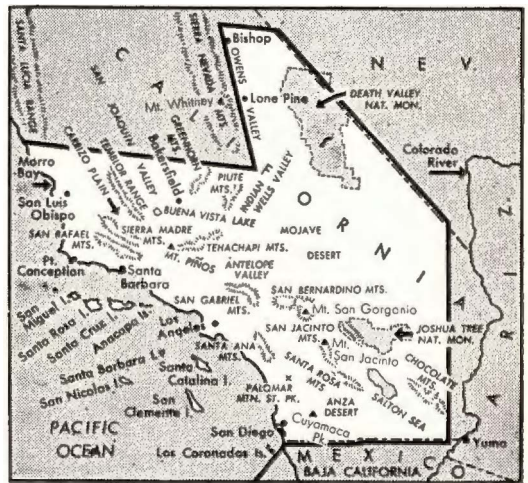


SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.-
Throughout the winter temperatures were on the
average warmer than normal, and we had only a few



rainstorms during the period. This relatively dry and mild winter enabled a number of species to remain through the period when they would normally have withdrawn to the south or perished. The season produced a few first winter records for California. It was encouraging to know that most of the unusual species were seen repeatedly throughout the winter by numerous observers, thus strengthening the validity of the sight records. No species staged a flight into the Region, and some that frequently

invade the Region, such as the Red-breasted Nuthatch, were very scarce or absent.

Loons, Grebes—In the Morro Bay area, Com., Arctic and Red-throated Loons were considered to be in about normal numbers for the winter, but farther south most observers felt that they were somewhat scarcer than normal. A Red-necked Grebe on Morro Bay during late January (*LP*, *fide* *EAP*) was the only one reported; the species is most unusual farther south. Horned Grebes were present in good numbers along the coast, but none were found inland where they are casual. Some observers felt that Western Grebes were a little scarcer than normal.

Albatrosses, Shearwaters—Since so little is known about the pelagics off this coast, I feel that it is worth publishing all reports outside of the Christmas Count records. A Black-footed Albatross was seen at the 43-fathom bank off San Diego on March 16 (*RM*). A Laysan Albatross was seen 50 miles off Point Conception on March 26 (*VK*); this species is occasionally reported far offshore during the winter. Four Pink-footed Shearwaters were seen off San Diego on Jan. 21 and 1 was seen there on March 16 (*RM*). The only Sooty Shearwaters reported were a few off La Jolla, San Diego Co. during December and 4 off San Diego on Jan. 21. Up to 5000 Manx Shearwaters were feeding on young squid close to shore off La Jolla during December (*PD*, *et al.*); 20 shearwater sp. that were most likely Manx Shearwaters were seen from shore at Laguna Beach, Orange Co. during mid-December (*JAJ*).

Pelicans, Herons, Ibis—A few White Pelicans were reported from along the coast, and 25-30 spent the winter on Lake Elsinor, Riverside Co. Cattle Egrets were scarcer this winter than last. In the Imperial Valley south of the Salton Sea, most observers were able to find only 1 or 2 individuals; 48 near Westmorland on Jan. 13 (*GSS* & *BB*) and 20 near Niland on March 2 (*GSS*, *DAG* & *BB*) were the only flocks reported; along the coast 1 near Santa Ana, Orange Co. on Dec. 10 (*TS*) and 1 at Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. all winter (*GMcC*, *et al.*) were the only ones reported. A Louisiana Heron was at Seal Beach, Orange Co. on March 20 (*JS*), 1 was at Newport Bay, Orange Co. on March 16 (*GSS*), and 1 was present throughout the winter at Imperial Beach (*GMcC*, *et al.*); the species is regular in very limited numbers along the southern portion of the coast. A Least Bittern was seen at the south end of the Salton Sea on Jan. 20 (*GMcC*); there are few winter records of this species. A few White-faced Ibis were found in coastal Ventura, Orange and San Diego Counties, as well as at the south end of the Salton Sea, during the period.

