

# SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie



The winter of 1988–1989 was relatively mild with below-average rainfall, but with an unusual cold spell during January. Bird activity during the winter was somewhat uneventful. Many of our regularly wintering species appeared to be in lower than normal numbers, and there were no influxes of species from the north. American Robins were scarcer than during most recent winters, and Cedar Waxwings were present in only very small numbers and absent from some areas. Mountain species such as Red-breasted Nuthatches and Mountain Chickadees were virtually unrecorded in the coastal lowlands, where small numbers can be found most winters, and Purple Finches did not appear to move from their nesting areas. Most of the rarities—such as the Ruff in San Diego County, the Thick-billed Kingbird in Orange County, and the Grace's Warbler in Ventura County—were birds apparently returning to localities where they had spent previous winters, but a Common Pochard in San Bernardino County represented a potential addition to the California State List.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — F.C.R. = Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial. Place names in *italics* are counties. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

**LOONS TO HERONS** — Two Pacific Loons were found inland on L. Palmdale, Los Angeles, Dec. 3 (MHe), with one remaining through Mar. 17; another on L. Silverwood in the San Bernardino Mts. Jan. 16 (MAP) was among very few ever to be found in San Bernardino away from the Colorado R.; and three were together on L. Perris, Riverside, Dec. 5, with one still present Jan. 10 (RMcK). A Com. Loon at Silver Lakes near Helendale, San Bernardino, Feb. 11–18 (EAC) was at an unusual locality for mid-winter. The **Least Grebe** found near Niland, Imperial, Nov. 19 remained through Dec. 24 (MAP). Up to two Horned Grebes present at Silver Lakes near Helendale Jan. 16–Feb. 18 (MAP) were inland and away from any of the larger bodies of fresh water, and 25 on L. Perris Dec. 1 (RMcK) indicated just how numerous this species can be on some of the larger fresh-water lakes.

Two Laysan Albatrosses were seen well offshore with one at 31° 30'N–121° 30'W Jan. 24 (KS) and the other at 32° 00'N–123° 50'W Jan. 29 (BR). Northern Fulmars were present in numbers south to Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara, as indicated by the presence of 125 at 34° 40'N–121° 20'W Feb. 2 (BR). A Cook's Petrel, obviously regular far off the California coast, was at 30° 20'N–122° 20'W Jan. 23 (KS) and three more were at 30° 00'N–124° 00'W on Jan. 24 (KS). A Pink-footed Shearwater, quite rare in s. California waters during the winter, was seen off Long Beach Feb. 26 (KLG) and three more were seen off San Diego Mar. 6 (JO'B). The presence of a Short-tailed Shearwater near Santa Cruz I. Dec. 12 (MAH), three off Santa Barbara Dec. 31 (JLD), two off Long Beach Feb. 26 (REW), seven off Oceanside, San Diego, Dec. 24 (DP), and one more off San Diego Dec. 17 (DP) indicated that small numbers of these birds were present in s. California waters during the winter. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, very rare in s. California waters, landed on a research vessel at 32° 30'N–122° 50'W on Jan. 29 (BR). A Red-billed Tropicbird, considered very rare in winter this far north, was at 32° 20'N–121° 30'W on Jan. 28 (BR). At least three Brown Pelicans were present on the Salton Sea all winter (RMcK), and another seen to land on a dirt dike near Brawley, Imperial, Feb. 11 (GMcC) was unexpected considering the time of the year.

Up to four ad. Little Blue Herons were present around s. San Diego Bay throughout the winter (EC), but the species went unreported elsewhere in the Region. The imm. Tricolored Heron found on s. San Diego Bay Nov. 28 was present through Dec. 17 (EC). The ad. Reddish Egret present on s. San Diego Bay since Sept. 11 was present through at least Feb. 7 (JO'B); the immature present at the mouth of the Tijuana R., San Diego, since Aug. 3 remained through Nov. 26 (EC), and the other found at the mouth of the San Diego R. Nov. 20 was still present Apr. 8 (MT). Some 6000 White-faced Ibises in the area south of Brawley Jan. 29 (REW) made an unusually large concentration. Two Wood Storks, casual along the coast nowadays, were seen in flight over Guajome L. near Oceanside Feb. 19 (L & DS).

