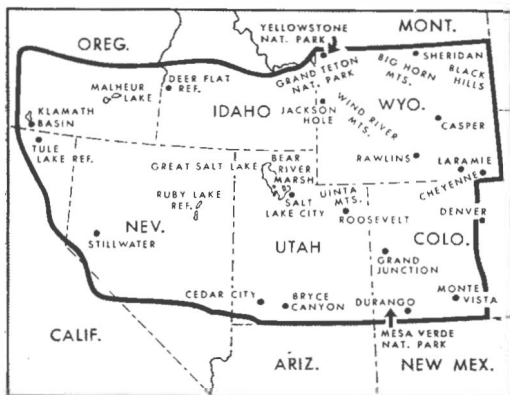


**GREAT BASIN, CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.**—The weather was more unusually irregular this season. The warm summer weather per-



sisted throughout and gave us one of the warmest falls on record. The western storm of Oct. 10-12 dumped badly needed moisture on the Klamath Basin and Malheur in Oregon, but its effect was not noted in the east. Klamath Basin had 6.01 in. of rain in this period compared with 2.59 last year. The hills around Klamath had 3 ft. of snow on Oct. 10, and 2 in. fell in the basin. Drought conditions were broken and Upper Klamath Lake rose from 1.13 ft. to a normal level. Clear Lake, one of the Klamath Basin Lakes, rose 3 feet (*EJO'N*). At Malheur the same storm dumped  $1\frac{3}{4}$  in., a great deal for that arid basin. Although the immediate effect is not too evident, the prospects for next year are improved. Malheur and Harney Lakes remain mere remnants of what they normally are.

Because of the warm weather, many ducks were still lingering or even had not appeared by the end of this period. There were many late dates for passerine

birds. In general, the geese seem to be holding their own over last year, but the ducks are down considerably in numbers.

**Loons**—A Common Loon was at Kolob Reservoir, north of Zion Park, southern Utah, Sept. 5 (*DLC*). The loon is unusual in that part of the mountains.

**Swans**—Shooting of Whistling Swans was permitted for the first time in Utah (1000 licenses) but, owing to the extreme warm weather, the birds did not arrive in time. The peak of 21,300 Whistling Swans at Bear River, northern end of the Great Salt Lake, Nov. 25, was down from last year's 24,000 (*RDJ*). This is by far the greatest concentration of swans in the West. It doesn't seem right that hunting of these great birds should be permitted. At Malheur there were 600 swans, double last year's number, but still way below normal. Thirty-seven were dyed yellow, a total of 181 having been dyed this color since last year. Yellow swans should be reported to Malheur Refuge, Burns, Oreg. More information on the movement of these birds is needed (*EK*). In spite of the recent drought the Trumpeter Swan is doing fairly well. The fall congregation on Flat Creek, National Elk Refuge, Jackson Hole, Wyo. increases year by year. This year there were 56 Trumpeters, including 7 cygnets, beside the highway. The other Trumpeter colonies in this area are slowly growing. At Ruby Lakes, eastern Nevada, where some of the birds are outside of the refuge, there are about 18 individuals (*DEL*). The Malheur colony had at least one cygnet this year (*EK*).

**Ducks and Geese**—The great Klamath Basin waterfowl migration was later than usual with a peak of 1,992,400 ducks the last week of October. (The 1955 high was 5 million.) This roughly coincides with the peak of geese at 771,900 and 600,000 Am. Coot. A breakdown of these figures the first week of November showed: Pintail, 754,800, down 50% from last year; Am. Widgeon, 128,500, up 77%; Shoveler, 65,350, up 6%; Mallard, 49,800, down 25%; Ruddy Duck, 35,500, up 5%; Canvasback, 18,100; Gadwall, 11,350, down 34%; Buffhead, 7570, down 25%; Redhead, 4500, down 8%. The geese breakdown shows: Cackling Canada Goose, 395,700, up 58% from last year; White-fronted Goose, 265,700, up 25%; Snow Goose, 109,700, down 13%; large Canada Goose, 4970, down 38% (*EJO'N*).

At Malheur the Snow Goose migration was  $\frac{1}{3}$  of last year's, but as the spring migration is by far the greatest, the fall figures do not mean much. There are relatively few other geese at Malheur. There were 76,000 ducks, way below normal, but double last year's estimate (*EK*). Ruby Lakes in eastern Nevada had waterfowl use up 100% over last year, a reflection of the mild weather and open water throughout the period (*DEL*). Actual numbers of birds at Ruby Lakes are much less than at the other great refuges. The Deer Flat Refuge, southwestern Idaho, had 520,000 Mallards at the end of this period (*DEL*); the peak often comes later. Nine thousand geese were using this refuge on Oct. 27, the high for the period (*GHC*). There were 7100 honkers present at Bear River on Oct. 28, the highest number in recent years (*RDJ*). Monte Vista Refuge, southern-central Colo-

rado, is growing, but the bird populations do not yet reflect the increase in size. It remains chiefly a Mallard refuge with much smaller numbers of other ducks. By the end of this period 40,000 Mallards were there (CRB).

