

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION /Ron LeValley and Jules Evens

Weather was an exciting topic for everyone, including birdwatchers, in northern California this winter. Torrential rains were the rule rather than the exception, with a major storm January 3-5 causing extensive damage especially in Marin and Santa Cruz counties. The abundance of water throughout the Region provided much habitat for various waterfowl species, consequently, there were few major concentrations but high numbers on counts made over widespread areas. Shorebirds along the coast had a difficult time finding appropriate habitat as a result of high water and extensive silting. This may provide extensive habitat for spring migrants but wintering shorebirds smaller than Willets abandoned many of their usual haunts.

The ocean water temperatures cooled as a result of the many storm fronts passing through so that along the coast water temperatures were between 11-13°C, just barely above the 20-year average.

Landbirds suffered high mortality owing to storm-related environmental stress, especially along the coast, however there is some evidence that certain small passerines dispersed (see Yellow-rumped Warbler below).

Christmas Bird Count (hereafter, CBC) records are omitted unless they are of over-riding significance.

All records from Palomarin and Farallon Island (hereafter F.I.) should be credited to Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (hereafter P.R.B.O.). A dagger (†) indicates that documentation is on file with the editors.

LOONS THROUGH STORM-PETRELS — Yellow-billed Loons made a good showing this winter, at least four were discovered: Tomales Bay, Marin Co., Dec. 18-21 (R. Ives, RS, LCB), Berkeley Jan. 17-Feb. 10 (†JM, m.ob.), Monterey Pen., Jan. 17-30 (†KH, GP, DR), and San Francisco Feb. 7-14 (RH, DM). Two to three individuals of each of the other loon species were found on inland reservoirs this winter, a higher-than-normal total. Red-necked Grebes were found in above-average numbers inland as well, with one at Lake of

the Pines, Placer Co., Dec. 26 (JML), two at Folsom L., Placer Co., Dec. 27 (*vide* JML), and one in the Feather R., at Oroville, Butte Co., Jan. 5-7 (BD, KVV, KC). Horned Grebes also were well reported from many inland localities. The occurrence of these generally coastal species inland was possibly related to high water levels at inland reservoirs, nearly all of which are man-made, or inclement coastal conditions.

Northern Fulmars had a "moderately good year" in our Region (m.ob.) with a peak mid-January-mid-February (P.R.B.O.). Flesh-



footed Shearwaters were reported in Monterey Bay on Dec. 5 (DR) and Jan. 16 (DLS). Even rarer, if correctly identified, would be the New Zealand Shearwater seen from Pt. Pinos, Monterey Co., Jan. 5 (BGE). Short-tailed Shearwaters have been reported in each of the last few winters so small numbers in Monterey Bay January and February with a maximum of six Feb. 6 (AB *et al.*) was considered normal. The only Manx Shearwater was in Monterey Bay Dec. 30 (DR). One or two Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were in Monterey Harbor Jan. 21 (*fide* AB) during strong NW winds.

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — Brown Pelicans remained in small numbers through mid-January, much later than normal. A sick individual picked-up in Gilroy, Santa Clara Co., Jan. 7 provided one of our few inland records (*fide* AB). High numbers of Green Herons were reported from the coastal areas by many observers this winter. An imm. Little Blue Heron at L. Earl, Del Norte Co., Dec. 4+ (†RAE *et al.*) was the first record for n.w. California and only the third winter record for our Region. A concentration of 15 Am. Bitterns at L. Earl Dec. 20 was unprecedented along the n. coast (RAE). White-faced Ibis wintered at traditional areas near Los Banos with a maximum of 78 Dec. 29 (KH) but more encouraging was about 30 at Colusa and Delevan N.W.R., Colusa Co. (BD), the first wintering records for the Sacramento Valley in over a decade.

