

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION
/ Rich Stallcup and Russell Greenberg

The winter season was typified by much rain, relatively little snow and very mild temperatures causing few freeze periods. The October-November rains continued sporadically through the winter with the only major lowland freeze and snowfall in early January peaking from the fifth to the eighth. Several northern counties suffered severe flooding and spill water remained throughout the Central Valleys (below C.V.) past the end of the period widely dispersing waterfowl and shorebirds from the usual places of concentration. With the warm temperatures more than usual numbers of land birds stayed at higher elevations later and more than usual numbers of typically "summer" passerines remained through December much to the delight of Christmas Count compilers. With the excess water and widely dispersed waterfowl, the number of birds killed by hunters was considerably less than last year. Pelagic species were much more adequately reported than in any other winter owing to several Audubon boat trips in January and February and regular offshore surveys, (C.F.G.). An asterisk means that a written description is on file with the Regional Editors.



There were more Snowy Owls seen in California this winter than have been seen in all the previous years combined. If one assumes that 1) owls seen at different localities were separate owls, and 2) owls seen at a given locality on different dates were the same owls, unless there was contrary information such as plumage differences or the known death of an earlier owl, the number of individual Snowy Owls this winter was at least *forty-three*.

Table 1 shows the number of owls in each of the counties where they occurred and the first and last dates that Snowy Owls were seen there. The counties are listed in order from north to south. Nothing is actually known about the owls' movements from area to area, but the impression of some observers, especially in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties, was that the birds tended to settle and remain when they found a suitable location, as do the nomadic Long-eared and Short-eared Owls. Eight birds were reported dead or were captured as a result of gunshot wounds. Snowy Owls are "protected" by law in California, and two hunters were convicted and fined in Humboldt Co. for killing an owl there in December. It is likely that more owls were shot, but were not seen by birders and not reported.

All of the owls were found in coastal dunes or adjacent open land, except for three with a yen to try city life: one in San Francisco, Jan. 2 (Harriet Fraser), one in Alameda, Feb. 9-18 (J&SL, many), one in Berkeley, Feb. 16 (SFB). The southernmost record is a bird found "freshly shot," Jan. 11, at the Salinas R. mouth in Monterey Co. (D. Ainley, *fide* AB). The other Snowy Owls reported this winter were: one at the Smith River mouth, Nov. 23 (Pat Fisher, *fide* DE), fourteen more between Pt. St. George and the Oregon border (RLeV, SFB, GMc), seventeen between McKinleyville and the mouth of the Eel R., Dec. 12 - Mar. 27 (m.ob.), three at Centerville Beach, Dec. 10 (CFG, M. Trenholm, *fide* DE), one at Bodega Head, Jan. 30 - Feb. 9 (Carolyn Connors), one at Pt. Reyes, Dec. 22 (Pt. Reyes CBC), and another there, Jan. 6-7 (VR, RGr, JM, RS, m.ob.), one at Ano Nuevo State Beach, Jan. 9-14 (DAG). Many of these birds may have been present longer than the dates indicate, but these were the only dates reported.

Snowy Owls in California, Winter, 1973-74

County	Dates	No. Individual Snowy Owls
Del Norte	Nov. 23-Jan. 5	15
Humboldt	Dec. 10-Mar. 27	20
Sonoma	Jan. 30-Feb. 9	1
Marin	Dec. 22-Jan. 7	2
San Francisco	Jan. 2	1
Alameda	Feb. 9-18	2
San Mateo	Jan. 9-14	1
Monterey	Jan. 11	1

To understand the magnitude of this year's invasion, let us see what has preceded it. Grinnell and Miller (1944, *The Distribution of the Birds of California*. Cooper Ornith. Club, Berkeley, Calif.) summarized the California records through 1943 and listed 20 records for Snowy Owls from the flights of 1896, 1897, 1908 and 1916, of which Santa Cruz Co. is the locality farthest south. Harris and Yocum (1968, *Condor*, 70:392) reported the only other substantiated records: four individuals seen near Humboldt Bay, January - March, 1967.

More Snowy Owls were farther south than ever before recorded in California. Why did it happen? The generally accepted explanation of these invasions is based on the 3-4 year population cycles of the lemmings on which Snowy Owls feed. In the years when lemmings are extremely abundant in the summer on the coastal breeding grounds, the result is increased owl reproduction. These lemming "highs" are followed by "crashes" in which the lemming population drops rapidly to very low densities, usually about the time the bumper crop of owlets has just fledged. The consequent food shortage is thought to cause large numbers of owls to move south.

Perhaps for the same reason the Rough-legged Hawk, another Arctic-breeding raptor, appeared in spectacular numbers, in our region this winter. Except for the 40 Rough-leggeds at Lower Klamath Refuge, Feb. 2 (ODS), the large concentrations seen in the Fall were spread throughout the region during the winter. Most sightings were of one or two birds. A conservative tally gave 187 individual birds with the bulk of the reports from along the coast, although the Central Valley had more Rough-leggeds than usual. Space permits only a sample of the total.

