

State of California
The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game

SIGHTING REPORTS OF MOUNTAIN PLOVERS IN CALIFORNIA:
RESPONSES TO 1972 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

by

Ronald M. Jurek
Wildlife Biologist
Wildlife Management Division

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In fall 1972, the Department of Fish and Game requested information from the bird-watching community on Mountain Plover sightings in California. An information request packet, which included a photograph and a brief article about the species, was sent to newsletter editors of National Audubon Society chapters and was published in the Department magazine Outdoor California.

The article listed the type of information needed (including area, date, number, and habitat type). Also, birders were advised to look for colored leg bands, because at that time a breeding population study and banding program were being undertaken in Colorado.

The Department received 16 responses in the ensuing months, mainly from January through May. Follow-up letters we sent to some respondents for more specific information or photographs if the original report seemed doubtful. Three sighting reports clearly appeared to be misidentifications. No color bands were reported.

The attached table is a recent summarization of information from 13 of the respondents.

MOUNTAIN PLOVER SIGHTINGS

REPORTS RECEIVED BY DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME IN 1973
IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

DATE OF SIGHTING	COUNTY	HUBBER	OBSERVER	LOCATION	HABITAT	OTHER INFORMATION
JAN-APR (BEFORE 1974 BUT NO YEARS GIVEN)	SAN LUIS OBISPO	PLACES OF UP TO 5	B. MALZON	CARRIZO PLAIN AREA		SINGLES, FLOCKS USUALLY OF 4 OR 5 BUT PLOVER TAKEN AS PREY BY PRAIRIE FALCONS
JAN-APR (BEFORE 1974 BUT NO YEARS GIVEN)	SAN LUIS OBISPO	COMMON	B. MALZON	SAN JUAN RIVER AREA		USUALLY IN JAN AND FEB, OCC. IN MAR AND APR. AD. MALE PRAIRIE FALCON OBS. EATING HTL. PLOVER IN APR. 1973 NEAR HWY. 56; FALCON WAS PUSHED AND PREY WAS IDENTIFIED IN HAND. PRAIRIE FALCON NEST NEAR HWY. 58 CONTAINED HTL. PLOVER REMAINS.
FEB 4, 1972	IMPERIAL	APPROX. 15	A. FRIS	IMPERIAL VALLEY, ETR. 115 AT WIKI RD.	RECENTLY PLOWED FIELD WITH JUST-SPROUTED GRAIN CROP	HTL. PLOVERS OBSERVED HERE AND TO NORTH IN SEVERAL PREVIOUS YEARS.
DEC 16, 1972	ORANGE	25	I. CHAMNESS, B. BERTON	INTERSTATE 5 AT HARVARD, MAIN	SMOOTH PLOWED FIELD	FOUND ALMOST ANY WINTER HERE.
DEC 17, 1972	ORANGE	22	A. AND E. CHAMNESS	INTERSTATE 5 AT HARVARD, MAIN	SMOOTH PLOWED FIELD	CHRISTMAS COURT DAY
JAN 1, 1973	ORANGE	2	I. CHAMNESS	ALONG HARVARD NEAR BARONICA	CUT-OVER AND PLOWED ASPARAGUS FIELD	FOUND ALMOST ANY WINTER HERE.
DEC 27, 1972	IMPERIAL	NOT MENTIONED	B. KAISER, T. NILES	YONDEL RD. AND BANNISTER RD., NEAR WESTBORLAND	ALMALPA FIELD	
NOVEMBER (BEFORE 1973 BUT NO YEARS GIVEN)	RIVERSIDE	PLACES OF 50-100	E. H. ANDERSON, JR.	SAN JACINTO RIVER NEAR LAKEVIEW AND SAN JACINTO LAKE PAN.	BARREN (ESP. PLOWED) FIELDS	ALSO IN WINTER IN SMALL NUMBERS
FEB 16, 1973	KERO	18	H. STUBBINGS	CORCORAN RD., 1 MI. W OF KEEY NAT. WILDL. REFUGE	SHORT GREEN GRASS FIELD AND SANDY WASH	MANY SHEEP GRAZING IN FIELD
JAN 27, 1972	ORANGE	5-10	B. BURLEDGE	HARPER RD. BETH. HARVARD AND SAN JOAQUIN RD.	RECENTLY CULTIVATED ASPARAGUS FIELD DEVOID OF VEGETATION	NONE SIGHTED IN PREY. 2-3 WKS. OF SEARCHING, BUT SEEN REGULARLY DURING FOLLOWING WEEKS. BIRDS SOMETIMES SEEN WALKING ON SLOWLY-TRAVELED HARPER RD. PAVEMENT, ESP. IN EARLY MORNING.
DEC 16, 1972	IMPERIAL	20	B. BURLEDGE	6 MI. S. OF BRANLEY	RECENTLY PLOWED COTTON FIELD	
JAN 11, 1973	ORANGE	10	B. BURLEDGE	HARPER RD. BETH. HARVARD AND SAN JOAQUIN RD.	RECENTLY PLOWED ASPARAGUS FIELD	FIELD WAS PLOWED THE PREVIOUS DAY, SAME SITE AS 1/27/72 REPORT.
JAN 12, 1973	ORANGE	1	B. BURLEDGE	HARPER RD. BETH. HARVARD AND SAN JOAQUIN RD.	RECENTLY PLOWED ASPARAGUS FIELD	NONE SIGHTED IN WHEES AFTER THIS DATE, ALTHOUGH AREA CHECKED OFTEN.
JAN 23, 1973	ORANGE	12	B. BURLEDGE	DYER RD. AND RED HILL, SANTA ANA	FIELD BEING PLOWED	PLOVERS AND 100 KING-BILLED GULLS WERE FOLLOWING A TRACTOR DURING PLOWING.

