

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Dave DeSante, David A. Gaines and
Van Remsen

"Very cold and very wet" effectively summarizes this Region's weather during the past winter season. December started out cold and a prolonged freezing spell December 8-14, perhaps the longest continuous cold spell that this Region has experienced in fifty years, devastated trees, shrubs and crops both in the Central Valley (below, C.V.) and along the coast. Extensive stands of mature introduced eucalyptus trees in the East Bay were killed, bringing speculations of a massive fire danger for the coming summer and fall. "Chains Required" signs in the Bay Area made front page photographs. Temperatures increased somewhat in late December but generally remained below average during the remainder of the period. A very wet November foreshadowed one of the wettest winters on record. By late March most areas had received nearly double their normal rainfall. Despite the cold, wet winter, or, perhaps, because of it, numbers of our normal wintering landbirds were generally thought to be better than average. However, most of the birds concentrated in lowland and heavily planted residential areas, leaving the higher and more remote areas of the Region comparatively birdless.



INVASION OF MONTANE AND NORTHERN SPECIES—The fall influx left an outstanding variety of montane and northern species wintering in our Region. Band-tailed Pigeons invaded the Sacramento Valley in unprecedented numbers: at least 5000 along a 12-mile stretch of the Sacramento R. north of Sacramento Feb. 21 (RS, GM), flocks of 1000 or more in the oak grasslands east of Sacramento (BK, RS, DAG, MA *et al.*) and similar numbers in the Chico area, where hundreds foraged in orchards and even plowed fields (TM, DAG). Numbers decreased in March (RS), but many remained at the end of the

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period; Band-taileds are normally rare in the C.V. By contrast, the Angwin, Napa Co., C B C in the inner coast range recorded only 16 Band-tailed Pigeons as compared to an average 500 on the previous three counts (*vide* DR); the paucity of acorns may have forced these birds into the lowlands. Lewis's Woodpeckers were exceptionally common and widespread in the hills around the C.V., but their numbers were down near Angwin and Pope Valley, Napa Co. (DR, JG). About 75 Lewis' were counted along a one-mile stretch of Highway 132 east of Modesto, Stanislaus Co., Mar. 25 (MM). Eight in the Palo Alto area throughout the period (*vide* DDeS) were the only sightings from the San Francisco Bay region. A ♂ Williamson's Sapsucker remained in Lafayette Feb. 21-Mar. 8; a color slide is on file (RE, LF, WP *et al.*). A Hair Woodpecker in Mountain View Cemetery, Oakland, Feb. 13, with almost entirely black wings, may have been the northwestern *harrisi* subspecies (JM).

The fall downhill movement of Steller's Jays left a number of small bands wintering on the floor of the C.V. near Chico (TM) and east of Sacramento (*vide* BKi). The Black-billed Magpie near Arcata remained until Jan. 30 (DE). Clark's Nutcrackers were observed at two C.V. localities: Woodland, Yolo Co. (*vide* DAG) and Fresno (KH). Two near Felton, Santa Cruz Co., Dec. 22 (BE), one in San Francisco Jan. 11 (JVM) and one near China Camp, Monterey Co., Feb. 22 (MeA) were probably remnants of the fall coastal invasion. Another montane species, the Mountain Chickadee, appeared at four C.V. locations and another was near Requa, Humboldt Co., Jan. 13 (RLeV). Red-breasted Nuthatches could be found in C.V. parks and yards, but were not as common as some years; by contrast, however, none had been reported in the C.V. during the past two winters. Compared to 1969-70, the last "invasion" year, nuthatch numbers were low, i.e., "ten times fewer in coastal Humboldt Co." (DA) and none at all in the Livermore and Napa Valley Regions. Varied Thrush populations boomed. "Largest populations in six winters at Pt. Reyes" (MLR) and "largest invasion in eight winters in Chico" (LT) were typical comments from coastal and inland localities. On five coastal C B Cs, the cumulative number of Varied Thrushes exceeded by nearly twice that on the four previous counts combined and the usual ratio of one Varied Thrush to every 25 Am. Robins was up to one to every four Am. Robins this season. Townsend's Solitaires appeared at Davis Jan. 5 (PB, DAG), Angwin, Napa Co., Feb. 28 (WT) and near Monticello Dam, Yolo Co., Mar. 18 (PB). Golden-crowned Kinglets were numerous at times in the C.V., but decreased in numbers during January and February. "Good numbers" wintered in the Mammoth area, Mono Co., where none were observed last winter (JMF). Cedar Waxwings were somewhat scarcer than usual. A group of 27 Bohemian Waxwings were observed northeast of Weed, Shasta Co., Dec. 23 (RS) and six were in the same area Jan. 1 (SB); two were in Springville, Tulare Co., Jan. 2 (MEM, RB).