**WATERFOWL** — A total of four Tundra Swans at the Santa Ynez R. mouth, Santa Barbara, Dec. 23–Jan. 13 (KH) and one near Lancaster, Los Angeles, Dec. 17 (JKA) were the southernmost to be reported this winter. A total of 20 Greater White-fronted Geese, now rare as wintering birds in s. California, were found along the coast, and another was present inland on Los Serranos L. near Chino, San Bernardino, Jan. 8–21 (MAP). Eleven Ross' Geese were found wintering along the coast, and another was inland, away from S.E.S.S., at Silver Lakes near Helendale Jan. 11–Feb. 18 (EAC). The ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal found in Goleta, Santa Barbara, Nov. 24 was present through Feb. 4 (AB), having spent its 8th winter at this locality, another was in Orange, Orange, Jan. 8 (DRW), and a 3rd was at the mouth of the San Diego R. Feb. 4–Mar. 12 (GMcC). A ♂ Blue-winged Teal in El Centro, Imperial, Jan. 28 (DRW) was in an area where few have been found during the winter. Eurasian Wigeon appeared to be present in above-average numbers with at least 25 individuals reported during the period. A ♂ Eurasian Wigeon x American Wigeon was carefully identified on Swan L. near Mira Loma, Riverside, Jan. 8–21 (MAP) and another was well seen on s. San Diego Bay Dec. 10 (GMcC), this hybrid combination now being found in s. California almost every year.

A ♂ **Common Pochard**, the first to be found along the Pacific Coast south of Alaska, was at Silver Lakes near Helendale Feb. 11–17 (RP) and was felt by many to be a genuine vagrant from Asia. The only Tufted Ducks found this winter were a female in Saticoy, Ventura, Feb. 4–Mar. 5 (LRB) and a male on the Elderberry Forebay of Castaic Res., Los Angeles, Dec. 4 (KLG). Only seven Oldsquaws were reported, but these included one as far south as Newport Bay Jan. 2–16 (DRW) and another on San Diego Bay Feb. 19–Mar. 19 (CGE). A Black Scoter at Point Mugu, Ventura, all winter (JSR), another in Oceanside Feb. 4–19 (GMcC), and a 3rd on s. San Diego Bay Nov. 20–Feb. 21 (JO'B) were the only ones found south of



Adult male Eurasian Wigeon in Lompoc, California. The winter of 1988–1989 saw above-average numbers of this species wintering in southern California. Photograph/Matt Heindel.

Santa Barbara. An imm. ♂ Surf Scoter on L. Silverwood Jan. 16 (MAP) and three more near S.E.S.S. Jan. 29 (RC) were inland, as was a White-winged Scoter on L. Palmdale Dec. 4 (NBB), but 19 together in the center of the Salton Sea Feb. 25 (RMck) was unprecedented. Up to four Hooded Mergansers in Santee, San Diego, Dec. 1–Mar. 18 (EP) and two seen near Brawley Jan. 29 (REW) were relatively far south for this species. Three Red-breasted Mergansers, rare inland in winter, were on the Elderberry Forebay of Castaic Res. Dec. 4 (KLG) and another was at Silver Lakes near Hesperia Feb. 16–18 (MAP).

**RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS** — Black-shouldered Kites were again present in the Imperial Valley south of the Salton Sea with at least five individuals found during the period (JLD, REW, GMcC), indicating the species is increasing in numbers as a winter visitor to s.e. California. Single imm. Bald Eagles at Point Mugu Dec. 11 (RJM), Upper Newport Bay Jan. 29 (BED), China Lake, Kern, Dec. 3 (RAH), and Harper Dry Lake northwest of Barstow, San Bernardino, Dec. 3 (PB) were all away from regular areas of winter occurrence. A Red-shouldered Hawk present in Niland, Imperial, throughout the winter (GMcC) and another in nearby Brawley Jan. 28 (GMcC) were both in an area where the species is considered very rare. An imm. Swainson's Hawk, accidental in winter, was well seen in Goleta Feb. 1 (LRB), but one over San Marcos, San Diego, Feb. 25 (DMack) was probably an exceptionally early spring migrant. A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk, rarely found here in s. California, was photographed near Ridgecrest, Kern, Dec. 30–Jan. 2 (DB) and another was present near Brawley Jan. 29–Feb. 11 (REW). Small numbers of Rough-legged Hawks were scattered throughout the Region, with two at L. Henshaw, San Diego, and at least three more around the S.E.S.S. during most of the winter (CGE, JLD, GMcC) being the southernmost. A Merlin near Tustin, Orange, Nov. 29–Dec. 22 (DRW) was a black individual of the rarely found race *suckleyi*.

The only wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers, all believed to be of the Asiatic form *fulva*, were three near Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, throughout the period (PEL), up to eight on n. Vandenberg A.F.B., Santa Barbara, Sept. 27–Mar. 3 (KH), and as many as 12 together at Seal Beach, Orange, Jan. 29 through the end of the period (DRW). A Black Oystercatcher seen off and on in La Jolla, San Diego, Jan. 6–Feb. 3 (B & IM) was in an area where few are recorded. A Whimbrel at S.E.S.S. Jan. 29 (REW) was the first ever to be found there in winter. A Sanderling, previously unrecorded inland in winter away from the Salton Sea, was near Taft, Kern, Dec. 30 (MOC). Up to 60 Stilt Sandpipers were found during the period around S.E.S.S. (REW) where small numbers regularly winter. The ♂ Ruff spending its 7th winter on s. San Diego Bay was still present Mar. 19 (GMcC), and the two found in El Centro Nov. 20 remained through the winter with the male still present Mar. 4 (GMcC).

**GULLS TO ALCIDS** — A first-winter Franklin's Gull on Laguna Res. in Laguna Hills, Orange, Dec. 4 (JT) was presumed to be a late fall migrant, but one in Fullerton, Orange, Jan. 9–22 (DRW) was undoubtedly wintering locally, and another at S.E.S.S. Jan. 29 (DA) was the first to be found in that area in winter. About 1000 Mew Gulls along the Santa Ana R. in Orange throughout the winter (DRW) made an unusual concentration for this far south, and an immature inland on L. Silverwood Jan. 16–21 (MAP) was one of very few ever found in San Bernardino. A Herring Gull on L. Palmdale Jan. 21 (MHe) was in an area where this species is considered very rare. Two or three Thayer's Gulls were inland around S.E.S.S. during the winter as is normal, but a first-winter bird on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara, Feb. 21 (PEL) was considered most unusual. At least two Glaucous-winged Gulls were around S.E.S.S. during the winter (GMcC), and another was on L.

Cachuma, where considered very rare, Mar. 1 (JEL). The only Glaucous Gulls reported this winter were two different first-winter birds on n. Vandenberg A.F.B., one Dec. 29 (KH) and the other Jan. 7 (KH). Black-legged Kittiwakes reached s. California waters as indicated by at least 170 seen during a scientific cruise off the coast between Jan. 24 and Feb. 2 (BR, KS), 17 seen off San Diego Feb. 19 (CGE), and smaller numbers found elsewhere along the coast, but a first-winter bird 15 mi inland along the San Gabriel R. in Pico Rivera, Los Angeles, Jan. 6 (JS) was exceptional. An Elegant Tern at Doheny State Beach, Orange, Dec. 29–31 (DRW) was an exceptionally late fall straggler. Black Skimmers wintered farther north than usual with up to 21 present at Point Mugu during the period (REW), up to seven in Santa Barbara Jan. 28–Mar. 1 (A & JC), and single birds in Goleta Dec. 23 (*fide* KB) and Feb. 22 (JEL).

