

## SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Guy McCaskie

Rain during the first half of December was the only significant precipitation of the season, leaving us with one of the driest winters on record. The best incursion of Short-tailed Shearwaters in recent years was the highlight among waterbirds, and an exceptional variety of flycatchers and wood warblers made for excitement among landbirds.

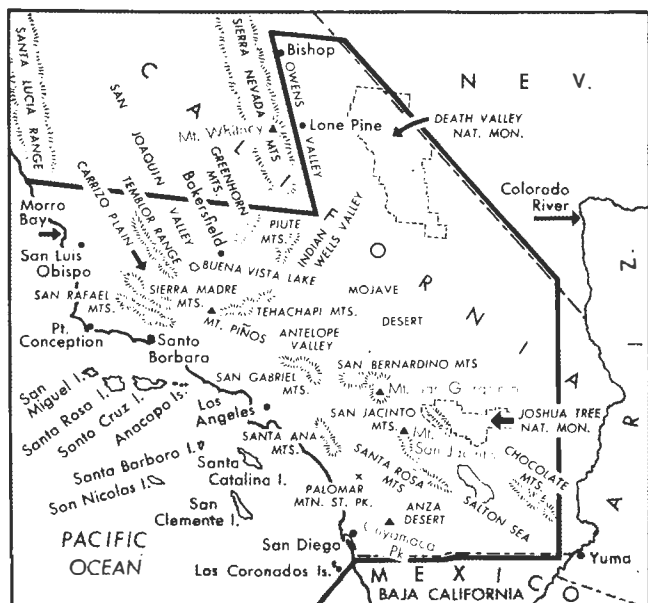
Certain erratic frugivorous species were present in above-average numbers with American Robins and Cedar Waxwings being the most conspicuous. Most observers commented on the abundance of American Robins, and 5000 using a roost in Redlands January 21 (RMcK) is just one of a number of such reports documenting the influx. Varied Thrushes were also numerous along the coast and well up into the mountains, with counts of up to 50/day made in areas of mature oak woodland such as in Placerita and Topanga Canyons, and pushed all the way south to Orange and San Diego counties. Cedar Waxwings were

abundant, especially after early February, with large flocks throughout the Region, including the southeast portion where frequently absent. Purple Finches were present in the southeast part of the Region where rarely found with a count of  $60 \pm$  made in the Brawley/El Centro area on February 4-5 (REW). Pine Siskins were relatively numerous along the coast to Los Angeles, but scarce south of there.

ABBREVIATIONS — N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.B.C.M. = San Bernardino County Museum; S.D.N.H.M. = San Diego Natural History Museum; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary, Ventura Co.; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. As virtually all rarities found in southern California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file for all rarities listed in the report. Records of birds seen only on days of Christmas Bird Counts have been omitted from this report to save space (they all appear in the CBC issue).

LOONS, GREBES — Red-throated Loons were more numerous than usual on inland bodies of water close to the coast, with some venturing as far inland as w. Riverside County as indicated by one to two on L. Evans in Riverside Jan. 6-15 (EAC), eight on L. Mathews Jan. 21 (EAC), and one on L. Skinner Mar. 3 (RMcK). An Arctic Loon, casual inland, was on L. Mathews Jan. 3 (JLD). Totally unexpected was an imm. **Yellow-billed Loon** on L. Perris Dec. 20+ (SCa, ph., S.D.N.H.M.), this being only the fourth to be found in s. California and the first inland anywhere in the State. As expected, small numbers of Horned Grebes were found wintering on some of the larger inland bodies of water the 30+ on L. Perris throughout the period (SCa) being the largest concentration. A Red-necked Grebe in Redondo Beach, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 6-Feb. 1 (BE) was unusually far s., another at Balboa, Orange Co., Feb. 13-Mar. 3 (BED) was only the fourth to be found along the coast s. of Los Angeles, and one on L. Perris Dec. 20-Jan. 20 (SCa) was only the second from a true inland locality in s. California.