Following last fall's excellent flight, good numbers of winter finches were found throughout the Region. As expected, Evening Grosbeaks were the most promi-

nent with reports being received from all locations in the Region including 355 counted on 19 C B Cs. The center of abundance of this invasion seemed to lie in the Sacramento Valley, where the species was common, and in the Bay Area. Peak numbers occurred between late December and mid-February after which time a gradual exodus was under way. However, some were still present at the end of the period. The largest single flocks included 60 at Berkeley Feb. 3 (WK), 250 in Piedmont, Alameda Co., Dec. 27 (ST) and 300+ near Scott's Valley, Santa Cruz Co., Feb. 14 (RS). Purple Finches were also very widespread and in excellent numbers throughout the Region. The major influx occurred in early or mid-January and lasted through February during which time they often outnumbered House Finches at Bay Area and C.V. feeders. Single flocks of 100 at Capitola, Santa Cruz Co., (WB) and 300 near Lafayette (LF) were certainly up to invasion standards. Numbers dropped steadily during March. Cassin's Finches, a very rare species in our Region west of the Sierra, were also involved in this winter's invasion. Records from the C.V. included 12 at Fresno (RH, KH), four at Davis Jan. 10 (DAG) and one at Sacramento Feb. 27-Mar. 3 (*vide* BK). Along the coast, singles were identified at Santa Cruz Dec. 8 (*vide* VA), Berkeley Dec. 12-17 (VR), Pope Valley, Napa Co., Jan. 14 (LW & AG) and Tilden Park, Contra Costa Co., Mar. 31 (ST).

A number of Pine Grosbeaks were found in Lassen Co. north of their resident California range and possibly represent individuals of some unknown northern race. If so, these could be considered the first occurrences of non-California breeding Pine Grosbeaks in the state. Records include singles at Janesville Dec. 19 (AW) and Fredonyer Pass, Jan. 29 (TM, J. Conry) and ten in Lassen Park Mar. 27 (VR, P. Myers). Both Pine Siskin and Am. Goldfinch numbers were better than the past two winters, especially in the C.V., but neither species was up to invasion standards. Similarly, Red Crossbills were widely distributed but in relatively small numbers.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS—A Yellow-billed Loon was on Humboldt Bay Feb. 18-Mar. 7 (RLeV, DE, TS *et al.*) and one was photographed at Berkeley Jan. 26 (C. Maynard, *vide* VR). One Arctic and two Red-throated Loons were on L. Shasta Dec. 23 (TM); both species are very rare inland. Another inland rarity, the Red-necked Grebe, was photographed on an American R. hatchery pond, Sacramento Co., Mar. 28-31 (RGi). The W. Grebe may be in trouble. Eleven coastal C B Cs which recorded 3179 birds this winter had produced 3747 birds last winter and 12,506 in 1970-71. The reverse trend has occurred inland: eleven counts found 340 birds this winter, 126 in 1971-72 and 36 in 1970-71. Northern Fulmars were very scarce this winter, with the maximum count 30 off Humboldt Co., Dec. 5 (DE, TS). Several consecutive days of high winds in March will usually bring Fork-tailed Petrels to Monterey Harbor, as happened this year, when two were found Mar. 13 (AW). White Pelicans wintered in normal numbers, with 900 until late January in s. San Francisco Bay (BE, D.F.G.) and at least 500 in the San Joaquin R. area of Merced Co. (CM, VR).