Waterfowl—In general, waterfowl numbers were a little lower than normal throughout the Region, although Snow Goose numbers on the Salton Sea were about normal. One thousand Canada Geese found near Lakeview, Riverside Co. on Feb. 18 (*EAC*) may indicate an undiscovered wintering locality; 80 near Newport, Orange Co. on Feb. 10 (*GSS*) were a large number for a coastal locality. Black Brant still manage to survive on the large

coastal bays, despite heavy hunting pressures, as indicated by 1000 seen at the mouth of the San Diego River on Feb. 21 (*PD*). One or two Snow Geese were reported from along the coast between Morro Bay and San Diego Bay where they are uncommon. One or two Blue Geese were present with Snow Geese at the south end of the Salton Sea between late January and early March (*TS*, *GSS*, *BB*, *EAC*, *EW*, *et al.*); it is normal for 1 or 2 to occur here each winter. A Ross' Goose that spent most of the winter at Santee, San Diego Co. constitutes the second record for the county; a few also were present with the Snow Geese at the south end of the Salton Sea, as is normal. A flock of 14 Fulvous Tree Ducks at the south end of the Salton Sea on March 2 (*GSS*, *DAG* & *BB*) were either wintering or early spring migrants, unusual at this time of the year. A Blue-winged Teal was seen on Chatsworth Reservoir, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 25 (*RM*), 2 apparently wintered on upper Newport Bay (*TS*), and 1 was at Imperial Beach on Jan. 27 (*GMcC*); this is a species that is always scarce but occurs in varying numbers. An obvious hybrid adult ♂ Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal was present at Imperial Beach on Feb. 2 (*GMcC* & *CL*) and Feb. 25 (*GMcC* & *EW*); this hybrid is seen almost every spring in the San Diego area and may be called a Blue-winged Teal by uncritical observers. A European Widgeon seen on Morro Bay on Feb. 10 (*L.A.A.S.*) was the only one reported in the Region. Only 50 Ring-necked Ducks were to be found at Devil's Gate Dam in the Pasadena foothills where they are usually more numerous, but over 300 were present on Cuyamaca Lake, San Diego Co. during February and March. Common Goldeneye were present in small numbers along the coast south to San Diego Bay and on the Salton Sea. An Oldsquaw, always rare in the Region, was present all winter near Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co. (*EAP*, *et al.*); 1 was in Los Angeles Harbor on Dec. 20 (*GSS* & *SW*); and 1 was found inland at the south end of the Salton Sea on Feb. 24 (*EAC*). White-winged Scoters were definitely more numerous than usual. Common Scoters were reported in small numbers as follows: 3 at Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co., Feb. 29 (*EAP*); 1 at Morro Rock, Dec. 20-Jan. 20 (*EAP*); 1 on Morro Bay, Dec. 26-27 (*EAC*); 6 at Ventura on Jan. 28 and 10 there on Feb. 22 (*GSS*); 3 at Venice on Feb. 11 and 1 there on March 3 (*JAJ*); 9 in Los Angeles Harbor on Dec. 20 (*GSS*); 8 at Huntington Beach on Dec. 16 (*JAJ*); 5 on San Diego Bay on Dec. 17 and 1 there on Feb. 10 (*GMcC*, *PD*, *et al.*)—usually only 2 or 3 individuals are all that are reported in the Region during a normal winter. A Hooded Merganser seen on Chatsworth Reservoir on Feb. 25 (*RM*) was the only one reported. More than the normal number of Com. Mergansers were found: 15 on Chatsworth Reservoir on Feb. 25; as many as 10 on Lake Mathews, Riverside Co. during January and February; 10 on Lake Henshaw, San Diego Co. on Feb. 4; and 2 in San Diego during February and March.

Hawks, Eagles—White-tailed Kites are still increasing in number and apparently are adapting well

