

The Region had a topsy-turvy winter, with swallows instead of winter finches and shearwaters instead of fulmars and albatrosses. Though there were a few mega-rarities around, including the Region's first Bean Goose, the season's main story was definitely that of semi-hardy and non-hardy species spending the winter. Consider that Washington had four first winter records (excluding the Bean Goose) and Oregon had one. Additionally, Barn Swallows invaded again, exceeding even last winter's unprecedented tally. Some "winter" birds did show up. In particular, American Tree Sparrows and Snow Buntings were present in good numbers east of the Cascades. White-tailed Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk, Western Scrub-Jay, and Bewick's Wren showed further signs of range expansion, while Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting reports are ever more frequent, even during winter.

Those of us living in the heavily populated Puget Trough and Portland areas perceived the winter as a dry one, but through December and January, most of the Region experienced well-above-average precipitation. The winter was warm throughout, however, with January temperatures averaging more than 8 degrees Fahrenheit above normal.

Abbreviations: FR.R. (Fern Ridge Reservoir, Lane); N.S.C.B. (N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos); O.S. (Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor); Ridgefield (Ridgefield N.W.R., Clark); W.W.R.D. (Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla); Y.R.D. (Yakima R. delta, Benton, WA). Eastside and westside denote locations east and west of the Cascade crest, respectively.

LOONS THROUGH CRANES

A Red-throated Loon, now almost annual in e. Washington, was below Wanapum Dam 3 Jan—15 Feb (PtS, RS). A tally of 8000 Pacific Loons flying past Boiler Bay, Lincoln 9 Dec was excellent for winter (PP). Last fall's Yellow-billed Loon at Wanapum Dam remained throughout the winter (m. ob.); on the westside, 3 Yellow-billeds was about average: Westport 14 Dec (BT, S Mills), near Sequim, Clallam 17 Dec (BLB, CW), and Yaquina Bay, Lincoln 6 Feb (WH). Three Clark's Grebes each in w. Oregon and w. Washington represented a fairly typical winter. The only pelagic trip of the winter was 8 Feb off Westport (BT); it found some extremely unusual numbers. Virtually absent were the typical winter tubenoses: no albatrosses and only 13 Northern Fulmars. Instead, shearwaters were found in unprecedented winter numbers, including 25 Pink-footed, one Flesh-footed, 84 Sooty, and 7 Short-tailed; there were no previous Washington winter records of Flesh-footed and only about two of Pink-footed. Twenty-two

Oregon & Washington



Short-tailed Shearwaters flying past Dungeness Spit, Clallam 16 Dec was unusual from land anywhere in the Region but was particularly noteworthy for being so far e. of Cape Flattery (J. Acker, B. Waggoner). Two Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels off Westport 8 Feb were also somewhat unusual.

Brown Pelicans again lingered well into Dec, with hundreds at several locations into mid-Dec and an unprecedented 1000 at Boiler Bay 9 Dec (PP); this species is still very rare after Dec, so singles at Yaquina Bay, Lincoln 20 Jan (WH), Gold Beach, Curry 12 Jan (PaS), and Seaside, Clatsop 24 Feb (S. Warner) were also noteworthy. Eastside winter Great Egrets have become annual of late; this winter 2 were at Moses L., Grant 21 Dec—10 Feb (DSc), and 10 were at Ringold, Franklin 8-25 Jan (H. Bowers), with 5 remaining there until 14 Feb (J. & A. Dittmer). A tally of 122 Black-crowned Night-Herons at McNary N.W.R., Umatilla 1 Feb was an order of magnitude above a normal winter count anywhere in the Region, excepting perhaps the Klamath Basin (MD, MLD). A Turkey Vulture was near Sequim, Clallam 13 Jan (J. Stewart); vultures are very

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rare during mid-winter in Washington. In Oregon, where possibly increasing as a winterer, at least 8 Turkey Vultures wintered for the 3rd consecutive year near Eugene (DI).

