

# The Nesting Season

June 1–July 31, 1989

## ATLANTIC PROVINCES REGION

Bruce Mactavish

Summer is the season when traditionally birdwatchers in this Region do the least amount of birdwatching. The Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas, in its third year, has done a lot to change that. New discoveries about everyday common species make them exciting. Many people were out in the field this summer in the three Maritime Provinces: New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia. Brian Dalzell, coordinator of the project, sent a comprehensive report of this summer's findings and they make up the bulk of this summer season report. The weather was about average over the Region.

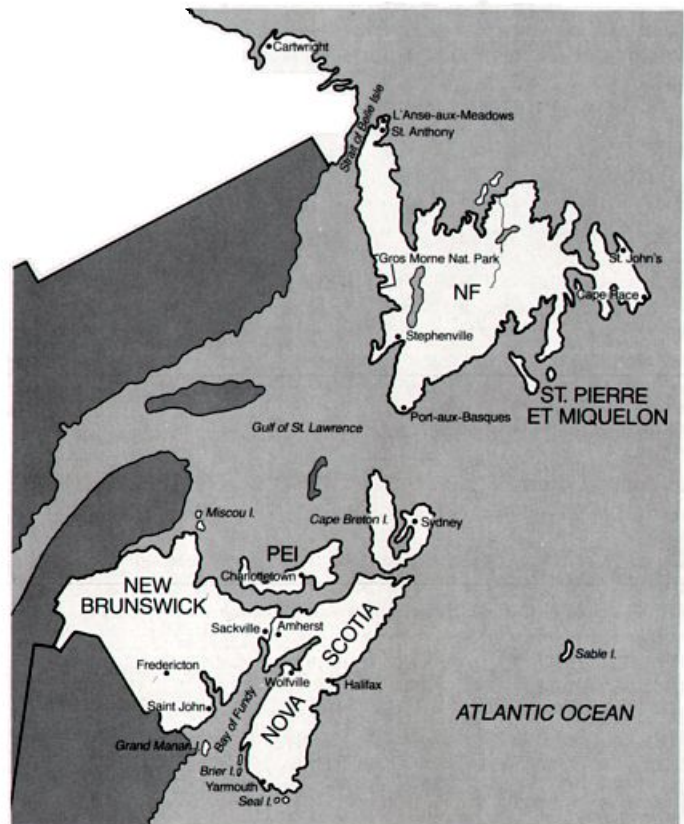
Rarities were few, but two firsts for the Region were recorded, one long overdue and the other not even dreamed about: Sandwich Tern and Marbled Murrelet.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — S.P.M. = Saint Pierre et Miquelon.

**LOONS TO HERONS** — Red-throated Loons in breeding plumage south of the breeding range during the summer are not unexpected, but one July 8 several km up River Hebert, NS, was unusual because it was inland (TE). The only 2 locations south of Labrador in the Region where the species has bred are Miquelon, S.P.M., which had a nest with one egg June 16 and a pair with two young July 17 (MB), and the Gray Islands, NF, where adults were seen in late June (JW).

Adult Pied-billed Grebes in Newfoundland—where rare, especially in summer—were one July 7 into August at St. John's (m.ob.) and one July 17 at Loch Lomond (BMt). An unseasonal Red-necked Grebe was at Summerville, NS, June 18 (IM).

The capelin spawning season in Newfoundland and adjacent St. Pierre et Miquelon in late June brought the predictable thousands of shearwaters in close to shore. Highest counts, mere fractions of the actual numbers present, were "well over" 10,000 Greater Shearwaters June 15 off Miquelon, S.P.M. (RE), and 7000 Greater and 1500 Sooty shearwaters June 25 off St. Shott's, NF (KK, BMt). The only Cory's Shearwaters reported were two July 5 from a ferry in Cape Breton I. waters (JJ). Reports of large numbers of Manx Shearwaters are becoming commonplace in Newfoundland and neighbouring St. Pierre et Miquelon. Two hundred fifty, most of them sitting on the water in one flock, were south of St. Pierre July 21 (ST *et al.*). Eighty flew past St. Shott's on June 25 (KK, BMt). They seem reluctant to colonize *en masse*, although they are being heard at night by seabird scientists at various seabird colonies in the area. Two out of 3 artificial burrows on Columbiar I., S.P.M., were visited by Manx Shearwaters, but none was heard calling from natural crevices as in past years. Yet another year passed without an actual nesting at



Map Illustration/Denise L. O'Brien

this promising site (RE). Manx Shearwaters were said to be "commoner than ever" around Brier I., NS (*vide* IM).

A local, uncommon, elusive Regional breeder is the Least Bittern, which was found on territory at 2 locations, both in New Brunswick: Piries Lake near Grand Falls (BD) and Musquash Marsh near Saint John (RW). Great Blue Herons were again seen at Sandy Point I., NF, in June where the province's first nesting is surely only a visit away (JB). A "white-headed" Great Blue Heron June 1 at W. Lawrencetown, NS, was said to look "just like Wurdemann's heron in the book" (*vide* IM). All six of the Snowy Egrets reported were from Nova Scotia including three in breeding display in early June at W. Lawrencetown (IM). No further word was received on the 3 pairs noted in late May on Bon Portage, I., NS, site of last year's first confirmed Regional breeding. A Little Blue Heron was at Miquelon, S.P.M., June 4–14 (RE), and an ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was near Lunenburg, NS, July 20–23 (BMy). Green-backed Herons breed Regionally only in New Brunswick, with the Saint John River valley being the population centre, but even here they are local and uncommon. A weakly flying juvenile at Ste-Anne-de-Madawaska, NB, July 16 extended the breeding range farther north (BD). An individual at St. Pierre, S.P.M., July 10–12 was off course (*vide* RE).

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS** — There was a "great influx" of Northern Shovelers into Prince Edward Island with several breeding records (RC). Numbers were also thought to be higher than usual in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia (BD, ST). At the eastern extremity of the Region, Newfoundland had a record number of shovelers with a pair in early June at Sandy Pt. (fide JB); a pair and a single male June 16 at Wigeon Pond, Codroy Valley (RB); 2 pairs through June at Plum Pt. (J. Gibbons); one June 30 at Gull I., Witless Bay (B. Threlfell); one in late June at Gray Islands (JW); and one July 15–16 at Stephenville (ST). Prince Edward Island is the Gadwall capital of the Region. This season that province had four broods plus probable nestings at 3 other locales (RC). A drake Gadwall June 4–9 at Miquelon furnished the first record for the French islands (RE). Four broods of Am. Wigeon July 16 in a pond at Stephenville Crossing, NF, provided a new breeding site for the province (ST et al.).

Two pairs of Redheads spent the summer at Noonan's Marsh near Borden, PEI, without breeding (RC). Eight to 10 broods of Ring-necked Ducks on Cobb's Pond near Gander, NF, represented an exceptionally high breeding density (BMT). The annual summer concentration of ♂ Greater Scaup at Stephenville Crossing, NF, was up to 45 on July 15 (ST). A 2nd-summer ♂ King Eider June 17–July 5 at Campobello I., NB, was unseasonable but not unprecedented for the southern latitude in the Region (S. Pottle et al.). A ♀ Harlequin Duck on a river at Eddies Cove W., NF, in late June raised hopes of breeding (PL).

One of the finest concentrations of feeding Ospreys to be seen anywhere is at Bellevue Beach, NF, where 25–30 were watched July 19 (BMT et al.). Perhaps a recent immigrant to Newfoundland but now fairly common in suitable habitat is N. Harrier; the province's first actual nest, documented at Shearstown, Conception Bay, was a mere technicality (KM et al.). Maritime breeding bird atlassers found several Red-shouldered Hawks in s.w. New Brunswick as expected (fide BD). Atlassers also discovered several territorial Broad-winged Hawks on Prince Edward Island, proving again that contrary to popular belief this species will cross significant expanses of water (fide RC). Mice populations must have rebounded in coastal Labrador after last year's scarcity, judging by the large numbers of occupied Rough-legged Hawk nests found in areas where they were almost all abandoned in 1988 (JB, DL). One, possibly two, ad. Golden Eagles throughout much of the period in the Nictau-Riley Brook area of New Brunswick raised the exciting possibility of breeding (fide BD).

In this the final year of a 3-year survey of breeding Peregrine Falcons on the Labrador coast, co-sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, Natural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Division, an additional 11 pairs were discovered, bringing the total number of known territorial pairs and/or nests to an impressive 26 in Labrador (JB, DL). A single ad. Peregrine was at Baccalieu I., NF, in late June (JW). There has never been a breeding record for insular Newfoundland. There was success in the Peregrine Falcon restocking program in New Brunswick with two fledged from a nest on a bridge in Saint John and three fledged from a cliffside nest at Fundy Park (fide BD).

**SHOREBIRDS** — Eight Piping Plovers June 2 on an isolated beach on the south coast of Newfoundland may have represented the province's last stronghold of the species (JB). None was found at Cape Freels, NF, where nesting has been reported during the 1980s (fide RB). A Piping Plover June 3 at Isthmus of Miquelon, S.P.M., was a rarity (fide RE). No word on the species came from the other 3 provinces, where it is still found in reasonable although sometimes decreasing numbers. Several Killdeer, including a pair mating, June 10 at Wabush, Labrador, were well north of the expected breeding range of the species (CB).

One of the biggest surprises uncovered by the ongoing

Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas Program has been nesting of Solitary Sandpipers in New Brunswick, well south of the previously known range. This summer New Brunswick's 2nd and 3rd breeding records were established by two almost fully fledged grown juveniles July 7 near Juniper (BD) and two just-fledged juveniles in late June at St. Martins (RW).

There were several noisy Willets July 2 at Sandy Point I., NF, the site of the province's only nesting. Two Willets were seen June 6 & 15 at Grand Barachois, S.P.M., where they are now just annual summer visitors but may soon be breeders (RE). A pair of Upland Sandpipers in a potato field at Lower W. Pubnico, NS, in July raised hopes for a first provincial breeding (RS et al.). Another Upland Sandpiper was at Grand Pré, NS, July 19 (fide PM). A full breeding plumaged black ♂ Ruff July 16–17 was at Brier I., NS (IM), and a ♀ Ruff July 23 was at Cherry Hill Beach, NS (BMy). Wilson's Phalaropes are working at becoming established breeders in New Brunswick; although no nests were found, pairs of adults were seen at Cape Jourmain, Fredericton, and the Lower Saint John River (fide BD). Early southbound sea-faring phalaropes are not often reported; therefore, two Red Phalaropes July 13 in the Cabot Strait, NF (ST), and many Reds and a few Red-necked Phalaropes July 16 off Brier I. (IM) were noteworthy.

There was little comment on numbers or dates of Arctic breeding shorebirds on their return passage in July, suggesting that migration was normal.

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — The capelin spawning season in Newfoundland waters mid-June to mid-July attracts many seabirds within sight of land, including subadult jaegers. This summer's records were of three Parasitic Jaegers June 15 at Grand Barachois, S.P.M. (RE); two Parasitic, four Long-tailed, and six unidentified jaegers June 25 at Southern Avalon Pen., NF (KK, BMT); and 13 Pomarine, six Parasitic, and 13 unidentified jaegers July 11 at Placentia Bay, NF (KE, DW). Two unidentified skuas, one probably a Great Skua, were seen July 11 in Placentia Bay, NF (KE, DW).

An unusual concentration of Laughing Gulls was of three adults and one subadult June 15 at Miquelon, S.P.M. (RE). The only other one reported was a 2nd-summer bird June 18

#### S.A.

A small alcid, seen July 15 in the ocean off a beach near the mouth of the Little Codroy R. in s.w. Newfoundland, flabbergasted Stuart Tingley and an entire Wings tour group when it turned out to be a **Marbled Murrelet!** Apparently healthy and in full breeding plumage, it was well studied as it fed near shore for most of a morning. This was a first for the Atlantic Ocean, but this Pacific Coast alcid has appeared inland in North America several times including Nov. 11, 1979, near Montreal, Quebec, and Sept. 17, 1982, in western Massachusetts. Both of these records were supported by specimens that proved to be of the eastern Siberian race *B.m. perdix*. Racial identification was not determined on the Newfoundland bird. It is anyone's guess as to the route it took to reach the Region.

at Trepassey, NF (fide BMT). Summer Little Gulls are almost annual in the Region, usually from Newfoundland and almost always first-summer birds. A first-summer Little Gull July 11 & 12 at Pt. Verde, NF (KE, DW), fit the pattern nicely. An ad. Little Gull June 23 at Miquelon was a first for St. Pierre et Miquelon (BL). The only known Com. Black-headed Gull colony visited was Sandy Point I., NF, where there was an agitated pair in early June, about par for the last decade (JB). Finally, the gull colony off Bellevue Beach, NF, was searched for breeding Com. Black-headed Gulls, but without any being seen in the area. There were, however, three adults there by July 19 (BMT). Other summer sightings were of two July 11 &

12 at Pt Verde, NF (KE, DW), and an adult July 31 at Dartsmouth, NS (PM).

A precise count of 1100 Ring-billed Gull nests June 17 on an island of Bellevue Beach, NF, made it the 2nd-largest known breeding colony in the province (KK, BMT). The regularly censused Ring-billed Gull colony at Miquelon, S.P.M., had 1155 nests June 17, 20% more than in any of the previous 15 years (RE). No Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported, in contrast to recent summers.

Intriguing was a flock of 45 Caspian Terns, adults and juveniles, resting on a sand bar at Sandy Lake, NF, Aug. 2 (BMT). There are numerous inland summer sightings of singles and pairs of Caspian Terns in the province and inland nesting has long been suspected. This was the first significant inland flock, large even by coastal standards. A check in the nesting season should reveal a Caspian Tern colony on the sand bar or on the adjacent Herring Gull colony. Long overdue in the Region, surprisingly the first **Sandwich Terns** occurred in the far eastern limit of the area: an adult June 7 at Grand Barachois, S.P.M. (AD), and an adult July 19 at Bellevue Beach, NF (ST, BMT). One hundred out of a flock of 350 Arctic Terns resting on the sand at Deadman's Bay, NF, July 23 appeared to be first-summer birds (BMT). Most birds of this age are thought to remain in the S. Hemisphere during our summer. However, a few can be found around most Arctic Tern nesting colonies in Newfoundland, and occasionally a hundred or more where adult Arctic Terns congregate in mid-summer. A **Least Tern** was flushed from floating vegetation by the ferry in the Cabot Strait June 24 (RB). A stray Black Tern June 17 & 18 was at a Common Tern colony on Miquelon, S.P.M. (RE).

Summer Dovekie sightings are treated with suspicion, especially from mid-July onwards when Dovekie-size young Com Murres begin appearing on the ocean. Every summer a few reports of Dovekie come in, mostly from visiting bird-watchers who may be unaware that all which appears to be a tiny alcid is not a Dovekie. This summer there were three Dovekies reported in July, none accompanied by supportive details. Two Thick-billed Murres July 28 near Campobello I., NB, were unseasonal (CD *et al.*).

**DOVES TO WOODPECKERS** — Mourning Doves north of the breeding range were one July 18 at Cowhead, NF (ST), and three July 27 at Wabush, Labrador (F. Phillips). A singing Black-billed Cuckoo July 11 at Chignic, NF, was a rarity for the province (JJ).

Long-eared Owls breed throughout the Maritimes, but owing to their elusive nature, they are proving difficult to find during the Maritime breeding bird atlas project. However, a juvenile was seen July 18 near Plaster Rock, NB (BD). The Atlassing project surprised veteran birdwatchers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick when they discovered a number of calling Boreal Owls this spring. Summer owling efforts turned up more Boreals with one calling June 21 at Stirling, Cape Breton I., NS (Fred Scott) and two calling into June near Kouchibouguac National Park, NB (Greg Bell). More routine, although still a good find, was a Boreal Owl nest in Butterpot Provincial Park, NF (*vide* BMT) and two seen June 25 on Bay d'Espoir highway, NF (RB).

A Common Nighthawk June 3 at Miquelon, S.P.M., was an annual vagrant there, as was Chimney Swift—although five swifts, also on June 3, made an exceptional count (RE, AD). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird July 30 at Glovertown, NF, furnished the only report from that province, where it has bred (RB). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker proved to be the most common woodpecker in n.w. New Brunswick during the breeding season (BD).

**FLYCATCHERS TO WAXWINGS** — Eastern Woodpeewees beyond the known breeding range were one June 3 at Langlade (AD), one July 10 at St. Pierre, S.P.M. (RE), and one singing in suitable breeding habitat July 17 in the Codroy Valley, NF (KK). The Maritime breeding bird atlas project is

revealing the status of Willow Flycatchers. They appear to be locally common in New Brunswick, especially in the Saint John R. valley, where fledged young were seen this summer (RW). The first records for Prince Edward Island were of two singing males June 15 at Hermanville (RT) and an adult carrying food in the western part of the province (D. Sabine). Least Flycatchers were felt to be decidedly scarce in some Nova Scotia atlassing blocks. In s.w. Newfoundland, three singing Least Flycatchers in June represented about the expected number for this as yet unconfirmed breeder (*vide* BMT). There were several reports of E. Phoebe in Prince Edward Island, where a first breeding record is only a matter of time (*vide* BD). Great Crested Flycatchers, as revealed by the Atlas, are well distributed through New Brunswick but mainly just along river valleys in northern parts (BD). Typical Eastern Kingbird records for St. Pierre et Miquelon and Newfoundland were a combined total of 16 in June, but none in July, indicating that they are spring overshoots with no intentions of nesting.

Two hundred fifty juvenile Tree Swallows gathered on Brier I., NS, July 15 were probably on migration (IM). Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported to be in good numbers in at least part of Nova Scotia (BMy). Golden-crowned Kinglets were common, with many family groups in July in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. A few Sedge Wrens were found at 2 locations in New Brunswick: Sackville and near Saint John (*vide* BD). Marsh Wrens are locally common in the Maritimes with the lower Saint John River valley, Sackville area, and now parts of Prince Edward Island holding good numbers (*vide* BD). Singing House Wrens in Nova Scotia were singles at Karsdale June 27 (JJ) and Yarmouth during the last half of June (*vide* BMy).

Eastern Bluebirds are staging a major comeback in the Maritimes. Prince Edward Island had its first breeding records ever (SM). Brian Dalzell, coordinator for the Maritime breeding bird atlas, suggests two reasons for the apparent comeback: the new use of clear-cut forest with minimum ground cover and several standing snags for nesting, and an influx of birds from successful bluebird nest box schemes south of the Region. Gray-cheeked Thrushes were found to be locally common in the highlands of n.w. New Brunswick and several territorial birds were at Englishtown, Cape Breton I., NS (*vide* BD). A Northern Mockingbird June 10 at Wabush, Labrador, was a long way from its usual habitat (CB). Several Brown Thrashers were found in n. New Brunswick including a fledgling being fed by an adult at Edmunston, establishing the northernmost breeding record in the Region (BD). After 2 poor summers for Cedar Waxwing in Newfoundland, this was a very good one. They were not only common in the urban centres, but present in wilderness areas as well. Four made it north to Wabush, Labrador, June 24 (CB). No comments on waxwings were received from the 3 Maritime provinces, where an increase would be less conspicuous since the species is ubiquitous there.

**VIREOS TO FINCHES** — Atlassers are finding Warbling Vireos through New Brunswick, as far north up the Saint John River as Edmundston (*vide* BD). A first summer record for Prince Edward Island was of one singing near Charlottetown (SM). But still there are no summer records for Nova Scotia. Philadelphia Vireos are locally common in balsam poplar stands in n. New Brunswick, but rare in southern New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. One singing in St. Pierre et Miquelon and two in Newfoundland were typical summer totals.

Northern Parulas east of the known breeding range were a singing male June 7 at Langlade, S.P.M. (RE), and one June 27 at Corner Brook, NF (BR). A juv. Pine Warbler being fed by an adult near Juvenile Settlement, NB, extended the known breeding range in the province another 25 miles to the north-east (RW). At the southern edge of their breeding range, Blackpoll Warblers were found to be common in the highlands

of Cape Breton I, NS (BD) Again the atlasing project came up with another interesting tidbit of information, which was that Palm Warblers were practically absent as breeders in n. New Brunswick because of the lack of bogs but common in much of Nova Scotia where bogs are plentiful (BD).

A first-year ♂ Summer Tanager June 5 was a very rare sight at St. Pierre, S.P.M. (AD). A singing, first-year ♂ Indigo Bunting with a female close by feeding a fledged young near Plaster Rock, NB, established the most northerly breeding record for the province of this rare and local bird (BD). Blueberry barrens in the 3 Maritime provinces have proven to be the strongholds of the locally breeding Vesper Sparrows (BD, BMy). Fox Sparrows were found to be more widespread breeders in New Brunswick than previously thought, being present in all suitable habitat in the central and northern highlands (BD).

House Finches are now breeding in Moncton, NB, and a male and female were present at Charlottetown, PEI, but in Nova Scotia the species is still somewhat of a rarity. White-winged Crossbills, the star finches of the last year because of their huge numbers Regionwide, began to fade away over the summer. There was none singing this summer in contrast to

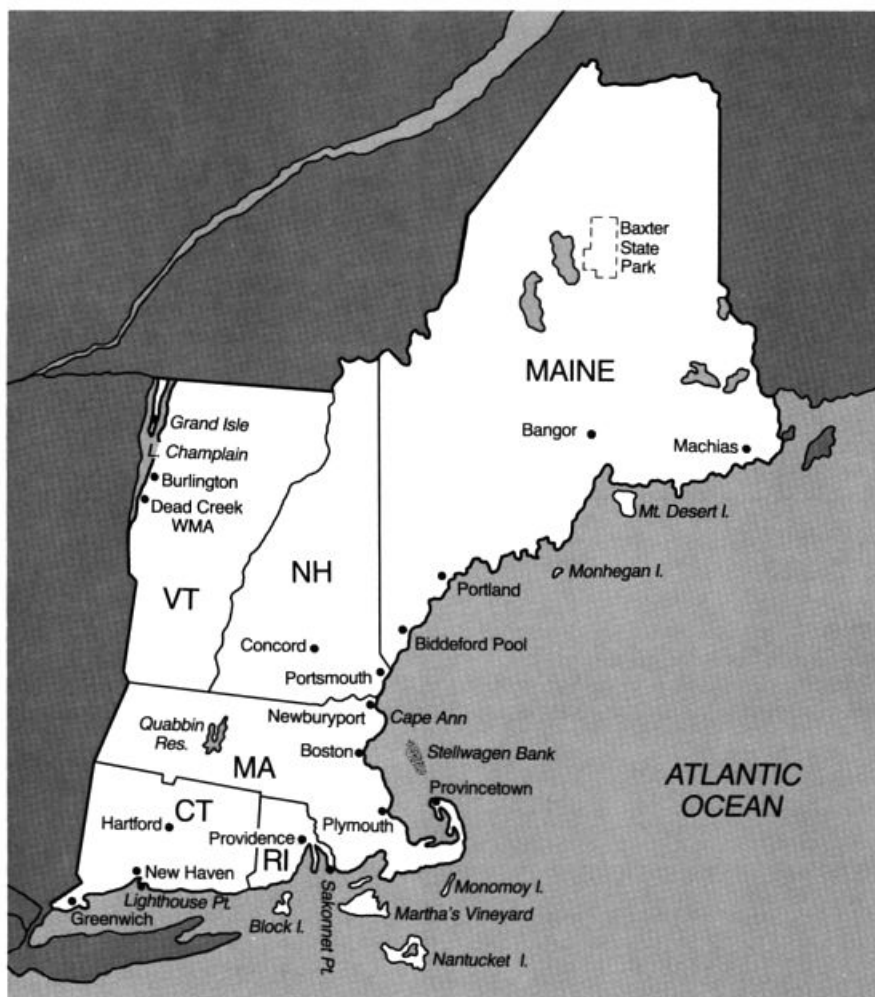
last summer and winter, when the woods rang with song. They were travelling in flocks made up mostly of immatures. Although several flocks of over 200 individuals were reported, most sightings were of small groups. All of the other species of finches were present in fair numbers. Whatever it was that Evening Grosbeaks found so irresistible on a gravel road in northern New Brunswick, it proved to be a fatal attraction for at least 450 that were killed by passing logging trucks (BD).

**ADDENDUM** — A singing ad. ♂ **Black-throated Sparrow** June 5 & 6, 1987, well photographed at Miquelon, St. Pierre et Miquelon was not previously reported in *American Birds* (RE, AD). It is the only record for the Region.

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## NEW ENGLAND REGION

Wayne R. Petersen



**I**n marked contrast to the summer of 1988, early summer 1989 in New England was climatically very nearly normal. In the Boston area, June was ushered in by a rainy spell, with the first half of the month receiving precipitation on all but four days. Despite this, overall rainfall was only .08 inches less than normal while heating degree days exceeded the norm by 26—partly a reflection of

excessive cloudiness and frequent rain and fog early in the month. July continued the seasonal temperatures of June, but greater than normal precipitation triggered a flashback of the second cloudy and wet July in a row.

Precisely how this early summer weather impacted nesting birds was difficult to register, but workers with the Connecticut Wildlife Atlas Program suggested that

early season losses may have been significant, particularly for ground-nesting species and marsh birds. Similarly, Wendy Howes, coordinator of the Western Maine Audubon Bluebird Project, felt that many Eastern Bluebirds' first nesting attempts failed in Franklin County, presumably owing to cold, wet weather in June.

On the positive side of the ledger, real triumphs were gained by several of the Region's endangered species, and the successful breeding of Bald Eagles in Massachusetts has to punctuate one of the more dramatic avian reestablishment stories in New England. Fascinating in a different way was the continued presence throughout June of one to two American Swallow-tailed Kites at Mansfield, Connecticut, along with another in early July in eastern Washington County, Maine. Could it be that such occurrences further highlight the tip of the iceberg hinted at by Blair Nikula in his last Winter Season report, when he speculated on southern species expanding northward in response to global warming?

#### S.A.

Undoubtedly the most incredible record of the season involved the continued presence of one to two **American Swallow-tailed Kites** in Mansfield, CT, June 6-24 (Paula Coughlin, George Clark, Louis Bevier, ph., et al.). The kites were variously seen soaring and pursuing dragonflies over a 19-day period, but no indication of territorial behavior was obtained. Nonetheless, the now regular, if not annual, appearance of Am. Swallow-tailed Kites in s. New England in spring certainly is provocative in light of the species' increase in its southern breeding range. An equally astounding Am. Swallow-tailed Kite occurrence was of a bird perfectly described and photographed at S. Lubec, Washington, ME, July 3 (Alan Strauss). If accepted, this record would only be the 2nd ever for Maine.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — M.V. = Martha's Vineyard, MA; Parker River = Parker River Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MA. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO CORMORANTS** — A count of eight Red-throated Loons at Kennebunk, York, ME, June 3 (JW, JH) was considered both seasonally late and high in number, and another tardy individual was at Chatham, MA, June 6-10 (PT). The breeding picture for Com. Loons in New England continued to be encouraging. In Connecticut, a pair was at a nest in New Hartford July 31, and 2 territorial pairs were near nesting platforms at Barkhamsted Res. (fide DR). Eight pairs of loons in Massachusetts produced eight fledglings, although high water at Quabbin Res. was thought to have hindered success at that site (fide BB). The statewide total for Vermont was of 13 pairs that generated 16 surviving fledglings (fide CR), while in New Hampshire, the statewide loon census produced 467 adults and 70 young (fide DD).

Pied-billed Grebes in Massachusetts gave no indication of confirmed breeding, while in Connecticut, 4 known pairs were showing little sign of success (fide DR). The future breeding status of this species in s. New England appears less than optimistic. An exceptional summer record for Red-necked Grebe was of one at Revere, MA, July 5 (LR), but more intriguing was a report of a bird described as this species said to be in attendance with three young at Lake Wicwas, Meredith, NH, June 5-July 27 (Norman Harris et al., fide DD). A Western Grebe at Crescent Surf Beach, Kennebunk, ME, June 3 (JW, NJ et al.) may very well have represented the latest such Regional sighting ever recorded.

Very unlike last summer's substantial numbers of shearwaters over inshore waters, this season saw only the most

paltry concentrations as reflected by maximum counts of 22 Cory's and 55 Greater shearwaters at Cox's Ledge, RI, June 21 (DF), and four Manx Shearwaters in Cape Cod Bay July 4 (fide B.O.). By contrast, Wilson's Storm-Petrels appeared in more usual concentrations with 2500 off Provincetown, MA, July 1 (fide B.O.) and 1000 at Stellwagen Bank July 2 (JB). A brief census at Penikese I. in Buzzards Bay, MA, revealed that at least 4 pairs of Leach's Storm-Petrels continue to nest at this species' southernmost breeding terminus on the Atlantic coast (TF). Most unaccountable was a well-documented sighting of an *Oceanodroma* storm-petrel seen flying adjacent to Interstate 95 at Richmond, ME, June 17 (PDV). The observer expressly noted several features that suggested the possibility of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, but conservatively left the identification at the generic level.

A wandering Am. White Pelican first reported at Little Compton, RI, July 3 (RB) was presumably the same individual later seen at E. Orleans, MA, July 13 (Tim Williams, fide BN). The continuing increase in Double-crested Cormorants was demonstrated by new colony formation at 2 localities in Connecticut (fide DR) and the first nesting ever of 10 pairs at Martha's Vineyard (fide GBD). At Young I. in L. Champlain, Chris Rimmer expressed concern that the 369 pairs there are beginning to encroach on the island's Black-crowned Night-Heron and Snowy Egret rookery.

**HERONS TO WATERFOWL** — In southern New England, where the species is an uncommon to rare breeder, 266 nesting Great Blue Heron pairs in Massachusetts appeared at 22 sites, mostly in the western counties, and produced 683 fledglings (fide BB). In Rhode Island only 2 breeding localities are known (fide DE). Results of a census conducted at Kettle I., Manchester, MA, June 22 produced the following numbers of pairs: 15 Great and 200 Snowy egrets, 6-10 Little Blue Herons, 25-30 Black-crowned Night-Herons, and 25-30 Glossy Ibises (CL). Other notable Snowy Egret pair counts at Massachusetts colonies included 350 at Middle Brewster I. (JH), 129 at Sampson's I. (SH, WRP), and 30 at M.V. (GBD). Similar tallies for Black-crowned Night-Heron pairs included 450 at Middle Brewster I. (JH) and 119 at Sampson's I. (SH, WRP). The only confirmed breeding Cattle Egrets in the Region were represented by 7 nests counted at Young I., L. Champlain, VT, June 21 (CR). The suspected nesting of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Parker River, MA, was reinforced by a count of four adults June 26 (Bill Drummond, fide B.O.) and an immature noted July 15 (JB).

Most unexpected was a Snow Goose at Bangor, ME, June 27 (RA), and slightly less unusual were single Brant at the Isles of Shoals, NH, June 28 (TA, LH) and at E. Orleans, MA, July 26 (v.o.). For the 2nd summer in a row a pair of N. Shovelers appeared at Easton, Aroostook, ME, July 9 (Melvin Trombley), along with three Am. Wigeons, June 25, but neither species was confirmed breeding as they did in 1988. Several unusual inland waterfowl records included a Greater Scaup at Lakeville, MA, July 1 (WRP); a Com. Eider at Plymouth, Penobscot, ME, July 14 (William Sheehan, fide JD); and a Bufflehead at Pittsfield, MA, June 12 (T. Gola, fide SK). Ever rare and local as a breeder in s. New England, a pair of Red-breasted Mergansers with 10 young at Duxbury Beach, MA, June 30 (DC) was especially noteworthy.

**RAPTORS** — A summary of Osprey nesting success in the Region can only be described as positive. In Connecticut, 52 pairs raised 89 young—a 225% increase since 1969, when that population consisted of only 16 pairs (fide Connecticut Dept. Env. Prot. Wild. Bureau). At 2 Massachusetts localities, 45 pairs fledged 96 young at Westport (fide Gilbert Fernandez) and 51 pairs fledged 83 young at M.V. (fide GBD). Every pair at the latter locality was breeding on artificially erected nesting platforms. In Vermont, of 3 nesting pairs of Ospreys, only one pair was successful (fide CR), while in New Hampshire, 21 pairs fledged 19 young (fide DD). More exciting still was the successful fledging of three Bald Eagles from 2 nests at

Quabbin Res. in c. Massachusetts (*vide* B. Davis). Two additional starter nests were constructed in Massachusetts, one at Quabbin Res. and one at Turner's Falls on the Connecticut R., thus leading to further optimism for the firm establishment of the species as a breeder in the state. A pair of nesting eagles at Lake Umbagog, NH, represented the first such attempt in 40 years. While the pair was unsuccessful on their own, they were successful in fledging a transplanted foster chick (DD).

The discovery in June of Cooper's Hawk nests in s.e. Massachusetts at Touisset (RB) and Middleboro (WRP) was noteworthy for this elusive species. Similarly interesting was a N. Goshawk nest in close proximity to the coast at Little Compton, RI (*vide* DE). The final page in the annals of this season's raptor success story mandates a summary of the Region's Peregrine Falcon population: in Maine, 3 pairs fledged six young (*vide* RA); in New Hampshire, 7 pairs fledged 10 young; in Vermont, 6 nesting pairs fledged six young (*vide* CR); and in Massachusetts, 2 pairs fledged four young (*vide* TF).

**RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS**—Like several other marsh birds in the Region, Com. Moorhens seem to be slowly slipping away as breeders. Hence, the appearance of eight at Berkshire, MA, with two to six at Pittsfield June 2–July 30 (Bob Goodrich, *vide* SK) and two at Egremont June 30 (*vide* SK) was noteworthy. Equally interesting was a Sandhill Crane at Newbury, MA, June 7 (William Drummond).

Piping Plovers, while seemingly teetering on the brink of disaster, continued to show their resiliency as a species. A record 34 pairs nested in Connecticut and fledged 61 young—an increase of 30% from 1988—while in Massachusetts, 137 pairs fledged 196 young (*vide* BB). Of major significance from a management point of view was the fact that out of 53 nests bounded by enclosure nesting fence in Massachusetts, 45 hatched young. American Oystercatchers at the northern terminus of their range in Massachusetts were this year seemingly unable to hold down new breeding beachheads in Boston Harbor and at Duxbury Beach, Plymouth, but a tally of 75 individuals at N. Monomoy I. July 30 (BN) indicated no serious cause for concern. Undoubtedly the most unusual shorebird of the season was an Am. Avocet at Quonochontaug Marsh, RI, June 16 (David Pratt, *vide* DE).

Most notable among the on-time and rather average flight of adult, arctic-breeding shorebirds were records of 471 roosting Whimbrels at N. Monomoy I., MA, July 31 (BN); an early Marbled Godwit at Parker River June 29 (Evelyn Pyburn, *vide* B.O.); a Ruff at S. Monomoy I., MA, July 3 (BN); and a Red Phalarope at Sloop I., Charlotte Chittenden, VT, June 12 (Jeffrey Allen, *vide* V.I.N.S.)—the latter a bird which in reality was probably a tardy northbound migrant. Certainly the most interesting inland shorebird record was of three Whimbrels at Belchertown, Hampshire, MA, July 23 (Scott Surner, *vide* SK). At Pease Air Force Base, Dover, NH, 32 Upland Sandpipers were tallied July 13 (*vide* DD) and in Vermont, 79 were found June 3–11 in 23 out of 33 towns censused (CR). In Massachusetts, six were found at Hanscom Air Force Base, Bedford, June 25 (Josette Carter, *vide* B.O.); and at Bradley Airport, Windsor Locks, CT, three were seen June 22 (JB). While these data are incomplete, they nonetheless suggest the significance of human-managed habitats to Upland Sandpipers, especially in s. New England.

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS**—Two Parasitic Jaegers at S. Beach I., Chatham, MA, June 24 (ML) were hard to account for other than by their proximity to an active tern colony. The apparent inshore scarcity of bait fish meant that even by late July, no jaegers were being seen at the traditional Stellwagen Bank locality off Massachusetts. Laughing Gulls nesting in Massachusetts are now fragmented between 2 colonies, New I., E. Orleans, with 956 pairs, and N. Monomoy I. with 400 pairs (IN). Two imm. Little Gulls at Newburyport, MA, June 7 (SAP, WRP) were the only notable gulls of the early summer.

A northward wandering Gull-billed Tern at Parker River June 22–23 (John Hoye) was eclipsed by a report which, if accepted, would furnish the 2nd state record of **Sandwich Tern** for Maine. The bird in question was well described as it perched 100 feet from the observer at Brunswick, Cumberland, July 27 (Paul Kleinholz, *vide* JD). In inland Massachusetts, unusual Caspian Tern records were provided by single birds at Quabbin Res., Hampshire, June 4 (Bill Davis, *vide* BB) and Boylston, Worcester, June 11 (*vide* BB). The endangered Roseate Tern maintained its Massachusetts stronghold with a total state population of 1576 pairs, over 1400 of which were concentrated at Bird I. in Buzzards Bay (*vide* IN). Productivity was calculated to be the best in 3 years. Common Tern pairs in Massachusetts numbered 9026 (*vide* IN), while the tiny New Hampshire coast boasted 92 pairs (*vide* DD). In Vermont, the L. Champlain colony hovers at ca. 50 pairs (CR) but continues to be plagued by owls, night-herons, and ants—problems seemingly affecting many New England colonies to one degree or another. Least Terns appeared to flourish throughout the Region, especially in Connecticut where 766 pairs fledged 280 young—an increase of 80% over last year (*vide* CT Dept. Env. Prot. Wild. Bureau). At New I., E. Orleans, MA, a pair of Black Skimmers successfully nested for the 2nd year in a row. A most unseasonal Dovekie was seen at point blank range at Pleasant Bay, Washington, ME, on the incredible date of July 14 (Tom Goettel, *vide* JD).

**CUCKOOS TO PIPITS**—While no major influxes of cuckoos were noted, observers in Connecticut commented that Black-billed Cuckoos were up considerably where gypsy moths were present, while locally in c. Massachusetts numbers seemed higher than usual (ML). The reclusive Barn Owl is undoubtedly underreported in s. New England, but at M.V., where virtually all birds breed in artificial nest boxes, 13 pairs were recorded this season (GBD). A remarkably late Snowy Owl appeared June 21 at Westbrook, Cumberland, ME (J. Bradford, *vide* JD), where it was videophotographed and projected on a local evening news broadcast. In the face of documented declines in local Whip-poor-will numbers, it is encouraging to report that a series of summer censuses run along a 7-mile route in the pine-oak barrens of the Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth, Plymouth, MA, produced an impressive maximum tally of 55, June 22 (Glen D'Entremont, *vide* B.O.). Unfortunately, no nesting evidence was obtained for two Red-headed Woodpeckers at Deerfield, MA, June 4 (Tom Gagnon, *vide* SK) and a single territorial male that spent the month of June in suitable habitat at Holbrook, MA (v.o., *vide* B.O.).

Acadian Flycatchers appeared to occupy their regular breeding stations in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, but two at Savoy, Berkshire, MA, June 29–July 3 were altitudinally out of place (Ron Rancatti, *vide* SK). Further evidence of the expansion of Willow Flycatchers in Maine was provided by two birds along the Sebasticook River, Cambridge, Somerset, ME, July 16 (Jay Pinchbeck, WRP)—the same area where a pair was located in 1988. Yet another strike against the indiscriminate use of off-road vehicles comes when one reflects on Jim Berry's comment concerning the loss of a Bank Swallow colony at Rowley, MA, possibly as a result of ORV overuse.

Of all the passerines in s. New England, few are currently enjoying the population explosion exhibited by Carolina Wrens. In Connecticut, the species is continuing to increase and expand (*vide* DR), while at Cape Cod, MA, they were described as being "all over the place" (BN), and a breeding confirmation at Ipswich, Essex, MA, in July (JB) was described as the first in years. One can only speculate on the activities of a single bird at Kennebunk Beach, York, ME, June 30 (June Ficker, *vide* JD). The rare and erratic Sedge Wren again made mid-summer appearances when three showed up in Kennebunk, ME, July 27–31 (PDV, JW *et al.*) and two at Hadley, MA, July 17–31 (Henry Allen, *vide* SK). A wandering individual

was also seen at Southwick, MA, June 1-3 (SK)

Golden-crowned Kinglets continued to occupy nesting stations in at least 2 spruce plantations in e. Massachusetts, one at Ipswich (JB) and the other at Lakeville (WRP). Eastern Bluebirds showed increased population gains this summer, despite some early season weather setbacks, and at least 950 pairs were estimated to exist in Connecticut (fide DR). A representative concentration in Massachusetts was of 15-18 pairs using boxes along the High Ridge Bluebird Trail in Gardner and Westminster, Worcester (BB), where 53 bluebirds were tallied in Westminster, June 17 (RS). For the 3rd summer in a row, tantalizing reports of one to two Water Pipits came from Mt. Washington, NH (C.L. Barber, B. Duff, fide DD), strongly suggesting the possibility of local nesting, which would extend considerably the southernmost breeding outpost presently in n. Maine.

**VIREOS TO FINCHES** — White-eyed Vireos north of s. New England were at Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, ME, June 5 (Kay Gammons, fide JD) and n. of Franconia Notch at Sugar Hill, NH, July 21 (fide DD). Five reports of "Brewster's" Warblers in w. Massachusetts (fide SK) and two reports of "Lawrence's" Warblers in the eastern part of the state (fide B.O.) not only underlined the extent of gene flow within local Golden-winged and Blue-winged warbler populations, but also eclipsed the total number of reported Golden-winged Warblers Regionwide. A typical early southward movement of adult Tennessee Warblers was shown by three reports in w. Massachusetts in July (fide SK), and Bay-breasted Warblers at Chatham June 30 (W. Bailey, fide B.O.) and Northampton July 15 (T. Gagnon, fide SK) may also properly belong in this category. Cerulean Warblers at long last consolidated their breeding range in Massachusetts when two males and two

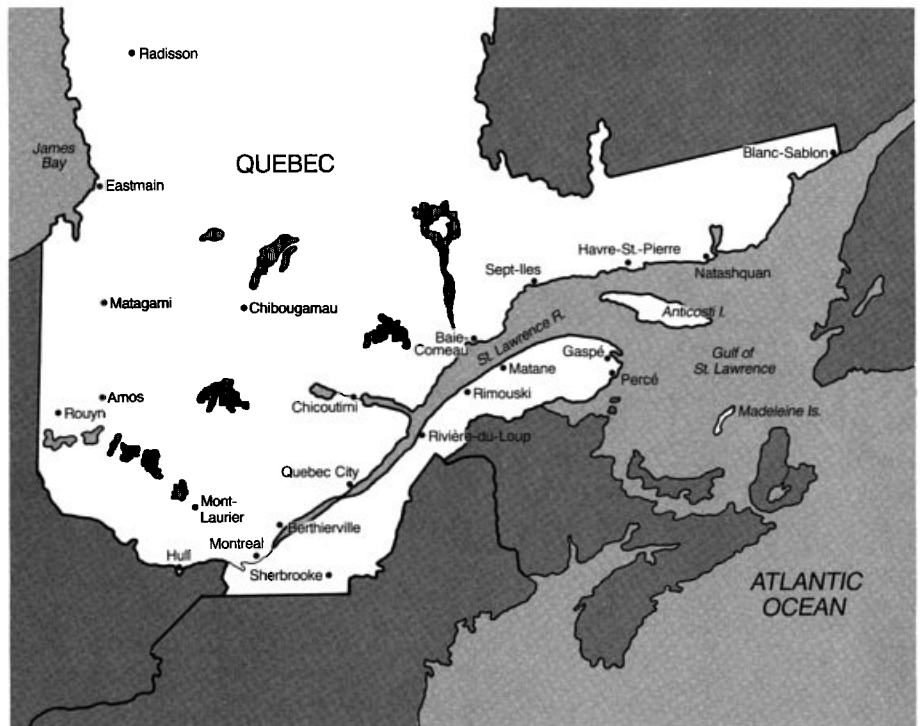
fledglings were found at Petersham, Worcester, July 2-9 (D'Ann Brownrigg, WRP, v.o.). Up to three other Ceruleans were present at s. Quabbin Res. June 1-July 23 (ML), and one was quite unusual at Webster, NH, June 15 (B. & H. Janeway, fide DD). A perfectly described ♂ Prothonotary Warbler at Swans I., Hancock, ME, July 8 (John Murname, fide JD) was inexplicable. Intensive field work in n. Berkshire and Franklin, MA, produced 34 reports of Mourning Warblers in June and July, the maximum being 12 at Hancock July 8 (Ron Rancatti, fide SK). These figures easily exceed historical nesting season totals in the n. Berkshire hills.

A Blue Grosbeak at Monhegan I., ME, June 7 (P. Richards, fide JD) was seasonally unusual, as were two to three Clay-colored Sparrows at the Kennebunk Plains, York, ME, June 1-21 (JW, PDV). How long will it be before this species breeds in the Region? A particularly anomalous New Hampshire sighting involved an ad. ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird at N. Hampton, June 17 (ph. Hazel Bower, fide DD). Early rumblings of a possible White-winged Crossbill invasion were indicated by hundreds seen at Monhegan I., ME, July 28 (JN); 60 at Scarborough, Cumberland, July 30 (JD); and 75 at Florida, MA, July 27 (CQ).

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## QUEBEC REGION

Yves Aubry,  
Michel Gosselin, and  
Richard Yank



This summer was characterized by clear, warm weather across most of the Region. The absence of severe storms should have provided excellent breeding conditions for most species. In June, thermometers in several northern localities recorded new all-time highs for any month of the year. Conditions in the southern one-

half of the province were closer to normal. Only one small area of southwestern Quebec received above-average rainfall. July weather continued fair, with every station recording higher than normal hours of sunshine. Precipitation levels were well below normal. Montreal, for example, reported only one-third of typical rainfall. The Gaspé

Pennisula, where total rainfall was more than twice the long-term mean, provided a notable exception. Temperatures in July were above average in the south and near normal in the north.

**GREBES TO DUCKS** — On the Magdalen Is., the isolated breeding population of Horned Grebes appears stable if we compare the 41 counted at Pointe de l'Est July 18 (PFe) with the 40 or so found at the same site in 1956 (see *Naturaliste can.*, 88:166–224). First recorded in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1972, Manx Shearwaters were not noted until 1985 in the Estuary, where they have since occurred annually between late July and mid-September. This year, ferry crossings out of Matane produced one on the early date of June 22 (JPO, ML) and up to nine July 25–28 (JPO, ML, v.o.). Intriguing was the report of one off Cliff I., July 26 (GCh, PBr), during a C.W.S. survey of the Sainte-Marie Is. seabird colonies. An ad. N. Gannet was surprising at Cap-Tourmente July 29 (RBA), as most that wander up the St. Lawrence R. do so in fall. A vagrant **American White Pelican** paused on the Sorel Is. June 5–18 (JLD, v.o.). Particularly rare in summer were single ad. Little Blue Herons at Baie-du-Febvre June 20 (MSo) and Etang-du-Nord June 28–July 14 (BL, v.o.), while another ad. Little Blue Heron at Cacouna June 2 (JPO, ML) and a Glossy Ibis at Katevale June 7 (DP) were carry-overs from the spring invasion.

Seldom noted in mid-summer, a ♀ Eur. Wigeon was reported at Rimouski July 11 (GG) and a male was observed at I. du Moine July 25 (CS, MBr). Local concentrations of Harlequin Ducks can be found along the Gaspé Pen. in summer. A census conducted by the C.W.S. of the 20 km of shoreline from Port-Daniel to Newport found 52 birds June 6 (*fide* ABt), while 55 had assembled at Bonaventure I. May 30 (ND, MR, PDr). South of their nesting range were three male and one ♀ Surf Scoters on L. Rouvray June 12 (MH). A pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes at R. aux Bouleaux, e. of Sept-Îles, July 8 (BDe, CB) supplied further evidence of possible breeding in s. Quebec. Four pairs of Ruddy Ducks produced at least 2 broods at Baie-du-Febvre this summer (*fide* DJ) and a pair also remained at Saint-Pascal through July (JPO, ML).

**VULTURES TO TERNS** — Two noteworthy concentrations of Turkey Vultures were reported: 13 at Brompton L. June 7 (DL) and up to 31 roosting on L. Memphrémagog July 10 (*fide* PDe). A ♂ Sharp-shinned Hawk was observed transporting nesting material on Cap-aux-Meules I., June 24 (PFe), thus providing the first evidence of breeding on the Magdalen Is. In mid-July, three young Cooper's Hawks fledged from a nest discovered earlier in a pine plantation near Huntingdon (PBa). Locally rare was a Red-shouldered Hawk at Saint-Fabien June 29 (GG).

A displaced Sandhill Crane was sighted at Bic June 14 (PBr), but the behavior of a pair near La Sarre June 13 (PM) suggested local nesting. Somewhat e. of its usual spring migration route was a well-described Lesser Golden-Plover in alternate plumage on I. aux Coudres June 2 (CC, GSa). The most surprising report of the season was of a **Common Ringed Plover** studied at Cacouna July 27–28 (JPO, ML, GG). The bird was directly compared with a nearby group of Semipalmated Plovers from which it differed by its call, broader breast band, and more prominent supercilium. On May 24, a Killdeer nest was discovered at Attikuan Pt., along James Bay (AR), further documenting the gradual northward range expansion of this plover.

A nesting pair of Solitary Sandpipers was observed on L. Morin in Laurentides P.P. June 21 (SB, GSa), at the southern limit of their range. While the Willet regularly breeds on Prince Edward Island, it is still considered an uncommon visitor to the Magdalen Is.; however, a pair in nuptial display at Havre-aux-Basques June 17 (FS) suggested that the species may now be extending its range. A pair of Upland Sandpipers accompanied young at Amos July 19 (DD), furnishing the first sighting and first breeding record for *Abitibi*. Other isolated

nesting sites beyond the northern edge of the species' normal range are at Jonquière and Mont-Joli. At least two were present at the latter location June 21 (RBu). Rare but regular migrants included a Marbled Godwit that reached Rivière-Brochu June 13 (BDe), a black-morph Ruff that enlivened Havre-aux-Basques July 29–30 (FS, PFe *et al.*), and a basic-plumaged **Curlew Sandpiper** found on I. aux Coudres June 3 (DT).

A Pomarine Jaeger was farther up the St. Lawrence than usual at Beauport June 2 (CM), an ad. Parasitic appeared inland at Saint-Louis-de-Blandford June 11 (GO), and an ad Long-tailed Jaeger was viewed from shore at Cacouna June 13 (JPO). These early June jaeger reports correlate with the now well-documented overland migration of Arctic Terns. Visiting larids included single Laughing Gulls at Rimouski June 2 (GG), Les Escoumins June 16 (YB, NT, ABd), and Hull the same day (BDi); an ad. Franklin's Gull at Aylmer June 6 (BDi), and single Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Rivière-Portneuf June 4 (CG, JI, Abd) and Cap-Chat June 18 (JPO, ML). Three ad Little Gulls that summered at Baie-du-Febvre (*fide* DJ) were of particular interest as this site offers habitat potentially suitable for nesting. The Region's first **Sandwich Tern** was a well-described adult found at Havre-aux-Basques July 16 (PFe, BL *et al.*). Two days later, Fradette observed what was likely the same bird at nearby Pointe de l'Est. These sightings were part of a larger movement into e. Canada (see Atlantic Provinces report).

**DOVES TO THRUSHES** — A pair of Mourning Doves apparently bred successfully at Kuujuaq for the first time (*fide* GSe). On June 3, lone Boreal Owls called at L. Ministuk, where one was reported in May, and L. Nixon (BDt, SLa)—both in Laurentides P.P.—while an adult was photographed at Rivière-du-Loup July 30 (AT). Single Three-toed Woodpeckers sighted at Fleurimont June 12 (PP *et al.*) and Auclair June 24 (JC, DK) were well s. of their known summer range. Unexpected in the St. Lawrence lowlands were singing Yellow-bellied Flycatchers at Senneville June 14 and Covey-Hill June 27 (PBa). Observers uncovered Willow Flycatchers at several new sites this summer: singles were noted at Brompton-Gore June 7 (DL), Lanoraie June 18 (CS), and La Pocatière June 21 (CA, CR). The Magdalen Islands' first Great Crested Flycatcher was reported at Grande-Entrée June 16 (BM), while a W. Kingbird was reported at Saint-Eusèbe June 18 (MBe).

Bank Swallows extended their breeding range to Kuujuaq, where abandoned nests were discovered in late summer (GSe). The only remnant of last winter's Carolina Wren invasion was a singing male at Mascouche into July (JGG), while two Sedge Wrens were n. of their normal range at Maniwaki June 14 (GB). An extralimital Blue-gray Gnatcatcher present at Cap-Tourmente July 29 (RBA) was of interest, as the species could well be found to nest at this location, where it has often been encountered in migration. Eastern Bluebirds have now re-colonized all of their historical range. One reached Forillon N.P. July 18 (RQ), and a nest was found along the Wabano R., n. of Gouin Res., July 14 (YA).

**VIREOS TO FINCHES** — The breeding status of Solitary Vireo on the Magdalen Is. was finally confirmed with the discovery of a nest at Havre-Aubert June 17 (FS). Elsewhere, five singing males at Covey-Hill June 22 (PBa) were unusual for the St. Lawrence lowlands. A "Brewster's" Warbler was a good find at Leslie L. July 30 (TB), as was a singing Pine Warbler at La Sarre June 13 (PM) that furnished the first *Abitibi* record. A pair of Cerulean Warblers was building a nest at Philipsburg May 22 (GL, DT). The continued loss of mature deciduous forest is of great concern with regard to the future status of this warbler in s. Quebec.

As a result of better coverage, Clay-colored Sparrows were found in unprecedented numbers. In addition to those reported during the spring, a total of five birds was found at 4 sites in w. Quebec between June 12 and July 2: Hull (DSH), Fort-Coulonge (PH), Montcerf (GB), and L. Diablotin (MA) At



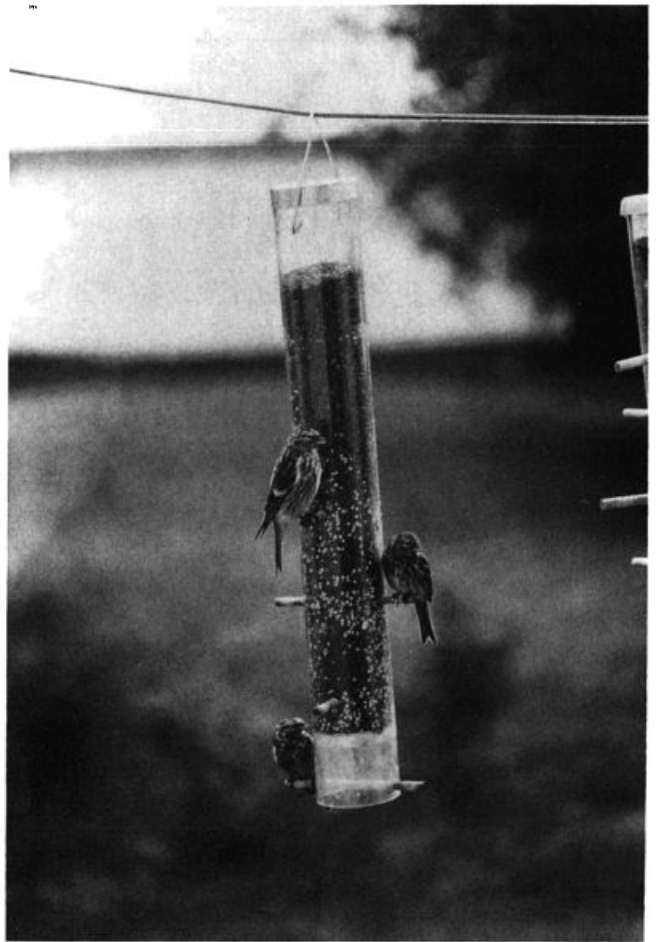
A presumed hybrid Com. Yellowthroat x Mourning Warbler was found at Sherbrooke June 1 (DL); it was netted and photographed the following day (FS, PFr). This hybrid combination has previously been described by Bledsoe (*Wilson Bull.*, 100:1-8) from a Connecticut specimen in first basic plumage. The Sherbrooke bird was apparently in alternate plumage and differed from the one illustrated by Bledsoe mainly in details of head markings, which may be partly explained by the difference in season. The bill, head, lower breast, and belly colorations matched those of a Mourning Warbler, while the song was that of a Com. Yellowthroat. The mixture of black and gray facial markings was somewhat intermediate between the two species, and throat coloration (where lies the main difference between the two species) was completely white. The bird was assumed to be a male, as it sang like a Com. Yellowthroat and seemed to be defending a territory in willow/alder shrubbery. Flight pursuits between the hybrid and a ♂ Com. Yellowthroat were witnessed.—F. Shaffer, P. Fragnier, D. Lepage.

L. Saint-Jean, one called in a young jack pine plantation near Saint-Prime (CG, MSa), and in the Chicoutimi area a total of three birds was noted at Saint-Honoré (FG *et al.*) and Saint-Nazaire (NT). First recorded as a western vagrant in 1960, this sparrow has so far remained a rare breeder, with only one regularly occupied site at Saint-Colomban. A survey of suitable habitat in s.w. Quebec uncovered 15 sites harboring no fewer than 36 Grasshopper Sparrows in Pontiac (PH)—12 of these sites being previously unknown. In contrast, a search of the Montreal area failed to produce any new sites. A rare Henslow's Sparrow, the first since 1985, was discovered in a hayfield near Huntingdon June 19 (PBa). The bird remained until early July when the field was mowed. Well e. of its normal range was a Le Conte's Sparrow at Saint-Raphaël July 4-5 (RL). Two singing ♂ Fox Sparrows at Mitchinamécius Res. July 6 (PBa) were s. of their usual summer haunts.

Lone W. Meadowlarks were noted at Mont-Joli July 1 (GD, DL, SLe, NT) and Gracefield July 8-22 (GB, m.ob.). The Magdalen Is., having recorded their first Yellow-headed Blackbird in late May, produced two males at Anse de l'Étang du Nord July 3-10 (AMO *et al.*). Yet another brightened Saint-Augustin, Portneuf, June 4 (PP). A first-year ♂ Orchard Oriole observed at Hudson June 8 (RP) represented the only report of the year for this rare spring and early summer visitor. Up to six Red Crossbills were observed at Saint-Honoré June 5-12 (FG, LI), including at least one recent fledgling. This constitutes the first breeding record for the Saguenay region. A flock of 35 Red Crossbills on Havre-Aubert I. July 25 (PM) also hinted at a certain local abundance. There were strong indications that Com. Redpolls bred in the Saguenay region this summer—an unprecedented event. A single adult was noted at L. Lévesque in Laurentides P.P. June 6 (GSa), and an ad. female came to an Alma feeder June 1 (CG, MSa). Subsequently, from June 19 to July 1, up to seven juveniles frequented the same feeder. On June 23, a juvenile was also observed at L. Mistigouèche (JMG) on the Gaspé Pen., and an adult was found at Havre-Aubert July 15 (PM). The species has been known to breed in the latter 2 areas.

**ADVENTIVES** — A Monk Parakeet was found at Sainte-Foy July 30 (MAL).

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*Juvenile Common Redpolls at Alma, Quebec, June 27, 1989. If these birds were hatched nearby, they would represent the first local breeding record. Photograph/Michel Savard.*

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# HUDSON- DELAWARE REGION

William J. Boyle, Jr.,  
David A. Cutler, and  
Robert O. Paxton

The wettest May of the century was followed by rain and rain again this summer. Although amounts varied, the entire Region experienced an abnormally wet June. Rochester had twice its normal monthly rainfall. Dutchess County, New York, had only six dry days. July was still wet in the south of this Region, but dry in parts of upstate New York.

Delays in spring migration were conspicuous in June. An exceptional number of migrants arrived late or lingered south of normal breeding areas. We learned of a lot of nests flooded out, but the picture was not all bad. Even some ground nesters, such as the Wild Turkeys in the Unami Creek Valley, near Sumneytown, Pennsylvania (B & NM), managed good broods. Hawk Mountain researchers studied Ovenbird productivity, and found that although more territories were deserted than usual, pairs that continued on territory had average success (LG). It was fish-eating birds and those vulnerable to high water levels that suffered most (see Osprey, terns, Black Skimmer, Louisiana Waterthrush). Abundant food sources permitted many passerines to rear two or even three broods (JPT).

The tanker President Rivera spilled 500,000 gallons of #6 heavy crude oil into the Delaware River July 1. Fortunately, unlike the situation in Prince William Sound, Alaska, where Exxon was totally unprepared, the authorities were able to contain the spill rapidly before it reached the great heronry at Pea Patch Island, near Edgemoor, Delaware. Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research, in Newark, Delaware, reported about 132 dead birds, mostly Canada Geese, and Laughing Gulls were showing up with oiled bellies two weeks later (HTA).

This season we had very interesting news about colonial waterbirds, gull and tern extravaganzas at Cape May and Braddock Bay, raptors, and a few stellar rarities (two White-winged Terns, a possible Greater Golden-Plover, Painted Bunting). We know, however, that many significant developments in the nesting season are escaping us. Here is the solution for readers who don't find everything they would like in this column. Please SEND A NOTE NEXT AUGUST TO YOUR SUB-REGIONAL COMPILER (see list below). Cover June and July only, because the *American Birds* nesting season does not include August, unlike your state journal. And don't wait until your state journal's deadline, because its summer report will reach us after we have gone to press. List things in AOU order. Don't mention only rarities. Hard figures are especially valuable. The best possible evidence is comparison over a number of years of breeding bird census data, or long-running June big days or Summer Bird Counts. Our old standby Summer Bird Count in southern Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, compares its totals each June with



a running ten-year average (RMS). We sense that dramatic changes are going on (often for the worse) with a number of familiar species, but our mail just doesn't bring us enough information to discuss them intelligently.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Bombay Hook = Bombay Hook Nat'l Wildlife Ref., near Smyrna, DE; Braddock Bay = Braddock Bay W.M.A. and vicinity, Rochester, NY; Brig = Brigantine Unit, Edward P. Forsythe Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Atlantic, NJ; Del. D.N.R.E.C. = Delaware Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control; Green Lane = Green Lane Reservoir, Montgomery, PA; H.M. = Hackensack Marshes, between E. Rutherford and Kearny, Bergen and Hudson, NJ; J.B.W.R. = Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York City; L.I. = Long Island, NY; Little Creek = Little Creek Wildlife Area, near Dover, DE; N.J.D.F.G.W. = New Jersey Dept. of Fish, Game, and Wildlife; N.Y.D.E.C. = New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation; S.C.M.M. = South Cape May Meadows, Cape May, NJ. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO ANHINGA** — Along with the usual scattered Com. Loons in basic plumage summering on the coast, several remained late in alternate plumage, including one to mid-June at Muddy Run, Drumore, Lancaster, PA (RMS), and two or three into July at Shinnecock Inlet, L.I. (RMS). These and five or six Red-throated Loons summering there were "truly exceptional" (ES).