In mid-December, 40 Rough-legged Hawks were counted along the coast between San Francisco and Santa Cruz (BGE). Point Reyes had as many as 15 per day vs. four per day in previous years (WMP). At Marina in Monterey Co., there were eight on Jan. 26 (VR), eight in eastern Contra Costa Co. Dec. 27 (AE), 12 at Benicia, Dec. 16 (CBC, *fide* FKB), at least 10 wintering from Loleta to Arcata (TS, DE) and 1-3 birds reported from each of these counties: Del Norte, Mendocino, Tehama, Colusa, Kern, Merced and Tulare.

The big southward migrations of Rough-legged Hawks are usually attributed to the Arctic microtine rodent cycles, and the concurrence of Rough-legged Hawk and Snowy Owl invasions is frequently mentioned, although this concurrence is far from perfect. A brief survey of old Rough-legged records reveals an interesting phenomenon — while Snowy Owl invasions usually do not occur in successive years (although there are exceptions in the eastern part of the country), Rough-legged invasions tend to come in clumps, e.g., both 1960-61 and 1961-62 were invasion winters on the Pacific coast, and both 1970-71 and 1971-72 were invasion years on the Great Plains. There are many other examples of this, and it will be interesting to see whether another invasion occurs here next winter. — Sadie Brown

LOONS, GREBES — Three Yellow-billed Loons were reported. One at Humboldt Bay Jan. 1 (DA *et al.*), one at Monterey Jan. 9 (AB, WA) and one (probably of this species) at Bodega Bay Dec. 10 (LWG). The usual numbers of Com. Loons were found coastally and at inland lakes and 85 was very high on the Oakland CBC. Two Arctic Loons were at Spreckles L., Golden Gate Park Jan. 18, a most unusual location (BJM). Three Red-throated Loons, rare inland, were at L. Hennessy Jan. 1 (BDP), one was at San Pablo Res. Dec. 18 (JM) and 140 on the Oakland CBC was very high. Grebes were reported in usual numbers and locations with the following exceptions: a red-necked was at Essex Pond Humboldt Co., Feb. 14 - Mar. 17 (DE, TS *et al.*). Single Horned Grebes were reported inland at Avocado L. Fresno Co., Jan. 12 (RBH, KH, JS), L. Mendicino Feb. 16 (OJK), Grey Lodge Mar. 12 & 13 (BED), Redding Mar. 24 (DE, RS, GM), Chico Mar. 20 (PM) and several wintered at Folsom L., Comanche Res. and Shadow Cliffs Park, Alameda Co., which is normal. Eared Grebes were high at L. Success, Tulare Co. with 500 compared to 200 last year. All water birds were up in numbers there (RB). It is the usual trend that as new reservoirs mature biologically, the number of attending birds rises. Forty-five Pied-billed Grebes "in one flock" at Skaggs I. Jan. 5 was thought to be unusual (LCB) and one with two newly hatched chicks at Shadow Cliffs Park Mar. 1 (AE) is interesting.

TUBENOSES — Black-footed Albatrosses were seen on nearly every trip off Monterey with a maximum of eight, Jan. 26 (RS, VR, JL *et al.*). Twenty-five were seen 12 - 20 mi. off Humboldt Bay Feb. 17 and in their company were three Laysan Albatrosses (RLeV, TS *et al.*). Another Laysan was seen 10 mi. w. of Moss Landing Mar. 22-26 (*fide* BGE) and yet another was one mi. s. of the Farallon Is. Mar. 22 (VDaC)*. Northern Fulmars were seen off the Pacific Grove shore with 250 on Dec. 1 (GMC, JM, RS), and 75 there Jan. 8 of which 50 per cent were white phase where only 10-15 per cent is normal (AB). Very small numbers were reported after this date. A Cape Petrel (*Daption capensis*) was well described 4.5 mi. w. of Moss Landing Mar. 13 (BGE)*. This is the second record for the Region and only the third for the e. Pacific Ocean north of the equator. No Pink-footed Shearwaters were reported until Mar. 27 when the first spring bird was noted (BGE). Thirty Sooty Shearwaters Jan. 26 (VR, RS, JL, O.A.S.) was the maximum count for any pelagic trip until late March when the spring influx brought the normal thousands. Short-tailed Shearwaters were seen in small numbers off Monterey from late November through February with an average of about four per trip. (VR, BGE, RS, AB *et al.*)* Whether the irregular status of this species is partly an artifact of irregular pelagic coverage by birders is not presently clear. Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were seen on most boat trips from Monterey Bay with a maximum of 8 on Jan. 26 (VR, RS, JL, O.A.S.) and at least three were seen from the Pacific Grove shore during strong NW winds Dec. 1. Also seen there Dec. 1 were three Ashy Storm-Petrels and 12 Black Storm-Petrels (RS, GMC, JM). The only other reports of these were of four Ashys seen 3-6 mi. n.w. of Pt. Pinos, Monterey Bay, Jan. 26 (RS, VR, O.A.S.).

