

on the Internet can point their web browser at the following URL to see the bird: <http://www.iphc.washington.edu:80/pages/iphc/staff/tracee/alby.htm>. Thanks to Tracee Geernaert for putting the picture up on her homepage and writing up the sighting.

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Oregon/ Washington Region

BILL TWEIT AND JIM JOHNSON

This was the second consecutive unusually wet winter, with unusual now meaning record-breaking and not just below average. The series of ice and snow storms that hit the Puget Trough south to Portland in late December resulted in tremendous tree damage, but no immediate avian effects were reported other than the usual appearance of Varied Thrush fleeing the higher elevations and crowding lowland feeders. Temperatures this winter season were quite mild for most of the region.

The most prominent feature of the season was the number of invasions, with the Snowy Owl flight the most memorable. Also appearing were Great Gray Owls, numerous corvids, and Mountain Chickadees. Only the winter finches declined to appear.

Abbreviations: F.R.R. (*Fern Ridge Res., Lane Co., OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor Co., WA*); Ridgefield (*Ridgefield N.W.R., Clark Co., WA*); Sauvie (*Sauvie I., Columbia Co., OR*).

Loons to Waterfowl

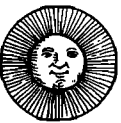
Up to three Red-throated Loons at Kirk Pond near F.R.R., Dec. 15–Feb. 14 (RH, HH, m.ob.) were unusual for the lower Willamette valley. All 3 freshwater Pacific Loon records were from w. Oregon: one near Medford, *Jackson*, Dec. 10 (C. Brumitt), one at Canby, *Clackamas*, Jan. 4 (E. Specht), and one at F.R.R., Feb. 15 (DH). The only Yellow-billed Loon report was one at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR Dec. 9–Feb. 21 (m.ob., *fide RB*); this represents the lowest total since winter 1991–1992. An Eared Grebe in s.e. Oregon at Krumbo Res., *Harney*, Dec. 21 (G. Ivey) was

indicative of the mild interior conditions. In w. Oregon, eight were found in the Willamette valley (RH, DC) and six on the outer coast (JJ, JG, CR). They have become regular in recent winters in certain locales, but were generally unrecorded before 1987. Clark's Grebe reports totaled five, about average: one at Everett, WA Dec. 14 (SM), one at Cascade Locks, *Hood River*, OR Feb. 2 (PlSu), one at O.S., Feb. 24 (†G&WH), one at F.R.R., Jan. 16 (HH), and one at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR Jan. 19 (*fide RB*).

The pelagic trip off Westport, WA Feb. 2 found five Black-footed and 13 Laysan albatross, 37 N. Fulmar, four **Mottled Petrels**, and one Sooty Shearwater (TW). The Feb. 15 pelagic trip off Depoe Bay, OR, found eight N. Fulmar (G. Gilson, M. Hunter). These were the 2nd Mottled Petrel records in as many winters. In inshore waters, a N. Fulmar and two Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel were at Rosario Beach, *Skagit*, WA Dec. 1 (*fide BK*). Unusual westside winter reports of Am. White Pelican were singles near Vancouver, *Clark*, WA, and adjacent Sauvie Jan. 4–12 (E. Anderson, M. Houck), and near F.R.R., Jan. 12+ (HH, m.ob.), the first *Lane* winter record. The four lingering Brown Pelicans reported from the Oregon coast were gone by January (RH, DM, *fide RB*).

Two Great Egrets along the Walla Walla R. in December, with one to Feb. 23 (MD, C. Rees, *fide JN*), provided a winter first for *Walla Walla*. The Cattle Egret reports validated the above-average fall





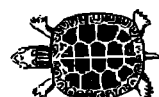
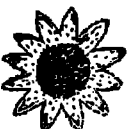
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numbers. Four w. Oregon reports included one near Whitehorse Park, *Josephine*, Dec. 3–Feb. 15 (DM), one at Sutherlin, *Douglas*, Dec. 16 (K. Wilson), one at Alvadore, *Lane*, Dec. 19–Jan. 13 (D. Brown, m.ob.), and one s. of Eugene Dec. 21 (K. McDonnel). In the interior, one was near Lowden, *Walla Walla*, WA Dec. 12 (JN). Two White-faced Ibis still at Bridge Cr., *Harney*, Dec. 11 (B. Rasch) were >2 months past normal departure.

