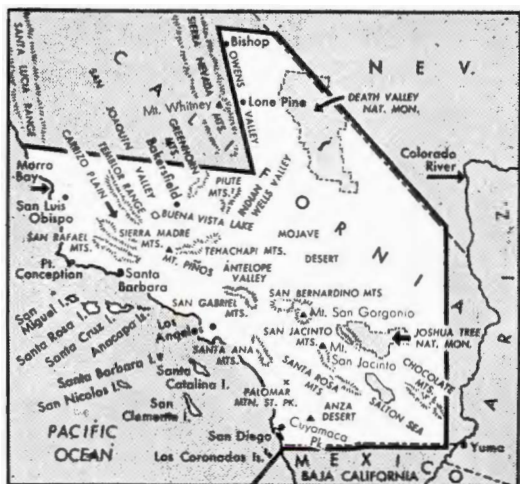


SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.—In southern California the weather did not clear up for any length of time until the end of April, and this seemed to delay many of the migrants. Once the weather did clear up, it appeared as if the birds could sense the change, and all at once they rushed into the Region.

It appears that a number of waterbirds may get caught in the Gulf of California on their northward flight, and the result is that some species, such as the



Black Brant, Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling, which are normally found only on the coast, appear on the Salton Sea during the spring.

Three species, Wied's Crested Flycatcher, Lucy's Warbler and Bronzed Cowbird, normally restricted to the Colorado River Valley within California, were found well to the west of there. Is it possible that these other species are attempting to spread westward as the Bronzed Cowbird has been doing?

Migration of Landbirds—It is apparent that many more migrants followed a coastal route, rather than a desert route, this year, for most people agreed this was a good year for seeing migrant landbirds along the coast. Only a few migrants could be found in the desert oases. This is in contrast to last year, when Morongo Valley, on the desert flyway, was flooded with migrants, and very few migrants were seen along the coast. A series of storms pushed into southern California from mid-March until almost the end of April, and these storms brought rain to the coast as far south as San Diego. As Robert Paxton pointed out, this type of weather is unfavorable to northward-bound migrants (see *AFN* 16 (4): 443). In general, most species arrived either on time, or a little early, but the storms seemed to check any large movements.

On the coast birds appeared to simply dribble through in early April, with a small flight noted at San Diego on April 12 (*EP*), then dribbled through until April 26. Most observers reported more migrants present after April 26, which marked the last of the storms. A heavy movement of Yellow and Wilson's Warblers was reported to have moved through Poway between April 26 and May 5 (*JWK*). All the western species of warblers were noted in Pasadena on April 27 (*GSS*). Eleanor Pugh, who lives on the sandy strip separating the ocean from San Diego Bay, reported that on the morning of April 29 she saw many migrants passing overhead as they moved northward, and others were found in the scanty cover offered there. The most abundant species were Western Kingbirds, Wilson's Warblers, Western Tanagers and Lazuli Buntings with lesser numbers of Barn and

Cliff Swallows, *Empidonax* flycatchers, Warbling Vireos, Nashville, Yellow and Hermit Warblers, Bullock's Orioles and Blue Grosbeaks. The heavy flight of migrants into the Region continued through May 7, and in this period many migrants were noted in residential areas of San Diego, with *Empidonax* flycatchers, all the western warblers, Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Lazuli Buntings present in numbers. On May 4 a total of 250 Western Tanagers was found in the Tijuana River Valley; the birds were sitting in open fields, along fence-lines, and in all available cover. On May 5 about 150 warblers were found in a small park in San Diego; the Hermit and Nashville Warblers were the commonest (about 40 of each), then Townsend's and Black-throated Gray Warblers (about 25 of each), and smaller numbers of the other western warblers. The Western Tanager was exceedingly abundant (about 60), and there were also about 25 Black-headed Grosbeaks present (*GMcC*). The Swainson's Thrush appeared to move up the coast during the first 3 weeks of May; some moving through Whittier on May 5 (*JHC*). This was the most numerous bird in the Tijuana River Valley on May 17 (*GMcC*).

