Feb. 20 at Provo, Utah (MW), surprised observers. Greeley, Windsor, and Loveland, Colo., each had a December Dunlin. The 75 Com. Snipe tallied at Denver over the winter doubled the average count of the previous 3 years.

A Franklin's Gull at L. Mead Jan. 15 gave s. Nevada its first winter record (VM). Denver had fewer gulls this winter—D.F.O. field trips counted only 1778 Ring-billeds and 437 Herring. Single Herring Gulls stopped at Grand Junction Dec. 19 and Cortez Feb. 29 (CD, LB). A Thayer's Gull wintered at L. Mead (VM, J & MC), the first one in some years, but Utah



Black-legged Kittiwake in first-winter plumage on Lake Mead, Nev., winter 1987-1988. Photo/Joe Kaplan.

reported "usual" numbers. The two reported from n.e. Colorado represented a drastic decline from eight last year and 39 the previous winter. Rawhide attracted Colorado's 2nd **Lesser Black-backed Gull** Feb. 5-28, a well-marked adult seen by many observers (†TG et al.). Colorado reported 13 Glaucous Gulls and G.S.L. had three, both about average. An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake wintered at L. Mead, the first in s. Nevada since February 1981 (VM, ph. JK). Lake Mead also had winter records of single Forster's Terns, Dec. 19 and Feb. 19 (VM).

DOVES TO CORVIDS — Casper and Jackson, Wyo., each had a Mourning Dove in December, and Boulder had four to 12 Dec. 6-Jan. 8. At Pueblo and Ordway, Colo., 150-200 wintered. A Greater Roadrunner hung around the Watts' yard in Penrose, Colo., Dec. 8-23, and another was seen at nearby Canon City Feb. 27 (DM); both sites lie at the n.w. corner of the Colorado range.

Snowy Owls barely made it into the Region: single birds were on either side of Sundance, Wyo., Dec. 29-Jan. 23 and Feb. 14 (JA). Reports of Long-eared Owls went up; observers found them in 8 locations in 3 states. In addition, 20 Long-eareds and 10 Short-eareds flushed from a draw near Sheridan Dec. 26; the outbreak of mice and voles probably attracted the owls to Sheridan. At Logan, Utah, the number of Short-eareds declined from 19 on the CBC to three on the mid-winter count Jan. 30, probably because of the snow blanket. The presence of eight Short-eareds along Utah's Wasatch Front seemed encouraging after the declining numbers of the past few years. The number also went up in e. Colorado, with 11 reported. One Boreal Owl appeared at Jackson (KDu, PMa), and in n. Colorado snow-birders found four. Two Anna's Hummingbirds wintered for the 2nd year at Las Vegas; after their first appearance in 1974, they have achieved close to resident status in s. Nevada (VM).

The dozen Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reported from Rye north to Ft. Collins suggested that a small contingent may winter along the Colorado Front Range; two of them, in Boulder and Ft. Collins, definitely wintered (SW, JMa). A Red-bellied Woodpecker wintered in Wray, Colo. (BB, 1st Lat winter). At Moab, Utah, a hybrid flicker displayed the yellow wings and tail and the red nape crescent of a Yellow-shafted (NB). A Vermilion Flycatcher stopped at the White Rocks Nature Conservancy site near Boulder Dec. 13 (BK). Horned Larks flocked in great numbers—Cedar City, Utah, had 6000-8000 at the beginning of the winter, although the numbers gradually dropped to an average 2000-3000 by February (SH). Cedar City had its first Steller's Jay in town in 9 years Jan. 1+ (SH), but Salt Lake City and Ogden had none. Blue Jays wintered in Logan and in

Cody, Wyo (SV, EG) One of several montane species in the Las Vegas valley over the winter, six Scrub Jays wintered at Corn Creek, where they cached nuts from a pecan tree (VM). Clark's Nutcrackers declined at Logan from 186 on the CBC to four on the mid-winter count (KA, KD).

TITMICE TO THRASHERS — A Plain Titmouse wintered in an Ogden backyard, a 1st Lat record (JN). Many Colorado observers commented on flocks of Com. Bushtits, from Cortez ("I don't see how anyone can count these little guys the way they flit in and out of bushes"—LB) to Denver (MK, H & UK, 1st Lat) and Loveland (JCh). Most areas reported substantially fewer Red-breasted Nuthatches and many more Brown Creepers, including 107 over the winter in Boulder, 29 on D.F.O. field trips (cf. 5-16 in previous years), 17 in Yellowstone (more than White-breasted Nuthatches—JZ). Grand Junction had five Blue-gray Gnatcatchers Dec. 31 (CD), and Beaver Dam Wash had 10 Black-taileds Feb. 5-6, a high count (CK). Bands of three to six E. Bluebirds wintered at Denver and Pueblo, both 1st Lat winter records (WF, A.V.A.S.), and 100-200 Mountain Bluebirds wintered at Pueblo. Observers reported fewer Townsend's Solitaires in urban areas, and there were at least 2 instances of aggression or distress that solitaires displayed toward Bohemian Waxwings. Perhaps the solitaires and waxwings compete for the same food, and the solitaires found their food supply wiped out, or threatened, by the roving waxwings.

A Hermit Thrush wintered in Mowbray's Las Vegas backyard, and individuals were found Dec. 30 in n.e. Colorado (JR); Jan. 6 at Layton, Utah (CK); and Feb. 14 at Salt Lake City (DJ). Fall's influx of Varied Thrushes continued into the winter with eight reported from Logan, Casper, Denver, and Ft. Morgan. The winter brought a remarkable 5 reports of Gray Catbirds, from Yellowstone, Casper, and Hotchkiss, Wyo., and from Florence and Boulder, Colo., the latter wintering (EM). A Jan. 17 Sage Thrasher provided a rare mid-winter record at Pueblo (MY). The winter attracted an unusual number of Brown Thrashers—they wintered at Salida, Denver, and Cheyenne, and 12 others occurred at 10 locations in Colorado plus Las Vegas. A Curve-billed Thrasher spent January coming to millet scattered on a front porch in Littleton, Colo. (HK, DL et al., 1st Lat). Utah's last reported Le Conte's Thrashers were found at Beaver Dam Wash in February 1985; a several days' search there in January and February failed to find even one (ES).

WAXWINGS — A giant incursion of Bohemian Waxwings moved like a wave from n. Wyoming to the most s. parts of the Region. The season began with, for Wyoming, modest numbers (1093 on the Sheridan CBC, 150-300 in Dubois in December). Huge counts on Front Range CBCs—11,000 at Boulder, 5871 at Denver, for example—were followed by flocks (many with thousands of birds) cruising about every reporting site in Colorado and almost every one in Utah. As winter progressed, perhaps after exhausting the available food supply, they moved on further south. Along the s. tier, the biggest numbers arrived in February: Penrose had 1000+ Feb. 12, Colorado City 400 Feb. 21, Salida 200 Feb. 25. Several hundred wintered in Grand Junction and Glenwood Springs. In Utah, Cedar City hosted 1000 Jan. 1+. Nevada shared this largesse: 30-50 at Ruby Valley, one at Corn Creek Feb. 9, and 25 at Las Vegas Feb. 5. Then, contrariwise, big numbers returned to n. Wyoming: Cody had 1000 Feb. 28-29, and Jackson saw its first flock Feb. 24.

WARBLERS TO BUNTINGS — The winter reports of Yellow-rumped Warblers ranged from the typical wintering sites of Provo, Cedar City, Grand Junction, and Pueblo to more unusual spots like Yellowstone (Dec. 19, Jan. 24—JZ) and the 7th floor of a Boulder apartment 3 times in January (BK). At Logan, a tardy, transient Townsend's Warbler came Dec. 14 (KD). A Palm Warbler stopped Dec. 22 along a downtown Denver greenway (DB). Boulder had a Wilson's Warbler Dec. 5-10 (A & GB). Denver's ♂ N. Cardinal wintered, with a female seen

nearby Dec. 16 (MKr, SN). A Black-headed Grosbeak survived at Sheridan Dec. 20+ until a cat caught it; rescued before disaster and nursed to health, it will be liberated in spring (HD). Two Green-tailed Towhees stopped at Denver in December (CW, DB), and one showed up in Grand Junction Feb. 14 (CD). Rufous-sided Towhees wintered along the Front Range and in Utah and Nevada; one observed 4 times Jan. 11–Feb. 29 provided the first winter record for Eagle (JM). A Brown Towhee found s. of Cortez, Colo., Dec. 22 proved elusive: observers had to jump on rocks in which it hid and make a lot of noise to make a positive ID (CD, 1st Lat).

Field Sparrows continued their modest incursion into the Region, with December records at Wheat Ridge, Boulder, and Lyons, Colo. (JT, B.A.S., HL). An odd Vesper Sparrow appeared at Loma, Colo., Jan. 24 (CD). Wintering Lark Buntings strayed N to s. Nevada—three Jan. 1 at Logandale and two Feb. 5–21 at Las Vegas, the first reports since 1983 (RCR, VM). One Golden-crowned Sparrow wintered at Denver Dec. 3–Feb. 8 (J & VH, EV); others were at Eldorado Springs, Colo., Dec. 17 (†PY) and Springdale, Utah, Dec. 26 (MH, JLe). White-crowned Sparrows wintered as far north as Cody, Wyo., and good numbers stayed at L/L/B/L (126 in January) and Boulder (88 over the winter). Even a Burlington, Colo., farm had single birds Dec. 18 and Jan. 22 (SH). On Jan. 6 at Layton, a **McCown's Longspur** fed on a path plowed through snow, for Utah's 3rd record (†CK ph.). Lapland Longspurs joined the Horned Lark flocks in good numbers, with reports from Cheyenne to Last Chance, Colo. (115 Feb. 20). The Region attracted few Snow Buntings, although Logan had two Jan. 13 (JS); a small flock of 12 at Rawlins, Wyo., Feb. 11 was the largest reported (CKe).

BLACKBIRDS TO FINCHES — Red-winged Blackbirds returned to Jackson by the early date of Feb. 23 (BR). Even Yellow-headed Blackbirds had arrived at Ruby Valley Feb. 26, 44 days earlier than in the previous year (CB). The Rusty Blackbird Jan. 5–13 at Grand Junction fed in a large cattail marsh, acting a bit like a Virginia Rail at times and like thrushes at other times (RL, †CD ph. 1st Lat). Great-tailed Grackles wintered for the first time in Colorado, at both Del Norte and Grand Junction (JJR, RL, CD ph.) and for the first time at Ruby Valley (CB). Cedar City notched its first winter record, a singing male Feb. 10 (SH).



Rosy Finches roosting in old Cliff Swallow nests under Interstate 80 near Cheyenne, Wyoming, winter 1987–1988. Photo/Ann King.

S.A.

Rosy Finches seemed more numerous; the wheeling flocks of 50–500 ranged all over c. Colorado. At Ruby Valley, a flock of 500 rolled over rock outcrops Jan. 5 and for 2 weeks swarmed over a feeder (“They sure can pack it in”—CB). Sheridan had 500 Jan. 14, but a few of these suffered an ignoble fate: perching on wires near a transformer box, some were electrocuted, and electricity to a nearby ranch was cut off (HD). The box was re-wired—not for the birds but for the ranch’s electricity supply. In Cheyenne, Ann King discovered that Rosy Finches roosted under an interstate highway bridge, in old swallow nests. This behavior extends to the Mountain West a roosting habit reported from Washington 57 years ago in *Bent’s Life Histories*.

The Region had only a few Red Crossbills—176 reported, including 100 at Ft. Collins Feb. 20 (JCh)—and one White-winged, at Salt Lake City Jan. 29 (CK). Wyoming observers noted a dearth of Com. Redpolls, and only 3 Colorado locations mentioned them. Killpack banded 1168 Pine Siskins Jan. 1+, including 126 in one day. Boulder and L/L/B/L reported 1603 of them over the winter. Utah had good numbers of Evening Grosbeaks, with 1519 on the Logan mid-winter count, 100 wintering at Cedar City, and six to seven at Beaver Dam Wash Jan. 1 and Feb. 27 (ES).

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SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona

Janet Witzeman and David Stejskal

The invasion of montane species into the lowlands, which began in the fall, continued through the winter. This winter's movement included even jays, which do not always accompany other montane species during these periodic incursions.

Another phenomenon that characterized this winter was the occurrence of many species (especially waterfowl and sparrows) that were present in higher numbers than usual.

A few rarities added spice to the season.

ABBREVIATIONS — B.T.A. = Boyce Thompson Arboretum; L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; P.R.D. = Painted Rock Dam; S.P.R. = San Pedro River.

LOONS THROUGH IBISES — A Pacific Loon, not unexpected but still uncommon, was seen on L. Havasu Dec. 13 (JD, GR, CM). The only Horned Grebes reported were one northeast of Phoenix Jan. 10 (RBr) and one at P.R.D. Dec. 11 at least to Jan. 16 (PL, DH). A **Red-necked Grebe**, in basic plumage, was discovered among the Eared and Western grebes on Roosevelt L. Feb. 17 (FD, Driscoll, M. Cross); there have been only 2 previous state records, both from the L.C.R.

An Am. White Pelican with a broken wing was present at Alamo L. from at least Jan. 15+ (RH). An imm. Brown Pelican, uncommon in winter, was present at Imperial Dam Dec. 23–31+ (m.ob.). Eleven Double-crested Cormorants, unusual away from the L.C.R. and lakes, were observed along the Salt R., s.w. Phoenix, Jan. 16–22 (DS, T & RJ). An Olivaceous Cormorant was present again on Patagonia L., where it was observed Feb. 26–28 (MD et al.), and one was seen at Pena Blanca L. Jan. 22 (GM).

An Am. Bittern, an uncommon winter resident, was present at Nogales from Jan. 23+ (RDU et al.). An unusually large group of Great Egrets (60–70) and 10 Snowy Egrets were observed along the Salt R., s.w. Phoenix, Jan. 16 (DS, T & RJ); both species are uncommon in winter away from the L.C.R. and large reservoirs. A White-faced Ibis was seen at Topock Marsh Feb. 2 (GM).

WATERFOWL — Eight Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, present during the fall at Avondale sewage ponds, southwest of Phoenix, remained at least to Jan. 16 (DS, SGa). A Tundra Swan was observed on Roosevelt L. Dec. 15–16 (R. Jackman, J. Donato), and one on lower Tonto Cr. Jan. 24–Feb. 1 (RMe, HM) may have been the same individual. Another Tundra Swan was seen at Sullivan L., Prescott, Feb. 29 (fide BT). Greater White-fronted Geese were reported from Tucson, where four were seen Dec. 14 (G. Porter), with one remaining through the period, and from P.R.D., where one was seen Jan. 23 (DH). Individual Ross' Geese were reported on the upper S.P.R. through the period (TC, DK); one was in Chino Valley north of Prescott Jan. 16–21 (BT et al.); and one was in e. Tucson all winter at least to Feb. 6 (m.ob.). Canada Geese were unusually common in areas south and west of and around Phoenix, where at least 350 were counted during the winter (m.ob.).

More than the usual numbers of Wood Ducks were reported during the period: 10 in the Phoenix area (m.ob.), at least five in Tucson (m.ob.), a male at Parker Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM), and a male at Pena Blanca L. Jan. 22 (GM). An unusual concentration of 350+ Green-winged Teal was observed at Willcox Jan. 6 (GM). A large flock of 100+ Gadwall was observed below Lee's Ferry in late January (V. Mowbray). No fewer than six ♂ Eur. Wigeons were present during the winter: three in the Phoenix area (R. VanSwinderen, L. Hatcher, PB et al.), one at Yuma (fide RBr), one at Prescott, and one at Montezuma Well



(fide CT). Two Greater Scaup were seen at Parker Dam Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM), and a ♂ Greater Scaup was seen below Parker Dam Jan. 9 (RF, RN). An Oldsquaw was discovered at a pond south of Phoenix Jan. 18 (PB). An imm. White-winged Scoter, rare in Arizona, was discovered at Silverbell L., Tucson, Jan. 1 (ph. JL, TG, S. Loch); the individual at B.T.A. remained into the first week in December (m.ob.). Four Barrow's Goldeneyes were seen below Parker Dam Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM); 17 (including two ad. males) were counted above Parker Dam Feb. 1 (GM).

Hooded Mergansers were unusually common this winter, with 10 in Scottsdale east of Phoenix, one at the Hassayampa Preserve south of Wickenburg, two in Tucson, three at Guevavi Ranch, and two at Kino Springs (m.ob.). Common Mergansers were not only more numerous than usual, but appeared in areas where they are not usually found: a female at B.T.A. Jan. 14–24 (L. & T. Watson, B. Odear) was the first for that locale; about 60 were counted along the Salt R., s.w. Phoenix, Jan. 16–22 (DS, T & RJ); two were reported at Guevavi Ranch Feb. 26 (PS); three were seen at Cook's L. Dec. 9 and one at Willcox Feb. 29 (GM); plus up to nine were on the S.P.R. Jan. 21–Feb. 19 (TC, DK). A Red-breasted Merganser was seen at Tucson Dec. 4 (J. Holloway).

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS — An Osprey, uncommon in winter, was observed in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN). A ♀ Bald Eagle that fledged from a nest on the Verde River was radio tracked to British Columbia, then found again in December near Martinez L., Imperial N.W.R., along with one adult and 10 imm. Bald Eagles (G. Hunt, D. Von Gonten). Three other Bald Eagles that fledged in summer 1987 were tracked to Canada and Montana, then found back again on the Salt and Verde rivers in December (fide TG). The ad. N. Goshawk seen in n. Phoenix in late November was seen again Dec. 12 (DS). Two Wandering Harris' Hawks were found at Canoa Ranch Jan. 13; one was at Green Valley Feb. 9; and three were along Joshua Tree Parkway north of Wickenburg Feb. 3 (GM). Three Harris' Hawks seen north of Alamo L. Feb. 20 (RH) may have been from the captive breeding program on the L.C.R. or wanderers from farther southeast. Four "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawks were reported: one at Mammoth Dec. 9 (GM), one at Benson Dec. 9 (KK, RBo, SGo), one at McNeal Jan. 1–Feb. 13 (TC, DK), and one in Chino Valley Jan. 16–21 (BT et al.). A Crested Caracara, north of its usual range, was seen near Gila Bend Dec. 29 and Jan. 14 (S. Burge, R. Witzeman, D. Todd). Another individual was seen north of Marana Jan. 1 (BK). At least 15 Merlins,

many more than usual, were reported from around the state during the winter (m.ob.).

Four Am. Avocets, scarce in the Phoenix area in winter, were at the El Mirage ponds Dec. 4 (DS, SGa), and six were in s.w. Phoenix Jan. 16 (DS, TJ); two were reported at Yuma Dec. 29 (BB et al.), and one was at Topock Marsh Feb. 2 (GM). Individual Lesser Yellowlegs, uncommon in winter, were at El Mirage pond, s.w. Phoenix, Dec. 4 (DS, SGa) and at P.R.D. Feb. 20 (DH). A Solitary Sandpiper in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN) represented one of only a few winter records for the state. Three Long-billed Curlews at Chino Valley Jan. 16 (BT et al.) represented one of only a few winter records for Yavapai County. Western Sandpiper, an irregular, uncommon early winter visitor in small numbers, was unusually common this winter: six were observed at the El Mirage pond Dec. 4 (DS, T & RJ), with four still present there Jan. 16 (TC, DS, T & RJ); five were reported west of Tucson and four north of Tucson in early December (m.ob.); one was at P.R.D. Dec. 11 (PL); and one was at Willcox Dec. 13 (ph. PL). There were higher numbers of Dunlins as well: eight were at the El Mirage ponds Dec. 4, with six still present Jan. 16 (DS, SGa, T & RJ); plus one was at the Nogales sewage pond Jan. 13 (GM). Two Com. Snipe were observed at Tuba City Jan. 10 (S. Studebaker); there are few winter records for n. Arizona. A Com. Snipe at B.T.A. Feb. 27 (R. Hirst) was new for that locale.

California Gulls in very small numbers have been recorded irregularly in winter away from the L.C.R., but unprecedented was the large number of adults (21) seen at P.R.D. Dec. 11 (PL). Two late, or wintering, Caspian Terns were observed north of Yuma Dec. 23 (CM, BB, M. Patten). There are few winter records for Forster's Tern, so unusual were the two at P.R.D. Dec. 11 (PL), up to three at Imperial Dam Dec. 23–31 (CM et al.), and three at Topock Marsh Feb. 2 (GM).

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — An imm. Band-tailed Pigeon in n.w. Phoenix Dec. 9 (L. Bustard, fide RBr) represented one of only a few winter records for the state. Two ♂ **Ruddy Ground-Doves**, observed at Green Valley Nov. 22–Jan. 3 (ph. †DG et al.), provided the 2nd record for that area; another male was found in the foothills of the Tucson Mts. Dec. 4 (ph. SL, JL, GM). There have been 6 previous state records, all since 1981. A Spotted Owl, spotted in a juniper tree in Bee Canyon on Tonto Cr. north of Roosevelt L. in late February (ph. N. Lucas, C. Lenihan), was at a lower than usual elevation. Another Spotted Owl was discovered north of Globe Feb. 12 (C. & B. McKusick).



Spotted Owl in Bee Canyon, Tonto Creek, Ariz., March 1, 1988. Photo/Neil Lucas.

An ad. ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird, casual in winter, was seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN), and another male was observed south of Phoenix at Ahwatukee Feb. 8 (PB). Up to two Violet-crowned Hummingbirds were present in Bisbee Dec. 1–12 (ph. A. & M. Cordano); there have been about 6 previous winter records. A ♂ Blue-throated Hummingbird frequented Portal feeders Feb. 13–23 (fide S & WS).

Unprecedented numbers of Green Kingfishers were found wintering. Three that were present all fall on the upper S.P.R. were still present Dec. 19, and the male remained through the winter (TC, DK). Individuals were also reported at Guevavi Ranch at least through December (m.ob.), at Nogales Dec. 19+ (Jsa, TG, M) et al.), and at St. David Jan. 31 (C. Green). Continued reports of Lewis' Woodpeckers in the lowlands included one west of Phoenix Dec. 9 and one in Mesa southeast of Phoenix from mid-December to Jan. 10 (PB). Five individual Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (more than the usual one or two) were reported: an immature in n.w. Phoenix Dec. 12 (DS), an ad. male at Prescott Dec. 19 (fide CT), one in e. Tucson Dec. 20+ (B. Sutton, B. Scheibe), another in Tucson Jan. 19–Feb. 22 (D. Deifik, GG, BK et al.), and an ad. male at Benson Jan. 24 (DS, SGa). Three Red-breasted Sapsuckers were found: one at Prescott Dec. 19 (fide CT); one at Catalina State Park, Tucson, Jan. 4+ (WD, RBo); and one at the Hassayampa Preserve Feb. 4 (GM). A Williamson's Sapsucker at Tucson Dec. 2+ (KK et al.) was at a lower elevation than usual. A "Yellow-shafted" N. Flicker was seen in Prescott Dec. 19 (fide CT).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH RAVENS — An N. Beardless-Tyrannulet was seen Feb. 21–28 at B.T.A. (DH) for the 2nd consecutive winter record at that locale. One Hammond's Flycatcher was reported in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN), and another individual was seen at B.T.A. Jan. 10–Feb. 15+ (SGa, Jsa, DS). There were 4 reports of E. Phoebe: the one in Madera Canyon in late November was still present Dec. 5 (Jsa); one was found east of Tucson Dec. 12 (PL, KK); one was at the Parker oasis Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM); and one was along the Verde R. east of Phoenix Dec. 21 (BP, RP). A Dusky-capped Flycatcher, seen far west at Topock Marsh Jan. 9, provided the first winter record for the state (†RF, RN).

A **Cave Swallow**, observed near the confluence of the Salt and Verde rivers east of Phoenix Dec. 21–31 (†TG, ph. HM, MJ, RMe, DS), provided the first winter record for Arizona; the only prior winter records in the United States have been from Texas. Reports of late lingering Barn Swallows were of one in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN), five or more at Parker Dec. 12 (JD, GR, CM), and one at Tucson until Dec. 14 (WD).

