

SOUTHWEST REGION.—Fall's mildness continued through most of the winter. It was also extremely dry—one of the driest winters on record.



The only storm of any consequence came right after Christmas. Forests are so dry that a severe fire hazard is expected next summer. Already, there have been big grass fires near Fort Bayard, N. Mex. (*RAF*) and in the Lincoln Nat'l Forest near Alamogordo, N. Mex. By late April Forests are already being closed in the southern part of the state.

Many species lingered beyond normal departure dates, some even through the winter. This is a Region where migration and even nesting begins before the season ends. Migrants began arriving early, but nesting was described as being a bit late (*SMR*). A storm on March 18 near Silver City, N. Mex. brought the first migrants on March 19; another on March 26 gave two very interesting days (*WG*). Finches and other highland species were found in many lowland areas. Food supply was generally good due to the good rains last summer.

The sudden deaths of both Ross and Florence Thornburg of Tucson, Ariz. were a great loss. The Tucson Audubon Society is setting up a Thornburg Memorial Fund to further preserve areas at Patagonia, Ariz. that the Thornburgs were instrumental in saving; they hope to be able to do the same for Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mts. nearby.

A "vast" concentration of birds near Bingham, Socorro Co., N. Mex. was filmed concentrating around ranch tanks—mostly Sage Thrashers, Robins, Mountain and Western Bluebirds, juncos, and White-crowned Sparrows (*BM, JM*).

Golden Eagles are still being shot in southeastern New Mexico and western Texas. Two flights in March 1966 over the Davis Mountains, in Texas and the Capitan Mountains near Roswell, N. Mex. revealed that "sport-pilots" are now shooting more than the former professional pilots. One out of Roswell actually shot down 42 in one day. Twenty percent of these were Bald Eagles, with a higher count of them probably likely in February. Two pilots occupied in this "sport" were killed when their plane hit a cliff on the Caldwell Ranch in Texas—a fact reported by all news media. It is hoped some pilot will be able to scout out the region during future shoot-off season and come up with some idea as to what is going on there (*WRS*).

Loons, Grebes—Two Com. Loons were found on Morgan Lake in San Juan County, N. Mex. on Dec. 23. A Western Grebe was there on Jan. 8 (*APN*). A Least Grebe was at Quitobaquito, Organ Pipe Cactus Nat'l Monument, Ariz. on Dec. 12 (*RLC*).

Heron—An Am. Egret at Tucson on Dec. 30 is unusual there at anytime (*BH*). A *Cattle Egret* found wounded near Phoenix (which later died), may be the first Arizona record (*LLH, fide UEM*).

Swans—There was an increase in records of Whistling Swans. They came to Bitter Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge near Roswell after a 3-year's absence (*VM*); 4 wintered on Morgan Lake (*APN*); 4 came to Tucson on Dec. 27 (*DSP*); 27 wintered at Havasu Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, Ariz.—Calif. (*JMW*); one flew over a Phoenix home in February (*SRD*); and another was in Nogales, Ariz. on Jan. 14 (*RB, fide SMR*).

Geese—By Jan. 10 Bosque Apache Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, near Socorro, N. Mex. had 3420 Canada, 2200 Snow, 35 Blue, and 1 White-fronted Geese (*RWR*). Some 1800 Canada Geese wintered on Havasu Lake with 700 Snow Geese there in December (*JMW*). A few Snow Geese and a Ross' Goose were recorded at Tucson (*BH*). A Snow Goose was at Painted Rock Dam, near Buckeye, Ariz. on Feb. 11 (*RPN, RW*).

Ducks—Most ducks arrived later than usual in early January (*DSP, et al.*). They seemed to be well distributed in most localities; the Diving Ducks, especially, seemed more numerous throughout. Concentrations of good size gathered at some of the larger lakes. Some 6250 Mallards made up the bulk of the population at Bosque Refuge on Jan. 10 (*RWR*). A Blue-winged Teal spent January in Nogales. A Wood Duck wintered there (*BH*); 3 were on Lake Havasu on Dec. 3 (*JMW*); and 8

were at St. George, Utah on Jan. 11 (*BL*). There were more records of Hooded Mergansers, including a female which was photographed at Quitobaquito Pond, Nov. 26 to March 31 (*BB, RLC, FW*).

Hawks—Some 200 Turkey Vultures were welling over the Santa Rita Mountains on March 27 (*JTL*). More reports of both eagles were received: most observers are reporting any that they see. Several reported a decrease (*DSP, WG, APN*) and only at Magdalena, N. Mex. was it thought that they might have increased (*JAB*). A Zone-tailed Hawk was at Nogales on Dec. 24 (*BH*); 2 Swainson's Hawks were at Faywood, Grant Co., N. Mex. by March 22 (*JLS*); a Goshawk was in the Pinal Mountains near Globe, Ariz. on Dec. 8; and an Osprey was at Roosevelt, Ariz. on March 31 (*BJ, EJ*). There was an increased number of reports of both Prairie and Peregrine Falcons this winter.