WATERFOWL — A Bewick's Swan was reported with a large flock of Whistling Swans at the Woodland Sugar Ponds, Yolo Co., Jan. 30-Feb. 2 (†JML *et al.*). Other reports of this species the last two years have lacked substantiating details so the true status of this swan in California has yet to be determined. Whistling Swans were well reported this winter, they are a species that responds quickly to local flooding, and so their movements complicate the estimation of populations. Some major concentrations included 120 at Yontocket Slough, Del Norte Co., Feb. 7 (P. Springer), 550+ in the Eel River Delta, Humboldt Co., Feb. 23 (RLeV, LD), 115 at the Garcia R. mouth, Mendocino Co., Dec. 26-30 (WB), 1750 in the Yolo Bypass, Yolo Co., Jan. 29 (HLC) and 2-3000 in the Butte Sink, Butte Co., Jan. 21 (WA). A Trumpeter Swan was described at the Chico Oxidation Ponds, Butte Co., Jan. 2 (†KVV, KC) for one of our few Regional records.

At least eight **Emperor Geese** appeared in Del Norte and Humboldt cos. during the first week of January with one remaining at the Smith R. mouth through the end of the period (RAE, RLeV *et al.*). Ross' Geese appeared in numerous coastal localities especially in Monterey County (DR *et al.*). Inland, where this goose makes its normal winter home, the almost unknown "blue" phase continues to be reported; two were at Gray Lodge W.A., Butte Co., this winter (BD).

Cinnamon Teal began appearing during the first week of February (m.ob.), a bit earlier than usual. Over 400 Redheads, a regular winter concentration, were gathered near the mouth of Tomales Bay Dec. 19 (DS). Ring-necked Ducks were well reported this winter but 5500 in the Butte Sink Dec. 16 is an astounding concentration (BD). Of all the ducks, the Canvasback seems most attuned to the changing water levels of many Central Valley (hereafter, C.V.) localities. Large numbers appear in newly flooded areas; over 14,000 were in the Butte Sink and Sutter Bypass Dec. 16 (BD). A total of at least six Tufted Ducks were detected. Besides three in w. Marin County remaining since fall, one male was at the Ferndale Sewage Ponds, Humboldt Co., Feb. 23-24 (†RLeV, LD, †RAE), one male was at L. Hennessy, Napa Co., Jan. 2-9 (BDP) and a male was at Richardson's Bay in e. Marin County, Feb. 25-Mar. 8 (†RH, JRi). Both species of goldeneye were detected in higher-than-normal numbers, especially away from their normal river habitats, many of which were flowing high and muddy (m.ob.). Interesting coastal records of Barrow's Goldeneye included six in the Smith R. bottoms, Del Norte Co., Dec. 14-Jan. 11 (RAE *et al.*) and at least three near the Big Sur R. mouth, Monterey Co., Dec. 17 (DR). Oldsquaws were remarkably scarce this winter, only two were reported; one was at Stone Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Dec. 17 (GS) and another was at Pt. Pinole Regional Shoreline, Contra Costa Co., Dec. 9 (KFC). A concentration of 28,000 Ruddy Ducks in the Butte Sink Dec. 16 (BD) was notable. An ad. ♂ *Smew* at Leo Ryan P., San Mateo Co., represents the first record for the Pacific Coast s. of British Columbia. It was first discovered Dec. 19 by B. Sauppe and subsequently seen by nearly everyone as it molted from partial eclipse plumage to full breeding plumage before it departed after Feb. 18.



Smew, San Mateo Co., Calif., Jan. 9, 1982. Photo/A. Giorshi.

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — Turkey Vultures, among our earliest spring migrants, were returning to areas where they are absent during the winter during the first week of February. A dark-phase "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was described near Davis, Yolo Co., Feb. 3 (†HLC). Red-shouldered Hawks are apparently increasing in our Region, we received many reports of this species in "new" localities along with "doing well" reports in traditional sites. Rough-legged Hawks were present in average or slightly below average numbers this winter but Ferruginous Hawks made an impressive showing throughout the Region. California's second **Gyr Falcon** pleased many observers after it was first discovered by C. Asay Jan. 17 as it was diving at a Goshawk that he was flying. Word came to the birding community and Jan. 22-Feb. 8 it was seen by many. The bird was a pale gray individual with a dark cere and tarsi, indicating an immature. The only previous California record was a specimen taken at Tulélake Oct. 23, 1948.



Gyr Falcon, Davis, Calif., Jan. 24, 1982. Photo/P.M. LaTourrette.

