

The only species appearing more numerous than usual were Rough-legged Hawks and Varied Thrushes. On the other hand many species such as Red-breasted Nuthatches, Purple Finches, and Fox Sparrows appeared to be scarcer than normal. The Region received its share of unusual birds including a species new to California — a Rufous-backed Robin.

LOONS, GREBES — Inland reports of Com. Loons included 1-2 in the Owens Valley all winter, and one on L. Mathews, Riverside Co. Feb. 17; small numbers occur regularly on large inland bodies of water. An Arctic Loon found dead in Whittier, L.A. Co. Nov. 3 (DH), and another seen on L. Sherwood, Ventura Co. Jan. 8 (GSS), along with a Red-throated Loon in Whittier Jan. 2-26 (DWF *et al.*), were exceptional since both species are virtually unrecorded away from the coast. A Red-necked Grebe at Malibu, L.A. Co. Dec. 14 was the only one reported. Single Horned Grebes were found inland, where they are rare, on L. Havasu on the Colorado R., Dec. 27 and in Colton, San Bernardino Co. Mar. 22.

FULMARS — The anticipated influx of N. Fulmars failed to materialize, however, small numbers were present offshore all winter with a few noted from shore in December.

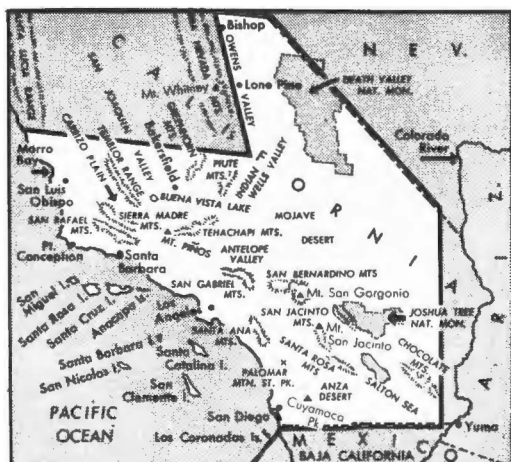
HERONS, SPOONBILLS — A Little Blue Heron was present at Bolsa Chica, Orange Co. most of the winter, definitely Dec. 10 - Feb. 9 (GAA,JD). A few Cattle Egrets evidently wintered along the coast since 30 individuals were reported between Goleta, Santa Barbara Co. and Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. during the period; large numbers were around the south end of the Salton Sea (hereafter S.E.S.S.) where they are now permanent residents, and 120 were noted at Winterhaven, Imperial Co. Feb. 1. The Reddish Egret that appeared in Imperial Beach Oct. 6 (*Am. Birds* 28:107) was still present on Mar. 31. A single Louisiana Heron was at Seal Beach, Orange Co. Dec. 10 - Feb. 7, another was at Bolsa Chica Jan. 21 - Feb. 9, and four were around Imperial Beach all winter; small numbers regularly winter along this section of the coast. A lone Roseate Spoonbill at Palo Verde on the Colorado R. Dec. 1 - Mar. 21 (JHS) was a straggler from last summer's influx, and represents the first winter record for California.

SWANS, GEESE, DUCKS — Up to 39 Whistling Swans near Big Pine in the Owens Valley all winter were the only ones reported. The Brant at Malibu (*Am. Birds* 28:107) remained until at least Jan. 8 (GSS), and another was present on San Diego Bay Jan. 20 - Mar. 28 (JMA,JL *et al.*). Two Black Brant at S.E.S.S. Feb. 24 were unusual for that time of the year. Two or three "Blue" Geese remained with the Snow Geese at S.E.S.S. through February as usual.