A Cassin's Auklet found alive on a Santa Barbara parking lot 3 mi inland from the beach Feb. 10 (ECo) was unprecedented. A Tufted Puffin, exceptionally rare in s. California waters, was far off the coast at 32° 10'N–121° 50'W Jan. 28 (BR) and another was near Santa Barbara I. Feb. 26 (KLG).

**DOVES TO SWALLOWS** — The introduced Spotted Dove is now established as far north as Lompoc, Santa Barbara, where a number of individuals have been reported during the past year (*fide* AA). Up to six White-winged Doves, very rare in winter along the coast, spent the period in Goleta with four still present Mar. 25 (PEL). Two Inca Doves at F.C.R. Dec. 30 (FT), with one remaining Jan. 6–Mar. 5 (AS), were exceptionally far north. The two ♀ Ruddy Ground-Doves present at F.C.R. at the end of November were still there Apr. 2 (JO'B). A Short-eared Owl at S.E.S.S. Dec. 28 (CH) was in an area where few indeed have been found in recent years. Twenty Vaux's Swifts near Oceanside Feb. 4 (GMcC) were undoubtedly wintering locally. A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird present throughout the winter in Ridgecrest (DM) was able to survive temperatures dropping down into the teens. Lewis' Woodpeckers appeared to be scarcer than normal with five at L. Silverwood Jan. 16–21 (MAP) being the southernmost reported. The ad. Red-headed Woodpecker found in Goleta Sept. 14 was still present Mar. 28 (KB). A ♂ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was at Westlake Village, Los Angeles, Dec. 18–31 (JR) and another male was in San Marino, Los Angeles, Dec. 10–11 (DC), this species being a rare straggler to California. A Red-breasted Sapsucker of the nominate form *ruber*, casual



This adult male Costa's Hummingbird wintered in Ridgecrest, California, December 1988 to February 1989. Photograph/Don Moore.

at best in s. California, was near Glennville in the Greenhorn Mts., Kern, Jan. 26 (JW).

An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Santa Barbara Dec. 31–Feb. 3 (BS) was evidently the same bird found here each of the past 4 winters. A Greater Pewee present in San Diego Dec. 6–Feb. 15 (B & IM) was apparently the same bird present here last winter. A Hammond's Flycatcher, casual in winter, present in Goleta Dec. 29–Jan. 29 (RPH) was undoubtedly the same bird as present here last winter. Six Gray Flycatchers were reported with single individuals near Ventura Jan. 8 (RJM), in Orange Dec. 18–Jan. 5 (CJ), at Coto de Caza, Orange, Jan. 12 (HLJ), Rubidoux, Riverside, Nov. 25–Jan. 21 (MAP), Riverside Feb. 11 (CMcG), and in Borrego Springs, San Diego, Feb. 19 (D & MH), this species formerly being more numerous in s. California in winter. The only W. Flycatchers reported this winter were single birds in Santa Barbara Nov. 6–Dec. 31 (RPH) and Dec. 29 (AME), one in San Marino Feb. 5–18 (KLG), another in Irvine, Orange, Dec. 24–Jan. 15 (LRH), and one in Mission Viejo, Orange, Dec. 17–18 (BED). The E. Phoebe found in Santa Barbara Nov. 8 remained through Jan. 12 (TEW), another was in San Marino Dec. 10–Jan. 8 (DC), and a 3rd at S.E.S.S. Dec. 18 (MAP) was undoubtedly the same bird present here all of last winter. Only four Vermilion Flycatchers were reported along the coast with one at Point Mugu all winter (JSR) being the northernmost, but one at Harper Dry Lake Dec. 10 (EAC) and three more near Victorville, San Bernardino, Dec. 26 (MAP) were relatively far north for the interior. The only Ash-throated Flycatchers reported this winter were one in Riverside Dec. 19 (C-TL) and another in Long Beach, Los Angeles, Dec. 15–Jan. 14 (BO'C). A Tropical Kingbird, very rare to casual in winter, was on n. Vandenberg A.F.B. Dec. 24–Mar. 12 (KH) and another in Goleta Sept. 25–Mar. 27 (HPR) was evidently the same bird as present here during the past 2 winters. A Cassin's Kingbird at Finney L. near S.E.S.S. Jan. 29 (RC) was one of very few ever found away from the coastal lowlands in winter. The **Thick-billed Kingbird** near Tustin on Nov. 29 remained through at least Mar. 5 (DRW), having now spent 7 winters at this location. A Barn Swallow was over L. Cachuma Jan. 28 (MHe), two were in Irvine Feb. 5 (DRW), and two more were near Imperial Beach, San Diego, the same day (GMcC), the latter looking very worn and judged to have wintered locally.

