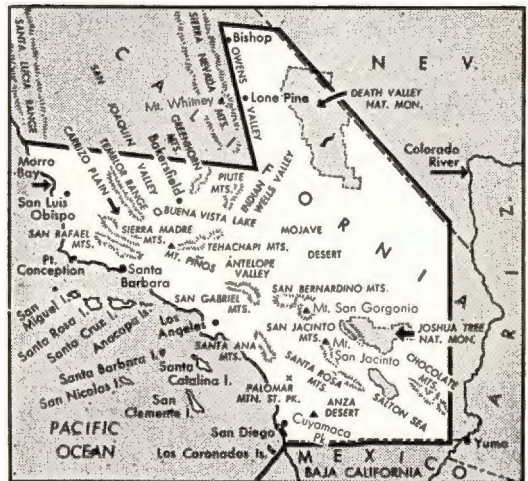


SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.—The winter weather was relatively dry and mild, with less than the average amount of rainfall recorded. Most



of the rain fell during November when we had some heavy downpours that helped the dry soil. February was exceptionally mild and dry.

The mountain species such as the nuthatches and Red Crossbills remained in the Region in fair numbers after having invaded the area during the fall.

As normal we had a few stragglers recorded in the Region. One species was added to the California

list, and another was verified for the first time by a photograph after having been placed on the hypothetical list on the basis of two sight records.

Loons through Shearwaters—All three species of loons were present in about normal numbers along the coast; however, Red-throated Loons were found to be quite common along the coast of San Luis Obispo County with groups of 35 to 50 at creek mouths (*EAP*). A Red-necked Grebe was off Santa Monica, Los Angeles Co., on Jan. 1 (*DAG*)—a scarce species in this Region. Outside of those *Procellariiformes* found on Christmas counts none were reported—probably a lack of observers offshore rather than a lack of birds.

Pelicans, Herons—About 70 White Pelicans wintered on Morro Bay and lesser numbers were found on other suitable coastal bays and large inland bodies of water as is normal. Three Louisiana Herons were at Seal Beach, Orange Co. on Feb. 22 (*GGS, SW*); 1 was on Upper Newport Bay, Orange Co. between March 22 and 27 (*TS*); and between 1 and 4 were present near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., throughout the period (*GMcC, AC, CL, PD*).

Cattle Egrets continue to increase in numbers apparently invading the Region from Northwestern Mexico; in the Imperial Valley, south of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co., they were commonly found in flocks of between 20 and 30 after the first of January, and 74 were counted in one field there on Feb. 23 (*WA*); along the coast up to 13 were present throughout the period near Imperial Beach (*GMcC, AC, CL*); 7 were near Newport, Orange Co. in early December (*TS*); up to 10 were in the vicinity of Westminster, Orange Co. from late December through February (*TS*); 3 or 4 remained throughout the period at Point Mugu, Ventura Co. (*GSS*); and 2 were present near Santa Barbara between Feb. 8 and the end of the period (*S.B.A.S.*). They apparently are here to stay, and it should not be long before they breed in this Region.

Black-crowned Night Herons are reported to be greatly reduced in numbers in the Santa Barbara area (*S.B.A.S.*). A few White-faced Ibis were found wintering along the coast as is normal, and flocks of up to 50 were seen in the Imperial Valley which is also normal. The secretive Least Bittern was noted on three occasions at the Salton Sea—at the south end of the sea on Dec. 10 (*GMcC, EAC*), and Jan. 28 (*BB*), and at the north end on March 24 (*RS*).

Salton Sea waterfowl population—On the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge the waterfowl population reached a peak of 136,650 on March 2; however, by the end of the month only 8000 birds remained. Most of the 4000 Canada Geese and 40,000 Snow Geese departed on March 5 and 6. Peak population counts for the commoner species of ducks on the refuge were: American Wigeon—51,600; Pintail—62,300; Green-winged Teal—5300; Shoveler—7800; Ruddy Duck—10,130 (*JLR*).

Swans—There were four reports of Whistling Swans for the Region—one on Morro Bay on Dec. 29 (*EAC*); one on Goleta Slough, Santa Barbara Co. between Dec. 31 and Jan. 6 (*ME, NM*); one on

the Pasuza Gun Club, Kern Co. on Dec. 24 (*GSS*); and one that arrived at the south end of the Salton Sea on Dec. 10 and was shot the following day (\$500 fine imposed) (*JLR*)—this species is scarce in this Region.