A bird which was almost certainly a hybrid Little Blue Heron X Snowy Egret wintered at Palo Alto (TC, RS *et al.*); since single ad. Little Blue Herons have been observed in the Bay Area intermittently in the past few years, the possibility of local production is suggested. Seven Cattle Egrets were found at five coastal locations and singles were seen at two spots in the C.V. A Black-crowned Night Heron nest with half-grown nestlings was found at L. Merritt, Alameda Co., Jan. 5 (BE).

WATERFOWL—The abnormal abundance of standing water produced by the heavy rains scattered the waterfowl in the C.V., resulting in hunter takes that were lower than last winter at every refuge. Whistling Swans, geese and dabbling ducks were much more common than usual near the coast. Diving ducks, however, were scarce everywhere; the heavy rains muddied many of the reservoirs and estuaries, and this may have been the cause. A fantastic migratory concentration of 33,000 Black Brant was on Humboldt Bay in late March (D. Henry, *vide* RLeV). An ad. Emperor Goose Dec. 30 at Humboldt Bay (RS) was a remnant of last fall's "invasion" (four records). Thirteen ad. Blue phase Snow Geese were reported from inland areas, which is more than normal. Seven white phase Snow Geese were six coastal locations Dec. 30-Jan. 15, and single Ross' Geese, very unusual away from the C.V., were at Ano Nuevo Jan. 6-22 (MeA, VR, photos) and Livermore Jan. 13-Mar. 31 (GB, AE). As usual, several Green-winged Teal (Eurasian subspecies) were at Arcata, Humboldt Co., Jan. 6-Feb. 25 (DE, TS, RS *et al.*); singles were also discovered Mar. 26 at Honey L. (RS) and Bieber (KK *et al.*), both Lassen Co. These are the first inland records for n. California. Six coastal and seven inland Eur. Wigeon were reported. An attempt by the Region's contributors to quantify sex ratios in Redheads and Ring-necked Ducks yielded a nearly 50:50 ratio for the Redhead, but for the Ring-necked Duck, the ratio was biased toward males near the coast (591:342) but toward females in the C.V. (218:317). Six Oldsquaws were reported from Humboldt Co. to San Francisco Bay. A ♀ King Eider appeared in Monterey Harbor Mar. 21 (MeA, RS, *et al.*), possibly the same bird that has been found there every winter since 1969-70. Hooded Mergansers were much more common and widespread than usual. Red-breasted Mergansers, very rare inland, were found at four interior locations: singles at Tule L. Feb. 18 (RS, DDeS), L. Almanor, Plumas Co., Mar. 27 (RS), and L. Mendocino near Ukiah Mar. 31 (PM) and two at Folsom L. Jan. 1-14 (RS, DAG *et al.*); all birds were males.

RAPTORS—Increased raptor reporting resulted in totals doubling or tripling last winter's numbers for every species. To determine whether or not this represented true increases, C B C data from the last two years was analyzed; the results (Table 1) show that most raptors were actually down. A Goshawk was shot by a rancher near Angwin (*vide* WT) for one of our few records away from the Sierras. Six well-described "Harlan's" Hawks were reported: Gray Lodge Refuge, Butte Co., Jan. 6 (TM, RS, DW); Wil-

Table 1
Comparison of 1971 and 1972 Northern California
Christmas Bird Count Data on Raptors

