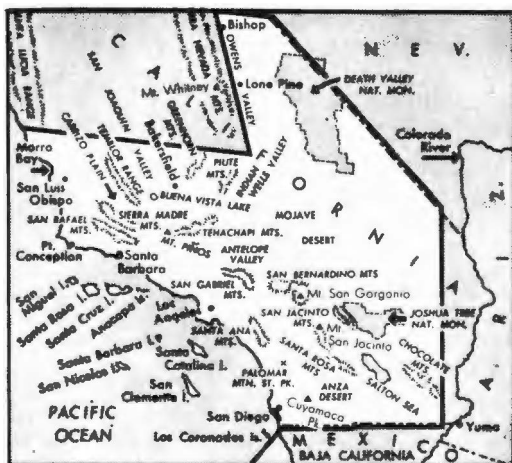


SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION / Guy McCaskie

Southern California experienced one of the wettest winters on record with rain continuous from December through March.



Most interesting was the fact that many species invading this Region last fall were relatively scarce this winter. Piñon Jays and Clark's Nutcrackers were rare away from areas of normal occurrence, Red-breasted Nuthatches became quite scarce in the lowlands in January, and Evening Grosbeaks were virtually unrecorded after January. One can only wonder where all those birds that passed through last fall went. On the other hand Lewis' Woodpeckers and Varied Thrushes remained common throughout the period.

GREBES—Horned Grebes were found inland with one on the Salton Sea Jan. 27 and three on L. Mathews, Riverside Co., Feb. 24; the species is rare away from the coast.

HERONS—The three Little Blue Herons found around Bolsa Chica, Orange Co. during the fall remained in the area through January with one imma-

ture still present Feb. 24. Cattle Egrets were present along the coast around Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. throughout the winter with as many as 15 there in February and March. The Reddish Egret first noted on San Diego Bay Sept. 19 was still present at the end of the period. A few Louisiana Herons remained along the coast as usual with up to three around Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co. Dec. 30-Feb. 4, up to five at Seal Beach, Orange Co. Oct. 25 - Jan. 27, one at Bolsa Chica Jan. 4-7, and one or two around San Diego Bay through February. The adult found at the south end of the Salton Sea (below s. end S.S.) Nov. 22 was last seen Dec. 14 (DVT).

SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS—Away from the Owens Valley, where up to 25 Whistling Swans were regularly seen during January and February, the only sightings were of single birds at California Valley, San Luis Obispo Co. Dec. 9-Jan. 25 and in Pasadena Dec. 27-Mar. 30. A most unexpected bird was a Trumpeter Swan at California Valley Jan. 13-22 (BBer, BS). Excellent photographs were obtained of it with a Whistling Swan; in recent years a few individuals have been found in coastal central and northern California, but this is the first modern-day record for S. California. Up to four blue-phase Snow Geese were present with the white-phase Snows at the s. end S. S. throughout the winter as expected. A flock of 12 Fulvous Tree Ducks seen near Brawley, Imperial Co. during January and February probably spent the entire winter in that area, unusual for that species. A couple of interesting hybrids were a ♂ Mallard X Am. Wigeon at the Salton Sea Jan. 28 and single ♂ Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal around San Diego Feb. 11 & 18. Eurasian Green-winged Teal was noted on L. Sherwood, Ventura Co. Jan. 11-27 (JD, JBu *et al.*) at the exact spot where a single bird has been found each winter since 1970-71, another was present at Solana Beach, San Diego Co. Mar. 18-24 (SS *et al.*); this form is a casual straggler to S. California, but appears more common farther north. A few Blue-winged Teal can usually be found in S. California during December and January, but when the Cinnamon Teal are moving through in February and March their numbers increase; this year over 30 individuals were reported Feb. 10-Mar. 31. The only Eur. Wigeon found were single ♂♂ at Newport, Orange Co. Dec. 30-Jan. 8, near Oceanside, San Diego Co. Jan. 14-Feb. 10 and at the s. end S. S. Dec. 10-Feb. 1. As usual a few Wood Ducks appeared throughout the Region.