Geese—The Am. Brant that arrived on San Diego Bay on Nov. 5 remained until Dec. 18 (*GMcC, AC, CL*). About 2000 Black Brant wintered on Morro Bay (*EAP*), which is probably the largest wintering concentration in the Region; formerly they were much commoner along the coast, but increased human disturbance has forced these birds to push farther south to seek undisturbed feeding grounds. Two *Emperor Geese* arrived on Morro Bay on Dec. 12, and a third individual was captured alive at Ociano, San Luis Obispo Co. at about the same time (*EAP*); by late December only one of the 2 birds at Morro Bay was still present, and this individual was last noted on Feb. 12—these birds were seen and photographed by numerous people, and constitute the southernmost record for this species. There were the normal scattered reports of White-fronted Geese and Snow Geese from along the coast where they are scarce. A Blue Goose was seen with the Snow Geese at the south end of the Salton Sea during February—usually 1 or 2 are reported each winter.

Ducks—There were at least 15 reports of male Blue-winged Teal from the Region during the period; most of the reports came from along the coast as is normal. A Wood Duck was at Ociano on Jan. 12 (*S.B.A.S.*); one near Santa Barbara on March 4 (*GF*); one at Sandyland, Santa Barbara Co. on Feb. 15 (*LC*); 4 on Chatsworth Reservoir, Los Angeles Co. between Nov. 11 and 16 (*NMw*); and one wintered in Bonita, San Diego Co. (*GMcC, AC*); they are scarce in this Region. As many as 300 Ring-necked Ducks were found on the small reservoirs in the foothills near Pasadena, Los Angeles Co. (*GSS*)—this may prove to be the best location for this species in this Region. An Oldsquaw at Huntington Beach, Los Angeles Co. on Feb. 22 and 23 (*GSS, SW*) was the only one reported from along the coast; one was found inland at the south end of the Salton Sea on March 16 (*JLR*). A flock of between 50 and 75 Surf Scoters was found inland on Cuyamaca Lake, San Diego Co. on March 26 (*TS*)—they have been suspected to use an overland route between the Gulf of California and the Pacific Ocean, and this is a little more evidence to support this theory. Three Common Scoters off Ventura, on Feb. 25 (*SW*), and one on San Diego Bay on Dec. 17 (*GMcC*) were the only ones found. A few Red-breasted Mergansers were found inland on the Salton Sea as now appears to be normal. A Common Merganser was seen in San Diego on Jan. 22 (*GMcC, AC, PD*); it is scarce on the coast this far south.

Hawks—Three *California Condors* seen flying over downtown Santa Barbara on March 31 (*DS*) were outside of the area of normal occurrence. Between 45 and 55 White-tailed Kites used a roost near Santa Barbara throughout the winter, and smaller numbers used other roosts elsewhere along the coast; this species is on the increase because it has been able to adapt to the presence of man. A

Goshawk, a wanderer from the Sierras, was seen in the Saline Valley, Inyo Co. on Dec. 30 (*DAG*). Red-tailed Hawks appeared to be more numerous than usual this winter throughout the Region. An immature *Broad-winged Hawk* was collected near Imperial Beach on Dec. 11 (*GMcC*) for the first record for California. A Rough-legged Hawk was at Harmony, San Luis Obispo Co. on Dec. 26 (*EAP*, *LS*); one was at Oso Flaco Lake, Santa Maria Co. on Feb. 9 (*MH*), and 2 were there on Feb. 13 (*MH*); several were noted throughout the winter in the Owens Valley, Inyo Co. (*DAG*), and one was at Lancaster, Los Angeles Co. on Dec. 21 (*DAG*, *GSS*); they usually are very scarce in this Region. Only 3 or 4 Ferruginous Hawks were reported; they apparently are on the decline as a winter visitor to this Region. The only Bald Eagle reported was one on Lake Henshaw, San Diego Co. on Jan. 21 (*EAC*). Two or 3 Prairie Falcons were found wintering along the coast. Peregrine Falcons still persist in the Region; however, their existence is threatened by the increase of would-be falconers, and the exact locations of resident pairs is best kept quiet. Only one Pigeon Hawk was reported this winter—an individual on the Palo Verde Peninsula, Los Angeles Co. during January (*SW*). One or 2 Ospreys wintered on Lake Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co. (*S.B.A.S.*); one was on Chatsworth Reservoir, Los Angeles Co. on April 2 (*NM*), and one was in San Diego on March 5 (*GMcC*).

Cranes—Sandhill Cranes reached a peak of between 10,000 and 14,000 on the Carrizo Plain during December (McMillan, *vide EAP*); this is the only wintering population known within this Region.

