

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

/ Dave DeSante and Ron LeValley

This winter was one of the driest on record. While the NW coast received a normal rainfall, the Central Valley (CV), Bay Area and southern part of the Region suffered a severe drought that, by Mar. 31, had produced less than half the normal rainfall. Most shallow



ponds and normally flooded lowlands in the CV and along the coast were dry and many fine creeks were reduced to a mere trickle. The fire danger for the coming seasons promises to be at an all-time high, while nesting waterfowl in the CV face a possible disaster. The temperature during Dec. and Jan. hovered about normal or a little lower especially in Dec. However, early Feb. saw the beginning of a most amazing two months of

TABLE I

**Relative Numbers of Common Wintering Landbirds
Middle Pacific Coast Region—Winter 1971-72**

Species	Coastal	Inner Coast	Central Valley
I. Irruptive Montane			
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Virtually none	Virtually none	none
Golden-crowned Kinglet	low-average	none	none
Purple Finch	very low-ave.	very low	virtually none
Pine Siskin	very low	very low	virtually none
Red Crossbill	none	none	none
II. Frugivores			
Robin	very low-low	very low	very low
Varied Thrush	low-high	low-high	low
Cedar Waxwing	very low-low	very low	very low
III. Granivores			
Oregon Junco	very low-ave.	very low-ave.	low
White-crowned Sparrow	very low-ave.	average	low
Golden-crowned Sparrow	low-average	average	average-high
Fox Sparrow	very low-ave.	low	very low
IV. Insectivores			
Red-shafted Flicker	low-average	low	low-average
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	low	very low-low	low
Hermit Thrush	very low-ave.	low-average	low-average
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	average	average	average
Myrtle Warbler	ave-high	ave-high	low-average
Audubon's Warbler	very low-low	low	very low

balmy temperatures, clear skies, early blooming plants and large numbers of early spring migrants. With the exception of hummingbirds and swallows, however, discussion of spring migrants will await the next issue. A killing frost Mar. 26-27 ended the season and left many agricultural areas, especially fruit orchards, in our Region to be declared State disaster areas.

The majority of our common wintering land birds were present in the Region in reduced or, at best, average numbers. However, more striking than overall scarcity was the variation in numbers from locality to locality. Never have so many conflicting reports been received, even from neighboring, ecologically similar areas. One reason for this was the tendency, because of the mild, dry weather, for birds to winter higher in the mountains and on the coastal ridges than normal—areas where observers are fewer and more sporadic. Waterfowl were also subject to contradictory reports, especially birds such as swans, which were concentrated in areas with water, and geese, which were spread out in the dry fields.

Table I is an attempt at summarizing these land bird reports. Several trends are evident from these data: 1) The irruptive montane species that were nearly nonexistent during the fall did not appear during the winter. Lowland records of Red-breasted Nuthatches were fewer than last year, perhaps the fewest in recent memory. However they were abundant in the Sierra from the transition zone upward (RLeV). Similarly, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Purple Finches and especially Pine Siskins were very scarce throughout the lowlands while no Red Crossbills were reported away from nesting

areas. 2) Numbers of fruit-eaters, particularly Robins and Cedar Waxwings, were far below average in spite of an excellent berry crop which simply rotted on the bushes. Varied Thrushes were scarce in the CV but "varied" from low to high—generally above average—along the coast and inner coastal ranges. 3) Numbers of seedeaters were also generally down throughout the Region, especially Oregon Juncos and Fox Sparrows. Only Golden-crowned Sparrows in the CV were reported in better than average numbers and this only during the early part of the winter (BK). 4) Among insectivores the sapsucker, Hermit Thrush and Audubon's Warbler were most consistently reported to be down, a continuation of last fall's trend, but even these varied somewhat locally.

