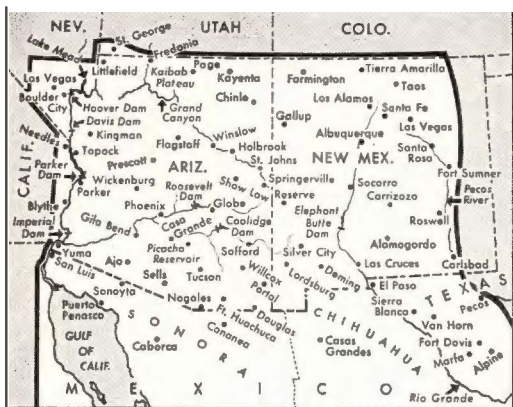


SOUTHWEST REGION.—This fall was mostly mild and dry, except in southern Arizona where one of the wettest years went on record, with Tucson getting 7.31 inches above normal by mid-October. Rains in late August and September helped in other areas, except in Texas and southern New Mexico. Here drought continued with Carlsbad receiving only 4.11 inches this year. October was generally clear and dry. The first killing frosts arrived about November 1 in northern areas. Unusual snowstorms in



mid-November brought snow even into deserts, with four inches at Nogales, Ariz. Ponds were full in Arizona, but in New Mexico Lake McMillan near Carlsbad was bone-dry until late November, and Lake Avalon, also at Carlsbad, and Storrie Lake at Las Vegas were very low. Eagle Nest Lake east of Taos was closed on Sept. 9 according to the press; and water levels at the Bitter Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge were the lowest recorded.

The Arizona rains made extremely heavy plant growth, even into northern Sonora. Cover was considered good in most areas, except at El Paso, Texas where ditches have been denuded and undergrowth removed from mesquite and salt cedar patches. Eastern areas thought food was less abundant. There were no walnuts produced in the Pinal Mountains near Globe, Arizona and few piñons on northern New Mexico foothills, though there was a good crop of juniper berries. Rains were too late to produce weed growth, especially low were cleome and sunflowers. Large areas of New Mexico hillsides have had piñon-juniper forests bulldozed over by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in an effort to encourage more grasses. The fallen trees are left to halt erosion which leaves some cover.

Bird numbers were reported low in the drier eastern areas. Many species were staying at higher altitudes. Several species stayed later than usual, even into November; though many left after the "insult" of the snowstorms. Peak dates for migration recorded were September 16 at Roswell, N. Mex. with 17 species in one yard; and Sept. 5 and 22 at Santa Fe, with lesser flights on Aug. 15, Sept. 9-10, Sept. 16, and Oct. 15.

Loons, Grebes, Cormorants—For the second year in a row an Arctic Loon was reported on Ascarate Lake in El Paso from Nov. 7 to 17 (MBK, LM, CM). There has been an increase in Western Grebe reports during the last two years. This fall they were seen at 6 New Mexico localities—Caballo Lake in Sierra County (BKH), Lake Avalon (RCB), Las Vegas, Bitter Lake Refuge, Farmington, and Blue-water Lake in Valencia County (JMS). A group of 7 Least Grebes was found on a small stock tank near Arivaca, Ariz. in Pima County and may have bred there (SHL). A Double-crested Cormorant was

seen on Eagle Nest Lake, Colfax Co., N. Mex. on Nov. 1 (JMS).

Hérons—Two immature Yellow-crowned Night Herons were on the Gila River near Gila, N. Mex. on Aug. 24; one was collected (BKH). An immature Little Blue Heron was seen at El Paso from Nov. 22 till 30 (LM, MBK, CM).

Geese, Ducks—A cold front on Nov. 17-20 brought over 1500 Canada Geese to the Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, N. Mex. with 4100 there by the end of the period. Also present were 1450 Blue and Snow Geese, a record high for the refuge. On Oct. 31, 4 Ross' Geese appeared; by the end of November the number had increased to 14! (LAO, WEG, JD, et al.). Duck numbers seemed low with most not arriving until after the snow fell. Five Red-breasted Mergansers were on Ascarate Lake, El Paso, Nov. 8 to 30 (LM, MBK, CM), and four Com. Mergansers were at Nogales on Nov. 8 (FMT).