Shorebirds—Mountain Plovers wintered in fair numbers in the Imperial Valley. Two to 4 Am. Golden Plovers were present near Goleta throughout January (*AA*, *NM*); 1 was noted at Playa del Rey, Los Angeles Co., between Dec. 10 and March 12 (*BB*); 2 were present throughout the period in San Diego (*GMcC*, *PD*); and up to 6 were near Imperial Beach until early January—a regular winter visitor in limited numbers. Knots appear to be very scarce away from San Diego, where as many as 200 can be found during the winter; one was seen inland at the north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co. on March 24 (*RS*). A Rock Sandpiper was collected near San Simeon, San Luis Obispo Co. on Dec. 30 (*EAC*), and one remained on the breakwater at Playa del Rey between Dec. 4 and March 12 (*DAG*, *BB*, *GSS*, *PD*); 1 or 2 are now reported each winter within this Region. Sixteen Stilt Sandpipers were seen at the south end of the Salton Sea on Feb. 11 (*DAG*, *GSS*, *BB*), and 3 were there on March 4 (*GMcC*, *CL*); this species is occasionally found along the southern shore of the Salton Sea during the winter. A *Ruff* was seen on a rocky strip of the coast near San Simeon, San Luis Obispo Co. between Dec. 22 and Jan. 25 (*PD*, *EAC*, *EAP*); surprisingly enough this individual was associating with Black Turnstones and Surfbirds—the sixth Regional record. Four Northern Phalaropes spent the entire winter at Imperial Beach (*GMcC*); they probably are regular at this location in small numbers.

Gulls and Terns—A second-year Glaucous Gull was collected at Ociano, San Luis Obispo Co. on Dec. 28 (*EAC*). An adult Glaucous-winged Gull was inland along the east shore of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. on Jan. 15 and 28 (*GMcC*, *EAC*). Mew Gulls were found to be quite common along the coast of San Luis Obispo County, but were scarcer than usual in the San Diego area. Black-legged Kittiwakes were noted in small numbers along the entire coast. One or 2 Common Terns lingered into early January on San Diego Bay (*GMcC*); records of this species in California during the winter must be treated with caution because of confusion in identification. Royal Terns remained as far north as Morro Bay as late as Jan. 20 (*EAP*); they wintered in the San Diego area as is normal. Elegant Terns lingered to late December; they sometimes remain as late as early January, and arrive as early as early March. A *Black Tern* remained on San Diego Bay, between Dec. 17 and Jan. 27 (Taylors, *GMcC*, *AC*)—the first winter record for California.

Doves, Owls—A White-winged Dove was seen in Morro Bay on Jan. 29 and March 24 (*MD*), and 1 or 2 were present in Santa Barbara during December (*S.B.A.S.*). Pygmy Owls were fairly common around Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co. (*EAP*), and 3 or 4 were present in the Santa Barbara area (*S.B.A.S.*). Short-eared Owls were apparently more numerous and widespread than usual.

Hummingbirds—Costa's Hummingbirds wintered in small numbers along the coast which is normal; spring migrants arrive in mid January so individuals present in December are the only ones that can be considered wintering. Anna's Hummingbirds started nesting in mid-December, which is normal. A few female hummingbirds, either Rufous or Allen's, were found in December and January, as is normal. Rufous Hummingbirds arrived in late January; however, displaying males were present on the Palos Verdes Peninsula in late December (*SW*), and are still present. In California there are two races of Allen's Hummingbird, a resident race confined to the Channel Islands, and a migratory race that is known to breed along the coast south to northern Ventura County; these birds normally arrive during the last half of January. This winter Allen's Hummingbirds wintered in Santa Barbara in small numbers, and at least 6 pairs have been nesting on the Palos Verdes Peninsula since late December (*SW*)—a most interesting development. We should determine which race is involved. This editor would like to have some confirmation of the occasional wintering Black-chinned Hummingbirds that are reported.

Woodpeckers—A Yellow-shafted Flicker wintered in Santa Barbara (*S.B.A.S.*); one in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., on Jan. 20 (*BS*), one on the Palos Verdes Peninsula during March (*SW*), one at Rancho Park, Los Angeles Co. on Dec. 13 (*DAG*, *GSS*), and one on Point Loma, San Diego Co. on Feb. 26 (*GMcC*, *PD*). It was a very poor year for Lewis' Woodpeckers; only 3 were reported. A Williamson's Sapsucker was found a little south of its normal range in Cuyamaca State Park, San Diego

Co. on Feb. 2 (*A&JM*). A Hairy Woodpecker, a stray from the mountains, was present on the Palos Verdes Peninsula during December and January (*SW*).