LOONS, GREBES, TUBENOSES — Common Loons were again reported from the large inland lakes of the Region, such as Folsom L., Sacramento Co. (RS, TM, RLeV), L. Oroville, Butte Co. (BW) and L. Topaz, Nevada Co. (RS). Yellow-billed Loons were found in Monterey Bay for the fifth consecutive year: 1 was present Jan. 21-Mar. 15 (AB, RS *et al.*) and another was seen Feb. 10 (AB). This second bird was seen again, still in winter plumage, between Apr. 13-15 (RS, AB, RLeV). This is the latest California record. An Arctic/Red-throated-type loon was seen on L. Tahoe Dec. 20 (GMcC). Either species is extremely rare away from the coast. Red-throated Loons, scarce this winter, may need some watching in the future (RS, Eds.). A Red-necked Grebe photographed at the Forebay, L. Oroville, Dec. 29 is one of the few inland

records (BW). Western Grebes were considered reduced in San Francisco Bay (BE) but a raft of 4000-4500 off McClures Beach, Marin Co. Feb. 26 (VR) is one of the largest concentrations ever reported for this region. Black-footed Albatrosses were reported from Monterey Bay all winter with a maximum of 9 Feb. 29 (AB, VR). The notable but not massive influx of Fulmars during the fall continued into the winter. A flock of 150 off Sonoma Co. Dec. 18 (TC, RLeV) and 131 in Monterey Bay Jan. 21 (AB) were the largest concentrations. By Mar. 27 only 4 were left in Monterey Bay (AB). Pink-footed Shearwaters, rare this far north in winter, were noted in Monterey Bay with 1 on Jan. 21, 5 on Feb. 29 and one on Mar. 27 (AB). The usual late March influx of Sooty Shearwaters in Monterey Bay was much larger than normal with 3000 present Mar. 30 (AB, VR). The Slender-billed Shearwater, once thought to be a regular visitor to our region, has proven to be extremely rare. The only record this winter was of a single bird in Monterey Bay Dec. 16 (VR). The latest regional record of Manx Shearwater was of one well described in Monterey Bay Dec. 16 (VR). No petrels were reported this winter.

PELICANS, CORMORANTS, HERONS, IBIS — White Pelican flocks were reported from various localities in the CV and around the San Francisco Bay Area as usual. Brown Pelicans had mostly left the Region during the last of December. Double-crested Cormorants were reported from a few inland locations, where at least one observer (ROW) considers their numbers declining in recent years. Nine Cattle Egrets were found in the Region this winter: 3 on Pt. Reyes Dec. 19 (TM), 1 near Newark, Alameda Co. Jan. 1 (DE, ST), 1 near Ferndale, Humboldt Co. (*vide* DA) and 4 in a field with sheep east of Watsonville, Santa Cruz Co. between at least Nov. 30-Dec. 16, a location where they have been seen for the last 4 years (*vide* VA). Up to 250 White-faced Ibis were seen at San Luis N.W.R. and Los Banos W.M.A. this winter (GS, ROW *et al.*).

WATERFOWL — Whistling Swan numbers in the CV were generally lower than usual because of the dry winter (BK), although observers at Los Banos (ROW) and San Luis (GS) found them to be more numerous there. At San Luis N.W.R. Nov. 30 there were three juvenile swans wearing the souvenir dark blue collars received at a banding party on the Seward Peninsula, Alaska, Aug. 25, 1971 (GS). The annual winter waterfowl survey, designed to indicate numbers of birds returning to breeding grounds from wintering areas in Calif. tallied 683,000 geese (11 per cent below last year), 4,749,000 ducks (26 per cent below last year's record, but 20 per cent above the 18-year average). As usual Pintail were the most numerous, with 2,711,000 counted. Other major species were: Mallard, 649,000; Am. Widgeon, 470,000; Shoveler, 485,000; Green-winged Teal, 214,000 (C.S.F.&G.). The largest Black Brant concentration was at the s. end of Humboldt Bay where 10,000 were estimated Mar. 31 (DA). Elsewhere 151 were at Limantour Estero Mar. 29 (DM) and 600 at Bodega Bay Mar. 24 (LWG). An imm. Brant was photographed at Moss Landing Dec. 11 (RS), one of the very few regional records. Blue Geese were near Sacramento, 1 ad. and 1 imm. on Dec. 26 (RS), and at Los Banos, 1 ad. on Jan. 22 (VR, SJ, PM).