Errant Am. White Pelicans continued to show up all over, as in the spring. There must have been two in s. New Jersey to account for observations the same day, June 2, in the pine barrens at L. Atsion, Wharton State Forest, Burlington (GA), and on the Delaware R. at Jakes' Landing, Cape May (CS). One of these could account for the frequent observations around Bombay Hook-Port Mahon, DE, in July. What must have been still another was seen over the Queens, N.Y.C., end of the Throg's Neck Bridge July 1 (J. & E. Caspers) and nearby in the H.M. July 4-5 (BMo, D & KK). This season's Brown Pelican invasion reversed the upward trend of the previous 5 summers. The highest count was of only about 80 in their preferred roost, Hereford Inlet, Cape May, NJ, July 18 (P & CS). Only a few reached Long Island where the best

count known to us was of 12 headed east past Long Beach, Nassau, July 6 (M.L. Silverberg).

Although no new Double-crested Cormorant colonies were known to us, upstate New York colonies continued to swell (they seemed about the same on Long Island and around New York City, RD). The thriving colony at Little Galloo I., on L. Ontario, Jefferson, NY, grew another 30% to over 3500 pairs (JS, BM). The complaints of fishermen grew louder, although their fears of competition for game fish are probably unjustified. Cormorants on the Great Lakes eat mostly alewives (BM). Cormorants could be found summering almost everywhere in this Region, even on small bodies of water (KLC). Wanderers reached such inland sites as Green Lane (BLM) and Amity L., Allegany, NY (VP); they were "all over" Cattaraugus L., NY (SWE). An Anhinga was reported remarkably far north over the New Jersey Turnpike near Woodbridge, Middlesex (PBa).

**HERONS TO WATERFOWL** — This season we have the results of a periodic aerial census by the N.J.D.F.G.W. of colonial waterbirds in New Jersey (DJ) and some preliminary projections based on the 4th annual census of colonial waterbirds conducted on Long Island by the N.Y.D.E.C., the Nature Conservancy, and the Seatuck Research Program (RD). Most heron populations seemed approximately stable. Although there was some local movement among colonies, declines in one area seemed to be compensated for in others. The biggest Regional change has been the total disappearance of the huge colony of over a thousand Cattle Egrets, plus some Snowy and Great egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons, at Rookery I., near Washington Boro, Lancaster, PA, which was abandoned during the breeding season in 1988 and has not been reoccupied (RMS). At this point we do not know whether human disturbance or pollution or some other factor is to blame.

Cattle Egrets showed clearer evidence of a trend than any other heron species, and the trend was down. Western Long Island's small population has dropped steadily for 4 years, and the New Jersey aerial census results were the smallest since the counts began in 1977. This relatively recent invader, which seemed in the 1960s preparing to cover the earth, may now be pulling back. Black-crowned Night-Heron colonies are too volatile to draw firm conclusions. They were doing well on Long Island, where they have increased steadily for 4 years and an old colony was reactivated this year on Fire Island (RD). They were "way down" in New Jersey (DJ), and the sometime colony on the upper Susquehanna R. at Pittston, Luzerne, PA, is defunct (WR). Some of the Black-crowned Night-Herons from Rookery I. may have relocated to a new colony at Manheim, Lancaster, PA [fide RMS]. A new colony of 40 birds at Webb-Royce Swamp, Essex, NY, with one or 2 nests, may have consisted of birds that left Island B of the Four Brothers Is., L. Champlain, after a predator—probably a fox—got on the island (JMCP).

Only two wandering imm. White Ibises showed up, one at Goshen Landing, Cape May, NJ, June 2 (MF), and another around Bombay Hook in late July (APE, JKM, HFS, B. Tanney). Glossy Ibises have increased a bit on L.I. over the last 4 years, and a nest on N. Huckleberry I., in Long Island Sound, was the first for Westchester, NY (TWB). A concentration of 800 Glossy Ibises at Port Mahon, DE, July 10 (DS) was evidence of this species' prosperity.

After many years of summer observations, a Com. Merganser was seen June 3 with a chick on the Susquehanna R. near Muddy Run, Lancaster, PA. This confirmation extended the known breeding range south about 80 mi (RMS). On the Delaware R., they were present south of the traditional s. limit at the Delaware Water Gap, in Warren, NJ (GH).

**RAPTORS TO RAILS** — A pair of Black Vultures with a chick near Easton, Northampton, near the Delaware Water Gap, July 15 (A. Koch) extended the known breeding limit northward in e. Pennsylvania. The number of active Osprey nests bounded upward again. Efforts to reestablish inland

breeding by hacking had gratifying results again in e. Pennsylvania, where the number of fledged young has been "going up exponentially" since the first young Osprey in years was fledged there in 1986. Twelve chicks fledged there in 6 successful nests (L. Rymon). Nesting was successful for the first time in w. New York, where hacking began in 1985; chicks were fledged this year at Allegany Res., Cattaraugus (BL, N.Y.D.E.C.), adding to already-established populations in c. New York, the Adirondacks, and Long Island. On Long Island, while the number of active Osprey nests increased from 164 to 185, only 172 were fledged, possibly because of exposure to bad weather (MS). The new pair at J.B.W.R. advanced to egg-laying this year, but nothing hatched (CP). Ospreys did well also in the lower bays area of Delaware, where 64 active nests produced 72 young, the 3rd most productive year since the Del. D.N.R.E.C. began intensive study in 1978 (JTh).

Mississippi Kites continued in evidence around Cape May into early June. As many as six were reported there June 3 (CS, VE), and the last two as late as June 11 (RJB, J. Peachey). More unusually, a subad. Mississippi Kite was seen repeatedly around Budd L., Morris, late June through July (D. Freeland, B. Huenemann, C. Kelly), for one of the very few north New Jersey records. Even farther afield, a subadult was reported from Braddock Bay June 7 & 18 (FN).

Bald Eagles had their most successful breeding season since efforts began to reestablish a nesting population by hacking. Nine occupied nests, 7 of them active, fledged a remarkable 10 young in New York, the 2nd consecutive 100% increase (P. Nye, N.Y.D.E.C.). New Jersey still had only one productive nest, in Cumberland. After its natural offspring died, the pair successfully raised a chick brought in from Maryland. The encouraging news from New Jersey was that 4 other pairs built nests (LN, N.J.D.F.G.W.), holding out the promise of more productive sites next year. Delaware slipped from 6 active nests to 5, but they fledged eight young, by far the best productivity since the Del. D.N.R.E.C. began intensive study in 1978 (JTh). In Pennsylvania, 3 nests along the Susquehanna in York, Lancaster, and Dauphin produced three young, the first successful nests there since 1948 (RMS). Floating birds were too widespread to enumerate. A Sharp-shinned Hawk nest near Tom's River, Ocean, NJ, was unusually far south on the coastal plain (DS). Cooper's Hawks continued their resurgence in the New Jersey Pine Barrens (CS). Peregrine Falcon sites increased in New York to 5 in the Adirondacks and 7 around New York City, 3 of them on buildings (including a new pair on the Riverside Church, a few dozen yards

#### S.A.

The new Peregrine population's propensity for bridges may be a poor strategy. Three bridge sites near Philadelphia seem to have produced only one viable young. One fledgling was recovered by a fisherman from the river, confirming the suspicion that some bridge site young have died this way. Three young died of trichomoniasis, a flagellate protozoan infection transmitted by pigeons, and the young male rescued from the river also died of this disease later when it was almost ready to fledge. Some young have been killed by traffic at bridge sites. Bridge sites may not produce enough young to replace the adults that breed on them (DB, EF, S. Lipschutz).

from where this column is being written), and 4 on major bridges. New Jersey had 10 active pairs, 6 of which were known to have fledged young. Three of them were on bridges, and most others on hacking towers in the coastal marsh. The pair on the Golden Nugget Casino in Atlantic City continued its lucky streak. A survey of traditional Delaware Water Gap nesting sites failed to reveal any reoccupation of such wild sites of pre-DDT days.

Spruce Grouse reports from the Adirondacks, including feathers found at Ferd's Bog, n. Hamilton, in June (JMCP) and

a male photographed July 6 (G. Lee), were encouraging. Wild Turkeys continued to thrive, even in the interior Adirondacks of Franklin, NY, far from any introduced populations (JMCP).

A calling Black Rail was present again at Oak Beach Marsh, L.I., the species' northern outpost in this Region (T. Lauro). A survey of 19 calling males in 4 colonies on the Delaware Bay shore of Cape May, NJ, found that they called most actively from late April until about May 10, and then dropped off dramatically. If this turns out to be normal behavior, many Black Rail censuses have taken place too late for best results. The most favored habitat was the upper edge of the marsh, at the beginning of woody vegetation, an area often lost to development. This study refrained from taping, in order to avoid disturbing the birds (DW, PK).

**SHOREBIRDS** — The shorebird picture was strongly influenced by the heavy rain. High water levels wiped out shorebirding at some traditional inland localities such as Green Lane. On the other hand, some inland rain pools were good, such as a farm pond at Amenia, Dutchess, which had five species of shorebird in June, including a Wilson's Phalarope June 1 (DFI, MY). Exceptional rain pools at the upper edge of the beach at Jones Beach S.P. and Cedar Beach, L.I., produced concentrations of gulls and shorebirds. The most easily viewed great concentrations, as usual, were at drawn-down ponds near the sea, such as at J.B.W.R. (after mid-July when drainage problems were cured) and at Bombay Hook. A number of unusually late lingering shorebirds in June almost coincided with early fall arrivals. Southbound shorebirds built up large concentrations early, and numerous juveniles beginning to appear at the end of this season suggested that it had been a good breeding season in the arctic (AM).

Piping Plover survival as a breeder in this Region depends now on active protection measures. Protection worked well

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Intense excitement and controversy were generated by a golden plover in breeding plumage at Bombay Hook July 23-27 (W. Clark, ABr, m.ob., ph. H. Rufe) whose specific identity is still under study. The continuous band of white down the neck and sides to white undertail coverts seems to rule out the expected American form of Lesser Golden-Plover. Opinion differed sharply about whether the axillaries and underwing-coverts were white (indicating Greater Golden-Plover of Europe) or gray (indicating the Pacific Golden-Plover, *Pluvialis fulva*, which may be either a race of Lesser Golden-Plover or a separate species). Stocky build and rather short wings that extended only to the tip of the tail at rest pointed toward Greater, and this was the majority opinion. A distant but recognizable form is now under study in Britain, California (where *fulva* winters sparingly), and the Canadian Maritime Provinces where Greater Golden-Plover has occurred annually in the last 4 springs, perhaps overshooting in migration from Ireland to Iceland (see AB 42:408).

in Delaware, where the tiny vestige of a nesting population raised no young last year because of human disturbance. This year, a Del. D.N.R.E.C. program of snow fencing, temporary wardens, and school involvement permitted 3 nests near Indian R. Inlet to produce eight chicks, seven of which fledged. One nest was destroyed by grackles (JTh, APE). The New Jersey and Long Island populations were estimated at just slightly above last year's 105 and 168 pairs, respectively, thanks to the protection offered by posted tern colonies. A bitterly contested measure to restrict beach buggy access to the Breezy Pt. unit of Gateway National Seashore, New York City, permitted an increase from six to 20 fledglings this summer (D. Riepe); in New Jersey, the entire point at Holgate, Atlantic, has been closed to all visitors.

For the 2nd summer in a row, an Am. Avocet got all the

way to the Great Lakes, this time to L. Ontario at El Dorado Beach Preserve, Jefferson, NY, July 11 (JS). Black-necked Stilts, which have nested at Bombay Hook for the past decade, have made another important leap northward. A nest at Broadkill Beach was the first in Sussex, DE (J. Aull, G. O'Shea, APE). Even more remarkable was the successful nesting of at least 2 pairs at the Philadelphia sewage ponds (EF, J. Miller, B. Stocku, F. Windfelder), the first breeding record for Pennsylvania.

Willetts continued to expand their breeding range away from the barrier beach, for example on the north (landside) shore of Long Island's Great South Bay (KF). Upland Sandpipers are still relatively common in great fields along the Quebec border in n. Franklin and Clinton, NY (JMCP), but none at all seem to have bred in s.w. New Jersey (WD). Good counts of 23 at the Wilmington airport (L. Falk) and 34 across from Dover, DE, Air Force Base July 15 (APE, JFS, R. Hilton) were believed to be of migrants. Length of grass affects many of these results, big counts becoming possible only after mowing. Three flocks totalling 86 Whimbrels 12 miles off s. New Jersey July 26 (MF) made a good count, reminding us how much shorebird passage probably escapes us offshore. An impressive concentration of Ruddy Turnstones at Port Mahon, DE, July 30 numbered at least 250 (SRL). It would have been interesting to know if all were adults. A record-early juv. Least Sandpiper arrived at J.B.W.R. July 24 (AM). An unusually good passage of Baird's Sandpipers was already underway in late July, with one (presumably adult) at Bear Swamp, Bombay Hook, July 22 (RGR), an adult at Marshlands Conservancy, Rye, Westchester, NY, July 23 (fide TWB), and three adults at J.B.W.R. July 29 (RMS).

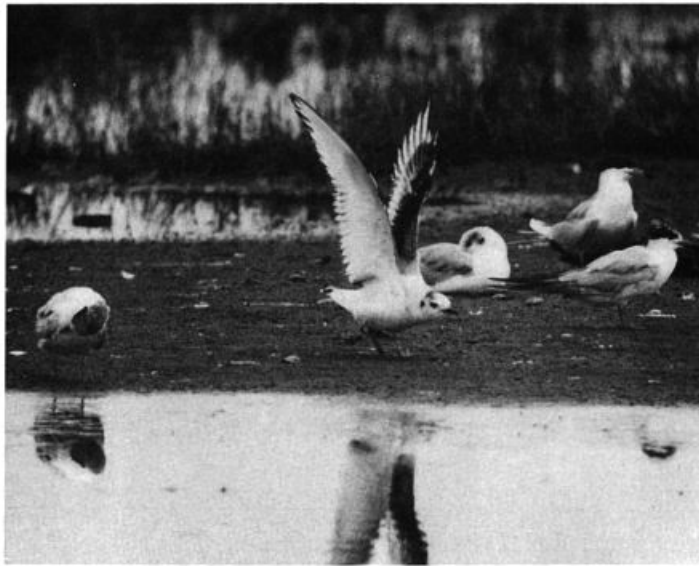
Purple Sandpipers in breeding plumage lingered at Cape May until June 2 (J. Palumbo), and for the first time non-breeding Purple Sandpipers hung around Great Gull Island, between Long Island and Connecticut, until mid-July (JDiC). A basic-plumaged Dunlin at Bombay Hook July 29 (MO'B) may never have gone to the arctic; three were very early at Nummy's I., Cape May, NJ, July 22 (PBA). The only Curlew Sandpiper reported was an adult in breeding plumage July 22-23 at Bombay Hook (RGR, DS). Ruffs were not very widespread; we knew only of one or possibly two in Delaware, observed at Broadkill Beach July 15 (J. Aull, WWF) and at Bombay Hook at the end of July (A. Hill, ph. JFS, m.ob.), and a black male at Marshlands Conservancy, Rye, NY, July 8 (TWB), believed to be the same that reappeared at the rain pool on the beach at Jones Beach S.P. July 16-19 (RFK, m.ob.). Returning Short-billed Dowitchers (presumably adults) reached S.C.M.M. June 20 (PH). They built to an impressive 3750 on the Delaware Bay shore of Cape May July 15 (HTA, GA). An excellent early count of 140 Long-billed Dowitchers was carefully described at Bombay Hook July 28 (†MO'B); we now know that returning adults arrive not much later than Short-billed. Wilson's Phalaropes were in very good numbers, especially at Bombay Hook, where up to 20 were at Raymond Pool in the last week of July (APE, MVB, S. McCandless).

**GULLS TO SKIMMER** — Braddock Bay and Cape May had the richest variety of gulls and terns this season. A die-off of small "sawbellies" at Braddock Bay held thousands of gulls well into June, including three Laughing Gulls, two Franklin's Gulls, about 200 Bonaparte's Gulls, an Iceland Gull June 11, a Glaucous Gull June 18, and a Lesser Black-backed Gull most of June (FN). Cape May had 15 species of gulls and terns in early June, as will be detailed below.

The N.J.D.F.G.W.'s aerial count of 58,797 Laughing Gulls breeding in coastal New Jersey was the highest ever (DJ). In Hereford Inlet, they feasted daily on newly hatched Black Skimmers: 11 on July 2, 16 on July 3, 17 on July 4 (MF, D. Githens). Exploring Laughing Gulls reached not only as far as Braddock Bay; one at Merrill Creek Res., Warren, NJ (J. Ebner) was thought to provide a first county record. Franklin's Gulls are not unexpected on the L. Ontario shore in late spring; far

more unusual were 2 sight records of first summer birds on the Region's Atlantic seaboard, where they are far less than annual: at Mecox Bay, L.I., July 9 (†ES) and the same day at the Port Mahon, DE, impoundment (†DS, MVB).

Far more Bonaparte's Gulls summered in the Region than usual, from the L. Ontario shore through Long Island, where 10-15 summered at the Cedar Beach rain pools (KF), to Cape May, where three were at Higbee's Beach July 31 (BMo). Little Gulls continued widespread. In addition to those already mentioned at Braddock Bay, two were at the Cedar Beach, L.I., rainpools in mid-July (KF), one at Island Farm, Sussex, DE (WWF), and a remarkable four or five subadults at S.C.M.M. all summer (m.ob., ph. KS, AB, BMi). Over a hundred pairs of Ring-billed Gulls nested on the roof of an Eastman Kodak building at Rochester, to the dismay of the plant's owners who will probably prevent a repeat next year.



*Little Gull in first-summer plumage taking flight at South Cape May Meadows, New Jersey, May 23, 1989. Four or five individuals summered in this area. Photograph/Bob Mitchell.*

Roof nesting is known for Ring-billed Gulls from Toronto, but not from the United States, to our knowledge. Black-legged Kittiwake, Mew Gull, Herring Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and Great Black-backed Gull all sometimes nest on roofs in England.

Gull-billed Terns seem to be prospering. At least 2 pairs settled again on the s. shore of Long Island (JZ, RD); and in Delaware, where summer records have been scarce in the last decade or so, two or three, some displaying courtship behavior, were at Assawoman, Broadkill Beach, and Cape Henlopen in July (DS et al.). Over 50 were at Brig, their main breeding area in this Region, in late July (RK). The Region's only Caspian Tern colony, at Little Galloo I. in L. Ontario, grew to over 150 pairs (JS, BM), and a pair nested successfully for the 6th consecutive year on Tow I., Ocean, NJ (JB). Royal Terns did not breed again in New Jersey, but the usual handful hung around there and on Long Island; 58 with young in Hereford Inlet July 19 (MF) almost certainly came from the breeding colonies south of this Region, since juv. Royals (like the even noisier young Caspian Terns) beg after their parents for hundreds of miles in late summer dispersal.

A few Sandwich Terns summered at Cape May and in nearby Hereford Inlet again, and so did perhaps as many as six Roseate Terns. A pair of Roseate Terns was observed copulating on 2 occasions at Hereford Inlet (MF). Roseate Terns have mated with Common Terns in New Jersey colonies, and Roseate Tern breeding is to be looked for. Within its normal breeding range farther north, a long-term decline

of Roseate Terns is causing concern. On Long Island, the huge colony on Great Gull I. held about steady with an estimated 1200 pairs (HH), while at least 3 of the smaller colonies on the south shore were seriously reduced (RD, JB, MG).

Common Terns were censused at 9647 individuals in coastal New Jersey, their best figure of this decade. Long Island's 2 most massive colonies, Cedar Beach and Great Gull Island, each about 7000 pairs strong, hatched about 10 days late in favorable weather (MG, HH), but elsewhere Long Island's Com. Terns suffered from rain and were thought to be slightly down (RD). The trend may be toward a few megacolonyes, where the birds would be more vulnerable to predators, accidents or disease. Upstate, the N.Y.D.E.C. has successfully protected Oneida Lake's Com. Terns from Ring-billed Gull incursion on their last 3 islands by installing a grid of monofilament fishing leader about 2 feet apart and 2 feet above the ground. The terns move freely through the grid, but the gulls stay away after a few brushes with it. Productivity was low this summer, however, apparently because of Great Horned Owl predation. Only about 200 chicks fledged from some 600 hatched. In the St. Lawrence R., where 594 nests were distributed among 13 active sites, 387 chicks were produced. Productivity was better on the gravel fill of navigational aids than in natural sites, where the nests were subject to flooding and Great Horned Owl predation. Most of the 600 or so Com. Terns nesting on the Niagara Frontier also use manmade sites, since gulls have occupied most natural sites. Egg-eating Ruddy Turnstones also do more damage at natural sites where they can walk into the colonies from the water's edge (BM).

Two Arctic Terns, one in first-summer plumage (ph. KS, BMi), were among the crowd at S.C.M.M. in early June. Forster's Terns levelled off in New Jersey to 1863 individuals, above the 1983 count but below the 1985 one, and one or two were present again in Great South Bay, Nassau, L.I., without renewed proof of breeding (JZ). Two were at Green Lane June 4 and July 19 (G. Franchois, K. Crilley), and one on the Susquehanna R. near Muddy Run June 7 (RMS, H. Morrin, m.ob.) was probably a late migrant. Least Terns decreased 2% from last year on Long Island, and were harmed by the rain and human disturbance (RD), but fencing and patrolling made a major difference in particular cases. Newly filled beach at Gilgo, L.I., was occupied by 300 pairs, effectively posted by Nature Conservancy volunteers, and sunbathers respected another large posted colony in the midst of Jones Beach S.P.

This year there were two **White-winged Terns**. One was an adult in rapidly fading alternate plumage that showed up at Bombay Hook July 23 into August (DS, R. Hilton, †MO'B, m.ob., ph. ABr, KK, G. Jett). Adults have become nearly annual in Delaware: this was the 7th since 1974 and the 3rd year in a row. The other was a remarkable find: the bird was in first-summer plumage, a plumage never before reported in North America, to our knowledge, since pre-breeding birds usually summer in Africa. First taken to be a first-summer Black Tern, at Cape May June 4, it was determined to be a White-

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A survey of the more than 90 historic Black Tern breeding sites in upstate New York found only 11 major colonies still active ("major" being defined as larger than 5 pairs), and a total breeding population of only 200-250 pairs. Only one colony contained over 50 pairs. The biggest remaining colonies are on the L. Ontario shore, especially in Jefferson, mostly on state-managed lands. They are subject to overgrowth by purple loosestrife, disturbance by boaters, and, this year in particular, by high water levels (P. Novak, *fide* BM). Around Rochester they may have produced no young owing to high lake levels (RGS). At Montezuma N.W.R., where 200 pairs nested in 1960, no more than three birds were present, and they did not appear to have bred (JW).

winged Tern in first-summer plumage by Seager on June 5 and confirmed by British observers familiar with the species (ph. KS, BMi, KK, R. Schwartz, m.ob.). It was seen daily until June 10, once again July 17 (PH), and again in late August (D. Sibley). The presence of a first-summer bird arouses curiosity about where it was hatched. It has been speculated that adult White-winged Terns reach North America after joining up with Black Terns of North American origin on the wintering grounds, perhaps off the west African coast. But North American breeding is at least possible. The first North American White-winged Tern record was in midsummer in a Black Tern colony in Wisconsin in 1873; more recently they have bred with Black Terns in Quebec (AB 39:889, 40:1181).

Breeding Black Skimmers have declined 4 years running on Long Island (RD), but were censused at a healthy 2299 individuals in New Jersey (JB). They had a poor breeding season there, however, perhaps because constant rain prevented them from getting enough food. Only part of the population even tried to nest; on Tow I., 350 adults made only 103 nests, the worst discrepancy between adults and nests in 14 years of observation (JB). In Delaware about 150 present all summer with juveniles at Little Creek were presumed to have nested (DAC), and the Indian R. colony did well.

**CUCKOOS TO BLUEBIRDS** — Both species of cuckoos were abundant in renewed gypsy moth infestations in Pennsylvania, upland New Jersey, and c. New York. We badly need a thorough survey of goatsucker populations in this Region. Common Nighthawks seemed "nearly extirpated as a breeder" in the Rochester area (RGS). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker feeding young at Leaser L. July 1 (K. & D. Grim) provided a first Lehigh, PA, nesting record, although the species breeds farther south at high elevations.

Olive-sided Flycatcher, normally a late migrant, lingered far into the season south of known breeding areas. Most remarkable were a singing male at the Schermann-Hoffman Sanctuary, Somerset, NJ, June 17 (DF, RK), and a lone individual in n. Schuylkill, PA, July 4 (LG, D. Wood). Eastern Wood-Pewees were missing in Carpenter's Woods, Philadelphia (SRL), and low in s.e. Pennsylvania (B & NM), and flycatchers generally seemed low around Rochester (RGS), but our evidence remains anecdotal. Acadian Flycatchers are still increasing in w. New York, coming up the Allegany R. system (SWE), and were found near Buffalo and Rochester (RA, RGS). An early W. Kingbird was at S.C.M.M. July 8 (VE, B. Glaser, J. Georges). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was around Primehook N.W.R. and nearby Delaware Bay at the beginning of June (WWF, T. White, B. Fintel), and another was reported on Raritan Bay at Lawrence Harbor, Middlesex, NJ, July 6 (M. Kohloff). Some observers reported that their usual Barn Swallows did not breed because of the rainy season (DH), but we have no systematic evidence. A Fish Crow at Grenadier I., at the n.e. corner of L. Ontario, continued the spring column's remarks about this species' expansion N to the lake shore of New York.

Winter Wrens have made a good comeback in the n.w. New Jersey mountains (GH), and in n.e. Pennsylvania there was an "explosion" of them, after being practically absent in the last 10 years (WR). Sedge Wrens were reported from only 3 places: on the St. Lawrence R. near the Moses-Saunders Dam (M. Badger), Black Creek Marsh, Albany, NY, after July 16 (B. Boehm, K. Beale), and Island Farm, Sussex, DE, typically late, July 30-31 (DS, J. Russell). We know far too little about Marsh Wrens in this Region; they appear to have vanished from many Long Island salt marshes, but a count of 41 in Piermont and Tallman Marshes along the lower Hudson R., NY, July 15 (PDe) sounded like the old days. Golden-crowned Kinglets are still pushing southward in ornamental conifer plantings. This season they established a first breeding record for Northampton, PA, near Nazareth, in Norway Spruce (RWt), while in s.c. New York, Brooks located 7 nesting sites in Allegany where they are "now abundant." Spahn called our attention to the curious phenomenon of late E. Bluebird migration along the shore of L. Ontario after the local bluebird

population has generally settled to breed. This season 60 E. Bluebirds (age and sex unspecified) passed Braddock Bay June 3 (F. Nicoletti, *vide* RGS).

**VIREOS TO FINCHES** — A singing ♂ Solitary Vireo was remarkable on the coastal plain most of June at Double Trouble S.P., Ocean, NJ (DS). A family of four Philadelphia Vireos was called up at Owl's Head, Franklin, NY, by the hiss of an insecticide can (JMCP).

The only "Lawrence's" Warbler hybrid reported to us was in s.e. New York, as is often the case, this time at Dover, Dutchess, June 11 (M. Van Wagner, J. Beck, DFl, MY). The "long slide" of Golden-winged Warblers (WR) seemed to be continuing in n.e. Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Yellow-rumped Warbler, probably the most successful colonizer among this Region's warblers, is spreading outside of spruce into mixed conifers in n.w. New Jersey, and thus reaching lower elevations. A new breeding area was found this season in mixed evergreens near the Delaware R. in Sandyston Twp., Sussex (J. Zamos). Two singing ♂ Cape May Warblers and seven or eight Bay-breasted Warblers in Franklin and Essex, NY, including one male feeding a young bird, indicated an above-average summer for the rarer spruce-breeding warblers in the Adirondacks (JMCP), better than in the atlas years. Particularly interesting was a Cape May Warbler feeding young in a mature plantation of mixed White and Norway Spruce at Cole Hill State Forest, Albany, NY, for the first recorded breeding outside the Adirondacks (KA) and what must be a rare instance of Cape May Warblers using mixed plantations. Although we have no further information about the expansion of Yellow-throated Warblers up the Delaware and Susquehanna R. systems into central New York, they are filling in along the upper Delaware Valley in Northampton, PA, where a first county breeding record was established at Easton (RWt). In the category of delayed migrants, a singing ♂ Blackpoll Warbler July 1 at Marshlands Conservancy, Rye, Westchester, NY (*vide* TWB) was remarkable.

Southbound warbler migration begins in late July, but fur- tively. A Tennessee Warbler near Albany July 25 was a "regular but little-noticed" event (KA). At Higbee's Beach, Cape May, the first clear evidence of fall warbler migration came on July 27 with a Yellow Warbler and two Louisiana Waterthrushes moving southbound across the Cape May canal (PH, DW). Louisiana Waterthrushes may indeed have left their territories early in some places because overflowing mountain streams destroyed their nests. That seems to have been the case in n.e. Pennsylvania where, after normal spring arrivals, Reid found no atlas blocks occupied in June and July (WR). Kentucky Warblers, still slowly expanding northward, were found feeding young near Shawnee, Monroe, PA, June 29 for the first Pocono Mts. breeding record (RWt).

A wary ♂ **Painted Bunting**, with the rich red breast proper to a wild bird, was seen several times in early June at S.C.M.M. (R. Smith, T. Boyle, KK *et al.*). Dickcissels reappeared; there were far fewer than last summer, but a good colony with at least five singing males was established at Woodstown, Salem, NJ after June 10 in a weedy field slated for development (JKM, WD). Copulation was observed June 18 (A. Keith), but mowing interrupted this colony which partially relocated nearby. Definite proof of breeding was never established. Elsewhere a singing male was observed repeatedly at the entrance to Little Creek June 10-July 22 (AH, SRL, DS *et al.*).

Henslow's Sparrows are now virtually limited in this Region to upstate New York. There were "good" reports from Livingston (BSy), and "normal" reports from the upper Hudson Valley, with populations at the Saratoga Battlefield Historical Park and 2 sites in Albany (KA), but only sparse reports from other upstate observers. In n.e. Pennsylvania, only one site, near Rome, Bradford, was occupied this summer (WR). A remarkable example of belated spring migration was a Sharp-tailed Sparrow, believed to belong to the interior race *nelsonii*, carefully observed June 10-11 at Walpack Center, Sussex, NJ (T. Halliwell, R. Radis *et al.*). White-throated Sparrows re-

mained outside breeding areas at Pt Gratiot on L. Erie near Dunkirk, Chautauqua, to June 30 (TDM), and at Moorestown, Burlington, NJ, to June 16 (BMo). Another belated migrant was a White-crowned Sparrow at Pleasant Corners, Lehigh, PA, June 2, the latest local record by 2 weeks (BLM).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds, a few years ago seemingly on the way to becoming regular in summer on the coast, were represented by only one ad. male at Bay Head, Ocean, NJ, July 8 (H. Davies). There is still a House Finch frontier: they were "exploding" in n. Clinton near the Canadian border (fide JMCP). White-winged Crossbills in the Adirondacks—a pair at Ferd's Bog, n. Hamilton, July 25 (JMCP) and groups of six to 38 "all summer" in Franklin (T. Mack)—were a precursor of things to come.

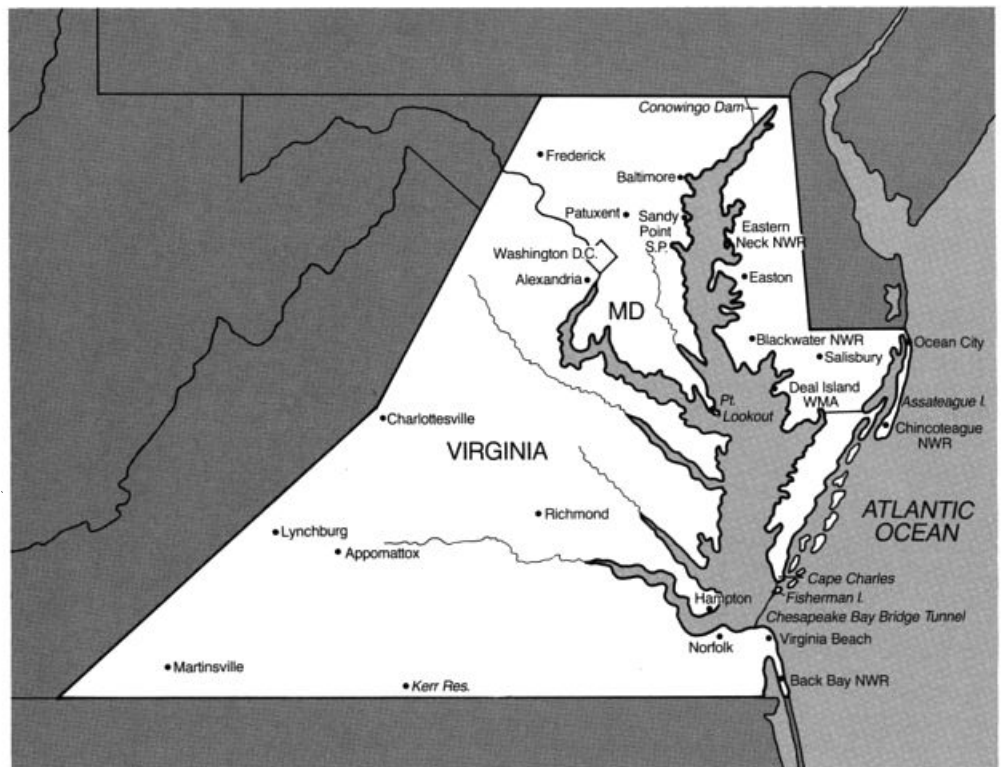
**EXOTICS** — Monk Parakeets seem to be gradually building up again. We have reports from Dutchess, NY, Bombay Hook (SRL), and Silver L., DE (DS).

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## MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Henry T. Armistead



**I**n stark contrast to the severe drought of 1988, the summer of 1989 was notable for continuing the excessive rains of the spring. The rain and the severe storms accompanying it, especially in June, were harmful to many

nesting birds. Birds adversely affected seem to have been most herons, gulls, terns, and skimmers, as well as Ospreys and Bald Eagles. Although in excellent numbers, the Region's three breeding plovers seem to have had poor re-

productive success Bright spots included the continuing presence of breeding Brown Pelicans, Dickcissels, and Bachman's Sparrows. Inland shorebird habitat and refuge impoundments were too full for good shorebirding. In many areas the abundant rain created a rank growth of marsh plants, including those in tidal salt marsh, but it also delayed fledging of some palustrine species. Deviation from normal of precipitation as reported by the six Regional stations reporting local climatological data: June +2.5 inches; July +2.1 inches. Temperature: June +2.9°F.; July +0.1°F.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Back Bay = Back Bay Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA; the Bay = Chesapeake Bay; C.B.B.T. = Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel, VA; Chinc. = Chincoteague Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA; Craney = Craney Island Disposal Area, Portsmouth, VA; D.C. = Washington, D.C.; Fish. I. = Fisherman Island Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA; Hart = Hart & Miller Is., in the Bay e. of Baltimore; H.M.C.P. = Huntley Meadows County Park, Fairfax, VA. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO STORK** — Stasz found the only summering Red-throated Loon at the Flag Ponds, Calvert, MD, June 18–26. As usual, Com. Loons were seen more than the former species, with reports from 5 localities in Maryland (*fide* RFR) and 2 in Virginia (DFA). At the Region's ranking freshwater marsh, H.M.C.P., a Pied-billed Grebe nest with 4 eggs was found June 6 (COH *et al.*) and four young were seen here July 24 (MF). Two other nests here were unsuccessful, perhaps owing to this summer's excessive rains (EPW). A Greater Shearwater was seen less than 10 yards from a boat c. 150 yards off the beach of Cedar I., VA, June 20 (BW), and 20 washed ashore during the summer at Assateague I., the cause of mortality unknown (IWA). Other Assateague I. mortalities included a Sooty Shearwater June 3 and a N. Gannet June 19, both in the Maryland part of this island (JL), the Greater in Virginia. Onshore sightings of Wilson's Storm-Petrels included seven from the C.B.B.T. June 17 (EVD), three at Cedar I. June 20 (BW *et al.*), as many as 56 up the Bay at Bethel Beach, VA, July 3 (JBB), and one even farther up the Bay close to the Maryland line near Tangier I., VA, July 24 (J & TD).

The only Am. White Pelican report was of one between Quinby and Hog I., VA, June 14 (LN, *fide* EMW). For the 3rd straight year, Brown Pelicans bred on an island s. of South Pt., MD (DB, *fide* JSW, specifics lacking). The best Maryland counts were of 70 in the Ocean City–Assateague I. area June 22 (MO), with 47 at Ocean City June 23 (MO) and 30 there July 15 (RPH). For the 2nd year they bred in Virginia (first records were in 1987) with 37 nests at Fish. I. in June, 29 of these nests having a total of 45 eggs (BW *et al.*), and up to 396 Brown Pelicans were seen there during the summer. As of late August there were 55 large young birds at Fish. I. (SWS). Other counts were of 85 at Back Bay/False Cape S.P. June 2 (DS, TMP), 30 at Metomkin I. June 18 (SHD), and 37 at Chinc. July 12 (DM), these all in Virginia. Double-crested Cormorants bred again near Hopewell on the James R. as they have most years since 1978, this being the only locality in Virginia where they have nested (*fide* JWD; details for 1989 lacking). The best counts in Maryland were of 345 in the Bloodsworth & S. Marsh Is. area July 3 (HTA, GLA), 95 at Bloodsworth I. June 3 (HTA), and 118 at Cove Pt., Calvert, July 22 (JLS). In Virginia an adult and three immatures at L. Gaston near the North Carolina line June 3 were seen by Lynch, who encouraged that this species be watched as it "is currently nesting at several reservoirs in North and South Carolina."

One of the highlights of the summer was the detection of two juv. American Bitterns at H.M.C.P. July 3–24 in company with one adult, for the first Virginia breeding record since two juveniles were seen at Back Bay May 28, 1968 (KH, EPW, RAA *et al.*). Least Bitterns were common at H.M.C.P., an organized census finding 4 nests there June 6 and making 28 sightings of this species on that date (COH, EPW *et al.*), but one e. of Blackstone, Dinwiddie, VA, May 27 furnished only

the 6th state Piedmont record (SRd) Nine were at Cove Pt., MD, July 22 (JLS). On Bloodsworth I., 95 Great Blue Heron nests had young June 3, many of these on artificial nest platforms which have been very successful here. However, the number of young per nest was low, perhaps owing to the rains and cold spring weather (HTA). Eight Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on the Banister R. near Scottsburg, Halifax, VA, June 18 were notable for the interior Piedmont of that state (JB).

Stray White Ibises included two immatures at Berkeley Plantation, near Charles City, VA, July 31–Aug. 1 (BM), and



*Immature White Ibis at Chantilly, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 30, 1989. Photograph/David F. Abbot.*

two immatures at Chantilly, Fairfax, VA, July 17–Aug. 1 (DFA, RAA, VBK). The high count of Glossy Ibises was of 350 at Chinc. July 2 (DFA). Always extremely rare Regionally, Wood Storks materialized at 2 areas on the western shore of Maryland with two immatures near Bertha, Calvert, July 10–31 (JLS, PAC) and an immature n. of Baltimore at Towson July 11–25 (JW, EMW, m.ob.), these birds all heavily photographed.

For the 15th consecutive year, the number of adult colonial waterbirds was recorded as part of the census of the Virginia barrier islands from Assawoman I. south to and including Fish. I. (BW, BA, RB, JV, BTt). This June survey recorded these totals: Little Blue Heron 77 (3rd lowest ever); Cattle Egret 95



*Immature Wood Stork north of Baltimore, Maryland, July 16, 1989. Three individuals showed up in Maryland during July. Photograph/David Czaplak.*

(5th lowest); Great Egret 239 (2nd lowest); Snowy Egret 252 (2nd lowest); Tricolored Heron 248 (lowest ever); Black-crowned Night-Heron 542 (3rd lowest); Yellow-crowned Night-Heron 21 (lowest ever); Glossy Ibis 195 (lowest ever); White Ibis four (on Fish. I.; found 9 out of 15 years). Great Blue Herons do not nest on the Region's barrier islands, and Green-backed Herons do not nest colonially (although I once found 14 of their nests in one offshore duck blind in the Little Choptank R., Dorchester, MD). The major colonies of herons



and their allies were again on Hog, Wreck, and Fisherman islands this year, the Metomkin I. colony still a shadow of its former self after the storm damage it endured in 1988. The fact that so many of these species are in low numbers on one of the most pristine, remote, and well preserved stretches of coast anywhere in the East is disturbing. Reports of heronries west of the Bay in Virginia and in most of Maryland are lacking, although the islands with mixed colonies in Dorchester, MD, were almost devoid of birds (HTA).

**WATERFOWL TO CRANES** — Mute Swans continued to utilize Hoopers and Barren islands, MD, as a staging area, perhaps their major one on the Bay, with a record 375 there July 23 (HTA, GLA, BM). They have extended their range south to Bloodsworth I., MD, where there were two for the first time June 3 (HTA). Waterfowl at the Easton, MD, sewage lagoons included a Snow Goose June 5 plus a Lesser Scaup and a Ruddy Duck June 7 (JE). The burgeoning Regional summer Canada Goose population resulted in sightings of 340 at Blackwater N.W.R. June 3 (HTA) and 81 at Piney Run Park, Carroll, MD, July 29 (RFR). The scarcer waterfowl breeding species seem to have declined in this Region during the 1980s. However, a Blue-winged Teal nest with 10 eggs was at Elliott I., MD, June 24 (GLA, HTA, CCW), and a ♀ Gadwall with 11 downy young were at remote Spring I. July 3 with four other adults nearby (GLA, HTA), these all in Dorchester, MD. A ♀ Hooded Merganser with nine small young was near Scottsburg, Halifax, VA, along the Banister River n.w. of Kerr Res. May 27, for apparently the 4th state breeding record (JB, JF, fide J & TD). Twenty Ruddy Ducks were at Hart July 23 (EB et al.) and Ruddies were seen at 5 other localities as well.

Ospreys continued to extend their breeding range up estuarine rivers with 2 pairs in D.C., one of which was raising one young June 10 (DC). Short found 15 nests on the upper Choptank R. from Denton to Choptank July 16, and Dyke noted 10 nests on the upper Wicomico R. from Salisbury to Ellis Bay, these all on the Maryland Eastern Shore. Lukei monitored 17 active sites in the Back Bay/False Cape S.P. area, VA, which produced 22 eggs and 22 fledged young, 16 of them banded. On Bloodsworth I., 31 nests were seen June 3, and a nest at Bellevue, MD, fledged four young, an unusually successful nest (HTA). However, as with many other waterbirds this year, including Bald Eagle, reproductive success was hampered by cold spring weather and excess rain.

An ad. Mississippi Kite was seen along the Meherrin R., Southhampton, VA, July 2-3, and a feather found there was sent to the Smithsonian in hopes of officially confirming the record (RPR). Virginia has a dozen or so sight records, but perhaps only one documented by photos (AB 41: 1384, 1419). Along the Rappahannock R. from Tappahannock to Port Royal, Portlock found 26 immature and nine ad. Bald Eagles July 21. A March snowstorm hindered eagle breeding success in Virginia (KT). Northern Harriers continued to be present during the breeding season in most areas with extensive tidal marshes, although evidence of nesting was restricted to Deal Island W.M.A. July 29 (female with two flying young—SHD) in Maryland, and Saxis, VA, s. of Deal I., where nest-building was observed in late May (fide VBK). Most unusual was a Sharp-shinned Hawk with a dead bird seen at Cheatham Annex Naval Supply Station along the York R. near Williamsburg, VA, June 22 (BT). The only Cooper's Hawk reports were of a bird with prey at Culpeper July 1 (VBK), and a female at Guinea s. of Fredericksburg (JBB) where an imm. Broad-winged Hawk was seen the same day. Reports of breeding Am. Kestrels were received from 6 places, an unusually high number for this Region, including a pair with three young in D.C. in late May and early June (PF, fide EMW). The three fledged Peregrine Falcons at S. Marsh I., MD, were observed all chasing the same Am. Black Duck July 3 (HTA, GLA) and the pair at Chinc. also fledged three young (IWA).

Young Wild Turkeys in large numbers were reported from Ivor, VA, July 2 (30 young; RPH), Idlewild W.M.A., MD, June 25 (15 young; RR), Culpeper, VA, July 1 (VBK; 12 young) and



*Adult King Rail with loyal subjects on the boardwalk at Huntley Meadows County Park, Virginia, July 15, 1989. This rail and its mate had five downy young nearby, and the birds were incredibly unafraid of people. Photograph/Edwin P. Weigel.*

Gloucester, VA (six-eight young through the period; TK). Black Rails were heard at 3 sites: one at Saxis at 11 p.m. June 3 (DFA), one at the unusual locality of Hog I., Northampton, VA, June 15 (LN, fide EMW), and others at their stronghold at Elliott I., MD, where one was heard calling at 12:45 p.m. and 2:08 p.m. June 24 (GLA, CCW, HTA). Sykes found a healthy Clapper Rail population at Lynnhaven Inlet, VA, where there were 28 on July 9, and Dyke had 20 in Monie Marsh near Deal I. July 16. Absurdly tame King Rails and their chicks were a smash hit with visitors at H.M.C.P., allowing approach within a few feet as they walked on the boardwalk. Five families with at least 23 downy young were found within a few feet of the walk in this ±100 acre marsh which has been greatly enhanced by beaver dams (EPW, SRd, RAA, EMW et al.). The Poolesville, MD, Sandhill Crane, present for over a year and consorting with horses, was still there July 23 (MO).

**SHOREBIRDS** — Three pairs of Wilson's Plovers at Wallops I. represented the northernmost breeders in the Region (CRV) now that they no longer breed on Assateague. The Virginia barrier island survey in June recorded the highest numbers in 15 years of adult Piping Plovers (140 on 7 islands) and Wilson's Plovers (35 on 7 islands; BW et al.). However, of these, 85 Pippings and 35 Wilson's were concentrated on Metomkin I., a vulnerable place which is eroding and split into several sections. The heavy, frequent rains were harmful to plover production, and on Assateague I., 15 Piping Plover chicks were lost during one storm (IWA). At Chinc., 23 Piping Plover nests were seen as of June 8 (IWA), and a successful nest at Craney I., Portsmouth, VA, was the first there in many years (SH, BA). For the entire state of Virginia the number of breeding pairs was 121 Piping and at least 35 Wilson's plovers (KT). Ultimately 39 Piping Plover nests at Chinc. produced 30 young. Many observers commented on the abundance of Killdeer this summer, and one pair raised young on a high school roof in Arlington (RAA).

The barrier island survey found 1025 Am. Oystercatchers at 15 sites in June (BW et al.). Other waders of note at Chinc. were 139 Willets July 5; six Lesser Yellowlegs and 235 Short-billed Dowitchers July 6; 102 Sanderlings and 55 Whimbrels July 12; 3230 Sanderlings and 35 Red Knots July 27 (DM et al.). Six Am. Avocets were also there July 31 (DM). Three pairs of Black-necked Stilts were at Deal I., MD, plus a juvenile July 19, establishing the 2nd state breeding record (LMD, AR). Two more stilts were at Craney I. during the period (SH). A shorebird trip to Hart July 23 found 130 Lesser Yellowlegs, 500 W. Sandpipers, a Dunlin, 50 Stilt Sandpipers, 90 Short-billed Dowitchers, and one Wilson's and one Red-necked phalarope (EB, SR, BD, RFR). An earlier trip here June

4 reported a Whimbrel, a Hudsonian Godwit, 250 Semipalmated Sandpipers, and a Baird's Sandpiper, the latter a first Maryland spring record if accepted by the state rarities committee (HK *et al.*). The best Whimbrel total was of 200 out from Wachapreague, VA, in the salt marshes there July 28 (GWR). One Whimbrel, scarce on the Bay, was at Sandy Point S P. near Annapolis, MD, July 27 (MO).

One of the few areas where Upland Sandpipers have bred recently in this Region is around Lucketts, Loudoun, VA. Up to six were here June 5 (JBB). In the never-never land 'twixt spring and fall migration were two Red Knots and 27 Short-billed Dowitchers at Ocean City June 23 (MO). Interesting tallies of shorebirds were 2793 Sanderlings, 122 Black-bellied Plovers, 187 Semipalmated Plovers, and 475 Ruddy Turnstones at Back Bay/False Cape S.P. June 2 (DS, TMP). The first southbound shorebirds reported were three Lesser Yellowlegs at Remington Farms, Kent, MD, June 28 (JG, PG). In a flooded field near Sudlersville, MD, 50 Pectoral Sandpipers and a ♀ Ruff were observed July 29 (LMD, HLW).

**GULLS TO SKIMMER**—The Virginia barrier islands survey found these numbers of adult birds in June: Herring Gull 2584 (6th lowest in the survey's 15 years), Laughing Gull 7360 (3rd lowest; at Wreck I.), Great Black-backed Gull 155 (lowest since 1984), Gull-billed Tern 339 (3rd lowest), Com. Tern 3060 (6th lowest), Least Tern 613 (4th lowest), Royal Tern 5000 (at Fish. I.; 5th lowest), Sandwich Tern 32 (at Fish. I., 15th straight year), Caspian Tern six (at Ship Shoal I.; 15th straight year), Black Skimmer 3451 (2nd lowest; at 12 sites). Gull-billed Terns were at 10 sites, Com. Terns at 12, Least Terns at 7 (BW, BA, RB, JV, BTt). Wreck I. had the highest numbers of all three gull species plus Gull-billed Terns (94), Little Cobb I. had the most Com. Terns (1092), Metomkin I. had the most Least Terns (259), and Ship Shoal I. had the most Black Skimmers (954). Of the 25 species of waterbirds studied in this survey Fish. I. had the richest variety with 16 species followed by Wreck and Hog islands with 15 each. As with the heron types the low totals for many of these species are cause for concern.

Elsewhere a Bonaparte's Gull was in D.C. June 25–July 15 (DC, ph.). The July 23 visit to Hart yielded 600 Ring-billed and 320 Great Black-backed gulls in addition to 330 Caspian and 350 Forster's terns (RFR *et al.*). Weske and others, continuing their long-term study of Royal Terns, banded an astounding 19,710 in Virginia and North Carolina. They tagged 1632 Royal and six Sandwich Terns at the unnamed sand island in Chinc. inlet plus 4628 Royal and 106 Sandwich Terns on Fish. I., "probably the best" in his experience, perhaps owing to the relocation of Oregon Inlet, NC, birds which largely abandoned that site following outrageous vandalism (an egg fight) there in 1988 (JSW, CRV, JHB *et al.*). The pioneer Royals that nested for the first time in the Maryland part of the Bay at Barren I., discovered May 28, increased their nests from 7 to as high as 40 but failed in July owing to heavy rains (DBr, *vide* JSW). However, 315 were seen just n. of there at Hoopers I. July 23 (GLA, HTA, BM).

A Roseate Tern, always rare in this Region, was reported at Back Bay June 17 (DFA, PL). At Spring I., Dorchester, MD, June 3, a mixed Forster's and Common tern colony held 565 nests with eggs (HTA), but a revisit on July 3 found only 122 and very few young (HTA, GLA), perhaps yet another casualty of the rains. Least Terns again nested in small numbers on the roofs of schools in the Cambridge and Easton areas in Maryland (JE, CL, HTA). At Cornfield Harbor, St. Mary's, MD, O'Brien saw 120 adult Least Terns July 8. A stray Black Tern was at Metomkin I. June 20 (JV). The outstanding rarity of the season was a quite well-described **Brown Noddy** well-seen at Portobago Bay downriver from Port Royal on the Rappahannock R., VA, quite far upstream but still on the coastal plain July 24 (WSP, LL). Subject to future rarities committee judgment, this would be a first state record. A Black Skimmer was in the Hunting Creek–Dyke Marsh area, VA, on the Potomac

during the 2nd week of June (VBK, BM<sub>1</sub>), and in the Maryland part of the Bay 10 were at N Beach, Calvert, June 17 (JLS), 36 at Bloodsworth I. July 3 (GLA, HTA), and 30 at Hooper's I. July 23 (HTA, BM, GLA).

**DOVES TO SHRIKES**—Mourning Doves begin to congregate in numbers even in mid-summer, as evidenced by 200 near Salisbury July 28 (SHD). Scarce in the summer here, Black-billed Cuckoos were found at 6 sites in Maryland (*vide* RFR), a better than average showing. Bass continued his Nokesville, VA, area studies of Barn Owls, finding 19 active nests in boxes he has placed in silos. Several observers commented on the decline of Com. Nighthawk, but singles were seen on the barrier islands of Cedar and Ship Shoal, VA (BW *et al.*). Previously unreported was an early Whip-poor-will calling at Sparta, VA, on Mar. 31, 1989 (WSP). Red-headed Woodpeckers seemed to continue their slight increase owing apparently to the presence of many dead tree boles left by the increasingly lumbering operations (*v.o.*).

Four Horned Larks were seen on Myrtle I. in June, part of the very small barrier island breeding population (BW) Not near any known breeding areas was a Cliff Swallow at West Point on the Pamunkey R., VA, June 16 (RPH). Adult Brown Creepers were seen carrying food June 5 & 12 at H.M.C.P., where they have previously bred (EPW). Sedge Wrens were reported only from Elliott I., MD, where Yokel had three on June 18. Loggerhead Shrikes were seen at 3 places in Virginia one in Nottoway May 26 (SRd), one 2 mi n. of Lucketts June 18 (JBB), and one near Upperville just s. of Sky Meadows S P., just barely in this Region, July 23 (VBK).

**VIREOS TO FINCHES**—A Warbling Vireo was at Stony Creek, Sussex, VA, June 11, in an area of the state where they are rare breeders. This is near the North Carolina line at the Piedmont-coastal plain interface (RPH). A ♂ Blue-winged Warbler was at Nokesville, VA, June 18–30, at or near the eastern limit of their known area of occurrence in the summer, although they are rare anywhere e. of the mountains (KHB). A ♂ Blackburnian Warbler June 5 in Brunswick, VA, was a late migrant for this southern county (SRn). A Summer Tanager at Pretty Boy Res. n. of Baltimore was unusual July 22 (PN). After a banner year in 1988, the Dickcissel presence this year was a more muted one although still better than average. They were reported from 6 places in Virginia and 2 in Maryland, although the sightings near Chestertown, MD, by the Grubers were in 3 different areas there, such as the three singing birds at Airy Hill Rd. June 30. Up to six singing birds were in Campbell, VA, June 11 (J & TD), s. of Lynchburg deep in the Piedmont. Up to five were near Fredericksburg, midway between D.C. and Richmond in Virginia, with at least one fledged young bird present there during June (CBS, VBK, SRd, HFD). They were also seen at 3 localities in Westmoreland, VA, throughout the period, with two at Oldhams (RPH) and five near Lyells (MB).

For the 4th straight year, very small numbers of Bachman's Sparrows were found in extreme s. Virginia in Brunswick and Sussex (RPH, SRd, DFA, JML, EMW). These birds were singing from June up until at least Aug. 13. Probably no more than six individual birds are involved. Some of the observers who saw and heard them are quite concerned about the abuse of tape playing to lure these birds in—to the extent that they have requested keeping the precise locations confidential. A singing Savannah Sparrow was at Taneytown, Carroll, MD, July 2 in one of the "few areas of the Maryland Piedmont where they breed" (RFR). Up to 80 Grasshopper Sparrows were reported from the Massey, MD, area July 1 (JG, PG), and other observers felt they had a good year also. At least three Henslow's Sparrows were near L. Manassas, Prince William, VA, July 1, and a fledged bird was there 2 weeks later (KHB). One was at Elliott I., MD, July 28 (EB *et al.*), a once reliable place for them where they have become very difficult to detect these past 2 summers. A count of 116 Sharp-tailed Sparrows was made at Elliott I. June 24 (GLA, CCW, HTA)

Anomalous were one White-throated Sparrow at Denton June 1 (AK) and one singing at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center June 6 (PK, *fide* SD). Concerning the sparse but widely scattered Regional breeding population of Swamp Sparrows, Droege found them at their usual haunts at Black Marsh e. of Baltimore, but felt they were down at Eastern Neck N.W.R., Kent, MD, where he found only six males. Ringler found one July 2 at Hampstead, Carroll, MD, a new location. At Keysville, Carroll, 25 Bobolinks were seen July 2 (RFR) in an area not far from the Pennsylvania line where the observer suspects they breed, but one at Newark Farms, Carroll, MD, June 7 was probably a late migrant (DLK). House Finches continue to increase and spread as Regional breeders (v.o.).

**OBSERVERS** — D.F. Abbott, I.W. Ailes, Bill Akers, Janet Anderson, R.A. Anderson, R.L. Anderson, G.L. Armistead, Scott Atkinson, K.H. Bass, Polly Batchelder, J.B. Bazuin, Ruth Beck, Debbie Bennett, Jeff Blalock, Eirik Blom, Mike Boatwright, L.D. Bonham, Dave Brinker (DBr), J.H. Buckalew, Ed Burns (EBs), George Chase, Martha Chestem, P.A. Craig, David Czaplak, John & Thelma Dalmás, L.M. Davidson, H.F. Day, E.V. Dean, Bob Dixon, Chris Dorset, Sam Droege, S.H. Dyke, S.D. Eccles, Jeff Effinger,

Ethel Engle, Mark Farmer, Peter Fenno, **A.J. Fletcher** (Caroline, MD), R.B. Fletcher, John Fulton, Inez Glime, **James Gruber** (Kent, MD), Patricia Gruber, C.O. Handley, R.P. Hilton, Ken Howard, Susan Hubbard, G.M. Jett, J.E. Johnson, Hank Kaestner, Teta Kain, Paul Keywood, Kerrie Kirkpatrick, D.L. Kirkwood, V.B. Kitchens, Alicia Knotts, Lawrence Latané, Charles Leck, H.E. LeGrand, Paula Little, John Loegering, R.F. Lukei, J.M. Lynch, Nancy Magnusson, Mava Mayo, Blair McWilliams, Debbie Melvin, Buck Miller (Bmi), Dorothy & Mike Mitchell, Bill Murphy (BMy), Paul Murphy, Leon Nawojchik, Paul Noell, Marianna Nuttle, Michael O'Brien, T.M. Padgett, **E.L. Pitney** (lower Eastern Shore of MD), W.S. Portlock, Ann Raspberry, **J.G. Reese** (Talbot, MD), G.W. Reiger, Sue Ricciardi, **Sue Ridd** (SRd; VA Atlas results), **R.F. Ringler** (entire state of MD), Wilbur Rittenhouse, R. Robinson, Milton Rosen, Barbara Ross, Stephen Rottenborn (SRn), R.P. Russell, R.M. Schutsky, Don Schwab, L.T. Short, **Jo Solem** (Howard, MD), S.W. Stairs, J.L. Stasz, C.B. Swift, P.W. Sykes, Brian Taber, Karen Terwilliger, R.J. Tripician, Barry Truitt (BTt), C.R. Vaughn, Jerry Via, **E.P. Weigel** (H.M.C.P.), J.S. Weske, H.L. Wierenga, **Bill Williams** (VA barrier island survey), **E.M. Wilson** (greater D.C. area), C.C. Witt, Ben Yokel, Charles Ziegenfus.—**HENRY T. ARMISTEAD, 523 E. Durham St., Philadelphia, PA 19119.**

## SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

(Spring 1989 Report)

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.



The wet winter continued into the spring, with March and April being very wet in many places. Temperatures were somewhat cooler than usual, and cold fronts were numerous.

Cool and wet weather tends to provide better than usual birding because stormy weather forces down migrants, frequently blows birds off course, or “chops up” a bird’s migratory flight into shorter segments. (Birding is poor during beautiful weather, when migrants can travel several hundred miles in a single flight, and are less likely to be blown off course.) Most of the veteran birders in the western Piedmont reported that the passerine flight (except for the disappearing spotted thrushes) was better than usual, and a few Coastal Plain birders said likewise. However, migrants were in their usual meager numbers in the eastern half of the Region, which hardly ever sees a memorable spring flight. There were practically no winter finches during the previous season, and

this trend continued into the spring. Pelagic birding was again rather limited this spring; there is still much to be learned about pelagic species distributions, especially in March and April. On the other hand, there was one first record for the Region—an unwanted visitor from the tropics.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — A Red-throated Loon near Brunswick, GA, May 5 (JG et al.) was rather late in departing. The only unusual grebe for the spring was an Eared at L. Waccamaw, NC, Apr. 8 (AW, VW). Northern Fulmars, which begin to appear in the Region (from where?) in March, were noted on a pelagic trip off Morehead City, NC, Mar. 26 (RD) and from shore at Pea I., NC, Apr. 20 (PW). The wintering grounds of the fall and spring fulmars seen in our Region are completely unknown. Davis had two Manx and one Audubon’s shearwater off Morehead City Mar. 26, a clear reminder to

pelagic observers not to assume all small shearwaters during the cooler months to be Manxes.

Although large numbers of Am. White Pelicans migrate from the Great Plains to Florida for the winter, few notable counts are reported from our Region. Good totals, each in Georgia, were of 15 at Eufaula N.W.R. in early March (*fide* TM) and 12 on L. Lanier Mar. 19 (*fide* JV). Seldom reported in Georgia, a Great Cormorant flew past Tybee I. Mar. 18 (PS). In coastal North Carolina, where locally regular, the peak count was of 20 near Ft. Fisher Mar. 18 (SC), and six were still there May 26 (RD). Ever increasing, Double-crested Cormorant totals of significance inland were of 635 at Falls L., NC, Apr. 12 (RD) and 92 at L. Oconee, GA, Apr. 15 (PY). An Anhinga Apr. 20 near Aurora, NC (SC), was well away from known breeding sites, but as the species has been expanding its range northward through the state's Coastal Plain in the past few years, it would not be a complete surprise if the species is nesting not far away.

