

/Jules Evens and Ron LeValley

The ocean water temperatures also reflected an unusual winter weatherwise as surface temperatures stayed constant throughout the period rather than cooling slightly as they normally do. By the end of the period the ocean surface temperatures were up to 2°C above the 20-year average along the entire California coast.

With the exception of the northwest counties where the Madrone (*Arbutus*) berry crop was exceptional (KVR, RLeV), irruptive species were scarce. The general consensus was that Band-tailed Pigeon, Varied Thrush, American Robin, Hermit Thrush and Golden-crowned Kinglet were extremely low in number. Usually common montane species and wintering migrants, especially fringillids, were also scarce or very localized. Insectivores were present in moderate numbers, perhaps showing partial recovery after last winter's high mortality. Despite the dearth of usual wintering species, unusual numbers of neo-tropical migrants, both summer residents and several vagrants, man-

A detailed map of California, showing major cities, geographical features, and transportation routes. The map includes labels for the Pacific Ocean, San Francisco Bay, and various mountain ranges like the Sierra Nevada and Coast Range. Major cities such as San Francisco, Sacramento, San Jose, and Los Angeles are marked. The map also shows the state's borders with Oregon, Nevada, and Arizona, and the Gulf of Mexico.

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

All records from Palomarin and the Farallon Islands (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 regional editors or with the California Rarities Committee.

LOONS THROUGH TUBENOSES — The only Yellow-billed Loon of the season was reported from Tomales Bay, Marin Co., Dec. 18 (CS). A Red-throated Loon at Avacado L., Fresno Co., Jan. 8-13 (KH, GP+) established a first county record. An Arctic Loon on L. Shastina, Siskiyou Co., Dec. 1 (RE, MRO), a Com. Loon at Staten I., San Joaquin Co., Dec. 19 (*fide* DY) and another at Folsom L., Sacramento Co., Jan. 6 (BED) rounded out the inland reports for the winter. This was a fairly typical number but is in contrast to last year when more than twice as many were found inland in spite of the abundant water in inland reservoirs both years. Twelve Red-necked Grebes on Tomales Bay Dec. 18 (CSw) 40+ at Limantour Dec. 18 (JE+) and nine along the Monterey waterfront Dec. 30 (LCB) were the only concentrations. Elsewhere they were considered scarce this winter. It is becoming clear that the light-phase of the W. Grebe is a fairly rare bird along the coast n. of Sonoma County where only two were reported. One was in the Mad R. Estuary Jan. 19 (RLeV) and one was in Crescent City Harbor Feb. 11 (RAE).

Single Laysan Albatrosses were sighted offshore from Monterey Bay Feb. 5 (†JD) & 19 (KHb, PU). Northern Fulmars were fairly common until mid-December and then became scarce possibly as a result of the warm water. Up to three Short-tailed Shearwaters were found on Monterey Bay Jan. 14-Feb. 28 (CF, JLu, BLAb, RS). Only a few Manx Shearwaters were reported in spite of the warmer waters and their apparent preference for such. The greatest number seen was eight near Pt. Pinos, Monterey Co., Feb. 28 (RS).

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — Brown Pelicans lingered in the Region later than usual but not in quite the numbers of last year. Double-crested Cormorants were well reported from inland localities this winter with 230 at the Stockton Sewage Ponds, San Joaquin Co., Feb. 5 (DY) the maximum. American Bittern numbers were considered lower around Gray Lodge Wildlife Area due to the management practice of burning dense stands of cattails to provide nesting habitat for ducks (BED). Concern was also expressed for their numbers around Santa Cruz, where one was at Neary's Lagoon Dec. 5 (BLAb). A Least Bittern, always a rare find in n. California, delighted many observers at the Palo Alto Baylands Dec. 29-Feb. 29. Another was heard at Gray Lodge W.A., Dec. 11 (BED). A Great Egret wandered to the Farallon Is., Feb. 4 (P.R.B.O., JS) to establish the first winter record there and to illustrate that even this normally sedentary species can wander some during non-migratory periods. The Great Egret population of the n. Central Valley (hereafter, C.V.) was estimated in the low hundreds. Their present distribution finds them as far as n. Willows, Glenn Co., and Richvale, Butte Co. (BED). Cattle Egrets seem to have reached a somewhat stable population in our Region, the past few years have seen a decline in reports from new areas and few spectacular concentrations. They have gained a substantial foothold in the s. San Joaquin Valley where it is possible to see in excess of 100 in a day but elsewhere they remain scarce and sporadic.