A ♂ Tufted Duck present on L. Sherwood Jan. 25-31 (JAJ *et al.*) is the first for S. California; however, there are four previous records in the State. Single Oldsquaws at Bolsa Chica Jan. 1-Feb. 18, and on San Diego Bay Dec. 15 were the only ones reported from the coast this winter. The Harlequin Duck present at Marina del Rey since summer was still there Mar. 7. A White-winged Scoter at the n. end S. S. Mar. 24 (EAC & SC) was at an inland locality where it is casual. Similarly, two Surf Scoters on the Salton Sea Dec. 9 (EAC & SC) were unusual. Common Scoters were exceptionally scarce among the wintering scoters along the coast, with only six individuals reported. On the other hand Hooded Mergansers

appeared more numerous, reaching as far south as Lakeside, San Diego Co. Jan. 27 - Mar. 4 (JD, GSS, GMCC) which is probably normal; however, an adult photographed at the s. end of S.S. Dec. 9 (EAC, SC) was not only one of the very few interior records, but appears to be the first for an adult in California. The only report of a Glaucous-winged Gull away from the coast was one at the s. end S.S. during December. Two or three Western Gulls were noted in the San Fernando Valley in early January, which is unusual as this gull rarely wanders from the immediate vicinity of the ocean. Mew Gulls occur regularly along the coast south to San Diego; however, some 600 around Prisoner's Harbor on Santa Cruz I. during mid-February was a large concentration for S. California. An ad. **Little Gull** was carefully studied at the s. end S.S. Dec. 3 (RTN); this represents the third record of this species in California, the previous two being in November and December. Black-legged Kittiwakes were almost nonexistent in this Region with two at San Miguel I. in late March and three around King Harbor, Los Angeles Co., During February being the only individuals reported. A Black Tern at Marina del Rey Feb. 17 (GSS *et al.*) was most unusual since there are but three previous winter records in California.

HAWKS—An ad. Goshawk hit a window in the San Ynez Valley, Santa Barbara Co. Dec. 6 and was retained in captivity (RWe), another was seen near Tecopa, Inyo Co. Feb. 26 (JT); this hawk is very rare in S. California. A Red-shouldered Hawk near Big Pine, Inyo Co. Feb. 12 was east of its normal range. Some 30 Ferruginous Hawks reported from various points throughout the Region during December-February were most encouraging. Away from the Owens Valley, where Rough-legged Hawks are expected winter visitors, single birds were found south to near Escondido, San Diego Co. Feb. 25, at L. Henshaw, San Diego Co. Dec. 29-Feb. 25, and at s. end S.S. Dec. 28-Jan. 28. As usual a few Bald Eagles were found around some of the larger inland bodies of water with one adult at L. Arrowhead Dec. 13, up to 10 immatures at L. Mathews Jan. 6-Feb. 24, one adult on San Jacinto Res. Feb. 24, up to 16 (5 ad. 11 imm.) around L. Henshaw Dec. 13-Jan. 28. Merlins appear to be on the decline, for only five were reported this winter. The only Ospreys were one over San Diego Bay Jan. 20 and another around the s. end S.S. Dec. 1-22.

SHOREBIRDS—An Am. Oystercatcher was seen at Pelican Bay on Santa Cruz I. Oct. 6 (Ken Henwood, *vide* DG) but a bird believed to be a Black X Am. Oystercatcher was carefully studied at the west end of that island Feb. 19 (LJ); as many as three oystercatchers with much white, believed to be Am. Oystercatchers, have been noted regularly in that area during the past 4 or 5 years (Lyndal Laughrin, *vide* LJ). The **Piping Plover** noted in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., during the past two winters was again present Dec. 16-Jan. 6 (LJ, GSS, KG). Am. Golden Plovers were present at four localities with up to three at Marina del Rey Jan. 1-Mar. 7, two on Newport Bay Dec. 5, one in San Diego all winter, and two near Imperial Beach Jan. 20-Feb. 10; all but the Imperial Beach birds were thought to be of the race *fulva*. A Pectoral Sandpiper found near Calipatria, Imperial Co. Mar. 17 (GMCC, SS) was probably an early spring migrant; however, there are fewer than ten valid spring records for this species in California. As usual a few Stilt Sandpipers spent the winter at the s. end S.S. with up to five noted regularly January-March.