Flycatchers and Swallows—A *Thick-billed Kingbird* was found at Bonita, San Diego County, on Dec. 26 (*Art Wang, AC*), and was still present the following day (*GMcC*, and many others); excellent photographs were obtained (*J. Sheppard*), and copies are now on file in two museums—the first substantiated record for California, and only the third-known occurrence. A *Tropical Kingbird* was present at Sandyland, Santa Barbara Co., from late November to at least Feb. 28 (*NM, S.B.A.S.*)—the first winter occurrence for this Region. A few Cassin's Kingbirds wintered in the southwestern portion of the Region as normally. A Vermilion Flycatcher wintered in Ojai, Santa Barbara Co. (*LC*); one was at Point Mugu, Ventura Co. on Feb. 4 (*DAG*); and up to 4 wintered in Bonita (*GMcC, AC, CL, PD*). Two Bank Swallows were at the south end of the Salton Sea on Dec. 10 (*GMcC, EAC*).

Magpies, Chickadees—A Steller's Jay seen on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Los Angeles Co. on Feb. 18, and 3 there on March 15 (*SW*) were wanderers from the mountains. A Yellow-billed Magpie, a little south of its normal range, was present in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co. throughout the winter (*NM, S.B.A.S.*). Mountain Chickadees normally descend to lower elevation during the winter and are consequently found in the foothills; this winter a few were present along the coast in the San Diego area (*AC, GMcC*). Up to 3 Verdins were present along the coast near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. throughout the winter (*GMcC, AC, CL, PD*); they may prove to be regular at this location.

Nuthatches—All three species of nuthatches were more widespread than normal. Red-breasted Nuthatches were especially numerous and were found throughout the Region. Three or 4 Pygmy Nuthatches were on the Palos Verdes Peninsula (*SW*), and about a dozen were present in the San Diego area (*AC, GMcC*) throughout the period; they do not normally stray from the mountains.

Thrashers, Thrushes—Two or 3 Sage Thrashers were located in the San Diego area during the winter. Robins were present in larger numbers than usual, indicating a good flight into the Region. The Varied Thrush was unreported after last winter's flight. Two Townsend's Solitaires were seen in the Santa Barbara area, and one on Point Loma, San Diego Co. during the winter period.

Kinglets, Waxwings—Golden-crowned Kinglets were present along the coast—several small groups (4 to 8) in Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co. (*EAP*); 3 or 4 in the Santa Barbara area during December and January (*PI, GF*); as many as 5 on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, (*SW*) between December and February, and up to 10 in the San Diego area during the same period (*GMcC, AC*)—A good flight. Cedar Waxwings staged an excellent flight into the Region and were even to be seen around the Salton Sea where they are normally absent. A Bohemian Waxwing, a very sporadic wanderer to this Region, was

photographed in west Los Angeles on Jan. 7 (*DAG*).

Vireos and Warblers—A fair variety of these birds was seen only on the days Christmas counts were held, and can be found in the Christmas count issue of *Audubon Field Notes*. Hutton's Vireos were nesting by early February in San Diego County. A Solitary Vireo was seen in San Diego on Dec. 25 (*GMcC, AC*)—scarce in winter. A *Tennessee Warbler* was banded on Point Loma on March 21 and retrapped ten days later (*AC, GMcC*); this extremely early date, and the fact that the bird remained in the area for at least 10 days, suggests that it was a wintering individual (verified spring records for California are all in late May and June). A Nashville Warbler was seen in San Diego on Dec. 17 (*GMcC*); one spent the winter on Point Loma; and one was near the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. on Feb. 11 (*S.B.A.S.*)—scarce during the winter. Myrtle Warblers were fairly common in deciduous habitat in San Luis Obispo County (*EAP*), and individuals were to be found throughout the Region as is normal. A Hermit Warbler wintered in Cambria (*EAP*); one was at Point Mugu on Feb. 4 (*DAG*); one wintered on Point Loma (*GMcC, AC*); this species is scarce as a wintering bird. A Palm Warbler was at Saratoga Springs, San Bernardino Co. on Dec. 28 (*DAG*), and Jan. 27 (*GSS*); it very rarely is reported away from the immediate vicinity of the coast, where the occasional individual has recently been detected wintering. A MacGillivray's Warbler was present in San Diego, between Dec. 24 and 26 (*AC, GMcC*)—casual during the winter. One or 2 Wilson's Warblers apparently wintered in the area around Morro Bay (*EAP*), and one was at Point Mugu on Feb. 4 (*DAG, GSS*). An Am. Redstart was at Bonita, between Dec. 24 and 26 (*AC*)—a scarce but regular winter visitor.