Com. Teal have proven to be regular in winter around Humboldt Bay; this winter up to 3 ♂♂ and 1 hybrid were near the w. end of the Samoa Bridge Feb. 2-Mar. 30 (TM, DE, RS, eds.). Blue-winged Teal were reported from the regular places along the coast and in the CV in small numbers. A hybrid Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal was well described from Moss Landing Mar. 18 (VA). Six Eur. Widgeon were reported with the large Am. Widgeon flocks, about normal for a winter. Fewer than 50 Redheads were reported from the Region this winter; many observers consider this bird to be increasingly scarce here. The fourth California record of the **Tufted Duck** was a ♀ at Stow L., Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, found Feb. 15 (RLeV) and seen and photographed by many through at least Mar. 3.



Tufted Duck , Stow Lake, San Francisco. Photo/Stuart Johnson.

As many as 25 ♂ Barrow's Goldeneyes were reported from the Region; 6 ♂♂ and 4 ♀♀ at L. Merritt, Oakland, were the maximum at a single location. Six Oldsquaws were seen this winter with 1 still present at the Berkeley Pier at the end of the period (GH, RLeV, *et al.*). Up to 4 ♂♂ and ♀♀ Harlequin Ducks wintered at Ano Nuevo (AB, VR). Other reports were 2 ♂♂ and 1 ♀ at Crescent City Feb. 1 (TM, BW), and 2 ♂♂ and 1 ♀ at Pt. St. George Feb. 20 (Eds. *et al.*). The ♀ King Eider was present in Monterey Harbor until at least Mar. 11 (RS, AB, Eds.). White-winged Scoters were scarce in the Region this year while Com. Scoters were more numerous than usual north of San Francisco Bay. Among the Hooded Merganser reports was a pair at L. Merritt until the end of the period and an unusual concentration of 20 including 8 ♂♂ on L. Almanor Feb. 6 (DE). There were 11 other individuals scattered throughout the Region. A peak count of 700 Com. Mergansers at San Luis N.W.R. during the last week of Jan. is the largest number ever reported from the Region (GS).

RAPTORS — With the advent of the "Blue List" many observers have sent in records of raptors that would otherwise be forgotten. As a result numbers recorded in this Region are higher than ever before and these totals will be of minimal value until next year when comparable data can be gathered. Some idea of the distribution and relative abundance of some of our regular species can be had from Table II. Turkey Vultures were reported as common to abundant along the coast all winter with numbers increasing in the CV after the first of Mar. White-tailed Kites continue their

gradual increase in range and numbers, and can be expected just about anywhere in the region including redwood meadows and chaparral foothill locations. A **Harlan's Hawk** 15 mi. south of Chico between Dec. 15 and Feb. 10 (TM, RS, TC *et al.*) and a second bird west of Chico Dec. 31 (TM) provided two of the very few records of this difficult-to-identify form in our Region, although it is of somewhat regular occurrence just east of the Sierra divide in California. Swainson's Hawks arrived the earliest ever with a pair at San Luis N.W.R. Feb. 26 (GS, ROW *et al.*). On the coast, where they are rare, they were reported from Coyote Hills Regional Park Mar. 11 (RLeV, GH) and Moss Landing Mar. 24 (WmA). The Marsh Hawk, a Blue List species, was considered common throughout our Region by most observers.