Although records of white morph Great Blue Herons have greatly increased in recent years, spring reports are extremely rare. One first noted May 1 (EH) at St. Simons I., GA, was still present May 16 (LT). Inland Snowy Egrets, all single birds, were near Greenville, NC, Apr. 3 (JW); in Aiken, SC, Apr. 16 (DC); and in Georgia at L. Oconee Apr. 15 & 29 (PY), at Augusta Apr. 18 (AW), and in Clayton Apr. 30 (A.A.S.). Dean had an excellent five Snowies near Goldsboro, NC, May 12, plus a Tricolored Heron there May 9. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron continues to breed in one of the least likely spots in the Region—residential Charlotte, NC, where a nest was seen May 7 (HW *et al.*). A few other inland Yellow-crowneds were seen in the greater Atlanta area. Single Glossy Ibises, always good finds away from tidewater, were noted in North Carolina near Greenville Apr. 4 (JW), Goldsboro May 7 (GH, ED), and Fayetteville May 30 (PJC).

**WATERFOWL**—Four Mute Swans at Rum Creek W.M.A., GA, Apr. 18–May 6 (TJ) caused a stir, as there are apparently no local birds in that area, and the species is hypothetical in the state. I would be interested to know how many Georgia birders count these swans on their state lists. On the other hand, the **Ross' Goose** previously reported in February in that state, at Eufaula N.W.R., definitely deserved to create a stir, as it provided the first state record. The goose was reportedly seen into early March (*fide* TM). A count of 200 Brant in Ocracoke Inlet, NC, Apr. 18 (JF) seemed a high number for such a late date; 10 were there Apr. 24 (JF).

The Eurasian Wigeon noted in February near Davis, NC, was last seen Mar. 11 (JN, GM) for the only spring report. Also lingering from winter were two Harlequin Ducks at Oregon Inlet, NC, where last reported Mar. 13 (MC). The only inland sighting of a scoter species involved three White-wingeds at Commerce L., GA, Mar. 4 (JP). Somewhat late was another White-winged Apr. 18 near Cedar I., NC (JF, DS). A Bufflehead May 6 at Rum Creek W.M.A., GA (DH *et al.*), was late, as was a Hooded Merganser May 10 near Greensboro, NC (HH). The only spring reports of Com. Mergansers were of two females on L. Lanier Mar. 4–12 (JP) and two males at James I., SC, Apr. 4 (DF).

**VULTURES TO CRANES**—Practically never previously reported in spring from the North Carolina Outer Banks, a Turkey Vulture appeared at Bodie I. Apr. 25 (JF). As usual, there was a handful of coastally overshooting Am. Swallow-tailed Kites in North Carolina: two in late March at Buxton (*fide* MaL), two there Apr. 26 (JF), and single birds near Atlantic Apr. 29 (TH, MD), Oregon Inlet May 6 (JW), and Kitty Hawk May 8 & 15 (QB). The bird event of the spring in North Carolina was the 2nd state sighting, and first confirmed, of **Black-shouldered Kite** at Ft. Fisher Apr. 8 (ED, SC, ph. CS). Overshooting the breeding range, presumably, were single Mississippi Kites in coastal North Carolina May 12 near Queens Cr., Onslow (JF), and May 23 over Morehead City (JF, DS). One of Georgia's few Bald Eagle nests, at far inland L.

Juliette, fledged one chick Mar. 29 (TJ) North Carolina apparently had only 3 nests this spring, one a new site and one former site seemingly no longer having birds. Northern Harriers are believed to breed at a few extensive marshes in coastal North Carolina, but Fussell reported two ad. males at North R., Carteret, May 6, one of which was carrying food. This is a new site for possible breeding.

Over a week early was a Broad-winged Hawk Mar. 24 seen over a highway in Cleveland, NC (PW). During the past decade or two, there have been numerous records of Golden Eagle from the Charleston and Francis Marion N.F. area, SC; and the only spring report came from that vicinity—Middleton Place on Mar. 25 (BK *et al.*). American Kestrels are quite rare breeders in the Coastal Plain, but J. Carter again noted a nest in an old Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity in w. Ft. Bragg, NC, May 8, whereas Forsythe noted a nesting pair Apr. 21 in a clearcut near Holly Hill, SC. Only one inland record was received for Merlin and two for Peregrine Falcon—one Merlin in Clayton, GA, Apr. 9 (A.A.S.), one Peregrine at Charlotte Apr. 10 (NC), and a pair of the latter on several occasions in April at Chimney Rock Park, NC (FW). No nesting evidence of these Chimney Rock birds was noted, but it might be assumed that at least one of the birds must have been hacked in the nearby mountains in that state.

Good details were provided for a Yellow Rail flushed from a salt marsh at South I., SC, Mar. 23 (HWi) for the only spring sighting. What is the breeding status of Black Rail in coastal Georgia and South Carolina? Can it be as rare as the few records indicate, considering the relative frequency in coastal North Carolina? One heard calling Apr. 30 at Andrews I. near Brunswick, GA (PS, TM, HG, PB), might well have been on territory, but follow-up visits later in spring and summer are warranted. More unusual was one heard calling in the foothills at L. Adger, Polk, NC, Apr. 28–30 (TP, HW, HWh). Again, additional visits in May or June are needed to determine if breeding is likely. Purple Gallinule, which possibly no longer breeds in North Carolina, still appears at a few sites in the s.e. corner; such was the case of one near Southport May 2 (JN). Several Purples were at Par Pond at the Savannah River Plant, SC, in late spring (JD); this site is near the northern edge of the breeding range. A flock of Sandhill Cranes in a cow pasture in early March near Alpharetta, GA, contained two "white" cranes (JGa). A photo of the flock is not sharp enough to tell if the birds were albinos, the more likely explanation, or were Whooping Cranes, which have not been reported in the state (or Region) in this century. Out of range, and surprisingly late, was a flock of 13 Sandhill Cranes seen in flight Apr. 25 over Huntington Beach S.P., SC (IP).

**SHOREBIRDS**—Inland shorebirding was rather poor because of the heavy rainfall keeping lakes and ponds full; however, most bodies of water are full in spring anyway in a season of normal rainfall. A group of 10 Black-bellied Plovers at L. Adger, Polk, NC, May 15 (PT) was an excellent inland count, but the only other inland report was of one at Gainesville, GA, May 7–8 (JP). Sadly, Lesser Golden-Plovers went undetected this spring. Cooper spent much of the spring surveying birdlife at Texas Gulf Sulfur settling ponds near Aurora, NC. At these ponds, he had a peak tally of 34 Black-necked Stilts May 25, one Red Knot May 18 and two May 25, a peak of 41 Stilt Sandpipers May 18, and two Wilson's Phalaropes on the very early date of Mar. 26. The best count of the very uncommon Upland Sandpiper was of seven, in n. Kershaw, SC, Apr. 16 (RC, CE). The last report of the Ft. Fisher, NC, Long-billed Curlews (two birds) was Mar. 25 (RD).

Western Sandpipers winter in good numbers along our coast, but these birds obviously make a long northwesterly overland flight in spring across the interior, as few are sighted inland. The only such sighting this season was of one bird at Silver Bluff Sanctuary, Aiken, SC, Apr. 23 (AW). A Baird's Sandpiper was reported from this sanctuary in May, but no details were supplied; an extremely thorough description

would need to be provided for this species, which is casual to accidental in spring. Although it is hypothetical in Georgia and unrecorded in South Carolina, Curlew Sandpiper occurs annually in North Carolina. One at Pea I., NC, May 20 (BL) was somewhat early, as most sightings are in July and August. A record count for South Carolina was of 213 Stilt Sandpipers at a spoil area in that state but near Savannah, GA, May 16 (SCa) Seldom reported in breeding plumage in the Region, a ♂ **Ruff** was present near Georgetown, SC, May 13–18 (BP, PA *et al.*), for about the 7th state record.

A Short-billed Dowitcher was quite early inland Mar. 19 at Clayton, GA (CL). Departure dates for Long-billed Dowitcher are poorly known, but two were believed rather late at North R., Carteret, NC, May 6 (JF *et al.*). In addition to the Wilson's Phalarope mentioned above, the only others reported were singles May 13 on the North Carolina coast at Eagle I. (JN, GM) and Beaufort (JF, BH, JC). A few Red-necked Phalaropes visit coastal ponds in spring, usually after storms; this season two were at a spoil pond at Eagle I., May 15 (JN) and one was at a similar site in South Carolina near Savannah, GA, on the same date (SCa). Seldom seen on land, a Red Phalarope was at a pond at Cape Hatteras point Mar. 12 (HLI, EL).

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — It was a lackluster season for jaegers, but a scarcity of pelagic trips had much to do with that condition. A Parasitic Jaeger seen at Avon, NC, Apr. 1 (RD) was earlier than most are reported (generally in May). Two Laughing Gulls were spotted in n. Georgia in Clayton May 7 (A.A.S.) and two at L. Lanier May 13–17 (JP), and singles were in inland North Carolina at Falls L. near Durham Apr. 23 (SG, DK, DSh) and near Greensboro May 15 (HH). South Carolina's 2nd recorded **Little Gull** appeared at Huntington Beach S.P. Mar. 23 (RK); both are sight records for March. In North Carolina, where almost predictable in early spring, two were at Ft. Macon S.P. Mar. 12 (JF, DS) and one was at Bodie I. Apr. 1 (RD). Common Black-headed Gulls were found only in the latter state: Mar. 2 near Aurora (SC) and May 19 near Corolla (RD, HL). Bonaparte's Gulls were more numerous than usual in the Atlanta area, although the peak count was just 30. Late was a Bonaparte's May 17 on L. Lanier, GA (JP), as were three near Greensboro May 15 (HH). The Lesser Black-backed Gull that appeared in Macon, GA, this winter was last noted in early March (TI), and another was found in that state at Tybee Beach Mar. 26 (DF, DCI). Apparently the 2nd inland record for the Region, and for North Carolina, was furnished by a first-year **Glaucous Gull** at Jordan L. May 7–10 and later (SB, SK, KK, m.ob.). Another Glaucous was very late at Belhaven, NC, May 21 (JB).

The best tally of inland Caspian Terns was of just five, at Plant Scherer in c. Georgia Apr. 29 (TJ). An amazingly large inland flock of 125+ Com. Terns was seen at Jordan L. May 9 (HL). Numbers of any tern species of this magnitude at an inland site are generally reserved for hurricane displacements in fall. Arctic Tern has a hypothetical status in South Carolina, and one seen off Charleston May 26 by a veteran observer, with no details provided, unfortunately did not alter the status. A Black Tern Apr. 3 at Ft. Macon (AW) practically defied belief on that date, whereas one at Cape Hatteras Apr. 24 (JF) was a more "normal" early date. The only inland Black Terns were three in Clayton May 16 (FM). Alcids are seldom reported in spring, and one wonders on what date a Razorbill found dead Mar. 17 at Cape Lookout, NC (JM), really died?

**CUCKOOS TO THRUSHES** — Six reports of Black-billed Cuckoos were received, about normal for the season; two each were seen/heard near Fayetteville, NC (PJC, DCh), and Greene, GA (PY), May 6. Not often reported in spring were a Short-eared Owl flushed near Athens, GA, Mar. 19 (JD) and a N Saw-whet Owl last seen at Buxton, NC, Apr. 6 (F & BT); the latter owl spent the winter in the observers' yard. Perhaps a slight extension of the breeding range was made for Whip-poor-will, which is expanding coastward as a nesting bird in the Region. A nest was at Silver Bluff Sanctuary, Aiken, SC

(PK), in May, two young were in the nest May 20 (AW *et al.*) Another was heard calling s. of Grard, GA, on the latter date (AW, VW). Also increasing in the Region are records of Rufous Hummingbird, as there are generally multiple reports each winter. An imm. male with "almost a complete rufous back" was last seen in Greenville, SC, Apr. 4 (PC), and an ad. male that wintered in the Atlanta area was last noted Mar. 6 (BTr)

Ever elusive as a migrant in the Southeast, single Olive-sided Flycatchers were encountered Apr. 29 near Dawsonville, GA (CL, HO) and May 11 near Charlotte (HW, HWh) Because Willow Flycatcher nests very sparingly in the upper Piedmont, reports of singing birds in spring need to be followed up in later weeks to determine if the birds are breeders. One was singing in Greene, GA, May 6 (PY) and two were singing May 13 (PY, PS), one was singing May 13 in Dawson, GA (JP), and one was near Greensboro May 19 (HH). Perhaps a breeding pair were two Gray Kingbirds at Jekyll I., GA, Apr. 29 (PB, HG, TM, PS). There was good news and bad news about the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Cartersville, GA. For the 3rd straight year, the species was present, but only one member of the breeding pair was seen in 1989 (M & CH). A vagrant Scissor-tailed was seen at Awendaw, Charleston, SC, May 29 (SCO).

A nest of Horned Lark was found at Moore, Greenville, SC, May 27 (GC), well within the breeding range but one of the few state reports of a nest. Sometimes I wonder if the people who compile range maps for field guides, such as the National Geographic Society's *Birds of North America*, ever read this magazine. Cliff Swallows have been nesting at many or most of the Piedmont's large reservoirs for a decade, but you wouldn't know this from the field guides. Not unexpectedly, active nests were found May 28 in Georgia at L. Oconee and L. Sinclair (PR). Ditto the above comments for Fish Crow. The field guides fail to indicate that this species essentially departs the Piedmont in winter; it is not a permanent resident. There were Fish Crow reports from 4 sites in n. Georgia, where breeding has yet to be confirmed; the peak count was of nine Mar. 25 near Atlanta (JV). Along the edge of the mountains was a pair of Com. Ravens noted at Tryon, NC, Apr. 6 (ST).

Only several inland reports of Sedge Wrens were received, including one Apr. 22 in n. York, SC (TP) that may have been the individual that wintered there. I realize that this is getting monotonous, but the migrant thrushes continue very scarce. Considering that the passerine flights were better than usual in the w. part of the Region, it seems to indicate that the populations simply are not what they were a decade ago. A singing Veery May 27 near Hamilton, NC (ML), was quite late. For 1989, a count of 25 Swainson's Thrushes May 6 at Atlanta (*vide* TM) was notable.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Amazingly, a Warbling Vireo was noted for the 4th consecutive year on territory e. of Scotland Neck, NC, Apr. 30 (ML, PL), far from the normal breeding range. The only other report for Warbling Vireo, which essentially avoids the Region in spring and fall, was at Greensboro May 13 (HLI, P.B.C.). Even rarer in spring than the previous species, a Philadelphia Vireo was seen Apr. 29 along the Chattahoochee R. near Atlanta (A.A.S.). Four Tennessee Warblers, two of which were singing, represented an excellent single-observer count where U.S. 1 crosses Deep R., NC, May 7 (AU), and another was also rare nearby at Jordan L., Apr. 30 (MG, DSh). There were 7 reports of Orange-crowned Warblers from n. Georgia, plus a few other inland sightings elsewhere; this is an uncommon and easily overlooked migrant, and its bland Palm Warbler/Chipping Sparrow song doesn't make it any more noticeable. Always notable, and often missed in spring, were single Nashville Warblers at Charlotte Apr. 30 (HW), in Newberry, SC, May 1 (RC *et al.*), and near Tucker, GA, May 14–15 (JS, CLam); two near Jordan L. May 7 were reported without details and might have been misidentifications.

A Chestnut-sided Warbler singing in late May at Caesar's Head S.P., SC (IP), was likely on territory. Another was notable

along the coast May 20 at Nags Head, NC (RiC). The better than average flight of warblers yielded a few more sightings of Blackburnian and Bay-breasted warblers. Blackburnians in the Coastal Plain, where rare, were at Augusta Apr. 29 and May 12 (AW, VW), at Bull's I., SC, May 7 (SCo), and at Pinehurst, NC, May 7-11 (JHC). Three Bay-breasteds at Weymouth Woods preserve near Southern Pines, NC, May 13 (LW) made a notable total. Seldom noted in spring near the coast, a Cerulean Warbler was singing at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Apr. 29 (PL) and two were singing near Aurora, NC, Apr. 26 (SC). The species is apparently locally common as a breeder along the edge of the Blue Ridge in Polk, NC, as four were at Warrior Mt. Apr. 28 (ST) and six were on Tryon Peak/Whiteoak Mt. Apr. 29 (HL, RD).

How does one explain an ad. ♂ Am. Redstart seen Mar. 15 at Tryon, NC (ST)? Davis noted a singing Worm-eating Warbler in typical pocosin breeding habitat along N.C. 211 w. of Southport, NC, May 27, indicating that the species presumably breeds nearby to the coast. Swainson's Warbler nests sparingly over parts of the Georgia Piedmont. Perhaps on territory were one singing in Oconee Apr. 25 and May 10 (PY), in Clarke May 23 (PY), near Pendergrass Apr. 29 (CL, HO), and at Shamrock L. May 7 & 31 (PR). One singing along the Deep R., n.e. Moore, NC, May 28 (JHC) furnished a rare Piedmont record for that state. Although I received reports for both Connecticut and Mourning warblers from the North Carolina mountains (outside the Region), the only one of these elusive birds from the Region was, amazingly, seen trying to land on a boat 10 mi off Wassaw Sound, GA, May 26 (BB)! A Wilson's Warbler at Augusta Mar. 14 (AW) was obviously an overwintering bird, as migrants do not arrive until the end of April. There were only several other sightings of this species.

**GROSBEAKS TO BLACKBIRDS** — Rare on the Georgia coast in spring was a ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak at a feeder on Cumberland I. May 18 (CD, MLD). Dickcissel reports were limited to just 2 sites, both locales where birds were present in 1988—near Townville, SC, where at least five males and a female were noted May 15-27 (PW) and May 12-13 in Saluda, SC (TK). Lark Sparrows, always good finds in spring, were noted Apr. 14 at both Bull's I., SC (CSm), and Athens, GA (BP), and one was at Ft. Fisher, NC, from winter to Mar. 25 (RD). Quite late was a Savannah Sparrow near the Savannah (!) spoil area, SC, May 19 (SCa). The Le Conte's Sparrow that wintered near Athens was last found Mar. 21 (JD, PS), but no

in Greene May 1, and another May 17—a record late date for Georgia—at Athens. Paget noted the species at Pendergrass Mar. 25 & 26 and Apr. 16 (same bird?), with the April bird heard singing. The only other Lincoln's were at Columbia, SC, Apr. 12 (TK) and near Goldsboro, NC, Mar. 11 (ED). Late in departing were White-crowned Sparrows at Oriental, NC, May 13 (DFoy) and at Pendergrass, GA, May 14 (JP). Hardly ever reported after March in the Region, a Lapland Longspur near Goldsboro Apr. 27 (ED) was about a month late.

Most unusual in spring on the Outer Banks were two Yellow-headed Blackbirds at a feeder in Salvo in the 2nd week of May (fide MaL). A ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird was also notable Apr. 22 near Commerce L., GA (JP).

Far east of the usual breeding range, which in North Carolina is primarily the n. mountains, was a pair of Northern Orioles on territory in May at Greenville (JW).

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#### S.A.

It was going to happen sooner or later, and for better or worse, it was sooner: the Region's first reports of **Shiny Cowbird**, all from Georgia, came this season. Unfortunately, all reports came secondhand *fide* Terry Moore, so I will hope that observers provided him with details. Two were noted mid-May on Cumberland I. (DSi), and one was present a week later (RM). Another was seen at Warner Robins Air Force Base in late May (DD). Finally, two were in a yard on Cumberland I. (same birds as above?) from late May into early June (CR). Apparently, none was photographed or collected; but it is likely that, with the expansion of the species in Florida, Georgians will get other opportunities for documentation in the next year or two.

others were reported. Sharp-tailed Sparrows typically are very late migrants in spring, with the coastal departure dates generally averaging between May 15-20, which also is the usual narrow window of dates for birds seen inland. Thus, two singing near Corncake Inlet, NC, May 26, almost certainly not breeders, were rather late but not extraordinarily so (JF).

An indicator of birding intensity is often reflected in the number of Lincoln's Sparrows reported; Yawkey and Paget in Georgia win honors for birding this spring! Yawkey noted one



SHAWNEEN FINNEGAN

# FLORIDA REGION

Richard T. Paul

Most of the decade has seen drier-than-normal conditions and routine comments in this column about delayed or reduced nesting efforts of colonial waterbirds. Last year brought an exception to this rule in south Florida, where unusually heavy summer rains swamped any concerns about drought conditions in 1989. This year there have been no exceptions. The eight-month dry season was pronounced throughout the state, and summer rains were insufficient to allow wetland systems to recover. Predictably, reports from all around the state noted the collapse of nesting efforts by herons, ibises, and storks. In the Everglades system, nesting populations dropped sharply from 1988 levels and colonies shifted to reflect the availability or the lack (mostly the lack) of standing water. Passerine nesting may also have been affected, but one observer thought the season shortened while another thought it extended! Maybe both were right.

A few late-arriving May reports are included . . .

**ABBREVIATIONS** — A.B.S. = Archbold Biological Station; C.S.M. = Clear Springs Mine; Corkscrew = Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary; E.N.P. = Everglades National Park; G.F.C. = Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission; "mines" = phosphate mines in w. Polk County; Merritt I. = Merritt Island Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; S.G.I. = St. George Island. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO FLAMINGOS** — A Com. Loon spent the first half of June on Lake Ella, a small municipal pond in Tallahassee (DY, JC). Another was seen in more conventional habitat off Aripeka June 20 (SR). East of Cape Canaveral, the good pelagic birding of spring continued through summer with 19 Cory's Shearwaters, one Audubon's Shearwater, and 42 Wilson's Storm-Petrels tallied in 5 trips (JJ, DC, MH). At S.G.I. three very out-of-season N. Gannets were seen July 24, flying east in the morning and west late in the day (NW). Summering Am. White Pelicans were reported from 5 scattered sites, with a high count of 550 from the phosphate mine district in w. Polk June 3 (PF, BPh). Brown Pelicans continued their strong population increase noted all decade; the statewide G.F.C. aerial survey recorded 34 active colonies and 12,300 nesting pairs—once again the largest number ever (SN). Three-quarters of the total were found on the Gulf coast. In contrast to the puzzling nest failures reported last year, nesting success was excellent at several sites (SN, RTP). Inland records of Brown Pelicans may be increasing, with two on Lake Jackson, Highlands, June 13 & 15 (Robert Curry) and one July 16 at Lake Alfred (JW).

Least Bitterns were abundant this summer in the mine district, with 30 counted July 2 (PF, PT). On June 21 two juv. Least were found foraging in cattails at Key West (JO), an unusual breeding locality. A wandering "Great White" Heron was found at Orange Park along the St. Johns R. June 18 (LM). Also at the mines, the July 23 count of 778 Snowy Egrets was the season high (PF, DF). Reddish Egrets turned up at 2 interesting sites. An adult foraging at Alligator Point, Franklin, June 1 displayed the sharply bicolor bill typical of breeding birds—but was 180 mi from the nearest known breeding locality (JAR). Likewise, a June 17 count of 15+ including three "juveniles" (PWS) was a very high count for the Crocodile Lakes (Upper Keys) area, and suggested nesting in nearby Card Sound, where breeding has not been confirmed. Five Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were found 20 mi offshore from Cape Canaveral June 18 (JJ, DC, MH), an unusual pelagic



sighting.

White Ibis numbers at Alafia Bank in Tampa Bay held steady at 4000 pairs, well below the numbers expected in a wetter year (RTP). Despite roosting at the Marco Rookery throughout the decade, Glossy Ibises have not nested until this year, when TB found 3 pairs. Roseate Spoonbills maintained their tiny foothold at Merritt I., with 4 nests again this year (RS). Inland, an imm. spoonbill at Gainesville June 30 furnished the 2nd area record in 2 years (Elizabeth VanMierop). Eighteen Am. Flamingos—including 15 subadults—were found June 10 on the mud flats of interior Cape Sable, an unusual location (JCO). Usually they are at Snake Bight, east of Flamingo.

**WATERFOWL, HAWKS** — Breeding of Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at Zellwood was confirmed July 21 when a female with four young was found (JJ, DC, MH). Two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks at C.S.M. July 11 were, if not escapes, the

## S.A.

Nowhere were wading bird nesting problems better documented than in the Everglades system, where use of wetlands by herons and ibises is the object of considerable research. Traditionally, most nesting in this system has occurred late in the dry season when prey was most concentrated. This year, a May survey "revealed a new all-time low dry season estimate of 4200 wading birds for the mainland region south of the Tamiami Trail" (JCO). Not only were they not nesting, they were not even there. At Loxahatchee N.W.R., White Ibises declined from last year's big effort of 8800 pairs to zero (RLP). Wood Storks did not attempt to nest at Corkscrew at all (PH), while elsewhere in s. Florida 550 pairs nesting at 6 small colonies produced about as many young (JCO).

first recorded for Polk (Tim King, Jim Friertag) For the 2nd straight year, 2 pairs of Canada Geese nested successfully on the Barthle Bros. Ranch northwest of Darby in n. Pasco. The origin of the birds was unknown, and they disappeared as soon as the young could fly (BPr). Four Wood Ducks made a rare Dade appearance June 25 on the Tamiami Trail (DO). Perhaps reflecting a local increase, 169 Mottled Ducks at the phosphate mines July 23 represented a high count (PF, DF). Blue-winged Teal apparently summered at several sites in c. Florida, with a pair reported from e. Orange on June 4 suggesting local breeding (TR). An Am. Wigeon and two Lesser Scaup at the mines June 10 were summer rarities for Polk (PF), while Ruddy Ducks, now regular at the same site, nested again with at least three families confirmed (PF, BPh).

The huge roost of Am. Swallow-tailed Kites near L. Okeechobee normally peaks at or just after the end of the period. This year 1000 birds were estimated in late July, somewhat below numbers of the last 2 years—possibly owing to disturbance by airboaters (BAM). Perhaps some moved to the Corkscrew roost discovered in 1988, where the peak count of 350 birds July 28 was 67% above last year's high (Keith Benson). In a welcome new study of Swallow-tailed Kite nesting success, 80% of the nests fledged young, with productivity averaging 1.26 young/active nest (Ken Meyer). Kites were considered very scarce in the Orlando area, though (DWF), with one observation particularly telling: a pair seen in March, flying low over a stand of pine flatwoods that was bulldozed a week later (D. Wilson Freeman). Although 500 Snail Kites were counted in the midwinter census, 53% over the previous year's high, nesting was below normal owing to drought conditions. In fact, there was none at all in the Conservation Areas, previously the key breeding areas. A few pairs began nesting late in the period at E. Lake Tohopekaliga, for the first time in recent decades (JAR). With nesting down, one might expect a spate of vagrant sightings; in fact there was just one: a male present throughout the period in a ditch in the old Loveland Slough east of the E.N.P. entrance near Homestead (BR, JCO et al.). A Mississippi Kite nest found near Cedar Key in mid-June (SF) marked a southern extension of breeding range, while a single bird seen June 14 at the Barthle Bros. Ranch furnished the 2nd Pasco record (BPr).

If you were not sure yet, Bald Eagles are clearly increasing. The G.F.C. statewide survey tallied 439 active pairs and 474 young produced, both new highs (SN). Not nesting but apparently very enthused about Florida anyway, the N. Harrier seen July 13 near Homestead was an exceptionally early returnee (JCO, BR). Four Cooper's Hawk sightings at 3 localities raised suspicions of nesting in Pasco (BPr, SR, PY, DR), while an adult with three young seen June 1 confirmed it for e. Orange (TR). An imm. Broad-winged Hawk at Key West July 7 was a summertime surprise (CW), while the Short-tailed Hawk seen July 8 in Homestead's Redlands district was the only report of this very scarce resident (JCO).

**RAILS TO SANDPIPERS** — A G.F.C. survey recorded Black Rails at 4 n. Florida refuges, notably St. Vincent N.W.R., where up to 10 singing males were found in April and May (Doug Runde, Rochelle Rankin, RW) and nesting was suspected. For the 2nd straight year, a Black Rail was heard at Payne's Prairie on June 1 (SN). Another was heard—twice—at Lake Tohopekaliga May 14, but the songster was a N. Mockingbird (RT)! Meanwhile, a King Rail with downy young in e. Orange June 4 confirmed nesting there (TR), and a Purple Gallinule with brood June 14 established the first Merritt I. breeding record (DC et al.). On easy street in Key West was the Purple Gallinule that spent 2 weeks in June in Ondrejko's backyard, fattening on white millet. Rare nesters in the mines area, at least three families of Am. Coots were found in June (PF, PT). Sandhill Crane nesting got off to a good start in n. Florida, with wetlands in good condition in March. But as they dried out, many young were lost to predation, and final productivity was only average (SN).

Good news for plover lovers, Snowy Plovers were found with young or territories at 4 localities, and Wilson's Plovers at 3, on S.G.I. during the week of May 15 (BHS). These were more breeding locations than expected, but all are threatened by continuing development and beach use (fide RW). Another pair of Snowies was at n. Longboat Key June 2 and again July 2, but no breeding activity was observed (SR). Five Sempalmated Plovers were at Port Canaveral July 22, a typical early date (MH, JJ); while a Piping Plover on Lower Matecumbe Key July 23 must have been one of the earliest on record for s. Florida (WH). Killdeer nested on 8 rooftops in the Orlando area, in each case with Least Terns (HK, GB).

For the 2nd time, Black-necked Stilts nested at Payne's Prairie: four birds and at least one nest were observed from May 4 to June 2, success unknown (James E. Weimer, m.ob.) Among early southbound migrants were an Upland Sandpiper at Florida City July 15 (CM) and a Long-billed Curlew in Tampa Bay July 8 (RTP). At S.G.I. on July 27, 128 Sanderlings made a high count but were thought to be only a fraction of actual numbers present (NW). Rare summer visitors, four Pectoral Sandpipers were at the mines June 10 (PF). Zellwood was a hot spot for shorebirds on July 21, with 14 Pectorals, 15 Stilt Sandpipers, and three Long-billed Dowitchers seen (JJ, MH, KB, JD).

**GULLS TO SKIMMER** — Two Laughing Gulls, an adult and a juvenile, were seen at Orange Lake July 22 (RR). Primarily coastal in summer, they were perhaps carried inland by the severe storms of that date. A single Laughing Gull nest was found May 20 at Bartrams I., near Jacksonville in the St. Johns River, where they are rare nesters (LB). A few Ring-billed Gulls normally linger along the coast, but three at the mines July 2 were unusual (PF, PT). Six Gull-billed Terns, which have nested there in small numbers, were also seen at the mines on that date (PF, PT). A few Gull-billed were also seen at the S.G.I. Least Tern colony, date unknown (HS).

Scarce summer visitors inland, single Caspian Terns were seen at Orange Lake July 22 (RR) and at Little Lake Santa Fe, Alachua, throughout July (LL). About 45 pairs of Caspians nested again in Tampa Bay, down a bit from last year (RTP), but Royal and Sandwich terns at Passage Key N.W.R. increased to 1825 and an astounding 200 pairs, respectively (RTP). About 2250 pairs of Royals also nested at the Nassau Sound Bird Islands (PS). Sixty pairs of Roseate Terns with eggs were counted on a Marathon condominium rooftop May 26 (SS, WH), with young fledging by early July (KSS). At Pelican Shoal near Key West, the Roseate colony was posted and 225 pairs (plus 12 pairs of Leasts) nested successfully (SS). Three Roseates were seen near the Seven Mile Bridge June 3 (PWS), and one 30 mi east of Cape Canaveral June 23, where JJ enjoyed a view from 10 feet. Five Common Terns at S G I July 27 were the first of the fall (NW).

Rooftop Least Tern colonies were reported from S. Ponte Vedra Beach (PP), Port Richey (BPr), Tampa (RTP), Key Largo (KSS), Sanford (GB), DeLand (GB), and Orlando (8 sites, largest 75 pairs—HK, GB). Five colonies at natural sites near Marco I. totalled 1000 pairs, with nesting success estimated to exceed one chick per pair (TB)! In n.e. Florida, 300 pairs of Leasts nested at 3 colonies near Jacksonville and another 60 nested at 2 near St. Augustine (LB, PS, BSP, Bob Steiger).

Bridled and Sooty terns were observed over the Gulf Stream off Miami May 27 (VE). Bridleds were also seen east of Cape Canaveral June 26 (four birds—JJ) and at the edge of the reef south of Stock I. July 22 (BN). Migrant Black Terns stopping at the mines peaked at 587 birds July 23, a very high count (PF, DF). Reports of Black Skimmer colonies included 200 pairs at Island 3D in Tampa Bay (RTP), 175 pairs at Passage Key (RTP), and 150 pairs in the Marco area (TB). The latter was highly successful, producing about 1.25 young per pair.

**PIGEONS TO SWALLOWS** — Remarkably, 120+ White-crowned Pigeons were seen feeding on white millet in a Key West backyard June 9 (JO). That must be good stuff! Perhaps



more expected, a new population of Eurasian Collared-Doves was found July 20 in Hudson, including newly fledged young (BPr). For the 2nd year in a row, White-winged Doves were heard calling from scrub habitats at A.B.S. (m.ob.). No nests were found, but the observation implies that they are beginning to nest in undisturbed habitats in the area. Until now, they were found primarily in residential areas and citrus groves (FL; see also AB 39:904). Two Mourning Dove nests were found in mid-May on S.G.I., where apparently they have not nested previously (BHS).

Burrowing Owls continued to turn up in new localities. At the Barthle Bros. Ranch in n.-c. Pasco, an area rich in wildlife, 10–12 owl burrows were found June 14 (BPr). Pranty called it the largest and best protected owl population in the county. Undocumented but astonishing if correct, a Short-eared Owl was reported from s. Dade, where it survived a June 21 collision with a car and was released some time after the end of the period (BK). The date would be unprecedented for s. Florida (*vide* WB). Amid hundreds of Common Nighthawks at the Delray Training Center this season, CP suspected a few Lessers. Anyone want to help check them next year?

Chimney Swifts again summered in Homestead, with two to four birds present through the period (JCO). Swifts were confirmed nesting at several sites near West Palm Beach (CP). For the 3rd time in 4 years a Ruby-throated Hummingbird nest was found at Corkscrew, with two young produced (PH). Even farther south, on June 17, was the pair thought to be nesting along the Loop Road (DL *et al.*). At 3 sites east of Orlando, several ♀ Ruby-throateds were found in June, but no nests (TR, HK, BC). A Belted Kingfisher at West Lake May 18 furnished an extremely late E.N.P. record (JCO), while another at Stock Island July 28 was a very early returnee for s. Florida (CW).

Three singing ♂ Acadian Flycatchers, two at the Little Wekiva R. throughout the period (BS) and one in e. Orange June 12 (TR), suggested nesting. Several reports of large flocks of Purple Martins were reported from St. Marks Light to Key West, with the topper from Gainesville where J.W. Hardy again found a roost of thousands on July 26. A Bahama Swallow was observed throughout the period at Cutler Ridge (m.ob.), while separate observations of N. Rough-winged Swallows feeding young in April and May furnished 2 Polk nesting records of this scarce breeder (CG, PF). An imm. Cliff Swallow with Cave Swallows at Cutler Ridge July 15 (PWS) defied explanation. Barn Swallows continued their range expansion, with nests reported 6 mi south of Micanopy May 18 (BPM, LL) and at Bailey's Bluff June 29 (BPr, PY).

**JAYS TO WARBLERS** — Are Blue Jays extending their range in the Keys? Formerly sporadic there, they were confirmed nesting on Key Largo (mile marker 103), and two spent the summer on Plantation Key (KSS). Blue Jays were also seen on S.G.I. June 12 (two birds) & 20 (one), where a small population had previously disappeared (JR). The only known Scrub Jays surviving in Pasco were found on the Barthle Bros. Ranch, where "numerous" scattered families including fledged young were seen June 14 (BPr, SR, DG). Extending their spring stay, two Fish Crows were seen at Key West June 20 (JO).

Based on field work throughout the period, Pranty exuberantly reported "literally hundreds" of Marian's Marsh Wrens, a localized race, in *Juncus* marshes north of New Port Richey. A Gray Catbird was singing July 7 in shrubby sand pines in n.e. Madison, where the species is rare in summer; no nest was found (HMS).

Vireos were a puzzle to Neville in s. Florida. At the Deering Estate south of Miami, habitat loaded with White-eyed most of the year had none in summer—only Black-whiskered Vireos (VE). Conversely, at a hammock in Marathon, BN found White-eyed Vireo nests common but no Black-whiskered, although they were singing within a mile of the site. Of course, Black-whiskered have posed a puzzle on the Gulf coast for the past 5 years (see previous summer reports). Happily, this year brought reports of at least 2 pairs and one or more singing

males from scattered Tampa Bay sites (DG, Marjorie Wilkerson, Gail Parsons). The lone Red-eyed Vireo reported was a singing male at S.G.I. found June 12 but not thereafter (JR).

In Florida we have two breeding races of Prairie Warbler, the widely distributed *discolor* of the eastern U.S. and the coastal, highly restricted *paludicola*. Singing males were found in Madison on May 26 and June 30 (RW, JR) near the southern range limit of the northern race. In coastal Pasco, Prairies sang throughout the summer in mangroves from Port Richey to Hudson (SR). Pranty estimated 50 pairs at the Anclote Keys July 10 (BPr, PY) and perhaps an equal number in the rest of the county. Black-and-white Warblers put in typically early fall appearances in s. Florida, with two seen July 27–31 at the Deering Estate (VE) and two at Key West July 27 (CW). A ♀ Am. Redstart in e. Orange June 2 was "out of season," or maybe only a late spring migrant. Another in Coral Gables July 26 was a normally early southbound bird (DO). Prothonotary Warblers were feeding young in e. Orange June 8 (TR) and on the Loop Rd. in e. Collier June 17 & 19, at the southern extremity of breeding range (m.ob.). A water-thrush heard chipping in Homestead July 4 was, from the date, almost certainly an early Louisiana (JCO). Two singing Kentucky Warblers along the Crooked R. June 7 were 25 mi east of the only known Franklin locality (RW). And why were two singing Yellow-breasted Chats on Dog Island, an unlikely breeding location (RW)?

**GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES** — Blue Grosbeaks and Indigo Buntings made a major move into central Pasco this season. They were found in virtually every abandoned orange grove or overgrown field checked (SR, BPr, m.ob.). Pranty estimated 50–100 singing ♂ Indigos from Spring Hill to San Antonio alone, all in old citrus groves. At Mims on July 22, a ♂ Blue Grosbeak, 2 pairs of Indigo Buntings, and four singing Painted Buntings were probably also breeding (GB, CF).

Two Chipping Sparrows found 2 mi northwest of Sumatra, Liberty, June 25 provided the first known summer records for the county (S.M. Jones). A Grasshopper Sparrow was found singing in palm savannah at Three Lakes W.M.A. near the Kissimmee River May 30 (RT). More information on this Endangered subspecies is urgently needed! About 30 Cape Sable Seaside Sparrows were found near Mahogany Hammock, E.N.P., June 11 (PWS). They began singing late this year, presumably because of the drought. Scott's Seaside Sparrows were common and carrying food in Aripeka in June (PY); Pranty suggested little change in abundance since Howell's time—1932!

Cowbirds are breaking out all over. At Ondrejko's feeder in Key West, 13 Shiny Cowbirds were counted June 1 and nine on June 8, but none after July 27. Neville called the records in s. Florida "too numerous to track," noting particularly their abundance at CM's Florida City home through the period. Three were seen June 30 well to the north at Anclote Key, Pasco, including a pair and a singing male (BPr, PY). The news for Brown-headed Cowbirds was similar. Two fledglings being fed by Prairie Warblers and Black-whiskered Vireos, respectively, were found at Flamingo July 3 (MW, JG, PWS), while at Corkscrew another was fed by a N. Cardinal in June (m.ob.). Other sightings included up to 18 seen daily at the Corkscrew feeder during June (PH), two flying over A.B.S. June 6 (G.E. Woolfenden), five at Anclote Key July 10 (BPr, PY), and 20 in a plowed field east of Tampa July 18 (RTP).

An Orchard Oriole in song at the E.N.P. Research Center June 26, but not thereafter, was a puzzling occurrence (JCO, BR), while a pair of N. Orioles building a nest May 15 provided the first breeding evidence for S.G.I. (BHS). Two, possibly three, broods of **House Finches** in Tallahassee in June represented the first breeding records for Florida (NW, DY). They were also seen at 3 other sites in the area (NW, Daan Sandee) and are now regular in summer. Three Am. Goldfinches at a feeder June 21 at Apalachicola provided the 2nd-latest spring record for the Tallahassee division (JR).

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## ONTARIO REGION

Ron D. Weir



Ontario's weather was without extreme conditions lasting for any period during the summer. South of Sudbury, June was wet but not excessively so and was followed by a dry July. The freak local rainstorm in the extreme southwest July 20 dumped a record 25.0 cm and 17.5 cm on Harrow and Leamington respectively to create ideal, albeit temporary, habitat for migrant waders. Conditions farther north were conducive to an average production of Canada and Snow geese along the coasts of Hudson and James Bays and to excellent production of bluebirds and swallows. Severe outbreaks of tent caterpillars south of the latitude of Algonquin Provincial Park apparently led to the abundance of Black-billed Cuckoos. The massive displacement of waterfowl and Dickcissels experienced last summer was not detected this year, suggesting a less severe drought in those areas from which the emigration occurred.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Pelee = Point Pelee National Park and vicinity; Algonquin and Presqu'ile are provincial parks. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO HERONS** — Five ad. Red-throated Loons, apparently late migrants, were in Neys P.P. near Marathon June 2 (SO *et al.*), and lone non-breeders appeared at Pelee June 4 (RPI) and Black Rapids, Leeds, July 29 (WC). Some 46 of the 48 Com. Loons together in L. Erie off Fisherville July 14 were oversummering immatures (JBM, G & SP). The only nest of Pied-billed Grebe reported was at Stoney Pt., Essex, June 26 (AW). Up to 12 non-breeding Red-necked Grebes lingered in L. Ontario off Mississauga June 10–Aug. 1 (BJ, CM) in what may be an annual phenomenon. Well e. of range was the lone Eared Grebe in breeding plumage at Grand Bend July 30 (AHR, CB). Three single Am. White Pelicans were e. of range at Pelee June 11 (CHM, MK), Sky Lake, Bruce, June 24 (JBM *et al.*), and Sault Ste. Marie July 13–Aug. 4 (TDM *et al.*). Summer surveys of Double-crested Cormorant revealed 64 colonies and 11,000+ active nests on the Canadian Great Lakes (DVW, AJ, CAB), as the species continues to prosper.

Only five Great Egrets were noted away from the southwest. These singles were along Toronto's waterfront June 12–30 (AD, DD), n. to Thornbury, Grey (DNB), and e. to Presqu'ile June 3 (AB, WH), Kingston June 3 (JHE, RDW), and Amherst



*Cattle Egret at Point Pelee, Ontario, June 1, 1989. Photograph/ Alan Wormington.*

I. June 8, the latter bird found dead (JH). The adult and imm. Snowy Egrets reported this spring from Clarkson's Rattray marsh remained there to June 30 (TH, DP), but were thought to be the same birds seen occasionally on the Toronto Islands during June (MWD). The only sighting of a Little Blue Heron was at Ferguson Falls near Carleton Place during July (RPH). Continuing to be elusive during summer, single Cattle Egrets were the immature at Pelee June 1 (SM), a holdover from spring, and one near Meaford June 29 (AWx et al.). The expanding cormorant colony in e. Hamilton Bay has reduced by half the nest numbers of Black-crowned Night-Herons (KAM). Farther east at Kingston, where the cormorants have usurped completely some night-heron islands, the latter species flourishes at new colonies nearby (K.F.N.).

**WATERFOWL TO CRANES** — Two Snow Geese (blue morph) appeared at Toronto's e. Headland July 1 (AJ), unusual in the south during summer. The pair of Canada Geese with four young at Haliburton during June represented the first nesting for that area (RJP). At Port Perry June 9 (AGC), two ad. Canadas attended 51 goslings in what was either phenomenal fecundity or devoted daycare, but probably the latter. The 1000 Am. Black Ducks at the Townsend sewage lagoon Aug. 6 (MT) made a noteworthy group for the early date. Single ♂ Eur. Wigeons tarried from spring at sewage ponds in Lindsay to June 1 (JM et al.) and Port Perry to June 3 (MJB), while a new one appeared at Bright's Grove June 4 (AHR). Rare for the Hamilton area was the breeding Am. Wigeon with nine young at Winona July 3–30 (KAM).

Single Canvasbacks were ad. males at Essex July 1 (AW) and Pinery P.P. July 2 (AHR) and a female at Long Pt. July 3 (RDM). Fewer than 10 pairs are thought to breed annually in the province, and most of these are in the southwest. Noteworthy concentrations for summer were the 126 Redheads at Mitchell's Bay lagoons June 26 (AW)—a species whose summering members are increasing gradually—and 150 Ring-necked Ducks, mostly males, at Thunder Bay July 9 (AGH, CPH). Late Surf Scoters were two June 3 in Presqu'île and one June 8–9 in Algonquin, where rare at any time (JSK, MR, RGT). The one in L. Ontario off Bronte June 27 (MJ) provided the first midsummer sighting in the south during this decade. The two ♀ Buffleheads at Bright's Grove June 5 were late (AHR), and the male at Pickering July 9–29 was most unusual

for the date (BH). A lone ♀ Red-breasted Merganser appeared July 17 in Algonquin, where rare (RGT). Nesting Ruddy Ducks were reported from Hullett near Clinton (RG), and Port Perry where nine young were present July 31 (MJB, BH). A 2nd-year male oversummered at the Tavistock lagoons for the first time (JMH).

The 21 Turkey Vultures roosting on a hydro tower within Algonquin July 18 reflected increased numbers there (DT), as the species continues to prosper throughout the south. Pelee's nesting pair returned to the park for the 2nd year (fide AW), and successful nests were monitored in Bruce (JWJ), Middlesex (DM), and Peterborough (HW, AGC et al.). Nesting Cooper's Hawks were reported at Long Pt. and in Oxford, Waterloo, and Lambton. Red-shouldered Hawk numbers remained strong in the heart of the nesting range with numerous nests in Frontenac and Leeds. Three pairs were in Algonquin during June (JSk), but farther south in Waterloo no birds could be found. The adult at Rainy R. June 3 was a good find (AGC). An ad. Red-tailed Hawk resembling the pale "Kridler's" form of the Great Plains appeared at Rainy R. June 5 (AW, WL). The typical average of one Golden Eagle every other summer paled by comparison with this season's nine birds. In addition to an active nest in the south, the sightings were from Grey, Bruce, York, Amherst I., Leeds, and Lanark. The only Merlin noted s. of the breeding range was the single at Whitby July 29 (DG).

The only report of the elusive King Rail was of a male in Black Creek swamp June 15 for Oxford's 4th record (JMH). Noteworthy Sandhill Cranes were the pair oversummering near Magnetawan, Parry Sound, again (fide JKM), and a pair at Long Pt. to mid-July (L.P.B.O.).

**SHOREBIRDS** — The spring movement of littorals continued into early June as usual. Sightings at Presqu'île dominated the late reports with a Whimbrel June 4; two Sanderlings June 12; single Semipalmated Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, and Semipalmated Sandpiper June 14; and nine White-rumped Sandpipers and a Dunlin June 17 (IR). The ad. Greater Yellowlegs at Rossport June 10 was late (AW, WL), as were the two Lesser Yellowlegs at Amherst I. and one at Rainy R. June 7 (W & JB, AW, WL et al.), and the lone Pectoral Sandpiper at Thunder Bay June 3 (AW et al.). White-rumped Sandpipers, scarce spring migrants in Ontario, included one at Emo June 6 (AGC) and two on Manitoulin I. June 13 (AJ). The three Baird's Sandpipers also represented a strong showing for spring; they were singles at Port Perry June 4 (DMA), Bright's Grove June 4–5 (AHR), and Thunder Bay June 6 (RD, KAM, GN). Also rare for spring in Ontario was the Buff-breasted Sandpiper seen on Sable I. June 7 (AW et al.). Noteworthy among the phalaropes was the high count of 153 Wilson's in the Rainy R. lagoons June 5 (AW, WL et al.) and one Red-necked in the Lindsay lagoons June 3 (FH, JC). Among the non-breeding imm. shorebirds summering in the south were Lesser Golden-Plover at Hagersville July 24 (WL) and Red Knot at Aldershot July 1 (KAM).

Piping Plovers numbered six in the Rainy R. area June 3–8 (fide AW). One unmated territorial male remained at Long Pt. to mid-June and another appeared there June 15 (L.P.B.O.). The ♂ **Black-necked Stilt** at the Stoney Pt. sewage lagoon May 29–31 lingered into early June (HGC, DD) and was joined by a 2nd bird (MPW). Later an ad. female tarried at the North Bay lagoons June 12–23 (ph. RT et al.). These birds raised to only six the total of provincial sightings since the first in 1955. Single Willets, rare in summer, were at Pelee June 8–10 (DC et al.), Collingwood June 18 (DNB), and Long Pt. July 29 (JMH). The agitated pair of Marbled Godwits near Rainy R. June 2–3 (AGC) suggested that breeding occasionally occurs in the remnant prairie sections of the Region. Its principal breeding area in Ontario lies along the west coast of James Bay.

A possible **Rufous-necked Stint** was at Fort Erie July 30 (KJR, AJS). The observers' description appeared thorough for this Asian wader. One previous sighting occurred in 1976

during July (W.E. Godfrey, *Birds of Canada*, 1986, p. 220). The three Ruffs tied the summer record set in 1984. This summer's birds were males at Richmond sometime during the week of June 28–July 3 (white ruff) (MPW), Smithville July 3 (chestnut orange) (KAM et al.), and another at Smithville July 3–15 (black and white) (KAM et al.).

Post-breeding adult shorebirds arrived throughout the south from late June onward. Earliest ever dates were set in e. Ontario at Kingston for Least Sandpiper July 1 (JHE, RDW) and Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, and White-rumped Sandpiper July 5 (PG et al.), and in the southwest at Pelee for Hudsonian Godwit July 23–31 (AW et al.) and Baird's Sandpiper July 26 (AW). Other noteworthy arrivals were the ad. Lesser Golden-Plover at Ruscom Shores, Essex, July 1 (AW), an ad. Semipalmated Plover at Hamilton July 6 (AJ), a Western Sandpiper in Hamilton Bay July 16 (AJ, SP), three ad. Whimbrels at Pelee July 23 (AW), an ad. Least Sandpiper at Bright's Grove June 29 (AHR), and a juv. Least Sandpiper at Presqu'île July 20 (AJ). The 95 Stilt Sandpipers in the extreme south July 13–31 compared with last year's total that presaged an extremely heavy autumn passage. Single ad. Long-billed Dowitchers were at Port Perry July 13–18 (RJP et al.) and Long Pt. July 29 (JMH).

**JAEGERS TO TERNS** — One Pomarine Jaeger and one Parasitic Jaeger were reported along the Hudson Bay coast at Winisk July 31 (CTB). Farther south at Pelee, a dark morph ad. Parasitic was seen migrating over L. Erie from Pelee July 30 (AW), a record early date by 18 days. The ad. Laughing Gull in Ottawa sometime during the week of June 12–18 (BMD) brought the province's total to 10 birds over the past 8 summers. Four single Franklin's Gulls were in the south during the period, representing a respectable number. They were an adult at Goderich June 9 (WT, LT), one in Ottawa between June 12 & 18 (BMD), an adult near Wheatley Harbour June 30 (AW), and an immature at the Townsend lagoons July 22–29 (JBM, C & MP). Little Gulls nested again on N. Limestone I., Perry Sound, where seven adults and 2 nests were present June 7 (ph. AF, DVW, CAB). The ad. Iceland Gull noted at Marathon in the spring report remained until June 2 (AW, WL). Other white-winged gulls were single Glaucous Gulls at Kettle Pt. July 15 (AHR) and Winisk July 31 (CTB). Seven Lesser Black-backed Gulls appeared July 10–30, including four at Pelee (AW) and singles at Wildwood, Oxford (JMH), Whitby (JLV) and Pickering (BH). They were identified to plumage classes as follows: two in first-summer, one in 2nd-summer, three in 3rd-summer, and one in adult summer plumages. [Third-summer plumage would ordinarily be scarcest in the total population; the high proportion reported here could include some adults retaining immature-like plumage characters, as often happens with large gulls—K.K.] Forster's Terns numbered up to 50 at Pelee June 12–24 (AW et al.) and up to 20 at Kettle Pt. June 10–July 22 (AHR). The two adults near Woodstock July 31 provided the 5th Oxford sighting (JMH).

**CUCKOOS TO THRUSHES** — For the 2nd consecutive summer, Black-billed Cuckoos were in high numbers in several counties: Haldimand–Norfolk, Huron, Peterborough, Lennox–Addington, Frontenac, Leeds, and Rainy River. In some of these, tent caterpillar numbers reached their seven-year high. Yellow-billed Cuckoos were numerous in the Long Pt. area and in Oxford. The Chuck-will's-widow that found itself well north of range during May in Presqu'île remained to June 12 (Jsk, DW et al.). Two calling Whip-poor-wills were noted in the Thunder Bay area June 28–July 7 and July 15 (NGE et al., SW), where the species is now reported rarely in contrast to a common status during the 1950s. Farther west at Quetico P.P., one was found July 12, providing only the 4th park record (SFP). Oxford's first confirmed nesting of Red-bellied Woodpeckers occurred this summer (JMH), and a pair overwintered again at Presqu'île (SML).



*One of the nesting pair of Western Kingbirds at Rainy River, Ontario, June 4, 1989. Photograph/Alan Wormington.*

Acadian Flycatchers overwintered at 3 locations in Oxford, one of which was new (JMH). Only one was noted in the Long Pt. area during June (L.P.B.O.) and another was at a known site at Wallacetown, Elgin, June 22 (AW). North of range was an Acadian at Presqu'île June 3 (IR). The nesting pair of **Western Kingbirds** had returned by June 2–3 to Rainy R., where the two nested during the past 2 summers (*vide* AGC, AW). In addition, a different bird was found at a new site near Rainy R. June 8 (AW, RBHS). Farther east at Thunder Bay, an imm. **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was found June 19 (RS, PS), providing Ontario's 10th summer record in the past 14 years. Thanks to suitable weather conditions, nesting success of Tree Swallows in Temiskaming returned to normal at Matachewan, where 329 young fledged from 91 nest boxes with 40 dead young (LT), one-sixth of the mortality rate of last summer. The pair of N. Rough-winged Swallows building a nest at Dorion June 10 (AW, WL) was at the northern edge of its range. Peak tallies of post-breeding Bank Swallows were at Long Pt., where 18,000 were present July 19 and 80,000 July 29 (TW, JMH).

South of the established nesting range was the young Gray Jay in Bon Echo P.P. June 17 (WB, RW), thought to have hatched in the area. Results from the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas 1981–1985 suggested no more than a dozen pairs of Black-billed Magpies breed in the province, all of them in the Rainy R. Area. It is of interest, in view of this species' expansion since the 1970s, that 14 breeding locations were noted this June in the westernmost part of Rainy River (AW, WL et al.). Maturing coniferous habitat in Oxford is evidently responsible for the appearance of Red-breasted Nuthatches at 5 new sites, Winter Wrens at 3 new locations, and rising numbers of Golden-crowned Kinglets (JMH). Building on its increased survival rate from warm recent winters, extensive successful breeding was enjoyed by the Carolina Wren in s.w. Ontario. At least 100 birds were present at Pelee in the period (AW). Some of the other successful nestings were noted at sites in Oxford, Middlesex, Niagara, and Scarborough.

The ♂ Winter Wren on territory in Pelee June 12–July 11 furnished a first summer record for the park (AW et al.). Farther north at Thunder Bay, a ♂ Marsh Wren singing on territory from July 1 was followed with interest, since no breeding record is known for the area (NGE et al.). A produc-

tive nesting season with increased numbers was noted for the E. Bluebird over widespread areas including Rainy R., Temiskaming, Perth, Oxford, Waterloo, Wellington, Peterborough, Lennox & Addington, Frontenac, and Leeds. The three young fledged at Pelee June 12 represented the first breeding record there in decades (RF, VF). Early migrant Swainson's Thrushes were at Long Pt. July 22 (L.P.B.O.) and Kingston's Garden I. July 23 (AJ, LW, DVW).

**MOCKINGBIRD TO WARBLERS**—The N. Mockingbird is another of the Carolinian species in Ontario to benefit from a succession of mild winters. Increased numbers were reported in the traditional southwest as far east as Kingston, where at least 7 pairs were present (K.F.N.). Another surge northward has occurred, as singles were at Virginiatown June 19 (PWR) and Moosonee June 6 & 25 (RSt). At Thunder Bay, where a territorial male sang June 10, three birds were present July 12 (SVP, WSC). The Loggerhead Shrike picture was incomplete at the time of writing. The available information showed that 2 pairs nested near Frankville, Leeds (N.L.B.), as did 4 pairs around Kingston, 3 of which fledged young (K.F.N.). Two pairs of White-eyed Vireos summered at Port Stanley, but a nest was not found (RJK, WJR), and a lone male was at Dundas June 8 (RFi). An unmated ♂ Solitary Vireo at Arthur June 18–July 16 (RVT) was thought to provide a first summer occurrence for Wellington.

Expansion of the Blue-winged Warbler range continued to occur in the southwest at the expense of the Golden-winged. In s. Oxford, 11 new pairs of Blue-wingeds were found, and in n. Oxford, the 8 pairs were unprecedented as they moved into the largest colony of Golden-wingeds (6 pairs) left in the county (JMH). Along the Grand R., Waterloo, 12+ pairs of Blue-wingeds now outnumber the 2 pairs of Golden-wingeds (TC, VM). One ♂ Magnolia Warbler summered in Oxford for a 2nd summer record (JMH). Four ♂ Pine Warblers were discovered as part of the Forest Bird Monitoring Programme w. of Thunder Bay June 3 (fide NGE). The species is rare in the district. The ♂ Prairie Warbler in Mississauga June 6 was out of place (DP) and very rare for the location. Important summer surveys of Hooded Warbler habitat revealed 22 nests and 6 sets of fledged young from additional nests near Long Pt. (MG). Near Eden and Richmond, Elgin, three and one males respectively were on territory (MG). In Oxford, a pair nested for the county's 2nd breeding record (JMH). Farther north in Awenda P.P., Simcoe, a significant range extension has taken place with the discovery of a Hooded Warbler nest containing 3 eggs, which failed to hatch (DAS, MG, PC). Late spring migrants included a Connecticut Warbler e. of range in Algonquin during early June (DW) and single Yellow-breasted Chats in Toronto June 2 (DPe) and Sweaburg, Oxford, June 5 (JMH).

**DICKCISSEL TO FINCHES**—Following last summer's record invasion of Dickcissels into s. Ontario, an echo flight did not materialize. The only reports were of two males in the Toronto area from June 25 to early July (RC et al., LN). The Clay-colored Sparrow nest in Algonquin with 4 eggs July 10 fledged two young July 26, to provide the park's first confirmed breeding (DT). Other rare sparrows in the park were a Field Sparrow with a juvenile July 27 (SB) and a ♂ Grasshopper Sparrow singing June 24–30 (PB et al.). At Long Pt., the White-throated Sparrow June 17 and Dark-eyed Junco June 22 were late spring migrants (L.P.B.O.). Seven W. Meadowlarks were reported in the south during the period, at Magnetawan, Pelee, Woodstock, Melbourne, Guelph, Wainfleet, and Oshawa.

The colony of Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Thunder Bay, which produced the area's first confirmed nesting in 1988, grew to 10 pairs this summer (AGH). In the south at Long Pt., an imm. female appeared July 30 and was suspected to have fledged from a local nest (BA). At Essex July 1, a new site was found with adults feeding nestlings (AW). Noteworthy orioles were the Orchard Oriole out of range near Colpoys Bay, Bruce,

during June (JW) and the Bullock's N Oriole at Schreiber June 2 (AW, WL). Remnants of the spring invasion of White-winged Crossbill included a few in Oxford and Waterloo and one in Luther marsh, Wellington, during the summer. By early July, White-wingeds joined by Pine Siskins flocked along highway 60 through Algonquin; late in the month, both species were widespread in the park but in low numbers (fide RGT).

**EXOTICS**—Noteworthy among this group were the Emperor Goose in Sault Ste Marie July 17 (TDM), an Egyptian Goose at Long Pt. July 29 (JMH), and a Cockatiel in Woodstock July 12 (JMH).

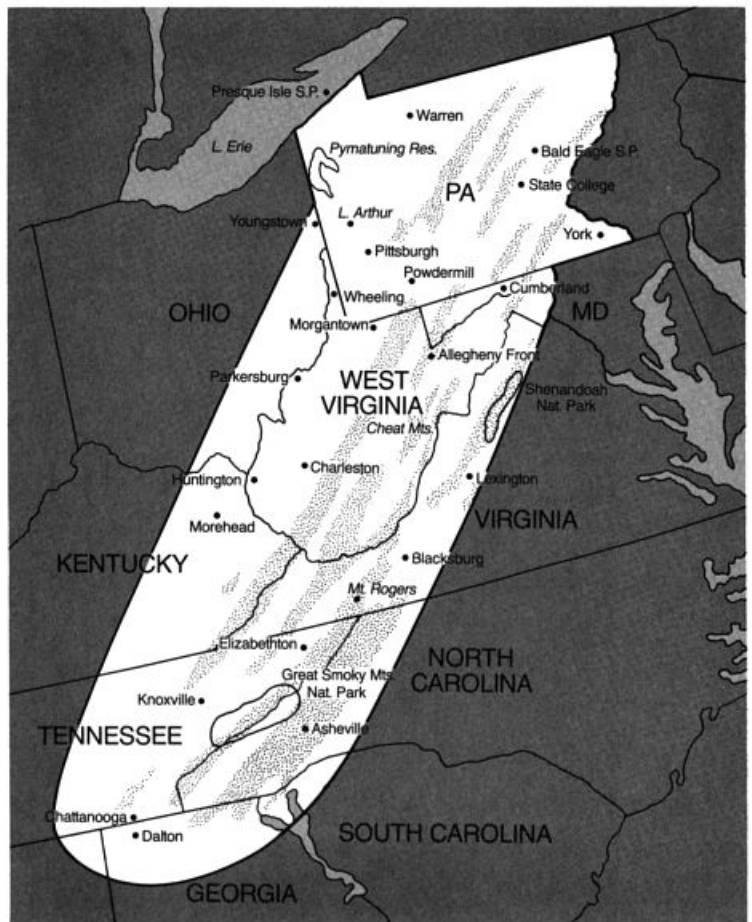
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WALT ANDERSON

# APPALACHIAN REGION

George A. Hall



The rains of spring continued into early summer, but despite the wet weather those observers who went afield had interesting birding. At Pittsburgh the June precipitation totalled 10.29 inches (7 inches above normal) and at Knoxville the 9-inch rainfall was over twice the normal amount. June temperatures were somewhat below normal. In July precipitation was near normal and temperatures were on the warm side, although really hot weather did not occur until late in the month. Much of this rain came in short, hard downpours that resulted in considerable flooding in low-lying areas. Water levels in impoundments were high. Shenango Reservoir in western Pennsylvania, for example, covered 6500 acres in late June, while the normal area is 3500 acres.