Most unusual was the presence of three Black-bellied Tree Ducks near Bakersfield, Kern Co. Nov. 19 (WLG); three were present at S.E.S.S. earlier in the fall (*Am. Birds* 28:107) and it is possible the same birds are involved in this sighting. Thirty Fulvous Tree Ducks at Winterhaven Feb. 13 and 40 at S.E.S.S. Feb. 19 were

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION / Guy McCaskie

The scarcity of gasoline this winter curtailed the activities of many birders who would normally have been far afield on weekends exploring areas such as the Colorado River Valley, the Salton Sea, and the vast



expanse of desert east of the Coastal Range. Consequently less information than normal was available from areas outside the main metropolitan centers.

unexpected since it is considered casual in California during the winter. A Eur. Green-winged Teal was seen with Green-winged Teal at L. Sherwood Jan. 8 - Feb. 2 (GSS & RS) where one has been found each winter since 1970-71, and another was studied near La Costa, San Diego Co. Dec. 12 (SS); this form is found regularly along the California coast each winter in small numbers. Am imm. ♂ **Baikal Teal** was shot near Riverside, Riverside Co. Jan. 12 (EAC, * to S.B.C.M.); the previous record for California has been treated as a possible escapee (A.O.U. Check-list); however, individuals do get into Alaska, and one has been shot in British Columbia, lending credulity to the belief that species may reach California as a genuine straggler. More than a dozen Blue-winged Teal were reported along the coast during the period as well as one at S.E.S.S. Feb. 16. The only Eur. Wigeon reported were single males in Whittier Mar. 1, on Upper Newport Bay, Orange Co. Dec. 1, and near Oceanside, San Diego Co. Feb. 9-17. A ♂ **Tufted Duck** on L. Sherwood Dec. 31 - Feb. 2 (GSS & RS) must have been the same individual present there last winter (*Am. Birds* 27:662). Single Oldsquaws, rare in S. California, were noted on Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo Co. Mar. 30 and at Huntington Beach, Orange Co. Dec. 1 - Feb. 9, and three were on San Diego Bay during December and January. A ♂ Harlequin Duck at Playa del Rey, L.A. Co. Jan. 5 - Mar. 31 (HB *et al.*) was south of its normal range. The King Eider at Malibu (*Am. Birds* 28:107) was last seen on Jan. 28 (GSS). A White-winged Scoter was seen inland on the Salton Sea Dec. 16 (EAC & SC) and a Surf Scoter was seen there Feb. 17; both species are rare away from the coast but noted with some regularity on the Salton Sea. Black Scoters remained fairly numerous through February along the coast with up to four individuals at numerous points from Goleta to Imperial Beach. Up to five Hooded Mergansers, scarce in S. California, were in Whittier Dec. 10 - Jan. 2, one was on L. Sherwood Dec. 30 and another spent the winter in Colton, San Bernardino Co. A flock of 70 Com. Mergansers near Coachella, Riverside Co. Feb. 15 was a large number for the area.

HAWKS — An ad. Goshawk in San Pedro, L.A. Co. Jan. 25 - Feb. 11 (SW *et al.*) was felt to be wild by some, however, there was no flight last fall and this individual was frequenting a residential area. A Red-shouldered Hawk in Big Pine, Inyo Co. Mar. 16, and another at the north end of the Salton Sea (hereafter N.E.S.S.) Dec. 19 were both outside their normal range. An imm. Broad-winged Hawk was seen in Chatsworth, L.A. Co. Jan. 27 (HK); one or two are recorded in the Region just about every winter now. A typical **Swainson's Hawk** was carefully studied in Bard, Imperial Co. Jan. 5 (GMCC, JD, SS); there is no documented winter record for California, but all three observers know the bird well. A number of Rough-legged Hawks reached the Region as indicated by reports of over 25 individuals from as far south as San Luis Rey and Escondido in San Diego Co. and near Brock Ranch in Imperial County. Ferruginous Hawks were scattered throughout the Region with some 30 individuals reported Dec. 1 - Mar. 4. At least 14 Bald Eagles (11 imm. & 3 ad.) were found in the Region, with five (4 imm. & 1 ad.) at L. Mathews,