TABLE II
Raptor Reports—Middle Pacific Coast Region—
Winter 1971-72

	Coastal	C. V.	Sierran
Goshawk	1	—	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	25	16	1
Cooper's Hawk	13	33	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	7	21	1
Rough-legged Hawk	2	16	—
Ferruginous Hawk	6	12	—
Golden Eagle	30	15	2
Bald Eagle	33	3	14
Osprey	14	—	—
Prairie Falcon	5	10	—
Peregrine Falcon	6	—	—
Pigeon Hawk	10	5	—
Totals:	152	131	21

GROUSE, CRANES, RAILS — On Mar. 5 single Ruffed Grouse were seen at both Prairie Creek Redwoods S. P. (MK) and 6 mi. east of Shelter Cove, Humboldt Co. (DE). This latter sighting is the southernmost record for the Region, and about 30 to 40 mi. south of other known populations. Two reports of Chukar were received: 2 at Coyote Hills Regional Park Jan. 2 (RS) and 1, 4 mi. north of Gridley, Butte Co. Jan 14 (TC, RS). Sandhill Cranes were last seen at Los Banos Mar. 14 (ROW). Two Virginia Rails and 14 Sora were estimated to have wintered at Crespi Pond, Monterey Co. (RS, AW) a large concentration for such a small pond. Com. Gallinules were very scarce this winter; only 4 were at Grey Lodge W.M.A. Jan. 29 (RLeV) and only 4 were at Los Banos W.M.A. Mar. 4 (TC). Both of these areas usually produce much higher numbers in good years. A single Com. Gallinule at Foothill Park, Palo Alto, Feb. 9 was considered to be at an unusual location (RB).

SHOREBIRDS — Shorebirds had a hard time finding moist earth in the CV this winter but most species followed normal distribution patterns in our region. Mountain Plovers were found near Davis through Feb. 1 (TM, RS), along Panoche Rd. Feb. 5 where 25+ were present (JG), and 76 along Sandy Marsh Rd.,

Merced Co Mar. 4 (TC). A flock of 25 Am. Golden Plovers of the race *fulva* again wintered in the Loleta Bottoms, Humboldt Co. (RLeV). Two more were at Pt. Reyes Mar. 27 (WMP). The only Lesser Yellowlegs reported were one at Volta W.M.A. Feb. 22 (ROW) and 2 at the Dumbarton Bridge Toll Plaza between Mar. 11-25 (GH, RLeV). Rock Sandpipers were found at the possibly regular places; Crescent City Feb. 20 (DE), Humboldt Bay jetties Jan. 8-Feb. 9 (DE, DA), Bodega Head Jan. 15-Feb. 5 (LCB, WMP), and Pt. Pinos, Mar. 11 (GMcC). Another Rock Sandpiper was well described from the unusual location of the rock jetty at Alameda Naval Air Station inside San Francisco Bay Jan. 2 (SB).

JAEGERS, GULLS, TERNS — Two or 3 Pomarine Jaegers wintered in Monterey Bay as is usual (AB, VR *et al.*). A single Parasitic Jaeger, rare in winter, was seen off the Sonoma Co. coast Dec. 18 (RLeV, TC). Glaucous Gulls were reported from the Arcata Dump, 1 between Dec. 6-27 (DE, DA); from the Pacheco Dump, Contra Costa Co. 2 on Dec. 26 (LF); from Moss Landing, 1 on Mar. 10 (AW); from the Palo Alto Dump, 1 between Mar. 12-15 (DDeS, TC). One Glaucous-winged Gull was with a few Herring Gulls at the s. end of L. Tahoe Dec. 20 (GMcC). Glaucous-winged gulls are rare away from the coast. An imm. **Franklin's Gull** along the Pacific Grove shoreline Dec. 29-30, the second winter record for the Region (AB, RS, Eds.), was not too surprising following last fall's influx. A large concentration of 2000+ Bonaparte's Gulls at the Dumbarton Bridge, South San Francisco Bay, Dec. 4 (TC) were probably late fall migrants. It was a poor year for Black-Legged Kittiwakes in the Region: the only reports away from Monterey Bay, where 89 on Feb. 29 (AB) was the maximum, were 1 off Sonoma Co. Dec. 18 (TC, RLeV) and one off Marin Co. Dec. 19 (TC, DDeS). A freshly dead **Common Tern**, found near Olema Marsh, Marin Co. Dec. 19, is this Region's latest fall record. (Jon Winter).