Steller's and Scrub jays continued to be in evidence in the lowlands. At least two individual Steller's Jays spent the winter in Phoenix yards (RBr, G. Chaiken), up to six were present all winter at the Hassayampa Preserve (J. Cooper, TG et al.), two were seen on Pinal Cr. near Globe Feb. 4 (N. Smith), and one was in e. Tucson Feb. 6 (JBo). Six Scrub Jays were present at B.T.A. from early fall through the winter (CT, DH), one was seen in Glendale west of Phoenix Dec. 9 (PB et al.), one was observed at Parker Dec. 12 (JD et al.), and many were in Tucson throughout the season. Almost unprecedented for s.e. Arizona were the numbers of Am. Crows reported during the period: about 50 were seen between Benson and St. David Jan. 31 (CG), 60–70 were counted along the upper S.P.R. between St. David and Fairbank Feb. 1–3 (TC, DK), and a flock (perhaps the same one) was seen again near St. David Feb. 17 (DJ).

TITMICE THROUGH WARBLERS — Two Bridled Titmice seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 4 (SGa, DS) were very unusual for that location and elevation. As in the fall, Pygmy Nuthatches continued to be seen in the lowlands—one remained in n.w. Phoenix until Dec. 24 (DS), and two were seen in a Phoenix yard Jan. 10 (TCh). Individual Am. Dippers, uncommon in s.e. Arizona in winter, were observed in Sabino Canyon Dec. 25–26 (D. Lee) and in Madera Canyon until Jan. 1 (Rdu et al.). A Golden-crowned Kinglet was observed at a lowland locale along the Salt R. east of Phoenix Dec. 20+ (H. Fibel et al.).

The Rufous-backed Robin at B.T.A. remained at least to Dec. 24 (SGa *et al.*); another individual was discovered at the Patagonia Sanctuary Feb. 26+ (B. Matheny *et al.*). These represented the 3rd and 4th records of the fall-winter season. More Varied Thrushes were reported: one in Carr Canyon Dec. 19 (*fide* DD), one in the Santa Catalina Mts., Jan. 2 (*fide* D. Thayer), and one in Prescott Jan. 1-18 (J. Waddle). The Gray Catbird at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson was seen again Jan. 14 (CT). The Brown Thrasher on the upper S.P.R. at St. David remained until Dec. 7 (TC, DK); other individuals were seen at Continental east of Green Valley Dec. 27 (*fide* BS) and at Portal Dec. 27 (RMO).

A Warbling Vireo found along the Verde R. east of Phoenix Dec. 21-23 (fBP, RP, DS) represented one of only a few winter records for the state. Two extremely early individual Lucy's Warblers were observed at the Hassayampa Preserve Feb. 10 and in Phoenix Feb. 13 (SD). A Yellow Warbler, a sparse winter visitor, was seen in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 (DS, RN). A Chestnut-sided Warbler, uncommon in winter, was observed at Tucson Dec. 22 (J. Tedford). The **Pine Warbler** at Benson since early November remained until Jan. 11 (DJ, ph. GR, ph. RBo., m.ob.).

Four Black-and-white Warblers were reported: two in s.w. Phoenix Dec. 4 (DS, SGa), one in another area of s.w. Phoenix Dec. 6 and Jan. 16 (DS, RN, T & RJ), and one at Cook's L. Dec. 9 (GM). Two **Worm-eating Warblers** were found—one along Rose Cr., Sierra Ancha Mts., Dec. 5 (fF. Collins) and one at Cook's L. Dec. 9 (GM, RDo). There had been only one previous winter record. This winter's Louisiana Waterthrush records came from Sycamore Res., Santa Catalina Mts.—one on Dec. 20 (m.ob.)—and from Garden Canyon, Huachuca Mts.—one on Feb. 21 (DJ). A Painted Redstart was reported in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., Dec. 18 (RMO).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES—The following sparrows—Fox, Swamp, White-throated, Golden-crowned, and Harris', usually present in winter in small numbers—were all found in greater than usual numbers. Individual Fox Sparrows were seen at Portal all December, and a 2nd individual was there Jan. 16 (S & WS). Other singles were at Tucson Dec. 31-Jan. 1 (KN); at Patagonia Jan. 1 (T. Olson), with another individual there Feb. 21 (JBo); at Miami Dec. 10+ (JSp); and two were at B.T.A. Jan. 10 (JSA). Individual Swamp Sparrows were observed at Cook's L. Dec. 9 (RDo, GM), at Pena Blanca L. Jan. 22 (GM), at McNeal Jan. 1 (TC, DK), on the upper S.P.R. Jan. 6+ (TC, DK), at St. David Jan. 12-20 (TC, DK), at Nogales Jan. 31 (JBo), at Kino Springs all winter (m.ob.), at Patagonia Feb. 21 (JBo), and at Patagonia L. Feb. 26 (MD). There were no fewer than 35 White-throated Sparrows reported in s.e. Arizona during the winter, with up to 25 individuals in the Patagonia area alone (m.ob.). Four individual Golden-crowned Sparrows were reported: in Sabino Canyon, Tucson, to at least Dec. 13 (WR *et al.*); at Bill Williams Delta Dec. 29 (A & JP); at Tucson Jan. 23+ (KN); and in the Avra Valley west of Tucson Feb. 4 (F Hopf). As was the case last winter, there was a small invasion of Harris' Sparrows, which included individuals at Tuba City all period (*fide* CL), at Miami Dec. 15-Jan. 15 (JSp), at Tucson from late December to Jan. 27 (JP), at P.R.D. Jan. 23 (DH), at B.T.A. Feb. 18+ (C. Clark, PB, DH), and at Green Valley Feb. 27+ (J. Holloway).

A Yellow-eyed Junco was found out of range at Benson from early November to Jan. 11 (DJ). A large flock of 250 McCown's Longspurs was observed north of Elfrida Dec. 13 (PL). Several Chestnut-collared Longspurs were found west of Phoenix Feb. 27 (RBr *et al.*).

A ♂ Great-tailed Grackle was seen at Tuba City Jan. 22 (*fide* CL), the species has expanded its range to n. Arizona only in the past decade. An imm. ♂ **Streak-backed Oriole**, for one of only a few Arizona records, was discovered at Green Valley Feb. 26+ (fJK, m.ob.).

The only Purple Finch reported was one seen at Catalina S.P. Jan. 7 (B. Coffee). Cassin's Finches were observed at 3 lowland locations: a male at Bisbee Dec. 12 (TC, DK), a female at Benson Jan. 24 (DS, SGa), and two individuals at Miami Jan.

19-23 (JSp) Red Crossbills continued to be widespread in the lowlands at least 10 were seen in Tucson Dec. 2+ (KK *et al.*), one in Sabino Canyon Dec. 13 (KK, PL), eight in Phoenix Jan. 10 (TCh), six at B.T.A. Jan. 10 (DH), and two in n.w. Phoenix Feb. 27+ (DS).

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New Mexico and Northern Chihuahua

John P. Hubbard

ABBREVIATIONS — Bitter Lake = Bitter Lake Nat'l Wildlife Ref; Bosque Refuge = Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Ref, C.C.N.P. = Carlsbad Caverns Nat'l Park; E.B.L. = Elephant Butte Lake; T or C = Truth or Consequences. Place names in italics are counties.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A probable Pacific Loon was at Storrie L. Dec. 5 (JH, JV). A Clark's Grebe was at E.B.L. Dec. 18 (PJ, JS). Up to eight Westerns were at Cochiti L. (JH, JV); upper E.B.L. (PJ, JS); and Evans L., Grant (RF *et al.*), Dec. 5-Jan. 25. Twenty-two Am. White Pelicans were at Babicora, Chih., Dec. 6 (RD). Late were five Double-crested Cormorants at Morgan L., San Juan, Jan. 26 (PJ); one was at Evans L. Jan. 16-27, and 15—four with white nuptial plumes—were there Feb. 7 (RF *et al.*). An Olivaceous Cormorant was at Las Cruces Dec. 19 (EW *et al.*), and others were at Casas Grandes, Chih., Dec. 3 and Jan. 30-31 (RD). Great Egrets were at Ascension, Chih., Dec. 1 and Jan. 30 and Casas Grandes Jan. 30-31, the latter with four Cattle Egrets (RD).

At least 19 swans thought to be Tundra Swans were observed, including nine at Dry L., Quay, Dec. 18 (W. McNall), three near Mule Creek Jan. 14 (BM), one near Cliff Jan. 2-16 (M. O'Byrne *et al.*), and four near Dexter Dec. 1 (KW). Unusual were three Greater White-fronted Geese in the Farmington area (AN *et al.*); also, 16 were at Belen Feb. 8 (WH), and others were in Chihuahua at Galeana, Lago de los Mexicanos, and Babicora in December and January (RD). Up to 40 Snow Geese were at Farmington Dec. 30-Jan. 27, along with eight Ross' Jan. 2 (AN *et al.*). Fifty to 100 Ross' Geese were also at Ascension, Chih., Jan. 10-11 (AS) with others at Babicora in December and January (RD). Canada Geese included up to 44 at Zuni Dec. 17-22 (JT); 100+ near Cliff January to Feb. 7 (RF); 64 at

Mangas Springs, Grant, Jan. 3–Feb. 5 (RF); 400 in the Hondo Valley, Lincoln, Jan. 9–10 (SW); 20 near Lordsburg Jan. 13 (J. Koons); and 30 near Tularosa Jan. 5–15 and Feb. 1 (J & NH). Up to 32 Wood Ducks were in the Albuquerque area Dec. 20–Feb. 4 (HS *et al.*), with a few between Espanola and Belen, in the Farmington area, and at Bitter Lake (v.o.). Late were three Blue-winged Teal at San Rafael and a Cinnamon Teal at Zuni Dec. 22 (JT). A Greater Scaup was at E.B.L. Dec. 13 (PJ, JS), and two were at Caballo Dam Jan. 3 (BZ *et al.*). Unusual were two Surf Scoters at Evans L. Jan. 23–Feb. 20 (DZ *et al.*, ph.) and a White-winged shot near Clovis (*fide* G. Schmitt). Hooded Mergansers in the Rio Grande, Gila, and Pecos valleys totaled 33, including up to 26 at Bitter Lake Dec. 11–Feb. 19 (KW *et al.*), also, two were north of Madera, Chih., with 29 Com. Mergansers Jan. 14 (AS).

RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS — Vultures in Chihuahua included 12+ Black Vultures in the Galeana-Angostura area Dec. 3 & 29 and at Casas Grandes Jan. 30–31, plus several Turkey Vultures in the Babicora-Buenaventura area in December and January (RD). A very early Turkey Vulture was near Carlsbad Feb. 15 (SW), and an Osprey was unseasonal at Cochiti Dam Dec. 1–31 and Feb. 16 (F & RS). Single Black-shouldered Kites were near San Marcial Dec. 11 (PJ, JS), Rodeo Dec. 10 (C. Kesselheim), Columbus Jan. 7 (J. Black *et al.*), and Janos, Chih., Dec. 13 (RD). The January aerial survey of Bald Eagles in New Mexico yielded 298 birds (compared to the mean of 241 for 1979–1987), including a new high of 54 at E.B.L./Caballo L. (SOW *et al.*). One to three were near Ascension, Chih., and Madera, Chih., Jan. 10–11 (AS) and Babicora, Chih., in December and January (RD). Single submontane N. Goshawks were at Abiquiu L. (DS), Espanola (BL *et al.*), Albuquerque (LG *et al.*), and Percha Dam (BZ *et al.*) in December and January. Four Ferruginous Hawks were in the Tres Castillos, Chih., and Babicora-Buenaventura, Chih., areas in December and January (RD), and a Rough-legged Hawk was near Casas Grandes, Chih., Jan. 11 (AS) & 30 (RD). Almost 20 Merlins were reported nearly statewide in New Mexico, plus others were in the Casas Grandes, Chih., area Dec. 2–3 and Jan. 29 (RD).

A Chukar at Bitter Lake Jan. 9–15 (KW) was probably a recent release. The introduced (Rio Grande) Wild Turkeys at Bosque Refuge now number at least 200 birds (RT), and 12 Montezuma Quail in Dark Canyon, Eddy, Jan. 29 were also the presumed result of a recent introduction in the area (J. Walters). Three N Bobwhites were near Bandelier N.M. Jan. 10 (C. Judson); the species was introduced in nearby Los Alamos about 1976 (BL). Bobwhites in the lower Pecos Valley region included 12–16 in the Roswell (KW), Rattlesnake Springs (CR), and Loving (SW) areas. Unusual was a Sandhill Crane south of Farmington in December and January (J. & M. Parker); eight Greater Sandhills at Bitter Lake Dec. 11 (KW) may have been a local first. Other notable Sandhill records included 46 at Dixon Feb. 19 (JW), 560 at Sumner L. Dec. 15 (DMc), eight at Dry L. Dec. 12 (DMc), 300± east of the Sandia Mts. Feb. 21 (LH, CR), 512 near Cliff Dec. 5 (RF), and up to 50 near Tularosa Feb. 18–19 (J & NH).

In Chihuahua, Am. Avocets were near Ascension Dec. 1–2 and Jan. 30–31 (RD); a Willet was near Gomez Farias Jan. 9 (AS); and Long-billed Curlews were at Ascension Dec. 1–2 and Jan. 30–31, Babicora Dec. 4–7, and Laguna de los Mexicanos Dec. 8–9 (RD). Late were two Least Sandpipers at Morgan L. Jan. 26 (PJ) and single Wilson's Phalaropes at Zuni Dec. 12 (ph. DC) and Bitter Lake Dec. 11 (KW). Ring-billed Gull numbers increased steadily at Bitter Lake, from 217 Jan. 16–22 to 2000 Feb. 20–26 (KW); also, five were at Evans L. Feb. 16 (RF). Forster's Tern, first found in winter in New Mexico at E.B.L. in 1986–1987, were again present there—with up to five Dec. 18–Jan. 18 (JS *et al.*); another was at Las Cruces Dec. 19 (EW *et al.*).

DOVES THROUGH CORVIDS — Maximum counts of White-winged Doves included 22 at Socorro Dec. 12 (PJ), seven

to eight at T or C—Percha Dam December to February (DM *et al.*), and 20 in the Alamogordo area Dec. 20 (RJ *et al.*); also, 12 were at Majalca, Chih., Jan. 8 (AS). Maximum counts for Inca Doves were of seven at Socorro Dec. 25 (PJ), three at T or C Dec. 13 (DM), and up to 10 at Alamogordo Dec. 13–31 (JTA). Northerly for the season was a Burrowing Owl west of Magdalena Jan. 14 (PJ), and single Short-eareds were at Zuni Dec. 27 (JT), Bitter Lake Jan. 8 (KW), and probably near Madera, Chih., Jan. 12 (AS). Scores of White-throated Swifts were in the Florida Mts. in February (JV *et al.*) and at Caballo Dam in January (PJ *et al.*); two were in the Peloncillo Mts. Near Rodeo Dec. 27 (RS *et al.*). An Anna's Hummingbird was at Silver City Dec. 5–9 (J. Scholl), and two were at Las Cruces Dec. 19 (EW *et al.*). An unidentified hummingbird was at La Luz Dec. 15 (RJ *et al.*), and a *Selasphorus* was at Las Cruces Dec. 19 (EW *et al.*).

A Red-headed Woodpecker was reported in the Roswell area Jan. 30–Feb. 12 (*fide* KW); Acorn Woodpeckers were absent in the Glenwood area until one appeared Feb. 8–9 (BM). Northerly were Red-naped Sapsuckers at Zuni (DC) and Cochiti L. (CR *et al.*) Feb. 14–20. A Williamson's Sapsucker was at Dixon Dec. 4 (JW), and two each were at Majalca, Chih., Jan. 8 and Babicora, Chih., Jan. 14 (AS). Unusual was a Downy Woodpecker at Moriarty Feb. 21 (LH, CR); westerly were one to two Yellow-shafted (N.) Flickers at Santa Fe (JH), Albuquerque (HS *et al.*), and Percha Dam (BZ) Dec. 19–Jan. 3. A probable Hammond's Flycatcher was again at Percha Dam Jan. 3 (BZ *et al.*), and a W. Kingbird was near Encinillas, Chih., Dec. 10 (RD). A Violet-green Swallow at Bosque Refuge Dec. 3 (LG *et al.*) and a Barn Swallow at Caballo Dam Dec. 18 (PJ, JS) were late; early were a Cave Swallow at C.C.N.P. Jan. 22 (A. & D. Cordero), two N Rough-wingeds at Caballo-Percha dams Dec. 12 (RT *et al.*), and five Tree Swallows at T or C Dec. 17 (DM).

A vagrant Gray Jay was at Tesuque Feb. 19, for the observer's only record there in 35 years (W. Huey). One to two westerly Blue Jays were at Las Vegas (CR *et al.*) and Albuquerque (HS *et al.*) Dec. 19–20. Others included one to two at Ft. Sumner Feb. 26 (JH) and small numbers at Carlsbad (SW). The autumn influx of Steller's Jays continued at lower elevations in the southwest, with small to moderate numbers in the Gila Valley–Silver City area (RF *et al.*) and five at Percha Dam Jan. 3 (BZ *et al.*). More extensive was the Scrub Jay influx Dec. 9–Jan. 9, including small numbers at Deming (PL); lowland *Dona Ana* (BZ *et al.*); west of Alamogordo (W. Bloys, RJ); Rocky Arroyo, Eddy (JS *et al.*); Rattlesnake Springs (MF *et al.*); plus in the Rio Grande Valley near Belen (PS, RT), San Marcial (PJ, JS), and T or C (DM).

A first for the Rio Grande Valley was a **Gray-breasted Jay** at Percha Dam Jan. 3 (BZ *et al.*), and also novel were six at Mangas Springs Jan. 2 (RF). Southerly Pinyon Jays included up to 52 in the Mangas Springs area December through February (RF). Unusual were two Black-billed Magpies at Albuquerque Dec. 20 (HS *et al.*), and at least six birds and two old nests were at La Bajada, Sante Fe, Jan. 2 (JH, JV). Unusual were at least three Am. Crows near Ft. Sumner Feb. 26 (JH) and seven at Silver City Feb. 7 (D & MZ). Also notable were 298 at Farmington Dec. 30 (AN *et al.*); 50+ at El Pueblo, San Miguel, Feb. 5 (JH); and 30–40 that wintered at Mangas Springs (RF). Single Chihuahuan Ravens were at Belen Dec. 17 (WH) and Vaughn Feb. 13 (JH).

CHICKADEES THROUGH SHRIKES — Mountain Chickadees continued their lowland influx, including small numbers at Clayton (MM *et al.*), Ft. Sumner (JH), Peloncillo Mts. (RS *et al.*), Deming (PL), Las Cruces area (BZ *et al.*), and Rattlesnake Springs (MF *et al.*) Dec. 14–Feb. 26. Northerly was a Verdin at La Joya State Game Ref. Dec. 3 (LG *et al.*); notable were 60+ Bushtits near Farmington Dec. 17 (PJ) and at least 40 in the Bernalillo-Socorro area Dec. 4–Feb. 8 (LG *et al.*). Submontane Red-breasted Nuthatches included small numbers at Clayton (MM *et al.*), Dixon (JW), Espanola (BL *et al.*), Albuquerque (LG), Roswell (HH *et al.*), and the Las Cruces area (EW *et al.*). White-breasted Nuthatches also staged an influx, in-

cluding at Clayton (WC), near Rodeo (RS et al.), at Deming (PL), and in the Las Cruces area (BZ et al.).

A **Carolina Wren** at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 9, Jan. 14, and Feb. 11 (MF) was probably the same one from the autumn. Northerly House Wrens were singles at Espanola (BL et al.), near Los Lunas (WH), and at Bosque Refuge (RT et al.) Dec. 16–Jan. 1, plus several were in lowland Sierra and *Dona Ana* (BZ). A local first was a Winter Wren at Tucumcari Dec. 5 (WU), and the only other was at Percha Dam Jan. 3 (BZ). An Am Dipper was near Zuni Jan. 24 (DC), and five were in the Espanola area Dec. 27 (BL et al.). Golden-crowned Kinglets at lower elevations included up to six at Albuquerque (HS et al.), near Los Lunas (WH), at Silver City (RF et al.), and at Roswell (M Peckinpaugh) Dec. 16–Jan. 15. Northerly were two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Albuquerque Dec. 20 (HS et al.), and a probable Black-tailed Gnatcatcher was at Bosque Refuge Feb. 7 (PJ).

Three westerly E. Bluebirds were at Albuquerque Jan. 16 (LG), and up to five were near Socorro Jan. 1 (RT et al.) and Feb. 20 (PJ). Western Bluebirds were generally sparse and confined to breeding areas, with the exceptions of birds south to the Peloncillo Mts. (RS et al.), Las Cruces (EW et al.), and Rattlesnake Springs (MF). Mountain Bluebirds also generally “stayed at home,” with most dispersal in the northeast (e.g., Clayton, Laguna Huerfana area of San Miguel, and Puerto de Luna–Ft. Sumner); however, 86 were also in the Rodeo area Dec. 27 (RS et al.), and others were at C.C.N.P. Jan. 7 (MF). Townsend’s Solitaires were generally rare to uncommon statewide, although at least moderate numbers were noted at Dixon (JW) and Zuni (DC et al.)—plus in the Santa Fe area Dec. 20 (RG et al.). Northerly Hermit Thrushes included one to two at Santa Fe Jan. 15 and Feb. 11–29 (S. Boles, CR), up to seven at Zuni Dec. 11–Feb. 21 (DC), and 11 in the Albuquerque area Feb. 1–4 (WH). American Robins were numerous in the northwest and locally so elsewhere; for example, 100+ were at Santa Rosa Feb. 26 (JH). However, they were generally scarce in the piedmont and lowland areas of the south (v.o.).

Unusual were single Gray Catbirds at Tucumcari Feb. 24 (WU) and in Silver City Dec. 19 (RF et al.). Single N. Mockingbirds were singing mutedly at Clovis and Portales Feb. 27 (JH), and northerly birds were at Zuni Dec. 19–Jan. 2 (DC) and Dixon (JW). Northerly Sage Thrashers included up to four at Dixon Dec. 4 (JW), in the Santa Fe area Dec. 12–Feb. 13 (SOW et al.), near Galisteo Feb. 21 (CR), at Zuni Dec. 12–21 (DC et al.), and at Bluewater L. Jan. 25 (PJ). Westerly Brown Thrashers were singles at Los Alamos Feb. 5–29 (M. Bunker) and near Rodeo Dec. 27 (RS et al.); also, one was at Tucumcari Dec. 5–Feb. 24 (WU). Sprague’s Pipits were at Laguna de los Mexicanos, Chih., Dec. 9 and Babicora, Chih., Dec. 12 (RD). A small flock of Bohemian Waxwings was near Aztec Feb. 6 (J. & J. Rees); Cedar Waxwings were widespread in small to moderate numbers (v.ob.). Single peripheral Phainopeplas were at Sevilleta N.W.R. Dec. 31 (PS) and C.C.N.P. Dec. 4 & 23 (C. Cook et al.). Five N. Shrikes were in the Tierra Amarilla–Tres Piedras area Feb. 20 (CR et al.); singles were near White Lakes Dec. 5 (JH, JV) and Zuni Dec. 17 (JT).

WARBLERS THROUGH LONGSPURS — A northerly Orange-crowned Warbler was at Albuquerque Jan. 18–Feb. 17 (ph W. Baltosser), and another was at L. McMillan Jan. 3 (CR et al.). A winter first for the state was a Virginia’s Warbler in the Espanola area Dec. 17 (E. Espinoza). Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warblers were rather widespread, including up to five at Santa Fe (JH), Zuni (DC, JT), Albuquerque (WH), Belen-Bosque (WH), and Clovis (JH) Dec. 17–Feb. 27. Two Painted Redstarts were at Majalca, Chih. (AS), and two Com. Yellowthroats were in the las Cruces area Dec. 19 (EW et al.). Up to three N. Cardinals persisted at Rattlesnake Springs Dec. 27–Feb. 11 (CR et al.). Northerly Pyrrhuloxias included singles at Sevilleta N.W.R. Dec. 31 (RT), at Socorro Feb. 3 (SOW), near Ft. Sumner Feb. 13 (JH), and at Mangas Springs Dec. 12–Feb. 21 (RF). Up to 11 Brown Towhees were at Zuni Dec. 17–28 (JT).

