

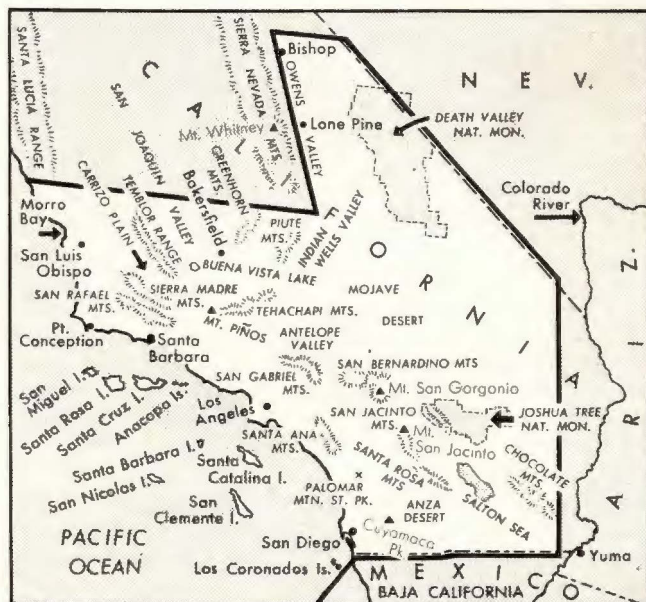
## SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie

This was a very mild winter with less than the average amount of rainfall. An exciting variety of unexpected bird species was found, including a number returning from previous winters.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. 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 with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

**LOONS THROUGH STORK** — A Pacific Loon, casual inland, was on L. Isabella, Kern Co., Feb. 12 (KH), a 2nd was on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., Feb. 10–Mar. 9 (PEL), one was on Silverwood L., San Bernardino Co., Dec. 8 (CMcG), up to two were on L. Perris, Riverside Co., Dec. 14–Feb. 23 (RMcK), one was on L. Havasu, San Bernardino Co., Feb. 14 (RMcK), and another was on Castaic L., Los Angeles Co., Jan. 24. A Horned Grebe on a small pond in California City Feb. 28 (MOC) was unexpected, since most found inland in winter are frequenting the large freshwater lakes and reservoirs. A Red-necked Grebe in Ventura Dec. 15–18 (KK) was the only one reported.



Counts of up to 30,000 Am. White Pelicans made during aerial surveys of the Salton Sea in January (RMcK) clearly show this to be a major wintering locality for this species, particularly



in light of the estimated North American breeding population as presented by Sidle, Koonz, and Roney (*Am. Birds* 39:859-864). Up to 20 Brown Pelicans remained on the Salton Sea throughout the period (RMcK) to give us the first concrete evidence of wintering on this inland body of water.

At least two adult and one imm. Little Blue Herons remained around s. San Diego Bay throughout the period (EC), and another adult was on nearby San Dieguito Lagoon Feb. 22 (SM), but the species was unreported elsewhere in the Region. The ad. Tricolored Heron found in Imperial Beach Nov. 6 remained through the period (EC) and appears to have been the only one present in California this year. The adult and imm. Reddish Egrets that appeared at the mouth of the Tijuana R. during the fall remained through the winter (GMcC), as did the adult on s. San Diego Bay (EC), but the immature in Del Mar could not be found after Jan. 11 (JO'B). A Wood Stork near Oceanside Feb. 22 (JO'B) was undoubtedly wintering locally, and was probably one of the birds that have been frequenting this area each of the past 6 winters.