On the desert flyway very few concentrations of migrants were to be found. By the end of the second week of April there were very few migrants anywhere on the desert, and only single individuals, or groups of three or four birds, were located in the oases in the Coachella, Morongo and Imperial Valleys. On April 21 Ted Chase found 11 species of warblers at Morongo Valley, but only the Wilson's Warbler was common, with 100 present; on the same day he found about 40 *Empidonax* flycatchers (probably all the Calif. species present), which were the only other prominent migrants. By April 27 there was apparently no increase in the numbers of warblers, except for the chats, which numbered about 15, a high number for any one location. There were about 100 *Empidonax* flycatchers, which indicates a good movement of these birds during the intervening week. It is interesting to note that only 5 Western Tanagers could be found on April 27 in contrast to the large numbers present on the coast at this same time, and still only 50 could be found on May 11; this seems to indicate that most of the Western Tanagers followed a coastal route this year. On May 11 the most prominent migrants at Morongo Valley were *Empidonax* flycatchers (40), Swainson's Thrush (35), Warbling Vireo (50), Yellow Warbler (30), MacGillivray's Warbler (20), Wilson's Warbler (50), Western Tanager (50), and Black-headed Grosbeak (10); however, very few migrants could be found elsewhere in the Coachella Valley on this date, and only a few were present in the Imperial Valley the following day. After this date no noteworthy numbers were found, though Western Wood Pewees, *Empidonax* flycatchers, and Western Tanagers were still straggling through until the end of the period.

Loons, Grebes—Most of the loons had passed north by the first week in April, although a few individuals were noted at points along the coast throughout the period. A Horned Grebe in breeding plumage was noted on the Salton Sea on May 12 (*GMcC*),

one of the few inland records for this Region. Eared Grebes numbered 1100 on the Salton Sea Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in the Imperial Valley on May 24, and were reported as abundant throughout the period (RRP). The winter flocks of Western Grebes had mostly departed by mid-April from San Diego (EP), and a late flock of 700 near Ventura on May 18 had fallen to 100 by May 20 (GSS).

Shearwaters, Pelicans—A "large" flight of Sooty Shearwaters was noted off Santa Monica on May 24 (AIS), but no others were reported. White Pelicans were first noted at the Salton Sea on March 11 when 85 were present (RRP); a "large" flock passed over Covina on March 18 (RSII'); on April 11 a flock of 4000 was seen flying northward over the Salton Sea (RS); however, the largest number noted on the Salton Sea Refuge was 150, which suggests that this large flock was in transit from somewhere south of the Salton Sea, probably the Gulf of California.

Herons, Ibis—The *Yellow-crowned Night Heron* remained at Claremont for 10 days after March 27, and was photographed on April 3 (LAIS). What was probably the same bird appeared at Harbor Park, Los Angeles, about May 30, and was still present on June 2 (LS). This is the third record for California, but there still is no specimen from the state. Only 150-200 White-faced Ibis were noted in the Imperial Valley (RRP), and the normal numbers of strays were seen along the coast.

Geese—On the Salton Sea Refuge the goose population was 12,000 Snow Geese and 740 Canada Geese on March 1; most of the Snow Geese left on March 8, with 2000 staying until March 15; also all of the Canada Geese had left by March 15 (RRP). For the first time the Black Brant has turned up in numbers inland. On April 9 there was a flock of over 100 at the north end of the Salton Sea, with 30 there on April 27, and one was still there on May 11 (GMcC); a single bird was seen near Calipatria on April 11 (RS). On the Salton Sea Refuge 5 appeared on April 22, and 4 were still present at the end of the period (RRP). Previously this species had been considered casual inland in California, but it is possible that the Black Brant is being forced to winter farther south on the Pacific Coast, because of the destruction of marshes, and may now have moved into the Gulf of California by passing around the southern tip of Baja California. By moving directly northward up the Gulf of California, the birds would be forced to move through the Imperial Valley of southern California.

Ducks—At the beginning of March 106,240 ducks were present on the Salton Sea Refuge; by March 15 waterfowl numbers had dropped to 30,000. From this point there was a gradual decline until April 12, when the population leveled off at 2500 birds. High temperatures during the first two weeks of May forced all but the normal summering population northward (RRP). The Fulvous Tree Duck arrived on the Salton Sea Refuge on April 23, but only 2 or 3 pairs were present at the end of the period (RRP). A few Blue-winged Teal were noted along the coast and in the Imperial Valley as is normal. A Greater Scaup was seen on the Salton Sea, where it is rare, on April 27 (LAAS), and 2 late birds were still present on

San Diego Bay at the end of the period (EP). The Lesser Scaup departed from its coastal wintering areas during mid-April, with some stragglers still present at the end of the period. As many as 15 Common Goldeneyes were present on the Salton Sea until the end of the period, and 1 was still present in San Diego on June 6 (EP), which is very late. Most of the wintering Surf and White-winged Scoters had left San Diego by the end of March (EP), though the usual small flocks, which sometimes remain to summer, were reported until the end of the period.