ALCIDS — Ancient Murrelet numbers were the best in 6 years at Monterey with a maximum of 86 on Jan. 21 (AB). Elsewhere 20+ were seen throughout January and February off San Francisco (P.R.B.O.) and 28 were off Marin Co. Dec. 19 (TC, DDeS). Cassin's Auklets were unusually numerous in Monterey Bay this winter, 473 were there Feb. 10 (AB) and 400 were counted Feb. 27 (RS). Three were also seen off Bodega Head Feb. 5 (LWG). The only Tufted Puffin reported was one in winter plumage Mar. 27 off Pt. Pinos (RS).

PIGEONS THROUGH OWLS — The future of the scanty Roadrunner population of our Region looks bleak; there were 5 winter reports in 1970, 2 in 1971 and none this winter. The Barn Owl, a Blue List species, continues to be common throughout the CV; however, local decreases have been noted at Pt. Reyes (MR), Berkeley (VR), and Lafayette (LF), mostly due to persecution by human beings. The Burrowing Owl, another Blue List species, continues to maintain its numbers "as long as it can stay ahead of the bulldozer" (LF). Habitat destruction is this bird's chief enemy. Reports of Pygmy and Saw-whet Owls continue to increase in our Region, presumably due to better cover-

age. However, reports of Screech Owls are decreasing and the possibility of the Saw-whet replacing the Screech in coastal areas should be considered. Besides the usual Marin Co. locations, Spotted Owls were found at China Camp, Monterey Co. where at least 5 were heard Feb. 12 (RS, AW, *et al.*). Long-eared Owls, photographed in Alamo, Contra Costa Co. Jan 10 (*vide* VH), 5 found roosting at Grey Lodge WMA, Butte Co. Jan. 16 (J&SL) and at least 2 in Putah Canyon, Yolo Co. Jan.-Feb. (DAG) were more than normal for a winter. It was a poor winter, however, for Short-eared Owls, especially in the CV where only 2 were seen (TM, J&SL).

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Four reports of wintering *Selasphorus sp.* hummingbirds are about normal for a winter; however, 1 from Arcata Dec. 7 (DE) and 1 from Eureka throughout the winter (*vide* DA) were very far north. An imm. *Selasphorus sp.*, first found Feb. 20 at Sacramento, was watched and photographed daily while molting into an adult ♂ Rufous; it remained until Apr. 4 (B&RL). The first ♂ Allen's Hummingbird was recorded at Felton, Santa Cruz Co., Jan. 21 (BE) only 3 days earlier than last year's first. However, the majority of ♂♂ arrived Feb. 1-15 and by late Feb. they were generally abundant rather than by mid-Mar. as the case last year. While the earliest ♂ Rufous was Feb. 7 at Eureka (*vide* DA), the same date as last year's first, most ♂ arrived in late Feb. and many were on territory in their breeding range in Del Norte Co. by Feb. 20 (Eds.), again somewhat early. While often reported from the coast, they were scarce in the CV, the opposite of the case last spring.