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — Lower-than-usual numbers of White Pelicans wintered in South S.F. Bay, but larger-than-usual numbers were at temporary water in the C.V. A thousand were near Los Banos in late March. (BGE) and nearly 500 were in the Sacramento Valley throughout the period (RS, DW). Only a few single Brown Pelicans were reported. Good numbers of Great Blue Herons were reported. Lake Success had 75 (only 40-50 last year — RB). A "record number" of 24 was at the Ukiah Sewage Ponds Feb. 16 (OJK) and an "unprecedented number" of 43 was counted on the Lewiston CBC Trinity Co. (BKl). Ten pairs were at a heronry near Hopland Mar. 10 (OJK) and 20 pairs at a heronry on Indian I., Humboldt Bay Mar. 15 (DE, JG, TS). The usual few Green Heron reports were outclassed by 25 on the Lost L. CBC Fresno Co. (RBH, KH, JS). Great Egrets were common in the CW and 45 wintered near Elkhorn bridge, Yolo Co. (RS, DW). Fifty at Jacoby Creek, Humboldt Bay Mar. 19 was a good figure but 18 Snowy Egrets there Feb. 16 was an all-time high. (DE, TS *et al.*). This species is certainly becoming more common north along the coast. Twelve Cattle Egrets were reported from the coast, four from the C.V. and two on the Farallon Is. in December and January, which foraged for flies on the elephant seals (P.R.B.O.). At Least 550 Black-crowned Night Herons in two roosts at Grey Lodge in December (RS, GM) and 20 at the Martinez Marina (NRB) were the only numbers reported. Three Least Bitterns were identified by call at Los Banos Wildlife Area Mar. 16 (RBH, KH, JS)*. Three Am. Bitterns reported from Humboldt Co. despite good coverage there was low (DE, TS). Three in wet fields at Ano Nuevo Jan. 12 & 19 (VR, TC) was unusual but all other reports indicated normality. The maximum number of White-faced Ibis reported was 140 at Los Banos Wildlife Area Feb. 16 (VR, KG). Various smaller numbers were reported there (our only regular winter spot) during the period by many observers.

WATERFOWL — Again as in the winter of '71-'72 abundant water from the heavy rains in the C.V. dispersed ducks and geese, resulting in a smaller total bag of killed birds by more hunters than in previous, drier seasons. Whistling Swans in the c. Sacramento Valley totaled 36,600 on the Mid-winter Survey (below M.W.S.) (CFG) and 200 at the Garcia R. mouth Dec. 30 Mar. 15 (OJK, KG) and 300 December to February in the Eel R. bottoms (TS, DE) were probably all better than normal numbers. The last swans at Grey Lodge were 40 on Feb. 23 (BED). A single Brant with Black Brant at Humboldt Bay Mar. 9 is one of several recent records from that locality (TS, DE, JG)*. Five blue-phase Snow Geese and one intermediate were with 40,000 white-phase and Ross' Geese at Tule L. Mar. 24 (RS, GM, DE)* and three were at Grey Lodge Jan. 10 (BED). Mallards totaled 16,500 in the Central Sacramento Valley M.W.S. which was considered low (CFG). Gadwall were in good numbers with 38 at Napa (BDP), 75 at the Salinas R. mouth Mar. 21 (LK) and 100 at L. Talawa, Del Norte Co. Feb. 10 (RS, DE, TS, JG). Two hundred ninety-four thousand Pintails were counted on the Central Sacramento Valley M.W.S. (CFG). At least three ♂♂ "Eurasian" Green-winged

Teal wintered at n. Humboldt Bay, which is normal (TS,DE,DA,many) and another was at Belmont Feb. 11-19 (BS m.ob.). All other teal were in average numbers. Thirty ♂ ♂ Eur. Wigeon were reported this season with four at Bollinger Res., Contra Costa Co. Dec. 29 with many thousands of ducks (LF), 18 at Grey Lodge Dec. 31 with 60,000 Am. Wigeon, a normal ratio (RS,GM,CLOW *et al.*) and eight singles at various places on the coast. Wood Ducks are thought to be declining in the Humboldt- Del Norte area where only three sightings were made this winter (DE,TS) and none were found in the usual places there in January (J&PG). Five hundred Ring-necked Ducks, always uncommon in the C.V., were on Grey Lodge after heavy spring flooding (BED), 333 were at L. Hennessey Jan. 1 (BDP), 225 wintered at L. Success (3 times last year's numbers) and 300 were at Searsville L. Jan. 13 (T&ZC). Canvasback numbers were down inland with only two at Springville, Tulare Co. compared to 50 or 100 last year (RB) and half last year's numbers in the Yolo Causeway and Sacramento bypass (RS). The M.W.S. estimated 7,300 for and the delta (CFG) and only 2,351 on the Oakland CBC is so low that it's scary. Three Greater Scaup were found inland which is more than usual: one at Friant, Fresno Co. Mar. 9 (RBH,KH,JS), one at Chico Nov. 18 - Feb. 13 (PM,TM) and one at Grizzly I. Feb. 10 (JM). Seventy-five Com. Goldeneye were at Lewiston L., Trinity Co. Feb. 16 (DA,DE,TS). Nine Barrow's Goldeneye were reported; five on foothill rivers (RS,DW,PM), three in S.F. Bay (J&SL,BGE) and one female on the San Joaquin R. near Friant, Fresno Co. Feb. 15 - Mar. 9 (RBH,KH,JS). Buffleheads on the Arcata Sewage ponds reached 400 on Mar. 10 which was very high (DE,TS). Ten Oldsquaw were reported from the coast including three together at Moss Landing all winter and one that wintered at the Farallon Is. (P.R.B.O.). Twenty-five Harlequin Ducks reported from the coast almost exactly equals the average yearly number. The only King Eider seen since November was the imm. male at Monterey harbor which was still present at the end of the period and had been seen by most active birders in the area. A ♂ White-winged Scoter at Grey Lodge Jan. 23 (BED) may have been the same bird that was at Chico in November and December (RS,PM). Surf Scoters on the Oakland CBC totaled 19,717, which was very high. Over 100 Black Scoters were reported from their usual coastal haunts: Ano Nuevo Pt. (by many), McKerricker Beach (BDP,OJK), Humboldt & Del Norte Cos. (DE,TS), and Pt. Reyes (AP). Three at the Arcata Sewage ponds during January were at an odd locality (DE,TS). Hooded Mergansers again were more common and widespread than is normal and notable, though regular, were 40 on the San Joaquin R. near Friant, Fresno Co. (RBH,KH,JS). Three hundred Com. Mergansers at L. Success was five times as many as were there last year (RB). The only Red-breasted Merganser inland was a female at Shadow Cliffs Park Jan. 20 & 27 (AE).

