

NEW MEXICO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

FIELD NOTES

SEASONAL REPORT #2

OCTOBER 1962 - JANUARY 1963

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Common Loon

3 on Lake Avalon 11/27; 1 on Lake MacMillan 12/12 (BH).

Eared Grebe

Thousands were reported from Lake MacMillan during the fall and winter (RCB). 6 were seen in Las Vegas 12/31 (ES).

Western Grebe

1 at Bitter Lake Refuge 10/27 (ANC); 1 on Lake MacMillan 11/8 and 12/12 (RCB).

Pied-billed Grebe

1 at Española 10/25 (PRS).

White Pelican

200 at Bitter Lake Refuge 10/7. Even larger numbers were reported from Lake Avalon until December (VM).

Double-crested Cormorant

9 at the Bosque del Apache Refuge 10/13 (PRS).

Black-crowned Night Heron

1 at Espanola 10/7 (JRT).

Whistling Swan

1 stayed at Bitter Lake Refuge through December (VM).

Blue Goose

3 adults and 2 immatures in a flock of 68 Snow Geese, Bosque del Apache Refuge 10/13 (PRS).

Ross Goose

1 at Bitter Lake Refuge for two weeks in December (VM).

Mallard

Particularly common at Española during fall and winter until early January (WBL). 34 on a reservoir above Santa Fe 12/23 (JRT) and 12/28 (PRS). Most abundant duck in the Las Vegas area in December and January, 768 on 12/31 (ES).

Game and Fish Department surveys are conducted on four established transects, on lakes in northwest New Mexico, the Pecos River between Alamogordo Reservoir and the Texas border the Rio Grande from Caballo Reservoir to Albuquerque, and the San Juan River and lakes on the Jicarilla Indian Reservation. These surveys showed the mallard population on these transects to be approximately 6,000 on September 15, 15000 on October 15, 17,000 on November 15, and 26,000 on December 15. The peak population of approximately 57,000 occurred on January 15, 1963

(WSH).

Pintail

On the previously mentioned transects the pintail population averaged about 17,000 through September and October, increased to approximately 22,000 in November, and reached a peak of 40,000 in December (WSH).

American Widgeon

1 in a reservoir above Santa Fe 12/23 (JRT) and 12/28 (PRS).

Game Department estimated 12,500 on September 15 to a peak of approximately 29,000 in November (WSH).

Wood Duck

A male and female were seen together at Española 10/7 (JRT). Wood Ducks were seen at three places in the SE region where it is rare: 1 at Stevens Tank near Carlsbad (Lea County) 10/23 (BH) 2 at Lake MacMillan 1/14 (RCB) and 2 at Bitter Lake Refuge 1/14 (RG).

Redhead

478 were counted in the Las Vegas area 12/31 (ES).

Hooded Merganser

Seen at Lakes Avalon and MacMillan (BH, RCB) and at Bitter Lake Refuge (VM) during the period; 2 at Las Vegas 12/31 (ES).

Common Merganser

Abundant along Rio Grande near Española until early January (WBL).

Red-breasted Merganser

1 arrived early, 11/10, at Bitter Lake Refuge (RC) and 5 were seen near Carlsbad 1/28 (RCB).

Turkey Vulture

Last seen in Los Alamos 10/4 (WBL); 6 present in Redrock 10/8 (JLS); 2 at Bosque del Apache Refuge 10/13 (PRS).

Goshawk

One of these uncommon winter visitors was seen at Lake MacMillan 12/27 (RCB).

Zone-tailed Hawk

2 at Redrock 10/8 (JLS).

Rough-legged Hawk

A dark phase individual was seen near Española 12/30 (PRS).

Harris' Hawk

A photograph of a Harris' Hawk in the Bosque del Apache Refuge 10/27 was obtained by McKnights. One was seen at Deming 10/24 (JLS); 3 east of Dexter 1/5 (VM, JHS).

Golden Eagle

One 3 reports were received: 1 was seen near Espanola 12/30 (PRS); 2 at Lake MacMillan 1/27 (RCB); but 18 were seen in the Las Vegas area in January (ES).

Bald Eagle

1 seen in Espanola 12/30 (WBL); an immature appeared at Lake Avalon 1/22 (BH, RCB); 26 were reported from Las Vegas in January (ES).

Pigeon Hawk

1 in Santa Fe 11/29, 1/9, and 1/19 (PRS); 12 in the Las Vegas area in December (ES).

Gray Francolin

1 reported from Deming 10/9 (JLS).

Sandhill Crane

150 were seen flying south near Santo Domingo Pueblo 10 a.m. 11/10 (LGH).

Killdeer

Peaks during fall migration were 12 on 10/21 and 15 on 11/14 at Santa Fe (PRS).

