



beginning of the period, which is far below normal, and it subsequently shrank to only 3500 acres. Following heavy rainfall amounting to 2.77 inches in November, a high figure for this semi-arid area, Malheur Lake grew to 12,000 acres by the end of the reporting period, and nearby Harney Lake, which had been dry for some time, had 10,000 acres of water (ELMcL).

It was the coldest August on record at Grand Junction in western Colorado (LFE). Throughout most of the Region, freeze-up occurred before the end of the reporting period, even in the Great Basin where this is unusual. Our winter birds generally arrived early and in numbers. Does this reflect the cool fall or does it mean that we are in for a rough winter?

Swans, Geese, Ducks—Bear River Marshes at the upper end of the Great Salt Lake had a large concentration of 27,000 Whistling Swans in November (PJF). This species arrived at Stillwater Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in western Nevada in late September, a month earlier than usual (LDN), probably because of the drought farther north at Malheur Refuge. A White-fronted Goose seen at the Bear River Marshes on Nov. 24 (PJF) was unusual at this location, although the species usually is present in large numbers on the western side of the Great Basin. The high count of ducks at Bear River Marshes, 473,000 on Sept. 18 (PJF), is down from previous years' highs and reflects a poor breeding season at this refuge. In contrast, Ruby Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in eastern Nevada produced 25 percent more ducks this year, with 7030 ducklings raised to the flight stage (LLN). The fall migration peak at this refuge, which is not as large as many of the Region's other refuges, was 11,300 on Oct. 15 (LLN). At Deer Flat Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in western Idaho, the Region's great Mallard refuge, the bulk of fall migrants had not arrived by the end of the reporting period (RVP). This is often the case at the refuge. The Mallard is at best a late fall migrant and frequently manages to spend much of the winter in the Region despite the rather severe climate. At the newly established Monte Vista Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Utah, which is essentially a Mallard refuge, 54,000 were present, Oct. 13-19

GREAT BASIN, CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNT—TAIN REGION.—The fall was cold and in much of the Region precipitation returned to normal levels after two years of above-average moisture. In contrast, the western part of the Great Basin, which had been undergoing a great drought, experienced heavy rains this fall. For instance, Malheur Lake, the sump at the heart of the great national wildlife refuge in eastern Oregon, comprised only 8500 acres of water at the

(CRB). The heavy rains came too late to correct the drought conditions of two year's standing at Malheur Refuge, and the fall waterfowl migration there was thus disappointing. Many flocks of ducks were observed to land briefly and then take off again, and the high count of 63,000 at the refuge was the lowest since 1961 (ELMcL). The peak count of 155,000 ducks at Stillwater Refuge occurred in early October (LDN). This early peak apparently was caused by the drought conditions farther north. The refuge itself was short of water, with 30 percent of its marsh area dry. Numbers of ducks at Stillwater Refuge were much the same as last year, however, with a peak of 18,250 Canvasbacks this fall as compared with 21,000 last year (LDN). The only report of rarities among the waterfowl came from Grand Junction, Colo. where 3 *Wood Ducks*, a species not previously known to occur at that locality, were seen on Oct. 24 (LFE).

Hawks—A heavy influx of Red-tailed Hawks was noted in western Nevada north of Reno, with only a sparse population of Rough-legged Hawks reported for the same area (JMD). This reverses the relative status of these two species in the same area last year. One wonders whether there is a reciprocal relationship between the numbers of these two species in the fall. Farther north at Malheur Refuge, a poor flight of Rough-legged Hawks also was reported, with a maximum of 50 present at the end of November as compared with 100 last year (ELMcL). A Harlan's Hawk was reported near Sheridan, Wyo. in November (TK). A Black Hawk again was observed in southern Utah near Springdale on Sept. 11 (BL); this species has become almost regular in that area.

Gallinaceous Birds—A *Gambel's Quail* observed in the vicinity of Durango in southeastern Colorado on Nov. 27 (KS) was the first ever recorded in that area. Turkeys are steadily becoming more widespread in the mountain states where the several fish and game departments are propagating them. Recently they have become plentiful in southern Utah near Cedar City (SM), and a flock of 11 was reported on Sept. 1 west of Denver, Colo. in Jarre Canyon (HH), a locality where the species previously was considered rare.

Cranes, Shorebirds—Normally there are two areas about 1000 miles apart reporting large concentrations of Sandhill Cranes in the Region, namely Malheur Refuge (ELMcL) and Monte Vista Refuge (CRB). This year the species peaked in early October at both refuges, with similar counts of 1800 birds reported at each of them. A Stilt Sandpiper observed at Farmington Bay on the eastern side of the Great Salt Lake, Sept. 5 (GK) was unusual for Utah, although this species is not uncommon farther to the east in Wyoming.

Owls, Hummingbirds, Swallows—A Barn Owl was seen near Cedar City, Utah on Oct. 30 (SM), and another was observed at Bear River Marshes on Nov. 2 (PJF). Utah has a small population of Barn Owls, although there are only a few records from the

surrounding states. Two hummingbird concentrations were noted, one in the Kolob area north of Zion Nat'l Park in southern Utah where several hundred hummers consume 5 gallons of syrup per day (BL), the other in the vicinity of Hotchkiss, Colo. on the western slope of the Rockies (TC). Two Purple Martins were seen near Cedar City on Aug. 16 (SM) and 5 at Farmington Bay on Sept. 5 (GK). This species is more common in Utah than elsewhere in the Region.

Jays—A Gray Jay seen in Cheyenne, Wyo. on Nov. 8 (RSG) was many miles from its normal mountain habitat. A very unusual movement of Steller's Jays into the valleys on the western slope of the Rockies (TC) may have been caused by a very poor Piñon Pine cone crop this fall. Perhaps for the same reason, the species was very common at Salt Lake City during the fall (GK).

Chickadees, Bluebird, Waxwings—The usual altitudinal migration of Mountain Chickadees occurred this fall, with their arrival noted in mid-October at Salt Lake City (GK). A Western Bluebird wandered into central Wyoming and was observed on Oct. 25 near Dubois (MB) where the species is rare. Reports indicated a big flight of Bohemian Waxwings, with many seen in November in the Reno, Nev. area (JMD) where they are unusual that early, and with other early and large concentrations reported at Salt Lake City, Casper, Wyo., and Grand Junction and Durango, Colo. A sighting of 22 Bohemian Waxwings at Evergreen, Colo. in the mountains west of Denver on Nov. 16 (WWB) was an unusual record.

Vireo, Warblers—A Philadelphia Vireo was seen on Sept. 22 in Salt Lake City at the same spot where one was seen two years ago (GK). This species is casual in Utah. A late Nashville Warbler was reported at Craters of the Moon Nat'l Monument in central Idaho, Oct. 7 (DLC). A Parula Warbler observed at Farmington Bay on Sept. 5 (GK) was a very rare find for Utah.

Finches, Buntings—There were scattered reports of Com. Redpolls from Wyoming and Idaho; the sighting of 3 at Craters of the Moon Nat'l Monument on Nov. 21 (DLC) established a first record for the monument and reflects the fact that a competent observer is stationed at the monument for the first time. Three Snow Buntings seen at Craters of the Moon Nat'l Monument on Nov. 21 (DLC) seem somewhat early; this species is poorly reported in the Region.

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