Hawks—No large migrating flocks of Swainson's Hawks were reported this spring, though there may have been a small movement through the Imperial Valley and along the coast on April 11 and 12, for groups of between 4 and 8 birds were noted (DP, LB & GMcC). This would be a late movement, and was probably only the tail-end of the main flight which is easily missed. A Peregrine Falcon was reported from the Salton Sea on March 6 (RRP), and at 1000 Palms on April 10 (DP). A single Osprey was noted at San Diego on April 15 (EP).

Plovers, Surfbirds and Turnstones—It appears as if the migration of some of these birds occurs earlier on the coast of southern California than it does in the Imperial Valley. The Semipalmated Plover, for instance, was scarce in San Diego after April 18 (EP), whereas, in the Imperial Valley, the same species built up to a peak of 400 at the end of April (RRP). They were still numerous on May 12 (GMcC). Snowy Plovers were on their breeding territories in San Diego by April 15 (EP). This species peaked at 50 birds on the Salton Sea Refuge at the end of April (RRP). Surfbirds apparently moved along the coast between March 25 and April 5, for flocks of up to 50 were noted at La Jolla (GH); 25 were noted near Laguna Beach (LAIS); 6 were at Goleta (JK) within this period. There was a heavy movement of Ruddy Turnstones through the San Diego area on April 6, and again between April 25 and May 5, when as many as 500 birds could be found on San Diego Bay (EP & GMcC); also there were smaller numbers of Black Turnstones moving through at the same time. The Ruddy Turnstone is normally considered strictly coastal in California, but on May 8 and 9 two were on the Salton Sea Refuge (RRP), and 9 were seen at the north end of the Salton Sea on May 11 (GMcC).

Sandpipers—Long-billed Curlews and Whimbrels reached a peak of 3000 birds each on April 1 in the Imperial Valley (RRP); elsewhere Whimbrels were noted moving northward along the coast at San Diego between May 3 and 15 (EP); at Laguna Beach between April 24 and May 11 (LAIS); and a flock of 70 remained near Pomona for 10 days after April 29 (W'RH). Knots appeared to move through the San Diego area during late April and early May, and most had departed by late May; on May 3, 3 were noted on the Salton Sea, where they may prove to be regular in small numbers during migration. Most of the Least and Western Sandpipers had departed from San Diego by April 21, but in the Imperial Valley they reached a peak of 15,000 in mid-April. Three Stilt Sandpipers were found at the Salton Sea on May

12 (*GMcC*), and this appears to be the only place in California where they occur regularly. Sanderlings were noted on the Salton Sea as follows: 1 on April 19 (*RRP*); 3 on April 11 (*RS*); 2 on April 27 and 3 on May 11 and 12 (*GMcC*); these birds are probably regular at this location in small numbers during migration.

Phalaropes—The flight of phalaropes was poor along the coast, but fair numbers passed through the Imperial Valley. Wilson's Phalaropes were first noted in the Imperial Valley on April 17; they quickly reached a population of 2000, and just as quickly dropped to hardly any by May 15 (*RRP*); no more than 200 were noted in San Diego during the same period. Northern Phalaropes were late and scarce, with hardly any at San Diego, and a high of only 500 noted at the Salton Sea on May 12. A Red Phalarope in breeding plumage was seen on May 12 at the Salton Sea (*GMcC*), where it is casual in occurrence.

Gulls and Terns—Most of the wintering gulls departed on time. Two Franklin's Gulls were present in the Imperial Valley between April 4 and 8 (*RRP*); this species is rare during migration anywhere in the Region, but may prove to be more regular in the Imperial Valley than suspected. The Bonaparte's Gull was present in fair numbers in the Imperial Valley, with a peak of 90 on March 28 and 75 on May 3 (*RRP*), indicating that this is a regular route during migration, and that the species is not merely of occasional occurrence as is often thought. The Common Tern moved north along the coast between April 20 and the end of the period, with a peak of 100 in San Diego on May 10 (*EP* & *GMcC*). The Least Tern arrived in San Diego on April 15, a normal date, and quickly built up in numbers (*EP*). The Elegant Tern was first noted in San Diego on March 10, and became common by March 15; the birds were found in the nesting area during early April, and later 60 nests were found along with 400 nests of Forster's Terns and many nests of Caspian Terns (*EP* & *GMcC*).

Doves, Swifts and Hummingbirds—White-winged Doves arrived in late April and soon became widespread. They were seen at such places as Morongo Valley and Cottonwood Springs at the north, and Yaqui Wells at the west of its range; a stray bird was seen in San Diego on May 25 (*GMcC*). The Ground Dove continues to increase in numbers, and at least 2 pairs per square mile are present in the Corona area (*NHM*). The flight of Vaux's Swifts passed through during the last half of April, but very few birds were noted, and most observers considered it a poor flight. A few Calliope Hummingbirds were noted on the desert flyway between April 12 and 21.