Beside 35 at their usual wintering locale at Airlie, *Polk*, Trumpeter Swans were reported from Tillamook Jan. 11 (CR) and in *Lane* Feb. 3 (RF); they are still noteworthy in most of w. Oregon. Ross' Goose reports on the westside have increased abruptly in recent years. Four reports this winter almost equalled last winters' record number. Singles wintered at Nestucca N.W.R., *Tillamook*, OR (R. Lowe, m.ob.), at Provolt, *Jackson*, OR (*vide* HS), near F.R.R., Jan. 1+ (S. Maulding, D. Pederson, TM) for a *Lane* first, and Auburn, *King*, WA Jan. 24 into February (A. Freeland, *vide* T. Bock). Five Emperor Goose reports was above average: The Troutdale, OR, bird remained through the winter (HN), one was at the Rogue R. mouth, *Curry*, OR Dec. 14 (*vide* CD), one was near Tokeland, *Pacific*, WA Jan. 14 (B.&G. Ramsey), one was at Sauvie Jan. 15 (S. Pinnock), and one was at Hunter Cr., *Curry*, OR Jan. 19–Feb. 23 (CD, DM, PlSu).

A pair of Eur. Green-winged Teal were reported: males at Tillamook, OR Feb. 8+ (CR) and at Sauvie Feb. 9+ (GL). Blue-winged Teal winter reports are sporadic: A female was at Dungeness, *Clallam*, WA Jan. 11 (†BN), and a male was at Tillamook, OR Jan. 12–Feb. 28 (CR). A Red-head at Glide, *Douglas*, OR Jan. 5 (RM) was unusual in the county. All of the Tufted Duck reports came from a small area in the lower Columbia R.: a female at Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark*, WA Dec. 29–Jan. 11 (E. Anderson, J. Engler) and one–two males at Sauvie Dec. 29–Jan. 19 (JJ, JG). A ♀ King Eider at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, Dec. 8+ (KM, m.ob.) provided about the 8th Oregon record. Fifteen Oldsquaw were tallied from the Oregon coast, a good total. Inland reports included one at Toketee L., *Douglas*, OR Dec. 6 (RM) and one at Vancouver L., *Clark*, WA Jan. 11 (D. Bush).

Raptors to Alcids

Eight Osprey reports, all from w. Oregon, indicates their change of status to regular in winter. The White-tailed Kite tabulation included only one Washington report, at Hoquaim, *Grays Harbor*, Jan. 29 (TA), but scads (≥45) were found in w. Oregon. Another southern raptor that is

doing well is Red-shouldered Hawk. An adult at Dungeness, WA Jan. 2–Feb. 18 (TA, BN, m.ob.) provided a first *Clallam* record. To the south, one was at Sutherlin, *Douglas*, OR Dec. 1 (*vide* RM), one was in *Lane*, OR, during December (TM), one was at Brownsville, *Linn*, OR Dec. 28 (AF), ≤two were at F.R.R. in January (DH, HH), 24 were in the lower Coquille valley Jan. 5 (AC), an immature was at Sauvie Feb. 5 (T. McAllister), an immature was at Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark*, WA Feb. 22 (BN), and one was in the Umpqua valley, *Douglas*, OR Feb. 23 (RM). Ferruginous Hawks are casual in winter in w. Oregon. Two were in the Rogue valley of *Jackson*, at Agate L., Dec. 16 and at Eagle Pt., Jan. 20 (HS), and one was near Finley N.W.R., *Benton*, Feb. 26 (DH, J. Plissner). About 19 Gyrfalcon reports was an amazing season total, besting last winter's total of 15. The 4 interior reports included three in *Lincoln*, WA (JA), and one e. of Burns, *Harney*, OR Feb. 18 (W. Dunaway); they are very rare in s.e. Oregon. The westside reports consisted of 3 Oregon reports: a subadult at Agate Beach, *Lincoln*, Jan. 12 (C. McIntyre), an adult near Corvallis Jan. 13 (*vide* J. Dillon), and an adult at Sauvie Jan. 23–24 (J. Morawski, S. Pinnock). Western Washington had the lion's share, as usual, with ≥eight in n. Puget Sound (JD, SM) and one at Steigerwald N.W.R., *Clark*, Dec. 7 (W. Cady), an adult at Vancouver L., *Clark*, Jan. 11 (B. Shelmerdine), one at Dungeness, *Clallam*, Jan. 12 (*vide* BN), and one near Satsop, *Grays Harbor*, Jan. 24 (G&WH). There were ≥6 Prairie Falcon reports from the Willamette valley, where they are regular, and one from the outer coast at Tillamook, OR Feb. 28 (HN), where they are casual.