Riverside Co. being the only concentration; numbers reaching S. California appear to decline each winter. A few Ospreys wintered in the Region as is evident from the ten or so individuals included in contributors' reports; most were from along the coast with the rest being noted at large inland bodies of water in extreme S. California. Prairie Falcons continue to hold their own in suitable habitat, with a few still reaching the coast. Eight Peregrine Falcons were reported with three on Santa Rosa I. Dec. 11-14, two at Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co. Feb. 2 and single birds at Goleta Jan. 5, on Anacapa I. Feb. 17, and at Newport Bay Mar. 22. Only eight Merlins were reported during the period; the species used to be much more numerous ten years ago.

CRANES, SHOREBIRDS — A flock of 61 Sandhill Cranes near Brawley, Imperial Co. Feb. 8 were the only ones noted away from the Carrizo Plain where a large concentration regularly winters. A Black Oystercatcher at Playa del Rey Dec. 9 was away from area of normal occurrence. A **Piping Plover** returned for the fourth consecutive winter to Goleta, being present Dec. 16 - Mar. 3 (JA *et al.*), and the bird at Malibu (*Am. Birds* 28:107) was still present Mar. 29; a careful search along our beaches may reveal a small but regular wintering population on the West Coast. Mountain Plovers still occur in good numbers with flocks regularly wintering along the w. edge of the San Joaquin Valley, in w. Riverside Co., in the coastal plains of Orange and San Diego Cos., as well as in the Imperial Valley; one near Blyth, Riverside Co. Feb. 16 was in an area from which few records exist. Two Am. Golden Plover at Playa del Rey Mar. 9 and another in San Diego Dec. 1 - Jan. 15 were all of the race *fulva*, and were the only individuals reported this winter. A Wandering Tattler at Westlake, Ventura Co. Mar. 3 (HK) was exceptional since the species is accidental away from the coast. A Sanderling at Salton City on the w. shore of the Salton Sea Feb. 17 gives us another winter record for this inland locality. A Red Phalarope at Imperial Beach Jan. 27 was the latest after a few appeared along the coast in December. As usual a flock of N. Phalaropes spent the winter at Imperial Beach with over 50 counted there Jan. 27.

JAEGERS, GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMERS — A few Pomarine Jaegers were noted offshore as is normal, and one was present on San Diego Bay Feb. 23 - Mar. 2. At least seven Parasitic Jaegers were reported seen from shore in Santa Barbara, Los Angeles and Orange Cos. during the winter; much is still to be learned about jaeger status and distribution along the California coast but this editor is of the opinion the Pomarine is the normally occurring jaeger in winter. A Glaucous Gull was seen at Goleta Mar. 4 (TNM), one was studied at the Santa Clara R. mouth Jan. 31 (GSS), and a third was in San Pedro Dec. 22 - Feb. 15 (GSS, JD *et al.*); this species apparently reaches as far south as S. California each winter. A Glaucous-winged Gull in Riverside Dec. 2, and another near Brawley Dec. 7, were the only two found away from the immediate vicinity of the coast. An imm. Mew Gull, quite rare away from the coast, was studied in a flooded field near Calipatria, Imperial Co. Jan. 26 (GMCCv). Black-legged Kittiwakes were quite numerous offshore throughout the winter, and impres-

sive numbers were at some coastal localities such as King Harbor, L.A. Co. (30 Dec. 11) and Los Angeles Harbor (80 Mar. 16).

As usual a few Com. Terns lingered along the coast until mid-December, and all appeared to have departed by Jan. 1, as would be expected; however, an immature on San Diego Bay Mar. 24 was most likely a wintering bird. The **Black Skimmer** on San Diego Bay (*Am. Birds* 28:108) remained until at least Mar. 2 (GMcC,JD) to establish the first winter record in California.