Black-bellied Plover

From 3 to 8 were seen in the Carlsbad area from 10/3 to 10/19 (BE).

Pectoral Sandpiper

1 at Lake MacMillan 11/1 (BH) and 3 at Bitter Lake Refuge 11/10 (VM).

American Avocet

12 at Santa Fe on 10/18 (PRS).

Herring Gull

A few were seen among the other gulls on Lake MacMillan in January, one color-marked (RCB, BH) .

Ring-billed Gull

Flocks estimated to number in the thousands were at Lake MacMillan in January (RCB, BH).

Franklin's Gull

1 east of Malaga 10/10 (RCB).

Bonaparte's Gull

5 were seen in the large flock of Ring-billed Gulls on Lake MacMillan in January (RGB, BH).

Forster's Tern

1 in winter plumage was seen near Espanola 10/20 (WBL).

White-throated Swift

20 were seen over Carlsbad on 1/17 (RCB). This is an unusual record as they usually leave New Mexico in October.

Yellow-shafted Flicker

2 were seen near Carlsbad 11/2 (RCB) and one stayed in Roswell from 11/4 to 11/28 (ANC).

Red-shafted Flicker

Abundant in the Española Valley (WBL). Heavy migration was noted from 11/22 to 11/26 in Santa Fe (PRS).

Acorn Woodpecker

The two birds reported during the summer in Los Alamos were still there during the winter (WBL).

Hairy Woodpecker

Scarce in the Española Valley, but numbers normal in Los Alamos (WBL).

Western Kingbird

21 were counted in Deming 10/9 (JLS).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

Late observations were 10/15 at Carlsbad and 10/21 at Milnesand (BH).

Eastern Phoebe

1 at Stevens Tank (Lea County) near Carlsbad 10/17 (BH).

Black Phoebe

2 were unusual at Roswell in January (VM).

Say's Phoebe

18 were seen at Golondrinos north of Las Vegas in January (ES).

Western Wood Pewee

Perhaps the first winter record for the SE area was 1 at Dexter 1/5 (VM, JHS).

Olive-sided Flycatcher

A late migrant appeared in Roswell 10/6 (VM).

Vermilion Flycatcher

2 at Redrock 10/8 (JLS).

Violet-green Swallow

40 were still present in Redrock 10/8 (JLS).

Blue Jay

1 at Bitter Lake Refuge 10/15 (BH).

Red-breasted Nuthatch

17 were counted in the Las Vegas area in January (ES).

Dipper

15 were counted in the Las Vegas area in January (ES).

Bewick's Wren

1 in Espanola 2/30 (JRT).

Long-billed Marsh Wren

6 probably on migration were seen in Santa Fe 11/11 (PRS). 3 were seen in Española 12/2; 2 were still present 12/30 (JRT).

Mockingbird

Occurred late in Los Alamos; 11/15 (WBL), 1/17 (LGH).

Brown Thrasher

1 was seen near Los Alamos on 11/27 (LGH); 1 was collected near Carlsbad 1/15 (BH).

Crissal Thrasher

3 near Loving 10/22 (RCB).

Robin

Most of the 150 seen 11/4 had left Santa Fe by 11/20 (PRS).

Eastern Bluebird

One of the very few records for New Mexico was 5 at Washington Ranch near Carlsbad 12/19 (BH).

Mountain Bluebird

Numerous in Santa Fe with over 100 seen in one area on 12/23 until after the Christmas snows when many left (PRS).

Golden-crowned Kinglet

2 were seen in Hyde Park north of Santa Fe 12/23 (JRT).

Water Pipit

Fall migration occurred from 9/20 to 11/3 with a peak of 20 on 10/25 (PRS).

Sprague's Pipit

1 was collected from a group of 4 at Madera Ranch (Lea County) near Carlsbad 12/3 (BH). One was seen at the same place 10/11 (BH).

Cedar Waxwing

Very scarce during winter in NW region: only one was seen during the Española Christmas Count 12/30 (PRS); none were seen in Cedar Crest or Albuquerque (McK).

Parula Warbler

An immature was seen 10/6 in same arroyo in Cedar Crest where a male was photographed in April 1958 (McK).

Blackthroated Blue Warbler

1 was collected near Carlsbad in October (BH).

Myrtle Warbler

Seen in Los Alamos 12/24 and 1/1 (LGH).

Audubon's Warbler

A number wintered in Los Alamos and Espanola: 42 at Espanola 12/30 (JRT, WBL). 1 was seen 11/ 28 in Cedar Crest, which is higher than they usually winter in this area (McK).

Northern Waterthrush

1 was seen in Espanola 12/30 (JRT).

Wilson's Warbler

Last seen in Los Alamos 10/5 (WBL).