RAPTORS — White-tailed Kites were more common and widespread than in other winters in Humboldt Co. (DE,TS). Goshawks were found in the following unusual lowland localities: one adult at Garberville Dec. 3 (*fide* TS), one adult on the n. fork of the Feather R. near

L. Oroville Dec. 15 (GN)*, one immature at Honey L. Dec. 27 (AC *et al.*), one adult at Grey Lodge Jan. 10 (CFG, *fide* BED), Calaveras S.P. Mar. 4 (MK) and one immature below Briones Dam Mar. 4 (SFB)*. Cooper's and Sharp-skinned Hawks were reported in fair numbers. In e. Contra Costa Co. Cooper's outnumbered Sharp-shinned 6:1 (NRB) but in Humboldt Co. the reverse was true at 8:0 (DE,TS). In the Fresno area ratios were about even with Cooper's over Sharp-shinned 1.33:1 with more than 60 observations (RBH,LH,JS). Twenty-two Red-tailed Hawks seen in the Sierran foothills of Amador and Calaveras Cos. Jan. 10 were all adults (RS,GM). Because of the Rough-legged Hawk invasion there were many more raptors per foraging area and we wonder if many of the Buteos might have suffered starvation had rodents not been brought to the surface as a result of flooding. Red-shouldered Hawks seem to be doing very well in this region, especially in the San Joaquin Valley (RBH,LH,HK,JS) and on the North Coast where reports of seven were more than ever (DE,TS,J&PG). A pair was seen copulating near Chico Feb. 2 (LT). Swainson's Hawks arrived on time as expected with one at San Luis Refuge Mar. 9 (J&SL,JM) and five at Davis Mar. 16 (RS). Reports totalling 187 Rough-legged Hawks were received from the coast and C.V. compared with 67 in these areas last winter, which was then felt to be a good flight. Numbers in the basin at Lower Klamath (ODS,RS,DE) and at Honey L. (RS,AC) were also thought to be above average. (See essay above). Sixteen Ferruginous Hawks were reported from the C.V. and the coast which is about average, but 45 last winter was unusually high. All other raptors were reported in numbers close to the last two winters except Bald Eagles, which were more common and widespread and more often observed in localities away from mountains and the Basin.

GROUSE TO COOTS — A ♂ Blue Grouse was booming 5 mi. n.w. of Hopland Mar. 29, the same spot as one Mar. 29, 1973 (OJK). Over 10,000 Sandhill Cranes wintered in the C.V., which is about average. Twenty-two were seen overhead 6 mi. n.e. of Auburn Dec. 9 (MaA) at a high altitude for this date, and small flocks were seen flying n. over Shasta Co. on Feb. 26, Mar. 3 & Mar. 12 (BKI). A C.F.G. and Audubon Society cooperative rail census in San Francisco Bay coordinated by Bob Gill produced 655 Clappers, 160 Virginias, 61 Soras and 40 Blacks; Clappers may be down 20 to 30 per cent under the last three years but further analysis of the data is necessary (RG). As many as seven Black Rails were reported from a small marsh at Benicia S.P. by many observers during flood tides in January and February (JM,m.ob.). A Com. Gallinule was observed at McKerricker S.P., coastal Mendocino Co., a most unusual locality (Rickon, *fide* OJK). Over 23,800 Am. Coots were estimated on the South Sacramento Valley M.W.S. (CFG, *fide* BED).