Two southerly Am. Tree Sparrows were at L. McMillan Jan. 3 (SW et al.), plus two were at Galisteo Feb. 21 (LH, CR). Northerly were a Chipping Sparrow at Farmington Dec. 30 (AN et al.); Lark Sparrows in the Las Cruces area Dec. 19 (EW et al.) and at C.C.N.P. Dec. 23 (fide MF); two Sage Sparrows near Dixon Feb. 25 (JW); one to two Savannahs at Zuni Dec. 17–28 (JT); and a Lincoln’s Sparrow at Ojo Caliente Feb. 20 (CR et al.) and up to five at Zuni Dec. 17–Feb. 6 (DC, JT). Unusual were three Clay-colored Sparrows, 21 Grasshopper Sparrows, and three Baird’s Sparrows near Rodeo Dec. 27 (RS et al.); a Field Sparrow near Bosque Dec. 21 (WH); and a **Le Conte’s Sparrow** at Zuni Dec. 19 (JT). Reddish Fox Sparrows (probably *zaboria*) were near Cliff (RF et al.), Las Cruces (PL), and High Rolls (G. Smith, JTa) Dec. 15–Jan. 23. A grayish bird (probably *schistacea*) was south of Ft. Sumner Feb. 26 (JH), and a probable one was at Zuni Dec. 19 (DC, JT).

Swamp Sparrows were fairly numerous in *Dona Ana* (BZ et al.), with small numbers north to Zuni (JT) and Belen (WH) in December. White-throated Sparrows were more widespread, including singles north to Espanola (BL et al.), Las Vegas (CR et al.), and Tucumcari (WU) Dec. 19–Jan. 17. One to two Golden-crowned Sparrows were at Bosque Refuge Jan. 13–Feb. 28 (RT et al., ph. LG) and another was south of Las Cruces Dec. 15 (PL). White-crowned Sparrow numbers were low statewide. Single Harris’ Sparrows were at Farmington (AN et al.), Espanola (BC et al.), Socorro (P. Basham et al.), and Bitter Lake (KW) Dec. 27–Feb. 12. Unusual were three **White-winged** (Dark-eyed) **Juncos** in the Sandia Mts. Jan. 10–Feb. 19 (PS et al.) and three Yellow-eyed Juncos in the Peloncillo Mts. Dec. 27 (RS et al.). Northerly McCown’s Longspurs included up to 12 near Los Lunas Dec. 16 (WH) and Jan. 25–29 (PJ, JS); 55+ were near Cloverdale Feb. 4 (SOW), and two were south of Las Cruces Feb. 10 (BZ). A Lapland Longspur was near Los Lunas Jan. 25 (PJ).

ICTERIDS THROUGH CARDUELINES — One to two E. Meadowlarks were singing at Zuni Feb. 28 (DC) and west of Portales Feb. 26 (JH). Northerly Yellow-headed Blackbirds included one at Cohniti L. Feb. 14 (CR et al.) and up to 20 at Zuni Dec. 12–Feb. 29 (DC et al.). A Rusty Blackbird was at Bosque Refuge Dec. 12 (PI, CR), and two were north of there Jan. 1 (RT et al.). Northerly were five Brewer’s Blackbirds at Santa Fe Dec. 20 (RG et al.); up to 30 at Zuni Dec. 12, Jan. 2, and in February (DC); and 10–20 at Santa Rosa Feb. 13 & 26 (JH). Also northerly were 400 Great-tailed Grackles in the Farmington area in late February (B. Carr), one at Las Vegas Feb. 6 (JH, PJ), up to 29 at Zuni Dec. 19–Jan. 9 and in February (DC et al.), one at Santa Rosa Feb. 13 & 26 (JH), and 20–25 at Silver City Dec. 21 and Jan. 5 (RF). Unusual were single Com. Grackles east of Gallup Dec. 3 (A. Schmierer) and at Zuni Dec. 13 to February (DC et al., ph.). Northerly was a Brown-headed Cowbird at Zuni Dec. 20 and Feb. 25 (DC).

Rosy Finch reports included about 70 Brown-cappeds and a Gray-crowned near Laguna Huerfana Feb. 6 (JH, PJ), three Gray-crowned just east of Santa Fe Feb. 24 (SOW), and six Brown-cappeds at Cochiti Dam Dec. 28 (F & RS et al.). Also, 40–50 of both forms were near Hopewell L. Feb. 20 (CR et al.), and 10 were on Sandia Crest Dec. 19 (PS et al.). Up to 34 Pine Grosbeaks were on Sandia Crest Dec. 19–24 and Feb. 18 (PS et al.). A local first was a Purple Finch at Socorro Dec. 25–27 and Feb. 1–4 (PJ et al., ph.). Low to moderate numbers of Cassin’s Finches occurred widely west of the Canadian and Pecos valleys, including at Albuquerque (PS et al.), Las Cruces (EW et al.), and Alamogordo (RJ et al.). Unusual were 15 Red Crossbills in Albuquerque Feb. 9 (WH) and a singing male near Cochiti L. Feb. 16 (F & RS); up to 38 were in Santa Fe Dec. 20–Feb. 29 (RG et al.), including a singing male on the last date (JH). Pine Siskins were widespread although generally uncommon, occurring east to Clayton (W. Cook et al.), Portales (JH), and Rattlesnake Springs (JS et al.). Up to 52 Lesser Goldfinches were at Zuni Dec. 1–Feb. 20 (DC, JT), and one was near Portales Feb. 26 (JH). Evening Grosbeaks continued to be numerous in montane-piedmont areas essentially statewide, plus

in such areas as Farmington (AN et al.), Dixon (JW), Espanola (BL et al.), Zuni (DC et al.), Albuquerque (PS et al.), and near Alamogordo (R) et al.).

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ALASKA REGION

D.D. Gibson, T.G. Tobish, Jr., and M.E. Isleib

Winter 1987–1988 was another mild one in a series that now extends back six years in this Region. Except in the eastern Interior, where dry conditions continued to prevail, there was significantly more precipitation than in last winter (snow in most areas, rain in southeast Alaska).

CORMORANTS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A lone Red-faced Cormorant observed in flight and perched in Turnagain Arm just east of Anchorage Mar. 1 (†RLS) had probably been pushed into the area by a series of storms that included high winds from the south. There is no prior record above lowermost Cook Inlet. Wintering Great Blue Herons west of Prince William Sound are scarce, so four birds all season at Seldovia (PJB) and three at Kodiak Dec. 19 (CBC) were of interest. One of the Kodiak birds remained to at least Feb. 23 (RAM).

Wintering populations of Trumpeter Swans included about 50 birds at Blind Slough, Mitkof I., s.e. Alaska (PJW), and 100 birds on the Eyak L./R. system near Cordova (RF). Three Whooper Swans, an immature and two adults, seen at L. Andrew, Adak I., Aleutians, in December and January (JPF, EVK) provided the season's only report. In apparently normal abundance at the e. limit of their winter range, Emperor Geese numbered 1867 at Kodiak's s. end (at Sukhoi Lagoon, Sitkinak I., and Tugidak I.) on Jan. 15 (U.S.F.W.S., fide RAM), and up to 300 birds wintered in protected bays at the island's n.e. end (RAM); one adult at Seward throughout the period (RLS, REM) was an extralimital bird. Twenty-three Eur. Wigeon at Adak Dec. 4 (JPF) was a good winter count for this Region; two males wintered at Mitkof I. (PJW). At least three Canvasbacks and 11 Tufted Ducks were recorded at Adak I., c. Aleutians, December through February (JPF, RPS, fide EVK). In the Aleutians, Canvasback is a "specialty" at Adak, where it winters in small numbers. Steller's Eider is a casual winter visitant in the southeast, so a female at the Mendenhall R. mouth, Juneau, Dec. 22 (MEI) was noteworthy. A female-plumaged Hooded Merganser at Kodiak Dec. 18–30 (RAM, DWS) was the first record at that locality in several years; 10 at Mitkof I. Jan. 2 (PJW) was maximum this season.

GROUSE THROUGH GULLS — Attesting that Willow Ptarmigan numbers were high in some areas (see Autumn report), a flock of 1000 was seen north of Kotzebue Feb. 17, the largest aggregation the observer had seen in 40 years in n.w. Alaska (BU, fide TJD). The species was reported abundant in the w. Interior at Galena all winter (TOO), but no numbers were given.



Two **Sandhill Cranes** observed in flight at Mitkof I. Dec. 6 (PJW) and one that remained on the Gustavus marsh until late December (BBP) were most unusual records; one at Gustavus on Dec. 17, 1983 (CBC) was the only December record in the Region.

A **Black-bellied Plover** survived bitter coastal weather at Seward at least through Jan. 17 (RLS, TGT, DRH), the first winter record of this bird in Alaska; last season (which see) produced the first autumn records as late as November. Two of three **Long-billed Dowitchers** present on the Mendenhall wetlands in early December (see Autumn) disappeared prior to the Juneau CBC Dec. 19, but the remaining bird wintered; it was last seen in late February, foraging with ducks on the mudflats (MEI et al.). There is no previous winter record of this species either. It looks as though Com. Snipe winter, or attempt to winter, with regularity along the Alaska Pacific coast. Two were found at Anchorage Dec. 19 (RLS, MRD), the 6th local winter report, and one bird was found there Feb. 6 (RLS).

Exceptionally late Bonaparte's Gulls remained into December at both Juneau and Petersburg. The last ones recorded were 31 birds Dec. 22 in Wrangell Narrows, Petersburg (PJW).

OWLS TO WOOD-WARBLERS — A little-known resident of s.e. Alaska since at least 1866, when it was described for science from a specimen taken at Sitka, the Western Screech-Owl has gone many years with no comment from this Region. There are still few data, but either the species has become more numerous in s.e. Alaska recently or it is being sought more effectively than in the past. One was found a window kill at Juneau Jan. 1 (*MEI), and birds were reported this winter at Mitkof I. (JE, *fide* PJW) and Glacier Bay N.P. (BBP). Northern Pygmy-Owls were recorded this season at Juneau (GVV) and on Mitkof I. (PJW). A **Barred Owl** taken by a trapline on Mitkof I Jan 9 (*JE via PJW) provided Alaska's 2nd specimen record (see AB 33:205, 1979). Short-eared Owls were observed all winter on the Mendenhall wetlands, Juneau, and on the sedge flats at Gustavus (m.ob.). One was seen on the Kenai R. flats, Kenai Pen., Dec. 12 (RP, GP). If this species is an annual winter visitant on Alaska's Pacific coast, it is exceedingly scarce. Boreal Owls began calling on time Feb. 11 (RLS) in the Anchorage area, where the species is not common.

Anna's Hummingbirds were recorded erratically at Sitka, Petersburg, and Wrangell during December; one bird that remained through the period at Wrangell (*fide* PJW) was the only one known to have wintered this year. A N. ("Yellow-shafted") Flicker was seen at Anchorage Feb. 6 (DR), and at least one was reported in the Homer area in December and January (GCW). The species is casual in winter west of s.e. Alaska.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were widespread and at least locally numerous in the Cook Inlet-Kenai Pen. area this winter. Forty-two of them Dec. 19 was a record high on the Anchorage CBC. The species was not mentioned elsewhere, or after the CBC season, in the Region this winter. American Robins wintered in larger-than-usual numbers along the Pacific coast, and a few wintered as far north as Fairbanks. Varied Thrushes were common this winter at Kodiak, where they are almost absent in some years (RAM). Latest-ever records of several species came from s.e. Alaska: Hermit Thrushes reported at Juneau Dec. 19 (CBC) and at Sitka Dec. 20 (CBC) and an Orange-crowned Warbler observed at Petersburg Dec. 13 (PJW).

STARLING, SPARROWS — A flock of 200+ Eur. Starlings in Wasilla through December (RH, MTB) might have furnished a high count for Alaska. Up to 90 could be found at either of 2 sites in the Palmer area all season (DWS, MTB). One wintered in Anchorage (with a group of feral pigeons—RLS), and two near Narrow Cape Dec. 30 (RAM) were some distance from downtown Kodiak, where the species has occurred in recent winters.

American Tree, Fox, Golden-crowned, and White-crowned sparrows wintered at feeders at many coastal locations, and one Am. Tree Sparrow and an ad. White-crowned wintered as far north as a feeding station at Harding L. (AGF), 50 mi southeast of Fairbanks. Both species are casual in winter north of the Alaska Range. A Lincoln's Sparrow at an Anchorage feeder provided upper Cook Inlet's 2nd winter record; the bird was joined by a 2nd individual Feb. 26 (TGT). Three Lincoln's Sparrows at Kodiak all season (RAM) were an "average" number at the only Alaska locality where this species has been found regularly in winter. A Lincoln's Sparrow at Petersburg was joined by a 2nd on Dec. 22, and both remained the winter (PJW). At least 30 White-crowns and three Golden-crowns were accounted for at Anchorage-area feeders in February (m.ob.). A White-throated Sparrow was seen at Seward Dec. 5 (DWS) to at least Jan. 17 (RLS, TGT), but not on Feb. 2 (RLS); another wintered at a Mendenhall valley, Juneau, feeder (MEI). And one Harris' Sparrow wintered at a Mendenhall valley feeder this year. Five McKay's Buntings, which probably win-

tered, were noted at the Kotzebue dump Feb. 19 (TJD). This bird has been recorded there each of the last 3 winters. Birds identified as a McKay's Bunting and as a Snow x McKay's hybrid were observed with Snow Buntings at Kodiak Dec. 18-Jan. 9 (†RAM, DWS, DWM) and at Seward Dec. 31 (†RLS, TGT), respectively. The first bird had too much black in the outer wing to be a typical McKay's, and the latter bird was a female, both are problematic field identifications.

FINCHES — A lone ♂ Rosy Finch present on the Univ. of Alaska campus at Fairbanks (RBW) at least to Feb. 9 (RR) provided an unprecedented winter record in c. Alaska. Absent most winters on the Alaska Pacific coast east of the Aleutians, Rosy Finches were seen in small numbers at sea level at both Juneau (MEI) and Petersburg (PJW) during January and February, and about 200 birds wintered on Homer Spit (GCW).

White-winged Crossbills were conspicuous and fairly common all winter in the interior at Fairbanks; males in full song were heard as early as Feb. 10 (DDG). The species was fairly common locally in the southeast (i.e., at Auke Bay, Gustavus, and Haines) but was rare in or absent from much of that region this season. And White-wingeds were present but nowhere particularly numerous in s.c. Alaska this winter. They were seen regularly in small numbers all season at Kodiak, where present in most winters in at least small numbers (RAM). Red Crossbills, on the other hand, are not found regularly west of s.e. Alaska in winter. This season, however, the species was at least as numerous as its congener at Kodiak (RAM).

Pine Siskins were widespread this winter in s.c. Alaska, where they occurred in large numbers. The Anchorage and Matanuska Valley CBCs broke previous records (e.g., 219 at Anchorage, where the previous high was 15), and there was an enormous influx of siskins into that region in February. At Homer (GCW), for example, numbers were low in December but rose through February; 140 were banded on a single day in early February, and by Mar. 1 over 2000 birds were estimated to be visiting GCW's feeding station. Several Anchorage feeders each had upward of 250 birds regularly after the first of February (TGT, DC). The same phenomenon was noted by observers elsewhere on the Kenai Pen. (MAM). Typically, Pine Siskin is absent in the n. sections of s.c. Alaska from late November through late March. This invasion was supported at least in part by an exceptionally good crop of paper birch catkins in the region. Siskins were fairly common this period at Kodiak (RAM).

It was an unexceptional year for both Pine Grosbeaks and redpolls, which were widespread in small numbers. Noted was the observation that a preponderance of Fairbanks-area redpolls this winter were dark, Common-types. Usually, no matter what their numbers, a clear majority of wintering redpolls in that area is made up of pale, Hoary-types.

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NORTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Bill Tweit

Nobody claimed to have tried it, but this winter one could have seen a Blackburnian Warbler on the Oregon coast and a McKay's Bunting on the Washington coast in the same day! Washington's first Vermilion Flycatcher was an adult male, and it looked almost as spectacular on the TV evening news as it did in life.

Intense storms with strong westerly winds in early December caused inshore congregations of several pelagic species, including Mottled Petrel, Red Phalaropes, kittiwakes, and alcids. Otherwise, lots of the "mild weather lingerers" did just that, including pelicans, egrets, Osprey, Cinnamon Teal, Sora, various shorebirds, several warblers, Savannah Sparrow, and several blackbirds. Several spring migrants began returning early: Turkey Vulture, Rufous Hummingbird, Tree Swallow, Western Bluebird. The big northern raptors—Rough-legged Hawk, Gyrfalcon, and Snowy Owl—were very scarce, as were Red Crossbills and Evening Grosbeaks.

With the exception of early December, this was a very mild, dry winter throughout the Region. Two very strong storms battered our coast during the first 10 days of December, with winds up to 70 mph and over five inches of rain. These rains did nothing to ease the regional drought, and by the end of winter the precipitation deficit had increased. There were no prolonged cold snaps, and snow never fell in the lowlands in much of the Region.

ABBREVIATIONS — V.I. = Vancouver Island, B.C. Place names in *italics* are counties.

LOONS THROUGH PELICANS — Red-throated Loons were in higher than usual numbers on the Columbia R., near Portland, and as far upstream as Hood River, Ore. (HN). Pacific Loons, in smaller numbers, were also reported along the Columbia R. from Portland to Hood River. Single Pacific Loons on fresh water were at Hagg Lake, Washington, Ore. (LW) and the Rogue R., Ore. (ph., HS). Common Loons were thought to be in lower numbers than usual along the central Washington coast (G & WH) and inland in western Oregon (HN). Yellow-billed Loons were reported from 10 different locations, from Howe Sound, B.C. (DK, MF) south to Cape Sebastian, Curry, Ore. (M. & K. Uhtoff, *fide* MM), including one inland at Sasamat Lake, White Pine Beach, B.C. [*fide* DK]. A decade ago, these would have been low numbers, but not currently.

Two Clark's Grebe reports came from Oregon, where a few may winter regularly. One was seen throughout December on the Coos R., Coos (LT), and another was found in late January on Meares Lake, Tillamook (JJ), both freshwater locations. Several tubenoses were noted inshore during the heavy storms in early December. Northern Fulmars were seen off Boiler Bay, Ore. (JJ), in Tillamook Bay (A. Haagen, *fide* HN), and off Cape Arago, Ore. (BF, *fide* LT). One was found dead near Puget Sound, in Skagit, Wash. (DM, *fide* TW). A **Mottled Petrel** was seen from shore with hundreds of tubenoses and kittiwakes at Boiler Bay, Ore., Dec. 10 (†JJ, DJ). There was a report of a 2nd. leucistic, bird being chased by dogs in downtown Cannon Beach, Clatsop, Ore., Feb. 13 (Andy Kerr, *fide* HN), and the specimen was apparently salvaged. These were the 3rd and 4th records for the state. Sooty Shearwaters, rarely reported in the Region during the winter, were seen throughout December along the ocean beaches, and once in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, off Trial I., near Victoria, V.I., Dec. 15 (*fide* DFr). The last reports were of two off Ocean Shores, Wash., Jan. 8 (G & WH). Short-tailed Shearwaters, the more common of the two



dark shearwaters in winter, were noted along the Oregon coast during early December. Forty at Boiler Bay Dec. 10 (JJ, DJ) were the peak. Three were found inside Puget Sound Dec. 18–19 (†VN, †Art Wang). A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel was at the mouth of Tillamook Bay Dec. 6 (JJ) and a Leach's was with the other tubenoses off Boiler Bay Dec. 10 (JJ). Fork-tailed records average one per winter, Leach's are much scarcer.

Brown Pelicans wintered in unprecedented numbers, after very large numbers were found throughout the fall. They have only occasionally lingered into December north of Oregon. This winter, pelicans were widely distributed along the Washington and Oregon coasts in December, including one far south in Puget Sound, at Fox I., Pierce, Dec. 20 (Verna Timm, *fide* TB). Southward migration was noted in early December, and mortality was high during Dec. 4–16 when four specimens were salvaged in Oregon (HN, JJ) and one in Washington (SS). Three first-year birds wintered in the Port Angeles harbor, Wash. (D & SS). Most of the other reports did not indicate age, except for two adults at Lopez I., San Juan, Wash., Dec. 11 (FS). The age of Brown Pelicans is fairly easily determined, and observers should record any data that will be relevant to our understanding of the exciting recovery that this formerly threatened species is experiencing.

EGRETS THROUGH DUCKS — Great Egrets also wintered in record numbers, after an excellent fall flight. The first individual to successfully over-winter in the Vancouver, B.C., area, and only the 2nd winter record for the area, stayed at Richmond in the Fraser R. delta (DK). There were at least seven birds in Washington, above last winter's record of five. In Oregon, numbers were noted in their now usual areas in coastal estuaries (HN), five wintered in the Portland area (DL, HN), and one in the Willamette valley (BB). There were 5 reports of Cattle Egrets in December, which was about normal after an average fall flight. The farthest north was a single on Dec. 8 north of Courtenay, V.I. (WHa, B. Sedgewick). A Green-backed Heron at Coquitlam, B.C., Jan. 1 (Nancy Whaston) and

another at Courtenay, V.I. (*fide* DFr) throughout the winter were north of their usual wintering range, which is south from s Washington. The usual number of Black-crowned Night-Herons wintered in scattered locations in estuarine areas. The 10 at Reifel I. in the Fraser R. delta (JI) and 15 in the Skagit R. delta (GR *et al.*) were the farthest north.

Wintering Trumpeter Swans outnumber Tundras in the Victoria and Vancouver areas (DFr, DK). In *Whatcom*, n.w. Washington, Trumpeters continue to increase annually. They make up as much as 90% of the swan flocks at times (TW). In the Willamette Valley of w. Oregon, where they are still irregular, up to 26 Trumpeters were seen in the Monmouth area, Polk, throughout the winter (BB), and one to two were at Sauvie I (HN) and the Forest Grove Sewage Ponds (DL). Two were seen north of Lincoln City, on the outer coast of Oregon, in late January (Tom Purvis, *fide* BB), one of which had a dark collar. Trumpeters are still very rare on the outer coast of Oregon, even though small numbers winter regularly just to the north in Washington. Greater White-fronted Geese wintered throughout the Region from Vancouver/Victoria south in the usual small numbers. The largest flock was of 20 on Sauvie I. Feb. 5 (JE). A Ross' Goose was on Sauvie I. from Jan. 31+ (JJ *et al.*), for the first Columbia record. Another was on Agate Lake in s. Oregon Jan. 13 (HS). An Emperor Goose at Port Hardy on northern V.I. Jan. 20 (Tex Lyon) had been present since November. Another Emperor wintered on the Saanich Peninsula, near Victoria, V.I., Dec. 13–Feb. 16 (Hank VanDerPol *et al.*). Additionally, there were sightings on single dates from Seattle, Ocean Shores, and Port Susan in Washington, and Sauvie I. in Oregon. None of these was accompanied by details. This bird is not yet so common in the Region that it should be accepted without documentation. A large movement of Canada Geese onto Sauvie I. and down the Willamette Valley was noted in early December (Richard Smith). Major northward movements in the same areas were seen in early February (HN). Nehls noted that both Dusky and Cackling races were well scattered through w. Oregon again this winter.

Two reports of Eur. Green-winged Teal from Victoria (RS, BD) and one from Sauvie I. (BO) were fewer than usual reports of this race. Single Am. Black Ducks, probably from the resident populations at Everett, Wash., or Reifel I., B.C., were at Victoria (J & RS, J & GA) and in Seattle (†Greg Toffic). Cinnamon Teal rarely winter in the Region. This year there were a few more reports than usual. Two were at Reifel I. (JI) and up to 15 were at the Forest Grove sewage ponds (DL) in December, singles were noted in January in Bellevue, Wash. (Tom Weir) and on Fort Lewis, Pierce, Wash. (Murray Hansen, *fide* TB), and six were on the Nehalem Sewage Ponds, Ore. (David Bailey). The first migrants were noted in the last week of February throughout w. Oregon and near Vancouver, B.C.