Hawks—A Black Vulture was seen at Maricopa, Pinal Co., Ariz. on Nov. 23 (SHL). A migrating flock of 79 Swainson's Hawks was near Beaverhead, N. Mex. on Sept. 20 (BKH), and other flights were seen near Tucson on Aug. 31 and Sept. 22 (DSP), but there was no noticeable flight through Nogales Pass. A Harris' Hawk was seen north of Blythe, Riverside Co., Calif. on Nov. 28; this species is becoming scarce in the Colorado Valley (GMC). Two Ospreys were over Juan Tabó Canyon in the Sandia Mountains near Albuquerque, N. Mex., apparently using thermals for migration (Gordon Meade, *vide* BM).

Quail—Numbers were still low in most areas, with little reproduction due to a lack of winter moisture.

Cranes, Rails—Six Sandhill Cranes were seen over the Colorado River north of Blythe on Nov. 28 (GMC). There was a peak of 38,000 on the Bitter Lake Refuge on Oct. 22, and on Bosque Refuge on Nov. 30, 5500 were present, the highest number in the history of the refuge. They also came in earlier (LAO). At least 3 Soras were calling in Sabino Canyon, near Tucson, Oct. 8 to 15 (FMT).

Shorebirds—Two Black-bellied Plovers, a Long-billed Curlew, and a Dunlin were in Phoenix on Oct. 20 (MLB, SRD) and Oct. 23 (WCR). Another Black-bellied Plover was seen there on Nov. 17. A Snowy Plover and 5 Pectoral Sandpipers were at Tucson on Oct. 17 (BH). Six Black-bellied Plovers were at Bitter Lake Refuge on Oct. 3, and a Semipalmated Sandpiper was photographed there in August. Bruce Harris saw a Stilt Sandpiper at Charette Lake, Mora Co., N. Mex. on Sept. 11. A Red Phalarope was reported from the Wahweap Canyon Arm of Lake Powell, Utah, on Sept. 10 (HEK).

Doves, Ani—Two Ground Doves and 20 Inca Doves were at Parker Dam, Calif.-Ariz. on Nov. 28 (GMC). Both species, with the White-winged, have been spreading north in recent years. A Groove-billed Ani appeared in Santa Fe on Sept. 5 (PRS). Whether this was an escape is unknown, but strong southeast winds from Texas preceded it. This species is still on the hypothetical list for New Mexico.

Owls—A Barn Owl was found dead at Hurley, N.

Mex. on Sept. 30 (BKH) and another was near Roswell on Oct. 23 (ANC). Six Long-eared Owls returned to a roost near Nogales. A Short-eared Owl was seen and another collected near Quemado, Catron Co., N. Mex., Oct. 24 and 31 (JC, JD).

Poor-will, Hummingbirds—A Poor-will was seen on a road in snow patches on the Desert Game Range in Nevada in November (CGH). A Whip-poor-will was calling at Cedar Crest, Bernalillo Co., N. Mex. Sept. 28 to 30. Several late reports of hummingbirds came in: a Black-chinned in Nogales in late Nov.; Broad-tailed in Santa Fe until Oct. 9 and one in Madera Canyon south of Tucson on Nov. 9 (JL); and Anna's through November in Tucson. Calliope Hummingbirds were not absent at Cedar Crest, as reported, but were seen three or four at a time this year.

Flycatchers to Jays—An Eastern Kingbird was at Kirtland, N. Mex. on July 21, a delayed report (AN). Some flycatchers stayed later than usual. A very late Rose-throated Becard was at Patagonia, Ariz. on Oct. 10 (BH). Two Scrub Jays were in Beaver Dam Wash, Washington Co., Utah, on Sept. 3 and Oct. 30 (DLC, GS). The *Magpie-jay* is still staying in Douglas, Ariz. (GM, et al.)—having been there since February.