ALBATROSSES, SHEARWATERS, STORM-PETRELS — An imm. **Short-tailed Albatross** at  $35^{\circ}30'N$ ,  $122^{\circ}11'W$  (60 mi. w. of Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co.) Dec. 2 (RLP, LS; ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was only the second reported in s. California waters this century, but with continued breeding successes (see *Am. Birds* 36:806-814, 1982) it could once again become a common bird along the coast. Northern



Fulmars were relatively common offshore during the first half of the winter with 30 ± off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC), but numbers started to diminish after January with very few reported during February. Three Pink-footed Shearwaters, rare in winter, were off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC). Short-tailed Shearwaters continued to be seen along the coast into February with a high count of 75 off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC), but five found dead along the beach at Morro Bay Dec. 14 (MHa), up to eight/day seen off Redondo Beach Jan. 16 + (KLG) and five off Newport Beach, Orange Co., Feb. 12 (LRH) illustrated how numerous and widespread these birds were. Black-vented Shearwaters were also numerous with 3000 off Redondo Beach Feb. 12 (FH), 300 + off Corona del Mar, Orange Co., Feb. 17 (V & WG) and 500 off San Diego Jan. 1 (CGE) being examples of their abundance. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, casual in s. California waters, was well seen near Santa Cruz I., Jan. 10 (RW). Five Black Storm-Petrels off San Diego Jan. 21 (GMcC) were exceptionally late, this species being unrecorded in California waters in February and March.

**DARTER** — A ♀ *Anhinga* was present at Lee L., near L. Elsinore, Riverside Co., Jan. 29 + (DCH, ph., S.D.N.H.M.); 2 previous records of this species in s. California have been considered "possibly valid"; although the more recent is considered by some to be an escapee from captivity, a check of local zoos and wild animal parks revealed no source for an escapee as the species is evidently very rare in captivity.

**HERONS, IBISES, STORKS** — Two or three Little Blue Herons were present around San Diego, where now evidently resident, through the period (EC). A Tricolored Heron on Los Peñasquitos Lagoon, San Diego Co., Jan. 8 (DKi) and two or three on s. San Diego Bay/Tijuana R. Estuary throughout the period (EC) were the only ones reported. An ad. Reddish Egret, very rare in s. California, on s. San Diego Bay Jan. 18-Mar. 15 (EC) was likely the same bird present here last winter. Two White-faced Ibises in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., Feb. 15-20 (GS) and 35 seen flying N along the coast in Corona del Mar, Orange Co., Jan. 5 (SJR) were away from the few remaining locations where this species still occurs regularly in winter. Two ad. Wood Storks at Whalen L., near Oceanside, San Diego Co., Dec. 4-Jan. 10 (TM) and at nearby L. O'Neill Feb. 12-26 (M & MJ) were more than likely the same two seen on L. Hodges in October.

**WATERFOWL** — A flock of 115 Tundra Swans near Big Pine, Inyo Co., Feb. 2 (BT) were in the Owens Valley where such numbers regularly occur each winter; along the coast, where decidedly rare, groups of up to four were reported, with one to two around Escondido, San Diego Co., Dec. 11-Mar. 18 (KW) being the farthest s. An ad. Snow (Blue) Goose accompanied by two young at Whalen L., near Oceanside Dec. 3-Jan. 16 (REW) were the first of this morph of the Snow Goose to be found in s. California away from the S.E.S.S. At least 26 Ross' Geese were found along the coast during the period, including a group of 11 at Whalen L., near Oceanside Jan. 15 (GMcC), and it appears this species is becoming more common in this area than formerly. A ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal, very rare in s. California, was in Goleta Nov. 13-Mar. 9 (GS) and another was in Huntington Beach, Orange Co., Jan. 31 + (BED). An obvious Cinnamon Teal x N. Shoveler near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., Mar. 1 (EC) was an unusual hybrid. Twenty-five Blue-winged Teal at Bolsa Chica, Orange Co., Jan. 14 (NBB) was the largest concentration reported, although individuals were present along the entire coast as expected. Eurasian Wigeon were present in about normal numbers with 20 ± reported, including seven to eight at San Jacinto, Riverside Co., during December and January (RMCK). Also present with the 10,000+ Am. Wigeon at San Jacinto were at least two ♂ Eur. x Am. Wigeon during December and January (GMcC), a ♂ Mallard x Am. Wigeon Dec. 22 (GMcC) that was most likely the same bird seen here Jan. 23, 1983, and a most bizarre looking bird felt to be a ♂ N. Pintail x Am. Wigeon Nov. 26-Feb. 13 (AS, ph., S.D.N.H.M.). A ♂ Tufted Duck on L. Perris Nov. 25-Mar. 5 (SCa) was undoubtedly one of the two present here last winter, and another on Quail L., at the w. end of the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 29-Mar. 7 (JM) was probably the same bird present here during the winters of 1978-79 and 1979-80. An imm. ♂ Harlequin Duck in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara Co., Nov. 25 + (LRB) was s. of the species' normal range. Oldsquaws were scarce with one in Long Beach, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 10 (BED)