Red Phalaropes were present along the entire coast in late December and early January with as many as 75 around Imperial Beach Dec. 31 & Jan. 20, however, all appeared to be gone by February. As usual a flock of about 75 N. Phalaropes spend the winter at the south end of San Diego Bay; this appears to be the only locality in North America where this species regularly winters. Four Wilson's Phalaropes were also present with the N. Phalaropes through most of the winter; a very rare species in California at this time of the year.

GULLS, TERNS—Three imm. Glaucous Gulls were found along the coast with one at San Miguel I. Mar. 24 (LJ), one at the Santa Clara River mouth,

Ventura Co., Mar. 24-31 (ERA *et al.*) and another near Otay, San Diego Co. Jan. 27 - Mar. 4 (JD, GSS, GMCC) which is probably normal; however, an adult photographed at the s. end of S.S. Dec. 9 (EAC, SC) was not only one of the very few interior records, but appears to be the first for an adult in California. The only report of a Glaucous-winged Gull away from the coast was one at the s. end S.S. during December. Two or three Western Gulls were noted in the San Fernando Valley in early January, which is unusual as this gull rarely wanders from the immediate vicinity of the ocean. Mew Gulls occur regularly along the coast south to San Diego; however, some 600 around Prisoner's Harbor on Santa Cruz I. during mid-February was a large concentration for S. California. An ad. **Little Gull** was carefully studied at the s. end S.S. Dec. 3 (RTN); this represents the third record of this species in California, the previous two being in November and December. Black-legged Kittiwakes were almost nonexistent in this Region with two at San Miguel I. in late March and three around King Harbor, Los Angeles Co., During February being the only individuals reported. A Black Tern at Marina del Rey Feb. 17 (GSS *et al.*) was most unusual since there are but three previous winter records in California.

ALCIDS—Fifteen Com. Murres off San Diego Dec. 2 and 40 individuals found on six of the coastal CBCs suggested that numbers had reached S. California waters; however, only four additional reports were received of single birds seen during February.

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS—Band-tailed Pigeons descended into the coastal foothills during the winter with hundreds around Pasadena in February and March and lesser numbers elsewhere west of the mountains. It is apparent a few White-winged Doves spent the winter on the deserts of e. San Diego Co., for one or two were regularly noted around Yaqui Wells and Agua Caliente Springs throughout the period; the species is previously known only as a summer visitor to that area. Ground Doves have apparently established themselves in Pauma Valley, San Diego Co., for up to 12 were regularly present throughout the period. A Long-eared Owl seen at the s. end S.S. Jan. 6 appears to be a new species for that area. Two Saw-whet Owls located on Santa Cruz I. Feb. 16-20 represent one of the very few Channel Is. records. Up to three Poor-wills were present on the Palos Verdes Pen. throughout the winter and it appears likely that the species occurs regularly there at this time of the year. A flock of 10-20 Vaux's Swifts were regularly seen with White-throated Swifts near Oceanside, San Diego Co., all winter (AF *et al.*), a species not known to winter regularly in California; however, a large flock was in the same area during the winter of 1969-70. Most unusual was a **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** in San Pedro, Los Angeles Co., Nov. 4-Jan. 20 (SW), for it represents the first winter record for California as well as the second sighting for the coast; the bird was captured, and the diagnostic tail feathers were retained.