Nuthatches, Verdins, Catbirds, Thrushes—Three Red-breasted Nuthatches were in the Pinal Mountains on Oct. 1 in pines. Verdins are increasing on the Desert Game Range, Nev. Robins, bluebirds, and Townsend's Solitaires were staying high in the mountains. A Catbird was at Cedar Crest on Aug. 23 and another in Roswell, Oct. 10 and 11. Santa Fe had a Swainson's Thrush, Oct. 24.

Waxwings—A few Cedar Waxwings were reported in lowland areas; 2 in Roswell on Sept. 16; an immature in Beaver Dam Wash, Utah, Sept. 24 (DLC, RD); 2 flocks in Globe on Sept. 28; and 14 birds below Pine Park in the Chiricahua Mountains, Ariz. on Nov. 12 (GM).

Vireos—A Bell's Vireo was at Parker Dam as late as Nov. 28 (GMC), and there was a Gray Vireo in Cave Creek Canyon of the Chiricahua Mountains on Nov. 13 (GM). (Note: this canyon is not in the Chiricahua Nat'l Mon. as was previously stated, but is part of the National Forest system.) A late Solitary Vireo was in Phoenix on Dec. 1 (M.A.S.). Barbara McKnight netted a *Red-eyed Vireo* at Cedar Crest, N. Mex. on Sept. 13, after having heard it (or others?) for a week.

Warblers—There were late records in October for almost every common species of warbler in the Region. Townsend's Warblers were seen in Phoenix on Nov. 19 (M.A.S.). Two Black-and-white Warblers were at Rattlesnake Springs, near Carlsbad, Sept. 7, and one collected at Fort Bayard, N. Mex. on Nov. 4 (BKH). An immature *Tennessee Warbler* was collected at Silver City, N. Mex., Oct. 6, the first state specimen (DAZ). A Nashville Warbler was at Globe on Sept. 23, a late date. Unusual was an Ovenbird at Phoenix, Sept. 3 (WP, SRD). Several Black-throated Blue Warblers were at Loving, N. Mex. in late Sept. (RCB). A Parula Warbler was at Fort Bayard on Sept. 26. The Palm Warbler

credited to BKH in the last report should have been credited to DAZ.

Orioles, Tanagers—Western Tanagers were outnumbered three to one this fall by Bullock's Orioles—usually there are six tanagers to one oriole on the Desert Game Range. A Bobolink was collected on Sept. 16 at Fort Bayard and another was seen the same day in Santa Fe.

Finches—Montane species were staying high in the mountains. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was found dead in Los Alamos, N. Mex. on Oct. 13 (WBL). Five Dickcissels were seen at Fort Bayard from Sept. 8 to 25, and one was in the bottom of the Grand Canyon, Ariz. on Sept. 8 (HEK). Lark Buntings and longspurs appeared on grasslands in good numbers.

Sparrows—Fewer sparrows than usual were wintering at El Paso, but they were considered numerous at Tucson. There were a number of unusual records. A Grasshopper Sparrow was collected at Loving and others were heard in October (RCB, SW). Clay-colored Sparrows were at Santa Fe, Sept. 5 and 12; banded at Los Alamos, Sept. 5 and 7 (JRT); and seen near Dugout, Cochise Co., Ariz. Nov. 11 (GM). A Fox Sparrow was collected on the Gila River at the Cliff Dwellings the same day (BKH). Swamp Sparrows were recorded at Silver City and near Española, N. Mex. (WBL). White-throated Sparrows appeared in Santa Fe (DM, PRS, et al.); Silver City; Cedar Crest; and at the Gila Pueblo near Globe (LLH). A Song Sparrow in Silver City, Oct. 13, was out of its usual habitat (DAZ).

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