At least 15 "pure" and numerous hybrid Yellow-shafted Flickers were reported this winter; this now is normal for our Region. Pileated Woodpeckers continue to spread at the southern limit of their coastal range as evidenced by sightings at 3 new localities in Napa, Sonoma and Marin Cos. (BDP). Continued evidence of Acorn Woodpecker displacement due to Starlings are the following counts in the Arroyo Mocho, south of Livermore, Alameda Co.: 34-2/8/70; 26-5/9/71; 8-1/29/72 and only 1-3/11/72 (VR). Lewis' Woodpeckers were common and widespread in foothills around the CV but in somewhat smaller numbers than last winter; however 8 on the Monterey Pen. Dec. 29 (RBr) represent a minor coastal invasion. A Williamson's Sapsucker, photographed in East Oakland Mar. 17 & 20 (J&SL) represents one of the few coastal records for the Region. Two Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers at Bridalveil Creek, Yosemite Mar. 5 (RLeV) indicates the resident nature of this species.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Three Tropical Kingbirds wintered on the Monterey Pen. until at least Mar. 12. Two were seen together at El Estero, Monterey Co. Feb. 29 and 1 frequented Pt. Pinos (RS *et al.*). A Western Flycatcher was well described from the U.C. Botanical Gardens, Berkeley, Jan. 2-3 (AP), the same spot where 1 wintered last year. Eight Barn Swallows flying together toward the Oakland robin roost on the evening of Dec. 31 astonished the observers (DE,ST) and represent the first winter record in the Region. The cold December probably accounted for the relatively small numbers of Tree and

Violet-green Swallows wintering in the Region. Nevertheless Violet-greens outnumbered Trees 28:8 on the Pt. Reyes CBC; this is further evidence that Violet-greens are increasing in winter in proportion to Tree Swallows. Very small numbers of both species began appearing as probable migrants in late January and early February but good numbers did not occur until about Feb. 12-14. This is normal for Violet-green but late for the Tree and possibly reflects the number of wintering birds in the northern part of their ranges. A very early Bank Swallow was at Hoskins Slough near Watsonville, Santa Cruz Co. Mar. 4 (BE). The earliest Rough-wings were 2 at Lafayette Reservoir Feb. 26 (*vide* WMP) while the earliest Barn was 1 near Thorton, San Joaquin Co. Feb. 22 (WMP). The main arrival of these two species along with peak numbers of Trees and Violet-greens occurred along the coast Mar. 4-13, a week or so earlier than last year. It has become apparent that Cliff Swallows arrive nearly a month earlier in the CV than on the coast. A single at Volta W.M.A., Merced Co. Feb. 11 (ROW) was the first for the CV where the main influx occurred Feb. 25-Mar. 12. Five high over Stanford Feb. 27 (DDeS) were the first on the coast where good numbers did not occur until after Mar. 20.

CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS — Gray Jays continued to be conspicuous in Humboldt Co. with many sightings at Prairie Creek Redwoods (MK), near Trinidad (*vide* DA) and at Russ Park, Ferndale (DA). Ten Black-billed Magpies at Grass L. near Weed, Siskiyou Co. Feb. 21 (LCB) and 15-20 at the s. end of L. Tahoe in Dec. (DE, GMcC) were at the western limit of their ranges in California. Com. Crows are becoming more common in the grasslands near Los Banos: 15 sightings this winter contrasting with only 22 sightings over the 3-year period 1963-66 (ROW). Chestnut-backed Chickadees continue to spread along the w. slope of the Sierra: 3+ were at Mirror L., Yosemite Valley, Jan. 22 (J&SL), singles were at 2 localities at 3800 ft. near Sterling City, Butte Co. Feb. 27 (BW), they were fairly common along the Yuba R. near N. Bloomfield, Nevada Co., Mar. 20 and were found at 4900 ft. near Sierra City, Sierra Co. Mar. 22 (DAG). An increase in White-breasted Nuthatches was reported by many observers both near the coast and around the CV. As in other winters, a few Dippers were reported from the now-usual lowland streams in the Coast Range from Prairie Creek (MK) to Alum Rock Park, San Jose (*vide* VH) and in the foothills of the Sierra. The only report of a wintering House Wren was 1 near Thorton, San Joaquin Co. Feb. 22 (WMP). A Winter Wren Jan. 22 at Mirror L., Yosemite, (J&SL) was the only one reported from the Sierra where they are uncommon and local. The Bewick's Wren certainly does not deserve Blue List status in our Region. A winter density of 170/100 acres in a riparian area at Searsville L., Stanford, (DDeS) is probably normal for much of this Region's chaparral, riparian and oak woodland areas. Rock Wrens were poorly reported from the interior but 1 in the Santa Cruz Mts. San Mateo Co. Dec. 20 (*vide* DDeS) and 1 at Tilden Park, Berkeley Jan. 9-17 (*vide* VH) were in new coastal locations.