and one to three on s. San Diego Bay Dec. 13-Jan. 29 (DP) being the only ones reported. Black Scoters were also scarce with one in Goleta Dec. 3-28 (JF), another at Carpinteria Feb. 5 (LRB) and one to four at Huntington Beach Jan. 13-28 (R & MW) being the only ones reported. A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye, casual along the coast, was near San Simeon, San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 4-9 (JMcD).

**HAWKS, FALCONS** — An imm. Bald Eagle at S.E.S.S., Jan. 28-Feb. 5 (REW) was in an area where now considered casual-to-accidental. Two Red-shouldered Hawks near Blythe, Riverside Co., all winter (SCI) were well to the e. of the species' normal range in California, and appeared to be courting at the end of the period. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk near Bonsall, San Diego Co., Dec. 10-Feb. 14 (M & DH) and another near Fallbrook, San Diego Co., Feb. 5 (AP) were undoubtedly the same two individuals that wintered in these 2 localities a year ago; a third adult seen at L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego Co., Feb. 25 (BF) was undoubtedly a migrant. Rough-legged Hawks were generally scarce, but did get as far s. as San Diego County with one at L. Henshaw Dec. 29 (RH) and another at nearby L. Wohlford Feb. 12 (RH). A Merlin at Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 8 (CM) and another in Carpinteria Feb. 18 (LRB) were both of the black form *suckleyi* from coastal British Columbia. The increase in Peregrine Falcon sightings from along the coast must in part be due to the success of the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Project and the number of birds released.

**COOTS** — A banded Am. Coot in Goleta throughout the winter of 1982-1983 and again this winter (JBo), had been banded on a nest near Flagstaff in n.e. Arizona in July 1981, and was also present there during the summer of 1983, illustrating the distances this species regularly migrates.

**PLOVERS THROUGH SANDPIPERS** — Wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers, all believed to be of the Asiatic form *fulva*, included one near San Simeon Jan. 21 (GPS), up to 11 near Santa Maria, Santa Barbara Co., throughout the period (BS) and one near Imperial Beach all winter (EC). An Am. Oystercatcher at Fraser Pt., Santa Cruz I., Feb. 26 (PEL) was at a locality where one to three have been present since at least November, 1966. Six Sanderlings, very rare inland in winter, were at Salton City on the Salton Sea Feb. 5 (REW) and undoubtedly wintered locally. A Reeve near China, San Bernardino Co., Feb. 3-11 (SJR) was felt to be the same bird present in this area last winter, and a male was on s. San Diego Bay Jan. 19-Mar. 23 (DA); one or two of these birds are now found in s. California every winter. A Wilson's Phalarope, very rare in winter, on s. San Diego Bay Feb. 11 (MHe) undoubtedly wintered locally.

**GULLS, TERNS** — A first-winter Laughing Gull off Redondo Beach Feb. 1 (BE) was unexpected as this species is casual anywhere along the coast. A second-winter Mew Gull on L. Perris Dec. 22 (REW) and an adult there Jan. 16-Feb. 13 (SCa) were relatively far inland, but nonetheless still on the coastal plain where small numbers regularly occur each winter. An ad. Yellow-footed Gull at Otay, San Diego Co., Feb. 25-26 (GMcC) was only the fifth to have been found along the coast of California; at the Salton Sea numbers were about the same as last winter with up to 15 being seen in a day. A second-winter W. Gull, accidental inland, at Salton City Feb. 5 (REW) was judged to be of the n. race *occidentalis*. Four first-winter Glaucous Gulls along the coast with one around Morro Bay Jan. 24-Feb. 29 (CM), one at S.C.R.E., Dec. 29-Jan. 25 (BE), a third off San Diego Feb. 18 (CGE) and another at Otay Feb. 25 (EC) was about average. An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake inland on L. Perris Dec. 20-Jan. 14 (SCa) was most unusual considering how few were along the coast. Two imm. Sabine's Gulls in Redondo Beach Dec. 4-7 (NS) were exceptionally late fall migrants. A Com. Tern on San Diego Bay all winter (REW) was the only one reported.