**WATERFOWL** — The only Tundra Swans reported were one on Oso Flaco L., San Luis Obispo Co., Jan. 1 (TEW), four on L. Cachuma Nov. 22-Jan. 25 (GT), and two in the San Jacinto Valley Nov. 25 (AMC). As now appears to be normal a few Ross' Geese were found along the coast with two around Morro Bay Dec. 14-Jan. 25 (GPS), one in Santa Barbara Nov. 5+ (JEL), another on L. Cachuma Feb. 10-21 (PEL), three near Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co., during December and January (JSR), one near Santa Ana Mar. 8-17 (PE), and one near Oceanside Dec. 27-Mar. 6 (GMcC). A ♀ Wood Duck in National City, San Diego Co., Dec. 20-Jan. 1 (DK) was at the s. limit of the species' winter range on the w. coast. A ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal in Goleta, Dec. 9-Apr. 1 (HR), was undoubtedly the same bird that has spent the past 5 winters at this location, and an apparent hybrid Eur. Green-winged Teal × Am. Green-winged Teal was carefully studied at S.E.S.S., Jan. 14 (JLD). At least 16 Eur. Wigeon were found in the Region during the period, and this no doubt was only a small percentage of the birds actually present. The ♂ Tufted Duck found on Quail L., Los Angeles Co., Nov. 25 was still present Jan. 24 (KLG), and another in Saticoy, Ventura Co., Feb. 10+ (KS) was undoubtedly the same bird that has spent part of the past two winters at this location. A duck on San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego Co., Feb. 20+ (SRG), initially identified as a ♂ Tufted Duck, had a shorter crest than expected. Upon close inspection, it showed gray rather than black on the back, so it is considered a Tufted Duck × scaup; hybrid Tufted Duck × Greater Scaup have been found in the wild in Europe and at least one has previously been so identified in California (AB 38:352-353), indicating all "Tufted Ducks" found in w. North America should be identified with caution. The ♂ Harlequin Duck present at Bolsa Chica since 1984 remained through the period (DRW). The only Oldsquaws reported were two at Avila Beach, San Luis Obispo Co., Dec. 27-31 (RK), one at Bolsa Chica Dec. 25 (RiH), two at Newport Beach Dec. 20-Mar. 11 (DRW), one near Oceanside Feb. 7 (JO'B), and another in Del Mar Dec. 6-Jan. 11 (LuS). A Black Scoter on Morro Bay Nov. 25-Dec. 25 (K & JH) was the only one reported. A ♂ Surf Scoter on Castaic L., Jan. 24 (JKA) and another on L. Cuyamaca Dec. 6 (CGE) were both inland. White-winged Scoters were exceptionally scarce along the entire coast, but two were found inland on L. Havasu Feb. 14 (RMcK). A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye at S.E.S.S., Jan. 24 (GMcC) was only the 5th ever to have been found on the Salton Sea.

**RAPTORS** — At least three Black-shouldered Kites were present in the Imperial Valley s. of the Salton Sea throughout the period (RHi), and another was found even farther e. near Needles Feb. 16 (RMcK). This species was formerly considered accidental in s.e. California, but is now being found in the Imperial Valley annually, reflecting the overall increase in the numbers of these birds now occurring along the coast, and the consequential expansion of its range. An imm. Bald Eagle near Pt. Mugu all winter (JSR) was along the coast where now ex-

ceedingly rare. The Red-shouldered Hawk present in Brawley since Aug. 26 remained through the winter (RHi) with additional birds present near Westmorland Dec. 13+ (GMcC), Niland Dec. 18+ (JO'B), and in El Centro Dec. 26+ (JO), all being in the Imperial Valley where formerly considered accidental.

Since **Swainson's Hawks** are extremely rare anywhere in North America in winter (Browning, 1974, Comments on the winter distribution of the Swainson's Hawk in North America. AB 28:865-867), with only 3 acceptable mid-winter records for California, the presence of one light-phase adult near Oceanside Dec. 27-Mar. 8 (GMcC) and a 2nd individual there Mar. 1 (GMcC) was totally unexpected. The ad. Zone-tailed Hawk seen over the Plano Trabuco, Orange Co., Nov. 28 was not seen after Dec. 7 (DRW), and the other in Vista Sept. 13-25 was seen sporadically through Mar. 3 (EC); but unlike wintering Red-tailed Hawks, this species does not appear to remain within a relatively small territory throughout the period, but wanders over many miles, and hence may be hard to keep track of. Rough-legged Hawks were exceptionally scarce, but reports did include a dark-phased bird near Ventura throughout the period (JSR) and a typical immature as far s. as Seeley Feb. 28 (RHi). A Golden Eagle over Goleta Jan. 3 (JP) was one of a very few ever to be found along this stretch of the California coast.

**CRANES, SHOREBIRDS** — Sandhill Crane numbers at the Goose L. Evaporation Ponds near Wasco, Kern Co., peaked at 600± Dec. 3 (MOC) with smaller numbers remaining through the rest of the winter, and 300± were present near Brawley through the period (GMcC); a large wintering flock on the Carrizo Plain and smaller numbers along the Colorado R. near Blythe are the only others regularly occurring in s. California.