DOVES, OWLS, SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS — Again a few White-winged Doves spent the winter at Agua Caliente Springs in e. San Diego Co. and an out-of-range bird was seen in Venice, L.A. Co. Dec. 15. Ground Dove numbers continue to increase in the Valley Center/Puma Valley area of San Diego Co., an area recently colonized by this species. Records of Long-eared Owls, a species for which much is still to be learned of its distribution, included two in Apple Valley, San Bernardino Co. in early January, two near Hemet, Riverside Co. during January, one at Cottonwood Springs, Riverside Co. Mar. 27, two near San Diego Mar. 10, and one at Laguna Dam, Imperial Co. Dec. 17. Short-eared Owls were virtually nonexistent throughout the Region, for only four individuals were reported. A Saw-whet Owl found dead at Cottonwood Springs Jan. 29 was at an isolated clump of trees on the Colorado Desert, a rather unusual locality. Six Vaux's Swifts were seen over Beverly Hills, L.A. Co. Jan. 11 (JT), and a flock of about 30 was seen near Oceanside Jan. 26; it is beginning to appear that a few of these birds winter in California. A Rufous Hummingbird in Valley Center Jan. 27 and an Allen's Hummingbird in San Diego Jan. 20 were the first spring migrants noted; elsewhere one or two wintering Rufous Hummingbirds were seen in December and January, and resident Allen's Hummingbirds were present in Santa Barbara on the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

WOODPECKERS — At least seven Com. Flickers showing the characteristics of the eastern form *auratus* were reported including one near Parker Dam on the Colorado R. Mar. 17. Lewis' Woodpeckers were scarce this winter, however one reached as far south as L. Henshaw, San Deigo Co. Feb. 26. Again Williamson's Sapsuckers were found in the mountains of San Diego Co., where they were unknown prior to 1965, with a female seen on Cuyamaca Mt. Feb. 3 (JD).

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A Tropical Kingbird was present in Santa Barbara Jan. 14 - Mar. 30 (AH,JL *et al.*), and another was seen near Imperial Beach Mar. 2 (JD, GMcC); this species is very rare in California during the winter. An E. Phoebe, a rare straggler from eastward, was in Tuna Canyon, L.A. Co. Mar. 13-14 (SWo, GSS, HK), and another was found at Mesa Grande, San Diego Co. Feb. 26 (AF). The only Gray Flycatcher seen along the coast was one in San Diego Feb. 17, however, four were found near Needles, San Bernardino Co. Dec. 27-28 indicating the species may be more numerous along the Colorado R. in winter than elsewhere in California. Three W. Flycatchers were seen around San Diego during the winter with one

on Dec. 2, another Jan. 24 - Feb. 18 and the other on Feb. 10, an additional bird was seen near Needles Dec. 27-28; this species is proving to winter in limited numbers. A **Coues' Flycatcher** in San Diego Jan. 20 - Mar. 25 (GMcC, JD *et al.*) represents the seventh record for California and it is interesting to note that four of the other records were of wintering birds. A few Vermilion Flycatchers wintered along the s. coast as is normal, with one at Pt. Mugu Nov. 3 - Mar. 14 being the farthest north; in addition a few were around the Imperial Valley, and one or two were present at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley. Interesting swallow records included the presence of at least two Bank Swallows around Imperial Dam on the Colorado River on Feb. 16, numerous Rough-winged Swallows throughout the s.e. corner of the Region from mid-December on, one or two Barn Swallows along the coast in January and February and Cliff Swallows returning as early as mid-February along the Colorado R.

CORVIDS — A Steller's Jay in Whitewater Canyon, Riverside Co. Jan. 11 and another in Garden Grove, Orange Co. Mar. 15 were both in lowland localities where they are unusual. Up to 13 Com. Crows remained around the S.E.S.S. all winter, a recently established wintering area. A Clark's Nutcracker in the Cuyamaca Mts. Feb. 3 was the only out-of-range bird of this species reported.