The Region's first well-documented Bean

Goose delighted observers at

Hoquiam, *Grays Harbor* 7-17 Dec (ph. PtS, RS); outside experts confirmed it as a *mid-dendorffi*, one of the "Taiga" races from Siberia (M. Ogilvie, K. Litvin, pers. comm.). Further details will appear in a future issue of *North American Birds*. The resident Port Angeles Emperor Goose survived another season (R. McNair-Huff), while another was at F.R.R. 5-28 Feb (D. Arendt). The 3 blue-morph

Snow Geese at Stanwood/Fir I., first found in Nov, remained through the winter (SM, DD, TA); there are fewer than 20 records of this morph for the state. This winter was another good one for Ross's Geese, with 6 in w. Oregon, one in w. Washington, and one in e. Washington. Single Brant, rare on the westside interior, were at Salem 18 Dec (K. Sparkman), F.R.R. throughout the winter (WH), and Ankeny N.W.R., *Marion* 23 Dec (J. Jebousek). Last fall's Black Brant wandered between Wenatchee, *Chelan* and *Orondo*, Douglas throughout the winter (DB, ph. R. Hendricks). A confusing flock of 200 Brant at Useless Bay, *Island* 17 Feb mostly consisted of birds that appeared to be Gray-bellied, but at least one looked typical for *hrota* (vt. SM, DD).

Nine eastside Eurasian Wigeon this winter was better than average. A Mallard x Northern Pintail was at Everett 26 Dec (SM, RTS). A Blue-winged Teal, not annual during winter, was at Millacoma Marsh, *Coos* 13 Feb (TR). Common (Eurasian Green-winged) Teal had another banner winter, with 11 "pure" birds and 4 Common x Green-winged Teal hybrids on the westside; a Common Teal at Prineville, *Crook* 31 Dec was on the eastside, where not annual (CG). A Harlequin Duck, very rare on the eastside during winter, was at Deschutes River S. P., *Sherman* 18 Jan (WG). Likely related to this fall's incursion, a White-winged Scoter was at Wanapum Dam 26 Dec—3 Jan (SDs), and 5 were at Wenatchee 9 Dec (DB), while 4

Surf Scoters were at Wenatchee 9 Dec (DB) and 2 were at Hood River 31 Dec (SJ); though rare to uncommon during fall, White-winged and Surf Scoters are very rare during winter on the eastside. Eight eastside



This Ruff near Satsop, Grays Harbor County, Washington, present 28 December 2002 (here) through at least 4 January 2003, was one of four in the Region this winter, the first in over two decades to be found in winter. Photograph by Ruth Sullivan.

Long-tailed Ducks equaled the totals for the previous two winters but was well above the long-term average. The Common Goldeneye x Bufflehead remained throughout the winter at Wenatchee (DB, B. St. George). Five thousand Common Goldeneyes near Ontario, *Malheur* 31 Jan was likely the largest tally ever for the Region (CC, JC). Several large concentrations of Common Mergansers were reported, including a stunning 3790 at Moses L., *Grant* 10 Jan (RH) and a smaller but still exceptional tally of 1122 Common Mergansers near Tacoma 21 Dec (CW, BLB).

Five Ospreys in e. Washington about doubled that area's number of winter records; singles were at Moses L., *Grant* 1 Dec (DSc), *Chamna* Nature Preserve, *Benton* 7 Dec (*fide* BL), *Ellensburg*, *Kittitas* 14 Dec (SDs), lower *Yakima* R. 4 Jan (M. Lilga), and near *Cle Elum*, *Kittitas* 18 Feb (M. Hobbs). An Osprey near *Snohomish* 25 Jan was in w. Washington, where merely very rare (D. Swayne). White-tailed Kite reports continue to increase, with many reported from the outer coast n. through *Grays Harbor* and e. along the lower Columbia R. to *Steigerwald* L., *Clark*. The Red-shouldered Hawk explosion continues. Six were found this winter in *Clark* (JE, TA), and singles were also at *Skagit* W.M.A. through 5 Feb (TA, J. Duemmel), *Cathlamet*, *Wahkiakum* 1 Dec—15 Feb (L. Cain, B. Waggoner), *Westport* 26 Dec (†B. Shelmerdine), and *O.S.* 11 Jan (vt. G.

Gerds, B. Waggoner). In e. Oregon, where also increasing, a Red-shouldered was at Ft. Klamath 8 Dec (D. Haupt). Rare during winter in e. Washington, single Ferruginous Hawks were at Lower Smith Canyon,

Franklin 15 Feb (DR) and *Byrnes Rd.*, *Walla Walla* 21 Feb (MD, MLD). Even more noteworthy was a very rare westside Ferruginous at *Netarts* 26 Jan (S. Shunk, K. Falco); 2 others were reported in w. Oregon without documentation. The Region's 10 Gyrfalcons this winter represented a fairly typical count; unusual was that 5 were in w. Oregon and only 2 were in w. Washington, a reversal of the normal ratio. Fourteen westside Prairie Falcons, 10 in Oregon and 4 in Washington, was better than normal.