SHOREBIRDS — Thirty-seven Black Oystercatchers were on Bodega Head Jan. 12 (BDP). Eighty-one Snowy Plovers at Pajaro Dunes Dec. 27 were more than last year and the first nest was made Mar. 24 (J&RW). Over 150 Mountain Plovers near Woodland into early

December (RS,DW) is a high count for that locality and as usual they were gone by January, probably wintering in known spots on the w. side of the San Joaquin Valley. A few Golden Plovers, both Eurasian and American subspecies, wintered on Pt. Reyes with Black-bellied Plovers (BDP,RS m.ob.). A Wandering Tattler was at Berkeley Marina, at the same spot as last year, on Dec. 16 (LCB) and again on Feb. 1 (KG). They are quite rare inside S.F. Bay. Lesser Yellowlegs were noted as follows: three at Arcata Dec. 8 (TS,BB) were late, two at Bolinas Lagoon Jan. 26 (P.R.B.O.), six at Joice I. Feb. 10 - Mar. 14 (JM), fifteen 6 mi. n.e. of Benicia Mar. 22 (RS,DE) and four at Sacramento N.W.R. Mar. 24 (RS,DE). They are very rare and local in winter and all of these records may refer to migrants. Five Rock Sandpipers at Bodega Bay Dec. 8 (JM), four at McKerricker Beach Feb. 9 (OJK,BDP) and one, one mi. s. of Pescadero Jan. 18 (BS) were the only ones reported. Least Sandpipers were all but missing at Humboldt Bay with 21 maximum on South Spit Feb. 22 (TS,JG). Western Sandpipers far outnumbered Least in the Sacramento Valley, which is normally reversed and probably owing to abnormally abundant water. The Long-billed Dowitcher is usually the only species present in winter at Humboldt Bay but a single Short-billed Dowitcher was seen and heard at Arcata Marina Jan. 10. Numbers of both species increased there during March (DE,TS). About 2000 Marbled Godwits at Arcata Feb. 8 were down to 1000 on Feb. 16 and 800 on Mar. 19 (TS,JG). Fifteen Am. Avocets at Lower Klamath Mar. 19 were early spring returns (ODS). The Black-necked Stilt has undergone a marked change in the S. C.V. in our region and is now a common winter resident (CBC data and pers. obs., JM). Red Phalaropes were late and in large numbers with 1600 at Pacific Grove Jan. 5 (VR) and 6000 there Jan. 12 (LCB). During early December and January some were present at most coastal inlets (many). **Northern Phalaropes** were unusually late at the Dumbarton Bridge with as many as five staying into early January (RS,Hurd,Null) and one female in near breeding plumage was at Moss Landing Jan. 12 (LCB).

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS — Eight Glaucous Gulls were found along the coast including one with an excellent description of an *adult* (BDP*,GLB)* at Jenner Mar. 30. Herring Gulls were again abundant in the C.V. (RS,DW) and one at L. Success, Tulare Co. Dec. 15 - Feb. 3 may be the first county record (RB). Seven Thayer's Gulls were found inland (VR,RS,DW) and seven were seen offshore (DE,RLeV,VR) in addition to several reports (but not yet enough for conclusions) from coastal dumps. Mew Gulls were in normal numbers (thousands) along the coast and normally rare inland with 54 at the Pleasanton sewage plant Jan. 20 (AE), four at Sacramento all winter (RS,DE), one immature on the Feather R. at Oroville Dec. 22 (AC)*, five at Dan Foley Park, Vallejo Feb. 16 (FB) and eight at Shadow Cliffs Park Jan. 27 (AE). Two Bonaparte's Gulls at Clear L., Lake Co. Dec. 13 (DA) one at Shadow Cliffs Park Dec. 26 (AE) and two at L. Shastina in late December (TM) are significant records. Black-legged Kittiwakes were scarce offshore until Feb. 2 when 230 were seen in Monterey Bay (AB,G.G.A.S.). The major passage occurred in early March when 100+ were seen

from the Farallons Mar. 12 & 13 (P.R.B.O.) and it was the "commonest pelagic gull" in Monterey Bay in mid-March (BGE). In early winter 95 per cent were adults but after the influx many immatures appeared. It is believed that the immatures are from farther south; hundreds were seen off n. Baja California in late February, with no adults (AB).

Eight Forster's Terns at Bodega Bay Jan. 12 (BDP) were farther north than they are usually found in winter. About 500 Com. Murres at Bodega Head Jan. 12 (BDP) and 150 off Humboldt Bay in February (DE,TS,RLeV) were noteworthy. Twenty-five Marbled Murrelets were reported from outer coastal locations December through February but one in summer plumage at Pt. Isabel, Contra Costa Co. Mar. 30, far inside S.F. Bay was exceptional (NRB). An unusual concentration of 200+ Ancient Murrelets was at Bodega Head, Dec. 8 (JM,BDP) and 56 in Monterey Bay Jan. 10 was higher than normal (AB). Auklets were common in Monterey Bay and peak numbers reported were : 200 Cassin's Jan. 26 (O.A.S.,LCB,RS,JL) off Moss Landing, 2000 Rhinoceros at Pacific Grove Jan. 25 (AB) and 3000 Rhinos off Moss Landing Jan. 26 (O.A.S.,LCB,RS,JL). During the week of Jan. 23 a **Parakeet Auklet** washed ashore near Moss Landing Marine Laboratory and is now a specimen there (*fide* BGE). This is the first record for the Region in many years. The only Tufted Puffin reported was one, 12 mi. w. of Monterey Jan. 10 (AB).