**AUKS** — Two Marbled Murrelets off Ragged Pt., San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 7 (JMcD) were in an area where undoubtedly regular. Five Xantus' Murrelets at Anacapa I., Feb. 24 (PEL) and 20 there 3 days later were believed to be birds just arriving on breeding territories.

**PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS** — A dead Band-tailed Pigeon found at Caruthers Canyon in the New York Mts., e. San Bernardino Co., Feb. 29 (SCa) was far out of range. A White-winged Dove at

N.E.S.S., Jan. 21 (HEC) was unexpected, there being no previous winter records for this area; one in Goleta Dec. 4 (PEL) and two to four there Jan. 15-Feb. 20 (DB) were along the coast where quite rare. The discovery of 25+ Inca Doves in Calexico, Imperial Co., Feb. 4 (REW) extends this species' known range W from the Colorado R. valley at least 60 mi into California. A Com. Ground-Dove at Castaic Jct., Los Angeles Co., Feb. 26-Mar. 11 (FH) was away from any area of known regular occurrence.

Twenty-five Long-eared Owls near Borrego Springs, San Diego Co., Jan. 24 (PU) was a relatively large winter roosting concentration. Two Lesser Nighthawks, very rare in winter, were seen in flight over Brawley, Imperial Co., during the evening of Feb. 11 (AS) and another was near Newhall, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 26 (WC). As appears normal, small numbers of Vaux's Swifts spent the winter around Oceanside with 30+ there Feb. 26 (GMcC) being the largest number reported but larger numbers were present around Los Angeles as indicated by up to 70 at Malibu Dec. 18-Feb. 27 (KLG), 35 over Culver City Dec. 27 (HMB) and 20 over Exposition P., Mar. 19 (KLG). A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird at a feeder in Santa Barbara Oct. 26-Feb. 7 (H. C. Wills, *vide* PEL) was the same bird present there last winter, and a female was in nearby Goleta Dec. 31-Jan. 18 (BED); this species is now found annually in a s. California and its status should be upgraded from casual to rare. Two Black-chinned Hummingbirds, exceptionally rare in winter, were in Long Beach Dec. 27-Jan. 3 (BED). Four Costa's Hummingbirds in the Santa Barbara area during December were at the n. extreme of this species' range in winter. A Lewis' Woodpecker on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co., Feb. 26 (REW) was along the immediate coast where very rare. A ♂ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Silverado Canyon, Orange Co., Nov. 26-Jan. 3 (BED) was the same nominate *varius* found here each of the past 2 winters. A Red-breasted Sapsucker in Santa Barbara Dec. 30 (JLD) was of the n.w. race *ruber* considered casual at best in s. California. A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker at Chilao near Pasadena, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 23-Mar. 2 (JBr) was at an unusually low elevation. An unusual, but not unheard-of hybrid was a ♀ Nuttall's x Downy Woodpecker near Imperial Beach Feb. 25 (GMcC).