WOODPECKERS—One or two yellow-shafted Common Flickers were noted around Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley throughout the winter, one was present in San Pedro all winter and another was seen in Los Angeles Jan. 13. A bird exhibiting the characteristics of a gilded Common Flicker was near Westmorland, Imperial Co. Jan. 20 Mar. 24 (EAC, SC); however, there is much variation in the plumage characters of Common Flickers occurring in California. Lewis' Woodpeckers remained conspicuous and widespread after last fall's influx, being present south to San Diego County all winter. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker believed to be *S. v. varius* was carefully studied at Furnace Creek Ranch Jan. 24 (JD); there are only three previous reports of this form in California. A Williamson's Sapsucker in Elysian Park of Los Angeles Mar. 1 and another near Lakeside, San Diego Co. Nov. 25-Feb. 1 were in lowland localities.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS—An E. Phoebe was present at L. Sherwood, Ventura Co. Dec. 3-Jan. 5 (RS, GSS *et al.*); a rare straggler to California. The only *Empidonax* flycatcher known to winter in the Region was a Dusky Flycatcher in Arcadia, Los Angeles Co. Dec. 10 - Mar. 16. The Coue's Flycatcher first noted at the Brock Ranch near Holtville, Imperial Co. Oct. 28 was rediscovered Jan. 7 and seen regularly to Feb. 17 (GMcC, KG, VR *et al.*). Single Vermilion Flycatchers were noted in s.e. California at Calipatria Dec. 28-Jan. 28 and Vallecito Mar. 25; an area where the species is now quite rare. One near Tecopa, Inyo Co. Mar. 7 and another at Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co. Feb. 4 were at the northern limits of its range in California. Records of wintering swallows included a Bank Swallow at the Salton Sea Dec. 10 and a Barn Swallow near Imperial Beach Dec. 15-16. Rough-winged Swallows return to the Salton Sea area exceptionally early, for they were regular after Dec. 28 with 20 counted Jan. 6.

CORVIDS—Up to five Scrub Jays present around Niland, Imperial Co. Jan. 13-Mar. 17 were outside their normal range. Sightings of Black-billed Magpies south of their normal range included one at Furnace Creek Ranch Jan. 7, one in Shoshone Jan. 31, and another near Tecopa Feb. 25. A flock of up to 40 Com. Crows remained at the Salton Sea throughout the winter after having arrived in November. The only lowland records of Clark's Nutcrackers were of one around San Pedro all winter, two in Rancho Park of Los Angeles Feb 2, three or four on Santa Cruz I. Feb. 17, and two at Morongo Valley through Mar. 31; remarkably few considering the numbers present last fall. A Piñon Jay in San Pedro during December and another at L. Henshaw, San Diego Co. Feb. 25 were away from areas of normal occurrence.

CHICKADEES, NUTHATCHES, CREEPERS—Mountain Chickadees were present in the coastal lowlands including San Diego Co. throughout most of the winter in larger than normal numbers. Surprising was the rapid decline in Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers during December with practically all gone by January. Lowland sightings of Pygmy

Nuthatches included a few on the Palos Verdes Pen. all winter, and three around Boneta, San Diego Co., Dec. 16-Feb. 3. A few Brown Creepers were present in the coastal lowlands; however, one in Niland, Imperial Co., Dec. 23-Mar. 17 was most unusual.

WRENS, THRASHERS, THRUSHES—The only reports of Winter Wrens were one in Santa Anita Canyon, Los Angeles, Co., Jan. 26-Mar. 31 and another near Victorville Feb. 26. A Brown Thrasher was well observed in Twenty-nine Palms, San Bernardino Co., Jan. 14 (CD); a rare visitor to California. A Sage Thrasher on San Miguel I., Mar. 25 was somewhat unexpected. Varied Thrushes remained common in the mountains and coastal lowlands, being reported in large numbers by all observers, and even reached the offshore islands, with 300 estimated to be present on Santa Cruz I. in mid-February. One found dead in Niland Dec. 28 (TT) is the first recorded in the Imperial Valley.