A Pacific Golden-Plover was at Bandon, *Coos*, OR Jan. 4 (AC) for the only report this winter. Lesser Yellowlegs are now being found annually in winter in w. Oregon. One was near Florence, *Lane*, Jan. 18–22 (DM, B&ZS), but one in the interior at Summer L., *Lake*, Dec. 26 (PlSu) was very unusual. A Red Knot was at Bandon Jan. 3 (B. Fawver, *vide* AC); the species does not linger every winter. In vivid contrast to last winter, Red Phalaropes were found in the usual small numbers along the Oregon coast in December and early January. The oddest report was of a breeding-plumage female in Eugene Jan. 1 (DH). Other interior reports were one at Forest Grove, *Washington*, OR Dec. 1 (E. McVicker) and one at Toketee L., *Douglas*, OR Dec. 1 (KG).

Three Pomarine Jaegers found off Westport, WA Feb. 2 (TW) and one at Boiler Bay, *Lincoln*, OR Dec. 8 (G. Gilson, M.

Hunter) represented average winter numbers. Adult Little Gulls at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, WA Dec. 2–Feb. 27 (V. Nelson) and at American L., *Pierce*, Dec. 15–Jan. 12 (B. LaBar) marked the 3rd and 9th consecutive winters, respectively, for those locations. The Glaucous Gull tally of 21 was a bit low; it included 12 in w. Oregon, two in e. Washington, and seven in w. Washington. Black-legged Kittiwakes were found in moderate numbers: 60 southbound off Boiler Bay Dec. 1 (AC), 161 off Westport, WA Feb. 2 (TW), and 22 off Depoe Bay, OR Feb. 15 (*vide* HH). The pelagic trip off Westport Feb. 2 found 107 Com. Murres, three Ancient Murrelet, 179 Cassin's Auklets, three Parakeet Auklets, five Rhinoceros Auklets, and one Tufted Puffin (TW). Small numbers of Ancient Murrelets along the Oregon coast featured a peak count of 50 at Boiler Bay Dec. 14 (AC) and one at Rocky Pt., *Curry*, Dec. 28 (DM). A freshly dead Horned Puffin was on the beach s. of Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR Feb. 25 (S. Brown).

Owls to Brown Creeper

Snowy Owl reports totaled ≥124, marking the largest invasion since 1973–1974. The largest numbers were in w. Washington, with peak concentrations of nine at Dungeness, *Clallam*, Dec. 11 (PtSu), six at Leadbetter Pt., *Pacific*, Dec. 21 (J. Caldwell, D. Whipple), 17 at O.S., Jan. 29 (TA), eight s. of Stanwood, *Snobomish*, Feb. 2 (SM), and 28 on the Skagit/Samish flats, *Skagit*, Feb. 15 (B. Anderson, m.ob.). Other records came from *Whatcom*, *Kitsap*, *Pierce*, *King*, and *Thurston*. The 16 w. Oregon records consisted mostly of singles in the Willamette Trough; on the outer coast the only concentration was three females, a male, and an immature at the s. jetty of the Columbia R. all winter (MP). Singles included one at Shedd, *Linn*, OR to Dec. 12 (RH), one at the Salem airport in December and January (AC), one at the Siuslaw R. mouth, *Lane*, OR Dec. 3–Feb. 15 (B&ZS), one at Tillamook Dec. 29 (JJ), an immature at Forest Grove, *Washington*, Jan. 3–early February (PlSu), one near Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, Jan. 11–13 (R. Gerig, PlSu, m.ob.), one near Junction City, *Lane*, Jan. 15–20 (PSh), one at Ankeny N.W.R., *Marion*, Jan. 23 (B. Lucas), one at South Beaver Cr., *Lincoln*, Jan. 24 (*vide* RB), one near the s. jetty of Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, Feb. 2–22 (*vide* RB), and one near Alsea Bay, *Lincoln*, Feb. 23 (*vide* RB). There were only 3 records from e. Oregon, where they are always very rare, with one n. of Condon, *Gilliam*, Dec. 1 (CC), one 30 mi w. of Condon Dec. 9 (B. Sharp), and one