to man's encroachment on their habitat. One of the big discoveries of the season was that *Broad-winged Hawks* apparently winter in California or at least that they did so in small numbers this winter. An immature was present near Cambria, Feb. 27–March 13 (*EAP*, many other observers); an immature was present on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Los Angeles Co., Nov. 24–March 11 (*SW*, many others); and an immature was at Leucadia, San Diego Co., March 7–25 (*GMcC*, many others). All three of these birds were well seen on numerous occasions. Two other possible sightings of Broad-winged Hawks in the Region could not be verified. There is only one previous record for California, an immature collected near Imperial Beach on Dec. 11, 1966. Ferruginous Hawks were found in small numbers throughout the Region: as many as 3 on the Carrizo Plains during the period, 3 in the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles Co. during December and January, 1 at Point Mugu, Ventura Co. on Jan. 27, and 1 at Rancho California, Riverside Co. on Jan. 27. On Lake Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., 2 immature Bald Eagles were present throughout the winter and an adult was seen on Jan. 21 (*vide NM*); on Lake Mathews, Riverside Co. as many as 4 immatures and 2 adults were present throughout the period (*EAC*, *GSS*); and on Lake Henshaw, San Diego Co., 1 immature was present on Jan. 1 (*PD*), 3 immatures and 1 adult were present on Jan. 6 (*TS*), and 1 immature was present on March 30 (*GMcC*). This is an encouraging number for the Region. Two Ospreys were present on Lake Cachuma throughout the winter (*vide NM*), 1 was at Lake Henshaw on Jan. 1 (*PD*), and 1 was seen near Descanso, San Diego Co. on March 20 (*PD*); this species is rather scarce in the Region. A few Prairie Falcons and Peregrine Falcons are still to be found, but they are apparently still declining in numbers. Very few Pigeon Hawks were reported.

Shorebirds—An *Am. Oystercatcher* was seen on the Los Coronados Islands on Dec. 30 (Mrs. James Locasso); the species is very rare this far north. Mountain Plovers were found on the Carrizo Plains, around Santa Ana, Orange Co., and in the Imperial Valley at the south end of the Salton Sea; these are all well known wintering localities for this species. A group of 5 *Am. Golden Plovers* was present at Imperial Beach until the end of December (*GMcC* & *PD*) and 2 were present all winter in San Diego (*GMcC*, *PD*, *AC*); they are scarce but regular during the winter. A few Lesser Yellowlegs were noted throughout the period, as is normal. Knots were scarce away from San Diego where they are relatively common. Two Rock Sandpipers first noted at the mouth of Pico Creek near Cambria on Feb. 13 were still present on April 10 (*EAP*); the species is proving to be of annual occurrence this far south. Four Stilt Sandpipers were seen at the south end of the Salton Sea, Jan. 13 (*GSS* & *BB*) and 1 was seen there on Jan. 20 (*GMcC*, *EW* & *EAC*); this species is found there with amazing regularity during the winter. A Ruff first seen near Cambria on Nov. 27 was still present on April 7 (*EAP*, many others); 1 was present near there during part of last

winter. Red Phalaropes remained in the waters off San Diego until at least the end of December; 14 found there on March 16 (*RM*) indicated that they probably had wintered. A few Northern Phalaropes again wintered at Imperial Beach where they appear to winter regularly.

Jaegers, Gulls, Terns—Pomarine Jaegers were present off La Jolla in December and 3 were found off San Diego on March 16; this appears to be the normal jaeger to find during the winter. A first-year Glaucous Gull at La Jolla, Dec. 31–Jan. 2 (*PD*, *GMcC*, *CL*), a second-year bird in San Diego on Dec. 22 (*AM*), 2 second-year birds present on a dump near Otay, San Diego Co., Feb. 3–18, and 1 still there on March 31 (*PD*, *GMcC*, *EW*, *et al.*) were a good number for this far south. Birds of the *thayeri* race of the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus thayeri*) of the A.O.U. Check-list, 5th ed., 1957) reached a peak of about 75 individuals on a dump near Otay during February, and a few were still present at the end of the period (*PD*, *GMcC*, *EW*, *et al.*). Little is known about the winter range and relative abundance of this form on the West Coast, and observers knowing how to identify it in all plumages should try to determine its status in their areas. Mew Gulls were common around Morro Bay, as usual; a concentration of 700 found at San Pedro illustrated how common this species really is this far south. A few Black-legged Kittiwakes were present along the entire coast through the period, with a high count of 20 off La Jolla on Dec. 9 (*PD*, *et al.*). Two-three immature Com. Terns stayed around San Diego until early January and 1 was seen there on March 10 (*GMcC*). A few Royal Terns were present north along the coast to Morro Bay, with the largest numbers present on San Diego Bay as would be expected. One or two Elegant Terns were present in the San Diego area during December; the first spring migrants were noted there on March 3 (*EW*), which is early. A Black Tern found at Solana Beach, San Diego Co. on Feb. 11 (*JS*) remained for the rest of the winter, proving that this species can successfully winter in California.