Approximately 13,000 Lesser Sandhill Cranes were estimated in San Joaquin, Merced, Kern and Stanislaus cos., during December including approx. 11% juveniles (TP). The changing uses of C.V. agricultural areas and the vagaries of water distribution have an unknown effect on this crane. Careful monitoring of this and Greater Sandhill Crane populations is encouraged. Black Rails continue to be reported during high tide weekends around the San Francisco bay area. Particularly interesting (and a bit scary!) were reports from Palo Alto Baylands where Black Rails were seen eaten by a Great Egret Dec. 12 (JM *et al.*) and a Great Blue Heron Jan. 9 (JML); perhaps observer effect on the vulnerability of the prey species is a consideration here.

SHOREBIRDS — Over 600 Mountain Plovers along Little Panoche Rd., San Benitos Co., Feb. 4 (NC) was the largest concentration reported, but many observers saw up to 75 near Davis, Yolo Co., all winter in an area where they were formerly reported with more regularity. As many as 27 Am. Golden Plovers wintered on Pt. Reyes, all apparently of the Asiatic race *fulva* (DS, RS). Although there are no specimen records of *dominica* after Nov. 11, there is some evidence that this larger race may linger until mid-December (DS). Careful attention to the racial identity of these plovers will be necessary to detect the different patterns of their occurrence here. A mixed flock of 14 Short-billed and Long-billed dowitchers at Schooner Bay, Marin Co., Jan. 25 (DS) was from one of the few localities where Short-billeds can be found along the north coast in winter. Two Ruffs were photographed at Merced Wildlife Ref., Merced Co., Feb. 5-20 (RB, KH, FB, JRi): one of these was probably an ad. male.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Pomarine Jaeger, normally our only wintering jaeger, was reported in small number from Del Norte and Humboldt cos. (GL) and Monterey Bay (GP, KH, AB) all winter. Single Parasitic Jaegers Dec. 17 & 24 off Del Norte County (GL) were possibly late migrants but an adult at Pajaro Dunes, Santa Cruz Co., Feb. 25 (J & RW) was more unusual. A minimum of 17 Glaucous Gulls was reported this winter, most remarkably a full adult at the Yolo County Landfill Jan. 23 (m.ob.). Nearly all of our records for this species refer to first-year birds. This individual and the first-year bird accompanying it were also notable for their occurrence at an inland locality. Mew Gulls, uncommon inland, appeared at Redding Dec. 1 (RAE) where one was found, and along the American R., in Sacramento where 10+ were found Dec. 12 (JML). A Franklin's Gull was 6 mi offshore from the Redwood Cr. mouth, Humboldt Co., Dec. 2 (GL). Up to three were present at the Stockton Sewage Ponds, San Joaquin Co., through the winter (FB, JRi). Thirty Bonaparte's Gulls on Eagle L., Lassen Co., Dec. 6 (BS) and 31 on L. Shastina, Siskiyou Co., Jan. 5 (RE) were unusual in mid-winter. An ad. Little Gull that appeared at Kelly L., near Watsonville, Monterey Co., Jan. 1-2 (JML) was strongly suspected to be the same individual that has been at the Stockton Sewage Ponds during the past 3 winters. Black-legged Kittiwakes were present in moderate numbers along the coast all winter (m.ob.). Three Forster's Terns at the Arcata Marina, Humboldt Co., Jan. 28 (RAE *et al.*) provided the first winter records for the n. coast.

Two Thick-billed Murres were present in Monterey Bay Dec. 5-15 (DR), for the first records in 4 years. Three Xantus' Murrelets off the Monterey Pen., Dec. 30 were identified as the race *scrippsi* (DR).

PIGEONS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS — Band-tailed Pigeons generally avoided the immediate coast (P.R.B.O., JE), but were found in substantial numbers around Benecia, Solano Co. (JL), in the East Bay hills (CS), the Fresno area (KH) and Dunsmuir, Siskiyou Co. (CSt).