A Sora at *Toppenish* N.W.R., *Yakima* 15 Dec provided e. Washington's 4th winter record (K. Turley), while 2 at *Houston* L., *Crook* 22 Dec (CG) and one at *Prineville*, *Crook* 31 Dec (CG) were nearly as unusual; in w. Washington, where very rare during winter, 2 were at *McChord Air Force Base* 21-25 Dec (S. Agnew). A Sandhill Crane at *Umatilla* N.W.R. 31 Dec provided the Columbia Basin's first Dec record (H. Browers).

PLOVERS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A Pacific Golden-Plover wintered for the 2nd consecutive year near *Tangent*, *Linn* 12 Jan through Feb (T. Snetsinger); there are fewer than 10 Oregon winter records. A Black-necked Stilt at *Klamath Forest* N.W.R. 22 Feb was the first ever during winter on the eastside (E. Marple), while 25 American Avocets at *L. Abert*, *Lake* 5 Dec provided only the 2nd eastside winter record of that species (TB). For the 3rd consecutive winter, a Lesser Yellowlegs was in Washington, with one near *Sequim*, *Clallam* 13 Dec (B. Boekelheide); this species was formerly far from annual in winter in that state. In Oregon, 2 near *Eugene* throughout the winter (HH, DDW, DI) and one at *Coos Bay* 16 Jan (TR) provided a fairly typical winter's yield. Spotted Sandpipers, extremely rare during winter on the eastside, were at the *Deschutes* R. mouth, *Sherman* throughout the winter (HN, MP) and at *Bend*, *Deschutes* 13 Feb (KO). Rare during winter away from the outer coast, a Marbled Godwit was near *Belfair*, *Mason* 25 Jan—9 Feb (M. Hrudkaj).

Three Western Sandpipers were at Moses L., Grant 12 Jan, and one was there 23 Feb (DSc); this species is very rare during winter on the eastside. Coastal Least Sandpiper numbers were exceptional, with 250 at Tillamook Bay 6 Jan (HN) and 225 at Nahcotta, Pacific 15 Jan (TA). For the 3rd consecutive winter, a Rock Sandpiper of the nominate subspecies was at O.S. 20 Dec (vt. CW, RTS, T. Perkins). Dunlin again overwintered in the Columbia Basin, with top counts of 120 at W.W.R.D 28 Feb (MD, MLD), 30 at Moses L. throughout the winter (DSc), and 18 at Y.R.D. 16-20 Jan (RF, NL, BW). Two Ruffs at Eugene throughout the winter (m. ob.), one at Salem 4 Feb (†J. Lundsten), and one near Satsop, Grays Harbor 28 Dec—4 Jan (B. Jones, ph. RS, vt. BT) provided the Region's first winter records since one was found near Coquille, Coos on 18 Jan 1980 (D. Fix). A winter flock of 160 Long-billed Dowitchers at Moses L. 21 Dec was wholly unprecedented for the eastside (DSc), while 1200 at Ankeny N.W.R., Marion 14 Feb (MD, MLD) likely furnished a record Regional winter tally. Mid-Dec storms drove Red Phalaropes landward, with maxima of 360 at Dungeness Spit, Clallam 16 Dec (J. Acker, B. Waggoner) and 150 at North Beach, Jefferson 16 Dec (CW, BLB); the last were gone by 10 Jan. As often happens with these storms, a few were found at scattered westside interior locations 12-31 Dec, with a top count of 15 at F.R.R. 18 Dec (DDW), but 2 at Hatfield L., Deschutes 29 Dec were probably the first ever during winter on the eastside (J. Meredith).