Up to 12 Lesser Golden-Plovers were present near Santa Maria throughout the winter (KJZ), three were near Pt. Mugu during December and January (JSR), five were on the Seal Beach N.W.R., Feb. 8 (LRH), and up to two were at S.E.S.S. during December (GMcC), all being identified as of the form *fulva*. Since Mountain Plovers are now most unusual along the coast, a flock of up to 10 near Imperial Beach Dec. 20-Feb. 1 (GMcC) was of interest. A Black Oystercatcher in Oceanside Feb. 7 (JO'B) was far away from areas of regular occurrence. As expected small numbers of Lesser Yellowlegs were present at various select localities along the entire coastline and around S.E.S.S. throughout the period, but up to three on the Tulare L. Drainage District ponds in Kern County all winter (RS) were in an area where until recent years they were unknown at this time of year. A Solitary Sandpiper near Corona Jan. 28 (HLJ) was only the 4th ever to be found in winter in s. California. Up to four Ruddy Turnstones at S.E.S.S. during December (GMcC) and two more at Salton City Feb. 8 (RHi) were all probably wintering on this inland body of water. Red Knots now regularly winter on the Salton Sea, but 12 at Salton City Feb. 8 (RHi) was a larger number than expected. Totally unexpected was a Baird's Sandpiper photographed near Goleta Dec. 10 (BA), the previous latest date for a fall migrant being Nov. 1, 1985 (AB 40:158). A Ruff near Santa Maria Jan. 24-Mar. 17 (PEL) and another on s. San Diego Bay Aug. 17+ (EC) were wintering along the coast, while up to two on the Tulare L. Drainage District ponds Jan. 17-22 (MOC) and another on the nearby Goose L. Evaporation Ponds Feb. 22+ (RS) were wintering inland. A Wilson's Phalarope at S.E.S.S., Dec. 26 (MJL) and another near nearby El Centro Dec. 26 (BN) were both probably wintering in that general area. Red Phalaropes were relatively common off San Diego during January as indicated by a count of 300 from La Jolla Jan. 15 (JLD), but had disappeared by February.

**JAEGERS THROUGH SKIMMER** — A jaeger, believed to be a Parasitic Jaeger, at N.E.S.S., Dec. 17 (JLD) was exceptionally late to still be on this inland body of water. A Laughing Gull, normally absent in winter, was at S.E.S.S., Feb. 8 (RHi). A first-year Franklin's Gull in Santa Barbara Nov. 23-Dec. 28 (AB) was evidently a very late fall migrant, but another in





Adult Lesser Black-backed Gull at the south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County, Cal., Dec. 17, 1986. This bird and another of the same species frequented this area for the remainder of the winter. Photos/John O'Brien.

Malibu Nov. 23–Feb. 25 (JKA) clearly wintered. The only Mew Gull found truly inland was a first-year bird at S.E.S.S., Dec. 13 (GMcC). A Herring Gull on the Kern N.W.R., Jan. 17 (MOC) was in an area where virtually unknown in winter. With all reporters from along the coast commenting on the paucity of Thayer's Gulls, along with the remarkably few found by this editor, it is clear this species was notably scarcer than normal throughout the Region. Up to two ad. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at S.E.S.S., Dec. 13+ (GMcC) were unexpected, considering the first ever for the Region was found only 2 years ago (AB 39:210), and another photographed in Malibu Jan. 19 (TK) was the first for the coast of s. California; but, considering the increase in numbers now being found in the e. United States, we can anticipate more. Up to six Yellow-footed Gulls spent the winter around S.E.S.S., where 10 years ago the species was unknown at this time of year. A first-year Glaucous-winged Gull at S.E.S.S. throughout December (RHi), a 3rd-year bird there Dec. 17 (CAM), and an adult there Jan. 24 (CGE) were the only ones reported from far inland. The only Glaucous Gulls present this winter were two in Santa Maria Jan. 24 (PEL). An Elegant Tern on Morro Bay Dec. 29 (GPS) was exceptionally late. The only Com. Terns reported this winter were one around Corona del Mar, Orange Co., Jan. 4–5 (RRV) and another near Imperial Beach Jan. 6 (MAP). A Black Tern in Corona del Mar Dec. 6 (CMcG) and what could well have been the same



First-winter plumaged Black-legged Kittiwake (above and left) on shore at La Jolla, San Diego County, Cal., February 22, 1987. This species was exceptionally scarce in southern California waters this winter and to see one on shore any winter is unexpected. Photos/John O'Brien.