At Palomarin there were no records of Spotted, Saw-whet or Barn owls during the period, which is most unusual. A Great Gray Owl found at Prairie Cr., Redwoods S.P., Humboldt Co., Jan. 17 (A. Wilkinson, †RAE *et al.*) and killed by a truck Jan. 22 (*Humboldt State Univ.) provided one of few lowland records and the second for the coast. An as yet undiscovered small population in the Siskiyou Mts., remains a possibility (RAE). A single Long-eared Owl was at Coyote Hills Reg. P., Alameda Co., Jan. 16 through the period (SFB *et al.*) and 18 were roosting in willows near Colusa in January and February (WA). Small numbers (1-5) of Short-eared Owls were at scattered locations with no large concentrations reported. Exceptional was one near Mono L., Jan. 1 (CS); winter records for the Mono Basin are few. Saw-whet Owls from inner-coast localities include one near Lafayette Dec. 17 (*fide* FB), one at Briones Reg. P., "calling territorially from oak-bay forest" Feb. 27 (SFB), both in Contra Costa Co., and one-two at Coyote Hills Reg. P., Alameda Co., Jan. 16 through the period (m.ob.). Up to six Poor-wills were active along the immediate coast on Pt. Reyes in February (DDeS, DS); more unusual was one seen sporadically in December and January near Winters, Yolo Co. (*fide* TL).

SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS — A belated report of Black Swift at Año Nuevo Nov. 29 (TG) was on a date extreme enough to include in a winter report. This species is unrecorded in winter in California; the latest previous record n. of Mexico was Nov. 2, 1974 in Death Valley. The numbers of Vaux's Swift reported surpass *all* previous winter records combined, as follows: ten at Año Nuevo Nov. 29 (TG), one at Lost L., Fresno Co., Dec. 7 (*fide* FRG), ten at Orick, Humboldt Co., Dec. 14 (RAE), two at Moss Landing Jan. 1 (BB), 30+ at Pescadero, San Mateo Co., Dec. 31 & Jan. 7 (PJM) and 60+ at Montara, San Mateo Co., Feb. 5 (*fide* PJM).

ASTOUNDING was an imm. ♂ **Broad-billed Hummingbird** present at a feeder in Fremont, Alameda Co., early January-Mar. 8 (K & N McAllister ph., *fide* JM). If validated by the California Bird Records Committee, this represents a first for the Region and the farthest n. record in North America. Rufous Hummingbirds arrived *early* as follows: San Jose Jan. 15 (*fide* WB), Ft. Dick, Del Norte Co., Feb. 2 (RT) and Palomarin Feb. 16 (P.R.B.O.). Also somewhat early was an Allen's Hummingbird at Alamo, Contra Costa Co., Jan. 13 (JRi). Three *Selasphorus* sp. on the n. coast in late December and early January may have wintered (*fide* RAE). Several observers in Fresno County feel that Anna's Hummingbird has displayed a marked decline in the past 10 years (FG *et al.*) Have others noted this trend?

Reason? None was found wintering in the n. counties and the first returned to Siskiyou County Feb. 13 (RE, MR).

WOODPECKERS — Numbers of Lewis' Woodpecker were considered low at various wintering locations in the C.V., however high concentrations were reported along the w. edge of the Sacramento Valley at Pope Valley and the n. end of L. Berryessa, Napa Co. (BDP) and between East Park Res., and Black Butte Res., Glenn Co. (BED). Two "Red-naped" Sapsuckers (*S.v. nuchalis*), one in Marin County (*fide* DS) and one in San Jose (*fide* WB) were unaccompanied by descriptions. More unusual, and well-described, was the nominate race, *S.v. varius* in Danville, Contra Costa Co., Jan. 23-Mar. 7 (†J. C. Broyles, †JRi). "Red-breasted" Sapsuckers were found in "excellent numbers" in Sonoma County (LCB), but hardly mentioned elsewhere. Ten Williamson's Sapsuckers were reported from mid-elevations (3300-4500 ft), all on the w. slope of the Sierra. Extralimital was a female at Redwood Reg. P., Alameda Co., Dec. 20 (*fide* SFB), a male in Mill Valley, Marin Co., Feb. 27+ (D. Sierra, RS *et al.*), and a female along the Klamath R., below Irongate Dam, Siskiyou Co., Jan. 9 (RE, MR). Two Downy Woodpeckers at Mono L., and one at Lundy L., both Mono Co., Jan. 1 (CS), add to the evidence that this species is rare but regular e. of the c. Sierran escarpment. Early indications are that Downies are recovering from the low numbers of recent years in the C.V. (BD). A White-headed Woodpecker on the Winters CBC, Yolo Co. (TL) has only one precedent on the floor of the C.V.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — The E. Phoebe that wintered in Monterey last year was found again Dec. 30 and seen sporadically into early February (JML, *fide* DR). A Say's Phoebe at Mono L., Jan. 1 (CS) was one of few mid-winter records for the Mono Basin. Two W. Flycatchers provided 8th and 9th winter records: Rank 1., on the San Joaquin R., Fresno Co., Dec. 27 (†KH, DB *et al.*) and Watsonville Jan. 2 (DR *et al.*). An *Empidonax* sp. in Fairfax, Marin Co., Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (*fide* JM) may have been a Willow Flycatcher (†), however the description is inconclusive. The Com. Skylark remained at P.R.N.S., at least through Jan. 3 (*fide* SFB). Unexpected numbers of Horned Larks were found along the n. coast Dec. 19-26 with a high of 20 at Pt. Saint George Dec. 20 (*fide* RAE).