Two Pomarine Jaegers were off Westport 8 Feb (BT); Pomarines are apparently regular in small numbers off the Washington coast during winter. Eastside Bonaparte's Gulls are very rare during winter, especially after early to mid-Dec; consequently, 60 at Moses L., Grant in mid-Dec, dwindling to 6 at winter's end, were noteworthy (DSc). Two Heermann's Gulls were at Port Angeles, Clallam 5 Dec (BN), and 2 were at Coos Bay 15 Dec (DI, AC); of late, this species has become almost annual during winter. The ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull returned for the 4th consecutive winter to the W.W.R.D. 21-28 Feb (MD, MLD); only 2 other Lesser Black-backed have been recorded in Washington. On the eastside, Western Gulls are regular only along the Columbia R. e. to the Tri-Cities, so one at Clarkston, Asotin 3 Jan—25 Feb was noteworthy (†C. Swift, ph. T. Gray, ph. T. Besser). This winter's 10 Glaucous Gulls was the lowest in more than 10 years. A count of 668 Black-legged Kittiwakes off Westport 8 Feb was exceptional (BT). Counts of 40,000 Common Murres flying past Boiler Bay 9 Dec (PP) and 9100 off Westport 8 Feb (BT) were most encouraging, as Regional numbers seem on the mend.

Washington's 10th Thick-billed Murre was w. of Port Townsend, Jefferson 17 Dec (†CW, BLB); all but one of Washington records have fallen between 6 Dec and 19 Feb. A total of 3100+ Cassin's Auklets off Westport 8 Feb (BT) was also a very high winter count.

A Eurasian Collared-Dove was at Joseph, Wallowa 11 Dec, presumably the same bird seen there intermittently since last winter (F. Conley); there are about six Oregon records. Two Burrowing Owls overwintered in sw. Linn, providing a fairly typical winter total for w. Oregon (JF, JG). The only e. Washington Burrowing Owls were 2 at Pasco, Franklin 10 Feb (J. & A. Dittmer) and one at Finley, Benton 19 Jan—21 Feb (B. Dunham). Snowy Owl numbers this winter were quite low, with 5 in e. Washington, one in e. Oregon, and one in w. Oregon. Four westside Great Gray Owls this winter, mostly in the Cascade foothills, was better than normal. A Boreal Owl was found at Mt. Pisgah, Wheeler 7 Dec (JG); winter records of this species are few, mostly because of habitat inaccessibility. Still rare on the eastside, an Anna's Hummingbird overwintered at Bend, Deschutes (DT) and at Cashmere, Chelan (J. Phillips), and another was at White Salmon, Klickitat 16 Feb (C. Flick). A Costa's Hummingbird at Eugene 27 Jan—13 Feb added to about 10 previous Oregon winter records (L. McQueen, DI). Female/imm. *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were at West Seattle 8 Dec—3 Feb (ph. J. Houston) and Kenmore, King 15 Jan (B. McKenzie); Dec/Jan records of



Only Oregon's second in winter, this adult male Baltimore Oriole visited a feeder in Florence, Lane County from late December 2002 through February 2003 (here 10 January). Photograph by Owen Schmidt.

Rufous Hummingbirds from Washington probably number fewer than five, so observers should not assume that winter *Selasphorus* are Rufous. Spring migrant Rufous were about two weeks early, with the first Oregon reports coming from Astoria, Clatsop 31 Jan (B. Barnett), Waldport, Lane 2 Feb (K. Ciotti), and New R., Coos 2 Feb (TR); Washington's first were at Nahcotta, Pacific 11 Feb (K. Sayce) and Vashon I., King

14 Feb (E. Swan). An Allen's Hummingbird at New R. 2 Feb was two to three weeks early (TR).

The continuing presence of Acorn Woodpecker in Washington was evidenced by one near Lyle, Klickitat 3 Jan (WC). A Lewis's Woodpecker was at Brownsville, Linn 3 Jan (JF), and 2 were near Monmouth, Polk 25 Jan (B. Tice); this species is a rare winterer in the Willamette Valley. Another Lewis's near Joyce, Clallam 10-24 Feb provided a very rare Olympic Pen. record (B. Oakes). For the 3rd winter out of the last five, a Williamson's Sapsucker was near Trout L., Klickitat 11 Jan—11 Feb (K. Glueckert); they are generally very rare during winter in e. Washington. Rare e. of the Cascades, a Red-breasted Sapsucker was near Prineville, Crook 22 Dec, and a Red-breasted x Red-naped Sapsucker hybrid was also in the area 18 Jan (CG).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH FINCHES

The Black Phoebe was near Cathlamet, Wahkiakum for its 2nd winter (m. ob.); there are still only five Washington records. Another Black Phoebe near Canby, Clackamas 24 Jan was well n. of its usual range in Oregon (E. Specht). Approximately 15 Say's Phoebes in w. Oregon about trebled the winter average for the last decade. Say's Phoebes are normally quite rare in e. Washington during winter until mid-Feb, when spring migrants return. This winter, one was at Toppenish N.W.R., Yakima 15 Dec (K. Turley), and 2 were on the Three Rivers C.B.C.