First-winter plumaged Black-legged Kittiwake seen at La Jolla. Photo/John O'Brien.

bird at nearby Newport Beach Feb. 24 (CH), along with one inland near El Centro Feb. 2 (RHi), were of interest considering the fact that only  $12 \pm$  previous winter records are known for the Region. One or two Black Skimmers were present on the Salton Sea during December and January (RHi), but not found in February, suggesting they did not winter.

**DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS** — Up to 12 White-winged Doves at Butterfield Ranch in e. San Diego County throughout the period (JO) and another at nearby Palm Spring Jan. 31 (JO'B) were in the area along the e. base of the coastal mountains where small numbers regularly winter, but one near Santa Ynez, Santa Barbara Co., Feb. 13 (PEL), up to five in Goleta Nov. 14–Mar. 31 (PEL), and another in Malibu Jan. 1–3 (KLG) were all well w. of the species' normal range. An Inca Dove in Imperial Jan. 18+ (RHi) was probably a pioneer from the resident population of Calexico a little to the south. Some 45 Vaux's Swifts at Morro Bay S.P., Dec. 15–21 (TME), 20 near downtown Los Angeles Jan. 19 (KLG), 20 more over El Monte Jan. 24 (JB), and up to 75 around Oceanside throughout the period (GMCC) were all evidently wintering. A ♂ *Xantus' Hummingbird* reported feeding on red flowers in a desert wash at Yaqui Wells in e. San Diego County Dec. 27 (RK) was supported by convincing details. If accepted by state and national committees this would be a first record for the United States; the species is resident some 300–400 mi to the s. in Baja California. A ♀ *Archilochus* hummingbird identified as a Black-chinned, considered casual in winter, was found in Westminster, Orange Co., Jan. 29 (BED), and two were on Pt. Loma Dec. 28+ (JO). Six Lewis' Woodpeckers were found at 3 widely-scattered localities around S.E.S.S., Dec. 22 (RHi) but all had disappeared 10 days later, suggesting all were on the move. An Acorn Woodpecker, probably associated with the movement of Lewis' Woodpeckers, in El Centro Dec. 22–24 (RHi) was only the 3rd ever to be found in the Imperial Valley. An imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker near Gaviota Jan. 14 (BA) and a male in Newport Beach Feb. 1–Mar. 1 (BED) were carefully identified by observers familiar with the characters separating

this species from the similar, and more likely, Red-naped Sapsucker, but the true identity of others reported could not be determined. A Red-naped Sapsucker at Montana de Oro S.P., Oct. 10–Jan. 13 (BH) and another in Wheeler Canyon near Ventura all winter (KS) were a little to the n.w. of the species' normal winter range, and a Red-breasted Sapsucker in El Centro Dec. 26 (JO) was one of very few ever found in the Imperial Valley.

**FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS** — An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Santa Barbara Feb. 2–Apr. 1 (LB) was evidently the same bird found here each of the past 2 winters, and one of fewer than one dozen ever found in California in winter. A Greater Pewee in San Diego Nov. 23+ (EC) was probably the same bird found here last winter. A Least Flycatcher near Brawley Dec. 31 (RHi) was the 7th to have been found in s. California in winter. A Hammond's Flycatcher in Santa Barbara Dec. 16 (REW) was probably an exceptionally late fall migrant, since it could not be relocated on later dates. The only Gray Flycatchers reported this winter were one in Ventura Dec. 21–Jan. 4 (RJM), another in Oceanside Dec. 21+ (JO) evidently returning for its 7th winter, a 3rd near Brawley Dec. 28–Jan. 4 (RHi), a 4th at Yaqui Wells Feb. 8 (JO'B), and a 5th in Bow Willow Canyon in e. San Diego County Feb. 22 (SM). Three W. Flycatchers were found, with single birds along the coast in Santa Barbara Dec. 7–Jan. 4 (PEL) and Irvine Nov. 12–Feb. 4 (DRW), and one inland in Morongo Valley Feb. 14 (DCH). Two Vermilion Flycatchers near Pt. Mugu all winter (RJM), one in Fountain Valley, Orange Co., Jan. 4–Mar. 1 (RF), and another near Imperial Beach throughout December (GMCC) were along the coast where now exceedingly rare. An Ash-throated Flycatcher, very rare to casual in winter, was in Goleta Jan. 3–Feb. 6 (PEL), another was near Upper Newport Bay Jan. 24–Feb. 7 (TEW), and a 3rd was near San Diego Mar. 1 (PP). A Tropical Kingbird in Goleta Oct. 26–Feb. 21 (CDB) and a 2nd in nearby Santa Barbara Nov. 11–Feb. 21 (JLD) were unex-