Quail, Turkeys—These birds are still reported as increased in numbers in most areas. A covey of Harlequin Quail was seen again in the San Mateo Mountains near Magdalena on Dec. 14 (*JAB*). Bobwhite in Albuquerque on Dec. 30 were probably the offspring of escapees (*JND*). Owing to the mild winter, Turkeys stayed higher in the Chiricahua Mountains near Portal, Ariz. (*AC*).

Cranes, Am. Coots—Thirty-six Sandhill Cranes were at Boquillas, Texas on Jan. 24 (*RHW*). Most had left the Bosque Refuge by Feb. 24 (*RWR*), and the last one left the Bitter Lake Refuge on March 12 (*VM*). Am. Coots were described as numerous in many areas.

Shorebirds—About 150 Mt. Plovers were found near Phoenix on March 8 (*UEM*). A Virginia Rail was at Quitobaquito on Dec. 27 (*RLC*), and a Sora near Phoenix on Feb. 18 (*RPN, RW*). A *Red Phalarope* at Tucson on Dec. 30 was most unusual (*BH, RPN*).

Gulls—A *Black-legged Kittiwake* was shot by a hunter near Phoenix (*FT, UEM*). Five gulls believed to be Western, were at Lake McMillan near Carlsbad, N. Mex. on Dec. 30 (*VM, JHS*).

Owls—Seven Long-eared Owls were in salt cedars near Holloman Air Force Base, Alamogordo (*JRD*) and 12 were at Lake McMillan on Dec. 30 (*VM, JHS*). A Barn Owl was near Los Lunas, N. Mex. on Jan. 28 (*JMC*). A Pygmy Owl was photographed near Robert's Lake, Grant Co., N. Mex. on Jan. 15 and 21 (*RAF*). Found dead near Mora, N. Mex. was a Saw-whet Owl on Jan. 7 (*JMC*).

Swifts, Poor-wills—Ten White-throated Swifts were over the Salt River near Globe on Jan. 7 (*RPN, RW*). A Poor-will was heard near Phoenix on Feb. 25 (*UEM*).

Hummingbirds—Most species returned to southern Arizona quite early. A Calliope Hummingbird was found near Sonoyta, Sonora on March 24 (*FW*); an Allen's Hummingbird was at Organ Pipe Nat'l Monument on March 11 (*RLC*); and a Rivoli's Hummingbird wintered in Ramsey Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains, Ariz. (*UEM*). A Costa's Hummingbird was in Big Bend Nat'l Park, Tex. on Dec. 17 (*DR, RHW*). A very early Blue-throated Hummingbird arrived in Cave Creek Canyon, Chiricahua

Mts. on March 12 (*ELS, fide SMR*).

Kingfishers, Woodpeckers—A Green Kingfisher appeared near Nogales in Sycamore Canyon on Dec. 25 (*EW, fide SMR*). A Downy Woodpecker stayed all winter at a Silver City feeder (*DAZ*). Red-shafted Flickers were in greater numbers in most areas; consequently, there were more reports of Yellow-shafted Flickers. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker of the Red-breasted race was at Organ Pipe Nat'l Monument on Dec. 27 (*RLC*).

Flycatchers—Two Eastern Phoebes were in Patagonia on Dec. 23 (*DLC, FMT*). Many *Empidonax* flycatchers were left in the Nogales area in late December (*BH, et al.*); 2 Gray Flycatchers and a Dusky were collected.

Larks, Swallows—Tremendous flocks of Horned Larks were wintering in most areas with counts increased generally. Up to 51,000 were at Roswell on Dec. 26 (*VM*). Swallows were returning early in most places.

Jays, Chickadees—A *San Blas Jay* (*Cissilophia sanblasiana*) was at a Nogales, Sonora slaughter-house, just over the border, on Dec. 21 and 24—250 miles north of its normal range (*WW, BH*). There were a number of reports of Mountain Chickadees from valley areas. Red-breasted Nuthatches were recorded at Big Bend Nat'l Park (*RHW*); Phoenix (*SRD, RPN*); in the Albuquerque, N. Mex. area (*BM*); and at Tesuque near Sante Fe, N. Mex. (*JCY*).

Wrens, Thrashers—A Cactus Wren wintered at Corn Creek, Desert Game Range, Nev. for the first time (*CGH*). There was a Winter Wren at Corrales, near Albuquerque on Jan. 22 (*CA, AA, RG*). At Big Bend Nat'l Park a Winter and a Carolina Wren were seen, and a Short-billed Marsh Wren was at Boquillas on Feb. 14 (*RHW*). All species of thrashers prospered this winter around Phoenix (*UEM*). Reports of Brown Thrashers increased in New Mexico and southwestern Texas.

