

parently do just that. Biogeographers refer to this phenomenon as long-distance dispersal. Root (1988) states that "in winter, Band-tailed Pigeons in the northern and eastern reaches of the breeding range migrate into the southwestern areas of the summer range." Where migration occurs there is always a certain small percentage of the population that goes off course or migrates the wrong way. Band-tailed Pigeons have also long been known to be nomadic as described in Bent (1932). "This was one of the wandering, restless flocks which travel about during the winter, moving from one place to another as food or fancy leads them." Several of the western regional editors of *American Birds* have noted movements out of the mountains. For example, in southern California, "As is apparently normal, a few Band-tailed Pigeons moved out of the mountains into the lowlands . . ." (McCaskie 1988). These pigeons are very strong, fast fliers able to travel long distances in a short time. This fall and winter (1996-97) many birds came out of the mountains of western North America, including Clark's

Nutcracker (see seasonal highlights in this issue), Pinyon Jay, and Pygmy Nuthatch. In midsummer, Red Crossbills invaded the Great Plains and farther east. Some of these wanderings could be induced by drought conditions in the western mountains.

With at least 49 Band-tailed Pigeon records for the states (eastern North America — see Table 1) not considered in the range or in the casual range by the A.O.U., I suggest that most if not all are of wild origin and are legitimate vagrants. The first eastern record occurred in 1930; the species has also been recorded in the

east almost annually since the late 1960s. These include 20 for winter, 15 for fall, 8 for summer, and 6 for spring. Some observers believe these pigeons are tame (escapees) since they sit for long periods in one place. However, this is normal behavior, and I have noted this habit in the pigeon's usual range.

Apparently Band-tailed Pigeons are rare to non-existent in captivity. Paxton et. al. (1981) stated they knew of no captive population and Duncan (1991) thought the possibility inconsequentially small that these records would pertain to escaped captives.



*Band-tailed Pigeon,
First State Record,
Springfield, Sangamon
Co. 28 Dec. 1996.
Photos by Dennis
Oehlme.*