5 Jan (fide MD). Oregon's 4th and the Region's 8th Vermilion Flycatcher was an ad. male that successfully overwintered at Woodburn, Marion after first being found by a jogger in mid-Nov (S. Latin, ph., m. ob.). An Ash-throated Flycatcher near Florence, Lane 5 Dec was well heard and seen (B. & Z. Stotz), providing the first winter record in over 10 years. For only the 3rd winter ever, one of the fall's Tropical Kingbirds lingered into Dec, with a single at Warrenton, Clatsop to 15 Dec (MP).

Midwinter Loggerhead Shrikes are rare in e. Washington; one was near Wallula, Walla Walla 5 Jan (MD, MLD), and one was at Rattlesnake Mtn., Benton 19-25 Jan (BL, NL) with 2 there 8 Feb (BW). A total of 7 Blue Jays was about average, with 3 in e. Washington, one in e. Oregon, and 3 in w. Oregon. Western Scrub-Jays continue to show signs of range expansion, with 3 at Ukiah, Umatilla mid-Oct—31 Jan (MD, MLD) and 2 at Winlock, Wheeler that overwintered (B. Sharp); the Ukiah birds were noted to be of the *californica* subspecies group. A flock of 125+ Horned Larks wintered in N. Portland, Mult-

SA This winter's swallow extravaganza exceeded even last winter's weirdness. As during last winter, the main participant was Barn Swallow. Prior to 31 Dec, there were only four sightings: one at Ridgefield 7 Dec (D. Robberson), one at Olympia 8 Dec (BT), one near Bellingham, *Whatcom* 15 Dec (J. Duemmel), and 5 in N. Portland 13 Dec (J. Fitchen, IT)—about twice average. From 31 Dec to 9 Jan, there were at least five sightings, involving 25+ birds in Oregon but none in Washington. After 10 Jan, Barn Swallows were being reported from all quarters on the westside and at several locations on the eastside. Numbers were most carefully tracked in w. Washington, where 66 were tallied during mid-Jan, 43 during late Jan, 101 during early Feb, 22 during mid-Feb, and 5 during late Feb (note that the late season drop-off was due, in part, to decreased reporting). Peak tallies included 30 at Ridgefield 18 Jan (PtS, RS, KK), 31 at Neah Bay, *Clallam* 2 Feb (N. Ball), and 43 at Nisqually N.W.R., *Thurston* 6 Feb (CW). On the eastside, where almost without precedent during winter, the following Barn Swallow records accrued: one, near Klamath Falls 10 Jan (D. Laye); 5, Hatfield L., *Deschutes* 18 Jan—Feb (J. Moodie, vt. DT); 2, near Desert Aire, *Grant* 20 Jan (JA, WH); 3, Bingen, *Klickitat* 30 Jan—Feb (SJ); 6, Wenatchee, *Chelan* 2-4 Feb (B. St. George, BT); 12, near Orondo, *Douglas* 7 Feb (CW); 2, Bridgeport, *Douglas* 15 Feb (PtS, RS); and 3, Blue L., *Grant* 23 Feb (PtS). The timing of this invasion was similar to that of last year, but the number of birds involved was probably triple, and none were found on the eastside last year. For perspective, note that, in total, only 26 Barn Swallows had been found in Washington during the eight winters preceding that of 2001-2002.

This incursion did not involve other swallows, though Tree Swallows arrived in late Jan, a week or so early. Midwinter Tree Swallow numbers were about normal, with one at Elma, *Grays Harbor* 29 Dec (PtS, RS), one at Philomath, *Benton* 5 Jan (D. Copeland), and 2 at Ridgefield 18 Jan (PtS, RS, KK). Violet-green Swallows in Jan are not annual, so 3 at Ridgefield 18 Jan (PtS, RS, KK) and 5 near LaConner, *Skagit* 21 Jan (V. Johnson) were noteworthy. Most unusual among the non-Barn Swallows was Washington's 2nd winter **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** at Edmonds, *Snohomish* 10 Jan (TP).

nomah, well in excess of any previous county tally and a goodly count for anywhere in the n. Willamette Valley (IT).