Orioles and Tanagers—A Baltimore Oriole, present since Sept. 24, wintered in Montecito, Santa Barbara Co. (*JK*); a male was at Rancho Park, Los Angeles Co. between Jan. 5 and 28 (*DAG, SW, GSS*); and a male wintered on Point Loma (*GMcC, PD, AC, CL*)—now regular in limited numbers during the winter. Two or 3 Bullock's Orioles wintered in the Santa Barbara area (*S.B.A.S.*); 1 was at Rancho Park on Dec. 18 (*DAG*); and 3 or 4 were present in the San Diego area throughout the winter (*GMcC, AC*); this is slightly less than the number reported in other winters recently. A Scott's Oriole was seen on Feb. 11 near the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. (*S.B.A.S.*)—a most unusual location. A Hooded Oriole wintered at Morro Bay (*EAP*), and 2 or 3 wintered in the Santa Barbara area (*S.B.A.S.*). Two Western Tanagers were on the Palos Verdes Peninsula on March 21 (*SW*); 1 was at Rancho Park, Los Angeles Co. on Feb. 23 (*DAG, GSS*), 1 at Capistrano, Orange Co. on March 28 (*AF*), 1 on Point Loma throughout the winter (*AC, GMcC*), 1 in Spring Valley, San Diego Co. on Jan. 22 (*GMcC, PD, AC*), and 4 in National City, San Diego Co. on Dec. 11 (*GMcC*); all were probably wintering individuals since spring migrants do not arrive until mid-April. A male Hepatic Tanager was at Rancho Park, Los Angeles Co. between Dec. 13 and the

end of the period (*DAG*, *GSS*, *SW*); this species is now found each year and is proving to be regular in limited numbers. A Summer Tanager spent the entire winter on Point Loma (*AC*, *GMcC*, *PD*); it is regular in limited numbers.

Finches—A flock of about 150 Gray-crowned Rosy Finches was seen at an elevation of 7000 ft. in the Inyo Mts. between Big Pine and the Saline Valley, Inyo Co. on Dec. 30 (*DAG*); this area is hardly ever visited, and it is possible that this species is regular here in the winter even though this is the first time it has been reported. Red Crossbills are still very much in the limelight after the fall's influx; in San Luis Obispo County they were noted in November and March, but at least 12 remained near Morro Bay throughout the winter (*EAP*); up to 16 were found in the Santa Barbara area (*S.B.A.S.*); up to 25 have been present on the Palos Verdes Peninsula throughout the period (*SW*); and about 50 spent the winter on Point Loma (*AC*, *GMcC*). On March 28 an active Red Crossbill nest was found on the Palos Verdes Peninsula (*SW*)—the first nesting report for the coastal region of Southern California.

Sparrows, Longspurs—A few Green-tailed Towhees wintered along the coast as is normal. Three Slate-colored Juncos were reported from along the coast—fewer than normal; they were fairly easy to locate in the northeastern portion of the Region where as many as 5 were seen together with Oregon Juncos. A Gray-headed Junco was at Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley National Monument, on Dec. 28 (*DAG*). Along the coast a White-throated Sparrow was in Cambria on Feb. 6 (*EAP*); one spent

the winter in Santa Barbara (*W* & *JG*); one was at Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. between Feb. 4 and 11 (*GMcC*, *CL*); and one was collected near Calipatria, Imperial Co. on Dec. 10 (*EAC*, *GMcC*)—the first record for the Imperial Valley. A *Clay-colored Sparrow* was at Imperial Beach between Dec. 11 and 26 (*GMcC*, *AC*)—the first winter record for California. A Swamp Sparrow was at 1000 Palms Oasis, Riverside Co., on March 24 (*RS*), and one was at Imperial Beach between Dec. 17 and 26 (*GMcC*)—scarce but regular during the winter. A flock of about 20 McCown's Longspurs was present near Westmorland, Imperial Co. from November until at least Feb. 11, and one was collected near Calipatria, Imperial Co. on Dec. 10 (*GMcC*, *EAC*, *AC*, *PD*, *CL*, *BB*). Three or 4 Lapland Longspurs were with the McCown's Longspurs near Westmorland throughout their stay, and one was seen near Calipatria on Dec. 10 (*GMcC*, *et al.*); these birds are probably regular winter visitors to the Imperial Valley, but are hard to locate among the many thousands of Horned Larks in the area.

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