The wet weather brought varied responses from the birds. Some species such as Scarlet Tanagers, Eastern Wood-Pewees, and in some places Red-eyed Vireos and most warblers were in low numbers. But an intensive survey in a previously unexplored area at high elevations in the Cheat Mountains of West Virginia found populations of most northern species to be in good shape, and the Brooks Bird Club Foray in Randolph County, West Virginia, produced a long species list with most in good numbers.

The intensive surveys carried out by the Breeding Bird Atlas projects in most states continued to produce interesting results. These projects have forced birders to move away from their favorite and customary birding grounds. In doing so they find that many species are more widely distributed than they had thought. This is particularly

evident in eastern Tennessee with several species that are approaching the southern limits of their ranges there.

It is difficult to judge the effect of the rains on the success of the breeding season. Certainly many ground-nesting species were flooded out on their first nesting attempts, and other first nestings may have been lost. Several reporters commented that young birds made their appearance rather late. However, it appears that overall the nesting season was a moderate success. At Morgantown, for example, the number of young robins in July was phenomenal. Some nesting was still taking place in early August.

As might be expected, the vegetation grew profusely, and it appeared that all the important food plants produced ample food supplies for the fall and winter.

The high water levels eliminated most of the shorebird habitat. A few late migrants passed through in early June, but the late July southbound flight was generally disappointing, although it began quite early. The southbound landbird migration also began early and by the end of July a number of species had appeared from the north.

A spring report from Erie County, Pennsylvania, was lost in the mail, so a few of the interesting and important records from that period are belatedly included here.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.B.S. Routes = Breeding Bird Survey Routes; B.E.S.P. = Bald Eagle State Park, Centre Co., PA; Ch.N.F. = Chattahoochee National Forest, GA; P.N.R. = Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., PA; P.I.S.P. = Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., PA. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO STORKS** — In addition to a few remaining in early June, Com Loons summered at Latrobe Reservoir, PA (RCL), Chickamauga L., TN (DJ), and Wilbur L., TN (RK). A Pied-billed Grebe was seen in Harlan, KY (AB), and the species nested at Jennerstown, PA (TM), both unusual summer records for the Region. Red-necked Grebes were seen at P I S P. Mar. 3 (JM) & 5 (EK) and Apr. 1 (JeS, JiS).

Double-crested Cormorant continued to make news. There were mid-summer reports from 10 areas ranging from Mosquito L., OH (DH), to Chattanooga, TN (DWi).

The only report of Am. Bittern came from Chattanooga, TN, July 8 (PH, JL). Least Bitterns nested at P.I.S.P. for the 2nd straight year (SS) and there were summer reports from Chickamauga L., TN, July 5 (WJ) and from Morgan, TN, July 10 (CN). The wet weather was apparently favorable to Great Blue Herons, which were reported in good numbers from more than the usual number of places. The heronries in Mercer, PA, fledged about 1000 nestlings from 452 nests (EB). A new colony of 50 nests was located at Tellico L., TN (WJ); but the colony reported from atop Cheat Mt., WV, last year (Redstart, 55:104-105, 1988) was not active in June (JR). Great Egrets were reported from Tellico L., TN (TK), and from P I S P. (JM) in June, and there were a few late July reports. The only reports of Snowy Egrets came from P.I.S.P., where they were seen on May 14 & 27 (JM, EK) and where one July 16-30 (RCL) provided the first July record for the county. Little Blue Herons were reported from 2 locations near Chattanooga (JH, BOn), and a Tricolored Heron was seen at Roanoke, VA, July 30 (MS). Black-crowned Night-Herons probably nested near Kingsport and Boone L., TN (GA), while the only report of Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was of an adult seen in Washington, TN, June 5 (TK).

A subadult **Roseate Spoonbill** was seen on the Tennessee R near Stevenson, AL, July 29-30 (JP *et al.*). Even more remarkable was a juv. **Wood Stork** recovered in a near moribund condition at Chattanooga July 3. The bird was rehabilitated at the Chattanooga Nature Center and then liberated in Florida Aug. 7 (LH, *fide* JP). The source of this young bird was unknown.

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS** — The broods of waterfowl in Somerset, PA, were above average this season (TM), but no young Wood Ducks were seen in the Mosquito Creek area of n.e. Ohio (CB). Hooded Mergansers nested successfully at Mosquito L., OH (DH), and probably at Austin Springs, TN, where three immatures were seen June 13 (RK). Females were also seen at B.E.S.P., June 13 (JPe), on the Watauga R., TN, June 18 (RK), and at the Kingston Steam Plant, TN, July 22 (JH *et al.*). A brood of Com. Mergansers was seen on the Kinzua Res., PA, July 29, and 12 birds were seen at Sinnemahoning S.P., PA, July 16 (LC). As usual there were a number of stray summer waterfowl records: Mute Swan, pair at Pymatuning S.P., PA, July 27 (TF); Green-winged Teal, Gavin Power Plant, Gallia, OH, June 18 (WA), and eight at Pymatuning L., PA, July 2 (RCL, RFL); Ring-necked Duck, Watauga R., TN, June 18 (RK); and Ruddy Duck, summered in Erie, PA (JM) Another belated spring record was of a ♀ Harlequin Duck at P I S P. Apr. 2 (JM *et al.*) for the first spring record there.

A single Black Vulture July 18 and two July 19 in Centre, PA, were somewhat north of the usual range (B & JPe). Turkey Vultures seemed to be more numerous than in recent years. The number of summer records of Ospreys continues to increase throughout the Region. There was a new nesting site in e. Tennessee, but the Watts Bar L., TN, site had only 13 nests as compared with 18 last year (CN). Bald Eagles fledged one young at Mosquito L., OH (DH), but the nest in Bath, VA, reported in the spring was unsuccessful (LT, MB), and there were no confirmation that the West Virginia nests produced young. Bald Eagles were reported in June from Kinzua Res., PA (two adults) (SL), Black Moshannon S.P., PA (one immature) (HH), and the Ohio R. in Wood, WV (one adult) (JE), and in July from Hartstown, PA (RFL), Butler, PA (TF), Watts Bar

L., TN (one immature) (WJ), and Tellico L., TN (one adult) (CN *et al.*)

A N. Harrier in the Shenandoah Valley, VA, June 24 was most unusual that low and that far south (KF). Harriers were also reported from Elk, PA, June 11 (LC), Lander, PA, July 1 (DW), and Mosquito L., OH, where an adult with two immatures was seen July 19 (DH). One N. Goshawk young was banded at the Warren, PA, nest reported in the spring (WH) Atlas work showed that both Cooper's Hawk and Sharp-shinned Hawk are perhaps more widespread than had been thought in e. Tennessee (RK, CN) and e. Kentucky (AB).

American Kestrels nested in downtown Knoxville (JBO) and in Meigs, TN (CN). In Warren, PA, 34 of 40 nest boxes were occupied by kestrels but 35% of the 167 eggs laid did not hatch, and an average of only 2.8 birds per box fledged (lowest record of the 7 years of this project). The low production was attributed to the cold wet weather of May and early June (B & DW). A Peregrine was seen on the crest of Cumberland Mt., VA, June 17 (BP-B).

**QUAIL TO TERNS** — Northern Bobwhite remained very scarce or absent from most of the northern part of the Region. Probably because of the wet weather, Wild Turkey broods were below average in Somerset, PA (TM), and few young were seen in the Ch.N.F. (HD). A turkey was seen at Cumberland Gap N.H.P., June 17 (BP-B, RC).

A calling King Rail was found June 11 in Meigs, TN, but the location was later inundated by the heavy rains (JP, CBm). Both King and Virginia rails were found near Berryville, VA, June 24 (JS, RB). A pair of Com. Moorhens and five young were seen in Hartstown, PA, July 2 (RFL, RCL).

A few migrant shorebirds remained in the area after June 1 but the only noteworthy record was of White-rumped Sandpipers at P.I.S.P. June 4 & 8 (JM). The rains of June left little suitable shorebird habitat and July shorebirding was most unimpressive, although by July 4 some migrants were seen at Lyndhurst, VA (SR), and Washington, TN (RK). A Piping Plover at P.I.S.P. May 4 furnished the first spring record there since 1981 (JiS), and one was seen there July 22 (JM, EK). An Am. Avocet rested for a while during a snowstorm at P.I.S.P. May 7 (JM, EK). A Willet was seen in Washington, TN, June 28-29 (RK) and the species was seen at P.I.S.P. July 1 & 23 (JM). Upland Sandpipers were seen with young in Crawford, PA, June 12 (TN) and were present all summer in Clarion, PA (WF), and near Petersburg, WV (RBa). Other reports came from Lander, PA, June 15 (DW, WH), and near Harrisonburg, VA (KF). At P.I.S.P. the more unusual shorebird records included: Red Knot, 3 weeks early on July 20; Western Sandpiper July 4 & 22 (JM); Baird's Sandpiper July 29 & 30 (JM), Dunlin July 1 (JM); and Stilt Sandpiper July 23 (FH). Two Stilt Sandpipers were also seen at Pymatuning L., PA, July 27 (TF). Short-billed Dowitchers were early at Roanoke, VA, July 6 (MS) and Pymatuning L., PA, July 8 (RFL, RCL).

Among the delayed records from P.I.S.P. was the 3rd Pennsylvania record of **Common Black-headed Gull** Apr. 1 & 2 (JM), and an extremely late Lesser Black-backed Gull May 11 & 12 (EK, JM). A Franklin's Gull was at P.I.S.P. June 3 (JM, RSt) and three Bonaparte's Gulls were seen at Yellow Creek S.P., PA, June 2 (GL). Ring-billed Gulls were more common on some of the inland lakes than usual during the summer. The spring influx of Caspian Terns held over into summer, birds were present all summer at P.I.S.P., with a peak of 22 on July 22 (EK). Other summer records were at Gavin Power Plant, OH, June 18 (WA), B.E.S.P., June 13 and July 20 (MW), and Donegal L., PA, July 12 (RCL, RM). Common Terns were at B.E.S.P. June 13 (MW), L. Somerset, PA, June 16 (TM), and Yellow Creek S.P., PA, June 30 and July 5 (GL), while Forster's Terns were at Yellow Creek S.P., PA, June 14 (GL) and in Botetourt, VA, June 25 (BK). Black Terns presumably nested at Hartstown, PA, again this year (*fide* RFL) and they were reported from P.I.S.P. June 2 (JeS), Conneaut L., PA, June 3 (RFL), and Washington, TN, July 20 (RK).

**CUCKOOS TO WOODPECKERS**— Except for n.e. Virginia and parts of w. Pennsylvania where the Gypsy moth is peaking, neither species of cuckoo was common, and they were missing from some places. The Black-billed Cuckoo nested at unusually low elevations in Shenandoah (DD) and Augusta, VA (RS), and reports from Sullivan, TN, June 13 (RK) and Scott, TN, June 19 (CN) were unusual for that region.

A nesting of Barn Owls at Cambridge Springs, Crawford, PA, was the first there for many years (RFL). The other nesting reports of this species came from the regular sites, Augusta, VA (2 or possibly 3 nests) (RS) and n.e. Tennessee (3 nests) (RK). Short-eared Owls were not present this summer on the recovered strip mines of Clarion, PA (WF). The Chuck-will's-widow continued to thrive. One was heard in Washington, OH, June 8 & 28 (LB), five (and no Whip-poor-wills) heard in the campground at Cumberland Gap N.H.P., June 13–21 (AB), and they were found in all the atlas blocks in the Ridge and Valley section of Greene, Cocke, and Hamblen, TN (RK).

Those reporters who mentioned them felt that Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were generally scarce, but the situation is clouded by the great increase in hummingbird feeders in this Region which may serve to reduce the number attending any one feeder. The Red-headed Woodpecker picture continues to be brighter. Nestings were reported from Mosquito L., OH (DH), Lyndhurst, VA (SR), Botetourt, VA, for the first in 15 years (BK, BO), and Blue Grass Valley, VA (2 pairs) (LT). They were also sighted at Burke's Garden, VA (SR). A Red-bellied Woodpecker came to a feeder at Saeger Hill, PA, July 29 (RFL, ML). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, which was once a fairly common breeding bird in the highlands, has almost disappeared in recent years. Thus a report of five birds in 3 areas of the Cherokee N.F., TN, for the first June records in many years (CN), was encouraging. The only other records came from Bath and Highland in Virginia (LT).

**FLYCATCHERS TO WRENS**— There were no reports of possible breeding Olive-sided Flycatchers. Reports from Cocke, TN, May 31 (A & RH) and Mountain City, TN, June 2 (DM) probably represented late migrants, while reports from Black Moshannon S.P., PA, July 22 (HH) and Frick Park, Pittsburgh, July 29 (TF) were probably of wanderers. In much of the Region E. Wood-Pewees were scarce, possibly casualties of the spring weather. Alder Flycatchers were found on Roan Mt., TN (FA), and at fairly low elevation of 2300 ft at Mountain City, TN (DM). Willow Flycatcher continued to consolidate its recent range extension into e. Kentucky and e. Tennessee. Least Flycatchers were uncommon in the usual range in West Virginia and Virginia; however, singing males were reported from Bell and Harland, KY (AB), and Scott, TN (CN), but no nestings have been established at those points as yet.

As mentioned in the spring report, Purple Martins suffered considerable mortality in May; but at least at Clarksville, PA, after the death of all the birds in a colony, new birds arrived in late May and had a successful breeding season (RB). Tree Swallows nested at Austin Springs, TN, for a 3rd record, and Watauga L., TN, for a 4th record (RK), and also at Waynesboro, VA (RS). Bank Swallows on June 4 & 25 in Union, GA, were far south of the usual breeding range (DF). Cliff Swallows are increasing in the Knoxville area and a new colony was found on the Clinch R. (CN). Nests at 3 barns in Clarion, PA, were also in new locations (WF).

A Red-breasted Nuthatch in oak-pine woods in Botetourt, VA, June 17 (BK) was unusual, but this species was not common in the high elevation spruce forest (GAH). Brown Creepers nested at Mosquito L., OH (DH), and in Tennessee a June record in Johnson (DM) and a July record in Carter (RK) were noteworthy.

Carolina Wrens seemed to be doing well in the northern part of the range. Of great interest was the first nest of Bewick's Wren in the Region for several years in Dickenson, VA, July 1 (SRI). A single ♂ Winter Wren in Pittsburgh's Frick

Park July 2 (TF) was unusual. A single ♂ Sedge Wren was located in Erie July 2, but was not seen thereafter (JeS, JiS).

**THRUSHES TO WARBLERS**— The *Catharus* thrushes are doing well on their breeding ranges within this Region. Veery and Hermit Thrush are both in good numbers, and Hermit Thrush has expanded its range in w. Pennsylvania (JPe). The Swainson's Thrush population in the West Virginia spruce belt was very high this summer. On the other hand, most observers from w. Pennsylvania to North Carolina reported that the Wood Thrush was in low numbers.

The stronghold of the Loggerhead Shrike has been in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, where 17 nesting locations in Rockingham (KF) and one in Augusta (MH) were reported, and e. Tennessee, where breeding was confirmed in 7 counties (PK, CN) and sightings came from 3 other counties (CN). Other nestings came from Highland (LT) and Tazwell, VA (SR). Red-eyed Vireos were thought to be scarce in Augusta, VA (RS), but in n. West Virginia, B.B.S. counts were normal. A breeding record of Warbling Vireo in Hancock, TN, was one of the few known from that area (R & AH).

As usual the warbler situation brought mixed reports. While most observers found that some species were up and some down, there was little unanimity as to the species belonging in each group. At Huntington, WV, all were in low numbers (WA), but in the West Virginia spruce belt, numbers of all species were normal or a little high (GAH).

There were some range extensions. Magnolia Warblers were found breeding at a low elevation of 1300 ft at P.N.R. (RM, RCL) and a singing male was found on Unaka Mt., TN, where previously unknown, June 8 & 17 (RK et al.). Yellow-rumped Warblers were found at several new stations in West Virginia and now seem to be present throughout the spruce forest there (GAH). Black-throated Blue and Canada warblers appeared to be more widespread and common in the Cumberland Mts. of Kentucky than had been thought.

There were several noteworthy occurrences. A Blue-winged Warbler in Unicoi, TN, June 28–July 7 (BC) provided the first local record. "Brewster's" Warbler hybrids were reported from Pendleton, WV, June 9 (CT, DH) and Elkton, VA, June 8 (MS). Yellow-throated Warblers were found at rather high elevations in Bath, VA (LT), and Randolph, WV (B.B.C.F.). Prothonotary Warblers nested at Mosquito L., OH (DH), and in Botetourt, VA (BK), and were located at Blennerhassett Island, Wood, WV (JE), and Conneaut Marsh, PA (RFL). There were 8 sightings in 4 e. Kentucky counties of Swainson's Warbler (AB), and one was found in Dickenson, VA, July 5 (SRI et al.). Even more remarkable was a Swainson's Warbler in Fayette, PA (ph., m.ob.), well north of its normal range.

The southbound migration was underway in the last few days of July and besides the early migrating Yellow Warblers and waterthrushes, several other species had appeared.



*Swainson's Warbler at Bear Run Nature Reserve, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, July 14, 1989. Photograph/David Krueger.*



**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**—As anticipated in the spring report, Scarlet Tanager numbers were low in many places. On B.B.S. routes in n. West Virginia and s.w. Pennsylvania, numbers were only about one-third of last year's (RB, GAH). Dickcissels did not return to most of the places where they showed up in 1988, but there were a few reports: three males and one female in Rockingham, VA, June 12 (KF); a male in Augusta on June 17–18 that disappeared after the field was mowed (YL); one in Cocke, TN, June 11 (A & RH); and four in Polk, TN, July 7 (CN).

A singing ♂ **Bachman's Sparrow** was found in Monongalia, WV, June 24 (GB), the first report in the state since 1972. A Clay-colored Sparrow was found at P.I.S.P. May 5, for the 10th county record (JM). Savannah Sparrows at 2 locations in Augusta, VA (YL), were farther south than expected. A White-throated Sparrow was seen at B.E.S.P. July 1 (MW). Grasshopper Sparrow numbers were up somewhat from previous years, but Henslow's Sparrows continued to decline. Vesper Sparrows nested in Johnson, TN, where they are unusual (DM), and were felt to be numerous in Highland and Rockingham, VA (KF), but were scarce in n. West Virginia and w. Pennsylvania. At Mountain L. Biological Station, VA, only 96 juvenile Dark-eyed Juncos were banded compared with 781 in 1988 (CZ).

Bobolinks were more common than usual in the grasslands of Clarion, PA (WF), and in the highlands of Virginia and West Virginia. More interesting were the large numbers in West Virginia's South Branch Valley (GAH, RBa) and in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley in Augusta (YL). A nesting N. Oriole in Cocke, TN, June 3 was unusual for the area (A & RH).

Purple Finches were unusually numerous in the Cheat Mts. of West Virginia (GAH). House Finches nested at 4000 ft in Giles, VA (CZ). Besides the usual records from Shenandoah Mt., VA, Red Crossbills were reported from 3 locations in Highland, VA (LT), from Mt. Rogers, VA (newly fledged young) (SR), and 3 locations in the Cheat Mts. of West Virginia (MG). Two Pine Siskins were seen in the Cheat Mts., WV, July 11 (MG), for the only report.

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## WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

Daryl D. Tessen



In sharp contrast to last year, this summer's temperatures and rainfall were more normal. There were only the usual brief bursts of hot weather (90°–100°F), which were followed by genuinely cooler weather. While rainfall was generally below average, it was so much better than last year it almost seemed like a deluge at times. Parts of all three states were still notably below normal on rain, especially northeastern and southwestern Wisconsin, but even here the occasional rains kept things green and the crops good. Consequently, nesting conditions for water

and land birds were considerably improved from last year. However, owing to the excessively low water table created by last summer's and winter's sparse precipitation, water habitat still needed improvement. The one negative aspect to the summer was a grasshopper problem in Minnesota. Numbers were so great that they reached epidemic proportions almost statewide. Consequently, a substantial spraying program was initiated that some felt was excessive. The impact on the state's bird populations was difficult to assess, but certainly was negative to some degree.

Birders labeled this summer as a quiet, rather typical one, with few rarities. However, many will be surprised at the seasonal account that follows for there were rarities. Two first state records were established, accompanied by a fine array of unusual seasonal finds. What proved all too typical was that the better species often did not linger or were very difficult to relocate. Highlights for Wisconsin included three Tricolored Herons, a first Fulvous Whistling-Duck, two Black-necked Stilts, Long-tailed Jaeger, Three-toed Woodpecker, and "only" two Kirtland's Warblers. Minnesota had a Pacific Loon, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, two Black-necked Stilts (a first), Sabine's Gull, Western Wood-Pewee, and seven Burrowing Owl nests. Michigan's interest was stimulated by a Pacific Loon, Brant, Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff, and Arctic Tern.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — F.S.P. = Fremont Sewage Ponds, MI; P.M.S.G.A. = Pt. Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe, MI; W.P.B.O. = Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Upper Peninsula, MI. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO HERONS** — Late migrating Red-throated Loons were found at Michigan's W.P.B.O. with five June 1 and one June 15 (staff, LD). Unexpected and exciting were single **Pacific Loons** at Duluth, MN, June 2-14 (D & SL et al.) and at W.P.B.O., MI, June 13 (LD, JK). A new Red-necked Grebe nesting site was discovered at Lake Maria in s.e. Green Lake, WI. Four to 6 pairs were present (TS). In addition, Schultz found four Western Grebes there June 24. An Eared Grebe was present June 9 at the major Red-necked nesting site on Rush L., WI (TZ). The only out-of-range Am. White Pelicans were three in Michigan: two June 6 at P.M.S.G.A. (HM, PC, GH) and one June 27 at Whitefish Bay (MB, CB).

A Least Bittern at Duluth June 12 was unusual for the locale (DBe). Southern herons continued their dismal performance of the 1980s in 2 states. Minnesota had only one Little Blue Heron, three Cattle Egrets, and three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons. Michigan had only four Snowy and 12 Cattle egrets. However, in Wisconsin the picture was the best in 10+ years, albeit far from the outstanding numbers of the 1970s. Snowy and Cattle egrets nested at Green Bay and could be seen with ease along the w. shore as they fed. At least three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were along the Sugar River in s. Rock (RH). For the first time in over 10 years, **Tricolored Herons** appeared in Wisconsin. One was in Polk June 27 (RH) and two were discovered at Barkhausen Refuge just north of Green Bay July 26, remaining well into August (WN et al.).

**SWANS TO RAILS** — Certainly the bird of the season in Wisconsin was the **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** discovered by Mueller and Schwartz July 3 at Goose Pond, Columbia. Many observers rushed to the site, but the bird proved very elusive as it moved between the pond and Schoeneburg Marsh that day plus July 4 & 6, when it was last seen. This was the first state record. Not to be outdone, Minnesota had its 4th record of a **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** with one carefully watched and photographed by Tveten in early July at North Long Lake, Crow Wing. A Tundra Swan spent the summer at P.M.S.G.A. (PC et al.). Single Tundras were in Wisconsin until July 7 in Dane (SR et al.) and June 11-July 2 at Mead W.A. (DBel). Out-of-range Mute Swans were at Grand Marais, MN, June 16-23 and Barago, MI, July 21. There were 5 summer records of Snow Geese in Minnesota, most unusual. A **Brant** was seen June 18 at W.P.B.O., MI (LD).

Interesting duck observations included June sightings of Canvasbacks in Wisconsin at Wausau (DBel), Ashland (DV), and Columbia (PA), and in Michigan at F.S.P. (GW), plus a mid-July sighting at Seney N.W.R. (DE). Ring-necked Ducks were found in s. Wisconsin with a pair summering at Goose Pond (PA) and one June 21-28 at Manitowoc (CS). Greater Scaup lingered into early June at Superior (RJ) and Ashland (DV), with singles at Pt. LaBarbe, MI, June 16 (DE) and

P.M.S.G.A. July 28 (PC, TW). Lesser Scaup were scattered around Wisconsin and Michigan during the period with a total of 13 and 10 respectively. Seven White-winged Scoters were at W.P.B.O. June 1 (staff) and two were at Superior June 2 (RJ). The imm. ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye present at Grand Portage, MN, in late May lingered until June 4 (m.ob.). A pair of Buffleheads was in Marathon, WI, June 4-25 (DBel), while one was at F.S.P. June 26 (GW).

Out-of-range was a Bald Eagle in *Wilkin*, MN, June 21 (KB). Unusual were two Ferruginous Hawks in *Rock*, MN, June 3 (KR) and July 19 (ND). Tardy was a Rough-legged Hawk June 2 in Michigan's Saginaw Bay area (m.ob.). Both Michigan and Minnesota reported good numbers of Merlins. Surprising were the 8 to 10 pairs of nesting Yellow Rails in Oconto Marsh (m.ob.) and several pairs along the Mink River, *Door* (BH), both in Wisconsin. King Rails were found in 4 Wisconsin and one Michigan sites. Unusually far north was a Com. Moorhen in *Polk*, MN, June 27 (AB).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — Twenty-three species of shorebirds extended their spring migration into June, up from last year and tying 1987's record. Interesting sightings included Black-bellied Plovers, maximum of 85, in early June at P.M.S.G.A., and a lone Lesser Golden-Plover June 18 in *Dane*, WI (SR). Point Mouillee also had impressive Semipalmated Plover numbers with 200 present June 1. Two **Black-necked Stilts** were found June 1 by Sutton at Nine Springs Treatment Plant (Madison) for one of Wisconsin's few records. They were observed by a few additional birders that evening but had departed by the next day. American Avocets were found in several Minnesota sites with the easternmost being



*Pair of Black-necked Stilts in Stevens County, Minnesota, July 15, 1989. Apparently a first state record. Photograph/Chuck Buer.*

June 14 at Duluth (m.ob.) and June 22 in Sibley (RG). Late was a Greater Yellowlegs in *Eau Claire*, WI, while Lesser Yellowlegs lingered until June 10 in *Dane* (PA) and *Eau Claire* (JP). At P.M.S.G.A., lingering species included two Whimbrels June 1 (PC, GH), a Hudsonian Godwit June 1 (PC, GH), 320 Ruddy Turnstones June 2 (PC et al.), three Red Knots June 1-6 (PC et al.), 1200 Semipalmated Sandpipers June 2, 80 White-rumped Sandpipers June 1 with birds until the 16th (PC et al.), 1000 Dunlins June 1, a ♀ **Ruff** June 1 (PC, GH), and a Red-necked Phalarope June 1 (PC et al.). For Wisconsin the late migrants included 12 Whimbrels June 2 in *Ozaukee* (RSu), 600 Ruddy Turnstones June 1 at *Manitowoc* (CS), Red Knots until June 9 at *Manitowoc* (CS et al.), and in *Dane* Semipalmated and White-rumped sandpipers June 13 (EH), Stilt Sandpiper June 3 (PA), and a Short-billed Dowitcher June 1 (EH).

The fall migration commenced June 24 with a trickle of migrants. It increased June 28 and markedly thereafter. Two Piping Plovers were present July 15 at *Vermillion*, MI (DB). Point Mouillee also had excellent shorebirding during the second half of the summer. For example, two Lesser Golden-Plovers arrived June 30 (PC et al.), 1400 Lesser Yellowlegs were there July 16, two summering Willets were present June

13–July 13 (m ob ) Also seen were a Whimbrel July 1 (HM), one to three Western Sandpipers July 21 and later (PC et al.), a **Curlew Sandpiper** intermittently July 16 into August (PC et al.), 100 Stilt Sandpipers July 29, 1000 Short-billed Dowitchers July 13, and a calling Long-billed Dowitcher July 29 (PS).

In Wisconsin interesting fall sightings included a June 26 Greater Yellowlegs in Vilas (BR); at Madison's Nine Springs Treatment Plant June 28 were Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, and Least Sandpiper (EH), and a very early Semipalmated Sandpiper was there June 24 (EH). Minnesota had its first **Black-necked Stilt** record when two were present July 13–17 in Stevens (m.ob.).

Wisconsin recorded one of its rare **Long-tailed Jaeger** sightings when Knue had a leisurely study of one at Ashland July 16. A jaeger sp. was seen June 12 at W.P.B.O. (LD). Laughing Gulls were recorded in Wisconsin with a breeding-plumaged adult at Manitowoc June 30 (CS) and probably the same bird at Sheboygan July 29 (DT). In St. Joseph, MI, three were present June 1 (WB) with one June 17 (RS, DF, WB). About 20 Franklin's Gulls were found along the Wisconsin side of L. Michigan during the summer (m.ob.) with four found in Michigan. About seven Little Gulls were present in Michigan with four in Wisconsin. Two ad. California Gulls were present June 10–11 at Thielke L., MN (KR, C & MB). Also at Thielke L. was an ad. **Sabine's Gull** June 12 (C & MB, ND). This was only the 2nd summer record. Great Black-backed Gulls were found at P.M.S.G.A. June 22–July 31 (maximum of three) and one was at W.P.B.O. June 9 (JK). An **Arctic Tern** June 30 at P.M.S.G.A. (PC, TW) furnished Michigan's 7th record. Unusual was a Least Tern at Hastings, MN, June 12 (JD).

**CUCKOOS TO FLYCATCHERS** — Cuckoos were up in Minnesota and Wisconsin, with Black-billed especially common in n. Minnesota owing to a tent caterpillar outbreak. The 7 Burrowing Owl nests found in s.w. Minnesota represented the best number in recent years. A **Great Gray Owl** was found June 25 by Hoffman in Douglas, WI, in the area where numbers resided during the winter and early spring. However, no nesting could be confirmed for any part of the state, a disappointment after last year's first confirmed success and the first winter invasion for the state. Minnesota had one confirmed Boreal Owl nest with one fledged young. Two **Chuck-will's-widows** were present in Wisconsin. The one in Polk was back for its 4th year, the longest any has ever returned to one site in the state. The other was heard on the Fort McCoy Military Grounds, Monroe, June 20 by Ayers. Wisconsin had one of its rare **Three-toed Woodpecker** records with one June 25 in the same bog as the Great Gray Owl in Douglas (RH). There were the usual Black-backed Woodpecker sightings/nestings in all 3 states. A "Red-shafted" N. Flicker was found June 3 in Pipestone, MN (BRu).

A **Western Wood-Pewee** seen and heard June 22 in the Sax-Zim bog, St. Louis, represented Minnesota's 5th record (KE et al.). Also in Minnesota the Acadian Flycatcher continues to expand northward, with an interesting observation June 5 at Sibley S.P. (RG). Nesting Western Kingbirds were found in Wisconsin and Michigan. In the former, a pair nested on a transformer w. of Madison July 2–16 (JR et al., ph.), with debate as to the success of the nest. This represented the first nest in the state in 10–15 years. In Isabelle, MI, apparently the same individual returned, and again it paired with an E. Kingbird (DB, JR).

**SWALLOWS TO WARBLERS** — As usual, swallows were gathering during late July, as evidenced by 1500 Bank Swallows at P.M.S.G.A. July 21 (JR). Again Black-billed Magpies nested in Aitkin, MN, with 2 nests this year (WNe). Red-breasted Nuthatches were unusually far south in Wisconsin with several in Madison during July (PA), in Milwaukee all summer (MBo), and in Sheboygan July 15–22 (D & MB). A few Carolina Wrens were found in Wisconsin but Michigan had no fewer than eight, including an adult feeding one young July 24 in Washtenaw (TB). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was at

Grass Bay, MI, June 24 (DEw). Far north was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at W.P.B.O. June 9 & 25 (JK). A tardy Swainson's Thrush was in Milwaukee June 1 (MBo). The only N. Mockingbirds were singles June 17 at Sarett Nature Center (RSc) and June 28 at Allegan S.G.A. (DE), both Michigan. The Loggerhead Shrike picture becomes more dismal with each passing year in the 2 eastern states. Michigan had 2 confirmed nestings, with five and two juveniles fledged (JL, DP). In Wisconsin there were only about 3 confirmed sightings, with no nesting!

White-eyed Vireo sightings were even fewer than last year with 3 each in Wisconsin and Michigan. One was recorded in Rice, MN, June 7–9 (GB et al.). Bell's Vireo sightings were also fewer than last year in both Wisconsin and Michigan. However, lack of coverage could have been a factor in Wisconsin.

Out-of-range warblers in Minnesota included three Golden-winged June 10–18 at Hovland (WP), and a Black-throated Blue July 8–9 in St. Louis (MH). Tardy Tennessee Warblers included June 1 in Oconto (WN) and June 19 in Sawyer (JP), both Wisconsin. Summering or early migrating individuals were noted July 7 at Agate Harbor, MI (LB), and July 15 at Superior (RJ). Outstanding was the finding of five (!) singing ♂ **Yellow-throated Warblers** along Wisconsin's Sugar River in s. Rock (RH). They have nested here the past few years and probably did again. Michigan had one at Dowagiac Creek June 24, but Evers found no fewer than 14 (!) territorial males along the S. Branch Galien River. Out-of-range Yellow-rumped Warblers were in Waupaca, Manitowoc, and Menominee, WI, until mid-June (DT, CS). Everyone in Wisconsin anxiously awaited this summer's **Kirtland's Warbler** survey after the record eight males found last year. However, the results were a disappointment, as only one of last year's males returned to the same site, Douglas (LS, RJ). Another male was found east of last year's territory, in Jackson, so the state totaled a modest two this summer. The Ozaukee, WI, Prairie Warbler lingered well into the summer. One was found June 2 at Kalamazoo Nature Center (DE).

An imm. Bay-breasted Warbler July 28 at Rabbit Bay, MI, was in the same locale where the species had bred in previous years (LB). Tardy spring migrant Blackpoll Warblers were in Door (R & CL) and Oconto (WN), WI, in early June. One was present June 15 at W.P.B.O. (LD, DE, JK). The reliable nesting pair of Worm-eating Warblers at Wisconsin's Baxter's Hollow raised a cowbird this summer (EH). Two Worm-eaters were present June 18 in Ottawa, MI (SM, JW). Out-of-range Kentucky Warblers included until June 16 at Lac Qui Parle S.P., MN (m.ob.), and an odd individual at Wisconsin Point, Superior, June 27 (RJ). Hooded Warblers are now nesting regularly in all 3 states, Minnesota being the last addition. Late in Wisconsin were single Wilson's Warblers June 1 in Milwaukee (MBo) and Door (R & CL), but it was more difficult to explain the June 19 individual in Sawyer (JP). There were five Yellow-breasted Chats found in Wisconsin with one confirmed nesting (PA), while Michigan had only three birds.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — A N. Cardinal was in Bayfield, WI, July 5 (LS). A ♂ Blue Grosbeak was present June 1 at Kuhn's feeder in Sheboygan, WI, for a rare summer record. In s.w. Minnesota numbers were above normal with an out-of-range male at Sacred Heart June 9 (RG). It was a varied Dickcissel picture, in contrast to the record numbers last summer. Michigan had only a few birds with none until mid-June. Wisconsin had a more normal summer with about 20 reporting counties, but Minnesota had a 2nd consecutive above-average season. However, in contrast to last year, there were few northern sightings. A Lark Bunting was in Wilkin, MN, June 22–23 (KB). Grasshopper Sparrow numbers were up this summer in Minnesota. A White-crowned Sparrow at Copper Harbor, MI, June 3 (LB) was a late spring migrant. More notable was one that spent the summer at a Door, WI, feeder (R & CL et al.). Also unusual was a Sharp-tailed Sparrow at W.P.B.O. June 24 (DP, BB). A pair in Pipestone (ND) was

south of the normal Minnesota breeding area.

House Finches continued to expand northward in Wisconsin and Michigan as indicated by a male July 8 at Marquette (NI). They have finally established themselves in Minnesota as evidenced by four southern nesting records (Winona, Faribault, New Ulm, and Dawson), the first breeding records of **House Finch** for the state. A few Red Crossbills appeared in all 3 states, but good numbers of White-winged Crossbills appeared especially in n.w. and n. Wisconsin, n.e. Minnesota, and n. Michigan. Nesting was suspected in Wisconsin. Unusually far south were Reds at an Austin feeder July 11–14 and a ♀ White-winged that was killed when it struck Woodmansee's window July 12 in Milwaukee.

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## MIDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

Bruce G. Peterjohn



**F**ortunately, last summer's extreme heat was not repeated, as temperatures averaged near normal or below normal in most areas. Precipitation patterns varied considerably. Most of Iowa and northern Missouri remained locked in a severe drought. Elsewhere, rainfall totals mostly returned to normal although portions of Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky experienced unusually wet summer months.

In general, this season's breeding success was noticeably improved over that of last year, particularly east of the Mississippi River where conditions were favorable throughout the summer. Some marsh birds took advantage of the heavy rains in the eastern states and nested in areas where they do not normally occur. However, these rains also produced localized flooding that reduced the success of Belted Kingfishers, Northern Rough-winged Swallows, and other birds nesting adjacent to streams. Within the drought-stricken western states, waterfowl and marsh birds experienced another poor year as suitable breeding habitats were scarce or nonexistent. Otherwise, it was a fairly typical summer with a few species continuing their

range expansions through the Region, a rather mediocre movement of shorebirds during July, and several surprising rarities.

Since the Illinois report was received too late to be incorporated into this seasonal summary, the following account contains the sightings of only a few observers from that state.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — U.S.W.R. = Union Slough Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, IA; Say. Res. = Saylorville Reservoir, IA; I.D.N.L. = Indiana Dunes Nat'l Lakeshore, IN. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO SPOONBILL** — As many as five nonbreeding Com. Loons were noted at 6 locations scattered across the n. states, a typical number of summer records. Within their normal range, Pied-billed Grebes were very successful along w. Lake Erie but raised few young in Iowa and were locally scarce in n. Illinois. Elsewhere, this opportunistic species nested in Washington, IN (JC), Butler, OH (PW *et al.*), and Swan Lake N.W.R., MO (BJa), and a pair resided in Wayne, IN (WB); they are very infrequent summer residents at all of these locations. A pair with a juvenile in Warren, KY, July 4

(BP) provided the first suggestive evidence of nesting in Kentucky in more than a decade. The Horned Grebe summering in Warren, KY (m.ob.), was believed to be injured. Single Western Grebes at Trumbull L. June 7 (SD) and Say. Res. June 16 (JF) were casual nonbreeding summer visitors to Iowa.

Nonbreeding Am. White Pelicans appeared in unprecedented numbers in Iowa, including flocks of 500+ summering in the Grovers-Hottes lakes area (DH), 850 at Rice L. July 16, and 450 at Mud. L. July 17 (SD). Smaller numbers were also reported from 9 other counties. A total of 25–30+ pelicans summered at 4 locations in Missouri, while one was a casual



*Colony of Double-crested Cormorants at Lake Renwick, Will County, Illinois, April 19, 1989. According to the photographer, the 61 cormorant nests there this season set a new record. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.*

summer visitor to Gibson, IN, July 16 (GB, fide SJ). Breeding Double-crested Cormorants were reported only in Illinois, including the established colony at L. Renwick (JM) plus small colonies at Bakers L., Cook, and along the Mississippi R. in Carroll (EW). However, with one to 35+ nonbreeding cormorants at 35+ locations scattered across the Region, this species appears to be on the verge of establishing other colonies.

American Bitterns definitely appear to be in trouble with only single reports from Iowa, Ohio, and Indiana, plus 2 sightings in Missouri. Least Bitterns are faring better, with fairly stable numbers scattered across the n. states and n. Missouri. Isolated pairs in Missouri were reported south to Mingo N.W.R. and Bushwacker W.M.A. (BJa, CW), while a maximum of seven at 2 Kentucky locations after July 16 were believed to be migrants. Great Blue Herons continued to increase in most states. Missouri's annual survey tallied at least 170 colonies with the largest containing 340 nests (fide JW). This spring's movement of Great Egrets into n. Illinois produced the first recent breeding record from L. Calumet, where 6 nests were discovered June 4 (JL). They remained numerous in n. Illinois throughout the summer, as evidenced by 75+ estimated in DuPage July 10–20 (fide EW). Elsewhere, their breeding populations were stable and the largest post-breeding flocks totalled 100–128 in w. Kentucky and along w. Lake Erie. Breeding Snowy Egrets were represented by 10–20 pairs at the s.e. Missouri colonies near Charleston and Caruthersville (fide JW) and 8–10 pairs on West Sister Is. in w. Lake Erie (MS, fide MG). Wandering Snowies were discovered at a total of 8 locations, and the largest post-breeding concentration was of 25 in Ballard, KY, July 28 (BP).

Little Blue Heron colonies in s.e. Missouri totalled 800 pairs near Charleston and 1000 pairs near Caruthersville, while 2 or 3 pairs continued to breed on West Sister Is., OH. Few Little Blues wandered into the n. states, with only a single report from Iowa, but 10 at Louisville July 18–28 (LRa) were noteworthy. The only Tricolored Heron was encountered at



*Cattle Egret in breeding plumage near the colony at Lake Renwick, Illinois, June 22, 1989. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.*

its regular haunts at L. Calumet, IL. Breeding Cattle Egrets remained stable in s.e. Missouri with 1000 pairs near Charleston and 1200 near Caruthersville. The colony at L. Renwick, IL, continued to thrive, and a few pairs are believed to nest on West Sister Is., OH. Nonbreeding Cattle Egrets have become decidedly scarce, with four or fewer at only 5 locations scattered across the n. states. Black-crowned Night-Herons returned to established colonies in normal numbers. At least 5 nests were discovered in Butler, OH (PW et al.), furnishing the first Cincinnati area nesting record since 1963. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were widespread through the Ozark Region of s.w. Missouri, but only scattered pairs and small colonies were reported elsewhere north to Cleveland. Their numbers appear to be fairly stable in most states. The only *Plegadis ibis* noted was in Missouri. An imm. **Roseate Spoonbill** was photographed at Land-Between-The-Lakes, KY, July 29 (JF1). This spoonbill was probably the same individual observed at a nearby Tennessee refuge before and after it established Kentucky's first record.



*Immature Roseate Spoonbill at Honker Lake, Land-Between-the-Lakes, Kentucky, July 29, 1989. First state record. Photograph/Jeff Flam.*

**WATERFOWL** — Increased numbers of breeding waterfowl were displaced into the Region this year. Surprisingly, the opportunistic N. Pintail was not one of these species, with only 3 nesting attempts in Iowa where they are rare but regular residents, plus a brood at Delaware W.M.A., OH (BPj), for only the 2nd c. Ohio nesting record. Blue-winged Teal took advantage of the suitable habitats in s. Kentucky with 10–12 broods in Warren, 2 broods in Simpson, and one in Trigg (BP), providing the first nesting records from this area since 1948. This species also nested in Wayne, IN (WB), and

Butler, OH (PW *et al.*), where it is a very infrequent summer resident. Northern Shovelers were more plentiful than normal in Iowa, with 12–15 nests at U.S.W.R. (JG) plus single nests at 2 other locations. Other breeding waterfowl at U.S.W.R. included 2 pairs of Gadwalls and a brood of Am. Wigeon (JG), only the 3rd Iowa nesting record of the latter species. Hooded Mergansers continued to expand in the n. states, and broods were noted south to Warren, KY (BP), and the Mingo N.W.R./Duck Creek W.M.A. area of s.e. Missouri (*fide* JW). Ruddy Ducks produced one brood in Iowa, where they are regular residents, and 2 broods in Cook, IL (EW), where breeding is not confirmed each year.

Nonbreeding waterfowl were unusually plentiful, with at least 20 species reported from across the Region. Even Kentucky had its share of summering ducks, such as eight species lingering in Warren into the first half of June. The most noteworthy records included an imm. Tundra Swan at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., OH through July 1 (BPj), two Greater White-fronted Geese at U.S.W.R. until July 1 (MK, SD), and a Snow Goose at Chesterton, IN, June 11 (KB). Nonbreeding puddle ducks were most unusual in Kentucky, where a Green-winged Teal remained in Mercer through June 8 (*fide* FL), two N. Shovelers lingered in Warren until June 13, and three Gadwalls and two Am. Wigeons remained at the latter location into early July (BP). Seven reports of Ring-necked Ducks included a summering bird in Warren, KY. Ohio's first summering Greater Scaup was a female at Oberlin Res. (†LR). Lesser Scaup appeared at 8 locations south to Kentucky. A Bufflehead summering in Warren, KY, was believed to be injured (BP). Nonbreeding Com. Mergansers were encountered at 2 locations in Iowa and 2 in Illinois including up to nine in Will, IL, through July 10 (JM, ph.).

**HAWKS TO CRANES** — Breeding Ospreys were restricted to w. Kentucky, with 3 nests at Land-Between-The-Lakes (ER, *fide* BP) and one in Livingston (BP). Nonbreeders were scattered across 13 sites in the other states. The unmistakable **American Swallow-tailed Kite** was briefly observed in flight near Austinburg, OH, June 16 (†CM) for Ohio's 2nd record of this century. Mississippi Kites nested along the Mississippi R. north to the St. Louis area while seven at Ted Shanks W.M.A., MO, June 8 (Bja) were suggestive of a local breeding population. The only extralimital **Mississippi Kites** wandered N to Iowa, where one at Dudgeon L. June 5–7 was joined by a second June 8–9 (DC, MP, †m.ob., ph.) to establish that state's first photographed record. Breeding Bald Eagles returned to Indiana for the first time this century with an unsuccessful attempt at Monroe Res. (JC). Elsewhere, their slowly expanding populations totalled 3 pairs in w. Kentucky, 6 in Missouri, 7 in Iowa, and 12 in Ohio. A Sharp-shinned Hawk nest in Lucas was unusual for n.w. Ohio (MA), but few were encountered elsewhere. Increased numbers of Cooper's Hawks were apparent in Iowa, Indiana, and Kentucky. Red-shouldered Hawk numbers remained unchanged, while Broad-winged were more evident than normal with scattered reports northwest to Clay, IA. Iowa hosted unusual numbers of Swainson's Hawks, with nests at Osceola (DB), George Wyth

#### S.A.

Reclaimed strip mines supported Kentucky's first nesting **Northern Harriers** of this century with one pair in Muhlenberg and two in Ohio, while summering harriers were also recorded in Todd and McLean (BP, AB). At least 2 pairs nested in strip mines in Coshocton, OH (BPj, MG). Northern Harriers are also taking advantage of grassy fields established by the Conservation Reserve Program. Nests were discovered in Emmet and Guthrie, IA (SD, BB), Maumee Bay S.P., OH (JP), and in Missouri at Prairie S.P., Bushwacker W.M.A., and Bates (MSw, JJ). Reports of summering harriers from 17 other locations were very encouraging.

S P (TK *et al.*), and near Cedar Falls (JF), plus one or two summering at 8 additional locations. Nonbreeding Swainson's Hawks also appeared in Missouri with one in Dallas during June (PM) and two near Seneca in July (LC). The introduced Peregrine Falcon successfully nested at E. Chicago, IN (JC) and summered at Toledo and Cleveland, OH. With release programs underway in most states, expansion of this small population is inevitable.

Gray Partridges are thriving in Iowa and expanding into its s. counties. Northern Bobwhites were generally reported in improved numbers although Indiana populations declined by six percent from 1988. The status of breeding King Rails remained tenuous. Nesting was confirmed only at Marais Temps Clair W.M.A., MO (Bja, JW), and Big Island W.M.A., OH (BPj, MG), and suspected at Ted Shanks W.M.A., MO (PC). Individuals appeared at 3 other locations during July. Unusual in s.w. Ohio, Soras were suspected of nesting at Spring Valley W.M.A. (BT). Reduced numbers of Com. Moorhens returned to the n. states. Elsewhere, Kentucky's 3rd nesting record was established in Ohio (BP *et al.*). In Missouri this rare summer resident was suspected of nesting at Ted Shanks W.M.A. and Duck Creek W.M.A. (Bja). Few Am. Coots successfully nested in Iowa, but they took advantage of the favorable conditions in the e. states. Coots are only casual summer residents near Cincinnati, but more than 25 nests and 70 young were tallied in Butler (PW *et al.*). Coots also attempted to nest in Wayne, IN (WB), Washington, IN (JC), Swan Lake N.W.R., MO (Bja), and Duck Creek W.M.A., MO (FR), where there are few summer records. Small numbers summered in Ohio and Warren, KY (AS, BP). At least one pair of Sandhill Cranes returned to Wayne, OH, but did not produce young. Two nonbreeding cranes lingered at U.S.W.R. through mid-June (JG) and an injured crane was recovered near Ripley, IN, during July (*fide* JC).

**SHOREBIRDS** — A shortage of suitable habitats resulted in an unremarkable movement of shorebirds in most areas. A Lesser Golden-Plover in Warren June 13 (BP) established a first summer record for Kentucky. Nonbreeding golden-plovers are more frequent in Iowa, where there were 3 records during June. Only 2 pairs of Piping Plovers attempted to nest at the IPL ponds in w. Iowa (SD); their success was not determined. Migrant Piping Plovers were also scarce, with singles at 2 Indiana locations July 22. Accidental visitors in the Region, two **Black-necked Stilts** appeared in Fulton, IL, during July and remained into August (m.ob., ph.). It was an exceptionally poor fall for Am. Avocets; only singles appeared in Ohio and Indiana. A summering Lesser Yellowlegs was unexpected in Warren, KY (m.ob.). Sizable concentrations of migrant shorebirds included 2000 Lesser Yellowlegs at U.S.W.R. July 28 (MK) and 100 Solitary Sandpipers at Runnells W.M.A., IA, July 8–30 (JS, AJ). A migrant Willet returned to Iowa by June 23 but their passage was rather poor with a total of 8 sightings from every state except Missouri. Unusual in s. Kentucky, three Spotted Sandpipers summered in Warren (BP). Upland Sandpiper numbers have improved somewhat in recent years. Breeding Uplands were noted in every state except Kentucky, with a maximum of 25 near South Bend, IN (DS, FG). Small numbers of fall migrants appeared during July.

Few Western Sandpipers passed through the n. states this July. A summering Least Sandpiper was unexpected in Barberton, OH (LR). Spring White-rumped were still plentiful during June, with 210 at Dan Green Slough, IA, June 3 (SD) and 15 in Warren, KY, June 13 (BP). One in Iowa July 1 could have been going in either direction. An impressive 4500 Pectoral Sandpipers were tallied at U.S.W.R. July 28 (MK). Stilt Sandpipers were generally scarce, although 96 congregated at U.S.W.R. July 28 (MK) and 58 at L. Calumet, IL, July 19 (JL). Dowitchers were scarce except for 200 Short-billeds at L. Calumet, IL, July 19 (JL). A nonbreeding Com. Snipe was unexpected at Warren, KY, June 19 (BP). Wilson's Phalaropes

were scarce with only small numbers appearing in Iowa and Illinois. The only Red-necked Phalarope was a very early migrant in Warren, KY, July 4 (BP, AB).

**GULLS, TERNS** — Laughing Gulls returned to normal along the Great Lakes with 3 sightings from L. Erie and a similar number from L. Michigan. Inland singles appeared at 2 locations in Kentucky and at one n.e. Indiana reservoir. Late migrant Franklin's Gulls peaked with 1500 near West Okoboji L., IA, June 3 (JD) and 185 at Clear L., IA, June 6 (SD). Small numbers of nonbreeders were scattered east to L. Michigan. Since summering Little Gulls are virtually unprecedented near Cleveland, one at Lorain June 4–July 16 (J & DH, m.ob.) and three at Headlands S.P. June 17–July 22 (RH, LR et al.) were remarkable. Nonbreeding Bonaparte's Gulls were more prevalent than normal along the Great Lakes while the expected fall migrants returned to c. Lake Erie by late July. Both Ring-billed and Herring gulls remained numerous at their established colonies on both Great Lakes. The most noteworthy breeding record of the latter species was provided by a pair nesting at Ft. Wayne (TY, TH), a first for the interior of Indiana. Ohio's first summering **Sabine's Gull** remained at Lorain through July 16 (m.ob.) and briefly appeared off Headlands S.P. July 22 (RH) before returning to Lorain in August.



*The tenacious Sabine's Gull present for months at Lorain, Ohio, seen here in the molt to first-summer plumage (outermost primaries not fully grown) on July 9, 1989. Photograph/Larry Rosche.*

Photographs taken during these months documented its transition into first-summer plumage, a plumage that is rarely seen in this hemisphere.

Unlike previous years, concentrations of migrant terns had not developed by late July. The beleaguered Com. Tern was represented by 31 nests at Waukegan, IL (JL), 42 pairs in Erie, OH, and 3 pairs at Ottawa N.W.R., OH (MS, fide MG). Only the Erie colony may have produced young. Within their established range, breeding Forster's Terns were confirmed at 7 locations in n.w. and n.c. Iowa. As many as 35–70 nonbreeding Forster's summered at Lorain, OH, an unusually large number for c. Lake Erie. It was not a good year for nesting Least Terns. While a record high population of 500+ pairs attempted to nest at various locations along the Mississippi R. in Missouri, most of their nests were washed away by June floods. Many pairs re-nested and were still incubating in late July (JSm). They fared better in w. Iowa, with seven young produced by nine or more adults at the IPL ponds (SD,

BB). After a one-year hiatus, Least Terns returned to Gibson, IN, where eight adults and 3 nests were noted (fide SJ, JC). The presence of 15 Least Terns at the Smithland Dam, KY, July 28 (BP) suggested that there may be undiscovered colonies along the lower Ohio River. Spring Black Terns were scattered across the Region through mid-June, with maxima of 125–150 in Iowa. Few breeding pairs were reported, but 4 June records from n.w. Indiana suggested that a small population may eventually be reestablished there.

**CUCKOOS TO SWALLOWS** — Black-billed Cuckoos are rare summer residents in Kentucky, where an early nest with young was reported from Louisville May 24 (AB) and single cuckoos were observed in McLean June 15 and Ohio June 28 (BP). While Black-billed received mixed reports from the other states, Yellow-billed were universally scarce. Seven Greater Roadrunners were noted at 4 locations in Taney (PM, GH), a good total for s.w. Missouri in recent years. Last year's drought was blamed for reduced numbers of Barn Owls. There were only 8 known pairs in Indiana, down from 15 in 1988 (fide JC), while only 13 pairs returned to Ohio (fide MG). Unusually wet weather delayed their nesting attempts by nearly one month in both states. In Missouri, 12 nesting pairs were considered normal. Casual summer visitors in Iowa, single Burrowing Owls appeared near Rock Valley June 24 and Maurice July 7 (JV). The only Long-eared Owl nest was discovered in Noble, IN (TH). Kentucky's first nesting **Short-eared Owls** were confirmed in the strip mines of Ohio May 18 (AS, KC) and Muhlenberg May 24 (BP, AB). Courting Short-eareds were also reported in w. Bates, MO, during June (JJ), but nesting was not confirmed. A single owl was detected in Coshocton, OH, June 24 (BP, MG).

A total of nine Chuck-will's-widows at 3 locations in the Dunes area of n.w. Indiana June 7–14 (DP) was remarkable at the n. edge of its range. The only noteworthy reports of Whip-poor-wills came from w. Iowa, with 47 in Fremont July 12 (SD et al.) and two in the n.w. corner in Sioux June 3 (fide DH). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were generally in short supply, a decline attributed to last year's drought. The only Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers observed were in n. Iowa, where nests were discovered in Clayton and Allamakee (DK, SD) and a single female was noted in Lyon July 25 (DH). Two nests of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker were reported from the Daniel Boone N.F., KY (SP, fide BP), their only breeding location in the state. Pileated Woodpeckers are spreading through Iowa; one wandered into the n.w. counties at Clay June 27 (LH, fide DH). Nesting was finally confirmed in n.w. Indiana with a successful attempt at Dunes S.P. (LHi).

The most surprising record of the summer was of a ♂ **Western Wood-Pewee** within a woodlot near Lynn, Randolph, IN, July 1–3 (+WB et al.). This individual called repeatedly, and tape recordings of its hoarse "pewee" calls are certainly consistent with this species (SJ, EH). For what it's worth, however, it should be noted that the complete song was never heard and the brief descriptions seemingly indicated that this pewee was visually identical with the Eastern Wood-Pewees present in the woodlot. Unusual in n.c. Iowa, an Acadian Flycatcher was noted in Floyd June 3 (JWa). A pair of Alder Flycatchers remained at Rebels Cove W.M.A., MO, during June, but nesting was not confirmed (BJa). Missouri lacks a breeding record for this species. Willow Flycatchers are spreading through Kentucky with reports southwest to McLean and Grayson. The expected small numbers of Least Flycatchers were scattered across the n. edge of the Region, while extralimital males appeared in Fayette, IN, June 15 (WB) and Whitley, IN, June 17 (SJ, BJ). Western Kingbirds did not appear east of c. Iowa this summer. Wandering Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were noted near St. Joseph, MO, June 27 (DMe), near Crawfordsville, IA, June 29–July 3 (+JF et al.), and in Dickinson, IA, June 25 (fide DH).

Purple Martins have noticeably declined in many areas. Hopefully, their good reproductive success this summer may



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Crawfordsville, Iowa, June 29, 1989. Photograph/T. H. Kent.

reverse this trend. The only sizable roost was of 1000 martins near Elkhart, IA, July 31 (DM). Tree Swallows continued to spread through the s. portion of the Region. Cliff Swallows are dramatically expanding in Kentucky while new colonies are also developing in other e. states. Migrant flocks of 150 Cliffs in Mahoning, OH, July 22 (LR) and 50 in Boone, KY, July 29 (LM) were locally noteworthy.

**NUTHATCHES TO WARBLERS** — Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported only from Ohio with singles in Hocking June 19 (BPj, MG), Lucas July 15 (MA), and summering at L. Rockwell (LR). Expected numbers of Brown Creepers nested across the n. edge of the Region, while singles were reported south to Hamilton, OH, June 10 (CS), Lawrence, IN, June 15–17 (JC), and Tuscarawas, OH, July 8 (ES). Carolina Wrens have benefitted from recent mild winters and returned to “normal” in most areas. They are regularly encountered at the n. edge of the Region, with sightings north to Howard, IA, July 10 (MH). The news concerning Bewick’s Wrens was fairly encouraging. They were noted in “unusually good numbers” in c. Missouri, but remained quite rare in other states where reports were limited to Kentucky singles in Warren June 2 (BP) and Kenton June 10 (LM), two at Waubonsie S.P., IA, June 11–17 (DR), and a nest in Jacksonville, IL (PWA). Winter Wrens were more widespread than normal in n.e. Ohio. In addition to established locations, two summered in Cuyahoga (TL) and a pair nested in Summit (LR). They are rare summer residents in n.e. Iowa, where two were detected in Dubuque June 27 (DK). Sedge Wrens received mixed reports and were more numerous than normal only in Indiana. They are rare in Kentucky, where the only report was of a single wren in Warren July 22 (BP).

One pair of Golden-crowned Kinglets attempted to nest at Morton Arboretum, IL, for the 2nd consecutive year, but may not have successfully raised any young (EW). Eastern Bluebirds had a successful year. The only extralimital Veeries were reported from Wayne, IN (WB). Small numbers of Hermit Thrushes were regularly noted at established summering locations in e. Ohio. Cedar Waxwings were widely distributed in most areas, except for s. Ohio and Kentucky where numbers were reduced from 1988. Breeding Loggerhead Shrikes remained reasonably plentiful in portions of Kentucky and

Missouri. Iowa also hosts a substantial population, with reports from 18 counties including a whopping 86 nests in Adair (DD, fide JD). Very few shrikes were reported from Ohio and Indiana.

Bell’s Vireos were rather scarce in Missouri, but similar trends were not apparent elsewhere. At the e. edge of its range, Kentucky nests were found in Ohio and Muhlenberg while three additional males were present in Ohio (BP, AB). They were also reported from New Castle, IN (BJ), and Buck Creek S.P., OH (DO). A Solitary Vireo in McCreary, KY, July 17 (BP) was at the w. edge of its range. This species continues to increase in e. Ohio. One in Mills, IA, July 22 (DR) was probably an early migrant.

Unusual in n.w. Iowa, single Blue-winged Warblers were noted in Lyon June 5 (JD) and at West Okoboji L. June 12 (NB). A Chestnut-sided Warbler in Dekalb, IN, July 2 (JR) was south of its normal range. Another at Swan Lake N.W.R., MO, July 28 (BG) may have been an early migrant. A late Magnolia Warbler remained at Yellow River S.F., IA, through June 16 (DK), but the only summering Magnolia was reported from Hocking, OH. Single Black-throated Blue Warblers at I.D.N.L. June 17 (JL, CMO) and near Jamestown, IN, June 24 (RHe), as well as a singing Yellow-rumped Warbler in Lucas, OH, June 20 (ET), are probably best treated as wandering nonbreeding summer visitors rather than late migrants. The northward expanding Yellow-throated Warbler is becoming established in n. Indiana, where one summered in Allen (Haw) and three males remained into June at I.D.N.L. (LHi). Pine Warblers summered in w. Kentucky in Hopkins (JHn), Butler, and Christian (BP), and nested in e. Indiana in Franklin (WB); they are rare summer residents at these localities.