Bewick's Wrens continue to expand into Oregon's ne. corner, with 2 at Cove, *Union* 31 Dec (TB) and 5 near Elgin, *Union* 17 Dec (TB). This winter's mildness was well evidenced by the wren clan. A concentration of 8 Rock Wrens near Vantage, *Kittitas* 2 Jan was probably unprecedented for winter in Washington (BT); a House Wren at Theler Wetlands, *Mason* 12 Jan was probably Washington's first during winter (†MB); and 56 Marsh Wrens at Spencer I., *Snohomish* 23 Feb well exceeded any previous winter tally (SM, DD). Western Bluebirds are not quite annual during winter in w. Washington, so one near Brady, *Grays Harbor* 16 Dec was noteworthy (A. Knue); similarly, Western Bluebirds are very rare during mid-winter in e. Washington, so up to 9 at Moses L., *Grant* 5-18 Dec (DSc) were of note. A winter tally of 31 Hermit Thrushes at Wahluke Slope, *Franklin* 7 Dec was without precedent in Washington (SM, BF, CB). Only 2 Northern Mockingbirds were reported, with one near E. Wenatchee, *Douglas* 31 Dec—2 Feb (M. Spencer, ph. R. Hendricks) and one at Bend, *Deschutes* throughout the winter (P. Low); the Region averages about 6-7 per winter. Sage Thrashers are very rare in n. Oregon and extremely rare in Washington before Mar, so singles at Fossil, *Wheeler* 19 Feb (B. Sharp) and Saddle Mt., *Grant* 24 Feb (BF) were noteworthy.

A White/Black-backed Wagtail at E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, *Benton* 13 Dec was nicely described and was likely a White, but the details did not allow for firm identifica-

tion to species (†JG). For the 7th consecutive winter, a Nashville Warbler was found, this year at Riverton, *Coos* 23 Dec (TR). Washington's 3rd winter Yellow Warbler was near Sequim, *Clallam* 16 Dec (PtS, BB). Not annual during winter, a Black-throated Gray Warbler was at Seaside, *Clatsop* 8 Dec (S. Warner). A Townsend's Warbler at Wenatchee, *Chelan* 27 Feb provided only the 2nd winter record for e. Washington (P. Ostendorf). Washington's first winter Hermit Warbler was at L. Sammamish, *King* 25 Feb (†C. Haynie). Palm Warblers are uncommon to rare during winter along the outer coast and very rare elsewhere. Twenty near Floras L., *Curry* 25 Dec furnished a remarkable high count (TR), while one at Ridgefield 12 Feb (KK) and one in w. Eugene that overwintered (DDW) were in the westside interior; even rarer was one on the eastside at the Deschutes R. mouth, *Sherman* 22 Feb (*vide* KS). Exceptionally rare during winter, an American Redstart was in N. Portland 18 Dec (S. Cackley). Formerly accidental during winter, Western Tanagers were recorded for the 5th consecutive winter, with singles at Newport, *Lincoln* 6 Jan (C. Philo) and Seattle 20 Dec—Feb (ph. L. Darnell).

An *oreganus* Spotted Towhee at E. Wenatchee, *Douglas* 26 Feb was likely the first for e. Washington away from *Klickitat* (†DB). American Tree Sparrows were widely reported on the eastside but were totally absent in w. Washington. Oddly, where formerly not annual, 3 were found in w. Oregon, with singles at N.S.C.B. throughout Dec (D. Pettay, TR), Coquille, *Coos* 28 Dec (GG), and Canby, *Clackamas* 6 Feb (E. Specht).