The flock of White-faced Ibises that wintered in Colusa County last year returned by Nov. 11 when 45 were at Colusa N.W.R. (FBr). The last sighting of these birds was Jan. 22 when the flock had grown to 75 birds (FBr). Newly reported information indicates that this flock has been wintering in this area since 1978-79 (BED). A concentration of 300 White-faced Ibises near Gustine, Merced Co., Mar. 1 (RS) and a flock of nine near W. Pittsburg that established the first Contra Costa County record were also good news for this species, whose numbers in our Region have been increasing slowly over the last 5 years.

WATERFOWL — Seventeen thousand Whistling Swans (of 55,000 statewide) were in the Sacramento Valley n. of the Yolo Bypass Jan. 19 (BED). Substantial coastal numbers were found in traditional areas near the Garcia R. Mouth, Mendocino Co., Dec. 31-Jan. 22 where 280 wintered (BDP, CSw) and in the Eel R. Bottoms, Humboldt Co., where 400 were estimated in January (JE) and 300+ were estimated

Feb. 28 (LD). The first coastal record of a swan thought to be of the *bewickii* race was at Bolinas Lagoon, Marin Co., Dec. 12-13 (†DDes, BDP). Forty thousand Ross' Geese at Gray Lodge W.A., during December were almost half of the Canadian estimate of 92,000 for this species (BED). Greater than normal numbers of Ross', Snow and Canada geese were found scattered in almost every coastal county. The endangered Aleutian Canada Goose continues its apparent increase in numbers with an all time high count of 3500 at Gray Lodge W.A., this winter (BED).

Most duck species continued their scarcity through the winter season despite the abundance of suitable habitat seemingly everywhere. An impressive 150 Wood Ducks were counted in a riparian area of Colusa N.W.R., Dec. 30 and Jan. 20 (FBr). The only dabbling ducks reported in good numbers were 150,000 Pintails at Merced N.W.R., Jan. 17 (RB) and 100,000 in flooded rice fields in the Yolo Bypass area all winter (TB).

The winter waterbird surveys in San Francisco and San Pablo Bays counted 12,909 Canvasbacks Jan. 4, about the same number as last year but well below the 40,000 average during the early 1970s (RWL). Likewise 38,109 Scaup and 9865 Scoters were approximately half of the recent average (RWL). Four Tufted Ducks, rare annual visitors to n. California, were found this winter; a female at Foster City, San Mateo Co., Feb. 20-26 (SFB, †RAW, †JM), a male at Mill Valley, Marin Co., Feb. 20 (*fide* Gull) a male at the Napa Sewage Ponds Dec. 26 (*fide* Gull) and an ad. male at Muddy Hollow Pond, Limantour Dec. 18 (JE+). The ad. ♂ *Smew* returned for its second winter to Foster City. It was first sighted Dec. 1 (KH), when it still showed traces of eclipse plumage. The last sighting this year was Feb. 13 (KHb) whereas last year's apparent departure date was Feb. 18. Hooded Mergansers were well reported; 60 at Tulelake N.W.R., Dec. 5 (RE, MRO), was one of the largest gatherings ever recorded in our Region. Other notable concentrations were 25 on the Bliss Ranch, Del Norte Co., Dec. 11 (PS) and 26 at Foster City Jan. 19 (PJM). Single Red-breasted Mergansers at L. Shastina, Siskiyou Co., Dec. 1 and Jan. 9, and at Tulelake N.W.R., Dec. 5 were notable because most of our inland records are for the fall and spring periods.



Steller's Eider, Crescent City Harbor, Del Norte Co., Feb. 19, 1983. Photo/R. Ekstrom.

Big news was made by the eider ducks this winter. Up to three **King Eiders** were in n. California; an apparent female at Fort Point, San Francisco Dec. 12 (*fide* Gull), an imm. male at Moss Landing Dec. 18 (*fide* Gull) and most cooperatively, a female at the Emeryville Marina, Alameda Co., Dec. 19-Jan. 22 (†JM, †KHb *et al.*). Topping all other reports this season was the imm. ♀ **Steller's Eider** discovered Jan. 16 in the Crescent City Harbor, Del Norte Co. (JR) and rediscovered Feb. 6 (†RAE, †RLeV, m.ob.). This established the first Pacific coast record s. of Vancouver I., Canada. Harlequin Ducks were reported in small numbers from 10 coastal localities s. to Monterey Harbor illustrating their localized status in the Region. Oldsquaws continue to be found in smaller than normal numbers for the second consecutive winter. Only 7 sightings were reported; most notable were three at the Klamath R. Estuary Dec. 18 (RAE, GL).

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — Early migrating Turkey Vultures were spotted near Auburn, Placer Co., Jan. 28 (BBa) and e. of Somes Bar, Siskiyou Co., Feb. 1 (KVR). Six Ospreys were found wintering in n. California, equally divided between inland and coastal localities as is

normal. Mixed reports were received concerning the status of White-tailed Kites in the Region, probably indicating local variation in population levels as a result of natural fluctuations in the availability of food. Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were reported in much lower than normal numbers this winter along the coast with normal or slightly better numbers inland. Their scarcity along the coast may well be tied to this year's paucity of landbirds.