An early Blackpoll Warbler returned to Huron, OH, July 21 (TL). Noteworthy warbler records from n.w. Iowa included a Cerulean at West Okoboji L. June 6–12 (NB), a nesting Prothonotary in O’Brien (HW), and single Prothonotaries in Clay June 8–July 4 and Dickinson July 1 (SD). A Worm-eating Warbler in Kosciusko, IN, through July 15 (WB) was north of its normal range. Swainson’s Warblers were reported only from s. Missouri with records from 5 locations north to Shannon (fide JW). The only summering N. Waterthrush encountered was at a regular n.e. Ohio location. A Kentucky Warbler in Clay June 4 (SD) was exceptional in n.w. Iowa. A ♂ Mourning Warbler near Wawaka June 18–July 6 (JR) provided one of very few summering records from Indiana. They were also reported from 2 traditional summering sites in n.e. Ohio. Hooded Warblers continued to appear at new locations in most states. Small numbers of Canada Warblers were scattered across e. Ohio where they are rather rare summer residents. A ♂ Canada established a territory near Turkey Run S.P., IN, but disappeared after June 16 (ABr). There are few previous summer records from the state.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — A pair of Summer Tanagers nested in Lucas (MA), for the first confirmed breeding record from n.w. Ohio in nearly 30 years. They are expanding elsewhere, and returned to their n. Illinois nesting site in Will (JM). Summering Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported from s.w. Ohio in Hamilton and Clermont (fide NK), and may be on the verge of expanding into Kentucky. Blue Grosbeaks continued to increase in every state, becoming locally plentiful in Kentucky, Missouri, and w. Iowa. Blue Grosbeaks at the n. edge of their range included e. Iowa sightings in Van Buren (JF), Lee (SD), and near Pilot Knob S.P. (RL), a nesting pair plus two additional males in Will, IL (JM), and single males in Lucas, OH, July 16 (MA) and Jay, IN, through July 4 (WB). Within their limited range in s.w. Missouri, Painted Buntings may be increasing in Taney (PM) and a pair was reported from Jasper (LHe). Dickcissels remained in good numbers in most locations, but may have declined somewhat in Ohio.

Sparrows received mixed reports, but the grassland species appear to be increasing as a result of the suitable habitats





*Female Summer Tanager on nest at the species' northern outpost in western Will County, Illinois, June 20, 1989. Photograph/ Joe B Milosevich.*

created by the Conservation Reserve Program. The beleaguered Bachman's Sparrow was noted in s.w. Missouri at 2 sites in Ozark, one in Wayne (*fide* JW), and one in Taney (PM). Only one Bachman's Sparrow could be located in Caloway, KY, June 25 (BP, JE). They do not regularly appear anywhere else in this Region. Nesting Clay-colored Sparrows were reported only from their traditional site at Rockton, IL (EW). Singles appeared in Iowa in Lyon June 5 (JD) and near U.S.W.R. July 21 (E & EA); this species is still not known to nest in the state. Another Clay-colored Sparrow was discovered in South Bend July 4-8 (EM, m.ob.) for Indiana's 2nd summer record. A Savannah Sparrow near Danville, KY, July 15 (FL) was south of its normal range. Estimates of 80 Savannahs and 125 Grasshoppers in Jay, IN, July 7 (WB) were easily the largest concentrations of these grassland sparrows this year. Henslow's Sparrows were more widely reported than normal. They may be rare but regular summer residents in s. Iowa, where five or fewer were reported from 10 locations. In the other n. states, Ohio's sizable population appeared to be normal while there were 4 reports from Indiana and one from n. Illinois. Kentucky colonies were reported from Pendleton, Grant (LM), and Ohio (BP, AB). Missouri hosted "good numbers" in the n. counties and nests were found in Andrew (LG) and at Taberville Prairie (JGa, JW). Ohio's first summer record of Fox Sparrow was established by one lingering at Akron through June 26 (LR). A White-throated Sparrow remained in downtown Chicago through June 17 while a pair was noted at a nearby site through July 4 but nesting was not confirmed (EW). Iowa's 2nd summer record for Harris' Sparrow was established when one was banded at West Okoboji L. June 13-14 (NB).

Breeding Bobolinks were noted south to Danville, KY (FL), where there are few previous summer records. Migrants were visible by late July, such as 140 in Holmes, OH, July 26 (ES). Nesting **Western Meadowlarks** were confirmed in Laporte (HD), furnishing a long-overdue first confirmed breeding record for Indiana. Scattered males and pairs were noted east to c. Ohio, while two in Newton (LHe, PM) were outside their established range in Missouri. Summering Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported from established locations east to L. Erie. Most noteworthy of the extralimital reports were one at Turtle Creek Res., IN, June 16-26 (*fide* JC) and two in Medina,

OH, July 20 (LR). Great-tailed Grackles continue to expand in w. Missouri, and are considered "common" in Cass (JJ) and Newton (JHa *et al.*). The only report from Iowa was of 3 nests at Lakin Slough, Guthrie, June 10 (SD).

A pair of Purple Finches established a territory at Morton Arboretum, IL, but the female died before the state's first nesting attempt was initiated (EW). House Finches have conquered Iowa, with reports from 18 counties northwest to Sioux. They are also locally distributed throughout Missouri where nesting attempts were reported west to Springfield and St. Joseph. Given the near total absence of winter finches last year, the appearance of an imm. ♂ White-winged Crossbill at a Columbia, MO, feeder Aug. 1-9 (B & JGu, †BJa) was completely unexpected. Nesting Pine Siskins were reported only from Waukegan, IL (EW), and a summering siskin appeared near Elma, IA, June 23 (MH).

**CORRIGENDUM** — The report of a Mountain Plover from Colo, IA, July 9-10, 1986 (AB 40: 1210) should be deleted.

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SUSAN THOMAS

# CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

Jerome A. Jackson



In much of the mid-South, rain for the year ran about 10 inches above average by mid-summer: Birmingham was about 14 inches over, and Muscle Shoals 20 inches (TAI). Lakes were full, eliminating mud flats that have lured early shorebirds in past summers. However, flooded fields and crawfish, catfish, and minnow ponds produced some interesting records—and heightened potential for further negative interactions between farmers and birds. Increases in feral Canada Geese populations were noted across the Region—amid news reports of more introductions. More exotic hummingbirds found the growing number of feeders—and no doubt the excitement of the exotics will spur more observers and more feeders. The invaders of the season were Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, with reports from Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida.

Observers: please note that there are several states in the Region—please include the state with each record! While you may know your sub-regional editor well, the individual preparing the season report may not know you. Print your name exactly as you want it listed—and be consistent from one record to the next. Please use a middle initial if you have one, as the growing number of observers makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish among records. A little care can make our report better—and more to your liking.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — A.O.S. = Alabama Ornithological Society; Auburn F.P. = Auburn Fishery Ponds, Lee, AL; Blakely I. = Blakely Island, Mobile, AL; Centerton F.H. = Centerton Fish Hatchery, Benton, AR; M.T.O.S. = Memphis Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society; P.R.M. = Pascagoula River Marsh, Jackson, MS; Vincent W.R. = Vincent Wildlife Refuge, 4 miles north of Kaplan, Vermilion, LA. Place names in *italics* are parishes (in Louisiana) or counties.

**LOONS TO FRIGATEBIRDS** — A streaked imm. Pied-billed Grebe was at Spanish L., Iberia, June 20 (MJM). Two

Greater Shearwaters were seen 80–100 mi s. of Pensacola June 30 (KW), and one was half a mile s. of Perdido Pass, Baldwin, AL, July 22 (A.O.S.). About 10 Wilson's Storm-Petrels could be seen 80–100 mi s. of Pensacola June 30–July 1, some flying around boat lights at night; one landed on the boat (KW). South of Baldwin, AL, July 22, seven N. Gannets were diving (A.O.S.). Up to 50 gannets were in the Gulf Shores area June 18–24 (PT, FT).

Brown Pelicans were reported as fairly common this summer. There were several reports of Am. White Pelicans summering across the Region. In Louisiana, two were at University L., Baton Rouge, June 4 (PM); 22 were near Cameron, LA, June 6 (JVR, CAM, PMc); 150+ were at St. Bernard S.P., June 11 (GO); 1000+ were along Fourchon Road, Lafourche, July 16 (RDP, m.ob.); and 100+ were near Morganza, Pointe Coupee, July 20 (DWG). Elsewhere, 20 were at DeGray L., AR,

## S.A.

Common Loons are on some state threatened lists and have been the subject of various conservation-oriented media blitzes in "loon country." But where is loon country? It's about time we enlisted some "Loon Rangers" here in the mid-South, because loons spend more time with us than in the North country. Sure, loss of nesting lakes to development and acid rain are taking a toll, but what about changes in environmental quality here? And just what is the status of loons here? Every summer we tally a few records of summering loons. This summer's records included birds at Porter L., Jefferson, AL, through the summer (TAI, m.ob.); two to three in the Pensacola Bay area June 3–28 (RAD, A & DF); one on Garcon Bayou near Pensacola June 17 (SG, MC); three at Browns Creek on the Guntersville, AL, BBS route, June 6 (TAI, JCR); one along the s. shore of L. Pontchartrain, Jefferson, LA, July 12–15 (HP, JFH, RDP); and two in Mississippi Sound off West Ship I., July 23 (TS).

July 18 (DH), and 17 at P.R.M. July 29 (JAT, m.ob.) More trouble is inevitable as Double-crested Cormorant populations build up near catfish farms. This year's records included 5 nests with young at L. Millwood, Sevier, AR, June 24 (U.S. Corps of Engineers, fide CAM), and an immature at L. Sequoyah, Washington, AR, July 4 (MM) & 30 (JN). An Olivaceous Cormorant was n. of Kaplan, Vermilion, LA, July 9 (KVR), and 10 were there July 23.

In Alabama, Anhingas were in Greene June 3-4 (M & SO); in Clarke June 10-11 (A.O.S.); and near Jackson over the Tombigbee R. July 22 (JTP, CDB). Nests and fledged young Anhingas were found in Walton, FL, June 28 (SD). Toups and Hodges found 8 nests and downy young at Big Point cooling pond, Jackson, MS, July 31. Two imm. Magnificent Frigatebirds were w. of Holly Beach, Cameron, LA, July 17 (SWC, DLD); and at Gulf Breeze, FL, frigatebirds were reported as more common than usual (S & LD).

**HERONS TO STORKS** — A Least Bittern was found in Greene, AL, June 3-4 (M & SO), and another at the Berkley W.M.A., Stewart, TN, July 8 (DWB). Along a 56-mi stretch of Mississippi R. levee in Desha and Lincoln, AR, July 19, JML tallied 300+ Great Egrets, 12 Snowy Egrets, 100+ Little Blue Herons, 1300+ Cattle Egrets, 35 Great Blue Herons, and eight Green-backed Herons. Lone Great Egrets were seen in Arkansas at L. Elmdale, Washington, June 4 (MM), and at the Centerton F.H., June 17 & 25 (MM, JN). A Snowy Egret was also at the hatchery June 25 (MM). Immature Little Blue Herons were s.w. of Delta, LA, July 21 & 31 (JTB). Many summer records defined the range of Tricolored Herons in s. Louisiana to include Pointe Coupee (DWG), Concordia (DWG), LaSalle (BC), Iberville (JVR), St. Martin (JVR, CAM), and Madison (JTB). An imm. Reddish Egret skipped along the beach in Biloxi, MS, July 17 (JAT). On July 15, JML found three Black-crowned Night-Herons along Cypress Creek, Monroe, AR. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron records included one at White River-Bull Shoals S.P., AR, July 6 (DRM), and lone imm. birds near Delta, LA, July 21 & 31 (JTB).

The White Ibis presence in the mid-South included probable nesting at a heronry in e. Noxubee, MS (JAJ); nine immatures were at Noxubee N.W.R. July 4 (MFH). Up to six immatures were at Delta, LA, July 21 & 31 (JTB), and one was at Bear Creek W.M.A., Stewart, TN, July 30 (DWB). Early July Glossy Ibis records came from Vermilion, Cameron, and Lafayette, LA (WPE, EE, m.ob.). At least six were among 650 "dark" ibis in Vermilion rice fields July 16 (KVR, MMS). An impressive 3700 Ciconiiforms of 11 species were attracted to the mud flats of a drawn-down crawfish pond in Vermilion, LA, July 17 (SWC, DLD).

Roseate Spoonbills were more in evidence than ever, with records from coastal Louisiana and Mississippi to Tennessee and the Tennessee valley of Alabama. Remsen saw nine June 10 in Calcasieu, LA, and Cardiff reports numbers commuting inland from coastal Louisiana colonies to feed in rice fields and crawfish ponds; other Louisiana records included birds in Assumption (BS), Ascension (CW), Orleans (LE, AC, DPM), St. Tammany (FB), Vermilion (159 birds on July 29; KVR), Lafayette (KVR, MMS), and Tangipahoa (CGB). Two immatures were at Hancock, MS, July 1 (CE), and one was at P.R.M. July 25 & 29 (GM, SM, JAT), presaging later records for the area. An immature appeared at Cross Creeks N.W.R., TN, July 23 (DWB, JW, DRJ, CGD). On July 29-31 and Aug. 3, a subadult was at the Tennessee R. near Stevenson, AL (JTP, DRJ, RJH, m.ob.).

Post-breeding Wood Storks also spanned the southern half of the Region. Earliest reports were of two adults in Acadia, LA, June 13 (JH, JFH), and a lone bird in Hale, AL, June 24 (DM). Later Louisiana records included Vermilion July 7-8 (50 birds; WPE, F & NA, SC); 60 in drained crawfish ponds in St. Landry July 30-31 (BA, LT, CAB); 15 at Pointe Coupee July 15, and 75 there July 20 (DWG); Madison in July (JTB); 85 in St. Martin July 16 (KVR, MMS); and 35 in Iberville July 16. In

Arkansas July 19, three were in Monroe (TSi) and one in Desha (JML). Mississippi records included two at Noxubee N.W.R. July 19 (MC) and one there July 30 (TS)—many arrived in August—and three in Jackson July 28 (BO). In Alabama an immature was at the Auburn F.P., July 19 (JH); and five were over the Tombigbee R. in Washington July 22 (JTP, CDB). Although there were a number of reports and a few sizeable groups, numbers were far lower than in many previous years. This is a species well worth added attention each year. Since storks are long-lived, we need to know more about what is happening with reproduction. You can help by training your spotting scopes on groups of storks and reporting numbers of immatures and adults (the immature has a paler head and a yellow bill).

**WATERFOWL** — Waddling through the duck litany each summer is frustrating. Granted there are real changes taking place in duck populations—serious ones that deserve coverage here. But weeding those out from the hunter-wounded birds and game farm escapees is the trick. In the end, what counts is what is here on a more or less permanent basis, and only time will provide the answers. A Fulvous Whistling-Duck with five half-grown young were in Cameron, LA, June 6 (CAM, PM, JVR); a lone Fulvous was at Blakley I. June 4 (BCG).

Apparently-wild Mallards nested at Centerton F.H., and at L. Elmdale, Washington, AR, as also reported in other recent years (MM). A pair of Blue-winged Teal and eight young were at Lower Hatchie N.W.R., TN, June 29 (LW). Lone Gadwalls

#### S.A.

About 50 Canada Geese were at L. Sequoyah, Washington, AR, July 4 (MM, JK)—no doubt evidence of the very widespread introduction of birds by state and federal wildlife agencies. News stories have lauded widespread introductions in Mississippi this year, and Imhof noted increases in Alabama. It is unfortunate that those responsible have not learned from the problems created by such introductions in New England and elsewhere. One serious problem that seems obvious, yet ignored, has been the repeated introduction (and now growing population) of Canada Geese along the Tenn-Tom Waterway adjacent to Columbus Air Force Base. Sooner or later a conflict between the big birds and the bigger birds seems inevitable.

[probably cripples] were at Okaloosa, FL (DW), and Lafayette, LA (KVR); two were at Cross Creeks N.W.R., Stewart, TN, July 25 (DWB). A volant ♂ Am. Wigeon was at Catahoula N.W.R., LA, June 19 (BC). Two ♂ Canvasbacks summered at the Alice-Sidney Fish Farm, Chicot, AR (DRS, CS). Lone Ring-necked Ducks were seen in Benton, AR (MM), Jones, MS (TS), and Vermilion, LA (KVR), and up to eight were at the Alice-Sidney Fish Farm, Chicot, AR, July 25-Aug. 1 (DRS). A pair of Lesser Scaup was at the Vincent W.R. July 29 (KVR, DP); lone Lesser Scaup were at Blakely I. July 23 (GDJ, DGJ), and at Laurel, MS, July 25 (TS). A Com. Goldeneye was at Wheeler N.W.R. July 1 (PF). Hooded Merganser reports included six immatures in Greene, AL, June 3-4 (MO, SO); six immatures at Noxubee N.W.R., MS, July 4 (MFH); one immature at Centerton F.H. July 9 (MM); and one female at Delta Farms, Monroe, AR (TSi).

**HAWKS TO RAILS** — Unusual Osprey records included single birds in St. Bernard, LA, June 4 (GO); Cameron, LA, June 6 (DLD); and at Oktibbeha L., MS, July 16 (TS, MFH). American Swallow-tailed Kite reports this summer came from the Atchafalaya Basin, where up to three were reported together (MJ, PM, CF, BO); from Clarke, AL, where three were seen June 10-11 (A.O.S.); and from Century, Escambia, FL, where GF counted 13 on July 24. Toups noted that Mississippi Kites seem to be increasing in Hancock, MS; nine were circling

over Vicksburg July 9 (JTB), and 185+ were tallied along Mississippi R and Arkansas R levees in s e Arkansas July 19 (JML). Two Black-shouldered Kites were near Kiln, Hancock, MS, through the season (JAT, GO, m.ob.), but with no reports of nesting as in some recent years. A Bald Eagle was soaring over the confluence of Bayou Meto and the Arkansas R., July 18 (JML).

On July 15, a ♀ Northern Harrier was hunting over rice fields w. of Holly Grove, Monroe, AR (JML). Accipiter records included only a Sharp-shinned Hawk in Elizabeth, AR, June 28 (DRM, PEH), and a Cooper's Hawk in Iberia, LA, June 11 (RM). At Bull Shoals S.P., Baxter, AR, DRM found a Red-shouldered Hawk June 8. In the bottomlands of s.e. Arkansas, JML found the Red-shouldered Hawk inexplicably absent—only one seen (near the White River, July 17) during much field effort. Broad-winged Hawks fledged at least one juvenile n. of St. Gabriel, Iberville, LA (JVR, CC). Southern Louisiana records of Red-tailed Hawks included birds in E. Baton Rouge (JVR, CC), W. Baton Rouge (KVR), and St. Tammany (PMc).

An ad. Crested Caracara was n.w. of Many, Sabine, LA, June 6 (RM). In Arkansas, Am. Kestrel records included birds w. of Arkadelphia June 3 (H & MP), and w. of Elizabeth June 28 (DRM, PEH). A Peregrine at Gulf Breeze, FL, July 24 provided a rare summer record (LD).

Battalio found two Com. Moorhens along the Mississippi R. in Madison, LA, July 21, and observed mounting of one by the other there July 31. American Coot records were more numerous than usual this year, with up to four adults and two immatures in s. Concordia, LA (DWG); several immatures at a minnow pond near Lonoke, AR, July 13 (JML); and 3 pairs and 10 chicks at Holiday Isle pond, Ft. Walton Beach, FL, July 8 (DW). Other season records without evidence of nesting included: Pointe Coupee, LA; Cameron, LA (SWC, DLD); Iberia, LA (MJM); and Cranfield Recreation Area, Baxter, AR (PEH).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — Up to 50 Black-bellied Plovers summered in rice field areas of Vermilion, LA (DLD, SWC, KVR), and 20 were along Fourchon Rd. and beach June 17 (DPM, RDP). A Lesser Golden-Plover was at the Simpson Sod Farm near Covington, LA June 12 to mid July (JFH, JH), and another was found along Catalpa Creek bottoms in Lowndes, MS, July 11 & 30 (TS) suggesting possible summering. Other entries in the "were they coming or going—or just confused" category were Semipalmated Plovers at Centerton F.H. June 11 (one; MM) and Lafourche, LA, June 17 (12; DPM, RDP). The lone Piping Plover for the season was at Holly Beach, Cameron, LA, July 17 (DLD, SWC); and a lone Snowy Plover at nearby East Jetty Beach July 30 was referred to as an "early fall migrant" (KVR, DP)—but could it be a rare resident as elsewhere on the Gulf Coast? East Jetty Beach was an important staging area for Wilson's Plovers, with 210 there July 6 (SWC) and 140 July 30 (KVR, DP).

Two Am. Oystercatchers were on Curlew I., St. Bernard, July 8 (RDP, LO). Black-necked Stilts continued their success in the mid-South, with four in Concordia, LA, June 3 (DWG), two w. of Lafourche L., Chicot, AR, June 4 (DRS, CS), and up to 15 near Morganza, Pointe Coupee, LA, July 15 (DWG). Up to 14 young were raised at Ensley, Shelby, TN (M.T.O.S.), the best year yet for this population. The big news for stilt fans involved the 800+ at Blakely I. July 23 (GDJ, DGJ), and the 735 at Vincent W.R. July 29 (KVR, DP). Up to six Am. Avocets were at Shell I., Bay, FL, mid-June to mid-July; five were noted at Blakely I. July 23 (GDJ, DGJ).

A census of rice fields in Lafayette and Vermilion, LA, revealed Lesser Yellowlegs as early fall migrants and regular patrons: 196 July 2; 340 July 9; 190 July 16; 75 July 23; and 1155 July 29 (KVR). All birds seen well were in at least partial breeding plumage. In Lowndes, MS, five on July 10 (MFH, TS) were earliest arrivals for the area. A congregation of 1100 was at Blakely I. July 23 (GDJ, DGJ). Inland Willet records included one in s.e. Limestone, AL, July 1 (PF, m.ob.), and one near

Morganza, LA, July 21 (DWG)

Spotted Sandpipers nested at the Metro Center Office Park, Davidson, TN, where new chicks were photographed June 4 (DFV). Three **Long-billed Curlews** provided excitement on Curlew I., St. Bernard, July 8, since there had been no s e Louisiana records for many years (RDP). Another was along the Mobile Causeway July 23 (GDJ, DGJ). An ad. Hudsonian Godwit was at Vincent W.R. July 9 (KVR). Marbled Godwits included three at Fourchon, LA, June 17 (DPM, RDP); one at the e. tip of Horn I. in mid-July (CD); and one at L. Sequoyah, Washington, AR, July 29 (MM). Ten Sanderlings on W. Ship I July 23 provided a new area arrival date (TS). Up to 20 Western Sandpipers were at Fourchon, LA, June 17 (DM, RDP); others included six in Lowndes, MS, July 16 (MFH, TS). Pectoral Sandpiper records included an early bird at Centerton F.H. June 25 (MM); one at Springdale, Benton, AR, July 9 (MM), one at Lowndes, MS, July 11 (TS); and four at Auburn F.P. July 17 (JH).

A Stilt Sandpiper was at Cameron, LA, June 13 (JH, JFH), 13 were at Vincent W.R. July 2 (KVR); six to 10 were at Fourchon, LA, July 16 (NN, MMy, RDP); and one was at Auburn F.P. July 26 (JH). An ad. ♂ Ruff was at Vincent W.R. July 29 (KVR, DP). Up to 200 Short-billed Dowitchers were at Fourchon, LA, June 17 (DM, RDP), and one was at Vincent W.R. July 9 (KVR). On July 11, TS found three Short-billed Dowitchers in alternate plumage at Catalpa Creek near U.S. 82, Lowndes, MS. Wilson's Phalarope records included an unusual June 3 bird at Springdale, AR (MM); four at Blakely I. July 23 (GDJ, DGJ); and two at Centerton F.H. July 28 (MM).

Two imm. Franklin's Gulls were in Cameron, LA, June 5 (SWC, DLD), and another was at Cross Creeks N.W.R., TN, July 24 (DWB, JW, CGD). A most unusual record of an ad **Gull-billed Tern** was of one hawking insects over a flooded field in Catalpa Creek bottoms near U.S. 82, Lowndes, MS, July 16 (TS, MFH). Caspian Terns homed in on Centerton F.H., where one was seen June 11 (MM, WF) and three July 12 (MM); one was in Jeff Davis, LA, July 1 (DM)—note that these latter inland records followed tropical storm Allison. About 115 Common Terns were in Cameron, LA, June 6 (CAM, JVR, PM), and up to 350 were there July 16 (DLD, SWC); 75 were at Ft. Morgan, AL, July 22 (GDJ, BCG, JH). Inland Least Tern records included one at Centerton F.H. June 4, four along the Mississippi R. levee, Lee, AR, June 10 (H & MP), and 12+ over the Mississippi R. carrying fish near Arkansas City, Desha, AR, July 19 (JML). A 2nd-year Sooty Tern was at Rutherford Beach, Cameron, LA, June 13 (JH, JFH). Wright saw three Sooty Terns 80–100 mi s. of Pensacola July 1, and 90+ were at Curlew I., LA, July 7–9, but with no evidence of nesting (RDP, LO). Two Black Terns were at Centerton F.H. July 12 (MM).

**DOVES TO FLYCATCHERS** — A White-winged Dove was at L. Arthur, Jefferson Davis, LA, June 13 (JFH). A Greater Roadrunner was seen along Hwy 127 in Madison, AR, June 24 (MM). Barn Owls had two young at Murphreesboro, Rutherford, TN, June 11 (RH, WH); BCG found a Barn Owl at Lilian, Baldwin, AL, June 17; and SD found fledgling Barn Owls in Escambia, FL, June 22. A ♀ Whip-poor-will at Johnson's Bayou, Cameron, LA, June 6 provided a rare spring record (CAM, JVR, PMc).

Hummingbirds continued to zap the mid-South with new records. A **Green Violet-ear** was photographed at a feeder near Arkadelphia, Clark, June 2–4, for the 2nd record of this species for Arkansas (JB, D & DoH, HF, JF). A bird identified as a hatching-year ♀ **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was banded Aug. 1, n.e. of Clay, Jefferson, for the 3rd Alabama record (B & MGS). The third rarity was a nervous "probable HY-F" **Rufous Hummingbird** seen at Alabama feeders July 16–20 (BS). On the negative side, PMc noted the fewest Ruby-throated Hummingbirds ever for East Baton Rouge, LA one to five for June 1–July 31, compared to 80–300 in 1985.

A Pileated Woodpecker was at Grand Isle, LA, June 2, for

the 2nd record for the island (DM, NN) An Alder Flycatcher was seen and heard at L. Elmdale, Washington, AR, June 4 (MM), and three Willow Flycatchers were seen and heard at L. Bentonville, Benton, AR, June 17 (MM, JN). Arkansas Scissor-tailed Flycatcher records included a pair with three fledged young at minnow ponds near Lonoke July 13 (JML); and sightings in *Baxter* (two birds June 5 & 10; one July 11 & 22, PEH); *Marion* (two June 5; PEH); *White* (two June 12; H & MP), *Woodruff* (one June 16; H & MP); and *Independence* (one July 16; PEH). In Louisiana an adult and a juvenile were seen June 13–19 in *Tangipahoa* (CGB). A pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers was discovered June 13, 2 mi s. of Brooksville, Noxubee, MS (REW), but was not seen again. On June 23, EWP found one on the east edge of Brooksville, where JAJ, MFH, and DJI found a pair with a nest on a utility pole crossarm; two birds were last seen July 23 (MFH, MC). This was the 3rd nest site for the species in Mississippi, all in black prairie habitats (JAJ). One Scissor-tailed was found at Nileville, Okaloosa, FL, June 24 (DW).

**LARKS TO WARBLERS** — A Horned Lark was seen near Mountain Home, *Baxter*, AR, June 14 (PEH). Fantastic numbers of Purple Martins—estimated at 100,000—were roosting at the s. end of the Ponchartrain Causeway, *Jefferson*, LA, July 28, where some birds had been seen since February. No new areas were reported for nesting Tree Swallows this year, although on July 1, birds were in the area on Swan Creek W M A., *Limestone*, AL, where they nested last year (PF, m.ob.). A Tree Swallow was at Spanish L., *Iberia*, LA, June 27 (MJM). About 35 N. Rough-winged Swallows fed over the catfish ponds at Kiln, *Hancock*, MS, June 10 (JAT). Bello found 30–40 Barn Swallows with nests under the Magnolia Beach Bridge over the Amite R., *Livingston*, LA, June 3; SWC and DLD found 3 pairs of Cliff Swallows nesting with Barn Swallows under the bridge over the Mermentau R. near Grand Chenier, *Cameron*, LA.

Lynch noted only seven Am. Crows at 4 localities in 7 days of field work in the Arkansas Delta. Fish Crows summered at Noxubee N.W.R. (JAJ, MFH), and near the Miller Steam Plant and Bayview L., *Jefferson*, AL (TAI). At Century, *Escambia*, FL, Fleming found a White-breasted Nuthatch July 25. The only Bewick's Wren report for the season was of two at the Cypress Inn, *Wayne*, TN, June 1–July 10 (DJS). It was a record year for E. Bluebirds in metro Birmingham, where 300 boxes fledged 525 young—but, fewer than 50% of the eggs hatched, and the frequency of unhatched eggs has increased dramatically (TAI). Why? A Swainson's Thrush was singing near the Univ of Arkansas campus, *Fayetteville*, June 1 (MM), and another was still winging its way north from the Holleyman Sanctuary, *Cameron*, LA, June 5 (DLD, SWC). In recent years we have had regular reports of isolated Am. Robin nests in coastal areas; this year's record was of an adult and fledged juvenile at Pensacola June 15 (CLK). Gray Catbirds were again seen on Grand Isle (DM), and two were in an Orleans city park June 17 (GO). A lone Cedar Waxwing was seen and heard at L. Fayetteville, *Washington*, AR, July 20 (MM). Loggerhead Shrikes continued to do well in e. central Mississippi (JAJ), while elsewhere their presence is declining. Lynch found 11 in *Desha* and *Lincoln*, AR, July 19, and the Parkers found two in n.w. *Izard*, AR, June 30. A Bell's Vireo was singing at the Jack's Bay Landing road in White River N.W.R., AR, July 18 (JML), and a pair of Red-eyed Vireos fledged at least one young on Grand Isle, LA (DM, m.ob.).

A ♀ Yellow Warbler was at Centerton F.H. June 3 (MM), and one was at Vincent W.R. July 30 (KVR, DP). A ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler was s. of Hackleburg, *Marion*, AL, June 3 (PK, BR) An early fall migration record for Alabama was set by a Magnolia Warbler n.e. of Clay July 22 (B & MGS). At Grand Isle, LA, four Prairie Warblers were found July 22 (DM, AS, GS, JS). Early Black-and-white Warblers included a female at Grand Isle July 16 (NN, MMy, RDP, GC). Hard-to-find Swainson's Warblers were singing through July 24 at Bayview L.,

*Jefferson*, AL (TAI), s e of Locust Bayou, *Calhoun*, AR, June 1 (H & MP), and July 8 at Noxubee N.W.R. (MFH, TS). About 12 were found in *Hancock*, MS, during the period (JAT). A rare mid-summer find was a Louisiana Waterthrush at Gulfport, MS, July 12 (JAT).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Painted Buntings seemed less common than expected in the Arkansas Delta this summer; JML found only four singing males July 13–19. They are regularly found in the Mississippi Delta, but e. Mississippi records have been unusual. This year they were found near Osborn, *Oktibbeha*, June 3 (TS); at the Golden Triangle Regional Airport, *Lowndes*, June 16 (MFH, MD); and near Crawford, *Lowndes*, June 17–July 3 (MFH, TS, JAJ, m.ob.). Dickcissel was one of the most common and conspicuous birds in the Arkansas Delta this summer; JML noted daily counts of 75–100+ July 13–19.

One of the places where Bachman's Sparrow has seemed to be thriving is the Mississippi Gulf coast, but this year Toups reported that numbers on 2 coastal breeding bird surveys were drastically down. In Tennessee, Simbeck found two at the Cypress Inn, *Wayne*, June 1–July 10. In Arkansas, the Parkers found a singing Bachman's Sparrow s. of Locust Bayou, *Calhoun*, June 1, and three along the Hollywood BBS w. of Arkadelphia, *Clark*, June 3. Two ♂ Rufous-crowned Sparrows were recorded at Mt. Nebo, *Yell*, AR, June 17 (WMS, MG)—one at a feeder. Single Chipping Sparrows at Freport, *Walton*, FL, through June 15 (BoS, MS), and in *Hancock*, MS, July 15 (JAT) furnished unusual summer records. A territorial Lark Sparrow was near the Golden Triangle Regional Airport, *Lowndes*, MS, June 14–17 (MFH, TS, MD), and a pair had four nestlings near Crawford, MS, June 24 (MFH, TS, m.ob.). Near the Cypress Inn, *Wayne*, TN, Simbeck found 10 adults and 15 juveniles June 1–July 10. In the Arkansas Delta, an ad. Lark Sparrow was found in a fallow field s.e. of McCrory, *Woodruff*, July 14 (JML). A singing Grasshopper Sparrow was n. of Augusta, *Woodruff*, AR, June 14 & 16 (M & HP), and Lynch noted 2 breeding colonies in the Arkansas Delta: one in an extensive fallow field 4 mi s.e. of McCrory, *Woodruff*, and the other about 3 mi n. of Arkansas City, *Desha*—at least 31 birds were tallied at the latter site. Was the Lincoln's Sparrow w. of Blue Springs, *Garland*, AR, June 4 still headed north (H & MP)?

Two Bronzed Cowbirds were seen at Clermont Harbor, *Hancock*, MS, July 2 (JAT, m.ob.), and an ad. male was in Baton Rouge July 8 (PSR). About 30 Orchard Orioles were at Blakely I. July 23 (GDJ, DGJ), and lone ♂ Northern Orioles were noted in Arkansas at L. Elmdale June 4 and n.e. of Maysville, *Benton*, June 18 (MM).

House Finches continue to secure strongholds across the mid-South and have been noticed most often at feeders with sunflower seeds. A nest was found in a hanging fern at Starkville, MS, June 13 (MC, MFH); JAJ banded the three young. Moore reports House Finches apparently feeding young in Vicksburg—and coming to feeders. In Birmingham, Imhof banded 78(!) at his home, mostly hatching-year birds. A male visited a sunflower seed feeder at L. Chicot S.P., AR, June 26 & 27 (DRS, CS), and a pair was at a Pensacola feeder July 4 (JP). Red Crossbill records spanning Apr. 1–July 22 came from 2 localities s. of Crossett, *Ashley*, AR, with up to 10 individuals seen—including immatures in April (WMS, C & LY, D & DoH, H & MP).

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## PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION

Bernard Gollop

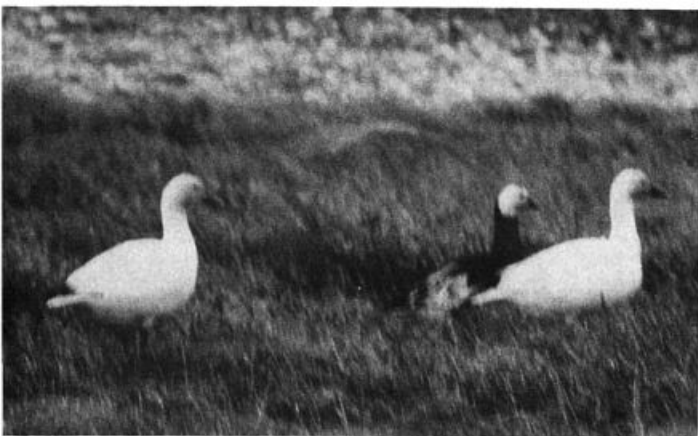


Mean June temperatures ranged from normal in Manitoba to 1°–2°C above in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Temperatures for July were 1°–3°C above normal, with Churchill having a record mean high 15.8°C—4° above average. June precipitation varied from average in the two western provinces to twice normal in Manitoba. In July precipitation ranged from less than half normal in much of Manitoba to 25% above average in central Alberta. Compared to 1988, the number of July ponds in southern Alberta was down 16%, in Saskatchewan it was equal, and in Manitoba it was up 14%; overall ponds were 42% of the long-term average (Canadian Wildlife Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service). How dry was it for the birds? A Barn Swallow at Oxbow, Saskatchewan, could not complete its third nest because of a mud shortage (Hazel Paton). Two marking projects were conducted this summer. Stuart Houston put green letter-number plastic legbands on 29 juvenile Ospreys and 93 juvenile Swainson's Hawks (107 on Swainson's last year). Black plastic bands were fitted on nine adult Ospreys. In Manitoba, Ken De Smet applied orange dye to the undersides of the flight and tail feathers of Ferruginous Hawks, Burrowing Owls, and Loggerhead Shrikes. Both projects were expected to continue in 1990.

**LOONS TO DUCKS**—Two of last year's concentration

areas for loons were again used in 1989: 300± Red-throated Loons were at Churchill June 5 (BC) and >200 Commons were on Muriel L., AB, in late July (Blair Rippin). The only report of more than a single Clark's Grebe was of a group of five birds among 323 Western Grebes at the n. end of Last Mountain L. June 1 (Brenda Dale). Only one egret was reported (a Cattle Egret in Manitoba July 2, Norm Hansley) and no ibises. Churchill was the locale for unusual records of the following four species: the first **Northern Gannet** for the Region was described in detail there June 17 by a group from Massachusetts Audubon Society (SP, m.ob.); Am. White Pelican—a straggler for the area—occurred as a flock of seven June 18 (Rob Unterinen); Snow Geese were migrating northward at varying rates of 3000–6000 per hour June 6 (BB); and a blue-morph Ross' Goose was photographed there June 3 (BB).

The molt migration of large Canada Geese from the s. Prairie Provinces and the Northern Great Plains to the Northwest Territories attracted considerable attention this summer. In the first week of June, there was an unusually heavy movement across s. Manitoba (PT, RK, GG, m.ob.); from June 1–4, many skeins of 40–100 birds, totalling >2000, flew over Turtle L., SK (MC); at Weyburn, 54 Canadas were noted June 6 (NP); from a point on the s. side of Saskatoon, counts were 34 on June 4, 533 June 5, 1002 June 6, 199 June 7, 32 June 8, eight June 9, and six June 10—mostly between 5:35 and 8:41 a.m. (BG). On the n. side of the city, 1000± were seen migrating on morning of the 5th (Wally Kost).



*Blue-morph Ross' Goose or Ross' x Snow hybrid (seen here with Snow Geese) at Churchill, Manitoba, June 3, 1989. Photograph/ R. A. Behrstock.*

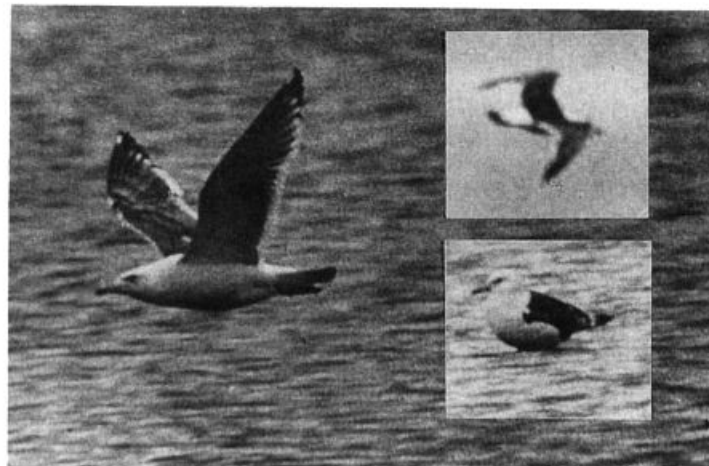
In Regina, the Wascana flock of  $400 \pm$  young Canadas was depleted by 66 after Diazinon, sprayed on trees for cankerworms, drifted to the grass and was eaten by the goslings; foxes probably killed another 30 (Lorne Scott, *vide* FB). Wood Ducks west of their known breeding range were found June 12 (dead in a chimney) and June 15 (one), both in the vicinity of Turtle L. in w-c. Saskatchewan (MC), and July 2 (a brood of 12) near Roche Percée in the s.e. corner of the province (SS).

**RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS** — At Loon L., SK, 8 of 13 successful Osprey nests were on platforms erected by Frank Scott (SH). Swainson's Hawk nestings and production were the worst in 18 years of a study through a large section of w. Saskatchewan, partly owing to a shortage of ground squirrels (SH). In Moose Jaw a pair of Swainson's nested in a tall tree at a busy intersection (Wilma Pickering). Ferruginous Hawk production was average in Saskatchewan, with a nest at Kindersley holding young for the 30th year in a row (a world record?) (SH). Two Peregrine Falcons, released in 1987, this year hatched 4 eggs on a Winnipeg hotel—the first successful nesting in the city (Robert Nero, *m.ob.*). Prairie Falcons had their most disastrous year in 18 in s.w. Saskatchewan (SH).

A Wild Turkey with eight young was found in Duck Mountain P.P., Kamsack, SK, May 13 (Frank Switzer). Five imm. Whooping Cranes spent the summer in Saskatchewan—an unusual event: two near Eyebrow L., two in the Speers-Cudworth area, and one near Cabri (Brian Johns).

Calgary's three young (not two as reported in last issue) **Black-necked Stilts** hatched May 31, began flying around July 2, and left with the female that week when the slough went dry (DC). In Saskatchewan a pair of **Black-necked Stilts** was found near Bradwell June 5, 8 mi from the site of an unsuccessful nesting in 1987. The birds were incubating June 8 and two young were seen July 1 (three on July 16), for the province's first successful nesting. Two adults and two young were last seen Aug. 18 (Craig & Lorriene Salisbury, Mary Gilliland, Daniel St. Hilaire).

June concentrations of shorebirds included 480 Ruddy Turnstones at Churchill June 6–9 (BC), >500 nonbreeding Wilson's Phalaropes at Luck L., SK, June 17 (FR), and 3000 migrating Red-necked Phalaropes at Good Spirit L. June 2 (William & Joyce Anaka). On Ducks Unlimited's new Luck Lake Project, SK, there were  $1240 \pm$  Marbled Godwits and  $4000 \pm$  dowitchers July 18 (Mike Gollop). Along a 175-mi transect in s.w. Saskatchewan June 6–24, there were 54 indicated pairs of Long-billed Curlews and 5 broods visible, compared to 36 indicated pairs and 2 broods in 1988 (Ed Driver). Saskatchewan's 5th **American Woodcock** was a bird studied as close as 8 ft on June 22 north of Somme (Ron Hooper).



*Composite picture of a Slaty-backed Gull in third-summer plumage at the south end of Last Mountain Lake, Saskatchewan, July 10, 1989. The subterminal light marks on the primaries can be seen on the clear flight shot, while the others show the overall contrast. First record for the province and apparently the second for Canada. Photographs/Ian A. McLaren.*

**GULLS TO OWLS** — A Lesser Black-backed Gull in first-year plumage near Pine Falls June 17 furnished Manitoba's 5th report (PT). Canada's 2nd and Saskatchewan's first **Slaty-backed Gull** was found June 5 on the Cement Plant Slough, n.e. of Regina; a detailed description of the 3rd-summer-plumaged bird was made then and again by 2 other observers when it was found at the Valeport Marsh June 10 and photographed (Robert Kreba, Trevor Herriot, Ian McLaren). Caspian Terns were more prominent than in previous summers: a nest with 2 eggs was found on Rattlesnake Dam, w. of Medicine Hat, June 4, for the first nesting for s. Alberta (DB). Four Caspians paid a 15-day visit to Glenmore Res., Calgary, beginning June 20 (DC). In Saskatchewan a new colony of 112 nests was found on Churchill L., Buffalo Narrows, July 13 (Barbara Hanbidge), and a single bird was seen June 4 at Scentgrass L. (SS). Arctic Terns peaked at  $3000 \pm$  at Cockles Point, Churchill, June 12 (BC).

Eastern Screech-Owls occupied 22 nest boxes (10 new) in the Estevan-Glen Ewen, SK, area; however, only one pair was successful, compared to 4 of 12 nestings in 1988 (Bob Finley, *vide* SH). A Snowy Owl, able to fly but possibly injured, was found near Matador, SK, June 18 (SJ, FR). The first N. Hawk Owl nesting for Churchill was established June 20–23 when two young were seen at a nest; another was also reported (JL, Russ Tkachuk, Brian Malcolm, SP). Thirty-two pairs of Burrowing Owls, a threatened species, were found in s.w. Manitoba; 24 successful nests resulted in 109 juveniles being banded (KD, MC). Ninety-three cooperators in Operation Burrowing Owl, a Saskatchewan project aimed at saving Burrowing Owl habitat, reported 292 pairs this year, compared to 250 in 1988. However, production appears to have been poor, probably owing to a shortage of mice (Dale Hjertaas). For the 2nd year, a Burrowing Owl family, surrounded by a snow fence, thrived through Weyburn's fair and rodeo as it again used a burrow on the exhibition grounds (not in Estevan as reported last year) (NP). A Long-eared Owl, new to Churchill, was heard and seen June 21 (JL). Short-eared Owls were apparently more common at Churchill than elsewhere in the Region with up to eight per day (BB). Boreal Owls used a box at Churchill for apparently the first recorded nesting for the area, but deserted, possibly owing to harassment by birders (JL, BC, PT).

**WOODPECKERS TO FINCHES** — A pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers spent spring and summer for the 3rd consecutive year near Estuary in s.w. Saskatchewan (Barry Cox, *vide*

SH). About 12 mi east, Pileated Woodpeckers produced young in a stump at Chesterfield Flats (Dean Francis, *vide* SH). Both species were far from their usual breeding ranges. An E. Wood-Pewee at Spring Valley June 5–6 was far west of its normal breeding area (FB). Saskatchewan's 7th **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was seen July 29 near Nokomis (Wayne Harris). By July 29, ad. Tree Swallows had departed Churchill, leaving 75± young behind, all probably raised in the town's 58 boxes (BC).

Saskatchewan's 2nd report of a **Mountain Chickadee** came from the Cypress Hills July 1 (Walter Farquharson, *vide* FB). Still in Saskatchewan, 2 broods of White-breasted Nuthatches (five young each) appeared in areas where breeding has been in doubt—Turtle L. July 1 (MC) and Weyburn July 3 (NP). A Veery, not previously reported from Churchill, was distinctly heard there about midnight June 22 (JL). Two pairs of Sage Thrashers raised young where the species was first found last year s. of Medicine Hat (DB, DC). Loggerhead Shrike numbers were up around Spring Valley (FB), equal to 1988 in s.e. Saskatchewan (Don Weidl), and seemed down in s. Manitoba, where 401 immatures were banded (KD, MC). What was apparently Saskatchewan's 2nd Kentucky Warbler was a singing bird in Regina July 14 (not seen, song memorized; FB).

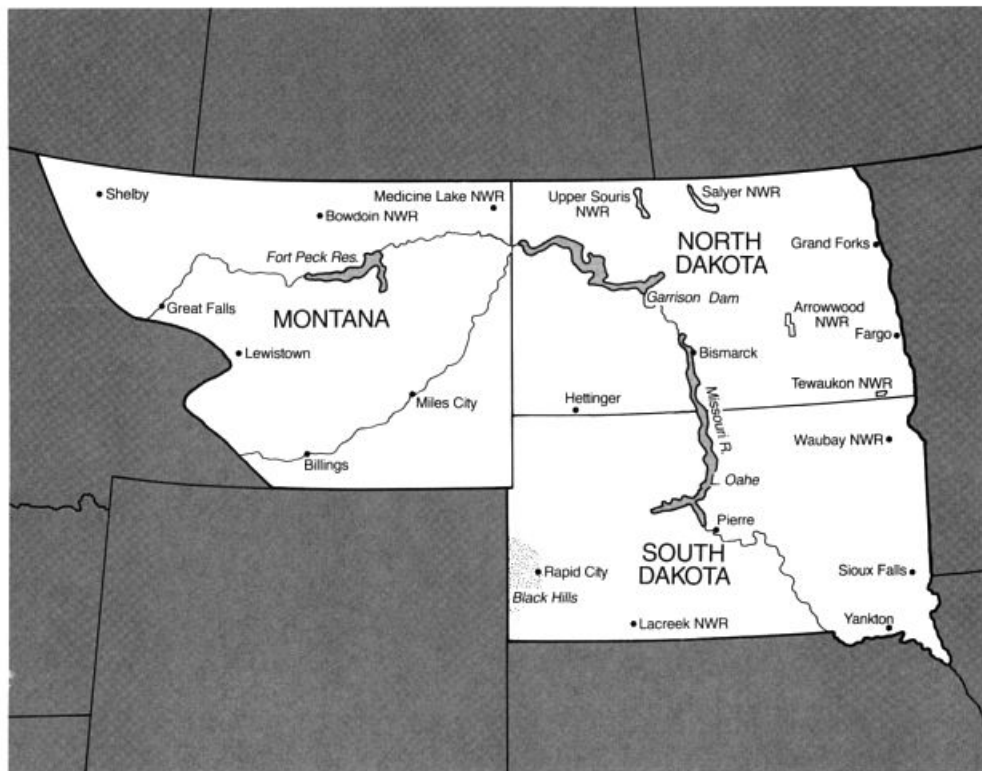
A Dickcissel at Seven Sisters, MB, July 16–18 was just east of its published breeding range (PT, GG, Martin Siepman). Single Rufous-sided Towhees were seen in June n. of their

normal breeding grounds—near St. Walburg and Turtle L. (MC). Churchill's 2nd Lark Sparrow was found July 4 & 6 (RK, PT, m.ob.). Lark Buntings occurred in good numbers beyond their usual restricted range in the s. part of the Region, e.g., north to Dilke and Whitebear, SK (Margaret Belcher, SJ). Baird's Sparrow was recently designated a threatened species by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. However, in Saskatchewan, with half the species' Canadian range, some observers referred to it as common to uncommon and others felt that it was increasing; it is one of the few species that has been found in standing cereal crops for more than 30 years. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were scarce around Churchill this summer (BC). The 3rd record for Com. Redpoll breeding in s. Saskatchewan and the 2nd for Saskatoon in 20 years was furnished by a nest with four young, 4 ft up in a planted 6-foot blue spruce in a small backyard surrounded by a high fence May 3; the birds fledged (BG).

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## NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Gordon Berkey



**W**hile scattered showers and slightly cooler temperatures kept grassland much greener than last summer, more wetlands in the prime prairie pothole region dried up as the water table continued to fall. Grebes, ducks, rails, and many other marsh-nesting species were severely reduced in numbers. Several grassland species, particularly those that use low meadows, have also declined drastically, perhaps because of poor breeding success last year and reduced cover this year.

Two species, Clark's Grebe and Violet-green Swallow,

were confirmed nesting in North Dakota for the first time. Summering Trumpeter Swans, Osprey, Sandhill Cranes, Black-necked Stilts, and Caspian Terns may have indicated that these species are about to breed in new areas. Species out of place at this season included Greater White-fronted Goose, Surf Scoter, Whooping Crane, and Sabine's Gull, but the most astounding find was a probable South Polar Skua. The summer proved to be a very exciting one; read on for the details.



**GREBES TO CRANES** — The first breeding confirmation of **Clark's Grebe** for North Dakota was obtained when an adult and two young were photographed in Kidder June 26 (KE). American White Pelican nests totalled 1709 at Bowdoin N.W.R., MT (DP), and 1041 at Drywood L., Roberts, SD (DS). The 2 active Great Blue Heron nests found along the Forest R. June 4 (DOL) represented the first definite nesting for the Red River valley of North Dakota; 19 ground nests of this species were at Drywood Lake. Two Little Blue Herons at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R., ND, June 3 (RM) provided the 14th record for the state.

**Trumpeter Swans** of unknown origin summered at 3 North Dakota locations. Singles were in Grand Forks (DOL) and Burleigh (RH), and up to five were on Chain L. at Lake Alice N.W.R. in Ramsey (GBB). None of the birds was tagged; speculation is that they came from the flocks at LaCreek N.W.R., SD, or Hennepin, MN, but other origins, such as the Yellowstone area, cannot be ruled out. The occurrences raised hopes that this magnificent species may begin breeding in the state once again. An imm. Tundra Swan spent the summer with the Trumpeter in Grand Forks. A Greater White-fronted Goose was unusual at Upper Souris N.W.R. June 20 (DB). Snow Geese, which summer more frequently, were seen at 6 different sites in the Dakotas. A total of 24 Mallard broods was at the Fargo lagoons July 17 (MB). A Lesser Scaup brood near Tappen, ND, July 7 was the earliest ever for the state (DK). The Surf Scoter at the Fargo lagoons July 9 (MB) furnished a most unusual summer observation.

Osprey was once again present at Icelandic S.P. (TH), where they have become regular in summer. Unexpected were summer sightings at Upper Souris (GM) in North Dakota, and in Meade (EM), Clay, and Lincoln (DR) in South Dakota. Ospreys were also seen along the Marias R. in Montana (HM) for the first summer in many years. These areas should be checked for breeding in the future. The 22 Turkey Vultures in Newton Hills S.P., SD, July 8 (GWB) were unusual, as the species is not known to breed in the area. A Rough-legged Hawk at J. Clark Salyer refuge June 2 (RM) furnished the first June record for North Dakota. A Merlin nest with young was found in Harding, SD, June 26 (MM). Sora and Am. Coots were hit particularly hard in the areas with low water levels. Sandhill Cranes were present throughout and presumed nesting at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R. (MZ). Twelve also summered at L. Alice, one was at Tewaukon N.W.R. June 5 (JL), and two were in Kidder, ND, June 23 (GBB). An imm. **Whooping Crane** that arrived in McLean, ND, June 11 was the first to spend the summer in the Region since the species was extirpated as a breeder.

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — The two Black-necked Stilts in Burleigh June 30 provided the 16th record for North Dakota (DL); there was a sighting at Lostwood N.W.R., ND, June 20 of possibly the same two birds seen in May, but no evidence of nesting was found. Migrant shorebirds once again provided some of the more interesting observations of the summer season. The Hudsonian Godwit in McHenry, ND, June 17 (RM) and the White-rumped Sandpiper in Clark, SD, June 30 (BH) furnished the latest spring dates ever for the respective states. A **Ruff** at the Fargo lagoons July 9–17 (GN) was the 5th for North Dakota, and the 2nd in July at that location. Montana had its 11th Hudsonian Godwit in Carter July 27 (SW) and its 18th Short-billed Dowitcher at Spidel W.P.A. July 15 (LM). Comments from several observers indicated an earlier return of fall migrant shorebirds involving larger than normal numbers. Earliest ever fall dates (including ties) for South Dakota included Greater Yellowlegs in Lake (DR) and Grant June 26, W. Sandpiper July 6 at LaCreek, Semipalmated, Least, and Baird's sandpipers in Todd July 2 (PS), and Pectoral Sandpiper in Brookings July 10. As most of these dates are well past the time when these species have occurred in North Dakota, it is possible that early migrants pushed a few hundred miles farther south because of poor

The bird of the century for the Region was a skua, most probably a **South Polar Skua**, discovered in the upper reaches of L. Oahe near Linton, ND, July 13. Imagine the surprise of Randy Kreil and Chris Gron-dahl, Jr., who were censusing Piping Plovers and Least Terns, when they found a large, dark, barrel-chested, gull-like bird with a hooked bill feeding on a still living Ring-billed Gull! The bird allowed very close approach and close-up photographs indicate a dark morph bird of this species aged at more than one year. Some experts feel that the N. Atlantic Great Skua has not been absolutely ruled out, and the photos are still circulating. There have been only two previous inland skua sightings from North America, at Niagara gorge and at Kansas City.

habitat conditions. Earliest ever arrivals in North Dakota were a Solitary Sandpiper June 22 and 20 Semipalmated Sandpipers July 3 at Long Lake N.W.R. (MR), and a Red Knot, very rare in fall, at Grand Forks July 18 (EF).

Last year L. Alice in Ramsey, ND, was reduced to a giant mud flat; this year an area of approximately 2 square miles had 12 to 18 inches of water and a solid growth of hardstem bulrush, attracting between 5000 and 15,000 pairs of nesting Franklin's Gulls. An imm. **Sabine's Gull** near Lewistown, MT, July 20 (LM), the 10th for the state, was particularly unusual at that date. There are no South Dakota breeding confirmations of Caspian Tern, so a copulating pair at Angostura Res. June 25 (RR) and two along the Missouri R. in Yankton July 17 (DR) were of interest. Two pairs of Least Terns nested successfully in Ft. Peck L., MT, for the first time (CC); they had previously nested in the state only along the river downstream from the dam. Very high releases of water from Garrison Dam by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flooded most Least Tern habitat along the free-flowing portion of the river in North Dakota.

**CUCKOOS TO BLUEBIRDS** — A Yellow-billed Cuckoo remained on territory June 10 through July 1 in Grand Forks, ND (DOL), which is n. of the normal range. Barn Owls were confirmed nesting in Jackson, SD (KG). An E. Screech-Owl with two fledged young was seen near Billings, MT, June 8 (WR). Burrowing Owls were found in 2 counties in e. South Dakota where they are rare (JDW, RP), and were present in good numbers in the Westby, MT, area (TN). The Common Poorwill nest found in Harding, SD, June 23 (MM) provided the 3rd breeding confirmation for the state. Two calling Whip-poor-wills in Roberts, SD, all summer (AS) were 100 mi n. of the normal breeding range. The 3 Chimney Swift nests found in Brookings, SD, July 8 (DR) provided only the 2nd definite breeding confirmation for the state, but the species is abundant in towns throughout the e. part of South Dakota. A Red-bellied Woodpecker in Tripp, SD, June 20 was farther west than expected. Active Red-naped Sapsucker nests were found in Custer (NW) and Lawrence, SD (BH), in June.

The Olive-sided Flycatcher at Fargo (LF) July 23 was the earliest fall migrant for North Dakota by 13 days. A Say's Phoebe was feeding young in Hutchinson, SD, June 25 (RB), e. of the normal range. A pair of Purple Martins remained at a nest box in Plentywood, MT, through the end of June (TN), but breeding could not be confirmed. The 4th record of **Violet-green Swallow** for North Dakota was obtained in the N. Unit of Theodore Roosevelt N.P. June 15 (GBB). The first breeding confirmation of the species was obtained at this site July 8 (DOL), when adults were photographed carrying insects into a nesting cavity in a cliff along the Little Missouri R. It was thought that a 2nd pair nested nearby. The Violet-green colony appeared to be reduced to one pair in Ft. Peck, MT, where they are apparently being displaced by N. Rough-winged Swallows (CC). Two active Barn Swallow nests were

found in caves in Theodore Roosevelt N.P. June 17 (RM) for the first known instance of their using natural sites in North Dakota in modern times. Sedge Wrens were absent in the Westby, MT, area (TN) and much reduced in North Dakota after last year's invasion. A pair of E. Bluebirds seen throughout June near Ft. Peck, MT (CC), was suspected of nesting; this was only the 16th observation for the state. The total of 134 banded at Waubay N.W.R., SD (DS), was indicative of how well this species is doing in the Dakotas.

**VIREOS TO CROSSBILLS**—An ad. Yellow-throated Vireo was tending three fledged young in Grand Forks, ND, July 22 (SL). A nest was collected from one of 3 pairs of Yellow-throateds in Roberts, SD, June 16 (BH). A rare **Cerulean Warbler** was singing in Roberts June 5 & 6. A strong movement of Connecticut Warblers in early June included a daily total of six in Walsh, ND, June 4 (DOL). The pair of Scarlet Tanagers feeding fledged young at Turtle River S.P. represented the first Grand Forks confirmation of breeding, but the species is regular there. Numbers of Dickcissels returned to normal in North Dakota after last year's invasion.

Field Sparrows have been increasing steadily and moving westward in e. Montana for the past 7 years (CC). The Lark Bunting nest with eggs in Wells (MN) June 1 was the earliest on record for North Dakota. Lark Buntings, in contrast to Dickcissels, were even more abundant than last year in many areas, and nesting was quite successful as food-carrying and fledged young were very much in evidence. An apparent dump nest of Savannah Sparrow containing 9 eggs was found at Grand Forks June 8. Grasshopper Sparrows were much reduced from last year but probably about normal in numbers. A Le Conte's Sparrow nest with 4 eggs was found at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R. June 10 (GBB). Le Conte's were absent from most marginal habitat this year. A Swamp Sparrow in Todd, SD, July 5 was w. of the normal range. White-winged (Dark-eyed) Junco, which had previously been found nesting only

in the Black Hills and Harding in South Dakota, was confirmed in Shannon July 12 (RP). Bobolink, another meadow nester, was down significantly. Red-winged Blackbirds were somewhat less widespread as marginal habitats such as roadside ditches were used less extensively. Yellow-headed Blackbirds nest in deeper marsh zones, and many former colonies were replaced by Red-winged as water levels fell. An **Eastern Meadowlark** in Sheridan June 8 (RM) was the 9th for North Dakota. House Finches nested in Fargo successfully again (MS); breeding of this species was confirmed in Brookings, SD, where birds had been noted in the spring, on June 22 (BH). A fledged White-winged Crossbill with remnant down was in Chester, MT, July 14–16 (HM), a juvenile was in Brown, SD, July 22 (DT), and eight, including adults and juveniles, were in Theodore Roosevelt N.P. July 19 (BW). These are normal dates for post-nesting birds to arrive in the Region, so the presence of juveniles does not necessarily indicate that the birds nested at the above locations. Red Crossbills were observed in the ponderosa pine forests of Slope, ND, in July. Wintering crossbills of both species were scarce over most of the Region last winter.

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## SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Joseph A. Grzybowski

**I**t was wetter, but the drought was still the big news. Rains apparently came over most of the Region, and conditions were even wet for Kansas and Oklahoma, although Rosche reports that the Nebraska panhandle remained parched. Now, can we measure the effects of the drought? Was relief from the dry spring conditions soon enough to help some populations produce young this year? What time-lags can we see in the effects of the drought on other bird populations?

As usual in nature, the answers, where possibly open to some speculation, were variable. Past precipitation was peculiar in that Kansas and Nebraska were dryer and hotter than Oklahoma. Some pockets of birds appeared to have a decent breeding season. Pied-billed Grebes and cormorants were perhaps examples. However, there appears to have been a general reduction in numbers of many bird species before relief came this season, particularly for waterfowl and shorebirds. The mid-summer rains seemed too late to be of much help in recouping these populations this season. A few dryer-adapted species, such as Cassin's Sparrows, were commoner in some western parts of the Region.



**ABBREVIATIONS** — Fontenelle Forest = Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., NE; O.B.R.C. = Oklahoma Bird Records Committee; Salt Plains = Great Salt Plains Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Alfalfa Co., OK; Quivira = Quivira Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Stafford Co., KS. Place names in italics are counties.

**LOONS TO RAILS** — Common Loons were noted during the period in Hall, NE (PB, GL), and Oklahoma (JGN). Eared Grebes were almost absent in w. Nebraska, where normally hundreds can be observed (DJR, RCR). They were present at Quivira, but never nested (RLB). Approximately 200 W. Grebes (high) were noted in Sheridan, NE, June 23 (RB); however, the Rosches report that few young were produced. In possible contrast, Pied-billed Grebes had excellent nesting success at the few places where there was water in w. Nebraska (RCR, DJR), and at Quivira (RLB). Do they concentrate and appear healthier than normal at these few places?