Flycatchers, Nuthatches—The earliest Ash-throated Flycatcher was noted in Santa Barbara on March 20 (*JK*), which is a little early. A *Wied's Crested Flycatcher* was well seen and heard at Morongo Valley on June 9 (*GMcC, et al.*); this appears to be the westernmost record of this species, but it is found fairly commonly along the Colorado River now, and may be spreading westward. A Western Wood Pewee at Morongo Valley on April 12

(*RS*) was a little early. Vermilion Flycatchers were present at Morongo Valley, and near San Diego (*LG*) which apparently is normal. A Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen on April 9 (*LB*) at Doheny Beach Park, a rather unusual location.

Wrens, Solitaire, Waxwings—A Winter Wren, rare in this Region, was found at Morongo Valley on April 10 (*DP*). On May 24 a Townsend's Solitaire was in the Tijuana River Valley (*GMcC*) where it is out of its normal range. The Cedar Waxwings that did arrive in southern California during February were still present in San Diego at the close of the period (*GMcC*), and others were noted in Pasadena on May 2 (*GSS*).

Vireos and Warblers—As indicated in the section on migration, there was a good movement of these birds along the coast between April 26 and May 7, but the flight on the desert was less spectacular, and did not compare with last year's flight. The only migrant Gray Vireo reported was one in Whitewater Canyon on April 21 (*DP*). A Black-and-white Warbler was in the Tijuana River Valley on May 17 and 18 (*GMcC*). A wintering *Am. Goldfinch* was still present in San Diego on April 20, and a migrant bird was in the Tijuana River Valley on May 2 and 25 (*GMcC*). A Northern Waterthrush was at Morongo Valley on May 11 (*GMcC, et al.*). These three species are regular migrants through California in very small numbers, and should not be thought of as accidental. A male *Prothonotary Warbler* was reported by Oliver Allen at Morongo Valley on May 6, and, if correctly identified, constitutes the second record for California. A Palm Warbler was at the south end of the Salton Sea on April 10 (*GMcC*); this species may prove our first in California in limited numbers during the fall, winter and spring, for there are now at least 25 records. The *Lucy's Warbler* is usually restricted to the Colorado River Valley as a California bird, but this year they were noted west of their normal range as follows: 1 in Morongo Valley on April 9 (*GMcC* & *RS*), and 2 there on April 21 (*TC*); 1 at 1000 Palms Oasis on April 12 (*RS*), and again on April 27 (*GMcC*).

Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers—All three orioles arrived on time with the first Hooded Oriole noted on March 20 at Covina (*RSW*), the first Bullock's Oriole on March 15 in San Diego (*EP*), and the first Scott's Oriole on March 17 in Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument (*DP*). Two Scott's Orioles, west of their normal range, were at Whittier, April 27 to 29 (*EBM*). A *Bronzed Cowbird* was carefully identified at a feeder in Whittier on June 12 (*EBM, et al.*); this is the westernmost record for this species, but it has once been collected in the Imperial Valley, and occurs regularly along the Colorado River in Imperial County during the late spring and early summer. Summer Tanagers were first noted at Morongo Valley on April 27, and 2 or 3 pairs appear to be breeding there; a migrant bird was at Cottonwood Springs on June 8 (*GMcC*). Western Tanagers, first noted on April 20, were among the most conspicuous migrants along the coast during early May, but were found to be less numerous on the desert.

Grosbeaks, Buntings and Sparrows—A Cardinal,

away from its restricted range in California, was seen in the Tijuana River Valley on May 31 (EP). A male *Rose-breasted Grosbeak* was at Poway, April 9 and 10 (JWK), and a wintering male remained in San Diego until April 15 (GMcC); this species is considered casual in California, and there are only about 15 records for the entire state. The migration of Black-headed Grosbeaks and Lazuli Buntings appeared to be normal this year, the birds arriving on March 29 and April 7 respectively. The Black-chinned Sparrow was found to be "very common" in White-water Canyon on April 21 (DP), and, since this species does not breed at this location, it would seem reasonable to assume that this was the time of heaviest movement into the Region. The majority of the White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows left

a little early this spring. A Harris' Sparrow was at Cottonwood Springs on April 22 (AS), and a White-throated Sparrow was in Orange County on April 7 (DP); both species are scarce in southern California.

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