very far south at Rocky Pt.-Upper Klamath L., *Klamath*, Jan. 17 (*fide* KS). Finally, in e. Washington, Acton had >20 in *Lincoln* in January–February, declining to two by Feb. 25, and one was at Hover, *Benton*, WA Feb. 18 (*fide* TG). A N. Hawk Owl remained at Cheney, *Spokane*, from mid-January–Feb. 24 (JA, m.ob.), for the 6th Washington record in the 1990s; there was only one report in the 1980s. Great Gray Owls also staged an invasion into the n. Puget Trough. As many as eight birds were reported (*fide* B. Anderson), including ones near Bellingham, *Whatcom*, in early January (E. Calvin, *fide* J. Meche), near Conway, *Skagit*, Feb. 15 (J. Bragg), and at Bridle Trails S.P., Jan. 28–Feb. 23 (D.&S. Stark, *fide* L. Erckman) for the first *King* record in a century! The only Oregon report was from the c. Cascades: one at Silver Falls S.P., *Marion*, Dec. 28 (SD). All three Burrowing Owls found in w. Oregon were coastal: one at Coos Bay Dec. 22 (*fide* AC), one at the n. jetty of the Rogue R., *Curry*, Jan. 11 (*fide* CD), and one at the s. jetty of the Columbia R., Jan. 24 (PlSu).

The ♂ Costa's Hummingbird that wintered in Grants Pass, *Josephine* (D. Vroman), provided the 2nd winter record since 1990–1991. Two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found in Oregon, for the 8th and 9th records: an immature s. of Klamath Falls, *Klamath*, Jan. 4 (KS *et al.*) and another immature photographed at F.R.R., Jan. 1–12 (PSh, DH *et al.*). A Red-naped Sapsucker was in Newberg, *Yamhill*, OR Feb. 4+ (C. Wilson) for an unusual west-side record. Numbers of Black Phoebes in w. Oregon appear to be increasing dramatically. The best example is the count of 105 on the Coquille Valley CBC (AC), but three on the Coos Bay CBC (*fide* AC), and singles at Peoria, *Linn*, for the winter (*fide* AC), in Sutherlin, *Douglas*, in January (*fide* RM), and at South Beaver Cr., *Lincoln*, Jan. 4–Feb. 10 (*fide* RB) are also exemplary. Barn Swallows are being reported more frequently in winter, but six at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, WA Feb. 13 (V. Nelson) was astounding. Only slightly less unusual were two at Port Orford, *Curry*, Jan. 17 (CD), one near Medford, *Jackson*, Jan. 30 (*fide* HS), and four near Cape Blanco, *Curry*, Feb. 1 (*fide* DM).

Corvids seemed to be everywhere, typified by the 3 species of jays in Moro, *Sherman*, a small town in the wheat farming country of e. Oregon that until recently harbored no jays. A Gray Jay in Walla Walla, WA Feb. 13 (P. Dauble, S. Albee, *fide* MD) was unexpected at low elevations. The Steller's Jay in Moro all winter (JJ, DBa) was one of the three. Blue Jay