At least 55 Redheads were reported, from Victoria and Vancouver south, a well-above-average count. The largest flock was of 24 on Beaver Lake, Skagit, Jan. 30 (JGa). None of this winter's Tufted Ducks appeared until after mid-January. Two different males were noted in Seattle Jan. 15–16 (†DB, †BT, m ob.). The bird on Green Lake was the same bird with a vermiculated grayish back and short tuft that wintered there last winter and appeared briefly in the fall. A female appeared at Delta, B.C., Jan. 30 (WW *et al.*) and stayed through Feb. 21. A male was at the Duncan, V.I., sewage ponds Feb. 22–27 (J & GA *et al.*), with a female there Feb. 27 (M & BMc). In Oregon, males were noted Feb. 6 at Meares Lake, Tillamook, and the Warrenton sewage ponds, Clatsop (Tim Shelmerdine, Mike Patterson, both *fide* HN). Barrow's Goldeneyes typically winter on salt water in the Region, but reports of flocks on fresh water are increasing. Forty spent the season on the Santiam R., Linn (Vivian Hall, *fide* BB) and 70 on the Rogue R., Jackson (HS). Groups of fewer than 10 wintered at several locations in w. Washington and Oregon. It is unknown whether the increases are due to a change in their wintering dynamics or to changes in reporting. Nehls reported that Ruddy Ducks were in very low numbers in w. Oregon this winter.

VULTURES TO RAILS — Turkey Vultures began returning in mid-February, 2 to 3 weeks ahead of normal (ME, MM, BF, *fide* LT, Kevin Sands). There were 3 December reports: one in the Vancouver, B.C., area (BK), one near Bellingham, Wash. (Paul DeBruyn, *fide* TW), and two along Willapa Bay, Pacific, Wash. (TB). There were also two northeast of Lebanon, Linn, Ore., Feb. 5 (Bill Thackaberry, *fide* ME). This was about the average number of winter reports. At least nine Ospreys were reported during the winter, more than the average number. Most were single sightings, and the farthest north was Dec. 27 at Delta, B.C. (†Prue Spitman). Individuals overwintered near Olympia, Wash. (BT) and in the Ashland, Ore., area (MM). At least 45 Black-shouldered Kites were reported during the period, with 16 of these in Washington, constituting a new record wintering total for the state. There were relatively few kite reports from the Willamette Valley and none from Fern Ridge Res., but elsewhere in Oregon they were in strong numbers. Northern Harriers seemed to be in better than normal numbers in w. Oregon this winter (HN), but were in low numbers or absent in parts of w. Washington (ML, BT). Sharpshinned Hawk reports were thought to be down in n.w. Oregon (JJ) and Victoria (BW). They totalled almost 70 for the Region. There were 54 reports of Cooper's Hawk. Northern Goshawk reports totalled 10 individuals, roughly average.

Red-shouldered Hawks are continuing to slowly expand their range to the north. There were 4 reports along the Oregon coast north of the Coos Bay area. Two at Nehalem Meadows Jan. 31 (JG) were the farthest north. In the interior, there were 2 reports north of Jackson: one at Coburg, Lane, Jan. 31 (Bill Shelmerdine) and one at Finley N.W.R. Feb. 21 (A. Floyd, *fide* ME). With 5 reports from s. Oregon, the total of 11 Red-shoulders represented the highest number ever for a winter period. A decade ago this species was listed in boldface whenever it appeared in the Region. Red-tailed Hawks were 20% below average numbers in the Victoria area (BW), quite scarce in the San Juan Islands (ML), and abundant this winter in w. Oregon (HN). Ten "Harlan's" race individuals were reported, well above the average number. Rough-legged Hawks were scarce, with fewer than 20 reports overall.

Roughly 100 Merlin reports were received, with 57 Peregrine reports, and only 3 Gyrfalcon reports. No Gyrs wintered in the Fraser R. to Skagit R. section where they are normally found. Seven Prairie Falcons were noted in w. Oregon, a normal number for the Willamette and Rogue valleys. Three were reported from w. Washington, where they are quite scarce. However, none of the three Washington sightings included details, and two of them were from areas where Peregrines of the *tundrius* type were wintering. It is possible that w. Washington observers accustomed to the dark *pealei* Peregrines are misidentifying these strikingly pale-headed *tundrius* types.

A report of Spruce Grouse at Manning P.P., B.C. (*fide* DK), Jan. 31 served to emphasize the mildness of the winter, as Spruce Grouse habitat should be completely inaccessible to most human observers at this time. The 4th report of **Rock Ptarmigan** for the Vancouver, B.C., area came from Cypress P.P. Dec. 28 (†Linda Newall). Counts of 10 Virginia Rails in Vancouver, B.C. (RC), seven at Reifel I. (WW), and six at Nisqually N.W.R., Wash. (Craig Provost) indicated that good numbers of this species lingered during the mild winter. However, most observers seemed to ignore this species. Soras were found at 3 locations along the outer coast: Ocean City S.P., Grays Harbor, Wash. (G & WH), Feb. 12; Raymond, Pacific, Wash. (BS), Feb. 25; and Youngs Bay, Clatsop, Ore. (JG), Dec. 20. Winter records are highly unusual in the Region and most previous records have been away from the outer coast.

PLOVERS TO ALCIDS — Five Snowy Plovers on the North Cove beach, Pacific, Wash., Jan. 16 (Joe Buchanon) furnished only the 2nd Washington winter record in recent years. Earlier in the century, when it can be assumed that larger numbers of Snowies bred in Washington, there were several winter re-

cords. Twenty-one Snowies were found on a Bandon, Ore., beach Jan. 21 (B. & Z. Stotz, *vide* MM). At least 47 wintering Semipalmated Plovers were found in Washington. Most were along the outer coast where small numbers often remain in milder winters. The nine found in Puget Sound were quite unusual. The numbers of Greater Yellowlegs reports are usually indicative of the severity of the season. However, this winter there were fewer than normal reports, except from the Vancouver and Victoria areas where above-average numbers were noted (DK, DFr). Are observers ignoring this species as it becomes routine? This would be unfortunate, since yellowlegs are the sort of conspicuous, easily-enumerated species, often indicative of environmental conditions, that are perfect for American Birds monitoring. A **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Blackie Spit, Surrey, B.C., Dec. 26–Jan. 3 (†BK, †Hue & Jo Ann MacKenzie) furnished only the 2nd winter report for the Vancouver area. Another was reported without details from the Oregon coast in December. Willets wintered at 3 traditional locations: one at Ediz Hook, Clallam, Wash. (D & SS), 14 at North R. mouth, Pacific (PM, TS), and five at Yaquina Bay, Ore. (*vide* HN). Regular numbers, for a mild winter, of Whimbrels wintered along the coast. The farthest north was at Saanich, V.I. (RS). Three wintered on Ediz Hook (D & SS), one at Tokeland, Pacific (Denny Granstrand), one at Yaquina Bay (HN), and two at Bandon marsh (LT).

The only location in the Region where large numbers of Long-billed Curlews and Marbled Godwits winter is at Tokeland, Pacific, Wash. Thirty curlews and a record 160 godwits were carefully counted there Feb. 4 (PM, TS). Elsewhere the usual singles were reported. Seventeen Ruddy Turnstones, another warm-winter lingerer, were reported from Whidbey I., Wash. (DP), south along the coast. Two of these, one at Ocean Shores Jan. 8 (G & WH) and another in Curry, Ore., Jan. 15–16 (JJ), were in full breeding plumage! Two Red Knots lingered to Dec. 5 on Boundary Bay, B.C. (MF, m.ob.), for the 3rd winter record for the Vancouver area. The number of Least and Western sandpiper reports was normal for a warmer winter. Up to five Least stayed on Boundary Bay, B.C. (WW), where they are casual in winter, but the species seemed to be in lower than usual numbers in Oregon this season (HN). Long-billed Dowitcher flocks were reported from the Fraser R. delta (JI), Boundary Bay (*vide* DK), Tokeland (MC), and throughout w. Oregon (*vide* HN). After the strong winds in early December, a large Red Phalarope "crash" was noted. On Dec. 10, 4000 were seen flying south past Boiler Bay, Ore., in groups of 30–50 (JJ, DI). Phalaropes were scattered inside the Strait of Juan de Fuca and n. Puget Sound east to Point Roberts, Whatcom, Wash. (Tom Hanrahan, *vide* DK), at Victoria (J & RS, Keith Taylor), and south to Point No Point, Kitsap, Wash. (VN), Dec. 11–13. Small numbers were also found at several locations in the Willamette Valley and Coast Range of Oregon at the same time (Bob May, DL), east to near Finley N.W.R. Dec. 13 (ME). The latest sighting was of a single off Dungeness Spit, Clallam, Wash., Dec. 26 (D & SS).

Two ad. **Little Gulls** on American Lake, Pierce, Wash. (EH, BT) provided the first record of wintering for the Region. An ad **Common Black-headed Gull** on Whidbey I., Wash., Dec. 20 (†Jim Zook) furnished only the 5th report for the state, 4 of which have been in 1986–1987. Three Heermann's Gulls were found lingering along the Oregon coast in December (JJ, Roy Gerig). A 2nd-year bird was noted Feb. 18 at Ediz Hook (DS) and 2 days later at the nearby Orcas ferry terminal in the San Juan Is. (†Tom Parsons). There are few Regional records from mid-winter. Six Glaucous Gulls were reported from British Columbia, three from Washington, and three from Oregon, for a below-average total. Following the storms, 1000 Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen off Boiler Bay Dec. 10 (JJ, DI). Singles were at Point No Point, Wash., Dec. 12 (VN) and Comox, V.I., Dec. 20 (Keith Morton), but the species was scarce the rest of the winter (MC, HN, G & WH). Only 27 were reported from 4 locations along the outer coast (HS, BB, JG, G & WH).

Ancient Murrelets displayed their usual temporal distri-

bution, with reports from the Strait of Juan de Fuca and outer coast in December, and absent thereafter. The high counts were of 30 Dec. 15 in Oak Bay, V.I. (CN), and 200 on the outer coast at Boiler Bay (of course) Dec. 10 (JJ, DI). Where do the individuals that move through the Region in large numbers in late fall–early winter spend the latter half of the season? Cassin's Auklets were also blown onshore by the early December storms. Five were seen at Boiler Bay Dec. 3 (DI, JJ) and three there a week later. Two were seen inshore: one at Oak Bay Dec. 15 (CN) and the other at Point No Point Dec. 12 (VN). Over 15 were picked up dead on Oregon beaches in s. Lincoln Dec. 11 (RK, *vide* ME). Two seen in central Puget Sound at West Point, Seattle, Jan. 16 (D. DeSilvis) were highly unusual.

OWLS THROUGH THRUSHES — Snowy Owls were as close to being absent as they ever get in our Region. Two wintered in close proximity on the Skagit Flats (m.ob.) and another two wintered in equally close proximity along Boundary Bay, B.C. (m.ob.). The 21 N. Pygmy-Owls reported made an above-average number of sightings. A Burrowing Owl lingered along Boundary Bay from November until Christmas Day (BK), for the first record for the Vancouver area since 1983. British Columbia observers reported eight Barred Owls. None was reported from Washington or Oregon! A single Great Gray Owl Dec. 28 to Jan. 3 at Langley, B.C. (GR) provided the only report. Ten Long-eared Owls at 4 locations: Reifel I. (m.ob.), Saanich, V.I. (J.B. Tatum), Langley, B.C. (GR), and E.E. Wilson W.M.A., Ore. (AM) represented impressive numbers for the season. The average is below five. Short-eared Owl numbers were low in most areas. The only locale with more than 10 birds was Boundary Bay (MF) in late December before many had been reported farther south. Most localities reported fewer than five.

An **Anna's Hummingbird** nest found Feb. 29 at Oak Bay, V.I. (B.R. Gates) provided only the 2nd nest record for Canada. This hummingbird species winters regularly around both Victoria (12+ birds this winter) and Vancouver (20+ this winter). It has been assumed that breeding was probable in both areas. The first Rufous Hummingbirds seemed to be about 5 days early throughout Oregon and Washington. One Feb. 28 at Ladner, B.C. (GP) was the earliest ever for the Vancouver area, and was about 3 weeks ahead of average. A Black-backed Woodpecker on the west side of Sand Mt., Linn, Ore., Feb. 27 (D. & R. Hall, *vide* ME) furnished one of only a few winter records for the Region. Two Three-toed Woodpecker reports from the Mt. Washington ski area in the mountains of central V.I. (Howard Telosky, WHa) were from an area where they are probably regular, but not often reported. Seven Black Phoebes were found in the Ashland, Ore., area (MM) and one was near Harbor on the Curry coast (HS). Two Say's Phoebes were reported from the Willamette Valley (M. Nebeker, RK, *vide* ME) and four from the Rogue Valley and s. Oregon coast (HS, MM). One on Feb. 28 along the Columbia R. in Skamania, Wash. (Pete May, *vide* WC) was the first migrant reported. These are average winter numbers for both phoebes in our Region. The ad. ♂ **Vermilion Flycatcher** discovered Jan. 25 in rural Redmond, east of Seattle (Bob Overly) remained through February (m.ob.). This was the first record for the state and for the Region. Vermilions are remarkably scarce in the northwest, in comparison with the number of records from the midwest and northeast.

The first Tree Swallows appeared the last day of January at Finley N.W.R. in Oregon (AM) and at American Lake, near Tacoma, Wash. (EH). By Feb. 18, they had been recorded from almost all reporting areas in the Region, including s. British Columbia. This is about a week ahead of "normal." As usual, the main influx moved up the Willamette Valley and Puget Sound. Arrival in coastal areas was generally later. The first Violet-green Swallows were seen at Ridgefield N.W.R., Wash., Feb. 14 (Don Jole), with widespread arrival the next week, as usual. Late Barn Swallows were still at Reifel I. until Dec. 13

(JJ) and Scappoose Bottoms, Columbia, Ore., Dec. 27 (Jack Kiley, *vide* HN) An early Barn Swallow was seen near Beaverton, outside of Portland, Feb. 19 (Bob Talley, *vide* HN).

Blue Jays wintered at 2 locations in Vancouver, B.C. (*vide* DK), at Port Townsend, Wash. (L. Tiller, *ph.*), and at Spanaway, Pierce, Wash. (B. Langlois, *m.ob.*). A few individuals are now found annually. A minor flight of Mountain Chickadees in December brought six birds to the Vancouver, B.C., area (WW, B Ramsdin), one to nearby Bellingham (Geri Walker, *vide* TW), a couple to the coast of Grays Harbor (Bob Morse, Keith Brady), and two to the Applegate valley in s. Oregon (John Keller). Early dates for returning W. Bluebirds were Jan. 25 on Fort Lewis, Pierce, Wash. (George Walter), Jan. 31 in Portland (DL), and Feb. 28 on Saltspring I., in the Gulf Is., B.C. (DFr, BW). The only Mountain Bluebird report was of one seen Dec. 29 at Graysmarsh, Clallam, Wash. (BT, D & SS). Twelve reports of Townsend's Solitaire, another scarce winterer, was an above-average number. Only a handful of Hermit Thrushes were reported, yet it was a mild winter. Observers may have under-reported them. This is another species that is easily monitored for AB and shows great variation in population between mild and severe winters. Varied Thrushes were "widely reported" in s w. Washington (WC) and in coastal Lincoln, Ore. (Darrel Faxon), and unmentioned elsewhere.

MIMIDS THROUGH FINCHES — Five N. Mockingbirds were reported, all from Oregon, an average number for recent years. Water Pipits were reported from s. British Columbia (DK, M & BMc) and Puget Sound (DB). In severe winters they are absent from these areas. The only Bohemian Waxwing reports were of three on V.I. in January (J & RS, WHa), eight in Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 23 (*vide* DK), three in Corvallis, Ore., Dec. 25 (A. Cromack, *vide* ME), and 80 at Toketee R.S. in the s. Oregon Cascades Jan. 12 (DF). Five Orange-crowned Warblers in Washington and three in s. British Columbia were average numbers for even a cold winter. Clearly not as average were the **Black-throated Gray Warblers** on the Univ. of Washington campus in Seattle from Dec. 13 to Jan. 18 (KA, *m.ob.*) and in Vancouver, B.C., Dec. 15–23 (†Doug Brown). These furnished the 3rd winter record for Washington and the first for British Columbia. The ♂ **Blackburnian Warbler** found Nov. 15 at Nehalem Meadows, Ore., survived throughout the period (HN, *m.ob.*). Another **Blackburnian Warbler** seen briefly at Discovery Park, Seattle, Dec. 4 (†KA, †Todd Haas) furnished the 4th record for the state, but could not be relocated. Probably because it was a mild winter, Palm Warblers wintered at 4 locations: Victoria (C. Eckhart *et al.*), two at Tillamook (DL *et al.*), Yaquina Bay (HN), and Gold Beach, Curry (HS), and there were 2 additional December sightings. Three Wilson's Warblers were reported without details.

American Tree Sparrows were scarce this winter. Single birds were noted in the Vancouver, B.C., area (DK), the Bellingham area (*vide* TW), at Davis Slough, Snohomish, Wash., Dec. 21–Jan. 23 (Rob Thorn, *m.ob.*), and on the Oregon coast, where they are very rare, at Nehalem Meadows Jan. 10+ (†LW, JJ, DI). A **Black-throated Sparrow** at a Bellingham feeder Dec. 27–Jan. 9 (DM, TW, *ph.*) provided the first winter record for the Region. Savannah Sparrows wintered in higher than usual numbers near Victoria (Lyndis Davis) and Sequim and Bellingham, Wash. (D & SS, BT, TW). Lincoln's Sparrows were seen in above regular numbers in w. Oregon this winter (HN), but were little reported, or under-reported, from elsewhere. Our understanding of Swamp Sparrow status has changed dramatically in recent years. There were 3 reports each from the Victoria area (WW, BD) and from Snohomish, Wash. (BBo, Tim Whitehouse), but mostly 34+ from Oregon (*m.ob.*). Most of these were along the coast, and many of those at sewage ponds. Swamp Sparrows were almost unreported over 5 years ago, and in the last few winters there have been 10 to 20 reports each. Nine White-throated Sparrows were reported north of Oregon, an average total, and in Oregon they were "maybe in

better numbers than normal" (HN) Very large numbers of wintering White-crowned Sparrows were reported from the Bellingham area (TW) and Victoria (MJ). Harris' Sparrows, however, were well below recent years' totals. Only five were found in Oregon, none in Washington, and four in British Columbia. Last winter 33 were reported.

Lapland Longspurs were reported only from Ocean Shores, Wash., where up to 50 were seen during December and January (MC). A flock of 15 Snow Buntings was also at Ocean Shores. A **McKay's Bunting** was present with them Jan. 15+ (MC, *m.ob.*, *ph.*) for the 3rd record for Washington. The first and 2nd were during the winter of 1978–1979 (AB 33:308). One in Oregon the next winter was the most recent Regional record Three Snow Buntings east of Roseburg Dec. 3 (JE) were the only ones reported south of Ocean Shores. A Yellow-headed Blackbird Feb. 25 at Richmond, B.C. (RC) and one Feb. 27 in Vancouver, B.C. (*vide* DK) furnished very rare winter records. One imm. male wintered near Monroe, Snohomish, Wash. (BBo, *m.ob.*), where they are also rare, and there were 3 reports from Oregon (*vide* HN). Last winter, Rusty Blackbirds still rated the boldface treatment. Not so this winter. Three were present near Monroe, Wash., Dec. 20–Jan. 9 (BBo *et al.*), an ad. male and female and two immatures wintered at feed lots on Sauvie I. (JJ, DI, JG, HN, *m.ob.*), and one male was at Richmond, B.C., Feb. 5 (Michael Price).

Seven Rosy Finches on Mary's Peak, in the c. Oregon Coast Range, Feb. 15 (Jim Carlson, *vide* ME) furnished the only report, other than a single north of Vancouver, B.C. (GP). Red Crossbills were sparse this winter (HN, BT) throughout the Region. There were only 2 reports of White-winged Crossbill, one from the Vancouver area (*vide* DK) and several seen near Salem, Ore., Dec. 29 (Chris Bond, *vide* BB). The Vancouver area provided the only Com. Redpoll sightings, with 4 reports of five birds (*vide* DK). Large numbers of Pine Siskins were reported from the Columbia R. south (WC, HN, MM). North of there they were rarely mentioned. Evening Grosbeaks were scarce throughout the Region (MJ, DK, BT, HN, MM).

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Kurt F. Campbell, Richard A. Erickson,
and Stephen F. Bailey

Early winter was abnormally wet, with mid- and late winter abnormally dry, leaving us with an extremely light Sierra snowpack. We are beginning to receive more CBC data, giving us at least more confidence in our guesses about what the birds were really doing.

The mild El Niño may have been related to the scarcity of northern seabirds such as Northern Fulmar, Black-legged Kittiwake, and Ancient Murrelet. A seabird die-off struck Monterey waters in December, and avian cholera again struck the Modesto sewage ponds. This was one of the best winters ever for the rare-but-regular insectivores; see especially the reports of warblers, many at all-time highs.

ABBREVIATIONS — C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.C.R.S. = Coyote Creek Riparian Station (banding station in Santa Clara); C.V. = Central Valley; F.I. = S.E. Farallon I., S.F.; O.S.P. = Open Space Preserve; S.F. = San Francisco; ph. = photo on file with the Regional Editors. Place names in *italics* are counties. All records from Palomar, Marin, and F.I. should be credited to Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (P.R.B.O.).

LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS — Highlights among numerous inland loons were four Pacific Loons in Santa Clara Dec. 3–Jan. 31. A rotting Yellow-billed Loon was found on Monterey Beach Dec. 24 (†AB, *California Academy of Sciences). Eared Grebes were virtually absent from San Joaquin, where there are often large numbers wintering (DGY).

Single Laysan Albatrosses were 4 mi west of Cypress Pt., Monterey, Dec. 5 (DR) and at Cordell Bank, Marin, Feb. 28 (EDG, DAH, DLSH). Only small numbers (up to 20) of N. Fulmars were reported, except for 150 on the Del Norte CBC Dec. 20. A late Buller's Shearwater was off Cypress Pt. Dec. 5 (DR). In the Monterey Bay area, the fall's big numbers of Black-vented Shearwaters declined through the winter: 700 Dec. 5 (DR), 42 Jan. 23 (DLSu), and one Feb. 29 (DLSu). Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were in Monterey Bay Dec. 19–22, but the high count was only of three, blown into Monterey Harbor Dec. 22 (DR, RER).

On the heels of the fall irruption of Red-footed Boobies came an imm. **Brown Booby** at Pacific Grove Dec. 3 (T. Farrell, D. Hope, †DR, †RER, †AB). Only one of the 5 previous Regional reports has been accepted by the C.B.R.C. (although some have not completed their review). The mortality of Brown Pelicans continued at Monterey, where at least 400 died (AB). Some were killed by overhead wires or cars while flying inland. Large numbers lingered late into winter, as exemplified by 983 on the Monterey Pen. CBC Dec. 28. Many CBCs recorded Brown Pelicans in record numbers or for the first time (e.g., two at Benicia, Solano, Dec. 22). Several remained as far north as Crescent City until Jan. 31 (ADB) and Humboldt Bay to Feb. 14 (FJB). A large roost count of Double-crested Cormorants was of 509 at Beach L., Sacramento, Dec. 5 (GEw). An imm. Pelagic Cormorant at Benicia Jan. 16 was the first for Solano (†RAE).

HERONS, WATERFOWL — Santa Clara's Snowy Egret x Little Blue Heron hybrid at Charleston Slough since Nov. 7 was last seen Dec. 30 (†A. Kratter et al.). The poor showing of Cattle Egrets throughout the Region continued, with few reports of groups of greater than 10. Eight Green-backed Herons at L. Merced, San Francisco, Dec. 28 (PJM) was a high count.



S.A.

Avian cholera was again a serious problem at the Modesto sewage ponds (see AB 41:323). Hand guns with signal cartridges were successfully used by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service personnel to haze Aleutian Canada Geese, but other waterfowl were apparently little affected. Over 5000 dead birds were removed from the ponds between mid-December and the end of February. Most of these (well over 90%) were Ruddy Ducks. It is hoped that a major outbreak of cholera will not become an annual event at the ponds. But the forced concentration of these birds caused by the limited amount of habitat available (and probably exacerbated by hunting pressure) increases their susceptibility to outbreaks of this kind.—Harold M. Reeve



Immature Trumpeter Swan at Modesto, Cal., Jan. 20, 1988. Photo/Eric Caine.