Alcids—The Christmas Counts indicate there were a few alcids along the coast during the winter. One hundred Com. Murres were seen off Morro Bay on Dec. 27 (*EAC*); 3 were seen off San Diego on Dec. 9 (*PD*, *et al.*); and 1 was seen there on Jan. 21 (*RM*). A Marbled Murrelet was seen from shore at Morro Rock on Dec. 20 (*EAP*). A Xantus' Murrelet was seen off San Diego on March 16 (*RM*). Twenty Ancient Murrelets were found with other alcids off Morro Bay on Dec. 27 (*EAC*). Cassin's Auklets were considered "common" off Morro Bay on Feb. 11 (*EAC*). Over 1000 Rhinoceros Auklets, an impressive number, were seen off Morro Bay on Dec. 27 (*EAC*), and 5 were found off San Diego on Jan. 21 (*RM*).

Doves, Owls, Nighthawk, Hummingbirds—A White-winged Dove was at Santa Barbara, March 9–12 (*BS*, *vide NM*); 1 was near Imperial Beach on Dec. 23 (*GMcC*), 2 were there on Dec. 24 (*AC*), and 1 was there on Jan. 27 (*GMcC*); the species is scarce along the coast at this time of year. Pygmy

Owls were again present in the Santa Barbara area (NM). A Spotted Owl was present during February in Sue Canyon northeast of Santa Maria, Santa Barbara Co. (MH, *vide* NM), an area for which there is only one previous record of this species. A Lesser Nighthawk was well seen near Imperial Beach on Dec. 23 (GMcC & PD); this is one of the very few winter records for California. A few Costa's Hummingbirds were present throughout the winter, as is normal. There still appears to be no good evidence to support the continued reporting of Black-chinned Hummingbirds during the Christmas Count period; they normally depart early in the fall and are late in arriving in the spring. Allen's Hummingbirds were again present throughout the winter on the Palos Verdes Peninsula; they nested and the first young were flying on Jan. 19 (SW). Allen's Hummingbirds were first noted on Point Loma, San Diego Co. on Jan. 1 (AC), which is a little early.

Woodpeckers—A Yellow-shafted Flicker was seen in Santa Barbara on March 11 (BS, *vide* NM); other flickers exhibiting some of the characteristics of this eastern form were seen elsewhere in the Region. The Lewis' Woodpecker influx did not materialize as hoped after the good number of fall reports; the only birds reported outside of the Christmas Counts were 1 present at Lake Cachuma throughout the winter and 3 present along the Angeles Crest Highway in the San Gabriel Mountains during January.

Flycatchers, Swallows—The 34 Ash-throated Flycatchers recorded on the Idyllwild Christmas Count, Dec. 30, are absurd. An E. Phoebe was present at San Clemente, Orange Co. from Feb. 11 to at least April 6 (SW, AF, many others); the species is a casual visitor to California. A *Coues's Flycatcher* found in Griffith Park, Los Angeles Co. on Dec. 31 (B&LLJ) was still present on March 24 and had been seen by many people; this was only the fourth record for California, the first to have reached the Pacific slope, and the first to have occurred during winter. Interesting is the fact that another *Coues's Flycatcher* was seen and heard by J. C. Yrizarry in a desert wash west of Imperial Dam, Imperial Co., at the extreme eastern edge of the Region. The 2 W. Wood Pewees reported on Christmas Counts in the Region would be most unusual if they were correctly identified; there is no winter record for California. Two Vermilion Flycatchers were present at Ojai, Santa Barbara Co. during December and January (LC, *vide* NM); a few wintered in the San Diego area as appears to be normal. A Rough-winged Swallow was seen near Imperial Beach on Dec. 25, a winter sighting. Most migrant swallows arrived in late February and early March, as is normal.