This fall's invasion of Broad-winged Hawks extended into the winter as might be expected from the much later than normal influx. At least 15 individuals were documented during the winter, all between the coastal counties of Marin and Monterey. Red-tailed Hawks were considered to be present in very good numbers, especially in the San Joaquin Valley. The very rare "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk appeared in the Region with singles at Bay Farm I., Alameda Co., Dec. 11 (JM), Lake of the Pines, Nevada Co., Dec. 18 (JML), near Table Mt., Madera Co., Dec. 19 (*fide* KH) and along E. Butte Rd., Sutter Co., Jan. 5 (BED). Since light-phase individuals of this subspecies are unknown, despite illustrations to the contrary in popular field guides, the true identity of birds reported as such is a real enigma. Fair numbers of Ferruginous Hawks wintered in the Region while Rough-legged Hawks were considered to be present in good but not great numbers. Five ad. Rough-legged Hawks along Hwy 395 n. of Mono L., Dec. 30 (DDeS) were impressive as nearly all individuals normally coming to California are immature-plumaged birds. Good fall numbers of Merlins remained into the winter in most areas, only in Del Norte and San Joaquin cos. were numbers considered lower than normal.

Common Gallinules were present in excellent numbers throughout the C.V., and around s. San Francisco Bay. Sandhill Cranes were found in good numbers at traditional sites with 1200 wintering between Gray Lodge, the Butte Sink and Chico (BED), 5000 wintering near Woodbridge Rd., San Joaquin Co. (DY) and 3000 along Sandy Marsh Rd., Merced Co., Mar. 1 (RS).

SHOREBIRDS — American Golden Plovers of the *fulva* race wintered on Pt. Reyes with a maximum of 16 on Jan 30 (DDeS); five also wintered at Lawson's Landing on the e. side of Tomales Bay (JE). Singles were found on F.I., until Dec. 14 (P.R.B.O.) and near Ft. Dick, Del Norte Co., until Jan. 4 (*fide* RAE), while two were at Pigeon Pt., San Mateo Co., Dec. 26 (*fide* PJM). Away from the coast one wintered with a flock of Black-bellied Plovers at the Lodi Sewage Ponds, San Joaquin Co. (DY). Thirty-three Snowy Plovers on the Foster City mudflats were probably forced into San Francisco Bay because of eroded beaches along the outer coasts (PJM). Likewise 69 on Doran Beach, Bodega Bay Dec. 4 was a high number at that protected locality (NTC). Mountain Plovers again wintered in the Panoche Valley where 213 were counted Feb. 26 (KHb, PU). Seven along Sandy Marsh Rd., Merced Co., Mar. 1 (RS) were in an area where much higher numbers were once regular.

A Black Oystercatcher on Castle Rocks, Contra Costa Co., inside San Francisco Bay Dec. 29 (RWL) was at an unusual locality. Perhaps it was another fugitive from the ocean storms. A concentration of 7220 Am. Avocets on a single salt pond near Menlo P., in the S. San Francisco Bay N.W.R., Dec. 1 (RWL) illustrated how abundant this species can be at favored places in our Region. A roost of 47 Lesser Yellowlegs at the Leslie Salt Ponds, Alameda Co., Jan. 2 (TG, KH) was the largest winter gathering on record. One thousand Long-billed Curlews near Liberty Island Rd., Solano Co., Feb. 10 (TB +) was an impressive number for mid-winter. A few Marbled Godwits wintered in the San Joaquin Valley as usual but two e. of Sacramento N.W.R., Dec. 3 (WA) were n. of regular wintering areas. A single Marbled Godwit wintering in Crescent City Harbor (RAE +) was unusual for its northerly coastal presence. Inland Sanderlings are always unusual but 2-3 at the Los Banos Sewage Ponds Feb. 11-14 (†FBR) established the first winter record away from coastal areas. They also penetrated far into the San Francisco Bay area with 12 at the Benicia Marina, Solano Co., Dec. 27 (JLo). After this fall's spectacular **Pectoral Sandpiper** invasion, one would not be too surprised at a single lingering individual at Pt. Pinos, Monterey Co., Dec. 4 (GM) establishing the latest migrant record for n. California. But overshadowing that sighting were three at the Creighton Ranch Preserve, Tulare Co., Dec. 30 (†KH) that apparently wintered! If further sightings can be confirmed then this would establish the first Regional wintering record and one of the few for North America. And Merced County came up with its fourth Ruff for

the year Dec. 23 along Sandy Marsh Rd., that was described as identical to a male found near there last February (RJB). One wonders how many individuals of these unusual shorebirds stop in at the same location year after year. Our second winter record of Wilson's Phalarope was well-described from the Los Banos Sewage Ponds Dec. 11-12 (†FBR). The only other winter record was from February 1980.