Tundra Swans made news on the c coast 31 at Pescadero Marsh Dec. 26 (PJM) and 37 at College L. Dec. 21 (A. & J. Harryman et al.) were reported as the largest flocks on record for San Mateo and Santa Cruz, respectively. A bird showing characteristics of "Bewick's Swan" was at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Siskiyou, Feb. 12 (WEH, SMS). Reports of Trumpeter Swans are on the increase with six birds found this season. Three were at Lower Klamath N.W.R. Feb. 12 (WEH, SMS; details to C.B.R.C.); one (one year old?) was on Hwy 12, 4.5 mi west of I-5 in San Joaquin Dec. 26 (†MJL); an immature at the Modesto sewage ponds Jan. 20–25 (ph. ERC) was found sick on the latter date and died in captivity Feb. 2, probably from avian cholera (fide HMR); and an adult with a numbered green collar at L. Almanor, Plumas, Jan. 1–Feb. 15 (†TDM, †HG et al.) answered the question of whether the relatively sedentary introduced population at Malheur N.W.R. in s.e. Oregon is capable of producing California sightings. The bird was marked as an adult at Malheur Aug. 26, 1986, and was last seen there in March 1987 (fide HG).

Venice I. hosted 32,000+ Snow Geese and 8000+ Ross' Geese in late December, a notable concentration for San Joaquin (MJL, DGY). A "blue" Snow Goose at Moss Landing Jan. 23 (MJL) was exceptional on the coast, for the first valid record for Monterey. Ten+ were reported from the C.V. After 2 consecutive big winters on the coast, Ross' Geese were back to more normal numbers with three in Humboldt and one or two in Santa Cruz the only ones reported. Five+ "blue" Ross' were found at Lower Klamath, Sacramento, and Sutter refuges, but no "blue" Snow/Ross' intermediates were reported (see comments in AB 40:325). A very obliging imm. Emperor Goose at Alameda Dec. 19+ (R. Jarrell, †ph. m. ob.) was seen by hundreds of observers. "Cackling" Canada Geese were found on the coast at the Garcia R. bottoms, Mendocino, Feb. 15 (SFB) and at Stafford L., Marin, Jan. 12 (two—DAH).

"Common" Green-winged Teal were found at Arcata Jan. 18–Feb. 13 (GSL, LPL et al.), Alameda Dec. 26–30 (L. Parmeter), and Hayward Regional Shoreline, Alameda, Feb. 6+ (RJR et al.). Selected Eur. Wigeon reports helped detail the species' status in our Region. In the C.V., 19 at Gray Lodge W.A. Dec. 29 (fide BED) was our all-time high count; five at Ft. Dick, Del Norte, Jan. 31 (ADB) was the most ever on the n. coast; one at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey, Dec. 31–Jan. 3 (DR et al.) and three to four in Santa Cruz Dec. 6–Jan. 13 (DLSu et al.) were in well-covered areas with few previous records; and four in Stanislaus Feb. 6+ (†HMR) were surprisingly the only recent records, although the county has been little birded until now. Eurasian x Am. Wigeon hybrids were reported from Alameda Jan. 1 (DEQ) and Bolinas Lagoon, Marin, Jan. 12 (†DES).

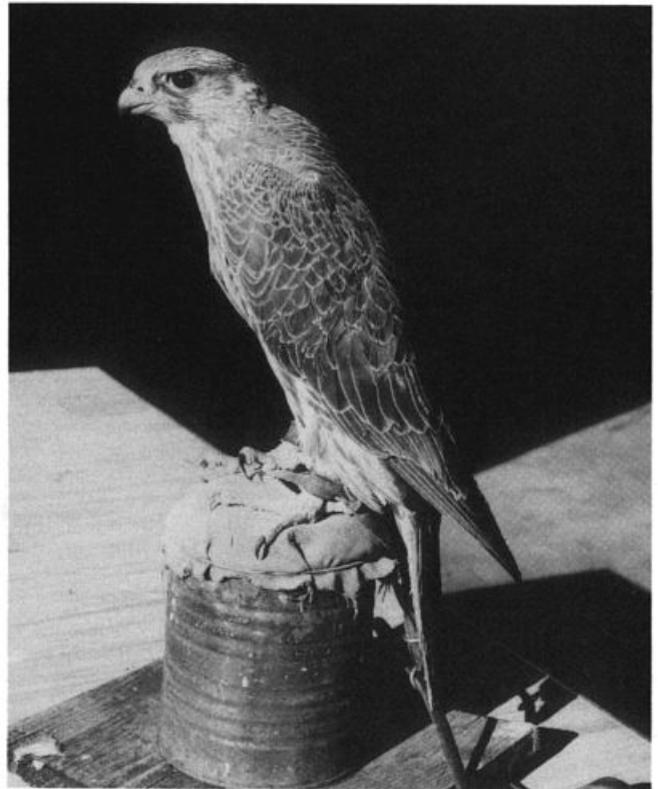
College L. was again home to record numbers of ducks for Santa Cruz: 675 Green-winged Teal Dec. 23; 757 Cinnamon Teal Feb. 26; 141 N. Shovelers Jan. 8; 465 Canvasbacks Dec. 23; 232 Ring-necked Ducks Feb. 5; 27 Hooded Mergansers Mar. 4; and 2985 Ruddy Ducks Mar. 4 (DLSu et al.). On the Peace Valley CBC, Butte/Sutter, 5200 Canvasbacks and 2037 Buffleheads were over 10 times the previous high counts (fide BED).

Five Tufted Ducks were found: a male at the Smith R. estuary, Del Norte, Jan. 24–Feb. 14 was joined by a female Feb. 5–7 (††ADB et al.); in Marin a female was at Belvedere Jan. 2 (†DAH et al.) and a male was in Novato Feb. 12–20 (JCS et al.); and a male was at O'Neill Forebay, Merced, Feb. 21–23 (†MJL, JMa). This was the first time that birds in the greater S.F. Bay area were outnumbered by birds elsewhere. Even more Greater Scaup were at O'Neill Forebay than in the previous 2 years; about 300 were estimated present Feb. 21–22 (MJL, HMR). At Benicia, 200+ Surf Scoters Dec. 25 was considered a high number (JCL), so 1400+ there Jan. 9 (RAE) was exceptional. We still have much to learn concerning the inner limits of marine species using the upper S.F. Bay system. An ad. ♂ Surf found dead at the Modesto sewage ponds Jan. 17 (fide HMR) was the only inland scoter report.

An imm. ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye at King Salmon, Humboldt, Jan. 3–Feb. 15 (SWH, †LPL et al.) and a male and female at the Hollister sewage ponds, San Benito, Dec. 23 (KVV) were in

areas with few previous records. High counts of Hooded Mergansers were of 76 at Foster City in early December (N. Coiro) and 50–60 at L. Almanor Jan. 1 (TDM). At Comanche Res., 1700 Com. Mergansers Jan. 13 furnished one of the highest counts ever in San Joaquin (DGY). Four Red-breasted Mergansers at O'Neill Forebay Jan. 25–Feb. 26 (HMR et al.) furnished the only inland reports. Differences in molt schedule were noted among the Ruddy Ducks of Santa Cruz (DLSu, CKF). "Resident" birds at such places as Neary's Lagoon and Westlake came into full breeding plumage and began displaying by late January, but wintering birds only began to show color by the period's end. Only about .05% were in breeding plumage at College L. by Mar. 4.

RAPTORS — Reports of 29 Ospreys this season probably reflected both better reporting and more individuals wintering. A Black-shouldered Kite at Tule L., Siskiyou, Dec. 31 (FrT) was rare that far north. Red-shouldered Hawk continued to increase and expand its range. Santa Clara and Santa Cruz CBCs had record counts, and the Springville, Tulare, CBC tallied 48 along the Tule R. and tributaries (RAB). Despite the record total of Broad-winged Hawks at Pt. Diablo last fall, only one was reported this season: a rare dark morph at Red Bluff, Tehama, Dec. 20 (SAL). This was in contrast to winter 1982–1983, when a November rush of Broad-winged Hawks was followed by 15 winter reports. We had both latest- and earliest-ever Swainson's Hawks. The former were dark and light adults over Bouldin I., San Joaquin, Dec. 25 (DGY). Two light morph birds (adult and immature) at the w. end of Woodbridge Rd., San Joaquin, Feb. 7 (†J. Walters) were followed by another migrant over Alamo, Contra Costa, Feb. 12 (JMR). Three adults (two dark and one intermediate morph) plus two immatures at Venice I., San Joaquin, Feb. 20 (DGY) may have represented the vanguard of normal arrivals. A remarkable concentration of 125–150 Red-tailed Hawks gathered for 3 hours in a small field that was being plowed on Venice I., San Joaquin, Feb. 20 (DGY). Three "Harlan's" Hawks were reported, but observers now seem to consider them too common to describe. The only de-



Gray morph immature Gyr Falcon found injured near McArthur, Shasta Co., Cal., December 1987. Photo/Bob Yutzy.

scription submitted suggested a possible "Harlan's" intergrade. Woodbridge Rd., San Joaquin, Dec. 19 (†KH). Ferruginous Hawk was considered relatively numerous in Humboldt, Santa Cruz, and Stanislaus but rather scarce in Sacramento. Rough-legged Hawk was in low numbers throughout cismontane California. Hunters found a gray morph imm. Gyrfalcon with a broken wing near McArthur, Shasta, Dec. 26 (ph. BY). As it will not be releasable, it will become part of a captive breeding program. This is the 4th Regional and California record.

GALLIFORMES THROUGH CRANES — A Ring-necked Pheasant in the hills above Soquel Dec. 19 was suspected of being a recent release/escapee as the species has almost completely vanished as a resident in Santa Cruz (DLSu). A "pure albino" California Quail with dark eyes found in Arcata Nov. 16 was present through the winter (fide GSL).

A Yellow Rail seen at Tomales Bay Dec. 2 (RS) was possibly the same one seen there Dec. 21 (PP, SNGH). Another was captured at Palo Alto Baylands Jan. 17, brought back to health, and released Jan. 19 (†). Broyles, L. & J. Young fide WGB). The surge in sightings recently might suggest this species is increasing in the West, but it seems more likely that increased observer coverage under the right conditions has been the cause. It is hoped that Yellow Rails still winter regularly in coastal California, as they were recognized as doing early in the century. Further, the breeding population of Yellow Rails in Klamath County, Ore., has rekindled hopes that California, too, still provides nesting habitat for the species.

The 2nd Yellow Rail at Tomales Bay was observed as it was caught and killed by a Great Egret. Thanks to the quick actions of the observers, the egret lost its meal, and the specimen is now housed at the California Academy of Sciences. An alarming number of Black Rails have fallen prey to egrets and other avian predators in recent years, and this year was no exception. There have already been calls for the placement of protective shelters to be used by rails during high tides (SFB).

Rare coastal Sandhill Cranes were at Bolinas Lagoon, Marin, Dec. 11 (P. Allen); Hayward, Alameda, Dec. 20 (RJR); and Portola Valley, San Mateo, Dec. 20–Jan. 3 (fide WGB, PJM).

SHOREBIRDS — Lesser Golden-Plovers provided no real surprises. Marin hosted 21+ wintering birds with seven others seen along the coast from Humboldt to San Mateo and seven more in the San Joaquin Valley, San Joaquin/Stanislaus. Semipalmated Plovers at Wilder Creek Beach, Santa Cruz, Nov. 27–Dec. 12 (DEG) and Crescent City Harbor Dec. 20 (RE) were apparently still on the move; neither was seen subsequently. Mendocino's first Mountain Plover was at McKerricher State Beach Jan. 3–10 (DT, JMa). Seventy-eight Am. Avocets at L. Washington, Yolo, Jan. 22 (GEw) were said to be "amazing" on that early date (TDM). One at San Felipe L. Feb. 6 was thought to provide only the 4th San Benito record (DSg).

As with a number of other shorebirds, Long-billed Curlews are local in the Region in winter. One at Seacliff State Beach Jan. 25 furnished only the 5th winter record for Santa Cruz in 18 years (DLSu). Sanderlings were again found in Stanislaus with singles seen on 4 dates in December and February (ERC, HMR). Singles at Harkin's Slough, Santa Cruz, Dec. 21–22 (DEG et al.) and Feb. 3 (DLSu) were 2.3 mi from the ocean in flooded fields; one at Benicia, Solano, Jan. 16 (RAE) was far up the S. F. Bay system but in an area where they have been found wintering regularly in recent years (fide RbL). An alternate-plumaged W. Sandpiper at San Rafael, Marin, Jan. 2 (LJP) was an unusual winter sight. In Santa Cruz Feb. 26, four Westerns at Laguna Creek Beach and seven at Wilder Creek Beach were apparently early migrants, as none had been there on numerous earlier visits (DEG). A juv. Pectoral Sandpiper on lower Watsonville Slough, Santa Cruz, Nov. 22–Dec. 4 (C. Wolfe et al.) and a Ruff in the Arcata Bottoms, Humboldt, Dec. 3 (KI) were late.

Based on extensive birding in Santa Cruz this season, the wintering populations of several shorebirds were estimated for the entire county: up to 93 Black-necked Stilts (high), up to 10 Am. Avocets, 25 Greater Yellowlegs, up to eight Lesser

Yellowlegs, up to 11 W. Sandpipers, up to 160 Least Sandpipers, 145 Dunlins, and 425 Long-billed Dowitchers (DLSu et al.).

San Joaquin was host to another winter Wilson's Phalarope, this one at the Lodi sewage ponds Feb. 6 (DGY). The last Red-necked Phalaropes were all seen Dec. 7: one at Bolinas Lagoon, Marin (R. Alexander), and three in Santa Cruz (BLaB, RMrr et al.). Red Phalaropes were present in good numbers through December with 333 on the Del Norte County CBC Dec. 20 (fide ADB) and 9337 on the Monterey Peninsula CBC Dec. 28 (fide DR). All had vanished by mid-January.

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS — The last Franklin's Gull of the fall lingered to Dec. 11 at Stockton sewage ponds, San Joaquin (DGY). An ad. Little Gull was at the same ponds Dec. 11+ (DGY, m.ob.). Whether this was "the" wintering bird arrived/detected late or was one of the usual spring birds that chose to winter is unknown. Heermann's Gulls were again abundant in the Monterey area into early winter. Thorough surveys of the coast in Santa Cruz and Monterey south to Carmel R. mouth Dec. 22–25 recorded 521 (DLSu, m.ob.). Within this area, their distribution correlated very closely with that of Brown Pelicans, with 83.5% around the Monterey Pen. (DLSu).

An apparent hybrid Herring x Glaucous-winged gull adult (see AB 41:324) was at Spreckles L., San Francisco, Dec. 28 (JM). The largest concentration of Herring Gulls reported was surprisingly of 160 at San Felipe L., San Benito, Dec. 30, by far a county record-high count (KVV). Four Thayer's Gulls, a W. Gull, and a Glaucous Gull there that day were all firsts for San Benito (†KVV). The highest report of Thayer's was of 120 at the Sausalito herring run Jan. 17 (DAH). Eight Glaucous-winged Gulls were reported in the C.V. from Butte to Stanislaus. Only six Glaucous Gulls were reported, including the one mentioned above. One was at the Davis dump, Yolo, Dec. 3 (†GEw), and four were coastal from Marin to Monterey Dec. 24–Feb. 23 (†DAH, †DLSu, et al.). Black-legged Kittiwakes remained scarce.

Barring duplication, 10 Caspian Terns were found, including six in Humboldt. These were two each at Mad R. mouth Jan. 24–29 (D. Muschalek), Arcata Marsh Feb. 7–15 (C. Ogan), and Eel R. mouth Feb. 13 (FJB). The others were two flying S at Pajaro Dunes, Santa Cruz, Jan. 2 (StG); one at Pajaro R. mouth, Santa Cruz/Monterey, Feb. 29 (DLSu); and one at Modesto sewage ponds Feb. 17 (†ERC). A late Elegant Tern was at Carmel River Beach, Monterey, Dec. 5 (BJW). January and February counts of Forster's Terns continued to increase at Humboldt Bay and in the Delta region. Arcata hosted 25 on Feb. 7 (FJB); 107 were on Stockton sewage ponds Jan. 25 (DGY); four were at Pocket Area, Sacramento, Jan. 12 (GEw); and five were at L. Washington, Yolo, Jan. 22 (GEw). A Black Skimmer at Salinas R. mouth, Monterey, Feb. 12 (JWr) furnished the earliest record for the Region by over 2 months.

One Marbled Murrelet off Pt. Pinos Dec. 28 (DLSu) was perhaps average for the Monterey Pen. in winter. Ancient Murrelets were very scarce, with only 8 sightings reported, none of more than three birds. "Heavy mortality" of Cassin's Auklets was noted in the Monterey area in December, with many birds dead on beaches and at sea (AB). Yet the Monterey Pen. CBC tallied 7143 Dec. 28, two orders of magnitude higher than any other count this decade, and three times any in the 1970s. Presumably the occurrence of such high numbers and the mortality were both the results of unusual conditions.

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Reports of 37 Burrowing Owls, mostly at "new" locales, was encouraging, but they were "in real trouble" in Monterey (fide DR). The species was missed on the Monterey Pen. CBC for the first time in years and it is now gone from 2 formerly regular locales. Single Barred Owls were found, as now expected, at Willow Cr., Humboldt, Dec. 26 (SDF) and at Howland Hill, Del Norte, Dec. 27 (JAR). Last winter's Tule Lake N.W.R. bird also reappeared Dec. 15 (FrT) and Jan. 23 (RE, apparently on other dates by refuge personnel). A Long-eared Owl at Kirby Park, Elkhorn Slough, Jan. 1–9 (CT, PJM, m.ob.) provided the first "chaseable, day-roost" Monterey record (fide DR), and one of 9 records

this season in the Region. Short-eared Owls were apparently in usual to slightly better numbers, with one on the Fall River Mills CBC said to furnish a first winter record for Shasta (*fide* BY) Three N. Saw-whet Owls were on the C.V. floor, at Metro Airport, Sacramento, Dec. 27 (recent roadkill, GEw-Sacramento CBC); near Turlock, Stanislaus, Jan. 19 (road injured, to be released, *fide* HMR); and at Discovery Park, American River Parkway, Sacramento, Feb. 6-10 (DoM, DLO, ph. EDG, m.ob.). A Vaux's Swift over the Univ. of California, Santa Cruz, campus Jan. 12 (DLSu: "third Santa Cruz winter period record") was not unexpected for the Region, but 50 over Hayward Shoreline Jan. 19 (RJR, KGH, G. Graves) was the 2nd-largest number ever reported during this season. Nearly all winter records are in coastal lowlands from Marin south.

Single Costa's Hummingbirds were at Porterville, Tulare, Dec. 25 (C. Gunderson); on the Redding CBC Dec. 27 (BY, CY); and at Sanger, Fresno (I. Paine "? Feb.," *fide* RHG). A very early Rufous Hummingbird at Rio Dell, Humboldt, Feb. 10 (I. Siipola) should have been documented (AB 39:207). The first Allen's Hummingbird was a few days early for the Region Jan. 14 at Univ. of California Santa Cruz (DLSu). Four *Selasphorus* sp. were all coastal, Dec. 8-Jan. 1; all were reported as one-day-only birds. An amazing seven Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were noted: Eureka Dec. 18-Jan. 23 (†PFS, SDF, m.ob.); Olema Dec. 18 (juv.—RS); the Cheese Factory near Nicasio, Marin, Dec. 22-Mar. 13 (juv.—DWM, CLF, CLO, m.ob.); an adult at the same locale at least until Feb. 26 (CLF); Ferndale Jan. 3-9 ("imm. male"—GSL, ADB, m.ob.); Palo Alto Jan. 22 (A. Jasberg); and Moraga Jan. 24 (GA). At least the 4th and 6th birds above were returns, indicating considerable site fidelity. The Region had only 13 records previously; the unofficial total is now of 17 Also impressive were 11 cismontane Red-naped Sapsucker records this winter Dec. 9-Feb. 22. This included a very overdue first Humboldt record at Bayside Dec. 18-Feb. 14 (ADB, RAE, m.ob.). Red-naped x Red-breasted Sapsucker hybrids were described from San Joaquin, at Acampo Dec. 19-20 (†DGY) and at Stockton Feb. 20 (a different bird—†DGY). A Black-backed Woodpecker (rarely reported in winter) was at 7350 ft at Sierra Ski Ranch, El Dorado, Feb. 17 (WGB). The few reports of Yellow-shafted and intergrade N. Flickers were of above usual numbers. Pileated Woodpeckers were surprises at Fall Cr. Dec. 19 (†DLSu—"first ever for Santa Cruz CBC"), and Green Valley (RbL, JCL—"Scarcely known from Solano").

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS—A Hammond's Flycatcher in Inverness, Marin, gave us our 2nd winter record Dec. 14-Feb. 7 (†RS, JGE, PP, DWM, m.ob.), surviving "25 days of 20 (lows) and hard frost" (RS). Reports by several skilled observers of a 2nd Hammond's Flycatcher in Oakland's hills were undocumented (!). Details will be solicited for a later addendum here. A W. Flycatcher was in Santa Cruz Dec. 19-Jan. 6 (†DSe, BBrr, DLSu). I agree with DR's diagnosis of a 2nd bird in Garzas Canyon off Carmel Valley, seen Feb. 20 (T. Crisler): "could be a very early arrival, but better treated as [a] winterer." One Black Phoebe was far to the northeast on the Fall River Mills CBC Dec. 19 (*fide* BY—"New for CBC and winter here"), and another was remarkably high at 6000 ft near Dinkey Cr., Fresno, Jan. 21 (JCL). Two E. Phoebes were discovered, one near Jameson Canyon Dec. 22-24 (MFRi, †MBG, ph. T. Battiste, †JCL, RbL, m.ob.) and another at Faith Ranch west of Modesto, Stanislaus, Jan. 18-Mar. 13 (M. Larkin, †HMR, DSg, m.ob.). Eastern Phoebes appear exceptional among our vagrant passerines in that many records are inland and occur almost strictly in late fall and winter. I would predict also that a fair proportion are adults (this could be checked with banding), and that in fact we are simply at the far edge of a normal winter range; our birds are not "vagrants" in the classic sense (i.e., misoriented), simply very rare. Our 5th Dusky-capped Flycatcher was cooperative at Monterey Bay Academy, Santa Cruz, Jan. 21-Mar. 10 (†DLSu, †DR, m.ob.). Both Ash-throated Flycatchers this season were returnees, at Rohnert Park, Sonoma, Feb. 6-12 (†KFC) and O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area,

Merced, Dec. 23 (†KFC, Los Banos CBC) A Tropical Kingbird was at L. Merced Dec. 20-Mar. 12 (A. Smith, PJM, ASH, m.ob.) The timing of migration in Cassin's Kingbirds is, unsurprisingly, poorly known in the Region. Two just north of San Ardo Jan. 26-Feb. 7 (BGE) probably wintered. "Several" at Arroyo Seco Feb. 6 (DLSh) were of uncertain status, but one in Panoche Valley Feb. 27 (TAC) surely represented seasonal movement. An imm. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher reported from east of Linden, San Joaquin, Jan. 2 (D. & A. Filson) appeared to be correct based on the verbal description (*fide* DGY; written details may be forthcoming), but observers are reminded that this species is among those reviewed by the C.B.R.C., and written details are necessary.

Tree Swallows appeared to be in above average numbers. A sighting of five Dec. 5 at Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, Butte, prompted this interesting comment from BED (the observer and subregional editor for the north C.V.): "At one time, any Tree Swallow records in this area before late December were unusual, but I now have several for early December. Still none for early November." Five Barn Swallows were well away from normal migration timing, Dec. 13-Jan. 23.