Wrens, Thrashers, Thrushes—Winter Wrens were reported only from Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co., which is at the south end of the species' breeding range. A Brown Thrasher found in San Pedro, Los Angeles Co. on Dec. 20 (SW) was last seen on March 1; this is a casual winter visitor to California. A Bendire's Thrasher seen near Niland, Imperial Co. on March 2 (GSS, DAG & BB) may have been a spring migrant since this species arrives in its normal range at about this time of the year; this

bird, however, was outside the species' known range. A Le Conte's Thrasher was collected on Feb. 18 in farmland near Moreno, Riverside Co. (EAC), outside of the species' normal range and habitat. The only Varied Thrushes reported outside of Christmas Counts were 5 around Cambria all winter (EAP), 2 on the Palos Verdes Peninsula on Feb. 25, and 1 there on March 1 (SW); the species is somewhat erratic this far south. In general, Mountain Bluebirds were more numerous and widespread this winter with thousands in the Imperial Valley during January. A Townsend's Solitaire was found close to the coast on the Palos Verdes Peninsula on March 29 (Richard Bradley, *vide* SW).

Warblers—An excellent variety of warblers was found in the Region during the period. The mild fall weather that continued into January may well have encouraged some of these birds to stay, and, indeed, some may have moved on when the weather became slightly cooler in late January since they were not found after this. In this Region we can count on finding five species of warblers wintering: Audubon's Warblers are abundant, Orange-crowned Warblers are relatively common, Townsend's Warblers and Yellowthroats are fairly common in suitable habitat, and Myrtle Warblers can be found when looked for in suitable habitat. This winter single Black-and-white Warblers were seen at Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co. on Jan. 1 (EAP) and at Imperial Beach on Dec. 23 (PD & GMcC); this species is casual during the winter. A *Tennessee Warbler* was seen near Imperial Beach on March 16 (GMcC & TT), the second time one has occurred in this area at this time of year. A Nashville Warbler was seen at Cambria on Jan. 7 (EAP) and another spent most of the winter on Point Loma (AC); 1 or 2 are found every winter. A Virginia's Warbler that remained in San Diego until at least Dec. 8 (AM) was very late or possibly was attempting to winter. A *Lucy's Warbler* was present in Costa Mesa, Orange Co., Jan. 11-31 (TS); the species is casual along the coast during the fall and this may be the first winter record for California. A Yellow Warbler seen near Imperial Beach on Dec. 30 and Jan. 7 (GMcC) constituted one of the very few winter sightings for California. Single Black-throated Gray Warblers, rare during winter, were seen in San Diego on Dec. 19 (AC) and in Spring Valley, San Diego Co. on Jan. 7 (GMcC). A Hermit Warbler, also rare during winter, spent the entire winter on Point Loma (GMcC, AC). A Palm Warbler was collected near Lakeview, Riverside Co. on Feb. 18 (EAC); 1 was seen at Ramer Lake, Imperial Co. on Feb. 24 (EW); 2 were at Bonita, San Diego Co. on Dec. 23 and 25 (AC, GMcC); 1 was at Imperial Beach throughout the winter (PD, GMcC, EW) and 1 exhibiting all the marks of a *Yellow Palm Warbler* (*Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*) was well seen there on Dec. 23 (PD & GMcC). This is a good number of reports for a bird recently considered accidental in California. A *Northern Waterthrush* found near Imperial Beach by the Greenbergs on Dec. 23 and still present on March 31 (EW, GMcC, *et al.*) provided one of the very few winter records for California.

Two MacGillivray's Warblers were found on the San Diego Christmas Count; this warbler is very rare during the winter. Two or three Wilson's Warblers wintered in the Morro Bay area (EAP), and a few were around Imperial Beach during December and January (EW, *et al.*); this species is also rare in the winter. An Am. Redstart was observed near Imperial Beach on Dec. 22 and 23 (R. Stallcup and D. DeSante); at the south end of the Salton Sea the surprising number of 7 were seen on Jan. 20 (GMcC, EW & EAC), 2 were there on Feb. 11 (GMcC, PD & AC), and 1 was there on Feb. 24 (EW). This species has been found regularly in small numbers at the south end of the Salton Sea in recent years and may have added this area to its normal winter range.