Species and Location	Number Observed		Per Cent Change
	Per Ten Party Hours	1971 1972	
Sharp-shinned Hawk			
Outer Coast	.78	.44	-44%
Inner Coast	.44	.33	-25%
C. V. and Foothills	.50	.45	-10%
Cooper's Hawk			
Outer Coast	.56	.31	-45%
Inner Coast	.30	.34	+13%
C. V. and Foothills	.47	.53	+13%
Red-tailed Hawk			
Outer Coast	6.9	4.9	-29%
Inner Coast	3.8	5.2	+37%
C. V. and Foothills	9.4	7.9	-16%
Red-shouldered Hawk			
Outer Coast	.38	.29	-23%
Inner Coast	.86	.87	+01%
Rough-legged Hawk			
Outer Coast	.32	.14	-56%
Inner Coast	.11	.42	+281%
C. V. and Foothills	.23	.47	+104%
Ferruginous Hawk			
Entire Region	.15	.14	-07%
Golden Eagle			
Entire Region	.34	.28	-18%
Bald Eagle			
Entire Region	27 total	25 total	-07%
Am. Kestrel			
Outer Coast	6.7	4.8	-28%
Inner Coast	4.0	4.8	+20%
C. V. and Foothills	12.7	11.1	-13%
Merlin			
Outer Coast	6 total	15 total	
Inner Coast	3 total	7 total	
C. V. and Foothills	3 total	4 total	
Peregrine Falcon			
Outer Coast	9 total	6 total	
Inner Coast	0 total	0 total	
C. V.	1 total	3 total	

low Slough, Yolo Co., Jan. 14 (DAG); Nord, Butte Co., Feb. 18 (TM); Chico, Butte Co., Jan. 20-late Feb. (TM, RS *et al.*); Honey L. Dec. 19 (RG *et al.*);

and Lower Klamath Refuge Feb. 17 (J&SL, RS). A very early Swainson's Hawk was near Merced Ref. Feb. 25 (LB, RLeV, VR *et al.*). Wintering Ospreys were reported from five coastal localities; one on the Lewiston C B C, Trinity Co., Dec. 23 (DA) was far north and far inland. Prairie Falcons appeared at six coastal localities, including birds at Arcata Jan. 1 (DA) and Pt. Arena, Mendocino Co., Feb. 15-16 (RLeV, photos); this species is particularly rare on the north coast.

CRANES AND RAILS—Sandhill Cranes were in good numbers with a peak count of 5000 Feb. 28 at San Luis N.W.R. (CM). A combination of extremely high tides and flooding from heavy rains produced some amazing counts of Clapper Rails Jan. 17-19: 150 at Dumbarton Bridge (BMCL, AP) and 73 at Palo Alto Baylands (P. Kelley). Decreases in this species were reported at Alameda (JM) and Emeryville (MLR). The Black Rail found last fall at the Dumbarton Bridge was seen Dec. 17-19 (RLeV, TS *et al.*). Common Gallinules were reported from more than the usual number of coastal localities (nine).