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Two Parasitic Jaegers off Moss Landing, Monterey Co., Jan. 1 (PJM) and one Pomarine Jaeger off Crescent City Dec. 20 (GSL) were the only jaegers reported this winter, far fewer than normal. Away from the Stockton Sewage Ponds, where the adult was present through Feb. 25, another ad. Little Gull was found at the Salinas R. Mouth, Monterey Co., Jan. 30-Feb. 20 (DR, JD, SFB). Stockton's Black-headed Gull wandered over to the Lodi Sewage Ponds Feb. 11 (DY) for a visit. It was present at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Feb. 28 +. Up to 100 Mew Gulls wintered at the Stockton Sewage Ponds while another 100 were at the Lodi Sewage Ponds, both impressive numbers for inland localities (DY). An adult at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Feb. 16 was in an area where this species is very scarce (SS). Inland Glaucous-winged Gulls were discovered at the Davis Dump, Yolo Co., Dec. 25-26 (JML) and at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Feb. 5 (DY). Also at the Davis Dump was a second-winter Glaucous Gull Feb. 6 (JD). Along the coast where this species is more regularly encountered only 8 other sightings were reported, substantially below the annual winter average. Three imm. Caspian Terns wintered at the Creighton Ranch Preserve to establish our first certain winter records away from the coast (KH), although it is possible that a small wintering population has been overlooked there. Thirty Forster's Terns at the Russian R. mouth, Sonoma Co., Dec. 30 (CSw) and 51 at Bodega Harbor Feb. 12 (NTC) were high numbers for winter. Coincidentally six were n. as far as the Arcata Marsh, Humboldt Co., Jan. 6 (*fide* LD) where they are very scarce in the winter.

Probably related to the warm ocean waters and repeated storms, Com. Murres failed to haul out in normal winter numbers on F.I. this winter. Ocean conditions and behavior such as this have led many observers to predict a disastrous seabird breeding season this coming summer.

PIGEONS THROUGH OWLS — Band-tailed Pigeons wintered in large numbers in e. Humboldt/s. Siskiyou/w. Trinity cos., with flocks of up to 1000 by early February (KR). Flocks of 75-100 were on the coast in Humboldt County in early December (GSL); elsewhere the species was virtually absent. A White-winged Dove at Bodega Head Dec. 11 (BDP) provided one of few winter records (all coastal); the only other Sonoma County record was also in December. Eight Mourning Doves were at 3 near-coastal Del Norte County locations Dec. 19 (BED, GSL, RT) and six were near Ft. Dick Feb. 13 (RT). One at F.I., Dec. 7-8 furnished the second winter record for the island. Judging from the dearth of reports, microtine dependent owl species are still experiencing a population lull (see AB 36:890). Fifteen Pygmy Owls from 8 expected locations was about average, however one — two in Killgore Hills, Siskiyou Co., Dec. 30 & Jan. 15 (RE, MRo) was unusual; the species is scarce in the Shasta Valley (RE, MRo). The only Spotted Owls were three in Willow Cr. Canyon, Sonoma Co., Dec. 12 (BDP). Two **Barred Owls** are still present: one at Salyer, Trinity Co., heard regularly after mid-January (KVR, JSW) and the one at Redwood N.P., Del Norte Co., was refound Feb. 19 +. Fourteen Long-eared Owls were seen at 5 C.V. locations; ten others were on the Marin coast, two at Bolinas Lagoon through Dec. 29 (BS *et al.*) and eight near Drake's Estero, P.R.N.S., Dec. 18. Notable was a roadkill at Stone Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Dec. 12 (GJS, *Humboldt State Univ.) since the species is casual away from Cape Medocino in Humboldt and unrecorded in nearby Del Norte County (*fide* RAE). Short-eared Owl is enigmatic; the scarcity of recent reports may indeed be a reflection of "no voles, no owls", however such a facile explanation should not blind us to the possibility that this species is undergoing a non-cyclical population decline — an opinion that is emerging among some biologists (*fide* G. Gould). The Dec. 30, 1982 Federal Register (Vol 47, No. 251) which "identifies vertebrate animal taxa, native to the U.S., being considered for addition to the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife" does not include Short-eared Owl. Perhaps it is not too early to seriously evaluate the status of this species. Saw-whets were not widely reported; only eight from "near coastal locations."