"White-bellied" swallows were reported throughout the season from lowland locations with Trees outnumbering Violet-greens 25:1. The most notable concentration of Violet-greens was 50+ at Sacramento W.R., Jan. 22 (R. Dunstow). Trees were found by the hundreds in late December-early January in the C.V. (m.ob.); a spring migrant at Eagle L., Feb. 20 (DA, BS) was early and unusual in the mountains. Mid-winter records of Rough-winged Swallows are sparse, so one at Los Banos Dec. 21 (†KFC) was noteworthy. Wintering Barn Swallows are extremely rare; one at Pescadero Marsh Dec. 31 & Jan. 7 (PJM) was on the immediate coast, San Mateo Co., and another was inland at Los Baños Dec. 21 (†KFC). Very early migrant Barn Swallows were at Jenner, Sonoma Co. (KC, KVV) and Coyote Hills Reg. P., Alameda Co. (KFC), both Feb. 27. Also early were 20 Cliff Swallows at Creighton Ranch, Tulare Co., Feb. 8 (RH). By Feb. 17, hundreds were investigating nest sites at Los Baños (PJM).

CORVIDS THROUGH WRENS — Common Ravens are now considered rare on the Sacramento Valley floor. Perhaps the following records represent a retreat from the storm-driven coast or the nearby Vaca-Berryessa Mts.: one at Chico, Butte Co., Jan. 7 (KC, KVV), 20+ in s. Yolo Co., Jan. 23 (TB) and one at Williams, Colusa Co., Feb. 28 (WA). Large numbers of ravens were also noted in the San Joaquin Valley in December (HLC, KH). The only Piñon Jay report was of three at Chester, Plumas Co., Jan. 27 (*fide* DA). Clark's Nutcrackers were found in the L. Almanor area in unprecedented numbers "probably due to downslope movement from Lassen due to snow and an abundant yellow pine cone crop in the Chester area" (DA). A single nutcracker was at Lewiston L., Trinity Co., Dec. 1 (RAE).

Increasing numbers of sightings of Bushtits in the San Joaquin Valley (KFC, KH) indicate that the species may be recolonizing its former haunts. Despite early autumn indications that it was an invasion year for Red-breasted Nuthatch, numbers were low everywhere except the Monterey Peninsula where they remained through winter (DR). The Pygmy Nuthatches discovered in the Oakland Hills in the fall remained present at least through December

(RAE). Brown Creepers were "very scarce" on the coast at Palomarin, but relatively common in the Sacramento Valley at Gray Lodge N.W.R. (BD) and on the C.V. CBCs: refugees from the coast and mountains? Six Dippers at scattered lowland locations was about normal. Overwintering House Wrens were reported in unusually high numbers from northerly stations: singles were at Red Bluff Dec. 19 (SL), Redding Dec. 20 (*fide* SL), Antelope Cr., Tehama Co., Jan. 1 (BD) and four wintered at Gray Lodge N.W.R. (BD); on the coast, one wintered at Bolinas and another was nearby at Palomarin Jan. 21 (DDeS). High numbers of Winter Wrens in the n. Sierra indicated a substantial influx this winter (DA, BS). The island's second Bewick's Wren which arrived Oct. 14 remained at F.I. through the period. A Long-billed Marsh Wren at Dechambeau Ponds in the Mono Basin Jan. 1 (CS) must have wintered. A Cañon Wren wintered at Whitmore, Shasta Co. (BKI).