SHOREBIRDS—A Black Oystercatcher was on Treasure I., S.F. Bay, Dec. 19 (RS); this species is extremely rare away from rocky outer coast. Snowy Plover showed large decreases on this year's C B C totals from last year on eight of nine coastal counts. Killdeer staged massive influxes into coastal areas such as Humboldt, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Cos. during the freezes of early December; they clustered on city lawns and huddled around sewer drains for warmth. Wintering Am. Golden Plover were much more widespread than usual; besides the usual birds in the Loleta Bottoms, Humboldt Co., two were at Dillon Beach Jan. 20 (MLR, JM), three at Pt. Reyes Jan. 23-27 (MLR, BF, JM *et al.*), one near Pescadero, San Mateo Co., Dec. 30 (PM), and one at the Pajaro R. Feb. 8 (J&RW). The birds at Loleta Bottoms increased from nine Dec. 31 to 39 on Mar. 5 (RLeV). The abundance of standing water along the coast resulted in an increase in Com. Snipe numbers; exemplifying this increase was a concentration of 190 birds at one small pond east of Bodega Bay Jan. 28 (LB). Single Wandering Tattlers, very rare inside S.F. Bay, where at Berkeley Dec. 9-17 (LB, VR) and at Dumbarton Bridge Jan. 20 (GB). Ten wintering Lesser Yellowlegs were tallied on the Hayward C B C Dec. 17 (*fide* JL), one on the Oakland C B C Dec. 17 (*fide* AP), and two at Joice Is., Solano Co., Feb. 9 (JM, GZ). An amazing number of Red Knots wintered near Oakland: 578 were counted on the Oakland C B C, including 470 in one flock at Albany (LB, VR). Red Knots are seldom that common, even in migration. As many as six Rock Sandpipers wintered at the usual location on Bodega Head Dec. 20-Mar. 11 (WP, LB, J&SL *et al.*) and one was at Pacific Grove Dec. 28-Mar. 10 (W. Reese, GMCC *et al.*). Red Phalaropes occurred at nearly every coastal locality from mid-December to early January. Monterey recorded an amazing 1199 on the C B C Dec. 28; the last bird was one in Monterey Co. Jan. 27 (RS).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS—As usual, a few wintering Pomarine Jaegers and no Parasitics were reported. At least two Glaucous Gulls were found at Arcata until Mar. 21 (DA, DE, RLeV, RS *et al.*). Singles were at Pacific Grove Dec. 28 (AW, TS), Dillon Beach Jan. 20 (MLR, JM), and Pescadero Creek, San Mateo Co., Mar. 17 (TC, BY). As usual, all were either first or second year immatures. Herring Gulls were exceptionally common in the C.V., often outnumbering the normally more common Ring-billed and Californias; there was a major influx into the Sacramento area Jan. 10-14, when 1000+ were seen (RS *et al.*). An imm. **Franklin's Gull** was at Arcata Feb. 10-Mar. 29 (DS, DE *et al.*) for the Region's third winter record. Black-legged Kittiwakes were very scarce along the coast, with only one to three birds found at any given spot; even off-shore the highest counts were only 35 off Humboldt Mar. 31 (RLeV, TS) and 30 off San Francisco Feb. 17 (VDAc). An ad. well-described from Woodland, Yolo Co., Dec. 2 (B&RL) was the first record for the C.V.

Two Com. Murres were found at Berkeley early Dec.-Jan. 12 (J&SL, LB *et al.*) and one was recorded on the Hayward C B C Dec. 17 (*fide* JL); This species is unusual far inside S.F. Bay. At least one **Thick-billed Murre** was seen at Monterey late Dec.-Jan. 26 (R. Webster, RS, J&SL). Marbled Murrelets, as usual almost always paired, were noted at four coastal localities.

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS—Five **Spotted Doves** remained in Fresno throughout the winter, the first record for the Region (RH); the species had been previously unreported north of Bakersfield. Roadrunners were observed on the Monterey C B C Dec. 28, at Mercy Hot Springs, Fresno Co., Feb. 4 (DDeS) and along Mines Road, Alameda Co., throughout the period. Saw-whet Owls were recorded from eleven coastal and inner coast localities between Humboldt and Santa Cruz Cos.; three reached the floor of the C.V. Pygmy Owls were frequently encountered in coastal forests and in the transition zone of the Sierras. A pair observed copulating near the arid eastern edge of the inner coast range, Yolo Co., was east of the species' known breeding range (PB). Roosts of Long-eared Owls were found at Honey Lake (TM) and at two C.V. locations. An additional Long-eared was at Bolinas Lagoon Jan. 13 (LB). An unusually large influx of Short-eared Owls seemed to peak in C.V. and Great Basin localities in December and January with high counts of 52 on the Lower Klamath Refuge Dec. 10 (TM) and 60 near Davis until the end of January (DAG); many were killed on highways in the C.V. (TM). Only two were observed in the C.V. last winter. Above average numbers of Short-eareds also wintered in the Bay Area. Despite the cold weather, Poor-wills were reported from the w. Sonoma C B C Dec. 30, Tomales Bay State Park Jan. 6 (JM, GZ), near Oroville Feb. 19 (GN) and near Jenner, Sonoma Co., Feb. 21 (RLeV).