**JAYS TO VIREOS** — Two Steller's Jays on La Cumbre Peak near Santa Barbara Jan. 2 (KA) were at an unusually low elevation, particularly during a winter when corvids did not appear to be on the move. Three Brown Creepers in coastal Orange during the winter (DRW) and another in Santee Jan. 1 (GMcC) were unexpected considering the paucity of mountain birds in the lowlands. A Winter Wren, rare in the southern portion of this Region, was in El Torro, Orange, Dec. 17 (BED), and another was along the upper San Jacinto R. in the San Jacinto Mts., Riverside, Jan. 28 (RRV). The presence of five Sage Thrashers at Harper Dry Lake Dec. 10 (AEC) might indicate small numbers winter at this location. A Brown Thrasher, a very rare straggler to California, was in Irvine Dec. 11–Feb. 18 (RRV). The **White Wagtail** that returned to near Oxnard, Ventura, Oct. 16 for its 2nd winter was still present Mar. 4 (RJM). After the appearance of three N. Shrikes in the n.e. portion of the Region during the late fall, small numbers continued to move into the area as indicated by the presence of an immature at Galileo Hill, Kern, Nov. 6–Jan. 2 with two there on the latter date (JW), an adult photographed in Ridgecrest Jan. 2 (JW), an immature at China Lake Dec. 9–Feb. 25 (RH), another immature at Harper Dry Lake Dec. 10 (M & RC), and an immature exceptionally far south photographed at S.E.S.S. Jan. 22–29 (MK). Ten Solitary Vireos were reported this winter, all but the one at Yaqui Wells in e. San Diego Feb. 11 (D & MH) being along the coast, and all but a



Immature Northern Shrike at Galileo Hill, California, December 3, 1988. Photograph/Matt Heindel.



Immature Northern Shrike exceptionally far south, near the south end of the Salton Sea, California, January 29, 1989. Photograph/Bob Pintner.

cassinii in Goleta Dec. 4–Jan. 29 (RPH) and another at Lake Forrest, Orange, being of the gray interior form plumbeus. A Warbling Vireo, exceptionally rare in winter, was in Santa Barbara Dec. 30–Jan. 2 (BA) and another was in Arcadia, Los Angeles, Dec. 4 (DC), both possibly being very late fall migrants.

**WOOD WARBLERS** — A Tennessee Warbler in Santa Barbara Dec. 6 (AB) could well have been a very late fall migrant, but another there Dec. 31–Jan. 1 (KA), one in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, Nov. 30–Mar. 10 (TEW), and a 3rd in Corona del Mar, Orange, Dec. 24–Feb. 5 (LRH) all undoubtedly wintered locally. Twenty Nashville Warblers along the coast was about average for the winter, but one in Niland, Imperial, Feb. 1 (RMCK) was unexpected. A Virginia's Warbler at Finney L. near S.E.S.S. Feb. 17 (GB) was the first to be found away from the immediate coast in winter. A N. Parula in San Diego Dec. 17–Jan. 7 (DH) was undoubtedly the same bird as found here last winter. Twenty Yellow Warblers along the coast were fewer than expected. A Chestnut-sided Warbler was found in Arcadia Dec. 30 (RMCK), and another at S.E.S.S. Dec. 18 (MAP) was undoubtedly wintering locally. A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler in Manhattan Beach, Los Angeles, Feb. 9–19 (fide KLG) was one of about 10 ever to be found wintering in California. Only 15 Black-throated Gray Warblers were reported along the coast, and two or three spent the entire winter inland near Bakersfield (MOC), where also regular at this time of the year. The only Hermit Warblers reported this winter were one on Santa Cruz I. Dec. 10 (MAH) and another on n. Vandenberg A.F.B. Dec. 18–31 (KH). A ♂ Blackburnian Warbler in Santee Dec. 26 (DC) was probably a very late fall migrant, since much searching failed to produce additional sightings.