MIMIDS THROUGH SHRIKES — A Mockingbird at 2800 ft. at Whitmore, Shasta Co. in late Dec.

(BK1), another at Arcata Jan. 30 (DA), and a California Thrasher singing at Shelter Cove, Humboldt Co., Mar. 5 (DE, DA) were north of their normal ranges. The W. Bluebird, a Blue List species, seems to have held its own or even increased slightly in most areas of the Region this winter. Observers, however, in the Sierra foothills east of Sacramento (B&RL) and Stockton (DMS) continued to report declines. Mountain Bluebirds, another Blue List species, were reported in average numbers. There were no coastal reports this winter. A Townsend's Solitaire Jan. 29 at the Sutter Buttes, Sutter Co. (DDeS) was the only lowland report. It was the best winter ever for N. Shrikes: 2 were at the s. end of L. Tahoe Dec. 20 (GMcC); 3 in the CV included an imm. at Los Banos Mar. 10-11 (JD Brandt, DDeS), the southernmost ever for the CV; and 8 along the coast included an imm. at Monterey, Dec. 29 (CBC), the southernmost record for our Region. A 25 per cent reduction in Loggerhead Shrikes, a Blue List species, occurred on 7 coastal CBCs between Pt. Reyes and Monterey despite increased coverage. The drop was most severe on Pt. Reyes (VR). Only 2 were seen in the Humboldt Bay area where they are normally uncommon in winter (DA, DE). Numbers in the CV, however, remained normal.

WOOD WARBLERS — While the total number of "yellow-rumped" Warblers was probably down this winter, the proportion of Myrtles to Audubon's reached the highest level yet along the immediate coast. Many observers on the coast reported difficulty in finding any Audubon's in the flocks of Myrtles, even as far south as Monterey. The proportion of Myrtle: Audubon at Jasper Ridge, Stanford, over the past 3 years has been: 1970-95:19; 1971-156:11; 1972-32:0 (*vide* DDeS). As one moves inland the proportion of Audubon's increases greatly, but even in Lafayette they were outnumbered by Myrtles (LF). A combination of a good winter for Myrtles and a bad one for Audubon's apparently made this year's ratio even more severe.

A number of unusual warblers were found in the Region this winter. Four Black-and-white Warblers were reported, the most ever in a single winter: Dec. 8, at a feeder in San Rafael (WD), Dec. 19 Olema Marsh (RS *et al.*), where 1 has wintered for 3 of the last 4 years, Feb. 2 Monterey Pen. College (RS) and Mar. 5 Dry Lagoon State Park, Humboldt Co. (*vide* DA) only the third county record. A Nashville Warbler was at Asilomar, Pacific Grove, Feb. 10 (RS) and at least 2 different individuals were in the Humboldt Bay area Nov. 30-Feb. 13 (*vide* DA). This is also a record for a single winter. Perhaps the most amazing report of the winter was a **Lucy's Warbler**, well described from San Francisco, Mar. 10 (MA), the first winter record for the Region. A **Yellow Warbler** was present near Bodega Bay Dec. 18 (TM), only the fourth winter record for the Region. Interestingly, all of these records are in late Dec. and either represent late migrants or individuals unsuccessfully attempting to winter.

Only 2 Black-throated Gray Warblers were found this winter: 1 on Inverness Ridge, Marin Co. Dec. 19 (Pt. Reyes CBC) and 1 at Pt. Pinos Dec. 30-Mar. 1 (AB, RS *et al.*). Three Hermit Warblers on the Pt. Reyes CBC and 6 more on the Monterey CBC indicate a good winter for this rare-but-regular winter resident.