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Vaux's Swift was again found at Pescadero Marsh, San Mateo Co., with 14 there on the Año Nuevo CBC Dec. 26 (*fide* PJM). An early ♂ Rufous Hummingbird was at Ripon, San Joaquin Co., Jan. 19 (*fide* DY). Arrival of Allen's Hummingbird was also on the early side at Santa Cruz Jan. 11 (BSc), Alamo Jan. 13 (JR), Inverness Jan. 19 (RS) and Palomar Jan. 24. Anna's Hummingbirds were in courtship flight by early January in coastal Del Norte County, but failed to winter in Siskiyou County where the first returnee was recorded Feb. 19 at Forks of Salmon (MRo). Exceptional, but not unprecedented, were two wintering Costa's Hummingbirds: an ad. male in El Cerrito, Contra Costa Co., Dec. 27 through the period (*fide* Gull) and a courting male at Pacific Grove Feb. 3 (LCB). Fewer than usual "Yellow-shafted" Flickers and more than usual "hybrids" or introgressives probably reflected the changing discrimination of observers rather than the distribution of the flickers (see *Continental Birdlife* Vol. 1, No. 1:4-15). No one mentioned "Red-shafted" types; were numbers low? A Pileated Woodpecker at Putah Cr., Yolo/Solano Co., Dec. 19 (S. Saunders, R. Palmer) was new for the CBC and the area in general (TB), perhaps a stray from the Vaca-Berryessa Mts. Peripheral habitat around the Sutter Buttes may be decreasing, thus accounting for the decrease in Acorn Woodpeckers there (BED), however numbers within the Buttes themselves remain stable according to CBC data (*fide* BED). Concentrations of Lewis' Woodpecker were as follows: nine at San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara Co., Dec. 21 (WGB), 22 in the e. San Joaquin County foothills Jan. 1 (DY) and 75 at Gardnerville, Nevada (just outside the Region) Jan. 2 (DDeS). None was found on the floor of the C.V. or in the Stony Creek drainage, Glenn Co. where they were concentrated last winter (BED). "Red-breasted" Sapsuckers were scarce, however an imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*S.v. varius*) was at Pacific Grove Dec. 31 (†JSt, LCB). The only Williamson's Sapsucker was at L. Almanor (on the CBC) Dec. 27 (HG). Nuttall's Woodpecker moves coastward during the non-breeding season on the central coast, however one on Tomales Pt., P.R.N.S., Dec. 28 (DS) was far out.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Two Tropical Kingbirds were found near the coast: one at Princeton Harbor, San Mateo Co., Dec. 14-20 (B. Sauppe, *fide* PJM) and one at L. Merritt, Oakland Dec. 31-Jan. 14 (R. Young, JM *et al.*). Late migrants may remain as long as a fortnight, but seldom overwinter. Where do they go? Winter records of W. Kingbirds often find their way into these pages and the CBC summaries, but few are substantiated with verifiable details. This season a report from near Dinuba, Tulare Co., Feb. 6 (RG) was received without supporting details. It may be premature to judge, but winter Cassin's Kingbird sightings seem to be increasing: one at Los Banos Res., Dec. 28 was "plunging into the water head first then perching on a 'no swimming' sign" (†KH *et al.*). Ash-throated Flycatcher presents the same problem as W. Kingbird—unsubstantiated records. This season there were two: Coyote Cr., Alviso Dec. 27 one mist-netted, banded and photographed was probably seen again Jan. 19 (LRM), one at Fresno State College Feb. 9 (JS) was "immaculately described" (*fide* KH), but details of neither were seen by the editors. A *Myiarchus* sp. was reported from Palo Alto Feb. 18 (P. Browning, *fide* WGB). Two E. Phoebes were in Monterey: one in El Estero Cemetery Nov. 23-Feb. 19 (DR, LCB, BDP) for the third winter, one in Pacific Grove Dec. 30-Feb. 3 (LCB). One 2 mi e. of Manchester Jan. 2 (†OJK *et al.*) was also coastal, but a first record for Mendocino County. Records are decidedly scarce n. of Sonoma County. Three active observers (KFC, BED, DY) noted an increase of Black Phoebe in the C.V. this winter. It would be interesting to compare CBC data and determine if this is a long-term trend. A Say's Phoebe on the Klamath R., near Happy Camp Jan. 8 (RE, MRo) may have wintered; first migrants were at Shasta Valley Feb. 2 (RE, MRo) and near Orleans, Humboldt Co., Feb. 23 (KVR). A W. Flycatcher, very rare in winter, was found on the Moss Landing CBC at Elkhorn Slough Jan. 1 (DR *et al.*) and Smith R. mouth Dec. 19 (SWH, *fide* RAE). The Pt. Reyes Eur. Skylark remained at least through Jan. 14 (LCB).