reports bounced back from last winter's low with 11 reports. Four were from e. Oregon, including one in Moro, and seven were in e. Washington. The most numerous jay in Moro was W. Scrub-Jay, with >five present (JJ, DBa). Other sightings from locales where they are irregular included one wintering at Vale, *Malheur*, OR (B. Jakubos), one at Kennewick, WA, into February (*fide* TG) for a *Benton* first, one at Bayview, *Skagit*, WA from November–Feb. 17 (*fide* BK), one at Mt. Vernon, *Skagit*, WA through Dec. 12 (*fide* BK), and four in *Kitsap*, WA (*fide* J. Carson). The two on the Coos Bay CBC Dec. 22 represented a count first (*fide* AC). The corvid litany ends with a Clark's Nutcracker in Richland, *Benton*, WA Feb. 24+ (M. Nowakowski, *fide* TG). Mountain Chickadees also invaded, with 9 reports from w. Oregon lowlands and the coast. Moro, *Sherman*, had two Feb. 5+ (DBa), presumably to provide companionship for the corvids. A White-breasted Nuthatch in the Siskiyous at Bear Camp Dec. 17 (CD) represented a 3rd *Curry* record, and may have also been a result of the fall flight of montane species. The Brown Creeper at Page Springs, *Harney*, OR Feb. 1 (B. Rasch) was unusual for the cold desert.

Thrushes to Finches

One notable result of the late December ice and snow storms was the Varied Thrush movement into the lowlands, *i.e.* 36 in view at once in Joyce, *Clallam*, WA Dec. 28 (BN). These numbers persisted into early January. The Gray Catbird in Corvallis Jan. 8+ (K. Fairchild, †HH, m.ob.) furnished the 2nd winter record for Oregon. Seven N. Mockingbird were reported, about average, although 2 winter records from the interior was not. Singles were at the Yakima R. delta, *Benton*, WA Feb. 3+ (J.&M. Hirth) and at Moro, *Sherman*, OR Feb. 5 (DBa). Bohemian Waxwings in unexpected spots included four at Bayview, *Skagit*, WA Dec. 8 (SM), one at Everett, *Snohomish*, WA Dec. 31 (SM), and one at Malheur N.W.R., *Harney*, OR Feb. 23 (P. & P. Neuman). Loggerhead Shrikes linger sparingly; this winter's reports consisted of one w. of Nespelem, *Okanogan*, WA Dec. 7 (M. Houston) and one at Newland Rd., *Jackson*, OR, for most of the winter (*fide* HS).

Last winter, we noted that 10 warbler species in winter was probably a Regional record. This winter 12 species were found. A Tennessee Warbler in Corvallis Dec. 1–11 (†RH, †HH, m.ob.) provided about the 6th Oregon winter record. The Nashville Warbler in Brookings, *Curry*, OR Jan. 19 (DC *et al.*), the Yellow Warbler

found moribund in Portland, OR Dec. 16 (B. Salinger), the Hermit Warbler at Finley N.W.R., *Benton*, OR Jan. 12 (M. Willison), the N. Waterthrush at Skagit, *Skagit*, WA Dec. 8–Jan. 1 (SM), and the Wilson's Warbler in Harbor, *Curry*, OR Dec. 14 (DM) were all less than annual in winter. The Palm Warbler total of five was average. The Black-and-white Warbler at Seattle, WA, remained into December (*fide* RR). Common Yellowthroats are annual in winter, but the only report was one male in Eugene, *Lane*, OR Dec. 15 (HH, RH).

All of the unusual *Spizella* reports were from Oregon. American Tree Sparrows are very rare on the westside, so one in *Polk* Dec. 13 was noteworthy (BTi, SD), and six at Antone, *Wheeler*, Dec. 30 (CC, PlSu) was a large group for e. Oregon. An ad. Chipping Sparrow was in Toledo, *Lincoln*, Jan. 9+ (C. Philo, SD) and a Clay-colored Sparrow was near Tangent, *Linn*, Dec. 14–15 (PV, †HH, m.ob.). No Swamp Sparrows were reported from anywhere but w. Oregon, which is atypical, and only nine were reported from there, which is also atypical. A Rusty Blackbird at Kennewick, *Benton*, WA Dec. 21 (†D. Rockwell) was the only report, and did not approach last winter's total of six. The Great-tailed Grackle remained at Malheur N.W.R., *Harney*, OR, through the winter (m.ob.). A Com. Grackle at Tumalo, *Deschutes*, Dec. 7+ (D. Hale *et al.*) was Oregon's 17th. An imm. Bullock's Oriole was in Newport from late December to Jan. 2 (*fide* RB); they do not linger annually. A few Cassin's Finches visited Rogue valley feeders in early December (*fide* HS, D. Vroman), and one was in the Creswell area, *Lane*, during the first part of January (D&HL). Their appearance may have been linked to the fall movement in the interior. White-winged Crossbill only appeared at Spokane, WA, with a single present Dec. 13–17 (W. Safranek), and Red Crossbills were almost unremarked. There were moderate numbers of Pine Siskins on the n. Olympic Pen. (BN), but they were very scarce in w. Oregon (HN). Evening Grosbeaks were almost absent everywhere (HN, BN, T. Mickel).