THRUSHES THROUGH VIREOS — A Brown Thrasher at Killgore Hills near Yreka, Siskiyou Co., Jan. 16 (+RE, +MR) provided the second Siskiyou County record. The only wintering Sage Thrasher was at Los Baños Dec. 20+ (KFC); one that arrived at F.I., Oct. 21 remained until Dec. 7.

"Irruptive frugivores" staged an impressive invasion coincident with the onset of rain. American Robin, Varied and Hermit thrushes (in order of abundance) were common on the coast, innercoast and C.V. "As common as I've ever seen them here" was a typical judgment from all lowland areas and applied to any of the 3 species. The influx was apparently weather related rather than the result of any abundance of food. On the coast, the possibility that numbers of Varied and Hermit thrushes were simply more visible after being driven-out of their usual deep canyon haunts by the flooding (DDeS, RS) is certainly a valid consideration. An influx of W. Bluebirds during January into coastal Del Norte, Humboldt and Marin cos. was noted (RAE, DDeS). Mountain Bluebirds were found along Little Panoche Rd., San Benito Co. (m.ob.), in e. Alameda County (AE) and in the Sacramento Valley (m.ob.) in high numbers. Townsend's Solitaire, usually a lowland rarity, was found in *unprecedented* numbers with 36 lowland reports received: 25 from the S.F. Bay area (Alameda 3, Contra Costa 7, Marin 8, Napa 1, Santa Clara 2, San Mateo 2, Sonoma 2) eight from the C.V. (Fresno 2, Sutter 2, Yolo 4) and two from the n. coast (Humboldt and Del Norte) and one from

F.I. Records predominated in late January through February, however several were found during the CBC period. "More than expected" were also encountered at higher elevations with ten at Red Mt., Del Norte Co., Dec. 19 (RAE) and ten + in the Yreka-Weed area of Siskiyou Co., Jan. 31 (B & CY). Ten Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were at coastal or near coastal locations between the Bay Area and Monterey; 17 at Creighton Ranch Dec. 29 (*fide* RH) seemed high and one was at Colusa Dec. 5 (WA), both locations in the C.V.

Although many CBCs recorded all time high numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets (see autumn report), populations declined rather drastically following the onset of the severe winter storms, especially along the coast (see tables below) a circumstance most probably attributable to high mortality. Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Townsend's Warbler, Winter Wren and Hutton's Vireo also crashed, at least along the coast, subsequent to the storms (P.R.B.O., RS, JE, RHA). Bohemian Waxwings were present in Siskiyou County Dec. 25-Feb. 26 with a peak of 190 at Yreka Jan. 22 (RE, MR). In Lassen County near Susanville, up to 350 were seen Feb. 7 & 15 (DA). Cedar Waxwings preferred the C.V. to the coast with the largest concentrations around Sacramento and Colusa (JML, WA). Twenty-five N. Shrikes seemed high with four on the Modoc Plateau, nine in the C.V. and 12+ on the n. coast. Loggerhead Shrike was not well-reported.

A Hutton's Vireo at Los Baños Dec. 29 (KFC) was out of place, and three in the Sutter Buttes (BD) for the second year in a row may indicate colonization in the future. A Solitary Vireo of the Great Basin race (*V.s. plumbeus*) was well-described from Los Baños Dec. 29 (+KFC), apparently representing the first winter record of this form within the Region (however, see Garrett and Dunn, *Birds of Southern California*). The vast majority of mid-winter records are of coastal *cassinii* as was a bird heard singing at Pescadero, San Mateo Co., Jan. 3 (SL). A single Warbling Vireo at Carmel Dec. 30 (SG) was one of very few winter records, all coastal.

Table 1. Banding totals of passerines at P.R.B.O.'s field station at Palomarin; Birds/100 net hours

	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
1976-1980 mean:	15.4	17.2	9.7	6.85	5.08	3.30
1981-1982:	11.7	28.4	16.1	5.75	3.36	1.62

Unprecedented numbers this fall (October and November) were attributable to high numbers of kinglets of both species. The disparity between fall and winter totals probably reflects extreme mortality suffered by kinglets and other small passerines following the onset of winter storms in mid-December.

