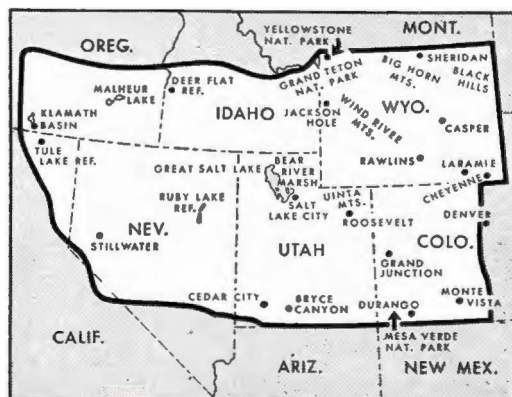


GREAT BASIN, CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.—The winter was remarkably warm and many migrants lingered on into the fall; a num-



ber spent the winter in the Region. The Christmas counts showed more late birds than usual. The western edge of this Region had more moisture than customarily. The eastern slope of the Sierra had 30 percent more than average and the mountains of eastern Oregon (Steens) are likewise well watered. Therefore, the refuges of the western Great Basin are in good shape and their outlook is bright. In the Wasatch the snow pack is above normal or average; in the central Rockies of Colorado, it is much below normal. Consequently, Monte Vista Refuge in southern Colorado has to pump artesian water to maintain any refuge at all. The nearby snow pack is only 30 percent of normal.

Spring came early in the western Great Basin and many early migrants returned in the first two weeks of February. Many landbirds perished in the heavy snows of mid-March at such places as Modoc Wildlife Refuge, Calif. (OEL) and Tule Lake (EJO'N).

Swans—The Trumpeter Swan at Malheur, Oreg. has been successful and now numbers 44 (DAP). The peak of Whistling Swans at Malheur was 8600, March 15—an early date and a high one (DAP). With the increase of moisture in the Sierra, Stillwater Refuge, Nev. has taken a new lease on life. There were 3700 Whistling Swans there, Dec. 11-17 (LDN).

Ducks and Geese—Stillwater had no great concentration of ducks but more than usual passed through, staying only a short time; in mid-March there were 25,000 Snow Geese there (LDN). Malheur's water conditions are good and improving. The great refuge in eastern Oregon had a peak of 130,000 Snow Geese in the second week of March (DAP)—a high figure.

Deer Flat Refuge, Idaho, reported 8000 wintering Canada Geese; the nesting season started on Feb. 3 on the Snake River (RVP), a very early date. The peak of the duck migration was Dec. 19 at Deer Flat with 514,500 ducks, of which 500,000, an average number, were Mallards (RVP).

Another Blue Goose was reported at Tule Lake Refuge, Klamath Basin, Feb. 17 (JG & RS). A Greater Scaup was seen near Reno in early February (JMD). Three pairs of Wood Ducks were seen at Niagara Springs near the Snake River, Feb. 22 (DLC). The Wood Duck is on the increase in the northern Great Basin. A pair of European Widgeon stayed at Malheur this winter (DAP); this is another species that seems to be increasing. An Emperor Goose was reported at Minidoka Refuge, Idaho (GK).

Hawks—There were scattering reports of Peregrine Falcons in this Region. This seems to be the wintering pattern of this rare bird. One was seen near Salt Lake City on Jan. 21 (GK); another was seen in the Cedar Valley, Utah, Jan. 3 (SM). A Harlan's Hawk at Honey Lake, northeastern California, was reported, Feb. 13 (RS). This bird is casual in California.

Eagles—There were 13 adult Bald Eagles and 3 immatures along the watercourses of the mountains of southern Utah, west of Bryce Canyon (BBH). A careful census by the Forest Service has not been available to us prior to this time. These birds arrived by Nov. 1 and left by March 15—a pattern which would hold for all Bald Eagles of the Region. Wintering Bald Eagles in the Klamath Basin reached the high figure of 112 (EJO'N). In March, 23 of 73 eagles at the Bear River Marshes, Utah, were Bald (MKH). Only about 12 Bald Eagles wintered at Malheur (DAP). The nine Golden Eagles at Monte Vista Refuge, Colo. Feb. 19-25, is the highest count there to-date. Nesting started on March 31. There were only 6 Bald Eagles at this refuge (CRB). Twelve Bald Eagles were reported at the new Browns Park Refuge on the Green River between Dinosaur Park and the Colorado-Utah line March 9-25 (RLP). (We should watch the progress of this new refuge with interest). Stillwater, Nev. had a wintering population of 8 Bald Eagles and 10 Golden Eagles (LDN).