Violet-green Swallows were found in their usual small winter numbers along the coast. C.V. records were of 6-7 at Sacramento N.W.R., Jan. 15 (JW) and one (straggler?) at Creighton Ranch Dec. 3 (KH, CP). Tree Swallows, however, were found wintering in higher than normal concentrations. Significant numbers included 500-600 at Grizzly Is., Solano Co., Dec. 10 (BDP) 200 in W. Pittsburg, Contra Costa Co., Dec. 24-25 (RAE), and 1400+ near Merced Wildlife Ref., Dec. 24 (E

& AM). Arrival of Tree Swallows Feb. 1 was the earliest ever at Palomar, and ten near Ft. Dick, Del Norte Co., Feb. 6 "may have wintered" (RAE). Rough-winged Swallows investigating nest sites at Crystal Springs Feb. 17 and Woodside Feb. 23 (PJM) were a bit early for San Mateo County and four at Paicines Res., San Benitos Co., in February were fairly early there (KVV, KC). Two winter records of Barn Swallow come from the coast: one at Pescadero Marsh Dec. 26 (*fide* PJM), and two at Elkhorn Slough Jan. 1 (DR *et al.*).

CHICKADEES THROUGH THRASHERS — How common Black-capped Chickadee is on the n. coast in winter is indicated by the following records: 30 at Klamath Dec. 18 (RAE, GSL) and 45 between L. Earl and L. Talawa Dec. 19 (RLeV, LD). Numbers of Bushtit at Palomar have apparently rebounded from last winter's mortality. The species was again found on the Los Banos CBC (*fide* KFC) after last year's precedent. Brown Creeper numbers at Palomar have not recovered from last winter's mortality. House Wren is fairly common in the San Joaquin in winter, but unusually scarce in the Sacramento Valley and on the coast. This winter was an exception. Of 30 records, 4 were from Napa/Solano Cos., 3 from the Sacramento Valley, 23 from the immediate coast (16 on the Monterey Pen. CBC!). Most notable of the coastal records was a single bird in coastal dunes w. of Ft. Dick, Del Norte Co., Dec. 19 (GSL *et al.*). Canyon Wren is rarely reported from the n. part of its range, especially in winter, so one in the Skeddaddle Mts., e. of Honey L., Lassen Co., Feb. 20 (R. Harris, *fide* DAA) was of interest. A Sage Thrasher at Redwood Valley Feb. 21 (†P. & S. Baldwin) was only the second record for Mendocino County. The date corresponds to the species migratory timing and suggests that this bird was a transient.

THRUSHES THROUGH WAXWINGS — Except for a few flocks in the San Joaquin Valley (Los Banos and Manteca), Am. Robin was virtually absent from the lowlands. However, in the Willow Cr. area (w. Humboldt/e. Trinity/s. Siskiyou Cos.) "tremendous numbers were at Madrones until mid-February with a high count of 10,000 on Dec. 2" (KVR, RLeV). Both Varied and Hermit thrushes were absent from most areas. Western Bluebird numbers may have been low in the lowlands. A few flocks of Mountain Bluebirds were found at usual C.V. locations. Seventeen males at Los Banos Dec. 28 (KH, BD *et al.*) was the high count for the Region and a new species for the Los Banos CBC. In contrast to last winter's extraordinary invasion, no Townsend's Solitaires were found in the lowlands. Except for a single report from Sutter N.W.R., Dec. 13 (FBr, T. McElroy), Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were found only at coastal locations: two wintered successfully at Palomar, one at Halfmoon Bay Jan. 13-Feb. 24 (PJM), one at San Gregorio Feb. 3 (PJM), one near Ft. Dick Dec. 19-20 (RAE, GJS, BED *et al.*) and one at Loleta Bottoms, Humboldt Co., Feb. 4 (JSt *et al.*). Although numerous in the Douglas Fir forests around Willow Cr., Golden-crowned Kinglet was entirely absent elsewhere. Ruby-crowned Kinglet was poorly reported, whether through lack of numbers or interest. As with other "irruptive frugivores", Cedar Waxwing was very low everywhere except Willow Cr., Humboldt Co., where they wintered in flocks of up to 200 birds (KVR).

PHAINOPEPLA THROUGH VIREOS — Although Phainopepla occurrence is "irregular", there seems to be a tendency for birds to disperse widely in late fall, perhaps explaining the following 2 records: one female 3 mi n.e. of Grenada, Siskiyou Co., Dec. 7 (RE), one male near Mariposa in the Sierran foothills Dec. 18 (SSch). Only four N. Shrikes were found: two in Del Norte County (GJS, RAE, SS) and two near Honey L. (DAA). The only Solitary Vireo (*cassini*) was in Inverness, Marin Co., Dec. 14-17 (RS).