JAYS THROUGH THRASHERS—Of several Steller's Jay reports from low elevations, the most atypical locale was of one in Modesto Jan. 22+ (HMR, SLR; 75 ft). After a good fall, the only Pinyon Jay reports were of 40 Dec. 13 at Lava Beds N.M. (JMD) and one at Tule Lake N.W.R. Feb. 4 (RbL), both in Siskiyou. Reminiscent of last fall/winter is but one report of Clark's Nutcracker after a strong fall: 43 (very many!) along Emerford Rd., Lake, "evidently present throughout the period" (JRW). A Black-billed Magpie near Blue Lake, Humboldt (*fide* C. Ogan, no date), was dismissed by GSL as an escapee; no specific evidence for captivity was given, and I suspect that in general most extralimital magpie records are not of escapees. All 9 reports of Com. Ravens were of good numbers or of wanderers past usual limits. One or two on Sherman I. Feb. 21 (†TDM) were among "very few (2-3) records for Sacramento." Observers should watch for evidence of lowland colonization, especially in the C.V. in the next decade. Two Mountain Chickadees, visiting Spring Lakes Golf Course in Scott Valley Dec. 19 (†BSch), gave Santa Cruz its first records. Is that scored as one birdie or two? For once there was general agreement about Red-breasted Nuthatches: they were scarce, if somewhat wandering. A flock of 12 Pygmy Nuthatches at Smith R., 4-5 mi east of High Divide, Dec. 20 (GSL) established a first record for Del Norte, on the heels of last fall's Humboldt record (which was actually their 2nd, not first record, *fide* RAE). One Pygmy Nuthatch in Dinuba, Tulare (330 ft), Jan. 22 (RHG) was an unexpected wanderer to the C.V. floor.

In Santa Cruz this winter, DLSu and other active observers uncovered 23+ House Wrens. Nearly all were in coastal scrub adjacent to riparian habitat. The species is probably somewhat more common than currently known in much of the Region's lowlands in winter. Golden-crowned Kinglets, like Red-breasted Nuthatches, did not irrupt, being in decidedly low numbers. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were well reported, with one in Mix Canyon Dec. 20 (DSh) at 2500 ft; most in winter are at very low elevations. Mountain Bluebirds were reported in average numbers at traditional posts but were virtually absent in areas of irruption (e.g., the C.V. floor) and as vagrants, with none toward the coast. Townsend's Solitaires were well reported (16+), with eight toward the coast. There was no striking pattern to Am. Robin numbers despite good reporting; they were in roughly average numbers for most areas, with the only large report being of roughly 10,000 in the Summit City area on the Redding CBC Dec. 27 (BVDm, R. Hull). Varied Thrushes invaded the Region in large numbers, especially along the coast. Although interior and coastal wintering populations are largely separate (see Grinnell and Miller 1944, *The Distribution of the Birds of California*), there seems to be a good correlation in annual numbers between these groups. In w. Marin, RS noted exceedingly high mortality, especially because of cats. Fascinating was a record of a Wrentit singing

over 2–4 inches of snow along Providence Creek Rd., Fresno, Dec. 7 at 6200 ft [JCL]. The observer was “reasonably certain these high elevation birds are resident.” Coastward Sage Thrashers were singles in the Arcata Bottoms Dec. 18 [JCS, Arcata CBC] and near Mt. Diablo Jan. 2 (†JM, Contra Costa CBC); two at Lava Beds N.M. Dec. 13 [JMD] were exceptional as winter Great Basin reports and were far north as well. A Brown Thrasher skulked in Chico at least from early December to Feb. 13 [A. Dauterman, †HG, BED, TDM, BY, m.ob.]. It was obviously difficult to see, as it was variously reported as having one foot and being three-legged. As noted last fall, our 6th **Bendire’s Thrasher** returned to Lodi, San Joaquin, Oct. 31–Mar. 1 [GEW, DGY, m.ob.] after a hiatus last winter.

WAXWINGS THROUGH VIREOS — Bohemian Waxwings strongly irrupted into the n. counties. Some 550 were tallied through Siskiyou Dec. 19+ [NEC, RE, MFRb, CST, m.ob.]. Up to nine in Arcata Feb. 12–Mar. 8 [C. Dillingham, RAE, GSL, m.ob.] were the first for *Humboldt* since 1969 [when up to 2000 were present, *fide* GSL]. A startling fill-in was the first confirmed record for *Del Norte* (three near Hiouchi Feb. 17, ADB), and also surprising were 2 among very few records for *Shasta* (six at Glenburn Jan. 23, BVdM, BY et al., and five from Fall River Mills to McArthur Jan. 25, BY, BVdM et al.). Our only other records were from elsewhere in our portion of the Great Basin, with the southernmost 2 at Mono Lake County Park Jan. 22 [RS]. Cedar Waxwings were in good numbers, but with no obvious pattern.

Of 19 N. Shrikes, 12 were in the Great Basin, six were coastward (*Del Norte* to *Marin*), and one was in the C.V. just north of Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Jan. 24 (†ERi). Two Loggerhead Shrikes at Eel River Beach Jan. 3 [J. Nusbaum, Centerville Beach CBC] were the less expected shrike species for the n. coast. Five of our eight Solitary Vireos were in the C.V.—our best winter showing ever. The five *V. s. cassinii* (three coastal) were noted Dec. 9–28, except for one present “throughout the period” [DGY]. Both *V. s. plumbeus* birds were interior, at Lodi L. Dec. 19 [DGY, Stockton CBC] and Kewin Park, Modesto, Dec. 22 (†HMR), the latter for *Stanislaus*’ 2nd record of that form. Some 13 Hutton’s Vireos were noted on the C.V. floor Dec. 3–Jan. 31, which was better than average but generally expected. Less well established are fall and spring timing for such birds and winter habitat and elevations in general. A bird at 5450 ft along Providence Cr., Fresno, Jan. 25 [JCL] was in dense mixed coniferous forest. Our 4th December record of **Warbling Vireo** was in the Corral de Tierra area of *Monterey* Dec. 28 [L. Jensen, *Monterey Peninsula* CBC; details reviewed by DR].

WOOD WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS — Only four Tennessee Warblers (one on the *Crystal Springs* CBC, two

on the *Monterey Pen.* CBC and another in *Pacific Grove* Jan. 30, LRBe) were reported. Some 34+ Nashville Warblers was above average, apparently due both to improved CBC reporting to us and a good winter for them. All were coastal. A **Virginia’s Warbler** sighting at Kewin Park, Modesto, Dec. 22–Jan. 30 (†HMR, †ERC, EHa, m.ob.) furnished our 3rd winter record and one of fewer than 10 records at any season away from both the coast and *Mono*, for which most of the few such are from the well-birded *Yosemite* region. Not to be outdone, *Monterey*, site of the first 2 winter period records, added another on Feb. 29 (†RER). A usual 13 Yellow Warblers (all coastal) included eight at L. Merced, S.F., Dec. 28 [PJM, *San Francisco* CBC] *Livermore*, *Alameda*, was home to the Region’s 2nd wintering **Chestnut-sided Warbler** Feb. 9–Mar. 7 (†KGG, ph. RJR, †JMR, †RAE, m.ob.). A **Cape May Warbler** at *Inverness* Dec. 19–Jan. 10 [DDK, RS, JaW, Pt. Reyes CBC] provided only the Region’s 4th or 5th winter record.

Numbers of Black-throated Gray Warblers vary greatly from winter to winter; 18+ this season was roughly average. Impressive were four Townsend’s Warblers in the C.V. Dec. 22+, and four at Jameson Canyon, *Napa*, Dec. 31 [RAE, MFRi] were “apparently unusual here in winter.” The interior edges of the wintering population’s range are poorly documented in our notebooks. Amazing were three wintering *Prairie* Warblers, Oct. 27–Dec. 10 east of *Sunset State Beach* [RAE, DLSu], Nov. 9–Feb. 20 at *Princeton Harbor* [ALE, PJM, JMR, RSTh, m.ob.], and Jan. 2–Feb. 7 at *Bolinas Lagoon* [R. McDonald, *fide* PP, DWm, CLO, DSg]. The 2nd (and possibly the 3rd) were returnees. In an echo of last fall’s remarkable invasion, 39+ *Palm* Warblers were noted along our coast through the period, for the best total in 4 years. Included was one apparent *D. p. hypochrysea* at *Kentfield, Marin*, Dec. 17–Mar. 14 [BiL, GHg]. The *Yellow-throated Warbler* noted last season visited *Stinson Beach* Nov. 29–Dec. 6 [KH et al.]. Ten more *Black-and-white* Warblers were reported this season than in any past winter, with 26 in coastal counties (including the S.F. Bay area). Also an all-time high was six *Am. Redstarts*, which were scattered the length of the coast; our average for the past 7 winters is now two. *MacGillivray’s* Warblers were noted at *Half Moon Bay* Dec. 19 (†RSTh, *Crystal Springs* CBC) and *College L., Santa Cruz*, Jan. 1 [DLSu]. Far north at this season were *Com. Yellowthroats* at *College of the Redwoods, Humboldt*, Jan. 3 [SWH] and *Arcata marsh* Jan. 24 [FJB]. Nine *Wilson’s* Warblers was about par; they dotted the length of the coast. Male and female *Summer Tanagers* were along *Corralitos Cr.*, the ad. male spending its 3rd winter at least, Dec. 5–Mar. 15 [RAE, BLAb, †DLSu, DSg, m.ob.], with the female nearby Jan. 24–Mar. 19 [M. Mammoser, †CKf, †DLSu]. A 3rd bird was a well-studied female at *Suisun, Solano*, Dec. 15–Feb. 25 [D. Salvato, †MBG, ph. T., Battiste, †JCL, m.ob.]. A total of 15 *Tanagers* was our best ever for the season by two. The northernmost were two in *Chico* Dec. 30, with one to Jan. 3 (†TDM, AM, m.ob., *Chico* CBC), the interior total being a very impressive six.

EMBERIZINES — *Rose-breasted Grosbeaks* vacationed at *Pacific Grove* Dec. 7–9 (imm. male; R. Bethel) and *Inverness* Dec. 19+ (imm. female?; RS, DDK et al., Pt. Reyes CBC). A ♂ *Black-headed Grosbeak* was singing in *Saratoga, Santa Clara*, Feb. 13 [D. Leal], 2 months early. Such birds are generally presumed to have wintered somewhere nearby. This season garnered our 7th and 8th winter records for *Indigo Bunting*: an imm. male Dec. 3–4 at *Westhaven* [GSL, LPL] and a female at *Ano Nuevo* Jan. 25–30 [GJS, RAE, PJM; ph.?). The latter bird apparently furnished the first record for any season there. A *Rufous-crowned Sparrow* on the n.w. slope of *Twin Peaks* Dec. 28 [RS, *San Francisco* CBC] apparently provided a first county record for *San Francisco*. A remarkable count of 21 in the *Battlecreek* area Feb. 20 [BVdM et al.] had as precedent only one bird for *Shasta* (Feb. 23, 1985). Just 2 reports of *Am. Tree Sparrow* was quite few: four were at *Tule Lake N.W.R.* Dec. 30 [FrT], and one was on the *Honey L. CBC* Dec. 31 [*fide* TDM]. Among records for 18 *Chipping Sparrows* was a peak of 13 in *Acampo, San Joaquin*, Dec. 19–Jan. 26 [TDM, AM, DGY]. Four



Chestnut-sided Warbler at *Livermore, Cal.*, Feb. 16, 1988. Photo/Robert J. Richmond.

Clay-colored Sparrows along the coast gave us 12th–15th Regional records for the period: Nov. 30–Dec. 11 at Salinas (BHG, †KVV), Dec. 19 at Princeton Harbor (PJM), and Jan. 3 in Ferndale, with the latter bird joined by a 2nd Jan. 4 (GSL, ADB, MFRb, RE). There are still no records for the Region Jan. 23–Apr. 28. Some 40+ Vesper Sparrows included a first winter record for Siskiyou: Dec. 27 at Tule Lake N.W.R. (RE, Tule Lake CBC). This also apparently furnished California's northernmost record for this season. A Black-throated Sparrow in San Jose Dec. 4–Feb. 29+ (F. & D. O'Sullivan, †WGB) constituted our first winter record in 6 years (about our 10th ever).

A Lark Bunting Dec. 2 along W. Butte Rd., Sutter (KH, BED, WDS), was at a popular locale for that species. A male near Hornitos, Mariposa, Jan. 10 (CLy, JW) was noteworthy in the Sierra foothills. The past few winters have held several records of Grasshopper Sparrow, virtually unknown at this season previously. Not to disappoint, one was on Mt. Diablo at Curry Pt. this Jan. 2 (†JM, ph. J. Edgar, Contra Costa CBC), with another nearby at Briones Regional Park Feb. 27 (M. Stern). Seven Sharp-tailed Sparrows were widely dispersed: singles were at Jacoby Cr. mouth Dec. 18–Mar. 16 (ADB et al.; 2nd Humboldt record), s. end of Tomales Bay Nov. 23–Dec. 19 (RS et al.; see last fall's report), Palo Alto Baylands Dec. 21–Jan. 20 (†M. Mammosser, †DEQ, †WGB, m.ob.), Pine Gulch Cr. mouth in Bolinas Lagoon Jan. 2–Feb. 6 (MJL, PP), and Arcata Marsh Jan. 18–19 (KS); two were at Limantour Spit, Marin, Feb. 7 (MJL).

A remarkable 88+ Swamp Sparrows were reported, more than in the previous 2 best winters combined. Most were in Marin, with only two birds not in coastal counties, on Woodbridge Rd., San Joaquin, Dec. 19 (KH; present from fall) and "Taylor Rd. at Jennings Rd.," Stanislaus, Dec. 30–Feb. 22 (†HMR, JHG). White-throated Sparrows equalled last winter's good show and were less concentrated toward the coast than Swamps, as expected, with 12 of 52+ records away from coastal counties. An impressive five Harris' Sparrows were away from Great Basin areas, at Ft. Dick Dec. 20 (RST), San Jose Jan. 5–9 (banded; LRM), n. Stockton Jan. 11–Feb. 21 (F. Clayton, MJL, m.ob.), n. spit Humboldt Bay Jan. 27 (D. Muschalek), and Pescadero Jan. 31–Feb. 27 (PJM, RSTh, m.ob.). Ten more in Great Basin areas was usual. Mind-boggling was a sober estimate of 500+ Lapland Longspurs on Gazelle Flats northwest of Gazelle, Siskiyou, Jan. 18 (RE, MFRb), with only a few present before and after this date (e.g., 15 on Jan. 24). Nevertheless, there were 4 previous records of 100 or more, all from the n.e. portion of the state, including a Honey L. CBC total of 492 in December 1978 (this year's total: one). Chestnut-collared Longspur numbers on Bear River Ridge, Humboldt, peaked at an impressive 30 Nov. 29–Feb. 21 (FJB, RE, GSL, SDF, m.ob.), and also noteworthy were three to five at Ave. 276 and Rd. 176, Tulare, Feb. 28 (RH). A Snow Bunting drifted to Bear River Ridge Nov. 29–Jan. 5 (FJB, †A. Desch, m.ob.); observers are reminded that this is a C.B.R.C.-reviewed species and requires documentation.

ICTERINES THROUGH FINCHES — Tricolored Blackbird was unreported away from Santa Cruz; observers are reminded that this species needs close checking, as it is very likely in a decline (of unknown speed). Anecdotal evidence indicates the species is occurring in smaller flocks than historically, perhaps a behavioral shift in response to fragmented habitat. Will breeding success decline? Half Moon Bay's Rusty Blackbird clearly wintered, being seen through the period Nov. 18–Jan. 20 (BS, CGR). My recent statement (AB 40:328) that a count of 100 Brown-headed Cowbirds was "exceptional anywhere in the Region at this season," was unfortunately quite wrong. While most CBCs, for example, record modest numbers, the species is still locally numerous in winter (e.g., 866 on the Sacramento CBC this year was very low for them). Other concentrations reported this winter were of 107 on the S.F. CBC; a series of pre-roost flock counts at one site in Rohnert Park, Sonoma, of about 100–210 Dec. 6–Feb. 5, indicating overwintering (KFC); and 210 on Harkin's Slough Rd., Santa Cruz, Feb. 15 (DLSu). Observers are encouraged to read the recent cowbird



Male Orchard Oriole at Pacific Grove, Cal., December 1987. Photo/R. F. Tintle.

paper by SAL (*Western Birds* 18:63–70) and to track population levels at all seasons. The Monterey CBC gave us an impressive three Orchard Orioles Dec. 28. A ♀-plumaged bird remained at Yankee Pt. to Jan. 4 (RLB, C. Hartzell et al.) as did one male in Pacific Grove (DLSu, BLAb, T. Crisler et al.), while another male there hung around through Feb. 15 (DLSu, BLAb, ph. DR, ph. RFT, m.ob.). An imm. ♂ Hooded Oriole was observed in La Selva Dec. 31–Jan. 1 (DLSu; † to Moss Landing CBC). Of eight N. Orioles (slightly below average), five were "Bullock's" and three unidentified to form.

Purple Finches were in modestly above average numbers throughout most of the Region. Among 8 Cassin's Finch reportings were six birds in Smith R. Jan. 22 (ADB—"first Del Norte lowland record") and eight in upper foothills west of the C.V. Dec. 30–Jan. 30 (HMR, DGY). It was clearly a Red Crossbill irruption year—good but much smaller than the record-setting 1984–1985 invasion. Only 4 reports were away from coastal counties (28 birds; RHG, MP, StS), with greatest enthusiasm and highest numbers from the 3 subregional editors surrounding the Santa Cruz Mts. (PJM, WGB, DLSu). An estimated 1050 birds were reported from Santa Cruz through the period (DLSu). Pine Siskins too were in good numbers at least in some areas (e.g., Santa Cruz, Shasta, the C.V.). A ♂ Lesser Goldfinch in Fresno Feb. 20–Feb. 21 (†JCL) showed black in the face. We have several records of "dark-backed" Lessers on file throughout the Region, and it seems most likely this is genetic variation, not vagrancy. Still, full descriptions of any odd birds are valuable. Reports of 16+ Lawrence's Goldfinches Dec. 20+ was just above average seasonally and included three on the coast at Pescadero Feb. 27 (RSTh, D. Keller, SEF). Evening Grosbeaks appeared in typical modest numbers.

CORRIGENDUM — Santa Cruz held six Yellow Warblers last winter (not five as stated, AB 41:326), with a seasonal total thus of 13.

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SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie

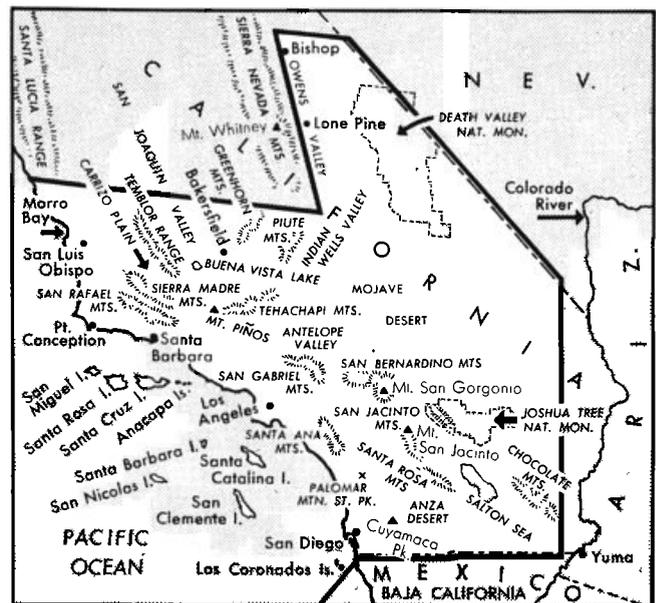
It was a relatively mild winter except for a cold spell in December, and it was exceptionally dry after the first of the year. Fifteen species of flycatchers, 24 species of wood warblers, three species of tanagers, and four species of orioles indicates the variety of birds found wintering in southern California, but these were all overshadowed by a most cooperative Xantus' Hummingbird in Ventura.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.C.R. = Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo Co.; N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o 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 HERONS — A Pacific Loon, rare inland, was on L. Perris, Riverside Co., all winter (RMcK), and another was on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., Dec. 14–Feb. 2 (MAH). The largest concentration of Horned Grebes found inland this winter was of 75+ on L. Perris Nov. 29+ (RMcK) with much smaller numbers scattered throughout the Region. A count of 2,500,000–3,000,000 Eared Grebes was made on the Salton Sea Jan. 23 (RMcK), indicating the importance of this body of water to this species in winter. Fifty thousand W./Clark's Grebes on the Salton Sea Jan. 23 (RMcK) was more than formerly believed to winter on this lake. Thirty-two thousand Am. White Pelicans on the Salton Sea Jan. 23 (RMcK) supported the idea that this is a most important locality for wintering birds of this species. Again a small number of Brown Pelicans wintered on the Salton Sea with five to 10 present during January and February (RMcK). A ♀ Magnificent Frigatebird over W. Covina, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 11 (DKA) was not only unseasonable but also inland.

Eight Am. Bitterns in the Prado Basin, Riverside Co., Dec. 22 (LRH) was a large number for s. California. Two or three Little Blue Herons around s. San Diego Bay throughout the period (EC) were the only ones reported. The ad. Reddish Egret that appeared on s. San Diego Bay Sept. 25 was still present Mar. 12 (GmC). The ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron first found in the San Diego area during the fall of 1981 was present in La Jolla Jan. 16+ (BW).

WATERFOWL — Up to two Tundra Swans near Lakeview, Riverside Co., Nov. 17–Feb. 26 (AMC) were the southernmost



of the 20± reported away from the n.e. corner of the Region. Up to two Greater White-fronted Geese in San Luis Obispo Nov. 2–Dec. 19 (GPS) and two to four in Ventura throughout the period were along the coast, where very few now are found wintering, but 30 over Goleta Feb. 6 (EG) were undoubtedly spring migrants. Three Ross' Geese in San Luis Obispo Dec. 15–17 (GB); one around Lompoc, Santa Barbara Co., all winter (KaH); and eight near Oceanside Dec. 26–Jan. 3 (GmC) were along the coast, where considered rare, and two in Lancaster, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 20–Jan. 21 (JKA) were at an unusual locality. A "Cackling" Canada Goose, rare in s. California, was in Malibu Dec. 20+ (KLG), and another was near Norco, Riverside Co., Jan. 18 (DH). Twelve Blue-winged Teal near Bakersfield Dec. 19–20 (MH); 27 in Pico Rivera, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 2 (JSc); and a male at N.E.S.S. Feb. 14 (RPH) were all away from the immediate coast. Some 30 Eur. Wigeon scattered throughout the Region was an average number to be reported in winter.

The ♂ Tufted Duck found on Quail L., Los Angeles Co., Nov. 19 was still present Mar. 5 (KLG); the male found on L. Cachuma Nov. 30 remained through Dec. 6 (PEL), and a female was there Dec. 18–Feb. 17 (CM); and a male was in Hesperia, San Bernardino Co., Dec. 6–11 (EAC). The ♂ Harlequin Duck



Immature female Oldsquaw at Santa Barbara, Cal., Jan. 20, 1988. Photo/Jon L. Dunn.

found in Bolsa Chica Nov. 14 was still present at the end of the period (LRH) after having spent its 4th winter at this location. Twelve Oldsquaws found along the coast during the period was an average number for winter in s. California, but one at the mouth of Salt Creek on the Salton Sea Jan. 31 (TG) and another (same?) at nearby Desert Shores Feb. 21 (GMcC) were inland, where considered casual. Twenty-two Black Scoters found along the coast included up to 14 off Vandenberg A.F.B., Santa Barbara Co., Dec. 26–Mar. 6 (KHo). One at S.E.S.S. Dec. 9 (WH) was one of a very few ever to be found inland in California. Two Surf Scoters at N.E.S.S. Dec. 20–Jan. 12 (RMcK) and another at S.E.S.S. Dec. 12 (GMcC) were inland, where considered rare. Twenty-nine Hooded Mergansers in Hart Park near Bakersfield Dec. 20 (RS) was a large number for s. California, and one in Santee, San Diego Co., Dec. 3 (JC) was relatively far south.

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — Four Black-shouldered Kites were found around the S.E.S.S. during the winter (MAP, GMcC, RPH), indicating this species is still attempting to expand its range. Up to 18 Bald Eagles on L. Cachuma during the winter (BA) was more than expected; an immature at Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co., all winter (JSR); an adult around Victorville, San Bernardino Co., Dec. 6–Feb. 7 (SMY); and an immature at Winterhaven, Imperial Co., Dec. 31 (RMcK) were all at unusual localities. A Red-shouldered Hawk at the Brock Ranch Research Center, Imperial Co., Jan. 1 (RMcK) was in the extreme s.e. corner of the State, where previously unrecorded. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk over the Plano Trabuco, Orange Co., Jan. 30–Feb. 3 (MAP) was undoubtedly the same bird seen here during the past 2 winters. Fewer than expected numbers of Rough-legged Hawks were found this winter, but these did include a dark-phased individual spending its 3rd winter in Ventura (JSR) and another as far south as S.E.S.S. Jan. 17–23 (DRW). A black Merlin (*F. c. suckleyi*) in Oceanside Dec. 22 (GMcC) was the first ever found in San Diego County, and another was seen chasing phalaropes off Pt. Fermin, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 4 (LRH). A Peregrine Falcon was at S.E.S.S., where considered rare in winter, Feb. 14 (RPH).