Five **Vaux's Swifts** were at Waddell Creek, Santa Cruz Co., Dec. 9 (BY, TC), only the fifth winter record for the Region. Many observers reported dramatic increases in feeder hummingbird populations during

the December freeze. About 30 Anna's Hummingbirds, for instance, utilized a feeder in Berkeley during December, at which time they were absent from the nearby hills; many, however, turned up stunned or dead in suburban yards (VR). Anna's wintered at feeders in several Sierra foothill communities and one remained in Weaverville, Shasta Co., while the temperature dipped to -5°F . (SB). This species has increased in our region in winter owing to ornamental plantings and feeders which provide food during the quiescent period of our native plants. An imm. ♂ Rufous Hummingbird, an imm. ♂ Allen's Hummingbird and an unidentified *Selasphorus* hummingbird wintered at a feeder in Berkeley (VR). Rufous Hummingbirds appeared in Pacific Grove Jan. 21 (RS, GM, ST, DDeS); the first C.V. sighting came Feb. 1 (*vide* BKi). This is one to two weeks earlier than the past two years. Allen's Hummingbirds arrived in late January as is usual, but were not abundant until March.

At least 25 "pure" Yellow-shafted and numerous "hybrid" Com. Flickers were reported this winter, a new high. A Pileated Woodpecker was seen in oak woodland, an atypical habitat, near L. Mendocino, Mendocino Co., Mar. 31. A Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker at Perego Meadows Dec. 23 indicates the species is resident there at all seasons (JL).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WRENS—A Tropical Kingbird appeared near Santa Rosa Dec. 23 (LW, AG). A Western Flycatcher returned for the third consecutive winter to the U.C. Botanical Gardens, Berkeley, but vanished when its favorite tree was felled Dec. 17 (AP). Another *Empidonax*, thought to be a Hammond's or a Least (definitely not Traill's, Gray or Western) remained along the San Joaquin R., Fresno Co., Nov. 25-Dec. 3 (RH, Alan Craig). The prolonged December freeze probably accounts for relatively low populations of Tree and Violet-green Swallows this winter. Numbers of Trees nearly equaled Violet-greens on C B Cs and in observer reports, reversing the trend of the past two winters. A Violet-green Swallow in Arcata, Humboldt Co., Dec. 8-12, was extremely far north (TS, RLeV, DE *et al.*). About 20 Bank Swallows arrived at the mouth of the Pajaro R., Santa Cruz Co., Mar. 22 (J&RW) and four were at Coyote Hills Park, Mar. 29 (RS, GM). Rough-winged Swallows appeared at two San Joaquin Valley locations Feb. 24 and were first observed in a coastal area Mar. 7. Similarly the Barn Swallow appeared inland Feb. 18 but did not reach the coast until Mar. 4. Three extremely early groups of Cliff Swallows were observed at widely separated points in the C.V. Feb. 3 & 4; two were also observed at Fremont Feb. 5, indicating an unprecedented early arrival throughout our Region. Good numbers occurred in the C.V. by late February, but in coastal areas only after mid-March as is usual. A Chestnut-backed Chickadee was in Mix Canyon, Solano Co., Dec. 17 (DAG) and five were there Jan. 1 (R&BL); one in Stockton Mar. 22 was the first report from the C.V. (*vide* DMS). A House Wren spent one of the "coldest, wettest winters on record" in Sacramento, north of its normal winter range (Anne Manolis, TM *et al.*). Five Winter Wrens were found in C.V. locations where they are very scarce.