WARBLERS — After a lackluster fall migration, Black-and-white Warbler made an impressive winter showing with 16 coastal records, mostly between Monterey and Marin. More northerly records included one in the town of Mendocino (1st county record) Dec. 17-23 (†J. Helfer, *fide* OJK), one on the Garcia R., near Ft. Arena Jan. 1 (R. Giebel) and Jan. 26 (GSL), and one at the Smith R., Del Norte Co., Feb. 26 (JML). The **Prothonotary Warbler** reported in the fall from Loleta Bottoms was seen again Feb. 4 (JSt, J. Kelley, D. Krueper) providing the Region with the first winter record. Twelve Tennessee

Warblers between Pacific Grove and Bodega was a high winter tally. Three + of these were confirmed wintering: one + at Pacific Grove Dec. 31-Feb. 27 (JSt, LCB, DR *et al.*) and two + at Carmel Jan. 8-30 (CG, DR *et al.*), most of the others were on CBCs and not relocated. One near Ft. Dick on the n. coast Dec. 19 "may have moved on" (RAE). Orange-crowned Warbler was thought to have wintered in "good numbers", but a review of the CBC totals does not indicate any higher than usual numbers. It was an extraordinary winter for Nashville Warbler. Five to ten are usually found along the coast, and most of these are late fall migrants. This season 34 were reported with at least 15 remaining beyond the discovery date. A Virginia's Warbler at Pacific Grove Dec. 30-Jan. 9 (JSt, LCB, BDP, DR) provided only the Region's second winter report, however neither has been substantiated with a detailed description. **None of our records will stand solely on the observer's reputation (no matter how hot) in 20+ years.** Three Yellow Warblers lingered into December: two at Los Altos Dec. 2 (J. Campbell, *fide* WGB) and one at Seaside, Monterey Co., Dec. 29-30 (R. Branson, *fide* DR). A Cape May Warbler along Rowdy Cr., near Smith R., Dec. 19 (SWH, D. Olson, *fide* RAE) may have been a very late migrant, however there are 2 mid-winter records for the Region. Further evidence of the mid-winter movement by Yellow-rumped Warbler (see AB 36:328) was provided this season with numbers decreasing after the new year in Del Norte County (RAE) and an apparent influx at Palomarin and Gray Lodge (BED) during mid-February. Five "Audubon's" Warblers at Honey L., Feb. 20 were considered "very early migrants" (DAA). The Black-throated Gray Warbler that wintered at Oak Grove Park, n. of Stockton (DY), was the only one of *ten* that was not coastal, in contrast to last winter's high number of interior records. High numbers of Townsend's Warblers were found in Humboldt, Trinity and Siskiyou Cos. (KVR) and on the Monterey Pen. CBC where 486 established a new national record (*fide* DR); numbers were "good" in Del Norte County before the first of the year (RAE); elsewhere, the species was fairly low. Numbers of Hermit Warblers were higher than usual on the Pt. Reyes CBC (8) and the Monterey Pen. CBC (15). Unprecedented wintering in California were *two* **Prairie Warblers** on the immediate coast: one at Pacific Grove Oct. 13-Feb. 5 (A. Baldrige, DR, LCB) and one at Halfmoon Bay, San Mateo Co., Jan. 20-Feb. 18 (†PJM). Palm Warblers winter regularly in small numbers. This year 23 reports was about normal, but 16 of these were during December only and are best considered late migrants. Of 7 records in January and February, 6 were coastal and one was inland at Cotati, Sonoma Co., Dec. 17 & Jan. 7 (LCB). An individual of the "yellow" race (*D.p., hypochrysea*) was in Del Norte County Dec. 19 (RLeV, LD). Of six Wilson's Warblers, very rare in winter, three were coastal December records (one on Pt. Reyes CBC, two on Monterey CBC) and three were wintering records: Halfmoon Bay Dec. 18-Feb. 18 (B. Sauppe), Seaside, Monterey Co., Jan. 27 (BE) and Loleta Bottoms Feb. 4 (JSt *et al.*). An Am. Redstart near Ft. Dick Feb. 13 (RT) provided a first winter record for n.w. California (*fide* RAE).

ICTERIDS THROUGH TANAGERS — Low numbers of Tricolored Blackbirds were found in the San Joaquin Valley, Los Banos and Creighton Ranch CBCs and the species was not well reported elsewhere. Although low numbers may be explained by the species' somewhat nomadic nature, it has been historically vulnerable to a significant population decline in California (to which it is essentially endemic). I can only agree with KFC, compiler of Los Banos CBC, that this species deserves close scrutiny from Regional observers. Please make an effort to document current breeding colonies and report the size and location to this editor. Fortunately, this species is included in the recent Federal Register (Vol. 47, No. 251) and is being considered for inclusion on the list of endangered and threatened wildlife.