THRASHERS, THRUSHES, SHRIKES — A Bendire's Thrasher first noted near Imperial Beach on Nov. 8 (*Am. Birds* 28:109) was still present Jan. 31 but not found thereafter, and another was seen near Bard, Imperial Co. Feb. 1 (RS); the species is very rare anywhere in California during the winter. A lone Curve-billed Thrasher was found near Bard Dec. 28 (AS), and this, or another individual, was present in Bard Feb. 16 through Mar. 9 (JD, EAC *et al.*); the species is a casual straggler to the Colorado R. Valley. A Le Conte's Thrasher near Bishop, Inyo Co. Feb. 24 (SGF) was at the northern limit of its range. A Sage Thrasher at Oxnard, Ventura Co. Mar. 26 and another on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co. Dec. 14 were the only two reported from along the coast. The first **Rufous-backed Robin** to be identified in California was discovered at Imperial Dam on the Colorado R. Dec. 17 (Ken Kaufman, S & SL) and was still present Apr. 6, having been seen by virtually all the active birders in the state (photo to S.D.N.H.M.). Varied Thrushes were present in fair numbers throughout the winter, being most numerous in the northern coastal counties, but pushing as far south as San Diego where at least eight individuals were found. A N. Shrike near Big Pine in the Owens Valley was probably at the s. end of its normal winter-range.

VIREOS, WARBLERS — At least six Solitary Vireos were reported with one in Riverside Dec. 12 (JA), two near San Diego Dec. 24 - Jan. 3 (DR), one in San Diego Jan. 27 - Mar. 16 (JD *et al.*), one at Brock Ranch Feb. 16 (GMcC) and one near Imperial Dam Jan. 31 (RS); the one in San Diego was definitely *cassinii*, the normal occurring race in California, but the one at Brock Ranch was *plumbeus*, a scarce form here. A Black-and-white Warbler was near San Diego Dec. 20 - Mar. 27 (JWD,JD), and another was at Laguna Dam on the Colorado R. Dec. 18 - Jan. 28 (S & SL); a casual

wintering species in California. A Tennessee Warbler at Brock Ranch Jan. 8 (LJ) was most unusual. The only Nashville Warbler reported was one in Los Angeles Dec. 29, and this could well have been a late fall migrant. A **Northern Parula** was collected near Needles Dec. 28 (EAC, SC; * to S.B.C.M.), providing one of the few winter records for California. A Yellow Warbler near Imperial Beach Dec. 2-15 was the only one on the coast, but 2-3 were noted around the S.E.S.S. where they winter regularly, and single birds were seen along the Colorado R. at Earp (Mar. 17) and around Imperial Dam (Jan. 31 and Mar. 9). Six Black-throated Gray Warblers were reported, but three were in December and could have been late fall migrants; one was in Goleta all winter, one was seen in Puma Valley, San Diego Co. Mar. 10, and another was at Brock Ranch Feb. 16. A Palm Warbler near Otay, San Diego Co. Dec. 21 - Feb. 18 (DR, JD *et al.*) was clearly of the normally occurring race *palmarum*, however, another accompanying it on Dec. 21 appeared to be *hypochrysea* (DR *et al.*), an exceptionally rare straggler to California. A N. Waterthrush, a very scarce wintering bird in California, was near San Diego Dec. 30 - Mar. 15 (JWD, JD), and another was near Imperial Beach Dec. 2 through Feb. 18 (GMcC, JD). A Yellow-breasted Chat near Imperial Beach Dec. 2 (GMcC, JD) was suspected to be wintering locally since virtually all normally have gone from the state by the end of September. A few Wilson's Warblers wintered along the coast with one seen at Pt. Mugu Feb. 2 and at least six around San Diego December through February.