PIGEONS, OWLS — Large influxes of Band-tailed Pigeons were noted during February and March. Invasions in the C.V. were restricted to the n. end and adjacent foothills. Five reports of Roadrunners are more than have been reported in several winters. One was observed along Rte. 5 near Redding (Sue Kaiser). An intensive study of Spotted Owl distribution by the C.F.G. located it at many regular localities in Marin, Sonoma, and Monterey Cos., but failed to find it in the Santa Cruz Mts.; a gap in its range filled by few records (*fide* BGE). One was carefully observed at the low elevation of 2300 ft. at the s. extreme of its Sierran range near Springville, Tulare Co. (E. Peterson). Burrowing Owls continue to decrease in e. Alameda Co. (AE) and were absent from the extreme n.w. coast (DE). Snowy Owls were found many places along the coast (see essay above). This may have been a minor invasion year for Long-eared Owls. They were reported from four localities: two, 4 mi. s.e. of Woodland, Yolo Co. (RS,AP), two major roosts at Grizzly I. totaled 35 birds (3-5 still present at the end of the period — RG), a roost of five at Coyote Hills discovered Dec. 15 (SB,VR), and two on Bodega Head Jan. 30 (VR *et al.*). Short-eared Owls were uncommon throughout the region. The only concentrations reported were eight birds at Grizzly I. Feb. 10 (JM) and eight at the Salinas R. mouth Mar. 21 (LK). Roosting Saw-whet Owls were found at Grizzly I., Feb. 22-24 (RG) in Tilden Park Jan. 21 (*fide The Gull*) and at Davis in February and March (PB,DQ).

NIGHTJARS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — An active Poor-will was flushed in Bidwell Park, Chico Feb. 5 (PM) and a torpid bird was found in a Marin Co. hole in mid-January (*fide The Gull*). Large concentrations of White-throated Swifts were seen in several

localities during the winter which is normal. Only one *Selasphorus* hummingbird was reported for mid-winter. First arrival dates for Rufous Hummingbirds ranged between Feb. 20 and April 2 with a median date of Mar. 10. Firsts for Allen's Hummingbirds were much earlier with four January reports and a median date of Feb. 3. An ad. ♂ Costa's Hummingbird was seen at a feeder near Folsom L. Jan. 20, where it has wintered for several years (DW,TL). The first Black-chinned Hummingbird was in Chico Apr. 4 and a very early Calliope Hummingbird at Table Mt., Oroville Feb. 10 (GN). A concentration of mixed woodpeckers was found around the n. edge of Big Meadow, Yosemite N. P. Dec. 13: 26 White-headed, seven Williamson's Sapsuckers, four Hairys, one Red-breasted Sapsucker, and one Pileated (DAG). Six reports of pure "Yellow-shafted" Com. Flickers and six of conspicuous introgressants were fewer than usual. Lewis' Woodpecker was absent from much of its range, but concentrations were observed in the San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara Co. (AE), several hundred were near Glennville, Kern Co. (RB) and 165 were observed along a 6-mi. stretch near Lodoga, Colusa Co. (DA,DW). Up to ten birds wintering in Kneeland (BB,RLeV *et al.*) and nine e. of Arcata Feb. 24 (RLeV) were first winter records for Humboldt Co. One Bay Area report came from residential Palo Alto during February (TC,BY,RGr). Red-naped Sapsuckers (*S.v. varius*), rare winter visitors, were observed near Friant, Fresno Co. Jan. 19 (R&KH,JS), Janesville, Lassen Co. Dec. 27 (RS,TM *et al.*), and in Fresno Jan. 19 (RBH,KH,JS). A Hairy Woodpecker, apparently of one of the northwest races (*gairdneri*?), was described from Limantour Spit Jan. 2 (AP*,JM).

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A Tropical Kingbird was well described from Pescadero Marsh Dec. 15 (PM*,SFB). First arrivals of W. Kingbirds were concentrated between Mar. 21 & 30. An unusually northern wintering Black Phoebe was at L. Earl, Del Norte Co. Dec. 1 (DE,TS,SS). The fourth winter record of a Dusky-Hammond's type *Empidonax* flycatcher was seen at Solano L. (DAG) and a W. Flycatcher was found on the Oakland CBC for the fourth consecutive year Dec. 16 (SB,VR*). A large concentration of Violet-green Swallows wintered at Pescadero Marsh where 400 were present Jan. 20 (LCB,Steve Spittler) and 200 Tree Swallows were at Suisun Bay Dec. 20 (SL). Two winter reports were received for **Rough-winged Swallow**: St. Mary's College, Contra Costa Co., Dec. 17 (RS *et al.*) and L. Merced Dec. 5 - Jan. 2 (BJM). These are the first regional winter records. An extremely late Barn Swallow was at West Butte Road Nov. 4 (BM) and another was seen near Santa Rosa Dec. 19 (LBG); there are few winter records. Migration dates fell typically early from the C.V. with one near Los Banos Feb. 9 (AP). Cliff Swallows also arrived early in the C.V. with 4 reports for February which is normal. Only a few coastal reports were received, but one was on a nest in Palo Alto Foothills Park March 11-13 (TC).

CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS — An unidentified magpie was observed along the New River, Trinity Co. (RLeV). Two reports of White-breasted Nuthatches,

one in Kneeland Mar. 9 (RLeV) and one in Fernbridge Jan. 12 (R.M. Tiperson, *fide* DE), both Humboldt Co., were north of their known range. Reports of Red-breasted Nuthatches indicate they were common in the Sierras (MK) and the coast range of Humboldt Co. (DE). Most lowland observers found them scarce, however they were abundant in the Monterey area (AB). There were four reports of Brown Creepers from C.V. riparian habitat, where they are rare. A Dipper wintered in Tilden Park (JM,VR *et al.*). House Wrens were found in usual numbers with seven C.V. reports and two coastal reports; six were additionally reported on the Peace Valley CBC Dec. 31. Four Winter Wrens were found along the San Joaquin R. near Friant where they are very rare (RBH,KH,JS). Another was found in the Sierras at Calaveras SP Jan. 14 (MK).

MIMIDS THROUGH STARLINGS — A Mockingbird observed at Garberville was the only report from n.w. California (*fide* DE), but 5-6 pairs were found resident in Ukiah Mar. 16 (OJK). Two truly rare mimid species were found this season. A **Gray Catbird** attended a feeder in Pebble Beach, Monterey Co. Dec. 28 Feb. 20 and was observed by many of the region's active birders (AB,LCB,VR*) as well as photographed. This is the third regional record. **Two Brown Thrashers** were found: one came to a feeder in Fairfax, Marin Co. (RS,VR, m.ob.)* all winter, as it has for several years, and equally surprising is a report from Janesville Dec. 27 (RS,PM,TM)*. These are the first regional winter records. A Sage Thrasher was found in a San Jose backyard Nov. 12 (B&CY); another was well described from Chico Mar. 4 (PM*,TM). It is a rare species outside the Basin.

Reports throughout the region indicate it was a good winter for Varied Thrushes, but Hermit Thrushes were consistently reported down in numbers. There were three coastal reports of Mountain Bluebirds. Townsend's Solitaires were common in the American River Canyon near Auburn Mar. 23 (DW) and one was at Monticello Dam, Yolo Co. Jan. 9 (Jerry Tangren, DW) which is rather far south in the coast range. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were encountered much more frequently this winter particularly in the C.V. Golden-crowned Kinglets were widespread and common. Cedar Waxwings were common as usual in the late winter months and small groups of Bohemian Waxwings were found at 3 localities in the Davis-Sacramento area (DA,RS). Reports of N. Shrikes outside the Basin continue to increase: n.w. coast five, coast s. of Humboldt Co. three, Delta four and C.V. four. This is probably owing to increased scrutiny of shrikes rather than true invasions. Two Loggerhead Shrikes were found around Humboldt Bay where they are rare in winter (DE) and reports from the C.V. indicate they remained common (AP,BED). Three massive Starling roosts were located: 6000-10,000 at the Garcia R. mouth (OJK), 14,000-18,000 at Friant (RBH,KH,JS) and 12,000 in Eureka (JS,TS).

VIREOS, WARBLERS — The first Trinity Co. Hutton's Vireo was found in Lewiston in December (DA,*fide* BK1). A Solitary Vireo was in Pacific Grove

Dec. 23 (AB) and a **Warbling Vireo**, for which there is only one previous winter record, was well described for the Oakland CBC Dec. 17 (Janice Southworth*). This was a fairly good year for wintering warblers. A ♀ Black-and-White Warbler was at Olema Marsh Dec. 10 (RS,GM). A good number of reports was received for Orange-crowned Warbler except on the north coast where only one was reported. There were two wintering Nashville Warblers: one in Eureka in December (TS) and one Jan. 6 near LaFayette Res. (P & D White, *fide The Gull*). A Yellow Warbler, very rare in the winter, was in Monterey Dec. 1 (LJ). Black-throated Gray Warblers were found at Vascona Peak, Santa Clara Co. (J.M. Abbott) Nov. 27, Bodega Head Dec. 2 & 29 (BDP) and s. of Colusa Dec. 31 (PM,GM); several were found around the C.V., at least three from Chico (*fide AC*) and three from Springville, Tulare Co. (RB). Tow Hermit Warblers were reported from localities around s. Tomales Bay during December (WMP,RS,RGr). Common Yellowthroats were common in Pescadero Marsh (AP) and Grey Lodge (BED), but were reported scarce in Napa and Solano Cos. (FKB). The only wintering Wilson's Warbler was a male at Patterson Ranch, Alameda Co. Dec. 16 (J&SL,RS,RGr). A Palm Warbler at Ferndale Dec. 30 (DA) was the only report. Amazing was the observation of a ♂ **Parula Warbler** at Grey Lodge. It was found Dec. 31 (RS,GM,Clo) and subsequently seen by many until Feb. 20. This is the first winter and C.V. record for this species.