MIMIDS THROUGH VIREOS—A Mockingbird was on the Mt. Shasta C B C Dec. 23, north of its present known range. A dead Gray Catbird, smashed as if it had arrived on the grill of a car and of unknown origin, astonished its discoverers near Los Banos Mar. 25 (J&SL). A Brown Thrasher returned for the second consecutive winter to a backyard in Fairfax, where it remained through the end of the period; there are no other winter records for the region (Morton Wilson; photograph on file). Another rare mimid, the Sage Thrasher, appeared near Woodland, Yolo Co., Mar. 18 (R&BL). Wintering flocks of Mountain Bluebirds seemed to concentrate in the San Joaquin Valley, where groups of 85 and 60 were observed in Madera Co. (RH), one of 60 in San Joaquin Co. (DMS) and 125 in the Panoche Valley (DDeS); scattered groups of up to six were present in the Sacramento Valley (DAG, BKi) and none at all were seen in coastal areas. It was another vintage winter for N. Shrikes with at least 20 sightings in the Tule-Honey Lake-Alturas region, six in the C.V., two at Grizzley I. Refuge (AP, GZ, JM, AM, WP) and one at Doran Park, Bodega Bay Dec. 26 (AM, WP). Loggerhead Shrike, a Blue List species, was unusually scarce in the Klamath basin Feb. 19 (LGO) and two at Cape Mendocino, Humboldt Co., were the only ones reported from the coastal region north of Mendocino Co., where they normally occur in small numbers. A Solitary Vireo was found dead in Arcata Dec. 16 (*vide* DE) and one was observed on the Hayward C B C Dec. 17; there are only four previous winter records for the Region.

Most of our uncommon wintering warblers were present in reduced numbers this winter, presumably a result of the very cold weather. Orange-crowned Warblers were generally scarce, and only one each of the Black-throated Gray and Hermit Warblers were reported. On the other hand, several very rare wintering species were present in record numbers including 4 Black-and-whites (1 from Humboldt Co.), 4 Nashvilles (all in Humboldt Co.), 7 Palms (3 from Humboldt Co.) and 1 Wilson's. Why so many of these birds winter in Humboldt Co. remains a mystery. A ♂ Yellow Warbler in San Francisco Mar. 6 (E. Peterson) probably successfully wintered. Two Townsend's Warblers were found in the C.V. where they are apparently very rare but regular winter residents. Only 10 Com. Yellowthroats reported from C.V. locations indicates the continued scarcity of this species there.

— S.A. —

WOOD WARBLERS—A coordinated effort was made by the Region's observers this winter to accurately determine the relative abundance of Myrtle and Audubon's races of Yellow-rumped Warblers. The general indication was that total numbers were low but slightly better than last year's very poor winter. Differences from last year were owing to slightly fewer Myrtles but somewhat more Audubon's being noted this winter. Data from C B Cs supply good evidence that the percentage of Myrtles decreases as one moves

inland from the coast (Table 2). However, the most interesting result of the winter observations was that an apparent difference in habitat preferences exists between Myrtle and Audubon's types. "Myrtle" Warblers basically prefer riparian growth, dense lowland oak woodland or residential areas and city parks grown to dense stands of mature deciduous trees. "Audubon's" Warblers, on the other hand, prefer more open oak woodland, chaparral, grassland and open or newly developed residential areas with scattered small trees and shrubs. These results are most interesting in view of the recent A.O.U. decision to consider the two forms as conspecific.