KINGLETS, WAXWINGS, SHRIKES—Away from the Owens Valley where several Golden-crowned Kinglets spent the winter, one was found at L. Mathews Feb. 24, three were on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co. Dec. -Jan. and one was seen on Catalina I. Mar. 20. After the small influx in December the only Bohemian Waxwings were 4-6 at Yaqui Wells, San Diego Co. Dec. 3-5, one at Furnace Creek Ranch Dec. 31 (M&NP), and five near Tecopa Mar. 7. A N. Shrike at Furnace Creek Ranch Jan. 2 was quite far south, but another in Eaton Canyon near Pasadena Jan. 7 - Feb. 18 (Dave Foster, *vide* MSM) was exceptional.

VIREOS, WARBLERS—A Solitary Vireo near Westmorland Dec. 10 and two in Riverside Dec. 22 were the only individuals reported. A Black-and-white Warbler, very rare in winter, was at the south end of the Salton Sea Jan. 27-Feb. 24 (JT, DAG). Yellow Warblers now appear to be regular during the winter along the south shore of the Salton Sea and 2-3 were noted there throughout this period. A Palm Warbler, a rare bird in California, was at Legg Lake in Los Angeles Dec. 15-Feb. 10 (EN, GSS), and another was noted near Imperial Beach Jan. 13 (TT). Most interesting was the number of N. Waterthrushes found this winter; one was in Fish Canyon near Duarte, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 25-Mar. 30 (MSM), one was seen near Imperial Beach Feb. 3 (JB, SS) and at least two were at the s. end S.S. all winter (GMcC); normally no more than one or two are reported in California each winter. A Wilson's Warbler at the s. end S.S. Dec. 16-26 may only have been a late migrant. As usual, up to six Am. Redstarts were known to winter at the s. end S.S., two more were at the Brock Ranch near Holtville Jan. 7, and another was near Imperial Beach Dec. 9-16.

ORIOLES, TANAGERS—As usual a few orioles remained through the winter. Single Hooded Orioles were present in Encino during February and in San Diego during December. Northern Orioles, always the most numerous oriole in winter, were present along the entire coast with at least four in the Santa Barbara

area, six in the Los Angeles area, and six in the San Diego area; one was inland near Westmorland Feb. 19. A ♂ in Encino Feb. 6, one in Solana Beach near San Diego Jan. 2, and two others in San Diego Dec. 16-30 and Nov. 16-Mar. 31 were clearly of the eastern race *galbula*. Western Tanagers may have been scarcer than usual this winter for three at U.C.L.A. Jan. 16-25, one in Encino all winter, three around San Diego all winter, and one in Imperial Beach Feb. 25 were the only ones reported.

FINCHES—The Pyrrhuloxia that previously wintered near Westmorland, Imperial Co. returned for the third time, being present Jan. 28-Mar. 23 (GSS *et al.*), and another was in nearby Calipatria Dec. 17-Feb. 19 (DES, GMcC *et al.*); the species may be expanding its range into California. Along with the single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks found on the Oceanside and San Diego CBCs, one in San Luis Obispo Dec. 3 (FT), one in San Pedro Dec. 10 (SW), and another in Pasadena Dec. 24-27 (GSS) gave us an unprecedented 5 records. A Painted Bunting at a feeder in Cambria Jan. 5 (GSS, HBa) may have been the same individual that frequented a feeder in nearby Los Osos during November, and could well be an escapee.