Cranes—Sandhill Cranes started moving north on the western slope of Colorado at Hotchkiss about a month earlier than usual; a group of 90 was seen, March 11 (TC). The peak of the Sandhill migration at Monte Vista was 4000 on March 31 (CRB). Incidentally, this relatively new refuge has now increased to 14,555 acres.

Rails—We have two wintering reports of the Virginia Rail far north of its usual range. There

was one at Pelican Pond near Logan, Utah, March 15 (DMF), and a pair at Casper, Wyo., where they were reported all winter (OKS).

Turkeys—Up to 6 Turkeys were present in January in the foothills of the Big Horn Mountains near Sheridan, Wyo. (TK), a further northern extension of this bird's range.

Owls—A Pygmy Owl near Reno, Nev., Feb. 23, is the second reported from the Sierra (FR). There were several other reports of this owl from Utah and Colorado. A *Snowy Owl* was shot four miles west of Syracuse, Utah, near Ogden, Jan. 26 (GK). This bird is a great rarity in Utah.

Swifts—A flock of 20 White-throated Swifts at Niagara Springs, Idaho on March 23 was very early (DLC). Another remarkable report of 25 of these birds came from near Carson City, Nev., Dec. 28 (JMD). Do they hibernate in that area?

Wrens—A Cañon Wren singing at Ayres Natural Bridge, Wyo., Feb. 26 (OKS, *et al.*), is a very unusual winter record.

Bluebirds—Due to our mild winter a Mountain Bluebird at Tarryall Reservoir was high in the mountains west of Denver (BG).

Waxwings—This was a big flight year for Bohemian Waxwings. Most observers reported more than usual. At Boise, Idaho the number of Cedar Waxwings was down; they were replaced by Bohemians (TL). The latter birds got as far south as Colorado. Flocks of up to 300 were reported from Evergreen and Idaho Springs in the Rockies in February and March (WWB). Two hundred Bohemians were reported on Pikes Peak—southernmost report in the mountains of Colorado—Dec. 11 (HEK). The most southern report is of a flock of 200 near Bryce Canyon, Utah, Dec. 12 (BAL).

Warblers—A Grace's Warbler was again seen at Zion Park, Utah, in December (BAL). There was a record of this bird in the same area last year.

Finches—More Cassin's Finches than usual were reported this winter at Durango, Colo. (OR); they were also reported from farther north at Grand Junction (LFE).

Crossbills—Logan, Utah, where there was much more moisture than usual, reported large numbers of Red Crossbills, Jan. 24 and Feb. 5 (KLD). Evergreen, west of Denver, in the Rockies, had a serious drought—there were almost no cones and no crossbills (WWB).

Towhees—A Brown Towhee was seen at Grand Junction, Colo., March 13. This is the first report of this bird in that area (LFE).

Sparrows—Five Tree Sparrows were seen at Honey Lake, Calif., March 5 (JG). This is a bird which rarely goes so far west. Two reports of immature Harris' Sparrows from northeastern California are unusual. One was at Fort Bidwell, Feb. 12; another at Tule Lake, Feb. 11 (RS). This bird probably occurs regularly in that area, but there have been too few observers. A White-throated Sparrow—a rarity—was seen near Dubois, Wyo., on the upper Wind River, Dec. 13 (MB).

Longspurs—There was a mixed flock of longspurs at Lower Klamath Refuge—120 Lapland, 5

McCown's, 1 Chestnut-collared, Feb. 11 (RS). The last two species are particularly rare in that area.

Buntings—Flocks of 30 or more Snow Buntings were seen in the Arco area, in the dry plains north of the Snake River, Idaho through the month of February (DLC). Probably these birds are frequent visitors to the dry basin in winter, but are infrequently reported.

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