MAR 2 AND 3, 1973	KINGS	40+	V. AND C. HOWE	2.3 MI. S. OF JUNCTION OF HWY. 33 AND HWY. 41	FLAT TERRAIN, UNFENCED, SHORT GRASS AND LOW-GROWING WILD-FLLOWERS (E.G., LIMNATHUS DICHOCHOUS, OENOTHEKA AND FILARIS)	NEAR WERE 25+ LONG-BILLED CURLEWS, ABOUT 6 HORNED LARKS, AND 1 SAN JOAQUIN ANTLOPE GOUD SQUIRREL.
JAN 1, 1973	MENDOCINO	2	B. REESE, J. BURCHER	MACARTHUR STATE PARK, S. END	GRASSY HIGHLANDS (SHORT GRASS)	REPORT WAS SUPPORTED BY A GOOD PHOTOGRAPH, BUT. FLOWERS WERE IN ASSOCIATION WITH KILLDEERS.
MAR 6, 1973	SAN BERNARDINO	2	H. PIERCE	1 MI. N. OF ESSEX	VERY SPARSE CROSBOTE BUSH SCRUB	STATE PARK WANGER PIERCE UNABLE TO FIND PRIOR RECORDS OF THIS SPECIES IN PROVIDENCE HTS. REGION.
MAR 27, 1973	SAN BERNARDINO	2	H. PIERCE	15 MI. N. OF ESSEX	CROSBOTE BUSH SCRUB	
SEP 15, 1972	SAN DIEGO	15	G. MCCASKIE	TIJUBA RIVER VALLEY	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS	
NOV 5 AND 12, 1972	SAN DIEGO	200 EACH DAY	G. MCCASKIE	TIJUBA RIVER VALLEY	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS	MOST BIRDS HAD DEPARTED BY END OF DECEMBER; THEY PREFER THE FLAT, WELL-GRADED DIET FIELDS WITH NO VEGETATION, WHICH ARE NUMEROUS IN FALL, BUT BY THE END OF THE YEAR VEGETATION IS GROWING ON THEM, AND FLOWERS BECOME SCARCE.
DEC 26, 1972	IMPERIAL	60	G. MCCASKIE	S. END SALTON SEA	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS DEVOID OF VEGETATION	NOTED IN PASSING
JUN 6, 1973	IMPERIAL	50	G. MCCASKIE	S. END SALTON SEA	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS DEVOID OF VEGETATION	NOTED IN PASSING
JAN 13, 1973	IMPERIAL	20	G. MCCASKIE	S. END SALTON SEA	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS DEVOID OF VEGETATION	NOTED IN PASSING
JAN 27 AND 28, 1973	IMPERIAL	1000	G. MCCASKIE	S. END SALTON SEA	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS DEVOID OF VEGETATION	NOTED IN PASSING
FEB 19, 1973	IMPERIAL	100	G. MCCASKIE	S. END SALTON SEA	FLAT CULTIVATED FIELDS DEVOID OF VEGETATION	NOTED IN PASSING
DEC 26, 1972	YOLO	60	AMERICAN BIRDS	DAVIS AREA		REPORTED TO AM. BIRDS EDITOR VAN RENSEN
DEC 6, 1972	YOLO	4	AMERICAN BIRDS	DAVIS AREA		REPORTED TO AM. BIRDS EDITOR VAN RENSEN
FEB 12, 1973	YOLO	1	AMERICAN BIRDS	DAVIS AREA		REPORTED TO AM. BIRDS EDITOR VAN RENSEN
DEC 12, 1972	MERCED	5	AMERICAN BIRDS	MERCED NAT. WILD. REFUGE		REPORTED TO AM. BIRDS EDITOR VAN RENSEN
DEC 29, 1969	KERN	SHALL GROUP	A. SMITH	3 MI. N. OF BLACKHILLS CORNER		

OBSERVERS:

ANDERSON, E. W., JR.; RIVERSIDE
BERTON, BARBARA
BRESE, BEATRICE; WILLITS
BURCHER, JEANNE; WILLITS
BURRIDGE, BETTY; TUSTIN
CHANNES, ARDIE; COSTA MESA
CHANNES, EDNA; COSTA MESA
FRIES, ALICE; VALLEY CENTER
HOMER, GEORGE; OAKLAND
HOMER, VI; OAKLAND
KAISER, BETTY; SAN JOSE
MCCASKIE, GUY; IMPERIAL BEACH
MYERS, TOM
PIERCE, HERBERT J.; ESSEX
REMSEN, VAN; BERKELEY
SMITH, ANNE M.; LARKSPUR
SVENNINGSEN, NAOMI S.; SAN FRANCISCO
WALTON, BRIAN J.; SAN LUIS OBISPO