The Palm Warbler found at Ferndale in late Nov. remained only until Dec. 2 (DA); another individual wintered at Pt. Pinos from Dec. 11 to at least Feb. 12 (RS *et al.*). The only wintering Wilson's Warblers were in average or slightly better numbers along the coast, but most interesting was a report of at least 5 Townsend's Warblers at 3680 ft. near Sterling City, Butte Co. Feb. 27 (BW), the first winter record for the Sierra. Another Mar. 23, at Whitmore, 2800 ft., Shasta Co. (BK1) could have been a wintering bird or a migrant since this is the time that numbers begin dropping along the coast. Only 5 reports of Yellowthroats from the many apparently ideal marshes of the CV indicate the inexplicable scarcity of this bird there in recent years.

ICTERIDS, TANAGERS — In marked contrast to last winter, Yellow-headed Blackbirds were very scarce in the CV. Three Hooded Orioles were found this winter: a ♂ all winter at Yuba City, Sutter Co., may not have survived a late Jan. cold spell were it not for a special diet provided for it (PH); other ♂ ♂ were at Santa Cruz Feb. 1 (*vide* VA) and Oroville, Butte Co. Feb. 25 (*vide* BW). A wing and tail of a probable imm. Baltimore Oriole was picked up in Ferndale Feb. 21 (DA) and sent to California Academy of Sciences. Four large flocks of Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported from the CV during the winter; two of them each contained over 1000 birds (RS-BK). A ♂ W. Tanager was present at Pacifica, San Mateo Co. Dec. 3 (DMcR); another ♂ remained in Pacific Grove Jan. 8-Mar. 11 (*vide* AB). The ♀ Summer Tanager in Pacific Grove remained through the entire winter (*vide* AB). This bird was erroneously reported as a ♂ in AB 26:117 and AB 25:798 and is apparently the same bird first reported last winter in AB 25:625. Another Summer Tanager, this one showing some red, was in Golden Gate Park Dec. 15 (*vide* VH).

FINCHES — A ♂ **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, the fifth winter record for the Region, was in Pacifica Dec. 23-31 (DMcR). The only Evening Grosbeak report of the winter was 1 at Olema Marsh Dec. 19 (RS). It was the best winter ever for Lawrence's Goldfinches: 35+ were near Montecello Dam, Napa Co. Dec. 4 (RS) and at least 60 others were at 7 different locations in the central part of the Region. The 1 or 2 **Lark Buntings** found at Sutter Buttes in Nov. remained until at least Feb. 10 (DAG, TM *et al.*). Another single was found near Winters, Yolo Co. Dec. 27 (RLeV). These are the first winter records for the Region. The **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** wintering for the second straight year at the e. end of the Dumbarton Bridge, Alameda Co. was present until at least Jan. 1. A Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Dec. 31, at Upper Bidwell Park, Chico, (TM) is probably the northernmost record for this species. Slate-colored Juncos, like Oregon Juncos, were less common this year than last: only 25 were reported this year, 48 per cent of which were from the CV and Sierra as compared to 61 or 36 per cent from the interior last year. A **Gray-headed Junco**, only the seventh record for the Region, was found near Davis Jan. 26 (DAG). Five Chipping Sparrows from the CV and none from the coast are probably normal for this very rare winter bird in our Region. As perhaps expected from last fall's data, a record number of 8 Harris' Sparrows was reported this winter, 3 from the CV and 5 from near the

coast. Similarly, a staggering number of White-throated-Sparrow reports was received totaling no fewer than 59 individuals, 15 per cent from the CV. This is nearly twice last year's record-breaking number. Seven Swamp Sparrows during the winter at Olema Marsh (RS *et al.*), 1 at Inverness (LCB *et al.*), 1 at Coyote Hills Park Jan. 1 (RS) and 1 at Spreckles Pond near Salinas Jan. 22 (*fide* VA) were more than usual for a winter.

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