The ♂ Grace's Warbler that appeared in Ventura Nov. 6 for its 5th winter was still present at the end of the period (JSR). Three Pine Warblers were present in s. California this winter with a male at Morro Bay Dec. 20–Feb. 3 (MHa), a female in Santa Barbara Dec. 31–Feb. 28 (BS), and a male photographed in Yorba Linda, Orange, Jan. 14 through at least Apr. 1 (MHe). A total of 10 Palm Warblers along the coast was about average for winter. Eleven Black-and-white Warblers were found along the coast this winter, with seven of these in the Santa Barbara area. Six Am. Redstarts were found along the coast, where quite rare in winter, but four or five were around S.E.S.S. where small numbers regularly winter. Four N. Waterthrushes were found with single birds at Santa Barbara Dec. 14 (PEL), S.C.R.E. Dec. 11–18 (JSR), Point Mugu throughout the period (JSR), and near Imperial Beach during January and February (JO). A ♂ MacGillivray's Warbler in Huntington Beach, Orange, Oct. 24–Mar. 19 (DRW) was undoubtedly the same bird that had been present here during the past 3 winters. A ♂ Hooded Warbler in Coronado, San Diego, Dec. 11–Mar. 18 (GMCC) was only the 2nd ever to be found wintering in California. Twenty Wilson's Warblers along the coast appeared to be about average for winter. A Painted Redstart in Santa Maria Oct. 22–Mar. 5 (KH) was undoubtedly the same bird as present here last winter.

**TANAGERS TO LONGSPURS** — A ♂ Hepatic Tanager in Santa Barbara Nov. 5–Mar. 18 (KB) was evidently the same bird that has spent the past 6 winters in this area. Summer Tanagers were much scarcer than normal, with one in Santa Barbara Dec. 30–Mar. 12 (KA), another in Ventura all winter (JSR), a young male in San Marino Dec. 10–Feb. 18 (DC), and a 4th in Huntington Beach Jan. 1 (MAP) being the only ones reported. Likewise, W. Tanagers were scarcer than usual with only 21 reported during the period. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Goleta Dec. 7 (KB) could well have been a late fall migrant, but one at Heritage Ranch, San Luis Obispo, Jan. 3–7 (TB), two together in Santa Barbara Nov. 28–Jan. 22 (JD), another in Santa Barbara Jan. 8–23 (LE), and a 5th photographed in La Jolla Feb. 26 (MG) were all undoubtedly wintering birds. A Blue Grosbeak in Anaheim Dec. 3 (DRW) was exceptionally late and could well have been attempting to winter locally. An ad. ♂ Painted Bunting (with plumage color suggesting dietary deficiency associated with captivity) was frequenting a feeder in Santa Barbara Feb. 14–Mar. 14 (JMcC), and another male (in perfect plumage) was caught and banded in Camarillo, Ventura, Jan. 3 (JWa); in the past similar birds have been



*Le Conte's Sparrow at China Lake, California, December 3, 1988. Photograph/David Blue.*

considered escapees, but, considering the number of fall records, it should not be considered out of the question that genuine vagrants could be present in winter.

