

migrants in the mountain areas found themselves in late winter conditions; insectivorous species were especially hard hit. Spring in the mountains was retarded almost a full month after the premature thaws in late February. A few light storms in April helped to relieve the water situation but dangerous fire conditions again prevailed toward the end of May. Shore- and waterbird migrations were normal but land birds tended to migrate through in small "waves" during April and May, a condition possibly brought about by the retarding effects of the weather. These "waves" were particularly prominent in the foothill canyons and in the desert oases which of course act as bird "traps," and as a result are excellent indicators of prevailing bird conditions. These waves for the most part consisted of only one or two species of birds.

*Loons through Egrets.*—A small northward flight of loons (250+), with Arctic predominating, occurred on April 19 off Anacapa Island (John Tremontano). Western and Eared Grebes for the most part had departed from the ocean to inland lakes to the north and east by early April. A great southward flight of cormorants (sp.) was observed in mid-April from Alamitos Bay to Huntington Beach as more than 5000 birds passed over the coastal area in a few hours (JT). Only a few shearwaters and no Fulmars were recorded by the L. A. Audubon Society on their trip to Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands, April 19. More than 2300 White Pelicans remained at Buena Vista Lake, Kern Co. and indications are good that they might breed. A single Ashy Petrel was collected on Jan. 7 at Oxnard, Ventura Co. (*vide* R. L. Pyle). Twelve Snowy Egrets were present near China Lake, June 9 (D. W. Moore).

*Waterfowl.*—Most of the wintering waterfowl departed by mid-March but about 1000 Shovellers remained at Buena Vista Lake throughout May. A single Blue Goose was carefully identified at the south end of the Salton Sea, March 1, by members of the Whittier Audubon Society (*vide* J. H. Comby). Two White-fronted Geese were present near China Lake, April 12 (DWM). R. N. Shuart reported dry conditions near Redondo Beach were responsible for the poor numbers of waterfowl in that area. A small number of puddle ducks remained at China Lake through early June (DWM). Cinnamon Teal, Shovellers, and Ruddy Ducks were locally common in desirable breeding areas.

*Birds of Prey.*—The main flight of Turkey Vultures passed through the Region in mid-March and only a few small flights of Swainson's Hawks were seen in early April. Either the main flight was missed or it did not materialize to great size. Golden Eagles were widely reported and 5 Bald Eagles were seen at Santa Cruz Island, April 1 (JT). Mrs. Stultz reported the White-tailed Kites still missing from the area near the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary, but they have appeared at Rolling Hills in Palos Verdes (D. M. Falconer) and at the Tupman Elk Preserve, Kern Co., April 16 (Ed.). A single Osprey at Santa Ynez, April 1 (R. M. Colcord), was the only one reported. A Prairie Falcon was at Little Blaine Canyon, San Diego Co., May 17 (James E. Crouch).

**SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.**—The mild winter continued as a mild spring in comparison with last year at this time. February continued



warm and dry with temperatures somewhat above normal and humidity dangerously low. A few influxes of early migrants appeared at this time. By April many landscapes had taken a parched look, since January and February

(normally our wettest months) terminated with almost no rain. Rainfall for the entire season was about one-fifth of the previous season and approximately two-thirds of normal. Continued warm spells brought early warm rains and thaws to the mountains in March. Mid-March and April weather was more winter-like with temperatures in some places more than 20° below normal, and a number of moderate rainstorms. These were accompanied by high wind conditions in the desert areas. The result was that many of the early

More Long-eared Owls reported: 2 at Tucker Sanctuary, Modjeska Canyon, June 8 (JT and Arnold Lane), and 6 from South Fork Valley, near China Lake, April 5 (DWM). Short-eared Owls were reported from the Los Angeles Airport on June 6 and Palos Verdes on June 10 (Herbert and Olga Clarke).

*Doves and Pigeons, Upland Game Birds.*—Chinese Spotted Doves continued to spread north, south, and east from their hub in Los Angeles, and there was an increase near Riverside, Banning (Belle Wilson), and Corona (Norman H. Mellor). White-winged Doves were at Mecca, 2 on May 6 (Cecelia Foulkes), and near Yaqui Wells, San Diego Co., 6 on April 25 (JEC), although quite uncommon west of the Colorado River Valley. A few Band-tailed Pigeons remained in the Mt. Pinos-Mt. Abel area (200, April 26, Ed.) and 3 were at the Museum Grounds in Santa Barbara, June 29 (RMC).