Three Chipping Sparrows were in *Yamhill* 26 Jan (D. Albright), and singles were near Independence, *Polk* 5 Jan (DDW) and at Fernhill Wetlands, *Washington* 23 Jan (B. Craig); Chippings are barely annual during winter in Oregon. There were "only" 2 Clay-colored Sparrows this winter, the lowest tally since 1997-1998, with singles at N.S.C.B. 7 Dec (TR) and Warrenton, *Clatsop* throughout the winter (MP, TT). The Region's observers are putting more time into sorting out their Fox Sparrows, and the result has been growing evidence that Slate-colored Fox Sparrows are annual here during winter. This winter, 4 were found, with singles at Wenatchee, *Chelan* 26 Dec (DB), *Yakima* 20 Jan (K. Turley), Crescent Bar, *Grant* 4 Feb (BT), and Big Flat, *Franklin* 8 Feb (BL, NL). Additionally, an apparent *altivagans* Fox Sparrow was near Crockett L., *Island* 17 Feb (SM, DD). Swamp Sparrows had their best winter since 1993-1994, with at least 19 in w. Washington and 7 in e. Washington; maxima included 6 near Monroe, *Snohomish* 7 Feb (CW) and at least 5 near Elma, *Grays Harbor* from mid-Dec to early Jan (PtS, RS). In Oregon, numbers were about average, including roughly 15 in *Coos* (TR).

Irons once again took on the task of tallying Oregon's White-throated Sparrows; this winter's count was 310, all but 4 of which were on the westside. This total was well above last year's 176, but it is not clear how much of that increase was due to observer effort/reporting. Top county counts were 72 in *Lane* and 63 in *Coos*. No increase was noted by Washington observers. Harris's Sparrow numbers were above average but not up to last year's incursion; 12 were reported from e. Washington, 5 from w. Washington, 5 from e. Oregon, and 4 from w. Oregon. Surprisingly, 2 White-crowned x Golden-crowned Sparrow hybrids were reported, with singles near Tillamook 15 Dec (J. Gilligan) and St. Helens, *Columbia* 19 Dec (D. Coggsell). Oregon's 6th McCown's Longspur was in N. Portland 7 Jan—mid-Feb (IT, ph. m. ob.); this bird was within spitting distance of Washington, which remains McCown-less. A Lapland Longspur, very rare in w. Oregon's interior, joined the McCown's in late Jan (*vide* DI). A count of 4000 Snow Buntings on the Waterville Plateau, *Douglas* was the highest Regional tally in seven years (DB).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Pacific City, *Tillamook* 21 Dec was about the 7th for winter in Oregon (*vide* D. Farrar). Likely providing a first Regional winter record, a male Lazuli Bunting was at Norway Pond, *Coos* 24 Dec (†TR). Shortly thereafter, the Region's 3rd winter Indigo Bunting was at found at Newport, *Lincoln* 21-27 Jan (J. & L. MacKown, †D. Faxon). Tricolored Blackbirds continue to make news in the Region.

A concentration of 1500 at Lone Pine, Crook 22 Dec was truly exceptional (KO, CG), while in Washington, where still rare, 2 remained at Shillapoo Bottoms, Clark 3 Dec (IT), and 8 were at Othello, Adams 9 Feb (BF). A Yellow-headed Blackbird at Nisqually N.W.R., Thurston 15 Dec provided a rare w. Washington winter record (B. Shelmerdine), while one at Gearhart, Clatsop 6 Jan furnished a rare outer coast record (MP). A Rusty Blackbird at Sauvie I. 9 Dec (IT, JF) and another at Enterprise, Wallowa 18 Feb (ph. B. Craig) added to about 11 previous Oregon records, but singles at Shillapoo Bottoms, Clark 3 Dec (IT), near Silvana, Snohomish 10-22 Jan (SM), and at Bridgeport, Douglas 11 Feb (†DB) provided a fairly typical winter yield for Washington. Washington's 13th Common Grackle, first found in Aug, was seen sporadically near Kennewick, Benton through 4 Jan (DR). Oregon's 2nd winter Baltimore Oriole was an ad. male coming to a feeder in Florence, Lane from late Dec through Feb (AC, NS, vt. O. Schmidt, vt. DL). Increasingly found, but still not annual during winter, a Bullock's Oriole overwintered at Brookings, Curry (K. Goldwater). Truly exceptional for the outer coast was a White-winged Crossbill at Clatsop Spit 16 Jan (†TT), while 5 at Mt. Spokane 24 Feb were less surprising (JA). A Pine Grosbeak, rare near sea level, was near Sequim, Clallam 16 Dec (F. Sharpe). Common Redpolls are usually very scarce after invasion years; a flock of 55 near Florence, Snohomish 22 Jan was the Region's sole report (†T. Cotner).

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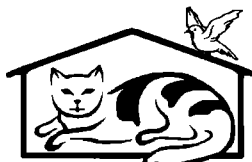
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- ▲ Outdoor cats are exposed to many hazards, including cars, disease, and parasites

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