More than the average number of Green-tailed Towhees were found wintering in coastal San Diego, and single birds were present as far north as near San Marcos Pass above Santa Barbara Feb. 20–Mar. 1 (DS) and on the Cuesta Ridge in San Luis Obispo Dec. 17–30 (GPS). A Black-throated Sparrow in Orange Dec. 3–11 (JB) and another in Coronado Dec. 11 (JO) were both along the coast where considered rare, especially so in winter. A Lark Bunting at Quail L., Los Angeles, another in Chula Vista, San Diego, Mar. 5–24 (RR), and four together near Holtville, Imperial, Feb. 17 (RMCK) were all more than likely wintering locally. "Large-billed" Savannah Sparrows, *A. s. rostratus*, remained around coastal marshes in the San Diego area into mid-February, with two seen at Bolsa Chica Jan. 11 (LRH), nine found in the Seal Beach marshes Jan. 15 (LRH), and another as far north as the S.C.R.E. Feb. 11 (RJM) being to the north of San Diego. A Grasshopper Sparrow at Crystal Cove State Park, Orange, Feb. 1 (RH) was away from known areas of normal occurrence. The **Le Conte's Sparrow** found at China Lake Nov. 27 remained through Jan. 2 (RAH) to give us the first winter record for s. California. Twelve Swamp Sparrows along the coast appeared to be about average, and another was inland near Victorville Dec. 26 (MAP). Eighteen White-throated Sparrows found during the period appeared slightly fewer than normal, but the only Harris' Sparrows to be found were a single bird in Whitewater Canyon, Riverside, Dec. 12–23 (DCH) and another at Doheny State Park Dec. 26–Mar. 11 (DT). The only longspurs found during the winter were 18–20 Chestnut-collared Longspurs at S.E.S.S., Feb. 1–2 (RMCK).

**BLACKBIRDS, FINCHES** — Up to ten Tricolored Blackbirds at Harper Dry Lake Feb. 4–8 (EAC) were relatively far out onto the desert where few are recorded. A Rusty Blackbird at China Lake Dec. 4–6 (JLD) and another at S.C.R.E. Dec. 7 (RJM) were more than likely late fall migrants rather than wintering birds. Great-tailed Grackles continued to increase in numbers along the coast with up to 35 around Imperial Beach throughout the period (GMCC), single birds along the coast of Orange Feb. 23 (RR) & 26 (BP), three at L. Casitas, Ventura, throughout the winter (RJM), another in Ventura during the same period (RJM), one in Santa Barbara Dec. 22–Feb. 5 (JB), and one more in Oceano, San Luis Obispo, for the entire winter (MHa). Five Orchard Orioles were found this winter with one in Goleta Dec. 10 (PEL), a female in Ventura all winter (RJM), an ad. male in Irvine Nov. 27–Apr. 9 (LRH),

an imm. male at Doheny State Park Dec. 27–Jan. 22 (BED), and an ad. male in Imperial Beach Dec. 30–Mar. 11 (BC); this species is found along the coast in small numbers every winter. A Hooded Oriole, very rare in winter, was in Santa Barbara Jan. 29 (PB), three were together in San Marino all winter (DC), and another was in Newport Beach Jan. 1–Feb. 5 (BED). Northern Orioles appeared scarcer than normal with only 40 reported, but this included single “Baltimore” Orioles in Carpinteria Mar. 10 (TEW), Ventura throughout the winter (RJM), San Marino Dec. 19–26 (DC), Doheny State Park Dec. 27–Jan. 22 (BED), and Coronado Dec. 18–29 (EC). Since Scott’s Orioles are rare along the coast in winter, single birds in Santa Barbara Dec. 28 (JEL), Santa Paula, Ventura, Feb. 5 (RJM), and O’Neill Regional Park, Orange, Dec. 18 (DRW) were of interest.

Two Purple Finches at Desert Center, Riverside, Dec. 29 (RMCK) were totally unexpected, particularly during this winter when virtually none were to be found along the coast away from known breeding localities. The only Red Crossbills reported this winter were up to twelve on Figueroa Mt. near Santa Barbara Dec. 26–Mar. 24 (KA).

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