In w. Nebraska, mid-July congregations of Am. White Pelicans (breeding outside the Region) appeared to have more than the normal proportion of young (RCR, DJR). Other June and July groups of pelicans were noted as far south as Lake Texoma (WAC et al.) and Sequoyah, OK (JN, JH, DV). Double-crested Cormorants apparently had a good year in Rock, NE, where most nests contained two to three young July 15 (RCR, DJR).

American Bitterns were found at Quivira July 1 (PJ). Cattle Egrets are becoming exceedingly abundant in w. Oklahoma. A roost of 10,000 herons at the Salt Plains was mostly made up of Cattle Egrets (RLB). Black-crowned Night-Herons were scarce, and no young were observed in w. Nebraska (RCR, DJR). Several White-faced Ibises lingered until June 10 in Canadian, OK (JGN), and as many as 60 ibises may have nested at Quivira (RLB).

A pair of Trumpeter Swans summered in Cherry, NE, but no young were seen (RCR, DJR). Two **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** noted in Marshall, OK, during early June were most unusual (WAC, BS et al.). Although the Region does not represent a major waterfowl nesting area, breeding waterfowl (including coots) were down in w. Nebraska, and few reports of extralimital ducks were received. A vagrant ♂ Ring-necked Duck was documented July 24 & 25 in Canadian, OK (MO). Hooded Merganser females were observed in Douglas and Sarpy, NE (AG, JB). On the other hand, Wood Ducks now regularly nest to probably the western margins of the Region from Nebraska to Oklahoma.

Three reports of Osprey came from Nebraska, and one was noted June 10 in Sequoyah, OK (JN et al.). An adult Bald Eagle added more sticks to an already massive nest in Garden, NE, but with no apparent success in breeding (RCR, DJR).

The marsh at Quivira may have survived the drought. King, Virginia, and Black rails seemed to be in normal abundance there (RLB). But it seems possible that the more generalized drought in Kansas, and the rains in Oklahoma, may have dispersed some rails farther south, such as the Soras in Canadian, OK, noted July 18 (TG, BJ, HH).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — A Black-bellied Plover was at Quivira throughout July (RLB). Two Piping Plovers (one banded) in Tulsa July 29 (JL, TM et al.) were the only migrants reported. A Marbled Godwit July 31 in Oklahoma (MO) was unusual. Four W. Sandpipers June 3 in Kearney, NE (TB, RS, DR), were late. Pectoral Sandpipers were noted as late as June 3 and as early as July 15 in Tulsa (TM et al.). A Ruddy Turnstone July 27 in Hall, NE (PB), was early, as were six Long-billed Dowitchers at Quivira July 1. This is not very much to say about migrant shorebirds, a group that can often dominate the summer Regional report.

Breeding shorebirds were down, absent, or spotty in w. Nebraska, primarily because of dry conditions. No Black-necked Stilts were seen. Willets were difficult to locate, and no young were observed. Wilson's Phalaropes fared only slightly better. Few or fewer Am. Avocets, Upland Sandpipers, and Long-billed Curlews remained to nest, and those that did

S.A.

It was particularly distressing to note that the concern of declining numbers of Upland Sandpipers last summer and fall may have been valid. Both Rosche and myself heard and observed few during mid-July in Nebraska and Oklahoma, respectively, a time when adults should already be migrating in conspicuous numbers. Are we at the mercies of vagaries in our spotty sampling? Can we comment only about populations in the Region, or did the extent of the drought into the pothole regions north create an exacting gap for populations breeding north well into Alaska to cross during their migrations? What will this mean for the numbers of young we should see in August?

had only spotty success (RCR, DJR).

In central Kansas and on the Salt Plains, rain, not drought, was the problem. Few to no avocets, stilts, or phalaropes were produced. And heavy rains in late June reduced a count of 70+ Snowy Plover chicks to fewer than 10 a week later at the Salt Plains (RLB).

A Franklin's Gull was still present in Tulsa June 6 (AR et al.). Central Oklahoma appears to be a magnet for vagrant Laughing Gulls, particularly in recent years. This summer, one adult was photographed in Oklahoma July 12 (MO). More unusual, a Common Tern July 23 from Lake Frances, Adair, OK, was well documented (MM).

Good and bad news for Least Terns. First the good! Up to 42 chicks were seen by mid-June in Tulsa (FP), the highest production ever noted there. Reports of small isolated groups seemed more common this season. As many as five adults were noted at Lake Hefner, Oklahoma, June 1-23 (JGN). Eight adults, in pairs, were present along the Canadian River, Cleveland, OK, June 9, although heavy rains swelled the river (PBe, MH, JAG). Ten were noted during the summer in Muskogee, OK (JM). Another three terns were seen flying along the Washita River in Carter, OK, May 30 (BF).

Now the poor to bad news: Although struggling at a number of locales along the Platte River, almost 100 nests produced about 50 young Least Terns (PB). Rains foiled nesting in n.w. Oklahoma, where approximately 180-190 pairs fledged only 40 young (RLB). Worse, at Quivira, 25 pairs fledged only one young (RLB). Still worse, coyotes destroyed all 9 Least Tern nests at one site in Buffalo, NE (PB). However, late nestings may still produce young at some of these localities.

**DOVES TO VIREOS** — A Ringed Turtle-Dove of unknown origin was noted in Wichita, KS (*vide* DK). Black-billed Cuckoos were noted June 4 in Oklahoma (HH), June 11 in Wichita (JY), and June 22 in Blaine, OK (JAG). A ♂ Rufous Hummingbird in Dawes, NE, July 16 was the only one reported for the summer period (RCR, DJR). An observation of a **Calliope Hummingbird** in Cimarron, OK, July 22, supported by written documentation (RCR, DJR), was accepted by the O.B.R.C., and represented the first report of this species for Oklahoma.

One to two Alder Flycatchers were identified June 1 in Douglas, NE (TB), and Fontenelle Forest (BP). An Acadian Flycatcher was noted west of usual areas in Carter, OK (BF). A pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, attempting to nest in a pod of lights atop a 50 ft pole at a local ball field in Cass, NE, was not successful (MK, GW). This was one of fewer than 10 nestings known in Nebraska. Flooded reservoirs and resultant dead trees appear to have built up numbers of Tree Swallows over the years in w. Nebraska (RCR, DJR). A southern outlier colony of Tree Swallows in Sequoyah, OK, was estimated at 25+ pairs (CH, *vide* JM).

A Red-breasted Nuthatch, possibly two, visiting a feeder in Pontotoc, OK (WAC et al.), added to a small collection of summer records for this species in recent years. Is there a pattern or trend here? Unusual, a Sage Thrasher was noted

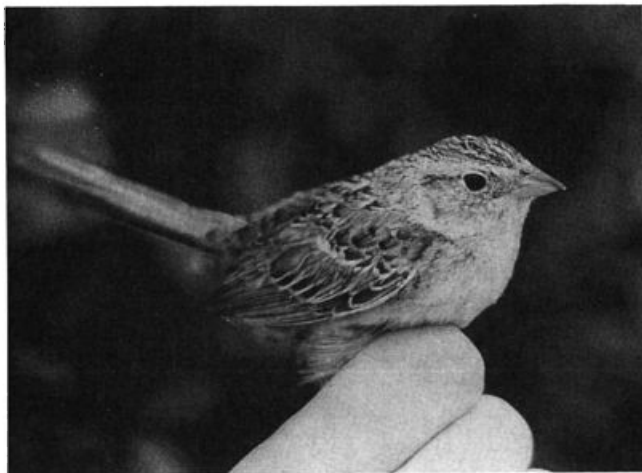
in Cimarron, OK, July 22 (RCR, DJR). Swainson's Thrushes June 3 in Wichita (PJ) and June 6 in Delaware, OK (MM), were late.

Four ♀ Black-capped Vireos in Blaine, OK, produced eight to 10 young, a hopeful sign for what may be the northernmost and very isolated remnant population of this species. Numbers of these vireos were down from last season in the Wichita Mountains, Comanche, OK, a possible artifact of drought conditions last season. Only 2 pairs were still present at previously known localities between Blaine, OK, and the Wichita Mountains (JAG).

A number of observers bemoaned the continuing decline of Bell's Vireos. Once an expected background bird in Oklahoma, it may warrant more serious investigation. Yellow-throated Vireos may breed regularly west to Carter, OK, where one was noted May 28 (BF).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES**—Lingering or lost, a ♂ Black-throated Green Warbler was noted in Comanche, OK, June 13 & 14 (DL, JAG). Worm-eating Warblers were noted during June in Adair and Delaware, OK (MM).

Lark Bunting, an erratic species anyway, had a disastrous season in w. Nebraska, with flocks estimated at only one-sixth of normal numbers (RCR, DJR). Nonetheless, one was noted far east in Sarpy, NE, June 16 (MD). Small "colonies" (up to 10) of another eruptive species, Cassin's Sparrow, were



*Cassin's Sparrow netted from a colony in Dundy County, Nebraska, June 22, 1989. In this dry summer, the species was found farther east than usual on the southern Great Plains. Photograph/Mark A. Brogie.*

discovered June 3 in Dundy and Hitchcock, NE (RS, TB, DR), with a single bird also noted in Chase, NE, June 16 (EB). In Greer, OK, 34 Cassin's were counted at 67 stops June 17 & 18 (JDT). And, Cassin's were observed as far east as Johnston, OK (WAC et al.), where at least six males were noted June 8 & 9. Although Grasshopper Sparrow is a common breeder throughout the Region, a large "colony" of 80–100 of the species in Carter, OK (BF), seemed noteworthy. A very late Lincoln's Sparrow was netted June 3 in Oklahoma (HH et al.).

Who would expect Swamp Sparrows to be on the climb in w. Nebraska during a drought year? Rosche noted 18–20 males at 8 different localities in central Nebraska, mostly in brushy habitat along watercourses.

A pair of Evening Grosbeaks, noted coming daily to a feeder, was accompanied by young in late June—the most definitive evidence of nesting reported from Nebraska to date (RCR, DJR). House Finches continued to be reported from Wichita

(PJ, DK), Tulsa (E & KH), and Muskogee, OK (DG), and three came to a feeder in Douglas, KS (RLB).

**ADDENDUM**—A belated report was received of a Sharp-tailed Sparrow May 27 at Quivira (RLB).

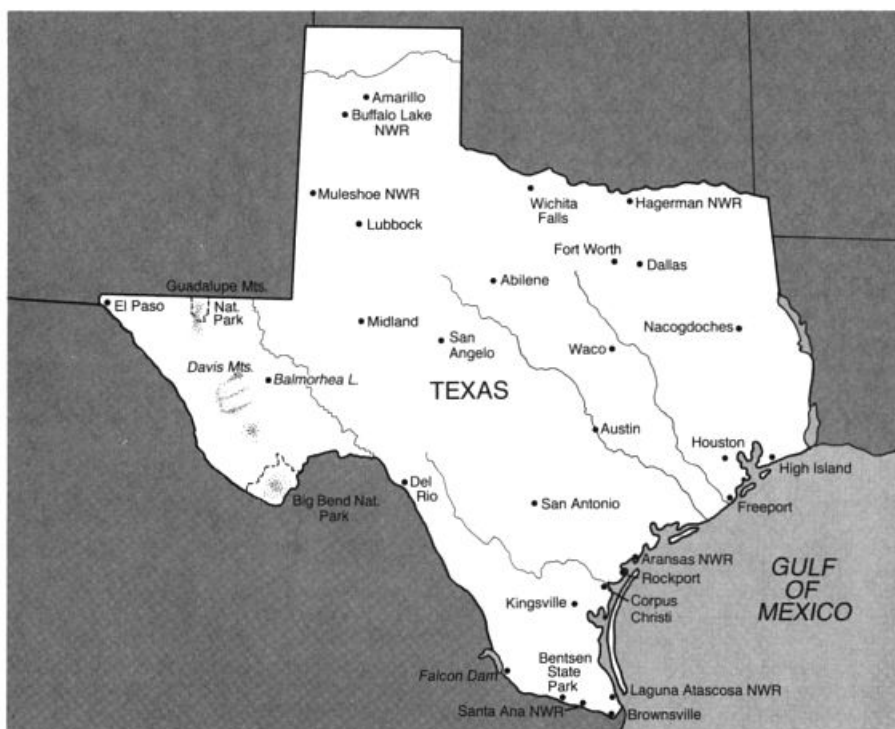
**CORRIGENDA**—As luck would have it, freshmen like myself must face the consequences of our inexperience, and backtrack to correct our mistakes. Thus, from *Am. Birds* 42 (5): 1308–1310: A **White Ibis** was discovered July 12 (not July 14) at Perry L. in Jefferson (not Douglas), KS, by Dan Lashelle. The White-rumped Sandpiper from Tulsa was reported in error, and should be deleted. And, the primary information for the record of Song Sparrows from L. Perry, KS should read: Up to 15 Song Sparrows were singing at Perry L. (not L. Perry), Jefferson, KS (not Douglas) during July (MMc, LMo). The additional observation of Song Sparrows reported on page 1309 was made by Ted T. Cable and Scott Seltman in Jefferson, not Douglas, KS.

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# TEXAS REGION

Greg W. Lasley and  
Chuck Sexton



In north and east Texas, last spring's heavy rains were followed by even more rainfall. In many cases, high water and blocked roads even prevented birders from reaching favored birding areas at local reservoirs . . . and that was before Tropical Storm Allison. After crossing Mexico and re-forming in the Gulf of Mexico, Allison stormed ashore near Galveston on June 26. The storm dropped as much as 20 inches of rain in parts of east Texas in less than a week. Grantham and other observers described the devastating results on colonial waterbirds on the upper Texas coast (below). On a more positive note, by season's end, grasslands in that region were unusually verdant and local woodlands had become almost tropical in appearance. With the exception of perhaps one pigeon, there were no particularly remarkable avian occurrences associated with the storm. It is tempting to look to Allison and associated winds to explain a handful of early fall arrivals of shorebirds, flycatchers, warblers, and others, but this would be speculative at best.

Seyffert's summary for the Panhandle was remarkable, even foreign-sounding, for Texas: "This summer was one of the most ideally pleasant in my memory"! June was relatively cool there and sufficient rain fell to yield lush prairies and full playas. The latter conditions gave rise to some interesting waterbird records. Spotty thunderstorms through the season brought local relief and some greening to many drought-stricken south Texas localities from the coastal bend to the Rio Grande Valley and west to Laredo but the long-term drought conditions persisted; freshwater lakes were still predominantly or completely dry. Heavy rains in the Hill Country and Concho Valley came in early June but the remainder of the season was hot and dry. Far west Texas had to wait for late July for some relief. Yet even in these droughtier areas of south and west Texas, many insectivorous and granivorous species such as cuckoos, flycatchers, mockingbirds, vireos, chats, buntings, sparrows, orioles, and goldfinches had good nesting success. Such results reflect the disparity between short-term

beneficial conditions of which many species can take advantage, in contrast to the continuing deleterious effects of the long-term drought on other groups such as inland-nesting waterbirds and galliform birds.

This would have to be rated as a pretty successful summer with new Texas nesting records for three species, one species newly documented for the state, and a first report (single-observer) of yet another species. The Texas Breeding Bird Atlas project continued to provide many other important if less spectacular finds.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Big Bend = Big Bend Nat'l Park (distinguished from "Big Bend Ranch" State Natural Area); G.M.N.P. = Guadalupe Mountains Nat'l Park; T.C.W.C. = Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection (Texas A&M University); U.T.C. = Upper Texas Coast. Place names in *italics* are counties. The following are shortened names for the respective state natural areas, state or national parks, national wildlife refuges, etc.: Aransas, Attwater, Brazoria, Devil's River, Kerr, Kickapoo, Laguna Atascosa, Santa Ana, and Sea Rim.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — A Com. Loon in San Antonio June 11 was a late inland migrant (WS). The two Com. Loons reported in spring on L. Tanglewood, *Randall*, remained through July 13 (TJ). Least Grebes were sparse to absent in coastal and south Texas; a pair at Aransas in late June furnished the first refuge sighting in over a year (BJ). A colony of nesting Eared Grebes was found on a playa near *Claude, Armstrong*, July 2 (PA) and courting birds were seen on another playa in the county July 4 (KS); the species is a rare nester in the Panhandle. Other summering Eareds were in *Lubbock (CSg), Hartley, and Randall (KS)*.

American White Pelicans summered on several inland lakes: seventy-six were on Millers Creek L. in n.c. Texas June 26 (KN); 35 spent the summer at L. Tawakoni (RK); and 50 were noted on L. Waco July 10 (JMu). After a peak of 250 migrant White Pelicans in early June at Mitchell L. in San Antonio, only four spent the whole summer (WS). Brown Pelicans attempted nesting at 5 locations along the coast. The northernmost group of 14 nests near Brazoria was destroyed

by high tides and rains from Allison (*fide* JG). The main nesting groups of Browns in Corpus Christi Bay numbered about 525 pairs; smaller groups hung around Port Isabel and Port Mansfield but no nesting was observed at the latter localities (JG, MF). Unusual summer records of Double-crested Cormorants were noted at New Braunfels (two birds; CB), San Antonio (WS), and most notably Lynn (12 birds) in the South Plains (GJ, WO). Olivaceous Cormorants were confirmed nesting for the first time near L. Tawakoni (RK, GH) and at Millers Creek L. in n.c. Texas (KN), and Montague got its first Olivaceous at Amon Carter L. (MP *et al.*). After a first area record last fall, four Olivaceous Cormorants spent the summer at Midland but did not nest (*fide* FW). Four more were at Tornillo L., El Paso, in late July (BZ *et al.*). Tropical Storm Allison deposited a few Magnificent Frigatebirds inland at Houston during the storm week, and the 60 seen off the Bolivar Ferry July 1 were no doubt associated with the blow (TE).

Grantham reported that "in general, long-legged colonial waterbirds had a very good season along the coast. There were no major storms which adversely affected birds nesting on higher islands and there was very little human disturbance on Audubon-monitored islands." He also noted that herons and egrets appeared to relocate to the north this year, generally with low numbers in s. Texas rookeries yet large increases along the coastal bend and the U.T.C. An exception was Green I. on the lower coast, up to 2200 pairs (from 850 last year) owing to raccoon removal in prior years (MF). In Denton, powerful storms, poachers, and hunters looking for target practice devastated an egret rookery.

An Am. Bittern was seen in s.e. Hutchinson June 18–19 (PA); the resident rancher said a pair was present all summer but nesting was not confirmed. Three Least Bitterns at Millers Creek L. June 3 were a first for Throckmorton (KN); another Least Bittern in the El Paso area was the first there in nearly a decade (JL). Snowy Egrets, classified as accidental in mid-summer in the Panhandle and South Plains, were reported in Lynn June 25 (GJ, WO) and Carson July 30 (KS). Little Blue Herons were at Phantom L. in Jones July 7–16 with a peak of 15 birds on July 15, more than any recent year (BH). There was a first Throckmorton record for Tricolored Heron June 3 (KN) and a second Tricolored record for Hudson on the Rio Grande the same day (JSp). An imm. Reddish Egret was at San Antonio July 24–26 (CB). Cattle Egrets, rare in summer in the Panhandle, were seen at an ibis nesting site in Hale July 6 & 16 (LM, KS). The most "urbanized" rookery to be reported entailed 75–80 Cattle Egret nests in live oak trees at the county courthouse in downtown Falfurrias (AO). Several Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Aransas beginning in early July provided a rare summer record (BJ).

Unusual inland reports of White Ibis included 15 at Nacogdoches June 17 (DW), an immature at L. Tawakoni July 5 & 23 (RK *et al.*), and three at Laredo's Casa Blanca L., July 24 (WS, J & BR). The recent appearance of Glossy Ibises along the U.T.C. is now known not to be limited to spring migration: a single Glossy lingered in Chambers until June 10 (BB, RE, TE, JM) and as many as three gathered with White-faced Ibises on a small rice pond in Waller July 4–20 (TE). Two White-faced Ibis rookeries, the larger with 50 or more birds, were found in Hale in July; these represented only the 2nd and 3rd confirmed nestings in that region (DS, KS, m.ob.). Seven Wood Storks in Robertson July 3 provided an apparent new county record (CJ, GL).

**WATERFOWL**—Single Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were rarities in Bosque June 19 (JMu) and at Austin June 25–July 6 (JSu, EK *et al.*), as were two to four Black-bellieds in Waco through the period (JY, JMu *et al.*).

Eleven species of ducks, including one ♀ Greater Scaup, summered at Mitchell L. (WS). In the Panhandle, Wood Ducks nested in Gray after a rancher erected nest boxes (*fide* RD). At the other end of the state, a ♀ Wood Duck at Falcon Dam

From one to three ad. Muscovy Ducks were reported regularly from the Rio Grande at Salineno and Santa Margarita Ranch through July. Andres Sada, who first predicted the occurrence of this species in Texas owing to his familiarity with the Ducks Unlimited waterfowl nest box program in n.e. Mexico, reports that this program has been relegated to a lower priority among the many important activities being accomplished by that organization. Many nest boxes in that region are now in disrepair. We may have seen the peak of the Texas "invasion" by Muscovies. Effects on populations of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, which initially may have gotten a boost from this program in the early stages of their recent "invasion" into Texas, will need to be monitored. In less than a decade the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck has become the most common nesting waterfowl in many areas along the Upper Texas Coast.

July 23 provided an unexpected summer record (CS). Mottled Ducks and "Mexican" Ducks mingled in feeding flocks at Falcon Dam through the period. Presumably-wild Mallards nested successfully during late July in Tarrant, a rare occurrence (CH). There was strong evidence of nesting by Mallards at Millers Creek L. (KN) and L. Arrowhead as well (CH). In June, Blue-winged Teal nested for the first time ever at Millers Creek L. (KN). A Redhead drake on Oso Bay, Nueces, July 29 was unusual (PP); most summering reports are of basic-plumaged birds. An out-of-season imm. Surf Scoter on Mesquite Bay June 10 provided a new species for Aransas (JG). A Red-breasted Merganser in Galveston June 10 was unusually late (BB, RE, TE, JM), but the most puzzling waterfowl occurrence was of an ad. ♂ Com. Merganser at North L., Dallas, June 11 (LH).

**RAPTORS**—A pair of Ospreys successfully raised three young at Sam Rayburn Res.; this was their 4th year in a row to attempt nesting (MK). Other Ospreys summered at Laguna Atascosa (three birds), Port Mansfield, Boca Chica, and Falcon Dam (m.ob.). An early migrant Osprey was at Mitchell L. July 28 (WS). A fresh tail feather from a ♂ Hook-billed Kite was found July 23 at Falcon Dam, where the species had not been reported in recent months (CS). Up to six Am. Swallow-tailed Kites staged in Orange July 12–13 (RP), adding support to the argument that a small remnant population of the species continues to breed in far s.e. Texas. David Mabie reported that 25 Bald Eagle nests in Texas fledged 28 young this year (*fide* JE). Unexpected was a N. Harrier near Claude, Armstrong, June 2 (SWi) and another in Grapevine June 15 (MP); both were probably late migrants. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was noted in Comfort July 9 (E & SW). Although probable breeding Cooper's Hawks were noted in many areas of Texas, nests continued to be hard to find.

A pair of Broad-winged Hawks nested for the first time in Austin; a recently fledged young was seen begging from an adult July 17 onward and a 2nd young was noted in early August (DWe, ph. GL, m.ob.). Broad-wingeds with young were spotted June 25 in Montague, where the species had not even been previously recorded (ph. MP, GK). The species also nested at Waco in June (FG, *fide* LB). A Broad-winged on Bolivar Pen. June 10 was considered a late migrant (BB, RE, TE, JM), while an ad. Broad-winged July 8 in Victoria was simply out of season and range (CH). A subadult light morph Short-tailed Hawk was studied and photographed at Santa Margarita Ranch, Starr, July 22 (CH, TR, KP, ph. LH), providing the first documented Texas record. Not surprisingly for "the most aerial of the buteos" (JA), this bird proved difficult to relocate despite regular coverage by birders for several days. It was possibly sighted on the 25th (CB *et al.*) and was last reliably reported July 28 (RW).



Short-tailed Hawk in Starr County, Texas, July 22, 1989. First state record. Photograph/Laurens R. Halsey.

There were early concentrations of migrant Swainson's Hawks in s. Texas, such as 23 birds in Wilson July 4 (WS) and 20 birds at Santa Ana July 31 (JI). We suspect these may be collections of the populations breeding in the s. Texas brushlands rather than birds from farther north or west. However, groups of 37 (June 28 in Carson; KS) to as many as 300 Swainson's (July 26 in Potter; RS) were very early and unexpected concentrations for the Panhandle. Four White-tailed Hawks at Falls City, Karnes, July 4 were unusually far inland (WS). The Texas Breeding Bird Atlas program continued to turn up new Am. Kestrel nesting areas. Pairs nested at Falcon Dam (2nd year in a row; OC, JI, m.ob.), San Angelo (first for Concho Valley; *fide* DT), Devil's River (*fide* KB), Mitchell (FW), and Lynn (MF). In the 4th year of the program, seven more Aplomado Falcons were released at Laguna Atascosa. A total of 13 birds had been released 1986-1988. One subad. Aplomado returned to the refuge this summer (SVR). Researchers reported 9 Peregrine eyries in Texas this year, the majority in Big Bend (*fide* JE). A Prairie Falcon in Coke June 21 provided a first summer record for the Concho Valley (MC, IW, *fide* DT).

**GROUSE TO TERNS**—Personnel at Attwater conducted a special prairie-chicken survey in July. On 6500 acres surveyed, they detected 35 adult and 39 young Attwater's Greater-Prairie-Chickens, representing an adult to young ratio of 1:1.1, a marked improvement over last year (CF). The population remains critically low, however. Reproduction by Wild Turkeys and N. Bobwhites was virtually nonexistent in many drought-stricken areas of the s. Texas brushlands (N & EA, P & NP, AO). In contrast, Frances Williams noted that Bobwhite populations were high in parts of w. Texas, seemingly at the expense of Scaled Quail, which have declined in areas such as *Gaines* and *Andrews*. Abundant rains in recent years may have tipped the balance.

King Rails were unexpected in Nacogdoches June 1 (DW) and near Gainesville June 25 (nesting; CH). The same Whooping Crane that had summered at Aransas in 1988 did so again this year (BJ).

A Lesser Golden-Plover in Waller July 13-15 (TE) established a new early arrival date for the species (previously July 18, 1954). Snowy Plovers were noteworthy in several areas of the state. A dozen were found in Lynn June 25 (GJ, WO). Sandy and alkaline shorelines of drying playas in the Midland area hosted an estimated 20 nesting pairs (FW). Several pairs nested with limited success at Balmorhea L. (ML). A pair of Snowies at Bolivar Flats June 18 raised suspicions of breeding, although the species is not known to breed on the U.T.C. (TE).

Wilson's Plovers were unusually abundant on the central coast at such localities as Packery Channel (WS) and Baffin Bay (PP).

A few "northbound" shorebirds lingered at Mitchell L. as late as June 21 (WS) while a small diversity of shorebirds had already returned (?) to Boca Chica near the mouth of the Rio Grande by June 26 (JI). One to two Willets in Austin July 3-6 were a rare find (GL, CJ, EK), as was another near McNary, Hudspeth, July 28 (BZ, SH). An early Upland Sandpiper was noted July 8 near Aransas (A & GS). Other Uplands were encountered "out-of-season" (i.e., outside the normal limits of established migrations) in Young June 24 and Haskell June 26 (KN). Long-billed Curlews arrived abundantly in Kleberg by late July (PP); over 240 were tallied in one group at Laguna Salada July 22 (CS). Two Hudsonian Godwits in Chambers June 10 extended the U.T.C. late spring departure date by over a week (BB, RE, TE, JM). A single Marbled Godwit inland in Waller July 13-26 was presumed to be a fall migrant (TE). Several observers tallied the first Ruddy Turnstone for Van Zandt at L. Tawakoni July 23 (RK, JN et al.). Three White-rumped Sandpipers were still present at Bolivar Flats July 2 (TE), overlapping with the beginning of the southbound migration of other species. Two Stilt Sandpipers on the Rio Grande in Hudspeth July 28 were a rare find (BZ, SH). Short-billed Dowitchers were carefully described at Fort Worth July 8 (RR) and L. Tawakoni July 30 (RK, GH, JN, MW). A juv. Wilson's Phalarope with adults was studied on a playa in Castro (N & EE, CB) and a single juvenile on a playa in Gray (KS) in late June suggested possible local nesting. Several ad. Wilson's were also observed in Armstrong (PA), but nesting was not confirmed. An imm. jaeger believed to be a Parasitic was found on S. Padre I. June 8 (\* to Pan American U.) A jaeger believed to be a Pomarine was photographed at Port Aransas July 1 (JMu).

Grantham vividly described the "severe losses" Tropical Storm Allison caused among U.T.C. gull and tern colonies. Virtually all colonies of skimmers and Royal, Sandwich, Gull-billed, Least, Caspian, and Forster's terns, and many Laughing Gulls were lost owing to heavy rains and high tides. Twelve hundred pairs of terns and skimmers at one colony in Galveston Bay had half-grown chicks down on the beach June 17; all the young birds were killed and/or swept out into the bay during the high tides accompanying the storm. Allison dropped four Laughing Gulls on Sam Rayburn Res. June 30 (DW); one to three Laughing Gulls were noted at San Antonio reservoirs through the period (m.ob.). A handful of summering Ring-billed Gulls caught observers' attention in widely scattered areas of the state. More notably, in a stunning range extension, a pair of ad. **Herring Gulls** that lingered through May at Arroyo Colorado spoil island in the lower Laguna Madre, Cameron, was found to have a nest with 2 eggs June 3 (ph. MF). One egg proved to be infertile (\* to T.C.W.C.). One adult was seen accompanying a single chick June 24; both adults were present July 2 but could not be located after that date (MF). To our knowledge, the nearest regular nesting locality for the species is on the coast of the Carolinas.

Unusual summer tern records included a Caspian at Millers Creek L. June 26 (first Baylor record; KN), single Commons at Mitchell L. June 4 (WS) and L. Waco July 14 (JMu), and four Forster's at Phantom L., Jones, July 15 & 19 (BH, CL). Common Tern is an enigmatic U.T.C. species; 225 in Galveston July 2, in both breeding and winter plumage, were inexplicable (TE). [The "winter-plumaged" birds were likely non-adults—K.K.] Small numbers of Least Terns were reported at Balmorhea L. (ML) and Millers Creek L. (KN) in June but no nesting activity was observed at either locality. A Sooty Tern at Cedar Bayou on Matagorda I. July 17 provided a first Aransas record. A pair of Sooties with young on Sundown I., Matagorda, July 14 represented the northernmost known breeding of the species along the Texas coast since the early 1900s (JG).

**PIGEONS TO HUMMINGBIRDS**—A White-crowned

**Pigeon** was seen briefly June 24 and July 2 on Green I in the lower Laguna Madre, Cameron (†MF). This was the first report of the species for Texas. Note that the dates coincide with Tropical Storm Allison's arrival. Attempts to relocate and photograph the bird failed. The species is common on Cozumel I. off the Yucatan Pen. of Mexico. Red-billed Pigeons were apparently more easily found this year at Falcon Dam and Santa Margarita Ranch than in recent years (m.ob.). A White-winged Dove nest in Midland was the first confirmed for that area (FW), and a White-winged in Erath June 12-14 furnished a first county record (ph. EM). Groups of four to nine Green Parakeets frequented McAllen through the period (SWe). A pair of Red-crowned Parrots of unknown origin hung around a large cavity in a cedar tree in Victoria and were suspected of nesting (D & RMe). Most contributors mentioned exceptional numbers of Yellow-billed Cuckoos this season, not only in moist n. and e. Texas but even in areas still under drought conditions. Our latest Greater Roadrunner escapade came from Ruthie Melton, who saw one kill and carry off a House Sparrow. May this bird and its offspring "live long and prosper!" A Groove-billed Ani in Coke June 10 (Mcr, fide DT) provided the first summer record there in several years.

One pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls at Falcon Dam raised two young that fledged in late June (MF). Two of the owls were seen July 2 (JI) but they seemingly "disappeared" later in the month (m.ob.). After this spring's reports in Val Verde and Kinney, inquiries by Kelly Bryan turned up reports of Elf Owls nesting near Montell in n.w. Uvalde and at Quemado in Maverick, both new county records. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was tape-recorded June 18-19 in G.M.N.P. (BS et al.), where the species is apparently extremely rare but perhaps regular in summer. Common Nighthawks continued to baffle many observers in e. Texas; Wolf last observed the species in Nacogdoches June 9. Does the species truly breed anywhere in the pineywoods (DW)? Nighthawks were again absent through the summer at Beaumont (WG). Several Chuck-will's-widows were heard in mid-June in s.e. Hutchinson (PA), where a resident said the birds are present every summer. This is our first knowledge of the summer occurrence of this species in the Panhandle. Also unexpected were three seen and heard in n. Dickens May 27 (GJ). A Chuck-will's-widow netted near San Angelo July 29 provided only the 2nd Concho Valley record (fide DT).

A **Green Violet-ear** was seen and photographed in Brownsville June 3-4 (ph. BM, MF et al.). Another Green Violet-ear delighted observers at a feeder in Sinton June 22-July 11 (Vaunda & Gerald Boscamp, m.ob.). The movements of Buff-bellied Hummingbirds remain predictable although inexplicable: as usual, they showed up in numbers throughout the coastal bend area in spring and stayed into late June or early July, then disappeared (E & NA, JG, P & NP, AO), yet no nesting activity has been noted in that region. The species returns in late fall to overwinter along the coast. Grantham wonders if, during their hiatus, they go north, south, west, or "just bury themselves in the mud?!" Calliope Hummingbirds were found in Rankin July 18 (probably first Upton record; JW) and Midland July 22 (MS, fide FW). Closer to their regular migration range but still notable finds were other Calliopes seen in El Paso July 18 & 26 (BZ), and in Dog Canyon in G.M.N.P. July 30 (BB, fide MF). An ad. ♂ *Selasphorus* hummingbird plumaged like an Allen's visited an El Paso feeder July 14-16 (BZ, YZ); the bird could not be netted to gather diagnostic tail measurements.

**WOODPECKERS TO SHRIKES**—A calling Ladder-backed Woodpecker in Woller July 4 was in an area where they are not known to breed (TE). A ♀ Downy Woodpecker at Aransas July 20 provided a first July record for the refuge (BJ). A N. (Yellow-shafted) Flicker in Beaumont July 17 furnished only the 2nd summer record for that area (WG). Acadian Flycatchers were confirmed nesting at Christoval, Tom Green, the only known Concho Valley location (fide DT). Acadians

again summered in the eastern part of n.c. Texas (Van Zandt) but no nesting activity was confirmed (RK, RR). An early Willow Flycatcher was at Tornillo L., El Paso, July 28 (BZ). A very early Least Flycatcher was banded July 11 at Driftwood, Hays (DC). Eubanks notes that in fall, *Empidonax* flycatchers migrate through the U.T.C. during a period of high temperatures and low birding activity and thus are missed by many observers; the same could be said for much of Texas. A rare Vermilion Flycatcher flashed in front of Nanney's car in Throckmorton June 3. A Great Crested Flycatcher seen and heard in Palo Duro provided a rare summer record (RH).

Several kingbird species made news at the edges of their ranges. A pair of Couch's (identified by voice) was feeding young July 22 at Victoria (D & RMe), for the northeasternmost nesting record for that species. A nest (first for Texas) of the **Thick-billed Kingbirds** at Cottonwood Campground in Big Bend was discovered May 31 (ML). At times three young could be seen in the nest (BBo); at least one fledgling was noted July 29 (ph. BZ). Western Kingbirds also nested at Cottonwood Campground at Big Bend, the first such record in recent years (BBo, JSe). A pair of Eastern Kingbirds nested on Matagorda I. and another pair was seen along the Intra-coastal Waterway at Aransas; these would be the southernmost nesting Easterns along the coast. A late migrant Eastern was at Devil's River June 9 (KB). Meanwhile, 4 pairs of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers nested near Alpine, where the species is a rare and erratic breeder (ML).

Purple Martins abandoned broods in drought-stricken areas of s. Texas but had excellent nesting success in n. Texas (m.ob.). Cliff and Barn swallows suffered some losses from fire ants around Bryan/College Station (KA). Although we have had several reports of the ants affecting ground nesters, this is the first observation of effects on culvert nesters. Cave Swallows were discovered nesting on Matagorda I. June 10 (JG) for a first island and Aransas record. A new county record was established by Eubanks when he found Cave Swallows nesting with Barns and Cliffs in Waller July 20. The Cave Swallows reported in spring at Sea Rim successfully fledged young. The same weather conditions that helped martin production in n. Texas washed out many Barn Swallow efforts. Overall success was down 30% from last summer; at least one colony was washed out 3 times (AV). Bryan photographed a pair of Barn Swallows June 8 at Devil's River that was nesting in an abandoned Hooded Oriole nest!

#### S.A.

The most exciting find of the season was an ad. **Black-vented Oriole** identified and photographed by Grantham s. of Kingsville July 15. The bird had probably been around since mid-June prior to its proper identification (fide P & NP). The bird remained through the period and was enjoyed by hundreds of observers (Many thanks to the Butlers!). This constitutes the 2nd documented Texas and United States record of the species, the previous record at Big Bend in 1968-1969. Several juv. Hooded Orioles regularly tagged along with the Black-vented on its daily rounds, commonly begging food from it. Since no breeding evidence by the Black-vented was noted, this appeared to be simply a case of "brood adoption" while the parent Hoodeds went on to re-nest nearby. Including the Black-vented, Kleberg played host to six species of orioles in July, which ought to be some sort of record.

A Green Jay 8 mi s. of Bracketville, Kinney, was notably far west (fide KB); the species had only marginal nesting success around the Kingsville area (SB). Up to 5 pairs of **Mexican Crows** built nests on a steel beam structure near the Brownsville Ship Channel, Cameron (AM, ph. MF). This was the first confirmed nesting of the species in Texas and the United States. Young crows were being fed June 23 (MF). Unfortu-



nately, the structure supporting the nests was dismantled in early July before the young crows could fledge. A Chihuahuan Raven nest at San Angelo was a first for Tom Green (DT). A "Black-crested" Titmouse that spent all summer at Midland was w. of its regular breeding range (CBa). Carolina Wrens were seemingly abundant in their regular range (m.ob.). A Carolina feeding young in Lubbock June 1–3 (RE) provided the first confirmation of nesting in the South Plains region. Another Carolina Wren appeared for the 3rd summer in a row in Midland (J & DM), and yet another was at Rio Grande Village for the 2nd year in a row (SH, BZ). Another wren expanding its range westward is House Wren. A singing bird along the Canadian R. in n.w. Potter May 23 (KS) was unexpected, as was one in Lubbock July 1 (WO) and another defending a territory in Ransom Canyon, Lubbock, July 14–27 (H & LMK).

A Black-tailed Gnatcatcher was seen feeding young June 6 in McMullen at the edge of the species' range (SB). A nest of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Aransas in June was rare for the coastal bend (BJ). The abundant spring rains in n. and n.w. Texas apparently created enough of a berry crop to entice single Swainson's Thrushes to linger until June 13 in Arlington (TG) and June 17 in Lubbock (DS). No nest could be found of a Wood Thrush that was seen in Dallas June 26–July 4; this is well w. of the species' known nesting range in Texas. For the 2nd year Buckman found a singing Gray Catbird in Chambers July 9; nesting has not yet been confirmed there. A catbird on Matagorda I. June 10 was a late migrant (JG); another in Campbell July 20 provided a first Hunt record for that month (MW). A Long-billed Thrasher again summered in Midland (J & DM), and a pair of Curve-billed Thrashers on Matagorda I. July 10 onward provided a first island and Aransas record (JC, *vide* BJ). There were 3 separate reports of Cedar Waxwings in Cook, Grayson, and Mills in late June and early July (*vide* WP). A Phainopepla was seen on June 8 on Dolan Creek Road, Val Verde, where the species had been noted in April as well (KB). Over the last 10 years in a regular census of 4 n.c. Texas counties, Valentine reports a gradual decline in the numbers of nesting Loggerhead Shrikes.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Bell's Vireos seemed abundant in the Concho Valley (DT). In contrast, birders and breeding bird atlases have been hard pressed to find more than a few pairs in n.c. Texas in the last few years (MP, CH, CE). A pair of Bell's remained in Nacogdoches May 27 through June (SL, DW), the species is a rare e. Texas breeder. An estimated 87 territories of Black-capped Vireos were found in surveys of the 21,000-acre Devil's River State Natural Area. A pair of Black-capped with young s.e. of San Angelo June 18–20 provided a new breeding locality for the Concho Valley. Two singing males June 25 near Goldthwaite provided a first confirmed Mills record (CS *et al.*). Although Black-capped populations continued a steep decline in Travis, reproduction was much better this year than in the previous several years (DSt, CL *et al.*). Two new colonies totalling about 45 pairs were documented in the n.w. portion of Travis and adjacent portions of Williamson and Burnet (CS *et al.*). Reproduction by over 100 pairs of Black-capped at Kerr was excellent (JGz).

Gray Vireos were found nesting in Upton for the first time (J & DM). A Red-eyed Vireo singing near Lubbock June 22–23 (JS, DS) furnished a first June area record. Both Red-eyed and Yellow-throated vireos were found on territory in Val Verde at the western limit of their distribution (*vide* KB). The latter species was also found at one Concho Valley location (*vide* DT). Most unexpected was a Yellow-throated Vireo in McKittrick Canyon of G.M.N.P. June 16 (MFL). It was theorized the bird may have been hybridizing with a Solitary Vireo. The nesting pair of Yellow-green Vireos at Laguna Atascosa remained through the period; another singing Yellow-green was seen in Brownsville June 22–July 10 (M & RF).

Connell's banding efforts at Driftwood turned up a Nashville Warbler on the inexplicable date of July 14. Two early

Virginia's Warblers in Hudspeth July 23 provided only the 2nd July record for the El Paso area (JSp). Multiple pairs of Lucy's Warblers throughout the summer along the Rio Grande in Hudspeth were almost assuredly breeding, although direct evidence was lacking (JSp); no summer records existed prior to this year for that area. A well-described ♂ Tropical Parula was tape-recorded at Aransas June 3–4 (BJ *et al.*). A Yellow Warbler at L. Tanglewood, Randall, June 22 (TJ) was in an area where the species was last found nesting in the mid-1940s. Eskew provided a new Fannin record with a Yellow-throated Warbler June 17 near Ivanhoe. A Prairie Warbler July 27 at Austin (GLam) set a new early date for this rare c. Texas migrant. Bryan found a singing 2nd-year ♂ Am. Redstart at Big Bend Ranch June 20. Jones encountered a waterthrush sp. at Aransas on June 24; there is no previous June record of either species at the refuge. The **Gray-crowned Yellowthroat** near the Sabal Palm Grove was last reliably detected July 5 (MF). Yellow-breasted Chats were notably common in the Concho Valley (DT); a chat in Lubbock June 11 (LM) was rare in summer for that area.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Single Summer Tanagers were noteworthy for mid-summer in Randall (TJ, KS) and Lubbock (JS, DS). Certain seed-eaters were unusually abundant within their normal ranges. These included Painted Buntings in the Concho Valley (DT) and Blue Grosbeaks in the Midland area (FW). A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak foraged with a flock of Black-headed in the Chisos Mts. July 26 (KB). An ad. ♂ Indigo Bunting was somewhat of a surprise in Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend, July 1 (ML). Two ♂ Varied Buntings were displaying territorial behavior near Rankin, Upton, but nesting was not confirmed (J & DM). A singing Olive Sparrow June 7 provided a 3rd Aransas record (BJ). At San Ygnacio July 22, Haynie *et al.* found three singing ♂ White-collared Seedeaters along with two to three birds thought to be females and six or more thought to be immatures. A pair of seedeaters found 3 days later at Santa Margarita Ranch was much less expected (CB *et al.*). Cassin's Sparrows were seemingly more numerous than usual over much of the species' range; after the onset of summer rains in El Paso, Cassin's were "skylarking everywhere, including such marginal habitat as cotton fields" (BZ). A Grasshopper Sparrow in Ector June 2 was a first for summer there (BW). One White-crowned Sparrow lingered June 1–3 in Midland (F & BW).

A small colony of nest-building Yellow-headed Blackbirds was found at Spearman, Hansford, May 6 (KS), providing confirmation for only the 2nd nesting site in the state in this century. An ad. ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was unexpected at Santa Margarita Ranch July 22 (CH *et al.*), as was another Yellow-headed in Harris July 15 (first summer U.T.C. record, LA, PG). Two apparent Boat-tailed Grackles were observed nesting at Aransas June 4 (D & RMe). Common Grackles are now very common all year in the Concho Valley and are obviously on the increase there (DT).

Northern and Orchard orioles were another set of species that seemed particularly common this summer in the Concho Valley (DT). The former species nested at Cottonwood Campground in Big Bend in June for a first park nesting record (BBo, JSe); the latter species, in contrast, was silent or absent near Comfort (E & SW). A ♀ House Finch wandered n. of its Brazos R. stronghold to Crowley June 2 for only the 5th Tarrant record; the bird remained several weeks (MR). Lesser Goldfinches were "exceedingly common" in s. Brooks (AO). As well, over 2000 Lessers massed in a thistle field at Kickapoo in late July (KB). With these occurrences, a wandering Lesser n.w. of Weatherford, Parker, June 22 (KN) and a pair of Lessers at Aransas (3rd refuge record; BJ) were a bit less surprising. A female and two imm. Evening Grosbeaks in Dog Canyon of G.M.N.P. July 19 were noteworthy (RR).

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# NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN- INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

Thomas H. Rogers



June in the Region was abnormally hot and dry nearly everywhere. July varied from somewhat cool to warmer than usual, but with few exceptions continued dry. Low water levels at American Falls Reservoir, Idaho, provided fabulous mudflats for migrating shorebirds. Conversely, a good water supply at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge provided excellent nesting habitat for waterfowl and other water-related species. The continuing trend for more southerly nesting species to appear farther north suggests that they may be early warning indicators of the "greenhouse effect."

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Hq. = Headquarters; W.M.A. = Wildlife Management Area. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — A pair of Com. Loons at Lost L. near Wauconda, WA, brought off young for the 2nd successive year (RF, EH). Young were raised on Murphy L. near Fortine, MT (WW). Others in breeding plumage were noted in Grant (KS) and Okanogan and on the Columbia R. near Entiat, WA (RF). They were nesting on Wenatchee L. and Eight-Mile L., Chelan, WA (RO). One was at the Pack R. delta e. of Sandpoint, ID, in June (SHS), and one on Ennis L. n. of Ennis, MT, was unexpected (WEH).

A Horned Grebe in alternate plumage at Camas N.W.R., Hamer, ID, was most unusual (WEH). Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR, reported a sighting of only one Horned Grebe, in late July (CB). That refuge had about 288 Eared Grebe nests (GI). A Red-necked Grebe was on a nest on Sidley L., near Oroville,

WA (EH), and the species was again breeding at Silver L. in Harriman S.P., ID (CHT). A brood of four young left the nest on Bull L. near Fortine for the only report for that locality (WW). Very few W. Grebe nests were found at Malheur and the 20 Clark's Grebes that summered there failed to nest because of a shortage of vegetation for nesting substrate (GI). A pair of Clark's Grebes was with small chicks on Moses L., Grant, WA, June 10 (EH), and the species nested successfully on Saddle Mountain L., Grant, WA (WRR). One was sighted in Idaho near Roberts and on Island Park Res., Fremont, and two were on Ennis L., Ennis, MT, July 8 (WEH). Apparently a latilong first was a Clark's at Willow Creek W.M.A. June 17 (PM, LWe).

American White Pelicans were reported all summer in Washington from Okanogan to the Tricities (Pasco-Kennebec-Richland area), the largest number 200-300 on Potholes Res. (RF, WRR, REW, JA). Supposedly there were no nesting attempts s. of the Region because of drought conditions. Some 1515 pairs at Malheur produced 910 young (GI). A few were reported in s.w. Montana. American White Pelicans numbered 150-200 at Ft. Boise N.W.R., Nyssa, ID, July 2 (ST), and "large numbers" were reported along the Snake R. in s. Idaho, presumably because the species was not nesting at Great Salt L. this year (*fide* CHT). Pelicans and Double-crested Cormorants were described as plentiful at Minidoka N.W.R., Rupert, ID (WHS). Cormorant nests in the Harney Basin, including Malheur, totalled 849, up from last year but below the 1987 total. Minidoka N.W.R. had 20+ cormorant nests (SB). The Potholes colony of Double-crested Cormorants contained 285 occupied nests (CG). Up to 20 fed and roosted at Columbia N.W.R., Othello, WA, during the summer (WRR). The colony at Ninepipe N.W.R., Pablo, MT, contained 80 birds (WEH) and the species had 75-80 nests, an increase, at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. (JB). Vagrant birds appeared on Napier L. s. of Kamloops, BC, June 18 (one) (RR) and at Tranquille, BC, June 27-29 (four—one with a leg band) and July 15-19 (one) (SR). A single bird at Ft. Boise N.W.R. was noteworthy (ST).

Malheur counted 494 Great Blue Heron nests, down a bit from last year. Potholes Res. had 99 active nests (CG). Great Egret nesting increased significantly in the Harney Basin; the 675 nests counted made the 2nd-highest number ever (GI). The Potholes colony had 31 active nests of these birds (CG). One Great Egret appeared on Saddle Mountain N.W.R. July 10 (WRR). One sighting was made at Red Rock Lakes, where the species is very rare (JB). Single Great and Snowy egrets appeared at Ft. Boise N.W.R. July 2 (DJ), and both species were reported at Metcalf N.W.R., Stevensville, MT (*fide* PLW). Numbers of Snowy Egrets in the Harney Basin improved over 1988's record low, with 35 nests counted (GI). Up to four Cattle Egrets appeared near Burns, OR, in July (CBa) and one was noted near Pocatello, ID, June 12 (WEH). An imm. Green-backed Heron was observed near Leavenworth, WA (RO). The Harney Basin showed an increase in Black-crowned Night-Heron nests, with 315 counted (GI). Their nests at the Potholes were conservatively estimated at over 200 (RF). The species appeared at Saddle Mountain N.W.R. July 10 (WRR). At Tranquille, BC, one imm. bird appeared July 15; subsequently, numbers increased to three immatures and one 2nd-year bird (SR). Thompson L. near Harrison, ID, had one June 12 and July 6 (JN) and perhaps the same one was seen regularly at Coeur d'Alene L. near Harrison in late July (SHS). White-faced Ibises set a new record for the number of nests in the Harney Basin with 4110 nests in 9 colonies (GI).

**WATERFOWL TO TURKEY**—An imm. Tundra Swan that summered in Malheur's Blitzen Valley was captured and banded (GI, DB). Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., Monida, MT, had a poor year for Trumpeter Swans, with only about 30 cygnets produced (JB). It was even worse at Malheur, where only one nest succeeded and the two young were presumably lost (GI). The 4 or 5 pairs at Harriman S.P. also had very few young (JS). Some Trumpeters were transplanted to Grays Lake

N.W.R., ID (SB). A pair of banded and wing-marked ad birds was observed at Springfield Bottoms along American Falls Res., ID, July 19-26, and two ad. birds were on Camas N.W.R. June 12 (CHT). Mute Swans with a cygnet were observed s. of Livingston, MT. The species has become established there and is spreading. Most of the birds have been captured and removed, in conjunction with plans to reintroduce Trumpeters in their place (WEH).

Waterfowl numbers showed an increase at Columbia N.W.R. but very few broods were found in the Fortine vicinity, a minor nesting area (WW). Ross' Geese were sighted on Pend Oreille L. at Sunnyside, ID, May 7 (RB). A brood of Com Goldeneyes was on Browns Lake s.e. of Ovando, MT, June 27 for apparently a new latilong record (PLW). The species was using nest boxes at Robinson L., n. of Bonners Ferry, ID (JM). Surprising were two pairs of Greater Scaup on Sidley L., Okanogan, WA, June 16 (EH). Immature Hooded Mergansers on the Jefferson R. w. of Three Forks, MT, suggested breeding there (WEH).

Turkey Vultures, normally rare at Red Rock Lakes, were sighted numerous times there (JB). Many more Osprey nests were found along the Wenatchee R. between Wenatchee L. and Monitor, WA: 28, compared to 14 last year. A pair of Bald Eagles nested at Wenatchee L., outcome unknown (RO). Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. had one unsuccessful nesting attempt by Bald Eagles (JB). Nestling Bald Eagles were reported at the upper end of Bowman L., Glacier N.P., MT, and "several" nests were reported in Lincoln, MT (*fide* WW). Two imm. Bald Eagles at Pend Oreille L., ID, were still coming to their nest to roost July 20 (RB). One or possibly two adults were sighted along the Salmon R. n. of Salmon, ID, in late July, for apparently the first record there (LH). A Broad-winged Hawk was reported on the n. slope of the Trout Creek Mts. s.e. of Fields, OR (PP). Rare were sightings of a Ferruginous Hawk close to Spokane June 24 (JA) and of two near Cottonwood, ID, July 15 (C.B.). One Merlin, 13 Peregrine Falcon, and 5 Prairie Falcon sightings were reported.

No Gray Partridges were found on a 1500-mi tour of c. and w. Montana, despite careful searching. The hard winter was suspected of having affected them (WEH). Several broods of Wild Turkey were seen in the Fernan L. area, Coeur d'Alene, ID (FA).

**RAILS TO TERNS**—At least six Yellow Rails were found near Ft. Klamath, OR, June 24 (m.ob., *fide* TC). Sandhill Cranes were increasing their numbers and expanding their range in the Lemhi Valley, ID. A group of five was seen June 29 near Leadore (HBR). Vagrant birds appeared at Prairie, Hill City, and in Stanley Basin, ID (AL).

Noteworthy Semipalmated Plover sightings were made at Harney L. in July (CB), near Cottonwood, ID, July 15 (WH, CV), and near American Falls Dam July 29 (CHT). Two pairs of Mountain Plovers showed strong indications of nesting near the Big Snowy Mts. north of Ryegate, MT (KSA). Two pairs of Black-necked Stilts were sighted near George, WA, June 11 (EH), and 2 pairs nested at Columbia N.W.R. (WRR). The species again appeared at Reardan, WA, but in reduced numbers; one pair with young was seen there in late July (JA).

Notable was a Greater Yellowlegs at Muskrat L., n.e. Okanogan, WA, June 15 (EH). Unusual were single Solitary Sandpipers at Cottonwood (WH, CV), along Eagle Cr. near Leavenworth, WA (RO), and near Sisters, OR (LRe). A Willet at Little Camas Prairie n.e. of Mountain Home, ID, was presumably the latilong's first (AL). One pair of Upland Sandpipers was sighted several times in May in the traditional nesting area in the Spokane Valley just east of the Idaho state line (EC). Two Uplands were seen in Round Valley, Cascade, ID, June 15, and one July 3 (AL). A Whimbrel was identified near Canyon Cr., MT, May 25 for a latilong first (DS). A Long-billed Curlew and its nest were photographed May 8 between Bonners Ferry, ID, and the Canadian border, and 6 pairs were sighted in that area May 16-June 1 (EC). Their numbers were

increasing in the Lemhi Valley where a flock of 19 was seen near Leadore June 29 (HBR). Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. had several sightings of a small flock of Marbled Godwits in June (JB). Unusual was the sighting of four Semipalmated Sandpipers at Separation L. in the Kamloops, BC, area (RRH). Single Short-billed Dowitchers were identified on Springfield Bottoms (CHT) and at Carey L., Carey, ID (DT). The species appeared near Sisters July 11 (LRe). A Red Phalarope was reported 8 mi s.s.e. of Burns, OR, on the highly unusual date of June 7 (CB). Over 4000 shorebirds were sighted on the mud flats at American Falls Res. July 29 (CHT).

Stinking Lake at Malheur had 14 Bonaparte's Gulls June 20 (GI) and Columbia N.W.R. had 12 on June 17 (WRR), both surprising dates. Up to 15 Caspian Terns were sighted near the Coeur d' Alene R. mouth, Harrison, ID, in late July-early August (SHS) and one was at Denton Slough, Pend Oreille L., ID, June 16 (SHS, DG, PS, CHT). One was found at Tranquille, BC, July 8 & 19 (SR). A Common Tern and seven Forster's Terns at Sidley L. June 16 made rare sightings there (EH). Black Terns were nest-building at Lost L. and Beaver L., Okanogan, June 24 (RF).

**OWLS TO HUMMINGBIRDS**—The Kamloops-N. Thompson area, BC, furnished sightings of 75+ Flammulated Owls, the vast increase being the result of new surveys (RRH et al.). Seven or eight were heard on Scout Mt. s. of Pocatello in late June (JT, LW), and three were heard just e. of nearby Justice Park July 3 (CHT, CW). Five Spotted Owls were found near Liberty, WA, June 13 (EH). In the area from Wenatchee L. to the Cascade Mts. crest, the number of breeding pairs of the species was believed to be about the same as in other years (RO). An adult and fledgling Barred Owls were sighted in Woods Gulch near Missoula, MT (JBr). It is believed that the species is not rare in that area now (PLW). A dead Great Gray Owl, cause of death unknown, was found hanging on a fence at Joseph Plain w. of Whitebird, ID, July 15 (C.B.). A Boreal Owl was heard near Elk City, ID (Sba). A N. Saw-whet Owl responded to a taped call near Prairie, ID, June 10 (ST). One was incubating 6 eggs in a nest box near Twisp, WA, June 18 (GB).

Eleven Black Swifts were sighted over Lightning Cr. n. of Clark Fork, ID, June 16 (SHS, CHT, DG, PS). Five appeared along the Lochsa R. at Boulder Cr. in Idaho June 17 and one was found on Joseph Plain July 15 (C.B.). Feeding at a low elevation near Winthrop, WA, were 75-100 of this species June 18 (RF). They were noted feeding over the Nat'l. Bison Range, Moise, MT, and Ninepipes N.W.R.. They are known to nest behind waterfalls in the Mission Mts. to the east (PLW). A vagrant Black Swift appeared over Lookout Mt., Hood River, July 22 (DA). An out of place White-throated Swift was sighted near Burnt R. Canyon, Baker, OR, July 2 (PM, LW). Revelstoke, BC, had a report of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird July 11 (MT, DP). Anna's Hummingbirds were reported in the upper Wenatchee Valley, WA, but numbers appeared to be down (RO). Female Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were believed present at feeders at Coeur d' Alene and Hayden Lake, ID (RBe, PH), at Rupert, ID (WHS), and at a feeder at Dale, OR, July 23 (MC, DL). An Allen's Hummingbird became a window casualty at Rupert (WHS). Several areas reported a drop in hummingbird numbers but Acton saw very good numbers at his Spokane feeders and over 400 were banded and 40 returnees caught near Troy, MT (KB).

**WOODPECKERS, FLYCATCHERS**—Lewis' Woodpeckers were observed in the big burned area in the Wenatchee vicinity (RO) and two were sighted e. of Oroville, WA, June 16 (EH). Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. had a sighting June 11 (JB). A Red-headed Woodpecker was identified just n. of L. Helena, MT, June 4 (TB, EB). Several Red-breasted Sapsuckers were sighted e. of the Cascade Crest in the Wenatchee area (BO). Pairs of Williamson's Sapsuckers were found at Bonaparte L. and near Lost L. in mid-June (EH). The species was found at numerous sites in the Missoula area (PLW). Surprising was a

nesting pair on Scout Mt., ID (JT, CHT, CW, LW). The Chumstick Canyon area n.w. of Wenatchee had a breeding pair of White-headed Woodpeckers (RO) and one was just e. of Vaseux L. in the Okanogan Valley, BC, May 27 (PPa). A Three-toed Woodpecker was sighted w. of Smith's Ferry, ID, July 15 (AL) and two were found in Glacier N.P., MT, July 11 (WEH). The Nat'l. Bison Range had five July 9 (WEH). A Black-backed Woodpecker was at a nest near Lost L. in mid-June (EH) and a pair was carrying food to a nest cavity near Red R. Ranger Station s. of Elk City, ID, July 4 (Sba).

A Least Flycatcher was reported at Malheur N.W.R. Headquarters June 5-6 (PP, CDL) and another was seen closely and its song taped at Turnbull N.W.R., Cheney, WA, June 14 (JA). One was seen and heard at Moreland, ID, June 12 (WEH, CHT, CW) and one was found later at Pocatello (CW). They were heard and seen at 2 places in Glacier N.P. in late June (KA). Two Gray Flycatchers spent the summer just e. of Oliver, BC (SC), and two were nesting at Summerland, BC (LR). An adult and an imm. Gray Flycatcher were reported n. of New Meadows, ID, July 22 (WH, CV). Several Cordilleran Flycatchers were found on Scout Mt., ID, June 12, and the species was subsequently found in at least 6 different places in the Pocatello area (CHT, CW). One was seen and heard near Driggs, ID, June 17 (SP). A sighting of Cordilleran Flycatchers s. of Cottonwood, ID, July 15 was significant (C.B.). A singing Pacific-slope Flycatcher was reported near Nespelem, WA, June 14 (EH). An E. Phoebe was seen at Revelstoke during early July (DP). Ash-throated Flycatchers were seen July 27 near Lyle, WA (EH), and one probably of this species was sighted in Norton Canyon w. of Ephrata (NL). Once fairly common in the Columbia Basin, they probably have lost their tree-cavity nest sites to starlings (RF). One was found along Mink Cr. Road s. of Pocatello in early June (DS) and another was sighted in junipers n. of Holbrook, ID, July 7 (CHT, CW). Extraordinary was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher described at Clinton, BC, June 25-27 (*fide* RRH).

**SWALLOWS TO WARBLERS**—An amazing roost concentration of swallows, estimated at 20,000-40,000, mostly Violet-green but with a few Tree, Cliff, and Barn swallows, was encountered near Rocky Point on Klamath L., OR, July 29-30 (CJR). A group of Blue Jays was reported near the Chelan, WA, airport (SE, *fide* RF). Observers are requested to report sightings of Com. Ravens marked with yellow wing tags in Douglas, WA, this spring. Report to George Brady (WA Dept. of Wildlife, Box 535, Pateros, WA 98845—phone 923-2326) date seen, number of birds, tag number if possible, and name, address and phone number of observer. Pygmy Nuthatches were reported breeding near the confluence of the Wenatchee R. and Peshastin Cr. (RO). A Bewick's Wren was in Fulton Canyon, Sherman, OR, June 10 (PM, LW). A sighting of a Gray Catbird, occasional to rare at Red Rock Lakes, was made June 6 (JB). Two N. Mockingbirds summered at the s. end of Flathead L., MT (MTh), and "a flock" visited near Boise for about a week around June 1 (RV). Sprague's Pipits were present most of the summer at Bean L. south of Augusta, MT (PHu).