A Sandhill Crane in San Simeon Feb. 2 (LT), another at Pismo Beach Dec. 22–Jan. 5 (SDa), and the bird in Saticoy Nov. 22–Dec. 8 (JSR) were all along the coast, where considered casual. Up to 10 Lesser Golden-Plovers near Santa Maria throughout the period (TEW), one to three at Seal Beach through February (DRW), and one near Imperial Beach Dec. 24 (BF) were all believed to be of the race *fulva*, the only form documented to occur in California in winter. Three Lesser Yellowlegs in the Prado Basin Dec. 22 (LRH) were of interest since few are found inland away from the Salton Sea in winter. A Solitary Sand-

piper near Imperial Beach Feb. 28+ (FD) undoubtedly wintered locally and was only the 6th ever to be found in California at this time of the year. A Ruddy Turnstone at Salton City, Imperial Co., Feb. 7 (HEC) undoubtedly wintered in that area. A Rock Sandpiper around Avila, San Luis Obispo Co., Nov. 22–Feb. 6 (JB) was believed to be the same bird present here during the past 2 winters. A Ruff found on Morro Bay Nov. 19 remained through Dec. 17 (JMcD), and the bird on s. San Diego Bay was still present Mar. 12 (GMcC). More than 30 Com. Snipe together in the Prado Basin Dec. 8 (LRH) was a large concentration for s. California. A Wilson's Phalarope at Salton City Feb. 7 (HEC) and another at S.E.S.S. the same day (HEC) were undoubtedly wintering locally.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — A Parasitic Jaeger was seen about 10 mi inland east of San Juan Capistrano Jan. 31 (DBo). A first-winter Laughing Gull, casual along the coast, was on Santa Barbara I. Feb. 28 (JKA). Five Franklin's Gulls were reported, with one in Malibu Jan. 7 (DG); single birds in Fountain Valley, Orange Co., Nov. 29–Dec. 5 (RRV) and Dec. 5–25 (BED); one at the mouth of the San Diego R. in San Diego Dec. 29–Jan. 20 (EL); and the 5th on s. San Diego Bay Dec. 3–6 (FD). Intriguing was an ad. Band-tailed Gull (*Larus belcheri*) in winter plumage seen on San Nicholas I. Nov. 9 & 20 and again Jan. 23 (TM); this South American species is at least partially migratory, having occurred casually north to Panama. Two Mew Gulls near Moreno, Riverside Co., Dec. 25–Jan. 2 (MAP) and another at S.E.S.S. Feb. 15 (RPH) were well inland, where very rare. An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull at S.E.S.S. Jan. 7 (CC) could well have been one of the two that were present here last winter. An ad. Glaucous-winged Gull at S.E.S.S. Jan. 17 (MAP) was far inland. The only Glaucous Gull reported was a first-year bird at S.C.R.E. Feb. 15+ (JSR). The only Com. Terns reported were one on San Diego Bay Dec. 5 (REW) and another in Malibu Jan. 1 (KLG), both of which could have been late fall stragglers rather than wintering individuals. Two Black Skimmers at S.C.R.E. Feb. 7 (JSR) were the only ones found north of Orange County.

There appeared to be an influx of Marbled Murrelets to the coast of San Luis Obispo County, with 15–20 off Montana de Oro S.P. Dec. 20 (JLD), 11 off Oceano Dec. 21 (BSc), and two more off Arroyo Grande the same day (BSc). Two Xantus' Murrelets carefully studied between Santa Catalina I. and Santa Barbara I. Feb. 28 (JKA) were of the s. form *hypoleuca*, previously known only as a rare late summer and fall visitor to s. California waters. Two Ancient Murrelets off Montana de Oro S.P. Dec. 20 (BSc) were the only ones reported.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A White-winged Dove, very rare to casual along the coast in winter, was present in Ventura throughout the period. Up to four Com. Ground-Doves present in Goleta since Sept. 29 remained through at least Jan. 10 (HPR), and others were found elsewhere nearby on Jan. 2 (TEW) and Feb. 20 (RPH), supporting the theory that this species is expanding its range northward. The Ruddy Ground-Dove found at F.C.R. Oct. 17 was still present Jan. 4 (CC). A Spotted Owl in a narrow ribbon of riparian growth within an extensive area of coastal sage scrub in Riverside Jan. 26+ (CMcG) was unexpected. Short-eared Owls were slightly more numerous and widespread than in recent winters, with one or two occurring around S.E.S.S. Jan. 17–23 (MAP), but they were still much scarcer than 20 years ago. A Vaux's Swift at Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo Co., Dec. 26 (BSc); 200 over the El Monte area Jan. 2 (JSc); and two at Batiquitos Lagoon, San Diego Co., Dec. 21 (DRW) were all undoubtedly wintering locally.

A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird found in Ventura Nov. 22 was joined by a female Jan. 31, with both remaining to Mar. 4 (VJK), and the male found in Mission Viejo, Orange Co., Nov. 30 remained through Dec. 12 (DRW). On Jan. 30, a ♀ Xantus' Hummingbird (*Hylocharis xantusii*) appeared in the same Ventura yard frequented by the Broad-billed Hummingbirds and remained through Mar. 27 (KHa, VJK); the bird built a nest

and laid 2 eggs in February, deserted them after the eggs failed to hatch, and was on a 2nd nest in March. Thanks to Virgil J. Ketner and his understanding neighbors, literally hundreds of interested observers from throughout the continent were able to see and photograph the bird. This was the first fully documented record for the United States, although a male was seen by a single observer in e. San Diego Co., Dec. 27, 1986 (AB 41: 330, 1987). Previously, the species has been considered resident in s. Baja California with the northernmost record from about 29° north latitude. A ♀ *Archilochus* hummingbird, identified as a Black-chinned Hummingbird, in San Diego Feb. 10 (REW) and another on Pt. Loma Nov. 26–Feb. 20 (REW) were the only ones reported. Up to two Costa's Hummingbirds in Ventura throughout the winter (VJK, JSR) and one in Santa Barbara Dec. 24–Feb. 3 (JEL) were the northernmost along the coast this winter. A ♂ Allen's Hummingbird in Santa Barbara Dec. 21–Jan. 2 (REW) was evidently wintering locally, the first of the spring migrants being found near San Diego Jan. 16 (JO) and on Vandenberg A.F.B. Jan. 18 (KH0).

An imm. ♀ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker near Tustin, Orange Co., Jan. 6–18 (RRV) and an adult female at Desert Center, Riverside Co., Dec. 26 (JLD) were the only ones reported. Three Red-naped Sapsuckers in Ventura County throughout the winter and another in Los Osos Dec. 13–Feb. 20 (KaH) were the northwesternmost to be reported this winter. A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker near Victorville Dec. 6 (CM) was away from the mountains. A Downy Woodpecker in Mojave, Kern Co., Jan. 30 (RS) had been present since the fall and was quite far out on the high desert. A Hairy Woodpecker at Harbor L. in Long Beach Jan. 2–Feb. 5 (KLG) and another at Upper Newport Bay Nov. 17–Feb. 23 (LRH) were unusually close to the coast. White-headed Woodpeckers remained in out-of-range lowland localities throughout the winter, after having moved into these areas during the fall, with several around Bakersfield at the s. end of the San Joaquin Valley Oct. 10+ (MOC); up to six in the Santa Barbara area to Feb. 25 (PEL); five in coastal Ventura County throughout most of the winter (JSR); one near L. Hughes, Los Angeles Co., to Dec. 27 (JKA); and one at Blue Jay in the Santa Ana Mts. of Orange County Nov. 14–Jan. 24 (BED).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — An Olive-sided Flycatcher, accidental in winter, was in Santa Barbara Dec. 25–Feb. 4 (LB) for its 4th winter, and another was calling in Casitas, Ventura Co., Jan. 28 (RJM). A Greater Pewee, a casual straggler to California, was in San Diego Feb. 20–Mar. 30 (JO'B). A Least Flycatcher in Mission Viejo Nov. 30–Jan. 30 (DRW) was the 9th to be found in s. California in winter. A Hammond's Flycatcher in Goleta Dec. 25–Feb. 21 (JLD) was one of a very few ever reported in California in winter. A Gray Flycatcher near Riverside Jan. 10–Feb. 13 (GH) and four in Orange County throughout the winter were the only ones reported. Five W. Flycatchers were found along the coast with single birds in Goleta Jan. 2–5 (JSt), Irvine Nov. 7–Feb. 21 (DRW), Mission Viejo Dec. 6–Feb. 21 (JT), San Diego Jan. 4–Feb. 11 (B & IM) and at another location in San Diego Feb. 11 (B & IM), and a 6th was inland at the Brock Ranch Research Center Jan. 1 (RMcK). Eastern Phoebes were more numerous than normal with seven reported including single birds along the coast in Santa Barbara Jan. 31–Feb. 7 (BBa), Long Beach Jan. 1–16 (MAP), and Newport Beach Jan. 2–Mar. 3 (LJ); near San Diego Dec. 25–26 (SG); inland at F.C.R. Feb. 7 (RAE); near Riverside Jan. 7 (CMcG); and at S.E.S.S. Jan. 23–Mar. 19 (BBr).

A Vermilion Flycatcher near Weldon, Kern Co., Dec. 26 (RHe) was unusually far north, and three around Ventura throughout the period (JSR) and another in Irvine Dec. 5–Jan. 9 (BSh) were along the coast. The Dusky-capped Flycatcher found in Mission Viejo Nov. 21 was still present Feb. 21 (MMcD), another was at S.E.S.S. Dec. 22–30 (KR), and a 3rd was in San Diego Feb. 11–Apr. 7 (B & IM), increasing the number now recorded in s. California to 10. A Tropical Kingbird in Goleta Sept. 22–Mar. 16 (HPR) was believed to be the same bird present here the

previous winter, and another was in Santa Barbara Dec 24–Feb. 21 (REW). A **Thick-billed Kingbird** near Tustin, Orange Co., Nov. 4–Mar. 5 (LRH) was the same bird that had spent the previous 5 winters at this locality. A N. Rough-winged Swallow was near Oxnard throughout the period (JSR), and another was in Irvine Nov. 22–Jan. 20 (DRW), suggesting they wintered locally. Records for the October–November period, however, are fewer than those for mid-winter, indicating even these two birds could be exceptionally early spring migrants.

JAYS THROUGH SHRIKES — Some Steller's Jays remained in the lowlands throughout the period as indicated by such reports as one in Whitewater Canyon, Riverside Co., all winter (DCH); another in Newton Canyon, Los Angeles Co., to Jan. 21 (JL); two in Glendale Jan. 15–30 (JJ); and one in Norwalk all winter (JSc). A Scrub Jay in Niland Dec. 22–Jan. 17 (JLD) was one of a very few ever found in the Imperial Valley. A flock of 150± Pinyon Jays in Apache Canyon, Ventura Co., throughout the period (RJM) and a flock of 10 around S.E.S.S. Dec. 31–Jan. 20 (TJW, RH) were undoubtedly tied to the fall movement of these birds. Good numbers of Mountain Chickadees remained in the coastal lowlands throughout the period after the fall invasion with one in Santa Maria Jan. 21 (JLD) being the most noteworthy. White-breasted Nuthatches were also present in the coastal lowlands throughout the winter with a calling bird in Ventura Dec. 27–31 (JLD) considered *tenuissima* or *nelsoni* from the interior and clearly not the expected *aculeata* from the coastal mountains. Pygmy Nuthatches remained in the lowlands into March with single birds in Corona del Mar, Orange Co., Jan. 3 (BED) and Irvine Jan. 16 (MAP), with one in Palmdale Mar. 19 (KLG) being the most noteworthy.

A calling Winter Wren at F.C.R. Feb. 7 (RAE) was felt to be of the e. form *hiemalis* and was undoubtedly the same bird found here in November. An Am. Dipper in the upper end of San Juan Canyon Jan. 27 (FR) may be the first ever found in Orange County. A Golden-crowned Kinglet at Lost Lake Resort, Riverside Co., Dec. 25 (MAP) and two at Laguna Dam, Imperial Co., Dec. 23 (CM) were along the Colorado R., where considered very rare. A Townsend's Solitaire in Banning, Riverside Co., Jan. 2 (MAP) was at an unusual locality. More than the average numbers of Varied Thrushes were present in the coastal foothills as indicated by 50+ in one canyon near Casitas, with a few being found along the coast as indicated by single birds



White Wagtail at Ventura, Cal., Feb. 2, 1988. Photo/Don Hoechlin.

in Huntington Beach Oct. 31–Jan. 23 (DRW), Newport Beach Feb. 21 (LRH), and San Diego Jan. 31 (LW). A Gray Catbird in Los Osos Feb. 14 (MC) was only the 4th ever found in s. California in winter. A Curve-billed Thrasher, a casual straggler to California, was at Imperial Dam Dec. 29–Jan. 1 (BBa). The ad. **White Wagtail** found near Oxnard Nov. 22 remained through Mar. 6 (JSR), losing its tail in January but growing a new one before departing. Up to two Sprague's Pipits, very rare in California, were near Lakeview Nov. 3–Jan. 10 (RMCK). A Bohemian Waxwing at F.C.R. Feb. 7 (RAE) was the only one found in this Region although small numbers were present just to the north of the Region. An imm. N. Shrike just north of the San Bernardino/Riverside County line near Twentynine Palms Feb. 21 (NMC) was unusually far south.

VIREOS, WOOD WARBLERS — Three of the 12 Solitary Vireos found along the coast were of the interior form *plumbeus* as was the one present inland near Bakersfield Oct. 10–Dec. 20 (MOC). Five Tennessee Warblers in the Santa Barbara area along with one in Ventura were the only ones reported this winter. Twenty-one Nashville Warblers along the coast appeared about average for a winter period. A N. Parula, casual in winter, was at Lost Lake Resort along the Colorado R. Dec. 12–23 (JLD), and another was in San Diego Feb. 24–Mar. 17 (REW). Yellow Warblers appeared to be scarcer than in recent winters with only 10 reported along the coast. A Chestnut-sided Warbler in Carlsbad Feb. 9–Mar. 12 (I & LG) was one of a very few ever found wintering in California. A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler in Santa Barbara Jan. 2–13 (MH), another in San Diego Dec. 3–6 (PJ), and a female inland at Lost Lake Resort Dec. 12–23 (JLD) could all have been exceptionally late stragglers from the fall. Twenty-five Black-throated Gray Warblers and five Hermit Warblers along the coast appeared average. A Blackburnian Warbler in Oceano Nov. 11–Dec. 10 (JLD) was clearly a late fall straggler.

The Grace's Warbler that had spent the previous 8 winters in Santa Barbara could not be found after Dec. 10 (JEL) and was considered to have died. The one that had been present in Ventura for the past 3 winters was still present Mar. 25 (PEL); another was in La Jolla Feb. 13–Apr. 3 (REW); and the bird seen on Pt. Loma Nov. 11 was seen on and off through February (REW). There have now been at least seven Grace's Warblers found wintering in coastal s. California, most returning during consecutive winters, although the species remains unrecorded elsewhere in the United States at this time of year, indicating these occurrences may be something other than accidental.

A ♂ Pine Warbler, casual in winter, was in Morro Bay S.P. Dec. 19–Mar. 8 (JSR). Palm Warblers were relatively numerous with 20 reported from along the coast including seven together in Goleta Jan. 3 (PEL). A Blackpoll Warbler in Santa Barbara Dec. 5–13 (BA) was by far the latest ever found in California. Fourteen Black-and-white Warblers along the coast were slightly more than normal, but three Am. Redstarts were fewer than expected. Three Worm-eating Warblers were present along the coast with one near Morro Bay Dec. 19–Jan. 31 (MTH), another in Huntington Beach through at least Feb. 3 (BED), and the 3rd on Pt. Loma to at least Feb. 27 (JW). Two N. Waterthrushes at S.C.R.E. during January (CM), two more near Imperial Beach Mar. 5+ (JO), and one at S.E.S.S. Jan. 23 (RH) were the only wintering birds found this year. A ♂ MacGillivray's Warbler in Huntington Beach Oct. 9–Mar. 5 (DRW) was undoubtedly the same bird that had spent the past 2 winters at this location, and another was in La Jolla Jan. 17–Feb. 28 (JO'B). Some 30 Wilson's Warblers along the coast were probably about average. Two Painted Redstarts were present with one in Santa Maria Nov. 18–Mar. 7 (MP) and the other in Coronado Nov. 25–Mar. 21 (EC).

TANAGERS THROUGH LONGSPURS — A ♂ Hepatic Tanager in Santa Barbara Dec. 29–Feb. 6 (AME) was the same bird present during the past 5 winters, and another was in



Blue Grosbeak at Norco, Cal., Jan. 12, 1988. Photo/Don Hoehlin.

Bonita, San Diego Co., Dec. 13–Jan. 16 (GMcC). Thirteen Summer Tanagers were found along the coast, which was slightly more than normal. More than 50 W. Tanagers were reported along the coast, and one was inland at Imperial Dam Dec. 31 (RMCK). The only Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were three in the Santa Barbara area, a male in Sherman Oaks Jan. 2–7 (GB), and two in the San Diego area. A Black-headed Grosbeak, rarer in winter than the preceding species, was on Vandenberg A.F.B. Jan. 3 (fide KH), and a male was in Goleta Feb. 25 (KB). A Blue Grosbeak photographed in Norco, Riverside Co., Jan. 10–28 (DH) was only the 7th ever found in s. California in winter. An Indigo Bunting, casual in winter, was seen in Goleta Feb. 10 (PEL), and another was photographed in Norco Jan. 10–28 (DH). A ♂ Painted Bunting in San Luis Obispo Jan. 22–25 (TT) was presumed to be an escapee.

A Green-tailed Towhee in Riverside Jan. 7–Feb. 27 (CMcG) and another near downtown Los Angeles all winter (JPD) were both slightly outside the area where expected at this time of the year. An Am. Tree Sparrow in Niland near S.E.S.S. Dec. 22–29 (JLD) was unusually far south. Four Clay-colored Sparrows were found with single birds along the coast in Los Osos Dec. 2–Jan. 5 (JMcD), Arroyo Grande Dec. 13–Jan. 15 (DS), and Goleta Jan. 2 (TEW) and inland near Imperial, Imperial Co., Jan. 23 (MAP). A Brewer's Sparrow near Oxnard all winter (JSR) was along the coast, where unexpected. A Vesper Sparrow, rare along the coast, was in Goleta Dec. 19–Jan. 16 (RPH), and another was in Irvine Dec. 2 (DRW). The Black-throated Sparrow found in Goleta Nov. 20 could not be found after Dec. 21 (RPH), and another in Quatal Canyon, Ventura Co., Jan. 23 (RJM) was out of range. A Lark Bunting on the Carrizo Plain Dec. 1 (GPS), three at Harper Dry Lake Feb. 14–21 (JKA), one to three near Lakeview Dec. 21–24 (JLD), and one at N.E.S.S. Dec. 11 (PEL) were the only ones reported.

A Large-billed Savannah Sparrow (*P. s. rostratus*), now exceptionally rare in California, remained on Morro Bay through Dec. 19 (JLD), and another was on s. San Diego Bay Dec. 19 (GMcC). A Sharp-tailed Sparrow on Mission Bay in San Diego was present through at least Jan. 18 (GMcC), and another was seen in Chula Vista Dec. 8 (SMO). Swamp Sparrows were far more numerous than usual with 45+ found along the coast along with five more inland. Sixteen White-throated Sparrows along the coast with one at F.C.R. Feb. 7 (RAE) represented probably close to an average number for winter, but single Harris' Sparrows in Los Osos Dec. 17–22 (JMcD), near Riverside

Jan 9 (DLD), and in Coronado Jan 3–Feb 15 (RL) were low A (Gray-headed) Dark-eyed Junco in Santa Barbara Jan. 31–Mar. 4 (BBa) and another in San Luis Obispo Feb. 24+ (EJ) were unusually far north for along the coast. Up to seven McCown's Longspurs near Lakeview during December and January (RMcK) were in an area where small numbers evidently occur every year. The only Lapland Longspur to be reported was one near Lakeview Dec. 24 (MAP), and the only Chestnut-collared Longspurs reported were four at the same location on the same day (MAP).

BLACKBIRDS, FINCHES — A Yellow-headed Blackbird on Vandenberg A.F.B. Dec. 26 (KHo) was in an area where considered very rare in winter. The Rusty Blackbird found in Malibu Nov. 29 was still present Mar. 16 (KLG), and up to three in Desert Center Dec. 23–Jan. 2 (BED) were the first for Riverside County. A Great-tailed Grackle in Casitas, Ventura Co., all winter (RJM); another in Seal Beach Jan. 13–Feb. 28 (JB); and two in Chula Vista Nov. 29–Feb. 21 (JO) were along the coast. A Com. Grackle in Santa Barbara Dec. 29–Mar. 2 (MT) was only the 2nd ever found wintering in s. California. Wintering Orchard Orioles included one in Carpinteria Feb. 17–Mar. 10 (KB), one in Ventura Feb. 6 (PEL), three together in Irvine Dec. 26–Feb. 21 (DRW), a female in Coronado Dec. 6–Jan. 31 (GMcC), and an ad. male in Bonita Jan. 10–Feb. 7 (JO). Seven Hooded Orioles were found along the coast, with one in los Osos Dec. 1–Feb. 10 (DK), three in the Santa Barbara area, two more in Ventura, and one in La Jolla Feb. 14 (PEL), which were more than normally expected. Of the 65± N. Orioles found along the coast, only three—single birds in Goleta Dec. 19 (AB), Santa Barbara Dec. 20–Jan. 2 (JG), and Encino Jan. 3 (SDu)—were “Baltimore.” A Scott's Oriole in Borrego Springs, San Diego Co., Feb. 13 (PP) was in an area where small numbers probably winter regularly, but another in Santa Barbara Dec. 21–Jan. 2 (JEL) was along the coast, where decidedly rare.

Two Purple Finches at F.C.R. Feb. 7 (RAE) were at an unusual locality. Cassin's Finches remained on Cuesta Ridge, San Luis Obispo Co., through Jan. 7 (TME), when one was still present. Red Crossbills were scattered throughout much of the Region, with flocks of up to 18 in Morro Bay S.P. (TME), 27 in Goleta (PEL), 30 in Ventura (RJM), 30 in Long Beach (BED), four in Orange County (DRW), and 15 in La Jolla (REW) along the coast. Thirty-six near Bakersfield Dec. 5–Jan. 30 (MOC), 20 in California City Feb. 6 (RS), eight in Ridgecrest throughout

the period (DBI), and 14 in Banning Dec 26–Jan 2 (JLD) inland illustrate the numbers present in the various areas of the Region. Twenty-five Lawrence's Goldfinches at S.E.S.S. Dec. 12 (GMcC) were at an unusual locality, and an influx of up to 60 to Chula Vista Jan. 9–16 (JO) was unexpected. The only Evening Grosbeaks to be reported were two in Santa Barbara Feb. 4 (RC) and another in Claremont Feb. 16 (HEC).

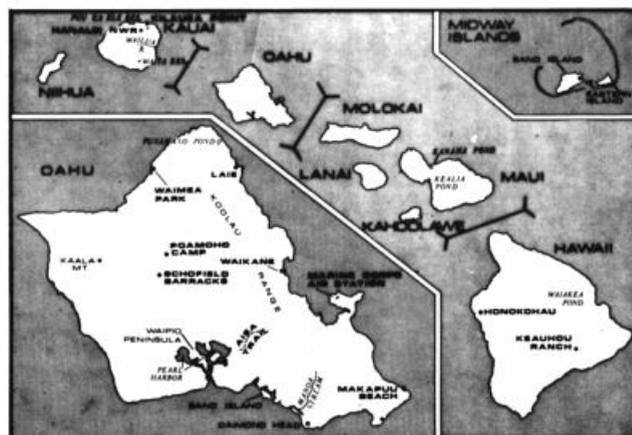
ADDENDUM — A noteworthy sighting inadvertently omitted from the Fall Migration Period Report was that of a Canada Warbler inland near Silverwood L., San Bernardino Co., Sept. 6 (Steve Myers).