Thrushes—Most locations had a good number of Robins this winter. The *Rufous-backed Robin* stayed at Carefree near Phoenix until March 14 (*ELR, UEM*). A Hermit Thrush was at Organ Pipe Nat'l Monument on Jan. 25 (*RLC*); it wintered at Cedar Crest near Albuquerque (*BM*); and at Big Bend Nat'l Park (*RHW*). Western and Mountain Bluebirds and Townsend's Solitaires stayed in the highlands in good numbers.

Kinglets, Pipits—Most areas reported an increase in Ruby-crowned Kinglets; a few Golden-crowned Kinglets appeared at Big Bend Nat'l Park (*RHW*) and on Mt. Lemmon near Tucson on Dec. 26 (*BH*). Numbers of water pipits were up in most places. There were especially large concentrations all winter near Roswell. About 10,000 were counted on Dec. 14 (*VM*). A Sprague's Pipit was found near Nogales, Sonora on Dec. 21 (*WW, fide BH*).

Shrikes, Starlings—There were several sightings of Gray Shrikes reported, and one was netted, banded, and photographed at Bosque Refuge on Jan. 29 (*BM, JRT*). Starlings have moved into the Region to stay. They were seen for the second time at Organ Pipe Nat'l Monument on Feb. 7 and 22 (*RLC*) with

numbers on most counts definitely increased.

Waxwings—Good-sized flocks of Cedar Waxwings were wandering into most areas with reports from most observers. Three were seen at Organ Pipe Nat'l Monument on Dec. 7 (*RLC*); flocks were seen in Albuquerque (*JND, BM, et al.*); at Gila Cliff Dwellings Nat'l Monument near Silver City (*WG*); Roswell (*VM*); Alamogordo (*JRD*); Globe (*BJ*); Los Alamos, N. Mex. (*WBL*); Nogales (*BH*); Silver City (*RAF*); and with "thousands" near Phoenix (*UEM, SRD*). Again there was an influx of Bohemian Waxwings in the north. About 5000 or more spent a month in Las Vegas, Nev. (*CGH*), scattering by late March. About 75 were in Los Alamos on March 5, being seen in smaller numbers until late March (*WBL, JRT, et al.*). Sante Fe had at least 200 from March 10 until April 1 (*PRS*).

Vireos, Warblers—Mild weather left us with lots of these little sprites. A Gray Vireo was near Silverbell, Ariz. on Jan. 14 (*SMR*). A Northern Waterthrush was at Gila Cliff Nat'l Monument in January (*WG*) and a *Louisiana Waterthrush* was near Nogales on Dec. 22 and 25 and again on Jan. 15 (*BH, EW, et al.*). A Townsend's Warbler was found there on Dec. 22-23 (*BH*). A Nashville Warbler was on Organ Pipe Nat'l Monument on March 29 (*RLC*). Most species were returning to southern areas by late March.

Tanagers, Finches—An Hepatic Tanager wintered at Phoenix (*SRD*). There were good numbers of Cassin's Finches and Evening Grosbeaks, especially in the highlands. A pair of Purple Finches was at Globe in late March (*BJ*). Ten Gray-crowned Rosy Finches near Bloomfield, N. Mex. on Jan. 2 made a new locality record (*APN*). Lawrence's Goldfinches appeared near Globe (*LLH, IT*) and at Nogales (*BH*). There were more reports of Am. Goldfinches from southern areas.

The irruption of Red Crossbills continued. They were seen in the San Mateo Mountains on Feb. 1 (*JAB*); stayed in the Sandia Mts. near Albuquerque through January (*TS, BM, et al.*); in Albuquerque itself until March 2 (*JND*); at Big Bend Nat'l Park (*RHW*); Globe (*BJ, DH*); Tucson and Nogales all winter (*SMR, BH*); and at Phoenix until March 6 (*SRD, UEM*). Those reported from the Animas Mountains in the last issue were actually seen at Apache Creek, Catron Co., N. Mex.

Sparrows—These birds wintered in good numbers, especially in the south (*DSP, BH, RHW, JTL*). A White-winged Junco was in the Jemez Mountains near Cuba, N. Mex. on Jan. 22 (*WBL*). Phoenix had a Harris' Sparrow on Dec. 4 (*RPN, RW*). Eight Fox Sparrows were counted at Bitter Lake Refuge on Dec. 27 (*VM*). A Golden-crowned Sparrow was netted and filmed at Cedar Crest on Jan. 5 and stayed until Jan. 25 (*BM*). One was seen near Tucson on Feb. 25 (*ELS, fide SMR*), and another was at Quitobquito from Feb. 15 to March 29 (*RLC*).

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