**FLYCATCHERS** — An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Santa Barbara Dec. 13 (JLD) and another a few miles away Jan. 27 (PEL) were totally unexpected as there were only 4 previous winter records for California. The Greater Pewee found in Los Angeles' Griffith P., Nov. 10 (HMB) was still present Mar. 23, having successfully spent its 5th winter at this location. A Willow Flycatcher near Fillmore, Ventura Co., Dec. 27-Jan. 7 (PEL) was only the second ever to have been found in California in winter. The Least Flycatcher found in Goleta Oct. 29 (RAH) was still present at the end of the period, and another was near Fillmore Dec. 27-Jan. 7 (PEL); this species is more frequently reported as more observers become familiar with *Empidonax* identification. A Hammond's Flycatcher carefully identified in Morro Bay S.P., Jan. 6-Feb. 15 (CM) is one of a very few ever reported wintering in California. A bird felt to be a Dusky Flycatcher was present in Long Beach, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 2+ (KLG). The only Gray Flycatchers reported were single birds near Borrego Springs in e. San Diego Co., Dec. 21 (BW) & Jan. 24 (PU). Eleven W. Flycatchers along the coast during the period was a large number for this time of the year. An E. Phoebe at Bard, Imperial Co., Dec. 17 (RB) was the only one found. Remarkable was a **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** in Goleta Dec. 5 (PEL) and another in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 22+ (CDB) as there were only 4 previous records for the Region; however, two more were found in n. California during the fall/winter suggesting some type of movement towards the NW by part of the population. More than the expected one or two Ash-throated Flycatchers were reported with single birds in Goleta Oct. 15-Jan. 7 (DB) & Nov. 13-Jan. 10 (GS), one in Santa Barbara Nov. 13-Feb. 5 (PEL), one in Fillmore Dec. 27-30 (PEL) and another in Costa Mesa Jan. 1-Feb. 13 (JGa) along the coast, and one at Yaqui Wells in e. San Diego Co., Dec. 9-Feb. 5 (BW) and another at the Algodones Dunes in e. Imperial Co., Dec. 20 (PU) being on the desert. A Tropical Kingbird in Goleta Oct. 21-Feb. 8 (CDB) was undoubtedly the same bird present here during the past 2 winters, one was near El Monte, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 7 (CTC), another was in San Diego Dec. 11-Feb. 17 (MWG) and a fourth inland near Chino, San Bernardino Co., Feb. 4 (SJR) is certainly the bird present here during the winter of 1982-83. The **Thick-billed Kingbird** found in Peters Canyon near Tustin Nov. 26 remained through Jan. 3 (DRW).

**SWALLOWS THROUGH PIPITS** — Small numbers of N. Rough-winged Swallows along the coast of San Diego County in December, with a high count of nine near Oceanside Dec. 16 (REW), were unexpected since this species is considered casual along the coast in winter. A Mountain Chickadee at Thousand Palms Oasis, Riverside Co., Feb. 25 (RMCK) and another near N.E.S.S., Jan. 29 (SCA) were in an area where very few indeed have ever been found. A Winter Wren, very rare-to-casual in extreme s. California, was in Silverado Canyon, Orange Co., Jan. 3 (LRH), and at least five more were found around San Diego during December and January (REW, EC) indicating more than the average number were along the coast. The Gray Catbird found on Pt. Loma Nov. 7 was still present Mar. 13 (GJ), and was only the second ever to have wintered in this Region. A Sage Thrasher, rare along the coast in winter, was present along the shore of San Diego Bay Jan. 22-Feb. 27 (GMcC). The only Brown Thrasher found this winter was one in San Pedro, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 14-Feb. 2 (BED). A Bendire's Thrasher near Lancaster, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 17-Mar. 5 (JLD) chose a most unusual place to winter, and one to two more were along the coast in Goleta Jan. 11-Feb. 19 (AB) where considered casual. A Sprague's Pipit s.w. of Blythe Jan. 2 (DKr) was the first to have been reported in Riverside County.

**VIREOS** — A Bell's Vireo, most unusual in winter, was seen foraging in open desert scrub at Yaqui Wells Jan. 20 (BW) and another picked up dead at nearby Borrego Springs Jan. 24 (PU, \*S.D.N.H.M.). Solitary Vireos were clearly more numerous than usual with 22 reported; the two found in El Centro in s.e. part of the Region Feb. 4 (GMcC, REW) were of the interior race *plumbeus* as expected, but that half of those found along the coast were also *plumbeus*, including one as far n. as Ventura Jan. 7 (JLD) came as a surprise. A Hutton's Vireo in Hart P., Bakersfield Feb. 26 (MHe) was at an unusual locality. A Warbling Vireo on Pt. Loma Dec. 23 (JML) could have been a late fall migrant, but one in Carpinteria Jan. 26 (TW), and another in San Diego Dec. 18-Jan. 24 (PEL) were clearly wintering.