Evening Grosbeaks became scarce after November; however, a few were still reported in coastal localities during January to as far south as San Diego (one, Jan. 5), and 12 were still present in Claremont Mar. 8. Purple Finches and Pine Siskins remained common in the coastal lowlands through the winter. Large flocks of Gray-crowned Rosy Finches remained around Westguard Pass in the White Mts. all winter but no more "blacks" were identified. A few Red Crossbills were present in the coastal lowlands for four were around L. Hollywood Dec. 31-Feb. 2, two were in Encino Jan. 5, about six were on the Palos Verdes Pen. all winter, and one was in Garden Grove Mar. 26; in addition three were seen at Morongo Valley Feb. 24, and two were at the Brock Ranch near Holtville Jan. 27.

SPARROWS, LONGSPURS—The only Lark Bunting found this winter was an individual near Niland, Imperial Co. Jan. 13-Feb. 19. The two **Sharp-tailed Sparrows** found at Newport Bay in November were still present Feb. 17, and had been joined by a third individual Jan. 19 (GSS *et al.*). Records of Black-throated Sparrows west of their normal range included one near Duarte Oct. 30-Apr. 2 and two near Lost Hills, Los Angeles Co. Dec. 13-20. Single Gray-

headed Juncos were found among flocks of Dark-eyed Juncos in Irvine Park, Orange Co. Feb. 10, Escondido, San Diego Co. Feb. 8-9, Morongo Valley Dec. 24, and Brock Ranch Jan. 7-Mar. 24; the species is rare but regular in S. California. Most unusual was a Tree Sparrow at the s. end S. S. Dec. 26-29 (EAC, SC), and another near Westmorland Jan. 28 (GMcC); this area is far south of the species' normal range. Harris' Sparrows were exceptionally common this winter, for some 20 reports, involving over 40 individuals, were received; birds were most numerous east of the mountains being found in the Owens Valley, Death Valley, at Oasis in San Bernardino Co., and around the s. end S. S.; however, at least seven were around the Los Angeles Basin, and another four near San Diego. On the other hand White-throated Sparrows were present in about average numbers with seven reported from along the coast and one at the s. end S. S. A Swamp Sparrow at the mouth of the Santa Clara R. Jan. 15 (HK), one near Imperial Beach Dec. 16-Jan. 20 (GMcC), and another at the s. end S. S. Dec. 29 (SC) were the only three reported; the species is rare but regular in California. Up to 25 Lapland Longspurs were around the s. end S. S. Dec. 10-Jan. 27, where they appear to be regular, and one was at the unusual locality of Thousand Oaks, Ventura Co. Dec. 20-Jan. 3 (LJ).

CONTRIBUTORS—Ernest R. Abeles, Allen B. Altman, Hal Baxter (HBa), Bob Behrstock (BBeh), Barbara Berton (BBer), Chas H. Bernstein, Leo Best, John Borneman (JBo), Bruce Broadbooks (BBR), Richard Bradley, Hank Brodtkin (HBr), John Buttler (JBU), Eugene A. Cardiff, Steven Cardiff, Edna Chamness, Carol Dunham, Jon Dunn, Dick Erickson, John M. Finkbeiner, Alice Fries, David Gaines, Kimball Garrett, Larry Goodhew, Daniel A. Guthrie, Andrew Hazi, Tom Heindel, Morine Heraty, Ginger Johnson, Jerry A. Johnson, La Von Johnson, Lee Jones, Paul Jorgensen, Harry Krueger, Dell Lacy, Peter J. Metropulos, Michael San Miguel, Ed Navojosky, Robert T. Norton, Michael Perrone, Mike & Nancy Prather (M&NP), Van Remsen, Donald E. Schmoltdt, Brad Schram, Chuck Sexton, L. A. Shelton, Richard Stallcup, G. Shumway Suffel, Steve Summers, Fern Tainter, Jan Tarble, Tom Taylor, Don V. Tiller, Richard Webster (RWe), Shirley Wells, Sanford R. Wilbur, Russ & Marion Wilson (R&MW)—**GUY McCASKIE, San Diego Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California.**

Western New York - Pennsylvania contributors will note a new address for Editor Richard Rosche. It is 305 Elm Street, Crawford, Nebr. 69339.