*Rails through Alcids.*—Wintering shorebirds lingered until late April before finally departing for their breeding grounds. About 500 Willets and Marbled Godwits remained at Playa del Rey until mid-June. Some 10,000+ Dowitchers were still present at Buena Vista Lake on May 3 but most had departed by the end of the month (Ed.). More than 800 Am. Avocets and 400 Black-necked Stilts remained as resident on the shores of that slowly receding lake, and 3000 Western Sandpipers were still there on April 21. Many fine-plumaged Wilson's Phalaropes could be seen on the lake on April 25 (Ed., R. E. Mall). Hudsonian Curlews migrated through the Region in good numbers and more than 100 Long-billed Curlews were feeding on a hillside near Santa Monica, March 28 (Harold Baxter). Black Turnstones were numerous at choice localities, with more than 50 of the birds together with better than 100 Surf-birds present on the Ballona Creek Jetty through late March (R. Julian). Wandering Tattlers were scarce everywhere, even at Redondo Beach and Palos Verdes (RNS). A beautiful, rare, pure *albino Killdeer* was seen at Northridge in the San Fernando Valley in March (Sam Fraser). Laughing Gulls were reported from Lake Cuyamaca, San Diego Co. (6), and possibly several more at China Lake, April 12 (DWM). Hundreds of Caspian Terns returned to the vicinity of the salt works near San Diego and more than 200 nests were found (JEC). More than 60 Black Terns migrated over Buena Vista Lake on April 25 (Ed.). A successful pelagic trip to Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands, April 19, rewarded the observers with Xantus, Marbled, and Ancient Murrelets as well as 3 Black Oyster-catchers and the Santa Cruz Jay (JT).

*Hummingbirds, Swifts.*—An early Rufous Hummingbird was at Whittier Dam on Jan. 25 (JHC), and 2 others on Feb. 1 (HB); but the main flight of birds began in late February and continued through the end of April. More than 300 Rufous Hummingbirds were feeding near Irvine Park, Orange Co., April 26 (Whittier Audubon Society, *vide* JT). Black-chinned, Allen's and Costa's arrived as normal. An Allen's Hummingbird with nest and 2 eggs in advanced incubation was at the Museum Grounds in Santa Barbara, Feb. 17 (RMC). The reorganization

and reconstruction of the bird sanctuary in Modjeska Canyon has afforded excellent results. Since many of the feeders for hummingbirds and other birds have been placed in operation the Tucker Sanctuary has again become a veritable bird trap for hummingbirds and other land birds. A very heavy flight of Vaux's Swifts occurred on May 8 along the coast and was observed by your editor near Calipatria. Birds moved through the foothills and along the coast by the thousands throughout the day. Smaller flights were observed elsewhere on May 15, 16, 17 and 20. Twelve Black Swifts migrated over Corona, May 22 (NHM), and more than 20 were seen flying over Santa Anita Canyon, May 24 (Robert L. Taylor). White-throated Swifts had their breeding colonies well established by mid-April.

*Passerine Land Birds (General).*—The migration of all species was good and for some species exceptional. Mild weather in January and February lured some early arrivals, but the return to winter-like weather in March and early April checked the migration of many so that they were a week or two late in appearing. This undoubtedly caused a certain amount of bunching among the various species and when they finally did arrive, it was with the effect of a minor "wave." This might have been interpreted as a marked increase in species but in most cases this was not so. There were several well marked flights in late April and early May. These flights were very heavy for several days, the most notable being April 21 through April 24, April 26 and 27, May 1 through 3, and May 15 through 20. Between these periods there was a decided influx as well, but these dates mark the highlights. This resulted in "wave-like" conditions for many species during this time, and to cite an instance, it was not uncommon to find 350 Western Tanagers in a day during early May.

*Flycatchers and Swallows.*—Ash-throated Flycatchers arrived in force during the latter part of April, and Western Kingbirds were exceedingly numerous in many places and everywhere reported as abundant. Western Wood Pewees were also reported as increased, with as many as 100 or more near China Lake in the latter part of May (DWM). A single Cassin's Kingbird was seen 20 miles north of Palos Verdes, March 30 (JT, Bill Hawkins, Pat Gould). Say's Phoebe were down. Vermilion Flycatchers continued to attract attention (little wonder!). Two males were seen near Morongo Valley Inn, April 22 (Belle Wilson) and a second male (the first died) arrived at Mecca, April 19, to mate with the surviving female and raise three young birds which left the nest on May 22 (CF). For the past two years there have been sporadic influxes of these beautiful birds, which appear to be becoming more stable. Several times recently they have succeeded in reaching the coast. Swallows were somewhat late in arriving, with the bulk of the influx coming in the latter part of March. Purple Martins were seen as follows: Whittier, 1 on March 8 (JT), Pauma Valley, 2 on June 11 (Eleanor Beemer), and Irvine Lake, 20 on June 21. Thousands of swallows (mostly Cliff and Violet-green) migrated through SGRWS on April 5 (Alma Stultz).