At the great Bear River marshes refuge, the peak of ducks was 367,000 on Oct. 3, instead of last year's 421,000 on Sept. 1-4. The individual peaks this year were in the usual order, except that the Am. Widgeon has risen to second place, after the Pintail pushing the Green-winged Teal to third place. Figures this year were: Pintail, 193,000; Mallard, 37,000; Gadwall, 27,500; Canvasback, 23,000; Redhead, 15,700; others in lesser order. Again the Am. Coot was common with 79,000 (RDJ). On the Soda Lakes the Am. Widgeon was one of the commonest ducks, if not the commonest. However, in this last area the concentrations are only a little over a thousand (OKS). At a time when most ducks are decreasing, it looks as if the Am. Widgeon is more than holding its own.

**Rarities**—Three Black Brant were seen at Flat Creek in Jackson Hole (EBM) on Nov. 6. This is the first record for the Elk Refuge and a great rarity in the state. On Nov. 18 a European Widgeon was banded at Deer Flat Refuge in western Idaho (GC). A Black Duck was shot on Lower Klamath Lake Refuge in November. On Nov. 20 a Surf Scoter was taken there by a hunter. An *Emperor Goose* was seen on Lower Klamath Refuge, Nov. 22 (RS).

**Hawks**—There are few encouraging notes. No Golden Eagles were seen on the central Wyoming flyway during this period (OKS). Elsewhere, few eagles were seen, which was attributed to the warm weather. Harold Holt feels the Golden Eagle is holding its own in Colorado. The scarcity of the Goshawk is alarming, although Stewart Murie had one at Parowan, southern Utah, Sept. 8.

**Shorebirds**—There were 6 Buff-breasted Sandpipers at the Soda Lakes at Casper, Sept. 2 (OKS). This bird may regularly migrate through Wyoming. A *Solitary Sandpiper* was seen at Lower Klamath Lake, where it is rare, Oct. 6 (Mrs. RB, Mrs. TC). There was also a *White-rumped Sandpiper* in the same area. This is so rare that perhaps a specimen should have been taken.

**Jaegers**—A Parasitic Jaeger (compared in size with California Gulls and amount of white in the primaries) was seen on Sept. 2 at the Soda Lakes, Wyo. (a first record for the state—OKS). It has long been recorded in the rest of the mountain states. The artificial Soda Lakes are interesting in themselves. The effluent of the Standard Oil of Indiana Refinery (which formerly polluted the North Platte River), is now pumped into this sump north of the city, where it comes in hot and loaded with industrial wastes. It goes through a series of settling basins and emerges at the bottom of the sump into a large lake where the water is good. Waterfowl and waders abound. The area has been protected by the refinery and the grass is returning on the surrounding range. Large numbers of antelope have returned as have longspurs and other grassland birds. From a noxious pollution problem we have gone to an ornithological paradise, one of the best in Wyoming.

**Owls**—The only place where the Flammulated Owl can be seen regularly is the Monte Vista Refuge, Colo. Six were present throughout this period and they have been there for several years (CRB).

**Cranes**—Up to 57 migrant Sandhill Cranes were on the National Elk Refuge in September (JLM). There were 400-500 in the Teton Basin, Idaho on Sept. 21 (RF).

**Woodpeckers**—There was a Williamson's Sapsucker at Cedar Breaks National Monument, Utah, on Aug. 31 (DLG). This is the first record for the Monument, although the bird occurs all through the mountains of Utah.

**Hummingbirds**—Mrs. Crews reported a very poor hummer migration in the mesa country of western Colorado. This is confirmed by Oppie Reames in Durango to the south.

**Swallows**—There were hundreds of Purple Martins at Tule Lake, Aug. 21 (GA). Spraying for mosquitoes for two years in Durango seems to be associated with a drop in the Violet-green Swallow population (OR). Since the mosquito is not the principal food of this swallow, obviously much more than mosquito killing has been done.

**Shrike**—An immature Northern Shrike was trapped on July 29 at Malheur Refuge (LK). This is the first summer record for Oregon. All those who assume all summer shrikes to be Loggerheads, please take note.

**Warblers**—There were 2 Magnolia Warblers at Salt Lake City on Oct. 14 (RF & HL). These birds are no better than casual in Utah. Eugene Kridler, with his netting and banding, continues to revise the status of birds at Malheur. He trapped several Red-eyed Vireos during the migration and had the third and fourth records of the Northern Waterthrush on Sept. 5.

**Flycatchers**—A Cassin's Kingbird was found at Salt Lake City on Nov. 11 (RH).

**Contributors**—Mrs. RB, Mrs. Ray Briggs; CRB, Charles R. Bryant; DLC, Dennis L. Carter; Mrs. TC, Mrs. Ted Conway; GHC, Gene H. Crawford; RF, Reed Ferris; RH, R. Hoehning; HH, Harold Holt; RDJ, Robert D. Johnson; GK, Gleb Kashin; EK, Eugene Kridler; HL, Dr. H. Lamb; DEL, Donald L. Lewis; EBM, E. Budd Marter; RLM, Robert L. Means; EJO'N, Edward J. O'Neill; LQ, Loraine Quillen; OR, Oppie Reames; OKS, Oliver K. Scott; RS, Richard Stallcup.—DR. OLIVER K. SCOTT, 437 East 13th Street, Casper, Wyo.