Yellow-headed Blackbird

2 at Española 12/2 JRT); a flock of 83 was seen 10/5 at Deming (JLS).

Rusty Blackbird

1 collected at Steven's Tank (Lea County) near Carlsbad 10/31 (BH).

Brewer's Blackbird

Over 1,000 were counted in the Las Vegas area 12/31 (ES).

Boat-tailed Grackle

29 were present in Española 12/30 (JRT, WBL). Roosted in flocks of as many as 300 in Roswell in December and January (VM).

Pyrrhuloxia

From 2 to 15 per day were seen throughout the winter near Carlsbad (RCB).

Black-headed Grosbeak

A very late record is the male seen in Española 12/30 (PRS).

Pine Siskin

A flock of 500 was seen in Santa Fe 10/18 (PRS).

Lark Bunting

More than 1,000 were reported from Deming 10/9 (JLS).

Slate-colored Junco

Several sightings in NW region: 2 in Santa Fe 12/26, 1 on 1/6; 1 in Chamita on 12/30 (PRS); 1 in Española 12/30 (PRS); 1 in Los Alamos 1/6 (LGH).

Gray-headed Junco

Although as abundant as usual in Los Alamos (JRT), few were seen at lower elevations in Santa Fe (PRS). They did not join the Oregon Juncos at Durrie's feeding station in Albuquerque until the last week in January although they are usually the commoner junco (JD). At Travis' banding station in Los Alamos, of 550 Juncos handled, the ratio of Gray-headed to Oregon Juncos was 18:1 for the winter of 1962-63. The ratio is usually closer to 5:1.

Tree Sparrow

A flock of 22 were feeding in a field north of Espanola 12/30 (JRT), 28 were seen near las Vegas 12/31 (ES).

Clay-colored Sparrow

Not seen some years, were observed in three places in the SE region (VM, BH, RCB).

Field Sparrow

The first Field Sparrow record for New Mexico occurred in December 1961. A year later Bruce Harris reports seeing them regularly about Madera Ranch (Lea County) near Carlsbad from October to January (BH)

Harris' Sparrow

Seen 12/10 in Las Vegas (PB); again 12/31 (ES).

White-crowned Sparrow

White-crowns which usually leave Los Alamos for the lower elevation of the Rio Grande Valley by the end of October, were present until 12/1 this year (JRT).

White-throated Sparrow

1 immature feeding in Lewis' yard in Los Alamos 11/3 through 11/5 (WBL). Reported from Stevens Tank (Lea County) near Carlsbad in November and Washington Ranch near Carlsbad in December (BH).

Swamp Sparrow

An immature was seen in Española 12/2 (JRT).

Summary of the Season:

The late fall season was characterized by two contrasting aspects: dull bird-watching because of the absence of high-altitude and northern species at lower elevations and some exciting observations of late lingering migrants. Both are probably attributable to the mild, dry weather prevailing during most of the season.

Observers in the Santa Fe-Cedar Crest-Albuquerque area particularly noted the lack of the usual interesting winter visitors. Noticeably absent or present only in small numbers were the Red-breasted Nuthatch, Townsend's Solitaire, Cedar Waxwing, and Cassin's Finch.

It was a good season for waterfowl and hawks in the northern part of the state. Until early January ducks were plentiful along the Rio Grande near Española and rafts of geese, ducks, and coots were seen on the lakes near Las Vegas. Ten species of hawks were identified during the Española Christmas Count on December 30 (only the Pigeon Hawk and Peregrine Falcon were missing from those usually reported).

Large flocks of shorebirds and sparrows were the predominant features of the late fall migration in the southeastern region. Thousands of sandpipers including Least, Western, and Baird's fed on the silt of Lake Avalon in October (RCB). Mixed flocks of Savannah, Lark, Brewer's, White-crowned, Lincoln's, and Song Sparrows lingered through the fall and into the winter around Roswell (VM).

Some remarkable winter records were reported. Individuals of a number of species which usually leave New Mexico by early October were sighted in December or January including the White-throated Swift, Western Wood Pewee, Vermilion Flycatcher, Northern Waterthrush, and Black-headed Grosbeak.

Attached are tables from Game and Fish Department Completion Report Job 2 1 W-91-R-6, in which may be found migration chronology for ducks, geese, and coots for the period September 15, 1962 through April 15, 1963. Average daily flights of all species tabulated are also listed and compared to the four-year average and to the 1961-1962 period.

CONTRIBUTORS

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JF	James Findley	(NW)
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LGH	L. G. Hawkins	(NW)
WSH	William S. Huey	(NW)
WBL	W. Burton Lewis	(NW)
McK	Daniel and Barbara McKnight	(NW)
VM	Vester Montgomery	(SE)
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