Tropical Kingbird in Goleta, Santa Barbara County, Cal. This bird spent the winter in the company of up to four Cassin's Kingbirds at this location. Photo/Paul E. Lehman.



pected, especially considering the paucity of birds found during the fall. The **Thick-billed Kingbird** successfully spent its 5th winter near Tustin, being present Nov. 9–Mar. 1 (LRH).

Two N. Rough-winged Swallows present near Imperial Beach Nov. 8–Feb. 21 (JO), joined by spring migrants on the latter date, clearly wintered, and cannot be considered either late fall stragglers or early spring arrivals as are so many mid-winter birds. Most unusual were up to four Bank Swallows near Oceanside Dec. 27–Feb. 8 (RM). A Cliff Swallow, the rarest of the swallows to be found in California in winter, was at Montaña de Oro S.P. near Morro Bay Jan. 10 (LD). Single Barn Swallows over Puddingstone Res., Los Angeles Co., Jan. 24 (JB) and in Irvine Dec. 20 (HLJ) along with three near Oceanside Feb. 8 (GMcC) and up to four near Imperial Beach during December and January (JO) were all most likely wintering.

**WRENS THROUGH VIREOS** — A Winter Wren in Brawley Dec. 22–24 (RHi) was only the 5th ever to be found in the Imperial Valley. Golden-crowned Kinglets were widely scattered, with some reaching the extreme s.e. corner of the state as indicated by up to eight at Finney L. near S.E.S.S., Dec. 26–Jan. 25 (MJL) and two in Brawley Feb. 21 (RHi). Single Townsend's Solitaires near Bakersfield Dec. 1–Feb. 8 (RS), in Ojai Jan. 18 (KK), near Ventura Feb. 28 (RJM), and in Imperial Feb. 1+ (RHi) were all in the lowlands and away from areas of normal occurrence. A Brown Thrasher, a rare straggler to California, was present in Huntington Beach Jan. 10–Mar. 7 (BED) and another was at Morongo Valley Dec. 15–Feb. 28 (CMcG). Two Bendire's Thrashers in the Chemehuevi Wash in e. San Bernardino County Feb. 14–15 (RMCK) were probably early spring migrants, since this species arrives on breeding territories exceptionally early. A Sprague's Pipit near Westmorland Dec. 6 (RHi) was the 2nd ever to have been found in the Imperial Valley, and another was flushed from tall grass near Lakeview, Riverside Co., Dec. 12 (RMCK).

A Bell's Vireo, casual in winter, was in Santa Barbara Jan. 3–Feb. 10 (JEL) and another was in Brawley Dec. 1–20 (RHi). A brightly marked Solitary Vireo in San Diego Jan. 16–Mar. 22 (JLD) was apparently of the nominate form *solitarius*, considered casual to accidental in the w. United States, and previously unrecorded in California in winter. Single Solitary Vireos along the coast in Goleta Jan. 3 (PEL), Ventura throughout the period (JSR), and in Coronado Dec. 28 (JO), as well as one in El Centro Jan. 24–Feb. 22 (GMcC) and another at Butterfield Ranch in e. San Diego County Feb. 8 (DK) were all gray birds of the plumbeous form, while one in Santa Barbara Feb. 4 (CDB), single birds in Lake Forrest Dec. 20 (DRW) and nearby Huntington Beach Dec. 5–Jan. 10 (LRH), and another on Pt. Loma in San Diego Jan. 31+ (REW) were of the w. form *cassinii*. A Warbling Vireo, exceedingly rare in winter, was in Santa Barbara Jan. 11–Feb. 1 (HR) for its 3rd winter, another in Ventura throughout the period (JSR) was apparently the same bird as present last winter, and a 3rd was seen in Coronado Jan. 10 (REW).

