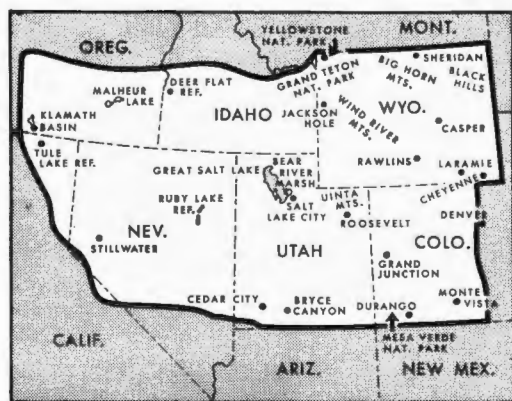


GREAT BASIN, CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION. — April and May brought almost no spring to the Region this year. The winter weather that had returned to us in March hit with all its fury in April and continued until the end of the month, piling up all-time record snow accumulations in the mountains



of southern Wyoming and northern Colorado and high snowpacks elsewhere. In May the giant snow accumulations in the mountains started to melt, and we had some spring weather, but the migration was merely reaching full stride by June 1, at which time migrants were still arriving two weeks late. By then it was apparent that the grass and flowers would be the most lush in many years. Since by the end of the reporting period the migration was only about two-thirds over, it would be hard to characterize the spring migration as other than late. We hadn't seen enough of it to know more.

The weather systems that involve the northern part of the Region do not directly affect southern Colorado, where it was noted, however, that the birds seemed held up at such places as Durango and the western slope of the Rockies by the severe weather to the north. It was also very dry in the south. The Great Basin experienced the same weather as the Central Rockies but perhaps to a lesser degree. Where the migration was observed more closely, as at Malheur Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon, it was found to be an unusual movement, with the recording of 20 species considered rare on the refuge, five accidental species, and four species never recorded previously on the refuge. These were *Knot* on May 17 (collected), *Yellow-billed Cuckoo* on May 20, *Black-chinned Hummingbird* on May 23, and *Parula Warbler* on May 19 (BD). In conjunction with an extensive netting and banding program, Malheur Refuge has the most carefully maintained records of any locality in the Region with which we are familiar.

Ibis — The colony of White-faced Ibis near Bear River Refuge in Utah used to have about 5200 birds. This year only 900 ibis were present, and, according to the Denver Wildlife Research Center, there has been almost complete failure of nesting in the last three years owing to the thin-shelled egg phenomenon that is associated with the accumulation of DDT and DDT-type residues in the birds' body tissues. In this case it is believed that much of the DDT is picked up in Mexico where the ibis winter, and thus conservationists should be concerned not only with the use of DDT in this country but also with what this nation exports. The outlook for this species is grim.

Waterfowl — On May 13 a White-fronted Goose was found south of Salt Lake City at Utah Lake (GK); the species is very rare there. At Stillwater Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, one of the desert sumps in western Nevada, water conditions are much improved, and the refuge's breeding population of ducks is up 32.8 percent (LDN). Water conditions are also good and expected to stay good at Malheur Refuge, where the water levels can be predicted accurately from the snowpack on the surrounding mountains, and a good breeding season is expected there (ELMcL).

Eagles — On April 9 an unusual event was recorded at Ruby Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in eastern Nevada. Two Golden Eagles were observed to be locked together and to fall to the ground from at least 300 yards in the air. The eagles hit the ground and bounced several feet into the air. One was able to fly away shortly afterward, but the other could not and subsequently died. Upon examination of this bird, an adult, it was found that the body cavity had been broken open by the fall. It was suspected that the two eagles had become locked together while mating in mid-air (LLN). A Bald Eagle was noted in the Klamath Basin on May 29 (JH); the species is a common winter visitor in the basin but the date is quite late.

Grouse, Cranes, Shorebirds — A count of 9 Blue Grouse in an area west of Denver, Colo. on May 9 (HK) indicated that numbers of this grouse were up this spring. The use of the relatively new Monte Vista Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado by Sandhill Cranes is increasing. A high of 2690 cranes was noted on May 4, and many of them remained at the refuge for a week (CRB). A *Snowy Plover* was identified at Grand Junction, Colo. on May 7 (LE); this species is very rare there. A *Com. Snipe* nest was found at 8500 feet elevation on the western slope of Ragged Mountain, about 30 miles south of Glenwood Springs, Colo., on May 26 (TC); the altitude seems very high for this species. A *Dunlin* noted at Grand Junction on April 10 (LE) was very unusual; at Stillwater Refuge, this species was much more numerous, with flocks of 200 seen as compared to only a few individuals in the past (LDN).

Gulls, Doves, Owl, Woodpeckers — Increased numbers of Franklin's Gulls were reported from Utah this spring (WS). One reason why the Mourning Dove is common in this Region is illustrated by a report of a nest at Stillwater Refuge in which a pair of doves had raised three broods by May 31; two of the broods were successful, the third was not (LDN). A *Boreal Owl* found dead in a snowbank 3½ miles south of Estes Park in the Colorado Rockies on April 1 (AC) constituted the first record in the area and one of very few records for Colorado. The specimen has been deposited at the Denver Museum. A *Williamson's Sapsucker* was observed at Craters of the Moon Nat'l Monument near Arco, Idaho on April 11 (DLC); this is the first record for the monument but the species is merely uncommon all through the Rockies. At Evergreen, Colo., in the Rockies west of Denver, where this woodpecker is not unusual, 3 were found this spring (WWB).

Warblers — The nearest thing to a migratory wave of warblers and other passerines occurred in Utah on May 13 and 14, during warm weather following a cold snap. Many individuals and some ten different species of warblers — a great number for Utah — were recorded. The prize find was a Grace's Warbler at Provo, Utah on April 13 (GK). At the other end of the spectrum, the last wintering Audubon's Warbler at Durango, Colo. was seen on April 2 and the last Myrtle Warbler on April 3 (OR).

Finches, Sparrows — An influx of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks occurred this spring. Four males were noted in one yard in Cheyenne, Wyo. on May 19 (MH); another was seen on May 14 at Grand Junction, Colo. and there were two records in Rocky Mountain Nat'l Park on May 21 (MP) and May 23 (PH), and another at Evergreen, Colo., also on May 23 (TM). A huge flock of Gray-crowned Rosy Finches, estimated to contain 5000 birds, was seen south of Cokeville in the Bear River Valley of Wyoming on April 14 (LM), and a similar flock was reported south of Jackson, Wyo. on April 27 (DLC). These are the largest flocks reported in some time and perhaps reflect the winter weather we had in April. After the big flight of last fall and winter, 3 White-winged Crossbills were discovered lingering at Evergreen, Colo. on April 12 (WWB), and 7 were found in Rocky Mountain Nat'l Park on May 17 (PE). Following strong southerly winds, a Cassin's Sparrow was observed on Florida Mesa near Durango, Colo. on May 2 (OR); this sparrow has not been reported previously from this part of Colorado.

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