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, TANAGERS — Individual Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at Princeton Harbor Jan. 13, Ano Nuevo Pt., Jan. 20 (LCB, *et al.*), and a road-killed male was examined near Petaluma Apr. 1 (BGE). A large concentration of a thousand was found in a massive blackbird flock near Los Banos (AP). All reports of wintering Hooded Orioles came from the C.V.: a female in Fresno Jan. 11 and two Mar. 2 (RBH,KH,JS), one in Chico Feb. 4 (LT) an adult male, two females and an imm. male wintered in Porterville, Tulare Co. (RB), and one in Eureka Mar. 9 (*fide DE*). A "Bullock's" N. Oriole was at Patterson Ranch Dec. 15 (J&SL,RGr) and an adult male was at Grey Lodge Dec. 31 (RS,GM *et al.*). Brown-headed Cowbirds (3-6 per flock) were occasionally seen near Arcata where they are uncommon in the winter (*fide DE*). Wintering W. Tanagers were found at 6 localities including 3 from the C.V.: a ♀ Summer Tanager wintered in Pacific Grove (AB,RS).

FINCHES, SPARROWS — Female Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were described from two localities: Mines Road, Alameda Co. Jan. 27 (Eugene Makishima*) and near Pilarcitos L., San Mateo Co., Dec. 8 (FN*). Even more rare was a wintering ♀ Black-headed Grosbeak in Pacific Grove Jan. 9 - Feb. 24 (Stoner Haven, *fide AB*). Evening Grosbeaks were widely reported but in numbers only a shadow of last winter's invasion. Reports on Purple Finch abundance showed no clear pattern with reports of local abundances from Lafayette (LF), Davis and nearby foothills (DW,TL) and decreases from Fresno (RBH,KH,JS), Arcata (DE,TS) and Oroville (GN). A ♂ Cassin's Finch, always rare near the coast, was in Canyon, Contra Costa Co. Dec. 16 (RS *et al.**) and four were observed in Garberville Nov. 21 - Jan. 6

(*fide DE*). Pine Siskins were reported in normal to good numbers except along the Marin and Sonoma coasts where they were scarce (BGE). Red Crossbill numbers were down along the n.w. coast (DE), but were high in the Monterey area (AB) and fourteen were seen near Scott's Valley, Santa Cruz Co. where they are rarely reported (BGE). Lark Buntings appear to be somewhat regular along West Butte Road, Sutter Co. where two were found wintering (RS,T&BM); another was in Elverta, Sacramento Co. through January (RS,BM,DW). A Grasshopper Sparrow, one of the region's least known birds, was found near Winters, Yolo C. Dec. 7-8 (DAG,DW). A Sharp-tailed Sparrow was found for the fourth consecutive winter near the e. end of the Dumbarton Bridge, Alameda Co. Jan. 1 (RS). A concentration of 71 Vesper Sparrows was at Sutter Buttes Dec. 31 (RGr,BM,SB). The first spring record for Sonoma Co. was at Sugarloaf Ridge S.P. Mar. 24 (BDP). A Lark Sparrow was at a Eureka feeder during December (RLV) where it is rare. Sixteen reports of "Slate-colored" Dark-eyed Juncos is fewer than usual. Four Tree Sparrows were found together with juncos 2 mi. s. of Grey Lodge Dec. 31 (RGr,BM) providing one of the few C.V. records. Five Chipping Sparrows reported on the Peace Valley CBC Dec. 31 were usual, but a flock of up to 35 at Avocado L., Tulare Co. (RBH,KH,JS) December - February is quite surprising. Two Harris' and 13 White-throated Sparrow reports is far below the average for recent winters. A rusty Fox Sparrow, a rare visitor from the north, was at Inverness during February (WMP,Gerald Brady). Lincoln's Sparrows were reported scarce by many observers. However 79 were reported on the Hayward CBC Dec. 16 mainly from a concentration at Coyote Hills (RS,RGr,J&SL) and over 80 wintered at Munger L., Sacramento (RS,DE). There were two Swamp Sparrow reports. Lapland Longspurs, rarely found wintering outside the Basin, were at the Eel R. mouth Jan. 27 and 17 were in the Arcata Bottoms Mar. 5 & Apr. 2 (DE,GF,JG,TS). Snow Buntings were at Honey L. Dec. 28 (adult male and immature — Gary Page,RS,TM *et al.*) and Feb. 17 (immature — RS).

CORRIGENDA — The Pacific Grove Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Am. Birds* 27:916, 1973) was June 6-7 not July. There was only one W. Grebe chick (*Am. Birds* 28:98 1974) and not nine at Tule L. Clarification under Tubenoses (*Am. Birds* 28:98 1974): Laysan Albatrosses have been recorded farther south than Pt. Pinos, but these have been farther offshore than 25 miles. Change number of Black Storm-Petrels (*Am. Birds* 28:99 1974) in 1966 and 1967 to 2-300, not 2-3000. The Black Brant (*Am. Birds* 28:99 1974) listed for Grey Lodge was at Tule L. and the date was Oct. 23. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Am. Birds* 28:101, 1974) was the second and not the first inland record. Initials for Black-and-white Warbler (*Am. Birds* 28:104, 1974) in San Francisco should be JM and not DR. In list of contributors (*Am. Birds* 28:106, 1974) Larry Kafka should be Lenny Kafka.

ADDENDA — Ground Dove (*Am. Birds* 28:102, 1974) on Sept. 29 at Pt. Pinos for the first N. California record (DDeS). Add to list of contributors (*Am. Birds* 28:106, 1974) Kimball Garrett and Steve Summers.

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