Two singing ♂ Orange-crowned Warblers were seen in June along the Pahsimeroi R. near Ellis, ID (*fide* CHT). A male and ♀ N. Parula were reported at Malheur N.W.R. Headquarters June 12 (DM) and a male was identified there the next day (CDL, HN). Single ♂ Chestnut-sided Warblers were sighted at Penticton, BC, June 13 (SC) and at Revelstoke, BC, June 23-July 31 (DP, JW). The s. Blitzen valley of Malheur had one Chestnut-sided on June 8 (CB), and Malheur Headquarters had a ♂ Magnolia Warbler June 8 (AM). Two ♂ Black-throated Blue Warblers were spotted at Camas N.W.R. June 11 (JT, LW). A Black-throated Green Warbler was seen and heard at Revelstoke July 3 (DP, WWe). A Black-and-white Warbler was reported at Red Rock Lakes May 29 (*fide* JB). Single Ovenbirds were sighted at Malheur June 7 (PP) & 18 (BL, CO), and two were heard at Granite L. n. of McCall, ID, July 22 (WH, CV). One was seen and heard at Shuswap L. n. of Salmon Arm,

BC, June 15 [CH] A N Waterthrush was carefully observed in the vicinity of Rocky Point, Klamath L., July 27 [CJR]. Red Rock Lakes had one June 2 [JB]. A Yellow-breasted Chat was found June 1 & 15 in the Helena Valley, where it is very rare [DE].

**GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES** — A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported at Malheur June 14 (*fide* GI). Two Indigo Buntings were sighted at Revelstoke June 26 and later [DP] and a male and a female were at Scotch Cr., Shuswap L., the last half of July (*fide* SRa). Green-tailed Towhees, normally occasional to rare at Red Rock Lakes, were seen regularly there [JB]. Two pairs of Black-throated Sparrows were again found s. of Vantage, WA [JA, EH], and a singing male was sighted on Burch Mt. n. of Wenatchee June 12 & 14 [RO]. Regular sightings of ♂ Lark Buntings occurred at Red Rock Lakes in June and early July [JB]. A single bird appeared near Leadore May 22 [HR]. Baird's Sparrow was located near Bean L., MT, in early June [PD, DTr] and one was collected there a few days later [PLW, DH]. A vagrant Le Conte's Sparrow was spotted at Clearwater L., Wells Gray Park, BC, June 24 [CH, *fide* RRH].

Two Bobolinks were sighted at Grays L., Bonneville, ID, June 24 [CV, HV] and three males were reported at Roaring Springs Ranch, Harney, OR, June 10 [CB]. A small colony of Tricolored Blackbirds was found near Hermiston, OR, July 20 [PSu]. Malheur Headquarters had a Great-tailed Grackle June 1 [JG, SJ, RS] and June 5 [CB]. Common Grackles brought off a brood of five at Aberdeen, ID [DBu], and young birds were found at Ashton, ID, July 22 [CHT, CW]. A ♂ "Baltimore" N. Oriole appeared at Kalispell, MT, in early June (*fide* PLW).

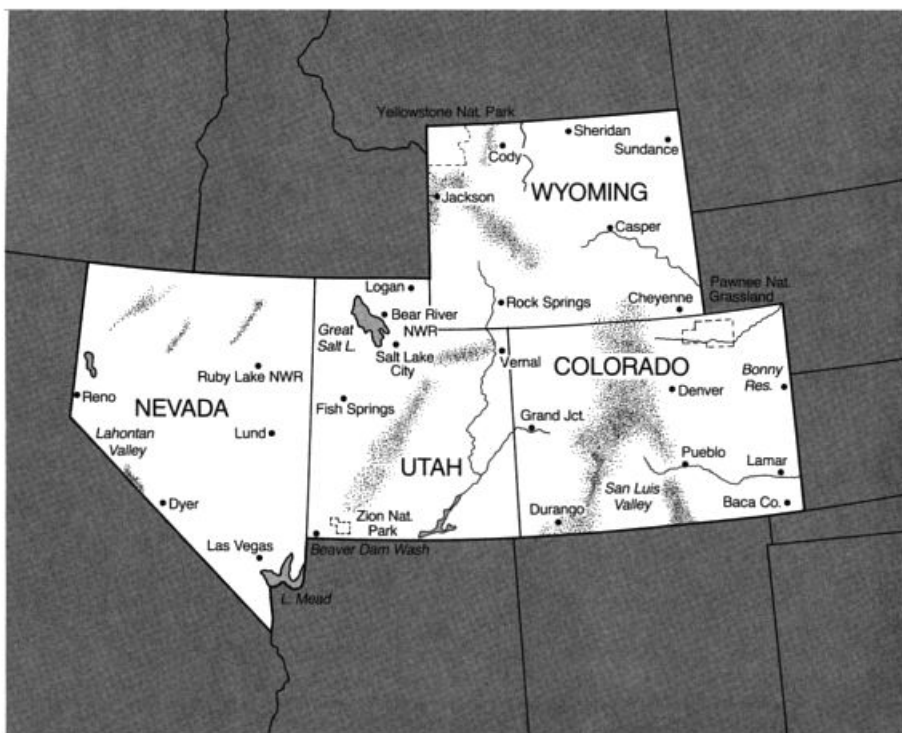
Several Lesser Goldfinches summered in the Pocatello vicinity, indicating an established breeding population there [CHT, CW].

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# MOUNTAIN WEST REGION

Hugh E. Kingery



The Region posted one new state breeding species [Bufflehead in Colorado] and two new state records [Acorn Woodpecker in Wyoming and Least Flycatcher in Utah] during a drought-dominated summer.

Observers universally reported hot and dry weather (e.g., McCoy, Colorado, had one inch of precipitation from February 9 to July 31—ME). Despite the dry weather, passerine species had successful nesting in most of the

Region, except in very hot and very dry Las Vegas.

Wetlands suffered from the dry weather. Colorado's San Luis Valley had the driest first six months in 80 years. This dramatically impacted birds using wetlands, dropping nesting success owing to poor food availability. Elsewhere lower water levels opened nesting sites to land predators (mammals and man). At the Nevada refuges, Stillwater and Ruby Lakes, waterfowl nesting was satis-

factory, but some species did not nest at all (avocets and stilts at Stillwater, ibises and Black-crowned Night-Herons at Ruby Lakes).

Forest Service and Nevada Department of Wildlife researchers conducted an Old Growth Survey this summer in remnant old growth forests in the Carson Range, to identify old growth indicator species. The Carson Range runs along the Nevada/California border west of Reno and east of Lake Tahoe. Gold and silver miners from Virginia City and other boom towns, in the 1870s and 1880s, cut all the standing timber in the Carson Range for mine shafts or to fire gold mills. Second growth has reforested much of it; only 550 acres of old growth timber remains, on steep, rocky, or boggy places. The researchers identified two bird species as indicators: White-headed Woodpecker and Brown Creeper. They failed to find other hoped-for birds that occur nearby in California (Spotted Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Hermit Warbler). However, one pair of Spotted Owls may have ranged into Nevada from a possible nest site near Truckee, California (LN).

We thank the visiting bird watchers who sent in reports of their observations; this season I thank five correspondents (JH, THK, RGM, MP, SW). As a postscript, when you find something special in the Mountain West, please call a local bird watcher, me, or the local bird report—Colorado (303-423-5582), Utah (801-530-1299), or Wyoming (307-265-2473) right away.

**PRAIRIE CYCLES** — Reports this summer on Burrowing Owls and Lark Buntings emphasized that populations of these two, and other, prairie species either display dramatic cyclical swings or move like nomads among different breeding localities. A long-term trend analysis by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service of 1968–1987 Breeding Bird Surveys in Colorado (SD) shows varying results for prairie birds: the data show a significant population increase for Grasshopper Sparrow (3.5% per year), a significant decrease for Cassin's Sparrow (12.6% per year), non-significant increases for Horned Lark, Dickcissel, and Chestnut-collared Longspur, and non-significant decreases for Mountain Plover, Burrowing Owl, Lark Bunting, and Western Meadowlark.

No Burrowing Owls were seen at traditional sites at Stillwater, Cody, Casper, and Loveland. They returned to sites vacant last year at Denver, Las Vegas, and Cheyenne. At more continuously occupied sites, numbers varied—up, down, and unchanged. Burrowing Owl populations cycle with prairie dogs, but also with other factors. Rocky Mtn. Arsenal near Denver, e.g., had 20–30 nesting pairs—almost all of which nested within 100 yards of roads (*fide* PG). This trait proved lethal near Ordway, CO: high-speed traffic on the road that bisects their prairie dog town killed at least three young owls (MJ). Burrowing Owls face other hazards like suburban development and rancher hostility to prairie dogs.

The 1988 BBS data suggest that Lark Buntings too are either cyclical or nomadic. One Sheridan BBS counted 109 (*cf.* 63 and 60 in other years), two others counted 24 (143 average) and 78 (*cf.* 211, 284, and 17). At Casper, M.A.S. recorded 150+ per trip after a high count last year of only 80. Two Colorado BBS routes had 21 (71 in 1988) and 218 (222 last year). The U.S.F. & W.S. data from Colorado BBS routes show a drop of 2% per year.

Cassin's Sparrows and Dickcissels also display cyclical or nomadic breeding patterns, so that the fixed BBS routes may not provide the most accurate measurement of these species' populations, at least in the Mountain West.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — L/L/B/L = Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records; 1st Lat = First latilong record (a latilong is outlined by one degree each of latitude and longitude, and measures about 50 by 70 miles); † = written description on file with Regional Editor; †† = written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state

or local records committee, BBS = U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (U.S.F. & W.S.) Breeding Bird Survey, I.P.B.C. = Indian Peaks, CO, Breeding Bird Count.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Four Pacific Loons, three in breeding plumage, actively fished in L. Mohave, NV, June 13–14 (†LN *et al.*). Aside from the usual Com. Loons at Yellowstone and Sheridan, basic-plumaged birds appeared near Boulder, UT, July 11 (SH) and Gunnison, CO, July 22–27 (two-CF, RL). Eared Grebes began nesting late at Stillwater (22 nests begun Aug. 1) and Cheraw, CO (49 nests on July 19, 101 on July 25). At Ruby Lakes, Eareds produced 150 young, an increase. Seven observers in 3 states reported on W. Grebes, and 3 mentioned Clark's Grebes; all reported poor breeding success or declining numbers.

American White Pelican nests at Anaho Island N.W.R., NV, dropped from 2400 in June to 480 in July, and produced 350 young—a tenfold increase over 1988, but low compared with the 10,000 young of 1986 (LD, LN). The eroding pelican nest island at Riverside Res., CO, which had 1100 nesting pairs this year, will receive repairs by C.D.O.W. to make it last another 20 years. Double-crested Cormorants have increased in both Utah and Colorado in recent years. A colony at Sheridan, WY, had at least 43 nests and one at Casper had 125 breeding pairs.

The 50 Great Blue Heron nests in Lahontan Valley, NV, produced few young. As the trees in the 100-year-old Chatfield heronry near Denver topple during winter storms and ice movements, the number of Great Blue nests dropped from a peak of 171 in 1986 to 90 this year (JJ, HEK). Their recently-arrived (1979) co-inhabitants, the cormorants, may have crowded them out; the latter had about 180 nests this year. A Little Blue Heron visited Pueblo May 13 (†M & RK). Researchers at Alamosa N.W.R. found a new colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons—with 750 nests (RS)! At Carson L., NV, 4000 pairs of White-faced Ibises produced an impressive 5000–6000 young (LD, LN). Ruby Lake had poor success, with only 180 nests; ibises did not use 2 other Ruby colonies because refuge repairs left the nest site dry.

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS** — Stillwater had poor waterfowl production but Ruby L. had better results—3996 young ducks including 877 Canvasbacks and 841 Redheads. Fish Springs N.W.R., UT, reported 1139 Redhead young and 824 of Cinnamon Teal. Ruby L. had 5 nesting pairs of Trumpeter Swans, down from 7. One Trumpeter summered at Loveland, CO, the same bird reported in the spring (*m.ob.*). Two Ross' Geese stopped at Yellowstone June 2–11 (†JZ, *m.ob.*, 1st Lat). Buffleheads seemed numerous in Yellowstone, with 59 observations of 189. A C.D.O.W. researcher confirmed Buffleheads nesting near the Mount Zirkel Wilderness, CO, with broods seen in 3 separate localities (JRi). In 1987 the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas received information that they bred in that area (JRc), but waited for confirmation by a 2nd observer before using the data. These observations confirm nesting in Colorado for the first time, 300 mi s.e. of the closest known site in n.w. Wyoming.

Ospreys met with poor success at Jackson, WY, with only 3 of 14 nests successful (BR). They nested at 4 new sites in Colorado, and two young fledged from the nest at Fallon, NV. For over a month Casper hosted Wyoming's 2nd-recorded **Black-shouldered Kite**: observers saw it in 3 different places several miles apart June 14–July 23 (†VH, JH, LRo *et al.*) A Mississippi Kite perched on a power line in residential Denver on July 4 (H & BO), perhaps scouting for sites like those the kites occupy in the s. Colorado cities of Pueblo, La Junta, and Lamar. We have reports on only 3 Bald Eagle nests—Casper, Sheridan, and Barr L. near Denver—all of which fledged young. A Broad-winged Hawk visited Cheyenne June 15 (F & JL). Ferruginous Hawks did poorly in s.w. Utah—Boschen banded only nine, *cf.* 25 and 31 in the last 2 years. Peregrine Falcons continue to thrive in the Region, with birds hacked from tall buildings in Las Vegas. Salt Lake City, Air Force

Academy, and Denver Most aeries in s w Utah were active, and s.e. Utah had seven new aeries. McKinley and Ryder banded 58 young Prairie Falcons in n.e. Colorado, but Prairies failed to nest on Devils Tower, WY.

**COOT TO TERNS**—American Coot production declined at Ruby L.—only 3040 young, compared with a 10-year average of 5726.

Observers found one to three Greater Yellowlegs every week in June, never at the same place; numbers and distribution increased starting June 24, when one to five birds arrived at Great Salt L., Casper, and Walden, CO. A small influx of other non-nesting shorebirds arrived June 23–25 after a 3-week hiatus: one to three Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary and Least sandpipers, and Long-billed Dowitchers at Farmington and Fish Springs, UT, Cheraw, CO, and Casper and Cheyenne, WY; plus 36 W. Sandpipers at Fish Springs June 27. Two flocks of Marbled Godwits—six at Colorado City, CO. June 24, and 16 at Sundance, WY, June 28—were migrants, but probably came from closer breeding grounds than the others. And by July 10, the migration began in earnest: 800 shorebirds had arrived at L. Henry near Ordway, CO.

A U.D.W.R. survey for Snowy Plovers counted 849 adults June 2–8 at Great Salt L. and n. Utah. In 1988 this survey counted 487 Snowies, but this year coverage of several new sites made the 2 counts not comparable. Nee Noshe Res. near Lamar, CO, had 15 adult and seven imm. Snowies July 25–30 (MJ), and they probably bred at Cheraw, CO. A C.D.O.W. survey produced Colorado's first breeding record of **Piping Plovers** since 1949: a pair seen at Nee Noshe had four young June 28–July 30 (JR, VZ, MJ).

No Black-necked Stilts fledged at Stillwater (LD, LN), or Casper (M.A.S.) although a handful did at Cheraw, Las Vegas, and Rock Springs (1st Lat breeding—FL). At Stillwater Am. Avocets likewise crashed—only 4 nests begun, all unsuccessful—but the 160 Casper nesters produced lots of young. Willets nested again at Arapaho N.W.R. near Walden, Colorado's only nesting site (one small chick June 26—WH). Yellowstone had an incursion of 73 Willets June 23–July 1 (JZ). Many Upland Sandpipers apparently breed in the sandhills of n.e. Colorado; 20–40 pairs inhabited an Atlas block near Idalia (HEK). Marbled Godwits summered at Fish Springs, and one to six spent June at Casper. Late as usual, 121 White-rumped Sandpipers June 1 at Julesburg, CO, topped other counts; 13

stopped at Cheraw June 4 and one at Casper June 6. One adult Short-billed Dowitcher at Cheraw July 17 showed adult breeding plumage of the race *hendersoni* (MJ).

A **Long-tailed Jaeger** in full breeding plumage arrived at Carson L. July 15 and stayed at least through Aug. 18. Nevada's 2nd Long-tailed, the bird was solitary and approachable; it swam along dike edges and picked insects off the surface of the water (†LN, LD, ph.). An ad. **Heermann's Gull**, Nevada's 4th, stood out among 500 Californias flying off Anaho Island N.W.R. on June 12 and was seen again June 14 (ST, TB, fide †LD). Colorado's 9th **Little Gull**, in first-winter plumage, arrived at Cheraw June 24 (†MJ), and stayed past July 31 (†DS, †THK). Searching for this bird among the 1000s of Franklin's and other gulls, Kent found a **Sabine's Gull** in full adult breeding plumage at the same place July 30 (†, ph.). Colorado has one other "summer" record, Aug. 25, 1983. Caspian Terns dotted Colorado, with 9 records of 19 birds, including six at Denver June 22–25; the state had no records prior to 1975. Territorial Least Terns at Rocky Ford and Nee Noshe Res., CO, did not reveal nests or young, but probably nested at both sites (MJ, VZ, JR). A C.D.O.W. survey of the S. Platte R. found single Least at 2 sites near Sterling, CO, June 4 & 23.

S.A.

Hummingbird reports originate principally from feeders, which probably skews our perceptions of their abundance. They are hard to see in the wild (except the noisy Broad-tailed males, actually more often heard than seen). In 1988 fewer attended feeders, but normal numbers favored their natural habitats. This year most observers, based on feeder appearances, thought them commoner than last year. However, two 1989 reports hint at something different: the lack of wildflowers at Morgan, UT, apparently drove hummers to eat pine pitch (VAS), and an Eagle, CO, beekeeper said his bees gathered less honey this summer (JM). The drought may indeed have had an effect—by shriveling wild flowers, driving hummingbirds to feeders.

**OWLS TO HUMMINGBIRDS**—At Morgan, UT, Smith found 22 ad. Flammulated Owls and 4 nests, most in an aspen woodland with an understory of maple, serviceberry, and scrub oak (one pair in conifers). A Flammulated nest near Westcreek, CO, contained an owl July 15 and a squirrel July 17 (RWi). Observers found five other Flammulated s.w. of Pueblo, CO, and one near Golden, CO. The Old Growth Forest survey in the Carson Range turned up one Flammulated Owl June 11 and one N. Saw-whet Owl June 6. In an Atlas block in the West Elk Wilderness, Levad found a Boreal Owl July 28, and two immatures were reported from Dillon, CO, July 30. Black Swifts turned up at Blue Mesa Res. and Black Canyon, both near Gunnison, and in the St. Charles Atlas block near Wetmore, CO.

Magnificent Hummingbirds visited Golden and Durango, CO (PH, †JH, C.A.S.). Reno had an Anna's Hummingbird June 23, in the same place as one seen May 2 (EK). Calliope Hummingbirds showed up in Reno June 8 and July 19–25, and summered in c. Nevada in the Carson Range and near Lamoille. South of the breeding range, Colorado reported about 15 Calliopes, the earliest far south at Rye July 2. The I.P.B.C. has recorded a steady increase of Broad-taileds since 1982—from 1.70 per party hour to 2.52/hour. After scarcity last year, Rufous Hummingbirds used feeders in more typical numbers; the first ones arrived at Sheridan June 22, Logan June 24, Ft. Collins June 24, and Lamoille, NV, June 26.

**WOODPECKERS TO JAYS**—In post-fire Yellowstone, woodpecker sightings increased, although the observations are relatively few and not based on any scientific studies. Table 1 shows the comparative number of observations reported to the Park office for forest-dependent woodpeckers. A remarkable **Acorn Woodpecker** called as it flew behind



Adult Sabine's Gull at Cheraw, Colorado, July 31, 1989. An exceptional mid-summer record for this rare inland migrant. Photograph/T. H. kent.

**Table 1 Forest-dependent woodpecker observations in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming.**

Species	# of Birds Observed		
	1989	1986-1988	
		Avg.	High Count
<b>WOODPECKERS</b>			
Red-naped Sapsucker	42	16	22
Williamson's Sapsucker	41	27	38
Hairy Woodpecker	8	21	25
Three-toed Woodpecker	25	5	11
Black-backed Woodpecker	6	1	1
N. Flicker	187	157	189
<b>NON-WOODPECKERS</b>			
Clark's Nutcracker	413	450+	560
Gray Jay	114	93	155
Mountain Chickadee	404	285	373
Red-breasted Nuthatch	77	28	44
Hermit Thrush	109	82	113
Yellow-rumped Warbler	481	376	447
Cassin's Finch	332	244	307

Luke, drawing his attention to Wyoming's first—2 mi n. of the Colorado line and 60 mi s. of Rock Springs.

Western Wood-Pewees posted normal populations, although observations included the first confirmed breeding in Colorado plains Latilong 5 (WH), possible breeders found by Atlassers in 2 other plains blocks, and some seen at timberline near Eagle, CO. A vocal E. Wood-Pewee stayed at Chatfield June 1-24, in the same place one stayed in 1988 (JK). Ron Ryel, while biking around Logan, UT, heard the distinctive song of a **Least Flycatcher**. He and others saw it at close range, photographed it, and recorded the voice of Utah's first (LR, KA, m.ob., ††). Utah's first summer Vermilion Flycatcher away from s.w. Utah was at Moab June 13 (NB, 1st Lat). Ash-throated Flycatchers established 1st Lat records in the Glenwood Springs and Monte Vista latilongs, CO (VZ, JJR, ER). A 15-mi walk along the S. Platte R. from Sterling to Iliff produced eight calling Great Crested Flycatchers—a record high count for Colorado (JD). Las Vegas had two E. Kingbirds June 8 and one June 17 (J & MC). Colorado had three Scissor-tailed Flycatchers out of range: Ft. Collins June 1-10 (RR, WH), Chatfield June 7 (D.F.O.), and Monte Vista June 19 (††H, C.A.S.).

Colorado atlassers continued to find Purple Martins in new locations—Norwood and Haystack Mt. near Glenwood Springs (CD, VZ), and old ones—Uncompahgre Plateau and McClure Pass. A visitor found four martins at Cheyenne July 23 (†SW). At a Bank Swallow colony at Monte Vista, 25-30 pairs were feeding young July 9 (JJR, ER, 1st Lat). Near Boulder, UT, were four Gray Jays July 11-13 (SH, 1st Lat), and a Blue Jay seen in July at Flaming Gorge Nat'l Rec. Area, UT, furnished a first Utah summer record.

**KINGLETS TO WARBLERS** — A Ruby-crowned Kinglet was feeding young in a Ft. Collins cemetery July 11; if they really nested there, 2500' below their normal haunts, this pair of kinglets provided the first plains nesting record (DL). A family of eight E. Bluebirds at Wild Horse, CO, provided a 1st Lat breeding record (DL). Single E. Bluebirds were w. of their known breeding range (the easternmost 30 miles of Colorado) at Hardin and Carr June 15 & 17 (WH). At Sheridan, a 13-year riparian survey shows Veeries declining steadily: they averaged from 8.5/year 1976-81 to 2.5/year 1982-1988, with none in 1989 (HC, HD). A Brown Thrasher strayed into the Colorado mountains at Jefferson July 1 (CH). A pair of Bendire's Thrashers tended fledged young July 13-19 at Del Norte, CO (BG, JJR).

"The Breaks," a unique habitat for e. Colorado, consists of

draws filled with thickets of skunkbush (*Rhus trilobata*) and hackberry woodlands. In one Atlas block near Idalia these draws hosted a dense population of Bell's Vireos—25-50 pairs (HEK). Two Sheridan surveys showed drops for Warbling Vireos, but the Cheesman Lake BBS counted 64 against a 3-year average of 38. Red-eyed Vireos strayed N to Rock Springs June 1 and Fontanelle, WY, June 3 (FL).

Stray warblers included a Golden-winged at Chatfield June 8 (JK); N. Parula and Chestnut-sided at Las Vegas June 10 (J & MC); Black-and-whites at Fontanelle June 3 (FL), Longmont June 9 (JA), and Logan June 23-25 (KA, RRy, LR, 1st Lat); Ovenbirds at Las Vegas June 1 (J & MC) and Fontanelle June 3 (FL); and a N. Waterthrush at Walden, CO, July 16 (†WH). The Sheridan surveys totalled 99 Yellow Warblers and the routes showed 25-50% increases above average.

**TANAGERS TO CROSSBILLS** — Two Hepatic Tanagers were found n. of their Kim, CO, breeding site—one on a BBS about 20 mi north (†MJ) and another 140 mi n.w. at Canon City (††JH). A N. Cardinal strayed to 10,700' near Evergreen, CO, July 19 (LRe). A hybrid Rose-breasted x Black-headed Grosbeak at Tamarack Ranch near Crook, CO, had an enlarged burnt-orange chest patch and reddish wing linings (WH). Killpack banded 108 Black-headed during the summer (42 in 1988). A singing ♂ Blue Grosbeak stayed June 20-23 at Logan (TB, LR, 2nd Lat). Atlassers in June found Lazuli Buntings (no Colorado plains nesting records) at Ft. Morgan, Prewitt Res., and Idalia. Colorado reported a few Dickcissels (the most a colony of 12 singing males near Idalia June 29) and Wyoming reported none. A Baird's Sparrow stayed on territory at Rock R., WY, during June (fide DM, ph. DL, 1st Lat).

**S.A.**

Colorado observers wonder whether Fox Sparrows have expanded their nesting range or whether observers have improved their abilities to identify them? In 1965, Bailey and Niedrach (*Birds of Colorado*) could list only 6 breeding reports for the state, in 4 latilongs. By 1988 the Latilong report listed them as confirmed or probable breeders in 13 mountain Latilongs. The sparrows prefer a specific habitat—large patches of tall willows. The BBS analysis of 1968-1987 data shows a whopping increase of 8% per year, with increases shown on half the routes and decreases on none; only 4 routes reported Fox Sparrows, however. In 1989, Atlas observers and others reported them from 14 different sites in 9 Latilongs; they now have the ultimate honor of having raised one cowbird fledgling, at Arapaho N.W.R. (fide WH).

Both species of grackles continue to spread: Great-tailed to Morgan and Moab, UT (NB, 1st Lat) and Julesburg, CO (†WH, 1st Lat), and Commons posted 1st Lat breeding records at Ridgway and Monte Vista, CO (JJR, BA). Brown-headed Cowbirds show an upward trend on the Sheridan surveys; observers commented on increases in all states but Utah.

Red Crossbills ranged throughout the Region, with immatures seen at Reno and the Carson Range, and flocks from Boulder, UT, and Rye, CO, north to Yellowstone and Sheridan. Utahans found single White-winged Crossbills east of Salt Lake City July 8 & 28, and seven were on Bear Ears Peak n. of Hayden, CO, June 9-July 14 (DN, 1st Lat). [A caution to our mountain observers, though: some Red Crossbills show narrow white wing-bars, and single, white-winged birds in flocks of Reds very likely are imm. Reds, not White-wingeds. Use the calls and colors to distinguish them.]

**EXOTICS** — Chapter 6: This summer, Gunnison's Red-backed Buzzard had the same Swainson's Hawk as last year for a companion, judging by the presence of a band on the Swainson's (last year's mate was banded). No nest was found this year, and last year's young has not been seen (DR).



**CORRIGENDA** — Red Phalarope (AB 41(5).1468, Summer season 1987): the dates were July 21–23, as in the text, not the different date in the photo caption. Connecticut Warbler (AB 42(3):469, Spring season 1988) was at Fontanelle, WY (I omitted the location from the text). Ruddy Turnstone (AB 43(1):142, Fall season 1988): DG found it Sept. 3: DS saw it Sept. 10.

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## SOUTHWEST REGION

### Arizona

Gary H. Rosenberg and  
David Stejskal



**D**rought conditions prevailed throughout much of the state through June and into the first few days of July, apparently contributing to the dismal breeding success of many landbird species in the state. Robert Morse said that in the Chiricahuas, numbers of birds in general were down drastically, especially so for Yellow-eyed Junco, Bushtit, and Elegant Trogon. The latter species, it was felt, was present in the Chiricahuas in the lowest numbers in ten years.

On the brighter side of things, Dave Krueper reported dramatic increases for a number of species on the upper San Pedro River during the period. Numbers of many monitored species showed an increase in overall numbers of as much as 100–200%. Those species showing the greatest increase in numbers were generally those species closely tied to riparian undergrowth, such as Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Song Sparrow. Yellow Warbler and Summer Tanager, canopy birds in general, also showed a dramatic increase in numbers. Krueper felt that this increase was attributable to the fact that cattle grazing along the San Pedro had been eliminated one and one-half years ago, and that the subsequent

luxuriant undergrowth has helped these and other species.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.T.A. = Boyce Thompson Arboretum; S.P.R. = San Pedro River.

**GREBES TO WATERFOWL** — During the summer months, Eared Grebe in Arizona is normally found only on its breeding grounds in the northern one-half of the state, but a few individuals can sometimes be found in the lowlands throughout the period; an ad. Eared Grebe in Phoenix July 1–10 was noteworthy (TG, B. Larson). Large numbers of Am. White Pelicans in the state during the summer are quite unusual, the bulk of northbound migrants occurring normally from late March through mid-May, thus a flock of 85 in Tucson June 15 (J. Druick) and another flock of 400 at Many Farms L. during early July (P. Ryan) were out of the ordinary. Brown Pelicans, annual post-breeding wanderers north from the Gulf of California, turned up at various spots throughout the southwestern one-quarter of the state: two at Picacho Res. June 16 through the end of July (D. Ford et al.); two at Alamo L. on the Bill Williams R. June 16 to the end of the reporting period (MJ et al.); one at the Nogales sewage ponds July 18 (CM); and another at L. Pleasant n. of Phoenix July 20–28 (G.

Talleni) All of these records presumably involved imm birds. Olivaceous Cormorant, an annual non-breeding visitor to the state, was recorded at Peña Blanca L. west of Nogales June 20 (S Schafer) and at Patagonia L. (where this species has been found most reliably during the past 15 years) the same day (C. Siddle, G. Davidson).

The Great Blue Heron rookery s. of St. David on the upper S.P.R., reported to have been active again this spring, was unfortunately abandoned again during June for unknown reasons (DK). Another Little Blue Heron, wandering n. of its usual range in western Mexico, was found at Kino Springs near Nogales June 10 (JS, E. Froelich).

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was again found breeding in the Phoenix area this summer, with an adult and seven young reported from the Gilbert sewage ponds (SG). This species was also reported to have bred near St. David during the period (fide DK). Two pairs of "Mexican Duck" Mallards were found on a small pond in Scotia Canyon on the west side of the Huachuca Mts. July 17 (GM). This area is somewhat west of the recent normal range of this distinctive subspecies. The Oldsquaw found at the Gila Farms pond s. of Phoenix during January was last seen there June 11 (fide SG). A ♀ Com. Merganser at Watson L. in Prescott July 25-30 was out of place for that time of year (CT). A ♂ Ruddy Duck, also at Watson L., July 21-25 represented one of the few summer records for the Prescott area (CT).

**RAPTORS TO GULLS** — Only 3 reports of Black-shouldered Kites were received for the entire period: one was near Nogales July 3 (P. Ralston); another was in the Sonoita area July 3-16 (L. Halsey *et al.*); and another was near Elfrida July 8 (JP). It seems as though the Black-shouldered Kite population has leveled off (or has been declining?) since the initial surge into the state during the early and mid-1980s. More accurate reporting is needed to follow the evolving status of this relative newcomer to the state. Extremely surprising was an ad. Bald Eagle seen on the upper S.P.R. one-half mile s. of the AZ Highway 90 bridge June 17 (m.ob.). Where this bird came from is impossible to discern, but it may have dispersed north from the recently discovered nesting areas on the upper Yaqui R. in Sonora, Mexico. A ♂ N. Harrier near Portal July 14-15 was probably an early migrant (C. Duncan, I. Balodis). As last summer, an ad. Com. Black-Hawk was observed irregularly through the period on the upper S.P.R. one mile s. of the Highway 90 bridge (DK). This species is not known to breed on the upper S.P.R.

Two Black Rails responded to taped calls June 6 on the s. side of the extensive marshes of the Bill Williams Delta on lower L. Havasu (R. Todd). This species has been detected here on a few occasions in the past, and Todd feels that this species has been a permanent resident here for an indefinite period of time prior to its discovery in 1979. Individual Soras near Portal July 4 (RM) and on the upper S.P.R. near Sierra Vista July 13 (C. Siddle, G. Davidson) were probably early migrants; the breeding status of Sora in s.e. Arizona awaits clarification.

As many as 30 Long-billed Curlews at Willcox June 18 to the end of the period were quite unusual, as there are few June records for the state, and prior June records have usually involved only one or two birds (SE *et al.*). Very exciting was an alternate-plumaged Red Knot at the Gila Farms pond s. of Phoenix July 19-20 (†SG *et al.*, ph. T. Janzen), providing one of only a handful of records for the state. Short-billed Dowitchers, normally arriving in the state somewhat earlier than Long-billed Dowitchers during fall migration, were represented during the period by three different individuals: one at Willcox July 8 (JP); an ad. bird at the Gila Farms pond July 19 (SG); and another at Willcox July 22 (DP). As Arizona birders learn how to differentiate this species from Long-billed, the true status of this species becomes more clear.

California Gull is quite scarce in the state in mid-summer, so a 2nd-year bird at Willcox July 8-19 (JP *et al.*) and two

more at L. Mary s. of Flagstaff July 8 to the end of the period (DS, JC, SG *et al.*) were noteworthy

**PIGEONS TO WOODPECKERS** — An ad. Band-tailed Pigeon at B.T.A. July 27 was at an extremely low elevation for that species (CT). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo near Portal June 21 (m.ob.) and another (or the same) near there July 5 were probably transient individuals. This species is rarely recorded from the Chiricahuas. Really exciting, but not totally unprecedented, was the discovery of one (and possibly a second) Black Swift at Herb Martyr in the Chiricahua Mts. July 27 (†L. Dombroski), with further sightings there at dusk on several occasions into August. There are still no documented records of Black Swift for the state, but there are numerous sightings for Arizona including a flock of 12 from the same area on July 11, 1964.

The variety of hummingbirds in s.e. Arizona during the period was exceptional, with 15 species reported. Overall hummingbird numbers at regular feeder stations were down again, as last year, during the month of June, but seemed to rebound through July. No fewer than six individual White-eared Hummingbirds were reported, with a ♂ bird at Coronado N.M. June 7-July 8 (J. McClung *et al.*), one in Carr Canyon, Huachuca Mts., June 14 (S. Mlodinow), and finally, an ad. male, an ad. female, and two juv. White-eared Hummingbirds in Ramsey Canyon June 18 through the period (m.ob.), strongly suggesting that this species nested in the latter canyon this year. Even rarer was the single Berylline Hummingbird at Portal July 18 (JK). Unfortunately, this bird was not seen subsequently. A Violet-crowned Hummingbird in upper Aravaipa Canyon June 23-July 4 was at an unusual location (J. Luepke). Magnificent Hummingbird may be becoming more common in the Sedona-Oak Cr.-Flagstaff area, as no fewer than six were reported from this area (all at feeders) during the period (fide AG). The apparent increase may only reflect an increase in the number of hummingbird feeders and observers in the area.

Always a surprise, a Plain-capped Starthroat was found frequenting feeders at Coronado N.M. at the extreme s. end of the Huachuca Mts. June 13-July 14 at least, adding to the growing number of records for this species in the state (RT, †C. Haynie *et al.*). One to two ♂ Lucifer Hummingbirds were at Portal through the period (m.ob.), and a ♂ and ♀ Lucifer were found using feeders in Madera Canyon June 27-July 10 (KK *et al.*). Lucifer Hummingbird is quite regular in the Portal area, but has only recently begun to utilize the feeders of Madera Canyon. A ♂ Calliope Hummingbird at a feeder in Cave Creek n. of Scottsdale was unusually low in elevation for that species in the fall, and represented only the third record for *Maricopa* (H. Larson, M. Larson). Two Rufous Hummingbirds reported from Boynton Canyon near Sedona June 23 were quite early (M. Gillette). More than the expected number of birds identified as Allen's Hummingbirds (all ad. males) were reported during early to mid-July from the various feeder stations in s.e. Arizona, with the majority of reports coming from Madera Canyon (v.o.).

Exceptional was an Eared Trogon seen and heard well along the S. Fork of Cave Cr. in the Chiricahua Mts. June 21 (†RM, P. Dunne *et al.*), providing one of the few believable records of this exceedingly rare species in Arizona. Another (or the same) was reported nearly 10 mi away near Herb Martyr the following day (†R. Plage, †C. Rau). Belted Kingfisher was again found nesting in c. Arizona, with one pair on Granite Cr. near Prescott feeding fledglings on July 20 (CT). Another pair along the same creek was seen throughout the period. Yet another pair was seen entering a burrow next to the Verde R. near Perkinsville June 5 (TG, MJ). The only Green Kingfisher reported for the period was a single male on the upper S.P.R. south of the Highway 90 bridge seen sporadically through the summer (DK). No evidence of nesting this year could be obtained. Out of place was a juv. Acorn Woodpecker at B.T.A. July 26 (CT). Most records from this area are

from the fall and winter months. A complete surprise was the discovery of a pair of Downy Woodpeckers near Rustler Park in the Chiricahua Mts. June 13, the pair being seen irregularly through the period (S. Mlodinow *et al.*, †B. Feltner). Downies regularly occur in Arizona south to n. Greenlee in the White Mts, with only a handful of records for s. Arizona. The only other record for the Chiricahuas was of a specimen from Pinery Canyon on April 10, 1928.

**FLYCATCHERS TO PIPITS** — A pair of N. Beardless-Tyrannulets 3 mi s. of St. David observed feeding recently fledged young July 13 represented one of the few nesting records for the upper S.P.R. (DK). A Buff-breasted Flycatcher in the same area on the same day (DK) provided one of the few lowland records of this species known to us, and makes one wonder where it came from. Historically, Buff-breasteds were found n. to Prescott and to Fort Apache in the White Mts region, but that was before the turn of the century. For the 2nd year in a row, a pair of Dusky-capped Flycatchers nested on the upper S.P.R. 4 mi s. of St. David (DK) and was present through the period. A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher in Parker Canyon, Sierra Anchas, June 5 furnished only the 3rd record for that range and was far n. of its usual range in the state (MJ). Another was out of habitat June 15 on the upper S.P.R. at the Highway 90 bridge (DK). A surprising three E. Kingbirds were reported for the period with one at Patagonia June 20 (S. Schafer), one in upper Aravaipa Canyon July 4 (J. Luepke), and still another at Kino Springs July 22 (DP). Very interesting was a singing ♂ Rose-throated Becard on the upper S.P.R. 4 mi s. of St. David June 2 (DK), establishing the first record for the S.P.R. and marking one of the few extralimital records for this species in the state.

A pair of Barn Swallows was found nesting this summer in Prescott, west of that species' usual breeding range in the state (CT). According to the observer, Barn Swallow has nested in the Prescott region for several years now. An Am. Dipper was again seen in the Herb Martyr area in the Chiricahuas June 6–16 (RM *et al.*), further fueling speculation of the possibility of this species' nesting again in that range. A dead Am. Pipit was picked up from the road near Portal on the late date of June 27 (D. Sibley), marking one of the few summer occurrences for the state away from its very restricted breeding range on the San Francisco Peaks and the White Mts.

**WARBLERS TO BLACKBIRDS** — A Chestnut-sided Warbler reported from the upper S.P.R. near Sierra Vista June 12 (SE) furnished one of only a few spring records for the state, the vast majority of records coming from the fall and winter months. Extraordinary was a w. race Palm Warbler at B.T.A. on the exceptional date of July 30 (†SG), establishing the first mid-summer record for this species in the state. Single Black-and-white Warblers, one of the more regular eastern "vagrants" to the state, were found in Madera Canyon June 7 (T. Crowhaw) and along the S. Fork of Cave Cr. in the Chiricahua Mts. June 22 (D. Sibley). American Redstart, another regular e. "vagrant," was represented by one male on the upper S.P.R. near Sierra Vista June 15 (DK), a ♀-plumaged bird along the S. Fork of Cave Cr. June 20–21 (P. Dunne *et al.*), and another at San Simon Cienega n. of the Chiricahuas July 1 (T. Gumbert). A singing ♂ Ovenbird near Payson in late June (*vide* JC) and another singing ♂ bird at 9500' in the San Francisco Peaks July 8 (sound rec. DS, JC *et al.*) were unexpected at that season. The latter bird furnished only the 3rd July record for the state. The only Hooded Warbler reported for the period was a male at Williams July 30 (CT).

At least two and possibly three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found this summer with one at Madera Canyon June 12–17 (*vide* JB), another, or possibly the same, there July 5–18 (W. Leitner *et al.*), and the last at Portal July 18 (JK). Rose-breasted Grosbeak is one of the most common e. "vagrants" to the state. Both DK and CT reported that Indigo Bunting

numbers in the upper S.P.R. and Prescott areas, respectively, were up dramatically from previous years. Krueper reported that they were difficult not to see on daily census routes. Varied Buntings returned to B.T.A. again this summer with at least 2 pairs present there from June 30 through July (CT *et al.*). If Varied Bunting becomes established here, like the N. Beardless-Tyrannulet seemingly has, it would represent a very significant range extension to the north. A singing ♂ Cassin's Sparrow, also at B.T.A., July 26–28 was n. of that species' usual range and very much out of habitat (CT). A very late ad. White-crowned Sparrow was found near Portal June 28 (†C. Swartz *et al.*).

Very unusual was a report of 12 ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbirds at almost 9000' in Rustler Park, Chiricahua Mts., July 12 (K. Sullivan). A Bronzed Cowbird at Alamo L. June 16 was well n.w. of that bird's usual range (MJ).

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## NEW MEXICO

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### John P. Hubbard

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Bosque N.W.R. = Bosque del Apache Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge; S.G.R. = State Game Refuge; T/C = Truth or Consequences. Localities in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO GROUSE** — Unusual were three Com. Loons at Jemez Canyon L. July 23, all in basic plumage (GP, *vide* HS). Eared Grebe numbers were down at Burford L., with only 500 birds and 3 nests there July 15 (B. Lewis). At Zuni, the species nested 5 weeks earlier than in 1987 and 1988—with eggs as early as June 15, young by July 30, and the maximum nest count of 185 on June 28 (DC). Birds at Wagon Mound S.G.R. (JH), Las Vegas N.W.R. (JH *et al.*), Bosque N.W.R. (PB *et al.*), and Holloman L. (JBk) were not known to be nesting. Noteworthy were a Clark's Grebe at Las Vegas N.W.R. June 15 and July 24 (JH *et al.*) and up to four *Aechmophorus* sp. there July 20–24 (L. Herrmann, CR) and at Wagon Mound S.G.R. June 16 (JH). Up to 50 Am. White Pelicans at Bosque N.W.R. beginning June 30 (PB *et al.*) and two at Bluewater L. July 20 (DC) were presumed early migrants. Apparent late migrants were 22 Double-crested Cormorants at Las Vegas N.W.R. June 7 and one June 17 (CR, ES), while early ones were one to two at Zuni July 3 (DC), L. Roberts and Bear Canyon L. (both Grant) July 17 (RF), and Santa Fe July 20 (CR).

Two adult and two juv. Great Blue Herons at Bear Canyon L. July 17 (RF) may have constituted the first evidence of breeding for the species in the Mimbres Valley area; 12 nests at Glenwood had large young by June 1 (RF, JH). A straggler was in Guadalupe Canyon, *Hidalgo*, June 20 (KC, SW), while other presumed non-breeders included a few at Zuni (DC), Bosque N.W.R. (PB *et al.*), and Holloman L. (JBk) in June and later. Breeding productivity was down in Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons near Loving (SW), where other herons included two ad. Tricoloreds June 8 (SW) and an ad. Little Blue July 23 (D & RR). Up to 20 Cattle Egrets were present in the Socorro area through the period (PB *et al.*), while northerly was a Green-backed Heron at Ojo Caliente,

Rio Arriba, June 4 (CR) Very unusual was an ad **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at Bosque N.W.R. June 28–July 12 (LG et al., ph.). Presumed late spring migrants were 13 White-faced Ibises at Las Vegas N.W.R. June 7 (CR) and one to two at Zuni June 11 & 15 (DC) and near Loving June 8 (SW), while likely early-returnees were seven at Bosque N.W.R. June 28 (LG et al.).

Canada Geese again summered in the Chama area (LS); highs elsewhere included 65 at Las Vegas N.W.R. July 20 (CR) and 60+ at Bosque N.W.R. July 15 (PI, PRS). Notable were one to two broods of Wood Ducks at Alameda June 11 (J. Phillips), Green-winged Teal at Zuni June 18 (DC), and probable Canvasback at Bernardin L., Taos, June 25–26 (ph. R. Garcia); in addition, Redheads bred at Las Vegas N.W.R. (W. Feurt, *vide* CR) and Ruddy Ducks near Loving (SW). Other noteworthy waterfowl included a Snow Goose at Bosque N.W.R. June 30 (RT et al.), a “Mexican-like” Mallard at Apache Cr., Catron, June 3 (JH), Com. Goldeneye between Carlsbad and Loving June 9 & 23 (SW et al.), and Bufflehead at Zuni June 15 (DC).

A pair of Mississippi Kites again bred at Albuquerque, where a brooding adult was seen July 6 (P. Elliston). More N. Harriers than usual were reported, including one to two near Chaco Canyon in San Juan (JR), Zuni (DC), the Acoma area (DC), s. of Ft. Sumner (SOW), near Animas (RS), and e. of Las Cruces (CR) in June. Harris’ Hawk numbers were down sharply in Eddy (SW), and a vagrant was near San Marcial, Socorro, July 12 (J. Burton, R. Roy). Now rare in summer at lower elevations in Eddy, a pair of Am. Kestrels was at Malaga June 22 (SW). A female probable Sage Grouse was e. of Burford L. June 28 (W. Hawk) for the first specific report of this species in the state in years.

**RAILS TO WOODPECKERS**—Notable were a Sora near Cloudcroft June 24 (CR), downy Virginia Rail at Zuni June 15 (DC), and three late Semipalmated Plovers at Bitter Lake N.W.R. June 6 (SOW). Young Snowy Plovers were at Bitter Lake N.W.R. as early as June 6–7 (SOW) and Holloman L. June 24 (CR), while a brood of Mountain Plovers was s.w. of Clayton July 16 (WC). Two broods of Am. Avocets were in the Chaco Canyon Nat’l. Mon. area in June (JR), and a bird was near Crownpoint June 25 (CGS). Presumed late spring migrants included a Lesser Yellowlegs at Holloman L. June 10 and a Long-billed Curlew and six W. Sandpipers there June 9 (JBk), a Western and five Stilt sandpipers at Bitter Lake N.W.R. June 5 (SOW), and five Long-billed Dowitchers at Bosque N.W.R. June 1 (PB, RT). Early autumn migrants were seven Greater Yellowlegs and four Willets at Clayton L. (WC et al.) and a Lesser Yellowlegs, Willet, and 11 W. Sandpipers at Holloman L. (JBk) June 24–25. Very unusual was a **Ruddy Turnstone** at Bitter Lake N.W.R. July 25 (D & RR), while also notable was a Short-billed Dowitcher at Zuni July 10 & 29 (DC). Sixteen Wilson’s Phalaropes were at Bitter Lake N.W.R. June 5 (SOW), while late June reports were of 18 in the Las Vegas-Roy-Wagon Mound area (JH et al.) and three at Bosque N.W.R. (PB et al.); all other reports were July 10 and later (v.o.).

One to two Ring-billed Gulls were reported in June (v.o.), with a few more birds showing up in late July (v.o.). Notable were a Caspian Tern at Las Vegas N.W.R. July 30 (CR) and two at Bitter Lake N.W.R. July 25–26 (D & RR), plus four to five Black Terns at these sites June 15 (JH) and June 5 (SOW), respectively. At least three and possibly up to 5 pairs of Least Terns were at Bitter Lake N.W.R., with a chick and a nest with eggs observed July 10–12 (SOW).

Band-tailed Pigeons were abundant in the Sandia Mts. (HS), and a vagrant was at Bosque N.W.R. June 14 (JB); other reports were of scattered birds in montane areas (v.o.). A White-winged Dove was in north Albuquerque June 13–26, while also notable was a nest at Hillsboro June 25 (BO). Otherwise, the species was in Carlsbad (SW)—plus scattered reports in the vicinity (v.o.)—and there were maxima of 25 at Socorro (PJ et al.), 16 at T/C (DM), and 33+ in Guadalupe Canyon (KC,

SOW) A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found dead at Clayton June 2 (WC) Northerly Greater Roadrunners were one to two near Grenville June 11 (KS), between Roy and Wagon Mound June 16 (JH), and at Zuni in July (DC). Six W. Screech-Owls and a Spotted Owl were in Big Canyon in the Guadalupe Mts. June 18 (SW). One to two Spotted were also on the Zuni Res June 4–July 4 (DC) and in the San Mateo Mts. July 20 (PJ) Sixteen Elf Owls were counted in Guadalupe Canyon June 18–19 (KC, SOW), while the only N. Saw-whet Owl reported was one in Hausner Canyon in the Zuni Mts. June 29 (DC) Notable were a Com. Nighthawk in Guadalupe Canyon June 18–19 (KC, SOW) and a Whip-poor-will in Post Office Canyon June 11 (RS).

About 12 Black Swifts were at Lobo Lodge n. of Chama June 20 and others were near there June 30 (JB). Chimney Swift numbers were down at Clayton (WC), while a vagrant was at Albuquerque June 15 (JB). Highly unusual was a ♂ **Broad-billed Hummingbird** at Hobbs June 2 (J. Hayes), and also notable were a ♂ **Blue-throated Hummingbird** in Big Canyon July 5 (SW) and four Magnificent Hummingbirds in the Gila-Bayard-L. Roberts area June 1–July 17 (SM et al.) Ten to twelve Lucifers summered in Post Office Canyon (RS), while unusual were two in Clanton Canyon in the same range June 26 (ph. LG). Calliope Hummingbirds were reported more commonly than usual, including singles near Clayton July 12–29 (O. Mock, *vide* WC) and e. of Carlsbad July 23 (D & RR), plus in the lowlands w. of the Pecos Valley (m.ob.).

Probable breeding Belted Kingfishers were several in the Chama area (LS), Ojo Caliente (CR), Las Vegas (JH), Bluewater L. (DC), and the lower San Francisco Valley area (JH) in early-mid June; apparent migrants were scattered almost statewide later in the period—possibly including singles near Cloudcroft June 24 (CR) and Carlsbad June 28 (D & RR). Notable were two Red-headed Woodpeckers at Boone’s Draw, Roosevelt, July 13 (DC), an Acorn Woodpecker at Mangas Springs July 27 (RF), three Gila Woodpeckers south of Animas June 18 (KC, SOW), and a Three-toed Woodpecker in the Zuni Mts. July 19 (DC). Northerly was a Ladder-backed Woodpecker at Ojo Caliente June 4 and July 20 (CR), while southerly was a Downy Woodpecker at Bosque N.W.R. June 1 (PB, RT).

**FLYCATCHERS TO WRENS**—Two N. Beardless-Tyrannulets were singing in Guadalupe Canyon June 19–20 (KC, SOW), and an Olive-sided Flycatcher was near Cloudcroft June 24 (CR). A flycatcher singing at Ojo Caliente June 4 was thought to be a **Least Flycatcher** (CR), which would be very unusual for the area at any season. A few Willow Flycatchers were singing in the Chama area in the period (LS) and at Zuni June 14–July 31 (DC) and Bosque N.W.R. June 1 & 15 (PB et al.). Northerly were three to five Black Phoebes—including a fledgling—at Ojo Caliente June 4 and July 20, and a bird at Las Vegas N.W.R. July 20 (CR); in addition, two to three were in the Ribera-Sena area June 15 (JH) and at Zuni June 1 and July 11 (DC). Two Brown-crested Flycatchers were at Glenwood and another at the nearby Catwalk June 1 (JH). One to two pairs of Thick-billed Kingbirds were in upper Guadalupe Canyon June 19–20 (KC, SOW), and an Eastern Kingbird was at Alameda June 11 (J. Phillips). Single Scissor-tailed Flycatcher nests were near Caprock June 7–8 (SOW) and in the Malaga area June 11 and July 7 (SW et al.); also notable were two birds w. of Boone’s Draw July 13 (DC).

Presumed early migrants were two Purple Martins near Gila the last week in July (SM). A pair of Tree Swallows was at a nest at Quemado L. June 3 (JH) and a single bird was at Bosque N.W.R. June 1 (PB, RT). Violet-green Swallows were apparently still migrating through in the first week in June, including one to three at Bosque N.W.R. (PB, RT), Horse Springs, Catron (DC), and Mangas Springs (RF). Two Bank Swallows at Ojo Caliente June 4 (CR) could have indicated the local presence of a breeding colony. Cliff Swallows were nesting on buildings in Alamogordo and Weed in the period (K & R); a bird with a dark forehead at Bosque N.W.R. July

15 (PRS) was presumably *Hirundo pyrrhonota minima* Cave Swallows numbers remained stable at Carlsbad Caverns Nat'l. Park, but breeding was later and less productive than last year, up to 20 birds were in Big Canyon, Guadalupe Mts., June 19 and July 4–5 (SW).

Eight Blue Jays were at Ft. Sumner July 13 (DC), and the species was present in numbers in Carlsbad (SW). Pinyon Jays were moderately common and widespread from the Colorado border region southward through the Mogollon Plateau (JH *et al.*) and in at least the Jicarilla Mts. in the southeast (SOW); juveniles were recorded at Santa Fe June 25–July 9 (JH). Peripheral records included two birds near Sabinoso June 17 (CR) and up to 40 at Mangas Springs July 1 & 20 (RF), while high was one at 12,400 ft on Lake Peak, Santa Fe, July 3 (JH). Up to eight Clark's Nutcrackers—including juveniles—were in the Zuni Mts. June 28–30 and July 18–19 (DC), and the species was numerous at 7500–8500 ft in the Sandias (HS). Submontane reports included Chama through the period (LS) and a bird at San Cristobal, Taos, June 3 (PI *et al.*). Twenty-seven Black-billed Magpies on July 21 represented a high count at Cochiti Dam (PI), while a straggler was at Eldorado near Santa Fe June 28 (J. Montgomery). A nest of Am. Crows at Mangas Springs (RF) was apparently a local first. Other crows of note included 10 near Farley June 11 (KM) and two each near Grenville June 11 (KS) and in the Gallinas Mts. June 21 (SOW), while the species was numerous in the Zuni Mts. area in June (DC). Noteworthy were four Chihuahuan Ravens e. of Sabinoso June 17 (CR) and 13 near Los Lunas June 1 (HS), as well as 44 Com. Ravens e. of Bloomfield June 10 (CR).

Three Bridled Titmice were in Cold Springs Canyon in the San Mateo Mts. July 10 (PJ). Verdins were common and nesting e. of Malaga during the period, although the species is generally local and uncommon elsewhere in Eddy (SW). Probably-breeding Red-breasted Nuthatches in smaller mountain ranges included two to four in the Magdalena Mts. June 4 (JB *et al.*) and in the Gallinas Mts. June 24 (SOW); presumed early migrants were one to two near Santa Fe July 19 (CR) and at Zuni July 31 (DC). Northwesterly was a Cactus Wren n. of the Magdalena Mts. June 4 (JB *et al.*). Young Bewick's Wrens were at Bosque N.W.R. June 15 (RT), while unusual were two birds at Rattlesnake Springs July 7 (A. Roberts, SW).

**KINGLETS TO TOWHEES** — Nestling Golden-crowned Kinglets were near Taos Ski Valley July 15 (BO), and the species was common at higher elevations in the Sandias—with fledglings there July 19 (HS). Other records included 17 in the Cloudcroft area June 24 (CR) and one or two in the Magdalena Mts. June 4 (JB *et al.*) and in the San Mateos July 16 & 24 (PJ). A dependent fledgling Ruby-crowned Kinglet was in the Zuni Mts. July 19 (DC), while other records included about 15 birds in the San Mateo Mts. July 19 (PJ). Northwesterly were two to three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers e. of Bloomfield June 10 (CR) and near Nageezi June 24 (CGS), and a nest with eggs was in Big Canyon, Guadalupe Mts., June 18–19 (SW). Mountain Bluebirds were fairly numerous and widespread in the regular range, with two easterly birds at Trujillo June 17 (CR, ES). Also easterly were five W. Bluebirds and two Townsend's Solitaires in the Farley area June 11 (KM), while also notable were single solitaires in the Zuni Mts. June 3 (DC) and in the San Mateo Mts. July 10 (PJ). Very rare in New Mexico, two **Veeries** were singing along the Rio Pueblo near Peñasco June 28 (JT)—where the species was also present in 1988. Two Swainson's Thrushes n. of Chama June 21 (JB) were in a new area for the species. A few Am. Robins were scattered over lower elevations in the western two-thirds of the state, with northeasterly reports including near Farley (KM), Sabinoso (CR), and Trujillo Canyon (JH) June 11–17

Phainopeplas were notably present northward/eastward to the lower San Francisco Valley June 2 (JH) & 28 (RF), the Rio Grande Valley north to the Socorro area June 9–July 30 (RT

*et al.*), the vicinity of Carlsbad June 6–July 9 (SW *et al.*), and even at High Rolls June 17 (GS). More unusual were up to eight June 8–July 16 at Zuni, where a nest was constructed and later abandoned (DC) for a first breeding attempt recorded for n.w. New Mexico. Up to 18 pairs of Gray Vireos (plus a young bird) were in Big Canyon, Guadalupe Mts., June 18–19 and July 4–5 (SW), confirming the persistence of that population; others included one near Placitas in the Sandia foothills June 24 (GP, *fide* HS) and a likely one e. of Bloomfield June 10 (CR). Easterly were one to two *plumbeus* Solitary Vireos near Sabinoso (CR) and in Trujillo Canyon (JH) June 16–17, with a straggler in Guadalupe Canyon June 19 (KC, SOW).

Easterly was a Virginia's Warbler in Trujillo Canyon June 16 (JH), while early migrants were singles at Santa Fe (JH) and Bosque N.W.R. (PJ *et al.*) July 30. Apparently summering Audubon's (Yellow-rumped) Warblers included five in the Gallinas Mts. June 24 and one in the Jicarillas June 21 (SOW), whereas one near Torreón June 10 (CR) was a late migrant Montane Com. Yellowthroats were four in the Cloudcroft area June 24 (CR). Possibly summering were five MacGillivray's Warblers along Bluewater Cr. in the Zuni Mts. July 20, whereas one at Zuni July 26 and a Wilson's there July 31 (DC) were presumably early migrants. Vagrants included a N. Parula at Rattlesnake Springs July 24 (D & RR), an Ovenbird at Farmington June 9 (ph. DC), an Am. Redstart in Albuquerque (GP, *fide* HS), and a Worm-eating Warbler at Zuni July 23 (DC, J. Trochet).

Very unusual was a ♂ **Scarlet Tanager** at Bosque N.W.R. July 1 (RT) & 6 (J. Hirth). A N. Cardinal nest was at Mangas Springs (RF), while two males were at Rattlesnake Springs July 24 (D & RR). A Pyrrhuloxia at Bosque N.W.R. July 15 (PI, PRS) was northerly for the season. A vagrant Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Mangas Springs July 20–25 (RF). Three Black-headed Grosbeaks at 10,000 ft on Sandia Crest July 12 (JB, T. Huning) were high, while northeasterly were one to two near Sabinoso (CR) and in Trujillo Canyon (JH) June 16–17. Late was a Lazuli Bunting at Zuni June 1 (DC), while early migrants were south to Mangas Springs (RF) by the last 10 days of July. Unusual were a pair of Varied Buntings at Rattlesnake Springs July 24 (D & RR) and a Painted Bunting at Alamogordo June 14 (GS). Three Dickcissels were at Ft. Sumner June 15–16 (SOW), where the species probably breeds. Easterly were one or more Rufous-sided Towhees near Sabinoso (CR) and in Trujillo Canyon (JH) June 16–17, while the maximum count at Bosque N.W.R. was of 11 on June 1 (PB, RT). Easterly Brown Towhees were four in the Sabinoso area June 17 (CR) and singles near Lakewood June 6 and e. of Malaga June 16 (SW)

**SPARROWS TO CARDUELINES** — Westerly Cassin's Sparrows included up to six near Crownpoint June 25 (CGS), Zuni July 10–16 (DC), and near Animas June 2 (RS), while high was a Rufous-crowned Sparrow at 8400 ft in the Sandia Mts. June 24 (HS). Unusual for the northeast was a report of six Brewer's Sparrows in the Farley area June 11 (KM), while southerly was a bird w. of Magdalena June 1 (J. Shipman). Four Black-chinned Sparrows in the Gallina Mts. June 24 (SOW) were in a new locality for the species; others included three to six in Trujillo Canyon June 16 (JH), Magdalena Mts. June 4 (JB *et al.*), and Jicarilla Mts. June 21 (SOW). Several Vesper Sparrows were singing in the Apple Valley area of the Manzano Mts. June 10 (HS), where the species probably breeds; other reports to the southeast included the Gallinas, Jicarilla (SOW), and Sacramento Mts. (CR). Summering Lark Buntings were sparse in the northeast, with the only five to seven near Farley (KM) and Grenville (KS) June 11; early migrants included four at Bosque N.W.R. July 13 (PB, RT) and one near Tularosa July 17 (J & NH). No Grasshopper Sparrows were detected on the Roswell and Caprock breeding bird surveys (SOW) and only one e. of Sabinoso (CR). However, no decline was reported at Clayton (WC), and the 17 in the Animas Valley June 18 (SOW) was similar to the 1988 count. One to three at Las Vegas N.W.R. July 20–30 (PI, CR) and w

of Boone's Draw July 13 (DC) could have been either breeders or early migrants. Five or six Lincoln's Sparrows were near Sunspot in the Sacramento Mts. June 24—along with a nest possibly of this species (CR). Very early was a Lincoln's Sparrow reported at Mangas Springs July 30 (RF), while late was a Song Sparrow at Zuni July 11 (DC).