Table 2
Analysis of C B C data
on Audubon's and Myrtle-type
Yellow-rumped Warblers

	Total Yellow-rumped Warblers	Per cent Myrtle-type Warblers
Outer Coast	2089	4.2
Inner Coast	440	11.6
Inner Coast Range	625	3.8
Central Valley	2229	0.7
Sierra	11	0.0

ICTERIDS, TANAGERS—Most observers reported exceptional numbers of meadowlarks and blackbirds throughout the winter; perhaps the very cold weather forced a withdrawal from more northerly wintering areas. Three or four Yellow-headed Blackbirds in the Arcata bottoms and a Tricolored Blackbird in the Loleta bottoms, all Humboldt Co., were noteworthy since both species are very rare along the north coast of our Region, but 50 Tricoloreds, 3 mi. S. of Albion, Mendocino Co., in late January were exceptional (RD). A probable spring movement of both of these species occurred in the C.V. near Merced Feb. 25 when 500 ♂♂ Yellow-headed and 100-500 thousand (!) ♂♂ Tricoloreds were seen (VR, LB). None were found in this same area Feb. 4 (VR). A **Rusty Blackbird**, the seventh Regional record, was found near Prairie Creek, Humboldt Co., Dec. 3 (DE, TS, RWi). (Two were on S. Farallon last fall but only one was reported (AB 27:118). Good numbers of orioles and tanagers were reported this winter despite the cold weather. Records included 4 Hooded Orioles in the C.V., one Bullock's type of the Northern Oriole in the C.V. and 3 more near the coast, one Baltimore type in Monterey in late Dec. (fide W. Reese) and an amazing 9 W. Tanagers, 6 near the coast and 3 in interior areas.

FINCHES—Three **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were reported during the winter: Dec. 3 & 28 in Mill Valley, Marin Co.—possibly two birds (MaAS), Dec. 30-Jan. 1 on the Russian R., Sonoma Co., (JH *et al.*) and

Jan. 3-20 at a feeder in Soquel, Santa Cruz Co. (JMi). There were only 5 previous winter records for this species. The equally rare in winter **Black-headed Grosbeak** was also reported 3 times: Dec. 19-20 at a feeder in Auburn (MA), Dec. 28 in Monterey (C B C) and Jan. 31 at the same feeder in Soquel where the Rose-breasted had occurred earlier (JMi, RG). A Green-tailed Towhee was at Pt. Lobos Feb. 22 (FNe) for only the fourth coastal winter record in the Region.

A Grasshopper Sparrow, very rare in our Region in winter, was hit by a car near El Nido, Merced Co., Jan. 3 (spec. to M.V.Z.) (WK). The Sharp-tailed Sparrow wintered for the third consecutive year near the Dumbarton Bridge, Alameda Co. Vesper Sparrows were present in good numbers around the edges of the C.V. and 15 individuals were reported from coastal locations, a record high. Three Tree Sparrows were at Honey L., Dec. 20-21 (RLeV, DR, SB); coastal records included one at Inverness, Marin Co., Nov. 17-25 (G. Brady) and one at a feeder in Arcata Mar. 9-11 (DE *et al.*). Sixty-three Slate-colored Juncos reported on C B Cs and at least 55 others reported during the winter along with 25 White-throated Sparrows on C B Cs and 30 others during the winter are best left to speak for themselves. An amazing 15 Harris' Sparrows were reported this winter: 2 from the coast, 1 near Weaverville, Trinity Co. (SBo), 9 from the C.V. and 3 near Honey L. Five Swamp Sparrows included one in the Loleta Bottoms Dec. 31-Jan. 7 (FWi, RS *et al.*) and another in Requa, Del Norte Co., Jan. 13 (DE, RLeV *et al.*). Four "eastern" Fox Sparrows in the Region filled out a very good winter for our more uncommon winter sparrows. Up to 50 Lapland Longspurs wintered at Honey L.; 2 or 3 Chestnut-collareds were with them Mar. 3-4 (B&CY, TC). Two or 3 more Laplands were at Bay Farm I., Alameda Co., Dec. 17-Jan. 7 (S&KB, JL *et al.*). Apparently 4 different Snow Buntings were near Arcata Dec. 8-Jan. 5 (TS, DE, RS *et al.*) while a single at Bay Farm I. Dec. 2-Jan. 11 (JM, J&SL *et al.*) represents the southernmost record for the Region.

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