**WOOD WARBLERS** — It was a better-than-average winter for wood warblers in s. California with at least 20 Nashville Warblers, over 30 Yellow Warblers, 30 Black-throated Gray Warblers, seven Hermit Warblers, and about 40 Wilson's Warblers reported along with the commonly occurring Orange-crowned, Townsend's, and Yellow-rumped warblers and Common Yellowthroats. In addition, nine Tennessee Warblers were found along the coast between Oceano and Coronado, along with one inland at Needles Feb. 16 (RMCK); 16 Palm Warblers were present between Morro Bay and Doheny Beach, and another was inland at S.E.S.S., Jan. 31 (DRW); nine Black-and-white Warblers were at various points along the coast, and at least four Am. Redstarts were wintering away from S.E.S.S., these all formerly considered casual to accidental in California in winter. A Virginia's Warbler in Oceano Dec. 3 (KJZ) was most likely a very late fall vagrant since searches for it on subsequent dates failed to turn it up, and the same can be said for the Blackburnian Warbler at the same location

Dec. 6–12 (K & JH). A N. Parula, very rare in winter, was in Oceano Dec. 7–Feb. 16 (BS) and another was at L. Mathews, Riverside Co., Jan. 14 (TM). A Chestnut-sided Warbler in Brawley Nov. 9+ (RHi) was probably the same bird as present last winter. A ♀ Cape May Warbler on Pt. Loma Dec. 25–Feb. 16 (GMcC) was the 6th to have remained in s. California through the mid-winter period. A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler in Santa Barbara Nov. 30–Jan. 4 (A & JC) and another in Placentia, Orange Co., Dec. 16–Jan. 28 (L. Berry) apparently did not remain through the winter, leaving the bird present in Santa Barbara Jan. 15–Mar. 16, 1982 (AB 36:332) as the only one known to have wintered in the Region. Four Grace's Warblers were present this winter, three of them believed to be returning birds, with one in Santa Barbara Oct. 13–Mar. 19 (PEL) successfully spending its 8th winter, another at the same location Oct. 19–Jan. 11 (TEW) spending its 3rd winter, one in Ventura throughout the period (JSR) for its 3rd winter, and the last in Newport Beach Feb. 21–Mar. 23 (BED). A ♂ Pine Warbler on Pt. Dume, Los Angeles Co., Dec. 21 (KLG) was the 8th to be found in s. California in mid-winter. A ♂ Prairie Warbler on San Clemente I., Feb. 25 (LaS) had undoubtedly wintered locally, giving us the 4th winter record for the Region. A Prothonotary Warbler frequenting a hummingbird feeder in San Diego Jan. 25–Mar. 20 (RAB) was only the 2nd ever to have wintered in California. An Ovenbird in Oceano Dec. 3–21 (KJZ) was apparently attempting to winter. A ♂ Kentucky Warbler in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co., Dec. 7–Feb. 1 (C & EB) was the 3rd to have wintered in California. A MacGillivray's Warbler, very rare in winter, was on Pt. Loma Dec. 28–Apr. 5 (REW) and another was in Coronado Jan. 10 (REW). A Painted Redstart, a casual to very rare straggler to California, was on Pt. Loma Dec. 20–Mar. 22 (RAR).

**TANAGERS THROUGH LONGSPURS** — A ♂ Hepatic Tanager in Santa Barbara Dec. 7–Jan. 13 (PEL) was evidently the same bird known to have spent the past 4 winters at this location, and a female in Irvine Nov. 17–Feb. 15 (DRW) was apparently the same bird present here during the past 2 winters. A Summer Tanager in Oceano Dec. 3–7 (KJZ) was probably a late fall straggler, but one in Santa Barbara Nov. 22–Feb. 1 (PEL), another near Santa Ana Jan. 4 (GF), and 10 along the San Diego County coast throughout the period (EC) were all clearly wintering. Seven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks wintering along the coast was about average, but five Black-headed Grosbeaks in the same area was more than normal.