*Thrushes, Waxwings, Vireos.*—Olive-backed Thrushes had their heaviest flight between April 30 and May 5. Many observers reported hundreds of birds, many of which were singing. Again only a few Am. Robins were seen, and yet these few birds seemed to have taken local residence in the lowlands. A singing Varied Thrush (singing is unusual away from the breeding grounds) was at the Museum Grounds in Santa Barbara, April 2 (RMC). Hermit Thrushes moved through early, but were not plentiful. Cedar Waxwings were scarce with only a few small flocks reported. Three Gray Vireos were identified by R. N. Shaurt in Joshua Tree National Monument, May 13.

*Warblers.*—Most of the wintering Audubon's Warblers had departed for their breeding grounds by the first week in April. A small warbler flight occurred on March 9, and another on April 6, followed by a larger flight on April 20. Many observers reported warblers as extremely numerous, with all species well represented. A heavy flight of Townsend's, Hermit, Black-capped, Black-throated Gray, and Yellow Warblers occurred on April 24-25. This was followed by six successive flights through May 16. R. L. Taylor reported a very heavy flight of Townsend's Warblers on May 1, through the Flintridge area. Mr. and Mrs. R. N. Shaurt experienced a large warbler wave through the desert at the oasis of 29 Palms, May 14 and 15. Most of the birds were Yellow and Black-capped Warblers, with all of the others represented in much smaller numbers. A Prothonotary Warbler was found dead in Dial House Mission Canyon, Santa Barbara Co., May 25 (RMC). A Black and White Warbler was at Sweetwater River, San Diego Co., March 19 (JEC); a second was at Mecca, April 21 (CF), and another was at the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary, May 20 (Alma Stultz, *vide* JT). A Black-throated Green Warbler was found near Whittier, June 5 (JHC, *vide* JT). The (Yellow) Palm Warbler which appeared near Whittier on Dec. 27 remained for more than 5 months and was seen until June 1 by scores of observers.

Here is more evidence that there has been a decided westward movement of some of these eastern warblers in the past three years, perhaps only sporadic and occasional, but nonetheless quite evident after examining these numerous, well-authenticated reports. Consider the list for the last year: Prothonotary (twice), Redstart (four times), Oven-bird, Black and White (nine times), Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Yellow Palm, Painted Redstart (twice), Northern Water-thrush, Tennessee (three times), as

well as other birds such as Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Orchard Oriole and others.

*Blackbirds, Orioles, Tanagers.*—Three thousand Tricolored Blackbirds remained as the breeding population at Buena Vista Lake tule marshes. Twelve Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at Fisherman's Retreat near Banning in early June (Ethel West), many were found nesting near Mecca in early April (CF), and 2 were in the China Lake area, June 9 (CWM). Bullock's Orioles arrived in bulk before the Hooded Orioles. A few Bullock's were seen in mid-March, but the larger numbers began arriving in early April and continued until the end of the month. More than 75 Bullocks were seen migrating through Palos Verdes, April 1 (JT). Hooded Orioles first arrived in late March, and their migration was more evenly distributed in time until mid-May. Scott's Orioles had arrived in San Diego County by April 26 (JEC). By far the most impressive migration was that of the Western Tanagers. Almost without exception observers reported them as more than abundant. Flocks of from 200 to 350 were not uncommon, with a group of as many as 500+ near Corona in early May (NHM). The peak of the flight came just after the middle of May, but large flocks were seen from mid-April until mid-June. The birds were quite tame, easily approached, and tended to be highly communal when feeding.

*Finches and Sparrows.*—Black-headed Grosbeaks had a fine flight, but they nowhere matched the numbers of the Western Tanagers. Most of the Grosbeaks arrived in late April and early May. Blue Grosbeaks were numerous and widely reported, as follows: 1 at China Lake, May 9 (DWM), 2 at Santiago Canyon, May 25 (Ruby Curry), 1 at North Banning, May 10 (BW), 1 at Corona, June 13 (NHM), 1 at Pauma Valley, April 21 (E. Sharpless), 4 at Mecca, April 17 (G. Charbonneau), and 3 at Irvine Lake, June 21 (Ed.). The extremely rare Rose-breasted Grosbeak (perhaps not 8 records in the last 20 years) arrived at a feeding tray in Tustin, Orange Co. on June 4. The male bird sang constantly and another grosbeak (from the good description, probably a female of the same species), was his constant companion. Green-tailed Towhees appeared at several desert oases during the migration. A large group of Red Crossbills apparently wintered in the Mt. Pinos-Mt. Abel forests. More than 100 birds were seen on April 26 feeding on Ponderosa Pine seeds (Ed.). They were previously seen in that area in December 1952. White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows had for the most part departed by the end of April.—ARNOLD SMALL, *Department of Life Science, Taft Junior College, Taft, Calif.*