**WOOD WARBLERS** — It was a somewhat remarkable winter for the number and variety of wood warblers present. In addition to the 4 common wintering species (Orange-crowned, Yellow-rumped and Townsend's warblers and Com. Yellowthroat), all 10 of the rare but regular wintering species (Tennessee (14), Nashville (20±), Yellow (30±), Black-throated Gray (25 ± including one in Brawley Jan. 28—REW), Hermit (7), Palm (6), Black-and-white (13), Am. Redstart (20± including twelve along the coast), N. Waterthrush (7) and Wilson's (25±)) were found along with 16 other species to give us an unprecedented 30 species during the period.

A Virginia's Warbler in Newport Beach all winter (SJR) was the same bird present here during the past 4 winters. A Lucy's Warbler, casual in winter, was in Ventura Dec. 15-Jan. 25 (PEL) and another was in Irvine, Orange Co., Feb. 25-Mar. 8 (DRW). A N. Parula, most unusual in winter, was in Long Beach Feb. 8-Mar. 10 (BED) and another was near Escondido, San Diego Co., Dec. 11-Jan. 7 (FD). Unexpected were four Chestnut-sided Warblers, with one in Huntington Beach Dec. 31+ (V & WG), one in Riverside Dec. 30-Jan. 30 (EAC), another near Lakeview, Riverside Co., Nov. 26+ (RMCK) and the fourth in Niland, Imperial Co., Dec. 20-Jan. 28 (JLD); there were only 2 previous winter records for the Region. The second Yellow-rumped x Townsend's Warbler to be found in the Region was a female in San Diego Dec. 20-23 (REW) following closely behind the first found in the fall. A ♀ Black-throated Green Warbler, a species now being found each winter, was in Los Osos Dec. 17+ (DRW) and another was in Costa Mesa Dec. 2+ (LRH). A ♂ **Yellow-throated Warbler** in Needles Feb. 28 (DLD, \*S.B.C.M.) was of the race *albilora*, and only the second ever to be found in California in winter. A Grace's Warbler in Santa Barbara Sept. 28-Mar. 14 (AB) and another in Carpinteria Oct. 22-Mar. 27 (PEL) were both spending their 5th winters at these localities. Remarkable was a ♂ **Pine Warbler** in San Luis Obispo Jan. 9+ (CM, ph., S.D.N.H.M.), another on Pt. Loma Dec. 12-23 (REW) and a female in San Diego Mar. 18 (GMcC) as only 7 previous records existed for the entire state. A Bay-breasted Warbler in Goleta Dec. 17 (AB) and another in Coronado, San Diego Co., Dec. 17-21 (REW) could well have been late fall vagrants, but one in San Diego Dec. 30-April 10 (T & GQ) was only the second unquestionably wintering bird for California. A

Worm-eating Warbler, only the fourth to be found in s. California in winter, was in Goleta Dec. 23-Mar. 11 (TW) and another was in Zuma Canyon, Los Angeles Co., Oct. 15-Dec. 18 (KLG). An Ovenbird on Pt. Loma Dec. 23 (JML) may have been a late fall migrant, but could also have been wintering locally. Another totally unexpected bird was a ♀ **Kentucky Warbler** in Goleta Dec. 16-Mar. 16 (RAH) and a male in Corona del Mar Dec. 19-Mar. 6 (CM), these two being the first to have been found wintering in California. A MacGillivray's Warbler, casual in winter, was in San Pedro Jan. 27-Feb. 10 (BED). The ♀ Hooded Warbler found at L. Sherwood Nov. 28 was last seen Dec. 10 (LC) suggesting it was a late fall migrant. A Painted Redstart frequented a hummingbird feeder in Chatsworth, Los Angeles Co., Nov. 25-Feb. 3 (HH); one or two of these birds are now found each winter. A Yellow-breasted Chat in Los Osos Jan. 26 (CM) would appear to be only the third ever to have been found in winter in California.

**TANAGERS, BUNTINGS** — More than the average number of Hepatic Tanagers were present this winter with a male in Santa Barbara Nov. 25-Mar. 30 (BZ) successfully spending its 2nd winter at this location, a male at Vogel Flat in Big Tujunga Canyon, Los Angeles Co., Jan. 7+ (LF), a female in Banning, Riverside Co., Dec. 31-Feb. 1 (SM, ph., S.D.N.H.M.) and a male on Pt. Loma Nov. 8-Feb. 21 (BJ). Twelve Summer Tanagers and  $75 \pm$  W. Tanagers along the coast during the period appeared about average. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Santa Barbara Dec. 9-27 (PEL), one in Santa Paula Feb. 27-29 (KS), one in Huntington Beach Feb. 25 (PE) and single birds around San Diego Jan. 8 (GMcC) & 23 (REW) were about as expected, but eight Black-headed Grosbeaks in the same general area came as a surprise, as this species is normally rarer than its e. counterpart in California in winter.