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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

Robert L. Pyle

Winter season rainfall was well above normal at virtually all reporting stations. A series of Pacific storms passing north of the islands in December and early January brought heavy rains and may well have been responsible for the significant increase in reports of straggler gulls beginning in early January. The fall and winter rains helped improve waterfowl habitat and might have been a factor in the reports of male ducks coming into breeding plumage perhaps a month earlier this year (SB et al.). Enhanced vegetation and food crop conditions resulting from the rains were probably related to the increases noted in some landbird species such as the Endangered Palila, and to the increases and range expansions reported for several introduced Estrildids. These excellent conditions should continue to help nesting landbirds and wetland species during early spring.



First state records for two species were recorded this winter.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.F.S. = French Frigate Shoals; H. = Hawai'i I.; K. = Kaua'i I.; M. = Maui I.; O. = O'ahu I.; J.C.N.W.R. = James Campbell Nat'l Wildlife Ref. on O'ahu; K.M.C.A.S. = Kane'ohe Marine Corps Air Station on O'ahu; P.H.N.W.R. = Pearl Harbor Nat'l Wildlife Ref. on O'ahu.

GREBS THROUGH STORM-PETRELS — The new colony of resident breeding Pied-billed Grebes at Aimakapa Pond, H., was still flourishing. At least 10 birds were on the pond throughout the season and 2 nests had sitting birds, although no chicks had been noted by end of February (RD). A single Pied-billed seen Jan. 3 through February at Lokoaka Pond (RD) across the island from Aimakapa, and one at Kealia Pond on nearby Maui Feb. 24 (RD, PD), may have come from the Aimakapa population or could have been independent winter stragglers from North America.

Hawaii's first **Red-necked Grebe**, a bird in winter plumage, was discovered Feb. 20 on seldom-visited Helenanalu Res., K. (TTo). By Mar. 10 the bird had come into nearly full breeding plumage (RLP, PD ph.) and was enjoyed by other observers until at least the 3rd week of March.

Midway's regular winter-visiting Short-tailed Albatross was back at Sand I. Dec. 1 (KM, TS ph.), still showing some subad. plumage. A Black-footed Albatross, seldom seen from the main islands in recent years, was observed on Mokuuaeae islet just off Kilauea Pt., K., in early January (BS). At least 31 Laysan Albatrosses were back at the colony on Kilauea Point N.W.R. this season, with 10 active nests and 2 other eggs laid but left unattended. This was a healthy increase over last year's 4 nests and 3 successful fledgings. The colony area is now well-protected from dogs and other disturbance. More nesting areas on the newly acquired Crater Hill and Mokolea Pt. additions to the Refuge should become productive when adequate predator control is in place.

On O'ahu, Laysans returned in increased numbers this season to numerous locations on the n. and e. shores. Of 39 birds banded last year at Dillingham airstrip, 21 were back this year. Another 73 captured this winter at Dillingham and at K.M.C.A.S. were banded and released at other locations on O'ahu (TO). At least 20 were observed still at Dillingham Feb. 13 (AE, RD). Three eggs, the first to be reported on O'ahu, were laid at Dillingham in early December probably by marginally mature birds, but were left unattended in the cold, wet weather (TO). One Laysan was seen Feb. 12 standing at the tip of Ka-laupapa Peninsula (BH) on the n. coast of Molokai, the next island to the s. of Kaua'i and O'ahu.

The shearwater aid program on Kaua'i this year experienced the heaviest fallout of imm. shearwaters on record. During October and November some 2270 Newell's Shearwaters (*Threatened*), mostly juveniles that had been grounded along the coast, were rescued, banded and released. Among them were nine (Hawaiian) Dark-rumped Petrels (*Endangered*) and two Band-rumped Storm-Petrels. At least one of the latter was an immature (TTe).

TROPICBIRDS THROUGH DUCKS — White-tailed Tropicbirds are rarely reported in the low-lying N.W. Hawaiian Islands, except from Midway where in several recent years one pair has been found nesting in a certain garden box on the ground at a particular military housing unit. This winter a pair was observed tending a fully-feathered chick in the crotch of a large *Casuarina* tree not far from the traditional nest site (BE, KM ph.). At least five individuals were present during the week's visit in early December (KM).

An out-of-range Cattle Egret was found at Sand I., Midway, Dec. 7 (KM). On Hawai'i I., Cattle Egrets have been subject to intermittent control programs in recent years and are still in much reduced numbers there. Only five or fewer have been found this winter in what formerly was a large colony at Lokoaka Pond near Hilo. Fewer than 10 have been at Aimakapa Pond across the island, and only an occasional individual at

Na'alehu near South Pt (RD) One (and occasionally two together) Great Blue Herons from last fall's invasion were reported through the winter at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R., and also at Kanaha Pond, M. (m.ob.). A Black-crowned Night-Heron was found Jan. 20 at a temporary freshwater puddle from unusual recent rains on normally dry Kahoolawe I. (TS). This was an interesting record, although not the first, from this uninhabited and rarely visited island 13 km from the nearest point on Maui.

Up to 20 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were reported this winter in the new and still flourishing breeding colony at Amoriant Aquafarm and adjoining Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R. A nest found at Ki'i Unit Feb. 15 had 9 eggs, 5 of which had hatched successfully a week later (GH). A **Tundra Swan**, studied and photographed for half an hour at Kealia Pond, M., Jan. 3 (GH), furnished the 2nd state record. A Brant at K.M.C.A.S. Dec. 27 (RW) through at least Jan. 25 (AE), and a (Cackling) Canada Goose at Waiakea Pond in Hilo, H., Jan. 6 and Feb. 8 (RD), represented species reaching Hawaii only as casual visitors. Nene from the free-flying group introduced at Kipu Kai, K., and widely reported a year ago, were reported again this fall at various localities in s. Kaua'i. Two nests in different parts of Kipu Kai in early February had produced 11 goslings (TTe).

Wintering ducks were widespread and in good numbers this year owing generally to improved habitat conditions resulting from heavier fall rains than in recent years and also from pond improvements at J.C.N.W.R. Males of regularly visiting species, including N. Pintails, N. Shovelers, and Am. Wigeons, seemed to acquire breeding plumage a month or so earlier than in recent years, perhaps because of the habitat conditions (SB). Less common migrants, including Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, and Lesser Scaup, were reported at numerous ponds on the 4 major islands. Eurasian Wigeons were particularly noteworthy with up to eight fine males at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R. (GH, PD, AE), up to five males at Aimakapa (BH, RD), and an emaciated female at Tern I., F.F.S., for a week before it died Jan. 31 (*fide* KM). Single Canvasbacks, normally rarely reported in the state, were found during the winter at Hanalei N.W.R., K. (SB), on O'ahu at Waipi'o (PD), Amoriant Aquafarm, and Punamano Unit, J.C.N.W.R. (GH, AE, PD), and at Kealia Pond, M. (RD). A ♂ Tufted Duck wintered at Lokoaka Pond, H. (Jan. 6 and Feb. 8, RD), and a pair was discovered at Wailua Res., K., Feb. 19-20 (TTo). Single Buffleheads in ♀ plumage were reported near Hilo, H. (RD, KI), at Kealia Pond, M (*fide* AE), and at Hanapepe Salt Ponds, K. (KI). This species was formerly casual in Hawai'i, but has been reported much less frequently in recent years.

OSPREY THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — An Osprey was reported during the winter at several locations around Pearl Harbor, O. (PD, KL). These reports of gallinaceous birds came from Mauna Kea, H., Feb. 1-4 (AE): Chukars were found to be widespread and numerous, two to four Japanese Quail were seen on Keanakolu Rd. near Pu'u Loa, a flock of 12 Wild Turkeys was found near Pu'u Akala and six more were seen the same day near Kanakaleonui Cabin (AE), all interesting observations from a locality seldom reported from.

Two (Hawaiian) Com. Moorhens (*Endangered*) were seen Jan. 13 in a rain pond at Kawainui Marsh, O. (TP, AE), where the species had not been reported for several years. On the statewide waterbird survey Jan. 25, RD counted 69 (Hawaiian) Am. Coots (*Endangered*) at Aimakapa Pond, H., along with 4 active nests. One individual was identified as belonging to the North American race (RD).

Shorebird activity slowed down a bit after the exciting season in late summer and fall. Black-bellied Plovers remained through the winter at several localities, mostly as single birds except for two (PD) to five (RD) found at Kealia Pond, M., Feb. 24. Two Semipalmated Plovers were recorded at Opaaula Pond (Makalawena), H., on the waterbird survey Jan. 25 (RD), and one was at a reservoir on Hansen Rd., M., Jan. 26 (*fide* AE). Two **Killdeer**, accidental in Hawai'i, were at Hanalei N.W.R., K., Feb. 5 (SB, TH) and were seen there again Feb. 21 (TTo), but could not be found thereafter.

An overwintering Spotted Sandpiper first seen Dec 5 at Napo'opo'o on the Kona coast of Hawai'i I was still there at season's end (RD, BM). The one Western and three Least sandpipers seen at Waipi'o, O., during fall were seen repeatedly there and at nearby Honouliuli Unit, P.H.N.W.R., through the end of February. Two small sandpipers, seen mostly separately but occasionally together at tiny Tern I., F.F.S., throughout January were identified as Westerns (*vide* KM). What appeared to be an odd Pectoral Sandpiper with an unusually long, slightly down-curved bill was scrutinized closely by numerous observers at Waipi'o from Jan. 28 (PD ph.) into late March. Two winter-plumaged Sharp-tailed Sandpipers found at Sand I., Midway, Dec. 7 (KM, BE) furnished an unusual winter record for the species. Up to four Dunlins and up to 15 Long-billed Dowitchers were reported through the winter at numerous ponds on O'ahu and Maui (m.ob.). A snipe found at Waipi'o Feb 4-5 (PD) may well have been a Com. Snipe, considered casual in Hawaii.

JAEGERS TO TERNS — Ten jaegers, almost certainly Pomarines, were seen in Honolulu harbor Feb. 16 (PD). Late fall sightings of gulls included one first-winter Laughing at Kealia Pond, M., Nov. 28 (GH), and first-winter Ring-billeds at Kapiolani Park, O., Dec. 2 (PP), and at Aimakapa Pond, H., Dec. 5 (RD). The latter was banded and its number was read with spotting scope. It turned out to have come from a nesting colony in Nevada (RD, 'Elepaio in press). A different first-winter Ring-billed Gull seen up the coast at Kawaihae Dec. 19 had apparently been there at least a week (RD), and was seen at nearby Mauna Kea Beach Hotel Jan. 3 (BH).

Then, after a series of Pacific storms passed by the islands during late December to Jan. 1, gulls popped up everywhere. From one to five (an unprecedented number) Laughing Gulls were at Ki'i Pond and adjacent Amorient Aquafarm from Jan. 9 into March. Up to three were at Aimakapa Pond during January (RD), and single Laughings were also seen at Keakia Pond, M., Feb. 14 (TW) and at Hanapepe Salt Ponds, K., Feb. 15-16 (TTo). Three ad. Bonaparte's Gulls were at Ki'i Pond Jan. 9 (AE, RLP) & 18 (PD), and single Bonaparte's were found at Hanapepe Salt Ponds Feb. 15-16 (TTo) and at Kealia Pond, M., Jan 24-Feb. 4. One or two Ring-billed Gulls were reported frequently at Ki'i Pond from Jan. 9 into March, and at Kealia Pond from Jan. 24 onward. A first-winter gull of one of the large pink-footed species, thought by some to be a Thayer's, was seen irregularly at Ki'i Pond and nearby Hauula Beach, O., from Feb. 16 into March (v.o.). Two others at Kure Atoll during March (JH ph.) were probably first-winter Herrings. And finally, an ad. Black-legged Kittiwake, accidental in the state, was at Tern I., F.F.S., Jan. 24-30 (*vide* KM). It was truly an outstanding winter for gulls in Hawaii.

A **Gull-billed Tern**, providing the state's first record, was found and photographed at Honouliuli Unit, P.H.N.W.R., Jan. 11 (PD, RD), but could not be found thereafter. Previous literature references to the species being a vagrant in Hawaii trace back to a 1967 published statement whose author has subsequently stated he can find no factual basis to support the record. Also at Honouliuli Unit, a Com. Tern found Jan. 2 after the winter storms was seen regularly (v.o.) as late as April with still no trace of alternate plumage apparent.

SANDGROUSE THROUGH CANARIES — A flock of 40 Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse seen Dec. 30 along Mamalahoa Hwy just n. of the Waikoloa turnoff (RD) showed that this species persists in this area of N. Kona, H., although a bit s. of where most previous reports have been. During January at Hakalau N.W.R. between Hilo and Mauna Kea, H., a (Hawaiian) Short-eared Owl (Pueo) was seen to rise from the ground, chase and attack a Hawaiian Hawk ('Io, *Endangered*) and then return to the ground, indicating the owl might well have had a nest nearby (BE).

A count of 14 Eur. Skylarks, mostly singing, on Waipi'o Peninsula, O., Jan. 2 (MO, RLP) was an unusually high number. A Red-vented Bulbul sighted at Pukalani, M., Dec. 29 (FD)

furnished a first valid record for that island, although it has not been seen since. Three sightings earlier in the fall in the Pukalani-Makawao area may well have been of that species (FD). Six to eight Japanese Bush-Warblers heard singing vociferously in a few minutes at Punamano Unit, J.C.N.W.R. (AE, RLP) indicated potential nesting in this lowland scrub area less than a mile from the sea. Traditionally the species has inhabited mountain forests on O'ahu, although it has occurred before in winter in this area and in other lowland areas.

Two pairs of Red-crested Cardinals at a shopping mall in Kahului, M., Dec. 10, and one pair still there Dec. 28 (FD), were significant in that the species has been reported only rarely on this island in the past. A male and ♀ Yellow-faced Grassquit on the w. cliffs of Kalihi Valley, O., Jan. 12 (AE) were well s. of where the species has been reported heretofore. Another was singing in a residential area in Pacific Palisades (PD), a more expected location downhill from its main range.

HAWAIIAN HONEYCREEPERS — The regular semi-annual survey of Palila (*Endangered*) on Mauna Kea, H., Feb 1-4 produced one of the highest population estimates on record (AE). Palila were very active and the flowering of mamane, whose seed pods provide the Palila's main food source, was heavier than veteran observers can remember seeing before, owing to the fall and winter rains. Expectations were high for the upcoming breeding season. The surveyors also were gratified to find 'Akiapola'au (*Endangered*) daily in small numbers 'Amakihi are continuing to appear at unusually low elevations back of Honolulu, O., including one drab individual (a young male?) singing in a possible territory on the lower slopes of Punchbowl Crater in late January and February (TP). A Hawai'i Creeper (*Endangered*) found at Kanakaleonui Cabin on the upper vegetated n.e. slope of Mauna Kea, H., Feb. 4 (AE) was at an interesting locality. Beal had a brief but close look at a pair of birds along the Pu'u Koahelo trail near Koke'e, K., Feb 12 which she feels certain were (Kaua'i) Nuku-pu'u (*Endangered*, super-rare).

Crested Honeycreepers ('Akohekohe, *Endangered*) may still be found in the Nature Conservancy's Waikamoi Preserve, M. Five adult birds were seen there on 3 different dates in January and February (FD). On Jan. 30 in the Hanawi area below Pu'u Alaea, M., three 'Akohekohe were closely observed feeding on olapa fruits and kawa'u fruits, an extremely interesting feeding behavior (FD) for this species normally considered to be primarily nectarivorous.

ESTRILDIDS — Red Avadavats continue to increase and spread still farther on O'ahu. Twenty were found Jan. 13 at Kawaiuni Marsh on the s.e. coast of the island where only two to three have been seen on a few rare occasions in the past. Five avadavats were seen again on Maui in Waikamoi Preserve (*vide* FD) on Haleakala Mt., not far from the Olinda site where five were reported last season for Maui's first record. A small flock of Lavender Waxbills at Keahou Botanical Gardens s. of Kailua-Kona, H., Jan. 29 (TW) indicated a range expansion to the south. An estimated 25-40 Orange-cheeked Waxbills at Puuohala Water Treatment Plant in Kane'ohe, O., Jan. 9 (AE, RLP) and a group of similar size there Mar. 8 (DP) indicated a significant increase in this population. At least one or more Com. Waxbills with them Jan. 9 (AE) furnished a rare (if not the first) report in s.e. O'ahu of this species, which has become common to abundant over most of the rest of the island.

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Robert L. Norton

Rainfall during the winter period was 36% above average (December +30%, January +48%, and February +47%) as measured at Cruz Bay, St. John.

International attention was focussed on the problem of toxic waste on the largest (and perhaps the poorest) island in the West Indies, Hispaniola. In the Dominican Republic, a peasant farmers' group in the province of Maria Trinidad Sanchez continued to protest a government-run gold mining operation, which the peasants allege is contaminating their watershed with cyanide and other mineral by-products. Government officials claim that studies indicate the mines have no contaminating effect on the rivers.

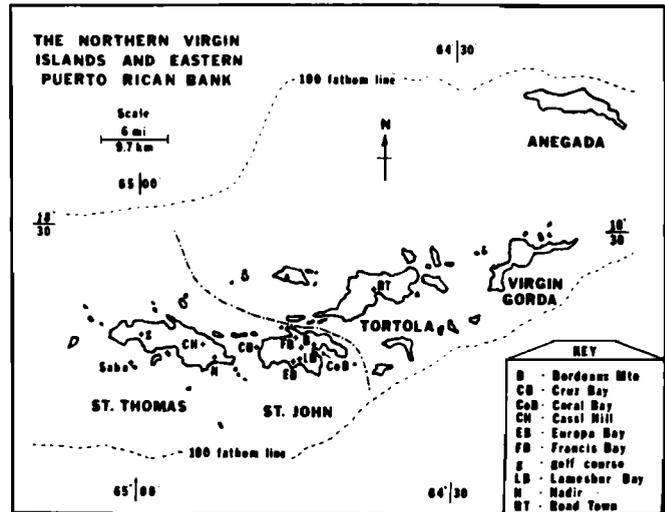
On February 7, a ship which had been loaded with 4000 tons of waste toxic ash from the United States left Gonaves, Haiti, without having been reloaded as had been ordered by Haitian authorities after they discovered the ash was toxic. A second shipment of 14,000 tons of toxic waste sent from Philadelphia was to be met with protests, media attention, and a recent Haitian government decree to prohibit the importation of garbage or debris capable of endangering the human population or the environment. A Greenpeace documentary was planned to point out that "some of the most toxic elements known in the world" were to be dumped in the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere.

A report from a Nature Conservancy trip to Cuba covering January 16 to 22 (BS) was highlighted by remarks that the Zapata Swamp and environs, including locked reserves, appeared to be less disturbed than either the surrounding countryside or many other similar areas in the West Indies. After the recent rediscovery of the Cuban Ivory-billed Woodpecker, a widespread awareness movement has begun in Cuba, with each provincial governor appointing an environmental officer. The Cuban initiative includes expanding the Ivory-billed Woodpecker protected area to 22,000 hectares. Biological field stations in the Ivory-bill area and the Zapata Swamp are reportedly planned for construction within the next year.

In Dominica, the Imperial Parrot and Red-necked Parrot, both endemics, are now the subjects of a three-year conservation effort carried out by the ICBP. The current population estimates are 300 for Red-necked Parrot and 60 for Imperial Parrot. Deforestation is seriously threatening both species.

ABBREVIATIONS — D.R. = Dominican Republic; P.R. = Puerto Rico

GREBES TO RAILS — A Least Grebe was noted at Santo Tomas, Cuba, Jan. 16-22 (BS), and another was seen at Culebra Feb 29 (BC). At Lake Cunningham, New Providence, Bahamas (about the same latitude as Key Largo, Fla.), a **Northern Fulmar** was studied Feb. 13 (PWS, SAS). This furnished a first record for the West Indies, and first sighting s. of South Carolina. An Am. White Pelican in the D.R. on Jan. 9 (HC) apparently furnished a first record for that country. Black-crowned Night-Herons on the two CBCs at St. Croix numbered 13 on the eastern count (Jan. 2) and 10 on the western count (Jan. 3), for an unusually high concentration of this species on the P.R. Bank. A white morph Great Blue Heron was noted at Lago Tesore, Cuba (BS). American Flamingos at Las Salinas, Cuba, numbered 300+ in January, but the species is reportedly not known to breed there (BS).



In Cuba, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks seen (100) outnumbered the increasingly rare West Indian Whistling-Ducks (15) during the Jan. 16-22 trip (BS). West Indian Whistling-Ducks were noted nesting at Santo Domingo, D.R., in December (LF, fide HC). Sorrie noted that White-cheeked Pintails were conspicuously absent from wetlands he visited in Cuba, despite a claim that Las Salinas was the "best saline birding" he had encountered in the West Indies. Counts of White-cheekeds elsewhere included 78 at St. John Dec. 19 and 92 on e. St. Croix Jan. 2 (fide FS). In Cuba, three Snail Kites were noted at Lago Tesoro and two more at Lechuzas during January (BS). A **King Rail** was reportedly flushed and seen well at Santo Tomas, Cuba, during the 3rd week of January, apparently providing the first record for the West Indies (BS).

SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS — A Solitary Sandpiper at St. Croix Jan. 3 (FS) provided one of few winter reports for the Virgin Is. At an ephemeral pond produced by heavy rains at Eleuthera, Bahamas, were eight Red Knots, 25 dowitchers (sp.), and 29 Blue-winged Teal on Jan. 11 (JS). In this Region, periodic late winter droughts followed by heavy rains are important controls for ephemeral microhabitats such as salt ponds (a habitat frequently abused on volcanic islands because they represent flat, developable land).

At San Juan Harbor, P.R., on Feb. 27, a **Great Black-backed Gull** was compared to a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** and a Herring Gull, all on the same sandspit (BC, m.ob.). The Great Black-backed represented the 3rd record for Puerto Rico, while the Lesser Black-backed was the 2nd for P.R. and perhaps 3rd for the Region. A Com. Black-headed Gull appeared at St. John Dec. 19, in time for the CBC (AW, m.ob.); two were noted at Antigua in January (JI); and two were observed Jan. 16 at Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas, in the company of a Ring-billed Gull (GW et al.). Six Ring-billeds appeared at Tarpun Bay, Eleuthera, Jan. 11 (JS) and two were noted throughout December at Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas (RLN). Certain gulls seem to be appearing with greater regularity in the e. Greater Antilles and n. Lesser Antilles; this is apparently not just the result of greater numbers of aware observers. On Grand Cayman, Berry noted four to six imm. Com. Terns Dec 26-Jan. 2. Sorrie observed 20+ Caspian Terns and three Gull-billed Terns at Las Salinas, Cuba, Jan. 16-22.

DOVES THROUGH ORIOLES — A Ruddy Quail-Dove was again reported from St. John, Dec. 19 (RW), for the 3rd

sighting there in the last 3–4 years. The elusive Key West Quail-Dove was recorded from Eleuthera Jan. 13 (JS). Among a group of swallows at St. John Dec. 19 were two N. Rough-wingeds and three Barn Swallows. Six Bank Swallows were seen at St. Croix Jan. 3 (*fide* FS). Two Zapata Wrens were seen near Santo Tomas, Cuba, in January (BS).

A Solitary Vireo, a scarce transient, was carefully noted at Freeport, Grand Bahama, Dec. 31 (DP). A Blue-winged Warbler seen at St. John Dec. 19 (RLN, DH) represented one of the few, but increasing, records east of P.R. A Black-throated Green Warbler, infrequently noted in the Region, was observed at Freeport, Grand Bahama, Dec. 30 (DP). Uncommon wintering species noted in Cuba in January included singles of Wilson's Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, and Summer Tanager (BS).

Cuban Grassquits, introduced to the Bahamas in Nassau in

1963, continue to flourish there; four were seen on New Providence Feb. 14 (PWS, SAS). Also noted on New Providence Feb. 14 were two Blue Grosbeaks and a Painted Bunting at the St. Augustine Monastery (PWS, SAS). Northern Orioles were noted at St. John Dec. 19 (GW), at Grand Bahama Dec. 30 (DP), and at Playa Larga, Cuba, in January (BS).

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