WARBLERS — Only three mid-winter Black-and-white Warblers were reported: two+ in S.F., Jan. 1-Feb. 28+ (DM, *fide* SFB) and one at Half Moon Bay, San Mateo Co., Feb. 10-24 (PJM). Six Tennessee Warblers Dec. 3-Jan. 2 along the coast was about average; apparently none over-wintered. Orange-crowned Warbler numbers were much reduced on the n. coast (RAE), but about average (DS), or perhaps slightly low (JE) on the c. coast; unusual were concentrations of 11 at Union City, Alameda Co., Dec. 27 (E & AM) and 20 at Mendota W.M.A., Jan. 7 (KH). Ten Nashville Warblers along the coast Dec. 1-Jan. 1 was about average, however one at F.I., Dec. 11-16 was late there, and one at Lost L., Fresno Co., Jan. 13 (+F. Young *et al.*) was unprecedented on the valley floor in winter. Four Yellow Warblers were as follows: Los Baños Dec. 29 (KFC), Pajaro R., Santa Cruz Co., Jan. 1 (SG), Arcata Jan. 17-Feb. 2 (GS) and Foster City Feb. 10 & 21 (PJM). The relative abundance of "Myrtle" and "Audubon's" races of Yellow-rumped Warblers (see AB 27:660-661) is difficult to assess due to sparse reporting by otherwise thorough observers. However, something unusual was happening this winter. In the East Bay "Myrtles" appeared to be about 80% as numerous as "Audubon's". At Pt. Reyes it was thought that Yellow-rumps (in this case "Myrtles") were particularly hard hit by the severe weather (RS), and at Palomarin and Lafayette (LF) numbers were generally low. It is interesting to note that at F.I., where winter arrival is rare, 2 waves of Yellow-rumps were recorded Jan. 6 & 11 during hiatuses in the storm track, providing the island with record high counts for winter. "Myrtle" types were more prevalent than "Audubon's" at F.I., during the period. To explain the season's skewed ratio we should consider 3 possible factors: 1) a low year for "Audubon's", 2) storm-related mortality and 3) storm-related dispersal. Increasing



Townsend's Solitaire, Drawing by Keith Hansen.

numbers of Black-throated Gray Warblers continue to be found in winter; eight were reported Dec. 20-Feb. 6, all from inner-coastal and interior lowlands. High numbers of Townsend's Warblers on the c. coast in December (DM, LCB, P.R.B.O.) all but disappeared with the onset of storms. Of 21 + Palm Warblers, 17 were on the n. coast; three were on the coast at Pt. Reyes and Monterey and one was inland at Willow Cr., Humboldt Co. (KR). Common Yellowthroat deserves more attention from observers. Eight Wilson's Warblers (most in late December) was a winter record; all but one near Fresno Jan. 9 (*fide* FRG) were on the c. coast. Four Am. Redstarts were found Dec. 20-Jan. 1; three in Monterey (SG, BDP, PJM), one in Santa Cruz (SG).

ICTERIDS THROUGH TANAGERS — An imm. ♂ Orchard Oriole was at Pacific Grove Dec. 30 (†RS); winter records are scarce. The Hooded Oriole that arrived at F.I., in mid-November remained until Dec. 5; three others were in Fresno (KH, *fide* FRG) where most winter records occur. Of 11 coastal N. Orioles, five were "Bullock's", five were "Baltimore" and one was unspecified. The Great-tailed Grackle pair returned to S.F., Jan. 14-16 (*fide* SFB) having last been reported in mid-summer. A single ♀ W. Tanager was at Chico Jan. 2 (KC, KVV) and two wintered in Novato, Marin Co. (SC). A ♀ Summer Tanager (race?) arrived at S.F., Dec. 22 (DM) and remained in the vicinity through the period eating honey bees (*fide* SFB).