**SPARROWS** — A Green-tailed Towhee in Costa Mesa Jan. 11-29 (LRH) was unexpected. A Black-chinned Sparrow, exceptionally rare in winter, was at Santiago Oaks Regional P., Orange Co., Dec. 6 (SJR). A handful of Lark Buntings were scattered about the Region with one at L. Ming near Bakersfield Jan. 13-21 (MHe), two on the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo Co., Dec. 8-Feb. 5 (MW), one near Blythe Dec. 26 (GMcC), two near Lakeview Feb. 3 (GMcC), and two to three near Niland Dec. 20-Feb. 26 (PEL). A Grasshopper Sparrow near Morro Bay Feb. 5 (EVJ) and small numbers found at 4 locations around San Diego throughout the period (CGE) suggested this species is commoner than thought in winter. The Sharp-tailed Sparrow found on Morro Nov. 19 was not seen after Dec. 4 (CM). Reports of  $20 \pm$  Swamp Sparrows and  $35 \pm$  White-throated Sparrows suggested that both of these species were present in about average numbers. The only Harris' Sparrows reported were one to two at L. Ming near Bakersfield Jan. 25+ (MMcQ) and four more along the coast. A McCown's Longspur, quite rare in winter, was on the Carrizo Plain Jan. 2 (CM), another was in the Lucerne Valley Feb. 11 (SCa), and two more were near Ripley s. of Blythe Feb. 5 (DKr). The only Lapland Longspurs to be found were single birds near Blythe Dec. 24 (JLD), in the Lucerne Valley Feb. 11 (SCa), near Lakeview Jan. 14 (BK) and at L. Henshaw Dec. 3-22 (RH). Three Chestnut-collared Longspurs near Blythe Jan. 21 (WCH) were in an area where small numbers undoubtedly regularly winter, and concentrations of  $30 \pm$  in the Lucerne Valley Feb. 11 (SCa) and up to 60 near Lakeview Jan. 14-25 (RMcK) are undoubtedly not as unusual as would at first appear.

**BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, FINCHES** — A Yellow-headed Blackbird in Goleta Jan. 10 (PEL) was in an area where considered very rare in winter. A ♀ Rusty Blackbird, exceptionally rare in winter, was in Carpinteria Feb. 4-21 (MHa). A Great-tailed Grackle in Corona Feb. 2 (SJR), one in Santee, San Diego Co., Dec. 3+ (CGE) and another near Imperial Beach Nov. 17+ (EC) were w. of the species' known range. As usual, a few Orchard Orioles were found along the coast with six in the Santa Barbara area Nov. 9-Feb. 25, one in Ventura Jan. 7 (JLD), and three in the San Diego area Feb. 9-29+. Hooded Orioles are normally most unusual in winter, thus nine along the coast, a female in Riverside Jan. 15-16 (SCa) and ad. males in Brawley Jan. 28-Mar. 7 (GMcC) & Feb. 5 (GMcC) were far more than expected. At least 12 N. (Baltimore) Orioles were among the  $100 \pm$  N. Orioles found wintering along the coast. Up to three Scott's Orioles in Santa Barbara Dec. 23-Feb. 13 (JEL), two around O'Neill Regional P., Orange Co., all winter (DRW),

one at nearby Santiago Oaks Regional P., throughout the period (SJR), one at L. Jennings, San Diego Co., Jan. 13 (CGE), another in Fallbrook Jan. 31 (JGi) and a ninth on Pt. Loma Dec. 23-Feb. 12 (JML) were all in the coastal lowlands where rare, and a male in Banning Jan. 16 (SCa) was at the w. edge of the desert where small numbers may regularly winter. A flock of seven Cassin's Finches in Hart P., near Bakersfield Jan. 7 (MOC) was at an unusual locality.

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