A single Orchard Oriole at Pacific Grove Dec. 30-Jan. 2 (†JSt, LCB, BDP, DR *et al.*) was variously described as a female and a young male by experienced observers, underlining the pitfalls of making such a distinction. Three Hooded Orioles were about normal for winter: two in Fresno Jan. 9 & 29 (*fide* KH) and one at Salinas Feb. 12 (KVV, KC). Six N. (Bullocks) Orioles and two "Baltimores" was also normal. The S.F. Great-tailed Grackle was seen boarding a ship at Fisherman's Wharf Nov. 24 (SCH). Ten W. Tanagers was higher than usual. Unusual locations included Willow Cr., Jan. 23 (J. Brack, KVR), two in the upper Napa Valley through the period (JSt) and one 2 mi e of Manchester, Mendocino Co., Jan. 4 (†OK *et al.*). A Summer Tanager

was present at L. Merritt, Oakland Jan. 1-15 (JM, m.ob.).

FRINGILLIDS — One Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Pacific Grove Dec. 30 (LCB, BDP) was the only *Pheucticus* reported. An Indigo Bunting at Bolinas Lagoon Dec. 9 (RS) was *very late* providing the fourth winter period report ever. Evening Grosbeaks, like other montane species, were virtually unrecorded, which makes 22 at Palomarin Jan. 9 remarkable. The finch situation at Palomarin, in general, mirrors the rest of the Region: "Purple Finch a little low; only one House Finch all winter. Siskins were erratic and down quite a bit after mid-December" (P.R.B.O.). Cassin's Finch, Pine Grosbeak, and Rosy Finch were unreported. Other than being "quite conspicuous, as expected" in Del Norte County (RAE), Red Crossbill was also unreported. Two winter records of Green-tailed Towhee were from the s. San Joaquin, as expected: Lost L., Fresno Dec. 19 (KH *et al.*) and Creighton Ranch Jan. 8 (KH). Six Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found, two at each of the following locations: Bolinas Lagoon (one banded in 1980—BDP, DDeS, BS), one mi s. of Dumbarton Bridge, Alameda Co. (†DSch), Palo Alto Baylands (†JM, m.ob.). Seven Vesper Sparrows in Panoche Valley, San Benito Co., Feb. 26 were thought to be *P.g. confinis* based on their gray coloration (PU); either race (*affinis* or *confinis*) is possible in winter and their distribution is not well documented (see Grinnell & Miller, 1944). One Vesper Sparrow was found at Stafford L., Marin Co., Dec. 26 (D. Sierra) and refound Dec. 29 (RS). Juncos were generally low in numbers (DY, P.R.B.O.) so it is not surprising that only eight "Slate-colored" forms were reported. Tree Sparrows are casual out of the Basin, one was at Napa Dec. 26 (†KVV, KC). Coastal Chipping Sparrows included five on Del Monte Golf Course, Monterey Dec. 30 (*fide* DR) and one at Stafford L., Marin Co., Dec. 26 (*fide* DS). Five Clay-colored Sparrows were found on the coast, all in December: two in Sebastopol (LCB), three in Del Norte County (RT, GSL, BED *et al.*). Despite low numbers of other *Zonotrichia*, Harris' Sparrow made a strong showing with 10 records. Those remaining sedentary through winter included: singles near Cotati, Sonoma Co. (LCB, BDP, NC), near Granada, for the first overwintering Siskiyou County record (RE), Sutter Buttes (WA *et al.*), Crescent City, Del Norte Co. (GSL) near Smith R., Del Norte Co. (RT, GSL *et al.*), and in Lee Vining, Mono Co. (DDeS, HG *et al.*).

White-crowned Sparrow numbers were quite low, especially "pugentensis" (P.R.B.O., LM) and especially adults (LRM). Numbers of Golden-crowned Sparrows were low at Palomarin but about normal inland (LF, DY). Forty-five White-throated Sparrows (14 on the Monterey Pen.) was an exceptional showing, with numbers concentrated on the c. coast. Fox Sparrow was low except in huckleberry patches of e. Humboldt County (RLeV). Ten Swamp Sparrows at 9 locations was a good showing. New sites included Nicasio Res., Marin Co. (RS), Sebastopol (LCB), Goodwin's Pond near Smith R., Del Norte Co. (SWH), and Creighton Ranch (†KH), the last furnished one of few San Joaquin Valley records. A flock of 21 Lapland Longspurs at Pt. St. George Dec. 19-20 moved on (RAE, JAR *et al.*); four were at Redwood Shores on S.F. Bay Feb. 11 and two remained through February (PJM).

EXOTICS — One Nanday Conure in the San Joaquin County foothills Dec. 12 and Jan. 2 had been present for 3 months (DY). Two Monk Parakeets were in Stockton Dec. 19 (DY). Eight Canary-winged Parakeets are still at large in San Francisco, most recently in the vicinity of DuBoce and Guerrero (PU).

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