Exotics

A Barnacle Goose was shot on the Nooksack R. delta, *Whatcom*, WA Dec. 9 (* to University of Puget Sound). A ♂ Mandarin Duck was found with Wood Ducks s. of Eugene, *Lane*, OR Feb. 6 (RF). Up to nine Monk Parakeet were at the Portland Airport colony throughout the winter (R. Korpi).

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Middle Pacific Coast Region

DON ROBERSON, DANIEL S. SINGER, AND STEPHEN F. BAILEY

The winter began very wet, but then turned mild and dry, contributing to unusual wintering birds, including a smorgasbord of herons and swallows—and even three astonishing Black Terns. Traces of the “montane invasion” of autumn 1996 were also noted throughout the Season.

Abbreviations: C.B.R.C. (*California Bird Records Committee*); C.V. (*Central Valley*); H.S. (*Hayward Shoreline, Alameda*); S.F. (*San Francisco*). Banded birds from Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey*, should be credited to Big Sur Ornithology Lab. Reports of exceptional vagrants submitted without documentation are normally not published.

Loons to Pelicans

Eight Red-throated Loons and seven Pacific Loons on inland waters, each in 5 counties, were more widespread than usual. Two locations in *Santa Clara* hosted all 3 commoner loon species. Sixty Red-throateds and 20 Pacifics on Stone Lagoon, *Humboldt*, Dec. 6 represented a large concentration for an enclosed body of water, albeit one fronting on the ocean (DFx). In marked contrast to recent years, only one Yellow-billed Loon appeared. It was one mi off Pt. Joe, *Monterey*, Jan. 11–Feb. 1 (RT, ADeM, †SFB, DLSh).

Red-necked Grebes also appeared more widespread inland this winter, with singles in *Siskiyou*, *Placer*, *El Dorado*, *San Mateo*, and *Solano/Yolo*.

A Laysan Albatross returned to Pt. Arena

harbor, *Mendocino*, Jan. 3–Feb. 2 (R. Higby, DT *et al.*), making its 3rd consecutive winter there. Although the site’s habitat looks ideal for nesting (DR), it is a mainland shore far to the north of this species’ tropical nesting islands.

Unusually warm weather in *Modoc* yielded abnormally high numbers of waterbirds at Modoc N.W.R., including \leq two Am. White Pelicans Dec. 5–Jan. 4, a local first in winter (RLR). This species departed *Santa Clara* early, with few remaining in December.

Hérons to Waterfowl

Noteworthy local first winter records included a Least Bittern at the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, *Sacramento*, Dec. 27 (R. Jones); \leq three Great Egrets at Modoc N.W.R., *Modoc*, Dec. 1–Jan. 10 (RLR); and a Green Heron at Benton Hot Springs, *Mono*, Jan. 18 (E. Gann). Winter’s lone coastal White-faced Ibis was at Pescadero Marsh, *San Mateo*, Jan. 3 (BS).

Two “Bewick’s Swans” were at Cosumnes R. Preserve, *Sacramento*, Jan. 16–18 (JTr). Ross’ Geese reported from unusual locations included the 2nd record for *Trinity*, Jan. 5 (JEH, RH) and \leq three in Shasta Valley, *Shasta*, Feb. 13 (RE). An amazing eight Emperor Geese were recorded during the period, of which only three were documented: one at Bodega Bay from Dec. 12+ (B. Hallet, ph. EDG,