Orioles, Grackle, Tanagers—A variety of orioles are now found every winter in this Region. Two Hooded Orioles were present through the winter in Montecito, Santa Barbara Co. (JK, *fide NM*). Single Scott's Orioles were seen at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. on Feb. 3 (JAJ) and at Imperial Beach on Jan. 27 (GMcC & EW). A Baltimore Oriole spent the entire winter in Montecito (JK, *fide NM*); 1 was seen in Pick Park, Los Angeles Co. on March 15 (SW & GSS); 1 was seen in Riverside, Dec. 31–Jan. 30 (EAC); and up to 3 were present on Point Loma through most of the winter (AC, GMcC, *et al.*). The species is now of annual occurrence in limited numbers in California. Two Bullock's Orioles were reported from Morro Bay during January (EAP), 1 from Riverside on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 (EAC), and 3–4 from the San Diego area during the winter (AC, *et al.*). A Boat-tailed Grackle found in San Pedro on Feb. 16 and still present on March 29 (SW, many others) constituted the fourth record for California and was the first to have wandered as far west as the coast. Single Western Tanagers were present in Montecito through December (JK, *fide NM*) and on the Palos Verdes Peninsula during December and February (SW); 1 was seen in Altadena, Los Angeles Co. on March 5 (GSS); 1 was banded on Point Loma on March 5 and another on March 14 (AC). A few are normally present during the winter. A ♂ Hepatic Tanager was again present at Rancho Park, Los Angeles Co. until at least March 11 (GSS) and a ♀ was present in San Diego, Nov. 13–March 8 (Mrs. Keho, PD, GMcC); the species is now proving to be of annual occurrence during the winter. A Summer Tanager spent the entire winter on Point Loma (AC, *et al.*); this tanager is regular in very limited numbers.

Finches—A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was well seen in San Diego on Dec. 23 (GC); the species is casual during winter. Single Black-headed Grosbeaks, rare during winter, were present in Montecito, Jan. 2–March 16 (JK, *fide NM*) and on Point Loma throughout the winter (AC, *et al.*). An Indigo

Bunting present in San Diego, Dec. 10–23 (AC, GMcC, *et al.*) was either a very late fall wanderer or a wintering individual. Many flocks of 50–100 Evening Grosbeaks, an erratic wanderer in the Region, were seen on Mt. Pinos on Jan. 17 and 18 (PS).

Sparrows and Longspurs—A few Green-tailed Towhees were in the San Diego area through December; 1 was seen at the south end of the Salton Sea on Jan. 20. A Lark Bunting, now a very scarce species in California, was collected from a flock of White-crowned Sparrows near Desert Center, Riverside Co. on March 23 (EAC). A few Grasshopper Sparrows, a species not often reported at this season, were found wintering on Dana Mesa, Orange Co. (SW & AF). Slate-colored Juncos were reported from Rolling Hills, Los Angeles Co., March 15; Pasadena, Los Angeles Co., Feb. 4–11; Riverside, Feb. 2; and Cuyamaca State Park, San Diego Co., Feb. 4. A few are found every winter. Single Gray-headed Juncos were near Ojai, Santa Barbara Co. (J. E. Taft, *fide NM*) and on the Palos Verdes Peninsula (SW) throughout the winter; this is much the rarer of the two scarce juncos occurring in the Region. The only Harris' Sparrows reported were 2 at Cow Springs in Sespe Canyon, Ventura Co. on Feb. 28 (JY & DS, *fide NM*). Three White-throated Sparrows were present in Cambria (EAP) and 1 was in Santa Barbara until Jan. 12 (W & JG, *fide NM*). Besides the 1 Swamp Sparrow reported on the Morro Bay Christmas Count and the 2 reported on the San Diego Christmas Count, 1 was seen at the south end of the Salton Sea on Jan. 20 (GMcC, EW, EAC) and 1 was near Imperial Beach on Feb. 3 (GMcC, GSS, EW, *et al.*); the species is very scarce but regular. Two McCown's Longspurs were found among thousands of Horned Larks near Niland on Jan. 20 (GMcC, EW & EAC); this species is now being found in this area each winter. A Lapland Longspur was seen on the Carrizo Plains on Jan. 14 (RM) and 2 were near Niland on Jan. 20 (GMcC, EW, & EAC); this is the most numerous longspur in California. A flock of about 40 Chestnut-collared Longspurs observed near Lakeview, Riverside Co. on March 17 and 23 (EAC, GMcC) was the largest flock thus far seen in the Region and also provided the latest date for a longspur in the Region.

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