A Green-tailed Towhee in Santa Barbara Jan. 4 (CL) and another at Upper Newport Bay Jan. 1 (RC) were n.w. of the species' limited winter range in extreme s. California. "Several" Brown Towhees found in the Indian Wells Valley of extreme n.e. Kern County during the winter (CP) were very close to the presumed isolated population in Inyo County known as the Inyo Brown Towhee, *P.f. eremophilus*. An Am. Tree Sparrow near Bishop Mar. 15 (TEW) was in an area where small numbers probably occur every fall and early winter, but was much later than most previous records. A Clay-colored Sparrow in Goleta Jan. 3–Mar. 24 (PEL) was one of a very few ever to have wintered in California. Two Lark Buntings, now quite rare in California, were in Niland near S.E.S.S., Dec. 18+ (JLD), and were the only ones found in s. California this winter. A Sharp-tailed Sparrow, very rare in s. California, was on Mission Bay in San Diego Dec. 31–Feb. 27 (EC). At least 13 wintering Swamp Sparrows, seven wintering White-throated Sparrows, and three wintering Harris' Sparrows along the coast were about as expected, but a White-throated Sparrow in El Centro Dec. 26–Feb. 16 (JO) and a Harris' Sparrow near Brawley Dec. 6 (RHi) were in an area where few have been found. It was a better-than-average winter for longspurs with a McCown's Longspur present on the Plano Trabuco in Orange County Nov. 28–Jan. 11 (JLD), four to five near Lakeview Dec. 12 (RMCK), and six more at L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego County Jan. 3–11 (DK). Single Lapland Longspurs were near Los Osos Dec. 10–12 (CM), Pt. Mugu Jan. 25 (RJM), on the Plano



Trabuco Nov. 28–Jan. 18 (JLD), at L. Henshaw Jan. 3–11 (DK), and at S.E.S.S., Jan. 31 (RHi), along with two near Oxnard Jan. 11 (JSR) and two to four near Lakeview Dec. 12 (RMCK). Six to 10 Chestnut-collared Longspurs were present on the Plano Trabuco Nov. 28–Mar. 15 (JLD), one was at Harper Dry Lake Jan. 19 (MAP), eight to 10 were near Lakeview Dec. 12–14 (RMCK), three were at L. Cuyamaca in the San Diego County mountains Feb. 8 (JO'B), and 30 were at S.E.S.S., Mar. 1 (REW).

**BLACKBIRDS THROUGH FINCHES** — Yellow-headed Blackbirds are rare and local along the coast, particularly so in winter, hence 30 near Pt. Mugu all winter (RJM), 100 near Irvine Jan. 30 (RRV), and five near Oceanside Feb. 28 (JO'B) were of interest. A ♀ Rusty Blackbird near Oceanside Feb. 22–Mar. 20 (GMCc) was one of fewer than one dozen ever to be found wintering along the s. California coast. Great-tailed Grackles continued to reach the coast with one at Upper Newport Bay Jan. 4 (HLJ), another at San Elijo Lagoon Feb. 10–11 (RP), and up to five near Imperial Beach during December (RM). A ♂ Bronzed Cowbird associating with thousands of "blackbirds" at a dairy near Oceanside Feb. 28–Mar. 8 (JO'B) was an immature moulting into ad. plumage, and had undoubtedly been present all winter. This species is a rare summer visitor to extreme s.e. California, and is expanding its range with vagrants recorded from as far w. as Whittier and Jacumba, but was previously unrecorded along the immediate coast, and had never before been found in winter.

An Orchard Oriole, considered a very rare winter visitor to California, was at Pt. Dume Dec. 21–Jan. 1 (KLG), three more were in the Newport-Irvine area Nov. 22–Feb. 1 (RoH, RRV), and a 5th was in Coronado Dec. 20–Feb. 16 (EC), to give us an average number for this time of year. Nine Hooded Orioles along the coast were more than expected, one in Redlands throughout the period (RMCK) was at an unusual location, but single birds near N.E.S.S., Feb. 14 (HAG) and in Brawley Jan. 14 (JLD) were in an area where small numbers may prove to be regular in winter. Six of the 75± N. Orioles found wintering along the coast were of the e. race *galbula*. Away from the extreme w. edge of the s. deserts (e.g., Morongo Valley and particularly Anza Borrego Desert Park), where small numbers

of Scott's Orioles regularly winter, five were found in the Santa Barbara area Oct. 24–Jan. 15 (PEL) and another was near Irvine Dec. 21 (HLJ).

A flock of 200± Rosy Finches found frequenting a bird feeder in the small community of Aspendell w. of Bishop Mar. 15 (TEW) could well have wintered locally. A few finches were dispersed through the lowlands as indicated by 15 Purple Finches in Brawley Jan. 24 (RHi) and 60 Cassin's Finches in Whitewater Canyon Feb. 25–28 (DCH). Evening Grosbeaks continued to attract attention with 40 on Mt. Palomar Feb. 9 (KW) and up to 20 in the Laguna Mts., Jan. 2–18 (BMCC) being the southernmost, apart from a single female in Plaster City, Imperial Co., Feb. 1 (RHi).

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