Four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks between Santa Rosa and Monterey were found Dec. 9 through the period, however no Black-headed were reported. The Region's first winter Lazuli Bunting visited a feeder from mid-January through the period (†E. Greaves). Singles and small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks appeared sporadically at lowland locations; the only places where they were present all winter in good numbers was at Chester, Plumas Co. (DA), Whitmore, Shasta Co. (BKI) and Redding (*fide* BKI). On the immediate coast at Palomarin, Purple and House finch numbers were rather low; siskins were erratic and low after mid-December (P.R.B.O.). In contrast, high numbers of Purple Finches and exceptional (perhaps unprecedented) numbers of siskins were in the C.V. (KH, JML, TL, BED *et al.*). Cassin's Finch moved downslope to the L. Almanor area where there were "more than ever" (DA) and Yreka where they were common daily although "virtually unrecorded prior to this winter" (RE, MR). A coastal vagrant at Coyote Hills, Alameda Co., Feb. 27 (†KFC) was well-described. The only report of Gray-crowned Rosy Finch was of 350 at Honey L., Feb. 6 (BS). Fewer than ten Lawrence's Goldfinch were reported, all in December: those not reported on CBCs were at Alamo Dec. 2 (JRI), Sebastopol, Sonoma Co., Dec. 17 (LCB) and the Sutter Buttes Dec. 6 (BD), all unusual locations. The only Red Crossbill away from the mountains was in S.F., Jan. 30 (DM). An extremely late migrant Rufous-sided Towhee arrived at F.I., Dec. 16 and unusually high numbers wintered at Gray Lodge (BD). The only Lark Bunting reports (after high numbers this fall) were at Creighton Ranch Jan. 28 (RH) and Lost L., Fresno Co., Jan. 29 (KH).

A Grasshopper Sparrow near San Jose Dec. 20 (†WB) provided one of very few winter records; the winter status of this species is poorly understood and those records available are for December; thereafter, the species is virtually unrecorded until Apr. 1. Four Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found at 3 of the usual locations. Rufous-crowned Sparrows were well-reported at usual locations: two at Palomarin Dec. 2 was unusual in winter, and one at Old La Honda Rd., San Mateo Co., Dec. 22 (WB) was one of few county records. Three Black-throated Sparrows at Table Mt., Madera Co., Dec. 23 (*fide* RH, FRG) augment fewer than 6 previous winter records for the Region. Tree Sparrows were found at usual Great Basin locations in mid-January; two near Chico Jan. 2 (SL) has only one C.V. precedent. Chipping Sparrows at Carmel Dec. 30-31 (SG *et al.*) and San Mateo County Dec. 22 (*fide* CB, WB) were late for the coast. Single Harris' Sparrows were near Yreka Dec. 15-Jan. 1 (RE), Arcata Nov. 28-Dec. 15 (*fide* RAE) and in e. Lake County Jan. 2 (JH, BD); the occurrence of this rare visitant seems arbitrary. White-crowned Sparrows were "glaringly absent" from F.I., where they usually winter, and numbers of both *nuttalli* and *pugetensis* were both low at Palomarin. By contrast, at an e. San Jose banding station White-crowns were more common than usual, attributable primarily to a high number of *gambelii* (*pugetensis* 88: *gambelii* 492) (LRM). While virtually all *pugetensis* at Palomarin were adults returning for a second+ time, the ratio of adults to immatures (36:52) at San Jose was comparable to previous years (LRM). Numbers of Golden-crowned Sparrows were way down at Palomarin, but the species was unreported elsewhere. A record 45+ White-throated Sparrows at

about 25 locations included 11-15 carefully tallied visiting a single feeder in Inverness (RS)! Numbers of Fox Sparrows were lower than usual at least at Palomarin and Lafayette (LF), but high in the Sweetwater Cr. area, Folsom Co. (JML). Swamp Sparrows were not found at the usual wintering spot in Olema Marsh after the floods of early January (DS), however singles at L. Earl, Del Norte Co., Dec. 28-Jan. 11 (GL, RAE, GS), Upper San Leandro Res., Alameda Co., Dec. 7 (†KFC) and two at Willow Cr., Sonoma Co., Dec. 27 (DE) represent new locations. The last coastal Lapland Longspurs were four+ at Pt. Reyes Feb. 25 (DS); one was at Davis, Solano Co., Jan. 23 (RAE); the species is seldom encountered in the C.V. The only Chestnut-collared Longspurs were at Pt. Reyes Dec. 6 (*fide* SFB) and Honey L., Feb. 6 (BS). A single Snow Bunting was at Big Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Dec. 22 (*fide* RAE).

CORRIGENDA — The location of Spotted Owls in AB 35:975 should read Lassen Nat'l Forest *not* Lassen Volcano N.P. The arrival date for Ash-throated Flycatcher in AB 35:857 should read April 11, Tehama Co. (RAE), not March 23, Marin Co. (DS).

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Smew. Drawing by Keith Hansen.