ORIOLES, BLACKBIRDS, TANAGERS — A ♂ Orchard Oriole present at a feeder in Santa Barbara since Sept. 15 (*Am. Birds* 28:110) remained until Jan. 30 (TNM) and an immature ♂ was seen near Imperial Dam on the Colorado R. Feb. 20-21 (GSS); the species is scarce in California. The only wintering Hooded Orioles reported were three around Santa Barbara. A ♂ Scott's Oriole in Riverside Jan. 10 (EAC, SC) was interesting because very few are reported in winter. As usual a few N. Orioles, by far the more common oriole in winter, were reported with at least two around Santa Barbara, five in the Los Angeles area and three in San Diego. Unprecedented was the finding of two **Rusty Blackbirds** near Solvang, Santa Barbara Co. Jan. 8-12 (JA *et al.*); only a handful of records exist for the coastal areas of California and only one of those was of a wintering bird. Great-tailed Grackles continue to spread along the Colorado R. with over 25 at Blyth Feb. 9 and 10 or so at Havasu Landing Dec. 27; one at Rammer L. on Mar. 26 was the only report for the Imperial Valley. A W. Tanager in Santa Barbara Mar. 20, 4-5 in Riverside Dec. 12, and at least four around San Diego all winter were the only ones reported; a few regularly winter, especially in areas supporting eucalyptus trees that flower in the winter months. A ♀ **Hepatic Tanager** was carefully identified at Imperial Dam Dec. 19 and another was seen at Agua Caliente Springs Mar. 9 (JD, SS); this species is very rare in winter. The only Summer Tanagers reported were two in San Diego Jan. 25 - Mar. 1; the species no doubt occurs in S. California every winter, but numbers are always very small.

FINCHES, SPARROWS, LONGSPURS — A ♂ Cardinal was seen in Earp on the Colorado R. Mar. 24,

the only area in California where the species occurs naturally; however, recent reports have been few and far between. A ♀ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Yorba Linda, Orange Co. Dec. 29 - Jan. 13 (BVW; photo to S.D.N.H.M.), and a male was present in San Diego Jan. 25 - Mar. 15 (JD *et al.*). A ♀ Black-headed Grosbeak was seen in Santa Barbara Dec. 10 (TNM), another was in San Diego all winter, and a ♂ was there Jan. 20 - Mar. 1 (GMcC, JD). Both species of grosbeak are rare in California during the winter but it is interesting to note that the eastern species is as common as the western one at that time of the year. Evening Grosbeaks were reported only from the San Bernardino Mts. where they were quite common with as many as 300 together (Running Springs Mar. 1-30). A flock of about 20 Red Crossbills remained on the Palos Verdes Pen. all winter, but away from there three in Santa Barbara Mar. 31, one at Simi Valley, Ventura Co. Dec. 8 and eight in San Diego Mar. 30, were the only others reported.

A few Green-tailed Towhees spent the winter along the s. coast, but one near Tecopa, Inyo Co. Jan. 31 and another near Cima, San Bernardino Co. were somewhat unusual. Dark-eyed Juncos appeared scarcer than usual throughout the Region and consequently only nine individuals of the eastern "Slate-colored" forms were reported. In addition a Gray-headed Junco in Fullerton, L.A. Co. Feb. 5, and two at Brock Ranch all winter were the only individuals reported. A Black-chinned Sparrow, very rare in California during the winter, was studied in Riverside Mar. 3 (EAC, SC). In contrast to last winter Harris' Sparrows were exceptionally scarce with one in Big Pine Jan. 2 - Mar. 31 and another in Colton Dec. 21 - Mar. 15 being the only two reported. White-throated Sparrow numbers were about normal with five reported along the coast, one in the Owens Valley, and two along the lower Colorado R. Four Lapland Longspurs on San Nicholas I. Feb. 9 (LJ) were the only longspurs found.

CORRIGENDA — In *Am. Birds* 28:110 (Southern Pacific Coast Region) reference A Bay-breasted Warbler should read — A Bay-breasted Warbler was on Pt. Loma (JD *et al.*) Sept. 16, and another was near Otay Sept. 29 (GMcC *et al.*), . . .

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