Very unusual was a ♂ **Bobolink** at Caballo L. June 9 (E. & T. Wooten). Outside the known breeding range were up to six Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Clayton L. June 25 (WC et al.), Bosque N.W.R. June 1 & 15 (PB et al.), and near Alamogordo June 22–24 (CR, GS); two were reportedly carrying food near Loving July 14 (SW). A pair of Brewer's Blackbirds was carrying food to presumed nestlings in a hole in a dead pine 3 feet above ground at Quemado L. June 3 (JH); 10–20 birds near Tularosa July 1 & 7 (J & NH) were presumed breeders. Peripheral Great-tailed Grackles included 10–11 near Ft. Sumner June 15–16 (SOW) and up to three at Zuni through the period (DC) and near Aztec (DC), Quemado L. (JH), Apache Cr. (DC), Glenwood (JH), and Mangas Springs (RF) June 1–10. Common Grackle numbers were up in the north valley of Albuquerque (BO), while others included three to five at Ribera June 15 (JH) and near Ft. Sumner June 16 (SOW). Peripheral Bronzed Cowbirds included up to six at Gila (SM), Mangas Springs (RF), and T/C (DM) through most of the period, plus one at Alamogordo June 22 and July 7 (W. Wells).

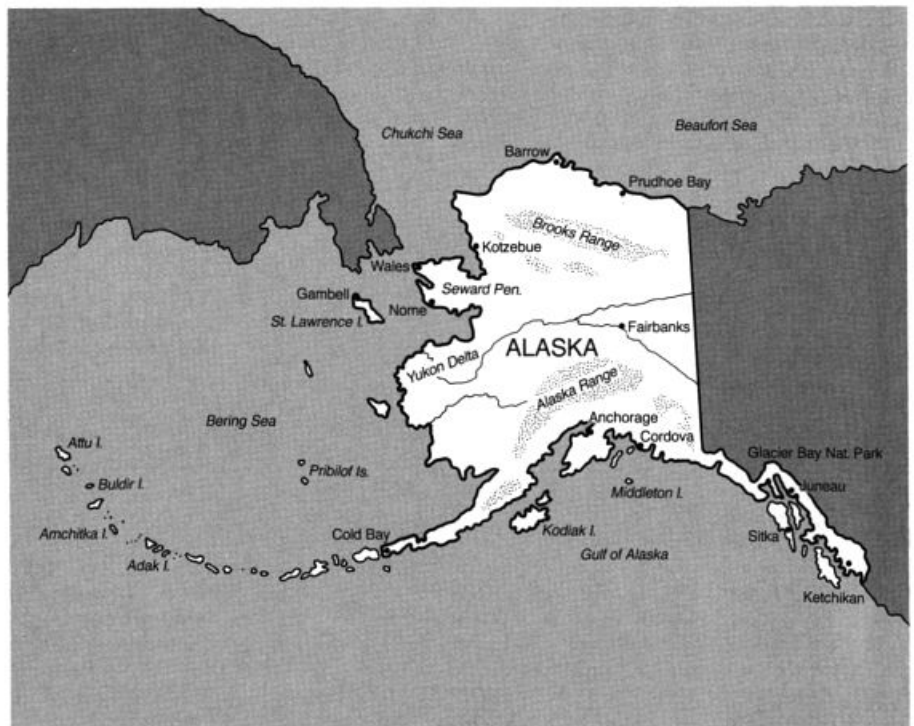
Cassin's Finches reportedly summered in the Chama area (LS) and 10 were at La Cueva in the Jemez Mts. July 8 (PI et al.); others were one to four near Gallinas, Rio Arriba, June

11 (PI, CR), Zuni Mts. June 28 (DC), Sandia Mts. June 28 (HS) and July 11 (PS), and the Sacramento Mts. July 15 (fide RJ). The only Red Crossbills reported were two-plus on Lake Peak July 2–3 (JH), about 40 in the Gallinas Mts. June 21 (SOW), and five in the Cloudcroft area June 24 (CR). Pine Siskins were fairly widespread and numerous in montane areas, with lower-elevational reports including a few birds at Santa Fe July 16–30 (JH), Las Vegas N.W.R. July 24 & 30 (PI, CR), and Zuni July 11 (DC). American Goldfinches summered in the Chama area (LS), while the only other reports were of one to four at Zuni June 11 and July 10–26 (DC). Evening Grosbeaks were present in generally small numbers in the San Juan, Jemez, Sangre de Cristo, Gallinas, and Sacramento mountains and vicinities (v.o.), with downslope migrants present at Ojo Caliente July 21 (CR) and the Santa Fe area July 18–31 (JH, CR).

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## ALASKA REGION

M. E. Isleib, and  
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**M**ainland Alaska's summer weather conditions in 1989 were nearly a duplicate of summer 1988. Clear, warm days and below-average precipitation dominated from the Arctic coast to the North Gulf coast. The Northwest coast between northern Norton Sound and the Lisburne Peninsula and portions of the western Interior remained under the influence of the previous winter's records snows, as rivers and wetlands stayed swollen into midsummer. Drifted snow buried significant portions of passerine habitat in these areas. Observers assessed breed-

ing success of species that utilize these flooded or buried areas as way down, particularly for dabbling ducks, terns, and Glaucous Gulls. In the Aleutians, the summer was, as in 1988, dry and free of low-pressure storms. Southeast Alaska was dominated by clear, dry, high pressure systems all season. Indeed, 1989 was the warmest, driest ever recorded for most of the Panhandle's communities.

It was generally felt that, as in 1988, breeding activity commenced early after a mild, storm-free spring and that post-breeding, southward departures were early. More

than a few observers commented on what they felt were relatively low summer populations of the common breeding passerines on the mainland between Southcoastal and the Interior. Catharus thrushes, most warblers, and other common breeders were difficult to locate in the White Spruce-Birch and Aspen forests, and numbers of these birds were found to be low on several breeding bird censuses. With the exception of the Hyder area (where a more continental climate persists) most Southeast communities reported low densities of nesting swallows. It was presumed that consecutive cool, wet summers through the mid-1980s directly limited nesting success. Reports of rarities and extralimitals were below what we have come to expect in summer. However, Alaska can now be added to the list of areas where post-breeding northward dispersal has taken Costa's Hummingbird and Black-throated Gray Warbler; both wandered into the Region for first state records late in the season. Studies devoted to documenting effects of the spring's Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound began this summer but few data were available for assessment.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — All written descriptions (†), specimens (\*), sound recordings (#), and photographs (ph.) referenced here are on file at University of Alaska Museum.

**GREBES TO WATERFOWL** — The season's only Western Grebes were six that summered in the e. end of Sumner Strait and near Petersburg (PJW). A few W. Grebes apparently summer in this area annually. A brown imm. Short-tailed Albatross was 40 mi s.w. of St. Paul I. July 14 (BD) in the Bering Sea, where the species is rare. Another imm. Short-tailed Albatross report came from near Seguam I. in the c. Aleutians July 8 (GVB, ADB), where we expect summer records. Although Short-tailed Shearwaters are annual in moderate numbers in the s. Bering Sea in summer, a flight of 1000/minute moving south past St. Paul I. in the Pribilofs for much of July 27 (DB) was unusual. Concentrations of this size are normally found in the N. Pacific and into the passes of the e. Aleutians. Farther east in the Gulf of Alaska, Kodiak observers encountered starving and dead Short-tailed Shearwaters in nearshore waters in July near the Kodiak Archipelago (RAM, JBA). At least some of this mortality was attributed to oil ingestion, as much of the archipelago's waters remained contaminated with sheen and mousse from the Exxon Valdez spill.

Nesting conditions for waterfowl were generally considered favorable, except in west-central and northwest Alaska, where flooded wetlands and heavy snows persisted into mid-summer. Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S.F.W.S.) reports summarized breeding populations as decreased from 1988 populations by more than 8%. There were local exceptions, for instance, in the waterfowl-rich Tetlin Lakes area of the e. Interior, where U.S.F.W.S. brood surveys revealed overall numbers up 25% from 1988 (TJD). Ring-necked Duck brood counts were up there by 500%. Given past success with reintroduction, hunting closures, and fox eradication in nesting areas, the U.S.F.W.S. recommended in July that the Aleutian Canada Goose be redesignated from "endangered" status to the less critical "threatened" status. The population of this maritime form has increased more than 600% since 1975, and now numbers over 5800.

A drake Eur. Wigeon spent at least June 20–24 (RD, DRH) near Cantwell, in the s. Alaska Range. This species is accidental in the Interior in summer. Another late spring migrant drake was found at Prudhoe Bay June 14 (RR) for one of few records there. Redheads appeared at several locales beyond their normal summer range of the c. Interior: at Anchorage, three drakes all July (TGT), at Homer, one drake June 10 (GCW), and a single drake at Curlew L. in the e. Yukon R. delta June 11 (BJM). Two Tufted Ducks that summered at St. Paul I. June 7–Aug. 1 (DB, ILJ, RAS) furnished the Region's

only report. A wandering ♀ Smew appeared at St. Paul I. June 20–21 (DB et al.) for one of few Pribilof reports. Another female found in salt water at Amukta I. June 9–10 (AN, HK) provided the Aleutians' most easterly record. Ruddy Duck reports came in from the e. Interior again this season, from Dathlalmund L. near Tetlin, where one male and possibly several females were seen July 17 (TJD).

**HAWKS TO RAILS** — Oil spill-related impacts to Bald Eagles in Prince William Sound were disastrous for this summer's nesting success. Of the 111 known active aeries, 54 were abandoned by late June and only 41 eaglets were found in the remaining nests (fide MEI). Disturbance to nesting pairs was as serious from human activity in normally pristine areas, as from direct impact from contaminated prey and feeding areas. Swainson's Hawk generally migrates into the Region north of the St. Elias and Wrangell Mts. in late April–early May, so an adult light morph bird near Juneau June 15 (MEI, SZ) was quite unexpected. This was one of few records, and a first for summer, for Southeast Alaska. A calling Sora on Ketili Cr. beaver ponds June 22 (PJW, JLD) was in an area along the Stikine R. where this rail is annual and has bred in the past. Another calling Sora n.w. of Northway July 20 (TJD) was unusual; Soras have been recorded casually in summer in this lake region of the e. Interior. One of the two Am. Coots that wintered at Sitka's Swan L. spent the summer (KH), and constituted one of very few summer reports for Southeast Alaska.

**SHOREBIRDS** — Unlike most summers, there were very few noteworthy June shorebird reports, which made assessments of the timing of southbound migration easy. Most unusual was the confirmation of Semipalmated Plover nesting at Adak July 4 (GVB, DW), where a pair with a chick and another pair in distraction behavior were encountered. This plover nests in the e. Aleutians to Unalaska I. and it is casual west of there in migration. Another adult Semipalmated Plover ventured west to Buldir I. July 10 (HD, MH, GZ), a first midsummer report and the 4th overall for the w. Aleutians. Single southbound ad. Gray-tailed Tattlers were identified out the Teller Rd. from Nome July 3 (†GR), at St. Paul I. July 25 (DB, KT), and in the Aleutians at Agattu I. July 24 (VK, AB, KC) and Buldir I. July 26–28 (VK, AB, KC). This Beringian form is casual on the Seward Peninsula but annual in fall passage in the Pribilofs and in the Aleutians. Casual in summer anywhere in the Region, single ad. Common Sandpipers were found at Buldir I. June 26–27 (HD, MH, GZ) and St. Paul I. July 6–8 (DB, RAS).

Unexpected for June 20 was an ad. Bar-tailed Godwit in Glacier Bay N.P. (HL, fide BBP). There are no prior June

#### S.A.

The Anchorage area population of Hudsonian Godwit has been in a decline since habitat loss escalated after the 1964 earthquake and again in the late 1970s. Although the isolated Cook Inlet population was never particularly large (Williamson and Smith 1964, *Condor* 66: 41–50), the greater Anchorage area provided significant habitats for both staging and nesting. Where perhaps a few dozen pairs may have nested prior to the 1964 earthquake and late 1970s–1980s building booms, only 2 pairs could be located this season. While this localized reduction may be insignificant to the Region's population, it nevertheless points clearly to this shorebird's vulnerability to cumulative habitat loss.

records and few summer records for s.e. Alaska. Southbound Western and Semipalmated sandpipers arrived at N. Gulf of Alaska coastal staging areas in remarkable synchrony and in unremarkable, low numbers. Flocks of adults arrived at Homer and Anchorage June 26 (GCW, TGT) and at Kodiak I. June 28 (RAM). The Western Sandpiper high count for s.c.

Alaska peaked at a below-average 700 at Homer July 15 (GCW). Buff-breasted Sandpipers displayed actively and commonly at Prudhoe Bay this season, but no nests were located, and the lowest densities in the past 10 years were noted on study plots there (CH).

**LARIDS, ALCIDS** — An adult Ring-billed Gull at the mouth of the Naknek R., in Bristol Bay, July 19 (MEI) represented one of very few w. Alaska records. The season's high count of California Gull came from the s. side of Mitkof I. at the mouth of the Stikine R., where a flock of six was found July 14 (PJW). Kodiak observers documented that area's first summer record of Slaty-backed Gull when they located an adult at Kalsin Bay July 16 (ph. RAM, MM). The remains of an ad. Sabine's Gull taken from a Peregrine aerie at Buldir I. June 21 (HD) constituted the Aleutians' most westerly specimen; a June specimen from Atka I. was for years the only Aleutian record west of the e. Aleutians. Ivory Gulls follow the retreating Bering Sea pack ice as pelagic migrants in late May and early June, so one at Safety Lagoon near Nome June 10 (ph. KN, JVN, AVN) was unusual onshore. Four Caspian Terns on Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands June 5-15 (m.ob.) and singles at Sitka (KH), Cordova (RF), and Montague I. June 28 (BS) were the season's only reports. No surveys were conducted in the area of w. Copper R. Delta where a small colony is suspected to exist.

An adult Dovekie at St. Paul I.'s alcid colony at Ridge Wall June 8 and July 23 (DB, ILJ) furnished one of few Pribilof records. Dovekie is casual in the Bering Sea south of St. Lawrence I. One Parakeet Auklet June 18 (DRH) and three July 3-13 (BBP) at Glacier Bay's Marble I. were well east of the species' normal eastern limit of summer range at Wooded I., off Montague I.

**CUCKOOS TO HUMMINGBIRDS** — A single gray morph **Oriental Cuckoo** was found near Northeast Pt., St. Paul I., July 10-11 (\*ILJ, SZ et al.). A spring 1987 report from Attu I. (see AB 41:477) had been the only report for the Region since 1946. Snowy Owls enjoyed optimum summer conditions on the North Slope both at Prudhoe Bay (KK) and at Barrow, where up to 20 per day could be found along the road system July 4-6 (GR). Given the poor showing of N. Hawk Owls throughout the Interior for the past 3 summers, the 5 nests located near Delta (TS, CM) were encouraging. Now apparently annual in s.e. Alaska, two Barred Owls were heard on Mitkof I. July 8-9 (PJW). Of the few Boreal Owl nests that were reported this season, fledging was close to 3 weeks late, into the last week of June, both near Fairbanks and in the s. foothills of the Alaska Range (GM, fide TGT).



*Astonishingly far out of range was this male Costa's Hummingbird that showed up in late July at Anchorage, Alaska, photo graphed August 4, 1989. Photograph/R. L. Scher.*

Providing Alaska's first record, and pushing the definition of post-breeding dispersal to extremes, was a subadult ♂ **Costa's Hummingbird** that took up residence at a s. Anchorage feeder July 23 through the period (DB, EW, ph. RLS et al.) Although Godfrey (1986, *The Birds of Canada*) listed only one record from Canada, recent Am. Birds reports from the N Pacific Coast and N. Rocky Mountain-Intermountain regions have revealed that this desert chaparral breeder wanders regularly, between late spring and summer, to Washington and Oregon. There are also at least 5 s. British Columbia records.

**FLYCATCHERS TO MUSCICAPIDS** — As in summer 1986, there were noteworthy records of Alaska's rarer *Empidonax*. The June 18 observation of **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at Hyder (#RLS) was Alaska's 3rd report and a first for the Southeast. At the mouth of the Stikine R., a well-described singing **Willow Flycatcher** June 21 (PJW, †JLD) provided Alaska's 3rd record, but totally unexpected was a second singing Willow Flycatcher found on the same date at Curlew L. at the e. edge of the Yukon R. Delta (†BJM). Single Least Flycatchers were singing at Delta Jct. June 16 (JW) and at Hyder June 18-19 (#RLS). This flycatcher is now an annual, rare, late spring visitant to the e. Interior and at Hyder **Western Kingbird** is a casual summer visitor mostly to the S.E. mainland, so one at Hyder June 7 & 20 (JMA, DL) fit this pattern and furnished a first local and 6th state record. The only Eastern Kingbird sighting came from Juneau's Mendenhall Wetlands June 19-25 (DM, †JLD, MS, RJG).

Up to three N. Rough-winged Swallows could be found at Hyder June 16-18 (RLS), at the only location in the Region where this rare summer visitant is annual. North Slope observers found up to 10 Bank Swallows in a nesting colony 90 mi inland along the Sagavanirktok R. July 4 (TS, TC). This is the Region's northernmost nesting area, and it had not been active since 1984. Casual at any season on the N. Slope, a



*Boreal Owl at nest in Denali State Park, Alaska, June 14, 1989. Apparently the species nested late this season. Photograph/Noble S. Proctor.*



single Barn Swallow was seen this summer at Camden Bay July 5-10 (PDM). At least 2 family groups of Steller's Jays frequented Anchorage area feeders in July, providing evidence for the 6th consecutive year of nesting at what is considered the species' northernmost breeding limits.

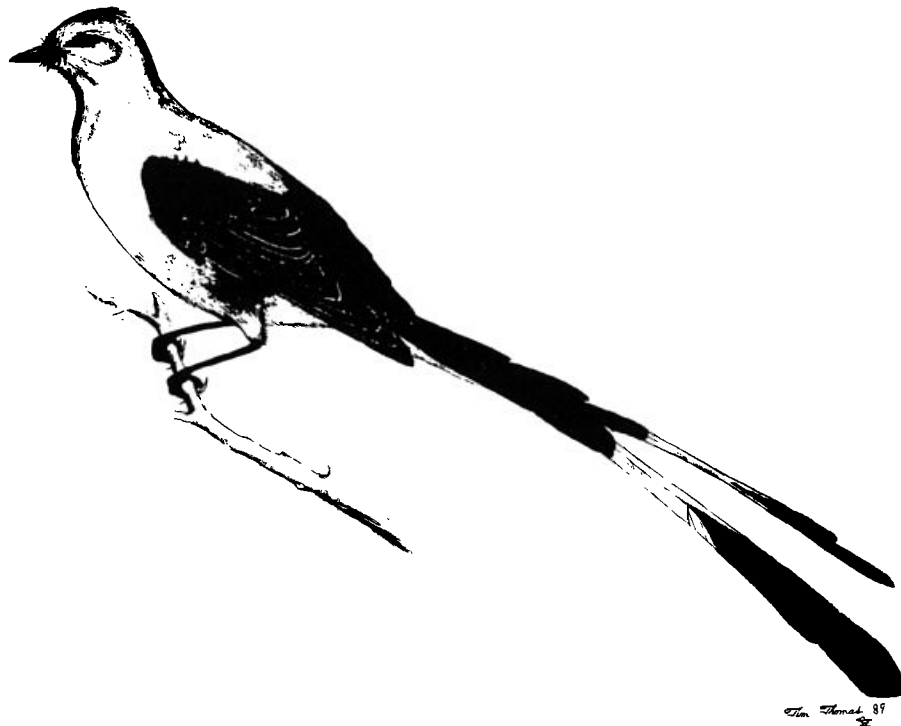
The Hyder area's **American Crow** population appeared lower than in the past 2 years. This year's summer maximum was 10 birds, including begging young, June 16 (RLS). Chestnut-backed Chickadees were reported from the periphery of the species' s.c. Alaska range; the Girdwood pair remained in the vicinity of where they had been found since the recent winter (DM), and a pair was feeding young well inland on the Kenai Peninsula at Ptarmigan Lake June 12 (ESV). The sporadic Winter Wren population at St. Paul I. exploded this season, where it had been absent since 1985. Singing males and several broods were present along the island's s. perimeter all summer (ILJ). This wren is more regular on nearby St. George I. In the Kodiak Archipelago the Winter Wren story was just the opposite, as that area's population remained grossly reduced after last winter's mortality. None was found on 2 different Breeding Bird Surveys on Kodiak or during an early July trip to nearby Shuyak I. (RAM, DM). The South-central population of Golden-crowned Kinglet also appeared drastically reduced by the winter siege, as noted by Kodiak, Kenai Pen., and Anchorage area observers (RAM, TGT).

**BLUEBIRDS TO FINCHES** — A nest box program in the interior's Delta agricultural area produced this year. Up to 8 pairs of Mt. Bluebirds nested successfully there (JW). Another adventurous pair of Mt. Bluebirds built a nest at Hyder June 16-18 (RLS), for the S.E. region's first breeding record. Cedar Waxwings were reported in good numbers during June and July at Juneau, Hyder, and Petersburg (m.ob.). A nest with five nearly-fledged young was found at Petersburg July 23 (PJW). Two singing Red-eyed Vireos near Barnes L. on the Stikine R. June 22 (JLD, PJW) were the only ones reported this

season. Tennessee Warbler is a rare local breeder on the S.E. mainland, so one July 1 (PJW) on Mitkof I. was unusual. Two Magnolia Warblers were found in the Salmon R. valley near Hyder June 18-19. This casual spring and summer visitor to mainland S.E. Alaska is likely annual in the Hyder area. New to Alaska was a ♂ **Black-throated Gray Warbler** on Mitkof I. July 5 (fPJW). This western wood warbler breeds as far north as s.w. British Columbia.

Alaska's first midsummer, and 2nd mainland, Com. Rosefinch was a male closely observed at Naknek July 5 (MEI). Having been absent since the previous fall, White-winged Crossbills made a widespread and synchronous appearance in the Region. Flocks arrived at all sections of S.C. Alaska between June 17 (MAM, TGT, DWS) and June 21 (GCW, RAM), while similar numbers drifted into S.E. Alaska by mid-July (m.ob.). Interior correspondents failed to mention crossbills, so it was not clear how widespread this phenomenon became. Surprising was an itinerant Oriental Greenfinch at Buldir I. July 19-25 (HD, MH, GZ). There is precedent for "summer" records of this rare spring migrant in the w. Aleutians, especially in years following a good showing in spring passage.

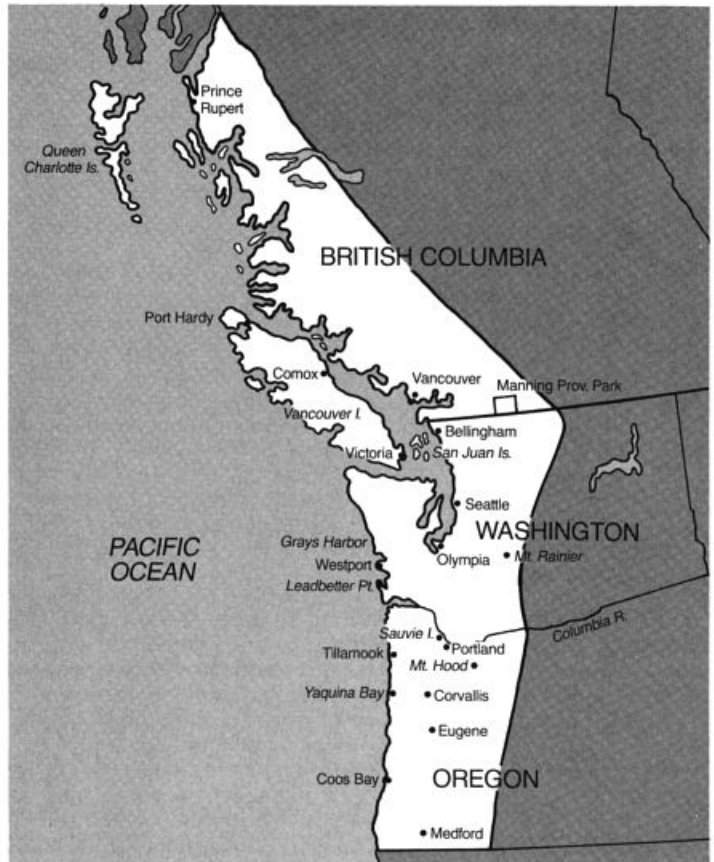
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TIM THOMAS

# NORTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Jim Johnson and Bill Tweit



It did not seem to be a very remarkable breeding season. There were few comments on passerine breeding success. On the ocean, there was an almost complete lack of the normal wind-driven upwelling. As a result, sea surface temperatures were up to 5° F warmer than usual. The lack of upwelling may have disrupted seabird breeding in a manner similar to the 'El Niño' effect and caused low counts of tubenoses in July off Washington. Returning adult shorebirds from the high Arctic, such as Whimbrel, "peep," and Short-billed Dowitcher, seemed a bit early and in low numbers.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Iona = Iona Island sewage ponds, Vancouver, BC; S.J.C.R. = south jetty of the Columbia R., OR; V.I. = Vancouver Island, BC; W.A. = Wildlife Area.

**LOONS TO PELICANS** — There were reports of immature Com. Loons accompanying adults on 3 different lakes in the Cascades of Washington (Bob Kuntz *et al.*). There are few recent breeding records for the state. They are not known to breed in Oregon, so a breeding-plumaged bird on Diamond Lake, Douglas, in the Cascades July 7 (DFi) was probably a summering non-breeder. Small numbers of summering Red-throated, Pacific, and Common loons were reported from coastal areas. No June migrations or large summering concentrations were reported. A subad. Yellow-billed Loon at Bullard's Beach S.P., Coos, June 4 (David Anderson) provided about the 5th summer report for Oregon. Small numbers of summering Horned, Red-necked, and Western grebes were also reported from coastal areas. The only flock of summering W. Grebes was of 350 on Bellingham Bay, WA (TW). The 2nd and 3rd records of summering Clark's Grebes in the Region were of one at Seaside, Clatsop, OR, June 26 (MPa) and a pair on Agate Lake, Jackson, OR, July 22-Aug. 3 (MM, HS).

Reports from pelagic waters included one trip off Westport, WA, July 22 (TW), and notes from observers on fishing vessels

off the Oregon coast (PS, TT). Black-footed Albatrosses were in large numbers, with 150 off Lane, OR, June 13 (PS) and 208 off Westport in July (TW). Small numbers (29) of N. Fulmars were seen off Westport (TW) and none was reported off Oregon. Low numbers were also recorded this spring. From 1981 to 1987, summering fulmars numbered in the hundreds. Very low numbers, reminiscent of summer counts prior to 1981, have been found these last 2 years. Fifty Pink-footed Shearwaters off Florence June 19 (TT) made a high count for June, but only 12 off Westport in July represented a very low count. Sooty Shearwaters and Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels exhibited similar patterns, with relatively high counts off Oregon, especially in June, and low counts off Washington in late July. Two thousand Sooties off Oregon contrasted with a paltry 250 off Washington in July, and 100 Fork-tailed off Oregon contrasted with two off Westport. The only Leach's Storm-Petrel report was of 50 off Florence, OR, July 27 (TT). For the 2nd year in a row, none was seen off Washington even though they are the more numerous breeder of the two storm-petrels.

Up to 20 Am. White Pelicans, rare in summer, were on Hyatt Res. and adjacent Howard Prairie L., Jackson, OR, during early July (HS, MM). Following large numbers this spring, the excellent numbers of Brown Pelicans reported from the s. Washington coast included all age classes. Of the 250 at Westport July 22, one-third were post-breeding adults and 10% were young of the year (BT, TW). The farthest north was one July 11 on the Chain Islets, Oak Bay, V.I. (Howard Rands, *vide* BW). Brown Pelicans are still very rare on V.I.

**HERONS TO HAWKS** — The only Great Egret report was of one at Fern Ridge Res., Lane, OR, July 17 (SH). Usually there are several reports. Unusual reports of summering or late migrant waterfowl included a Trumpeter Swan at Saanich, V.I., June 6-29 (RS), a swan (sp.) at Miller Sands I. in the lower Columbia R. July 21 (*vide* HN), a Snow Goose at Iona

June 1 (TP), a Redhead at Eckman L., Lincoln, OR, June 18 (Roy Lowe), an Oldsquaw at Central Saanich, V.I., July 8 (JGa, KT), and an ad. ♂ White-winged Scoter inland on Fern Ridge Res July 10 (SH). Gadwalls are very rare breeders in any part of western Oregon and in western Washington away from Puget Sound. Pairs were noted on the Oregon outer coast June 2 at Ft. Stevens S.P. and S.J.C.R. (HN). Buffleheads are also very uncommon breeders in Oregon; a pair and six ducklings were at Diamond L., Douglas, July 7 (DFi). More ♀-plumaged Harlequin Ducks than usual summered at Tatoosh I., Clallam, WA (BP), and there were several other unusually high June counts from areas where post-breeding Harlequins summer: 40 at Clover Pt., Victoria, V.I., June 17 (RS), 24 at Point Roberts, Whatcom, WA, June 21 (WW), and 25 at Dungeness Spit, Clallam, WA, June 25 (SS).

Black-shouldered Kites were reported from 2 locations in Oregon: an immature was on the outer coast at Warrenton, Clatsop, July 6 (MPa), and an adult was in the Rogue valley at Denman W.A., Jackson, July 10 (HS). In Washington, 2 pairs and one immature were noted at their only known breeding locale at Raymond, Pacific, June 22 (EH) and one was along Puget Sound at Nisqually N.W.R. June 28 (Dennis Bolton). The number of *Accipiter* reports was above average: 15 reports of Sharp-shinned Hawk, 12 of Cooper's Hawk, and 2 unusual lowland summer records of N. Goshawk: an immature at Ocean Shores, WA, July 28 (G & WH) and an adult at Corvallis, OR, July 24 (Rich Hoyer). The only Red-shouldered Hawk report was of one near Talent, Jackson, OR, July 26 (HS). There were 4 reports of summering Merlins, a larger than normal number. One was from the s. Oregon Cascades July 1 (DFi) where they are not known to breed. The other 3 were from the Vancouver, BC, area, and one of those appeared to be of a family group (TP). There were 3 reports of summering Peregrines in Washington, and 2 reports from the Vancouver, BC, area.

**CRANES, SHOREBIRDS** — A Sandhill Crane on Sauvie I., OR, throughout July (JJ, NL) provided the first summer record for the area, as did one July 6 at Sequim, Clallam, WA (G Fagerlund, *vide* SS). June reports of summering Black-bellied Plovers included 23 at Boundary Bay, Delta, BC (WW), numbers on Grays Harbor and Leadbetter Point, WA, June 20 & 21 (DP), and 25 on Dungeness Spit June 25 (SS). The Dungeness Spit birds were mainly in basic plumage; no notes were submitted on the others. Peak counts during July were of 50 at Dungeness Spit July 9 (SS), 45 molting adults July 22 at Ocean Shores (EH), and 150 at Mud Bay, Delta, BC, July 27 (JAM). There were 2 June reports of Lesser Golden-Plover, and 7 July reports. None of the reports indicated subspecies; observers should identify Goldens by subspecies whenever possible, as they likely originate from different areas. Snowy Plovers were found at their northernmost breeding locale at Ocean Shores, WA; breeding success was unknown. The maximum count was of three May 30 (Paul Hicks). Five summering Semipalmated Plovers were reported during early June from Iona, where they have bred (Danny Tyson). The first migrants were noted July 2 at Central Saanich, V.I. (BW), June 23 at Delta, BC (GP), and July 12 at Clatsop Beach, OR (HN). The peak counts were of 200 July 23 at Iron Springs, Grays Harbor, WA (EH), and 400 at Tillamook Bay July 26 (HN). A pair of **American Avocets** successfully bred at Serpentine Fen, Surrey, south of Vancouver, BC, this summer. Two fledged chicks were noted June 19 (JL). This is the same site where 2 pairs attempted to breed in 1988 for the first Regional record. Avocets are rare breeders even in eastern British Columbia. The other Am. Avocet report for the summer was of one at Portland, OR, June 3 (Greg Gillson), at the site where one was found in 1988.

The first returning Greater Yellowlegs were found in the Vancouver, BC (GP), and Ocean Shores, WA (DP), areas June 20, and the peak count was of 50 at Sauvie I., OR, July 30 (JJ, NL). Fifty-seven Lesser Yellowlegs, an unusually high num-

ber, were found in the Vancouver, BC (MPr, GP), and northwestern Washington (DP) areas July 1 & 2. The only Solitary Sandpiper reports received were 2 from Oregon in late July (DFi, JJ, NL). The largest reported Whimbrel numbers were 50 each at Dungeness Spit, Clallam, WA, July 9 (SS) and at Tokeland, Pacific, WA (EH), lower than the usual peak counts. A Marbled Godwit at Sidney Spit, V.I., June 2 (J & RS) furnished the first June record for the Victoria area; they are rare there at any season. A Ruddy Turnstone at Iona June 1-5 (RT) was highly unusual. As usual, the first southbound arrival dates for the rock shorebirds, including both turnstones, Surfbird, and tattler, were July 15 in all parts of the Region, except that 100 Surfbirds were early at Seal Rocks, OR, July 8 (*vide* DFa). Some 125 Ruddy Turnstones at Bandon Marsh, Coos, OR, July 31 (LT) and 500 Surfbirds at Seal Rocks July 15 (*vide* HN) were both very large counts for the Region.

Five Red Knot reports were all from late July, except one at Warrenton, Clatsop, OR, July 1 (MPa), a very early date for knots. A molting Sanderling at Dungeness Spit, Clallam, WA, June 25 (SS) furnished the only summering record, and the first migrants appeared July 9 at Dungeness (SS). Up to three Semipalmated Sandpipers remained until June 5 at Iona (RT), where the first return migrant appeared June 20 (JL). The peak Semipalmated count at Iona was of 195 July 9 (MPr) when Westerns also peaked locally. The largest groups of Semipalmateds away from the Fraser R. delta were of five each on Sidney Spit, V.I., July 8 (JGa, KT) and at Whidbey I., WA, July 9 (DP). Usually the first W. Sandpipers are found in the last days of June in all parts of the Region, but this summer they seemed earlier with 15 at Iona June 20 (JL) and 30 at Crockett L., Whidbey I., WA, June 25 (MD). The peak counts of adults were lower than usual: 5000 at Iona July 9 (MPr), 400 at Courtenay, V.I., July 19 (Barbara Sedgewick), 1000 on Grays Harbor, WA, July 22 (EH, G & WH), and 2000 at Tillamook Bay July 26 (HN).

Least Sandpipers arrived just a few days later than Westerns, and peak counts of adults were low: 125 at Sidney Spit, V.I., July 8 (JGa, KT), 50 at Delta, BC, July 15 (GP), 40 at Grays Harbor, WA, July 22 (BT), and 250 at Tillamook Bay, OR, July 26 (HN). A **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Iona June 29-July 2 (†RT, †H & JAM) furnished the 3rd record for the Vancouver area and the Region, all during the summer from Iona. There were 8 reports of Baird's Sandpipers during the period, roughly normal. During early June there were 10 reports of Pectoral Sandpipers, from the Oregon coast (HN, SH) and Iona (RT), which was above average, and which exceeded the 7 reports of returning migrants. A Stilt Sandpiper at Warrenton, OR, July 19-23 (MPa) furnished the only report.

Short-billed Dowitchers returned early to the outer coast. First arrivals were at Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay June 20-21 (DP) and peak counts were well below normal: 500 on Grays Harbor July 22 (EH, G & WH) and 150 at Warrenton July 17 (MPa). Long-billed Dowitchers tend to appear later than Short-bills, and in Puget Sound and Willamette Valley locations rather than on the outer coast. Peak counts were of 250 at Reifel I., BC (TP), and 800 at Sauvie I. (JJ, NL). Small numbers of Wilson's Phalaropes were noted during June in western Oregon and in the Vancouver, BC, area, but no breeding was noted. There were only 7 July reports. Red-necked Phalaropes reappeared in July, and three Red Phalaropes were noted off Westport July 22 (TW, BT).

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — A Parasitic Jaeger at Clover Pt., Victoria, V.I., June 20 (*vide* DFr) was highly unusual. Fifty-eight Pomarine Jaegers and six S. Polar Skuas off Westport July 22 (TW, BT) were high counts for July. A single S. Polar Skua seen 12 mi off Depoe Bay, Lincoln, OR, July 3 was early and close to shore (TT). Three July reports of Franklin's Gulls, 2 from the Vancouver, BC, area and one from Oregon (Bob O'Brien), were expected. An ad. Little Gull was seen July 13 at Clover Pt. (RS) and July 15 at Dungeness, Clallam, WA (FS). Little Gulls are still rare in the Region at any season. Summering Bonaparte's Gulls included 50 at Grays Harbor June

20 (DP) and 35 at Delta, BC, June 16 (GP). By the end of June, migrants were being reported, with high counts of 450 at Iona July 18 (JL) and 250 at Clover Pt. July 23 (RS). The first northbound Heermann's Gulls were reported off the Coos R. mouth, OR, June 20 (LT). In some years northbound birds do not appear until July. Five days later the first Heermann's were reported from the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca (MD). No Sabine's Gulls were reported off either Oregon or Washington; usually a few are present in July.

No summering Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported, nor were any summering Com. Terns reported, although in July individual Com. Terns were reported from Delta, BC (GP), Clover Pt. (RS), and Westport (TW, BT). The isolated colony of Arctic Terns, found in 1977 in the Everett, WA, harbor, persists. Two pairs, one on a nest, were there July 2 (EH). Two immatures seen there with four adults Aug. 5 (Scott Ray) indicated successful breeding. Three Forster's Terns were at Fern Ridge Res., OR, June 23 (SH). This species, rare elsewhere in the Region, is found here nearly every spring/summer. A Black Tern near Vancouver, Clark, WA, June 11 (Jeff Skriletz) was unexpected.

Common Murres apparently had poor reproductive success this year, probably correlated with the lack of upwelling this spring and summer. They may also be suffering from lingering impacts from the winter oil spill. Only one chick was noted with the adults moving north past Westport July 22 (TW, BT) and only one chick was noted with the first groups of adults to reach the Strait of Juan de Fuca July 26 (DFr). A *Marbled Murrelet* egg that fell out of an old growth W. Red Cedar was found on Long I., Willapa N.W.R. in Willapa Bay, WA, July 22 (JA). A very large count of *Marbled Murrelets* was of 360 on the ocean off the Siuslaw R. mouth, Lane, OR, in June (SH). This count may indicate that the Siuslaw R. watershed, which drains part of the southern Willamette Valley cutting through the Coast Range, is a most important drainage for *Marbled Murrelet*. Other high counts of *Marbled Murrelet*, which is a possible candidate for threatened status, included 70 at Point Roberts, Whatcom, WA, June 21 (WW) and up to 30 off Sidney, V.I. (J & RS). Only 16 Cassin's Auklets were found off Westport on the July 22 pelagic trip (TW, BT). This low number may also correlate with the lack of upwelling this year and impacts from the winter oil spill as well.

**CUCKOOS TO WRENS** — A malnourished ad. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was found road-killed in Victoria, V.I., July 5 (*vide* BB, \*Royal B. C. Museum). There are only 3 previous records for the Victoria area, the last in 1904. The subspecies was not reported. A Flammulated Owl was heard in Sam's Valley, Jackson, OR, June 5-6 (June Babcock). There are few records for the Rogue valley but it probably breeds regularly there. One Spotted Owl was reported from s.w. British Columbia, where the species undoubtedly deserves endangered status. Barred Owl reports continued to increase. There were 5 from southern V.I. (*vide* BB). The two breeding records from the Vancouver, BC, area (Colin Butt, Carlo Giovanella, Gretchen Long) were the 3rd and 4th breeding records locally. Another breeding record came from the McKenzie R. drainage, Lane, OR (SH), and a pair was found between Lemolo L. and Diamond L. in the s. Oregon Cascades (*vide* DFi).

The first sightings in Washington and British Columbia of Com. Nighthawk, always our last migrant, were all June 4. The number of reports of nighthawks in the Puget lowlands, where the breeding populations have been reduced for some years now, seemed to be better than usual. The colony of Black Swifts at Salt Creek Falls, Lane, had as many as 11 birds this year (NL). This is the only known breeding location in Oregon, although two at Pamellia L., Linn, July 1 (Roy Gerig) might have been from another breeding location. A ♂ Calliope Hummingbird coming to a feeder throughout June at Yachats, Lincoln, OR (*vide* DFa), was very rare on the outer coast. A female just over the Oregon Cascade Crest in Lane July 15 (SH) was less unexpected. A pair of Williamson's Sapsuckers

was at Conde Cr., Jackson, OR, July 6 (HS), this east-slope species might breed regularly in Jackson. A White-headed Woodpecker near Glacier, Whatcom, WA, June 23 (Pat Whar-ton) was another wanderer from the east slope of the Cascades. The status of Three-toed Woodpecker on V.I. is undetermined, so an adult male seen at Battleship L., Strathcona Park, in the Courtenay area June 25 and July 9 (Willie Haras, Joan Cartwright, Vi Chungranes) was of interest.

More than usual numbers of Willow Flycatchers were noted in the Sequim area, Clallam, WA (SS). A Least Flycatcher at Iona June 28-29 (†RT, †Glen Thomson) furnished the 8th record for the Vancouver, BC, area. A spate of Eastern Kingbird records included one from Oregon, at Denman W A., Jackson, June 7 (HS, ph.); two from Washington, June 15 at the Washougal R. hatchery, Clark (Wilson Cady), and June 25 at Indianola, Kitsap (†Hank Vail); two at Courtenay, V.I., July 7 (Dianne Maloff); and seven in the Vancouver, BC, area (m.ob.) during June. These records do not include sightings from the few known breeding locales in the Region. For years, Purple Martin populations on southern V.I. have been reduced to 6 pairs or fewer at the Cowichan R. estuary, where two adults and two immatures were seen June 30 (RS). This year, at least three were seen during July around the docks at the Nanaimo harbor, 50 km north of the Cowichan (Mike Bentley, Bill Merilees), indicating the population may be recovering. A family group was seen in 1988 at Campbell R., another 130 km north of Nanaimo. Two martins summering in Bellingham, WA, where they have not been seen for years (*vide* TW), were also a hopeful sign, especially after the first martin record in years for the Vancouver, BC, area this spring. Martins continued to do very well on Fort Lewis, WA, breeding in houses and snags (GW). This is the northern extent of sizeable martin populations. A Rock Wren was on Saddle Mt., Clatsop, in the Oregon Coast Range June 24-27 (Durrell Kapan, MPa), where territorial individuals have been noted previously. They are unknown as breeders west of the Cascade range.

**THRUSHES TO FINCHES** — A Ruby-crowned Kinglet nest found at 4300' in Cat Basin, near High Divide in the Olympic N.P., WA, Aug. 7 (CC) confirmed suspicions that the species nests in the Olympic mountains as well as in the Cascades. Three singing ♂ kinglets in Royal Creek Basin July 12 provided additional confirmation of breeding in the Olympics (FS). The number of W. Bluebird pairs nesting on Fort Lewis, WA, was 178 pairs, down from 212 in 1988 (GW). Total production in the area, their northernmost regular breeding site, was comparable to 1988 with over 700 fledglings produced. Two Townsend's Solitaires were gathering nesting material June 7 at Mt. Douglas Park, Saanich, V.I. (RS), this would be an unusually low-elevation breeding record. More Swainson's Thrushes than usual were noted this summer in the Sequim, Clallam, WA, area (SS). A N. Mockingbird at Denman W.A., Jackson, OR, July 10 (HS) was the only one reported in the Region this summer. Up to 12 Red-eyed Vireos found on Sauvie I. all summer (m.ob.) evidenced a continuing westward increase of this species along the lower Columbia R. Singing ♂ Nashville Warblers at 3 locations in the upper Cowlitz R. drainage, Lewis, WA, in June (BT) probably signified another area of range expansion over the Cascades from the east. Currently, they are known to breed sparingly in eastern Skagit and King of Washington. Two pairs of Hermit Warblers were found on Fort Lewis, WA, this summer (GW), in a locale and habitat from which the species disappeared during the 1970s. This is at the northern edge of their historic range. A ♂ Am. Redstart at Sauvie I., OR, July 4 (Anthony Floyd) furnished an unusual mid-summer record. An Ovenbird singing in the Santiam Pass area, Linn, July 14 (John Crowell) provided the 4th record for western Oregon. A singing N. Waterthrush recorded at the Ashland Pond, Jackson, OR, June 4 (Bruce Stewart) was a vagrant, as the only spot where this species may breed in the Region is the Salt Creek Bog, Lane. A few were noted there June 22 (SH).

There seemed to be fewer W. Tanagers than usual in the Sequim and Bellingham areas (SS, TW). Two Grasshopper Sparrows were at the Eagle Point colony in Jackson June 10 (MM). This was the 3rd consecutive year for breeding here, the only known locale in the Region. A ♂ Bobolink June 5 on Tatoosh I., Clallam, WA (BP), provided a very rare summer record. There were very few Yellow-headed Blackbirds reported this summer; only 6 reports were received. A **Common Grackle** at Reifel I., Delta, BC, June 25 to July 3 (†Gerry Ansell, †RT, †WW) furnished only the 2nd record for the Vancouver area and the 2nd summer report for the Region. Several Cassin's Finches were found just west of the Cascade Crest in King this summer (CC). They seemed to be breeding in the mosaic of old-growth and clearcuts at 4000'. They are known to breed west of the Crest in the Subalpine Fir zone, usually above 4500'. This report is from a lower elevation but the cutting activity may create a niche for them. The elevation is well above typical Purple Finch elevation.

The Sitka Spruce cone crop on the Washington outer coast was outstanding, so Type III Red Crossbills were abundant there and apparently bred (TH, JA). Small numbers of Type III Reds were found in the southern Washington Cascades during July (BT). Type IV Red Crossbills were numerous in the San Juan Is., WA, during June (TH). Reds of unknown type were well reported through much of the rest of w. Washington and s. British Columbia. In the Oregon Cascades, there were huge numbers of Type II from mid-June on (JJ,

BT). Reds of unknown type were numerous throughout western Oregon. With the Reds in the Oregon Cascades were small numbers of White-winged Crossbills. Ten were at Gold L., Lane, July 22 (JJ, SH, Dave Irons), and three were at Larch Mt., Multnomah, July 29 (JJ). Four White-wingeds were also noted at Cypress P.P., in W. Vancouver, July 22 (WW). Neither Pine Siskin nor Evening Grosbeak was well reported, with the only indication of numbers of either coming from the central Washington Cascades (CC).

Finally, in the "No comment" category is the Eur. Tree Sparrow that began visiting a North Bend feeder, Coos, OR, July 17 (Barbara Griffin, MM) and was joined by a 2nd bird July 28. This is the same yard that held a Yellow-throated Warbler and a Clay-colored Sparrow this spring.

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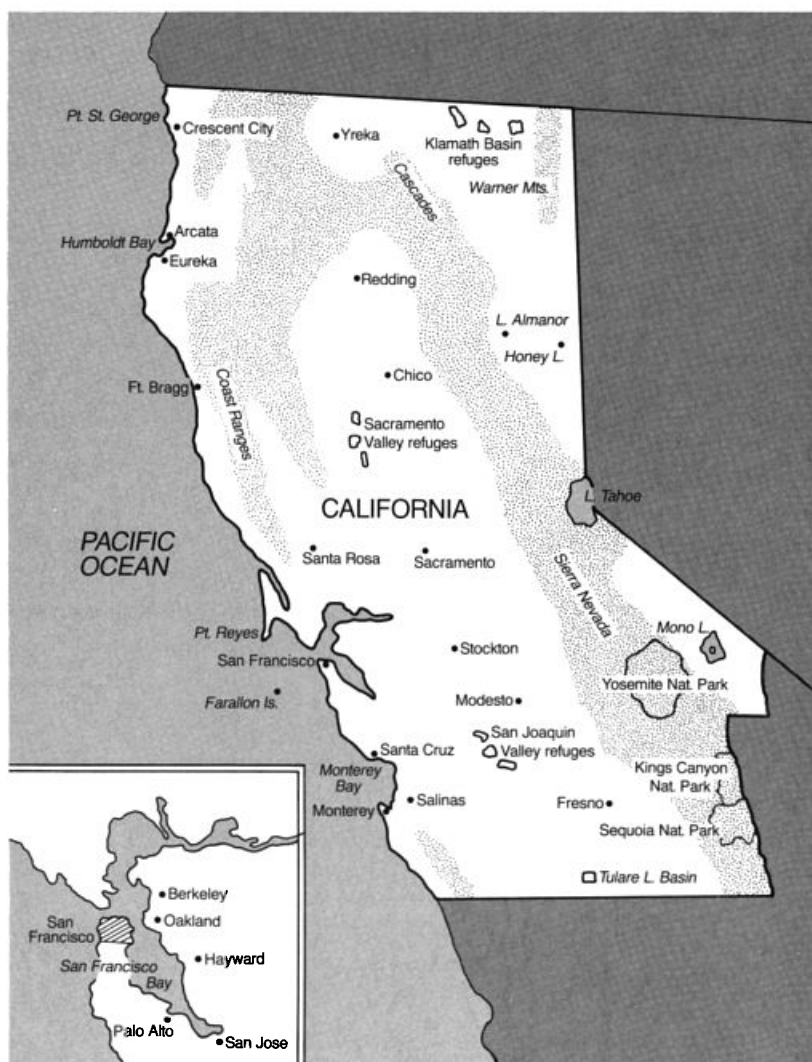
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# MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

Stephen F. Bailey,  
Richard A. Erickson,  
and David G. Yee



The season was generally unremarkable. Vagrant production was probably on the low side of average on the central and southern coasts but was very good on the north coast by local standards. The continued flow of significant nesting records produced by several ongoing county atlas projects is appreciated.

Birders searching for vagrants at traditional migrant traps on the coast in June have long realized that many common species, as well, do not recognize the *American Birds* cutoff of May 31 as the end to all migration. This year late migrant reports came from the length and breadth of the Region but concentrated on the coast and in the Central Valley, also our human population centers. The following species were all reported as migrants in the first nine days of June except where noted: Black Swift (to May 29), Olive-sided Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher (see below), Hammond's Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher (to May 31), "Western" Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Swainson's Thrush, Cedar Waxwing (to May 29), Warbling Vireo, Nashville Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Townsend's Warbler (June 12 in Mono County, June 16 in Humboldt County), Hermit Warbler (to May 26), MacGillivray's Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Savannah Sparrow.

We are grateful to Kurt F. Campbell for compiling the landbird reports for Erickson's analysis.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — C.A.S. = California Academy of Sciences; C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.C.R.S. = Coyote Creek Riparian banding Station, Santa Clara County; C.V. = Central Valley; F.I. = S.E. Farallon I.; S.F. = San Francisco; ph. = photo on file with Regional Editors. Place names in *italics* are counties. All records from F.I. and Palomarin banding stations should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory (P.R.B.O.).

**LOONS TO FRIGATEBIRDS** — A basic-plumaged Red-throated Loon far inland at Bridgeport Res., Mono, June 12 was joined by another by July 25 (PJM). Equally far inland was a breeding-plumaged Pacific Loon on L. Tahoe at Tahoe City July 1 (†GMcC). A basic-plumaged Pacific Loon on Calaveras Res., Santa Clara, June 1 (M. Seibert) was closer to the coast but still unusual. Over 250 Pacifics on Drakes Bay, Marin, June 11 & 18 (MJL, JM) represented a large group for summer. A Horned Grebe in mixed plumage at Charleston Slough, Santa Clara, June 3 (MRo) may have been a very tardy straggler, but a breeding-plumaged individual on Tule L., Modoc, July 3 (SFB) was at a potential breeding location. Grebe nesting continued to be disrupted by low lake levels in several counties from Monterey to the Great Basin.

A foreign factory fishing fleet offshore Humboldt Bay concentrated 1000 Black-footed Albatrosses and 10,000 Sooty Shearwaters June 11 (SWH, GSL). A Wilson's Storm-Petrel 21 mi w.s.w. of Pt. Reyes June 10 (†PP, P.R.B.O.) was early, and a Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel one mi n.e. of N. Farallon I., San Francisco, June 12 was "suspicious" (P.R.B.O.). Possibly this

is the origin of the summer birds at Cordell Bank (AB 40 1249)

Probably reflecting the continuing but decreasing drought, Am White Pelicans were again unusually widespread, early returning, and/or present through the spring and summer away from breeding areas. These trends were seen also in 1985, 1987, and 1988, being strongest in 1988. Two or three **Brown Pelicans** in Mono were the first confirmed east of the Sierra in our Region. One (age not reported) was at Negit Islets, Mono L., July 3–5 (J. Dierks, m.ob.). A weak immature beside the road in Lundy Canyon July 16 was reportedly carried to the Lee Vining Ranger Station later that day (WDS). An adult roosted with Am. White Pelicans at Bridgeport Res. July 25 & 29 (PJM, †ES). On June 17 there were 125 Double-crested Cormorant nests on Knight I., Solano, and 9 nests on Russ I., Napa (RLCL, V. Coburn). At least 12 nests of this species on power towers beside the San Mateo Bridge July 23 (PJM, SFB) established the 2nd recorded breeding for San Mateo. The previous record was on the coast at Devil's Slide in 1940 (fide PJM). A ♀ Magnificent Frigatebird soared with hang gliders over Waddell Cr., Santa Cruz, June 25 (GJS, fide RSTh).

**HERONS TO WATERFOWL** — A Least Bittern was calling at Little Chico Cr., Butte, June 30 (JHS). We have averaged fewer than 2 reports a year during the past 6 years from known areas of breeding in the C.V. and Great Basin. While the birds are secretive, efforts should be made to detect whether their already greatly reduced numbers are dwindling further. Twenty active Snowy Egret nests at Modoc N.W.R. June 19 (EckB) represented a nesting first for the refuge. As usual, three to four Little Blue Herons were reported from Santa Clara. However, most intriguing was the interspecific marriage between a Little Blue Heron and a Cattle Egret at Colusa N.W.R. June 12–July 25 (tph. S. Berendzen). The pair laid 4 eggs, hatched 3, and fledged two hybrids! This chance mating may have been stimulated by the estimated 80 nesting pairs of Cattle Egrets observed at the refuge during the Period (S. Berendzen), which is by far their highest Regional total away from the s. San Joaquin Valley. Attempted hybridization between these two species appears to be previously unknown.

The Mono Basin had its 2nd nesting of Black-crowned Night-Herons in one year and 3rd overall: Negit Islets, Mono L July 4 (J. Dierks). White-faced Ibis continued to stake claims in the Region as they provided first nesting records for Modoc N.W.R. and Sierra Valley Marsh, Plumas: 30 nests June 19 at the former (EckB), and several nests with about 100 birds present June 10 (†MBG et al.) & 17 (WDS, DnB) at the latter

Summering swans and white geese are always rare and not seen annually, especially if presumed healthy as were the following: single Tundra Swans at Modoc N.W.R. July 1–4 (SFB, CGR) and Tule Lake N.W.R. July 3 (SFB), and two at L. Almanor, Plumas, July 4 (SFB); single Ross' Geese at Tule Lake N.W.R. July 3 and Lower Klamath N.W.R. July 3 (both SFB)

Ducks oversummering and those pushing the boundaries of their breeding ranges are always noteworthy, especially in light of our recent drought and man's constant negative impact on suitable nesting habitat. A summary of some follows. A ♂ Green-winged Teal summered at the Bolinas sewage ponds, Marin, June 25–early August (WDS). A family of N. Pintails at the Martinez sewer ponds June 22 (KGH) constituted Contra Costa's first nesting record. A rarely reported ♂ Gadwall x Mallard was found at the Stockton sewage ponds June 3 (†DGY). An Am. Wigeon at Mono L. June 11 (PJM) was a first in summer for the Mono Basin.

Canvasback bred for the first time in Santa Clara, with a pair and two young found at Guadalupe Slough June 16 (T. Espersen, S. Formenti). Only three additional birds were found summering away from the Great Basin. The brood of Redheads at the Sunnyvale sewer ponds July 22 (PJM) was Santa Clara's first since 1984. A female at the Eel River W.A.,

Humboldt, May 30–June 11 (JCS) furnished one of few summer records for the n. coast. Three ♂ Ring-necked Ducks at Bridgeport, Mono, June 6 provided the Mono Basin's 3rd summer record, while 12 Lesser Scaup at Mono L. June 10 suggested breeding there as in 1987 (both PJM). A flightless ♀ Hooded Merganser was at Tahoe City July 2 (GMcC); summer records for the Region are few.

**RAPTORS** — The pair of Ospreys that had nested unsuccessfully for 5 years on the South Tufas of Mono L. finally raised two fledglings this year (R. Potashin, m.ob.). Obviously they caught their fish elsewhere. Sharp-shinned Hawks were inferred or suspected to be nesting at several new sites in Monterey (DR, RFT, RER), as well as in Tilden Park, Contreras Costa (JM). An ad. Cooper's Hawk with three nestlings on Woodley I., Eureka, July 10 (RAE, M. Morris) established the first coastal nesting record for Humboldt. An ad. Red-shouldered Hawk at Mono L. County Park July 16 (WDS) was the first in midsummer in Mono. A newspaper report discussing raptor mortality owing to windmills in the Altamont Wind Farm, Alameda, listed 29 Golden Eagles and one Bald Eagle in the past year, but did not touch on the more common raptors which should also have been impacted (fide ALE, GFB).

**PHEASANT TO SHOREBIRDS** — No viable population of Ring-necked Pheasant is known in Humboldt, so a male at Samoa Dunes Recreational Area June 7–17 (RAE et al.) was strutting his stuff in vain, and falls in that county's "not established" category.

Our only Lesser Golden-Plover report was of an alternate-plumaged *dominica* at the Davis sewer ponds, Yolo, July 19–26 (TCo et al.). A non-breeding-plumaged Semipalmated Plover at the Stockton sewage ponds June 8–30 (DGY) was our first definite summering individual from the interior. Apparently the first nesting Snowy Plovers for Napa were on Little I. June 17 (RbL, V. Coburn). There was no mention of their success.

Surprisingly, no June Willets were found in Humboldt/Del Norte (RAE, GSL), while one made a rare mountain stop at L. Forrest, Placer, July 2 (GMcC) and 10 juveniles at the Stockton sewage ponds July 28 (DGY) made a fairly high C.V. count. Spotted Sandpiper was added to Santa Clara's nesting list as active nests were found at Anderson Res. June 10–29 (E Curtis) and the Pajaro R. at Hwy 101 July 24 (DLSu). A Marbled Godwit at Crowley L. July 25 (PJM) was a Mono Basin rarity, while five Ruddy Turnstones in late July from the interior were also noteworthy. A single Red Knot at Mono L. July 24 (PJM) was interesting, but 100–125 summering at the Hayward Regional Shoreline, Alameda, June 17–July 1 (RJR) was an unprecedented number.

Two ad. Semipalmated Sandpipers hit the n. coast July 9–12 while four juveniles appeared July 26–28. A W. Sandpiper that summered at the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin June 17–July 1 had a broken leg (PJM). The first returning adults arrived June 25–26 with the first juveniles reported July 25–28. An ad. Baird's Sandpiper graced the Modesto sewer ponds July 21 (HMR), a juvenile was at L. Talawa, Del Norte, July 26 (JCS), and two unaged birds were at Año Nuevo Pt. July 23 (GJS). Additionally, up to three ad. Pectoral Sandpipers were at the latter locale July 29–30 (GJS, RSTh). An alternate-plumaged Dunlin summered at L. Talawa June 8–26 (JCS) while a similarly dressed Short-billed Dowitcher was at Samoa, Humboldt, June 2–15 (RAE).

**LARIDS, ALCIDS** — South Polar Skuas at Cordell Bank, Marin, June 3 (P.R.B.O.), 8.5 mi s.s.w. of Santa Cruz June 11, and near Pt. Pinos July 23 (both RT, fide AB) were seasonally rare. Five ad. **Franklin's Gulls** vigorously defending two nests at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Siskiyou, July 3–4 (ph. †SFB) added a new breeding species to the California list. Details will be reported elsewhere. Nearby at Indian Tom L. an adult was seen June 24 (PEG), and another adult was at the Fleming

Unit of Honey Lake W.M.A. June 19 (AM). Our C.V. and S.F. Bay Franklin's Gulls were all immature: a bird in fresh juvenal plumage at Lodi sewage ponds, San Joaquin, July 25-29 (DGY), first-summer birds at Modesto sewage ponds June 26-27 (HMR, ERC) and July 21 (same?—HMR), plus one there possibly in juvenal plumage July 23 (ERC), and a first-summer bird at Mountain View Forebay, Santa Clara, July 19 (PJM, D. Keller). Late spring Sabine's Gulls included 26 near the Pioneer Seamount, Marin and/or San Mateo, June 4 (P.R.B.O.), and three adults flying N about 30 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes June 11 (JM).

Caspian Terns nesting in 2 colonies on Knight I. June 17 may have been the first known breeding in Solano (RLCL, V. Coburn). An ad. Royal Tern at Pajaro R. mouth, Monterey, June 25 (PJM, RER) was very rare for the Region. Forster's Terns nesting on Russ I. and Island No. 2 on June 17 may have been the first known breeding in Napa (RLCL, V. Coburn). At the Alameda Naval Air Station Least Tern colony, 72-75 pairs (78 nesting attempts) produced about 80 fledglings (LDC). The other four fledglings of 1989 were evenly divided between colonies of 3 nests at West Pittsburg, Contra Costa, and 9 nests at the Oakland Airport (LDC, LRF). Westward vagrant Black Terns were at the Alameda Naval Air Station Least Tern colony June 4 (LDC) and at Salinas sewage ponds June 9 (DEG). A Black Skimmer at Salinas R. mouth June 5 (DEG) carried a band on one leg. A pair of Black Skimmers in the tern colony on Bair I. July 29 gave no sign of nesting but represented the first record for San Mateo (P. Woodin, S.F.B.B.O.). When will nesting be proven in our Region?

A **Thick-billed Murre** led five or six Com. Murres in flight S past Pt. Reyes June 28 (†RS).

An unseasonal Ancient Murrelet was off Whaler I., Crescent City, July 5 (S. Miller, B. O'Donnell). A **Parakeet Auklet** in breeding plumage at a water boundary 11.7 mi w.s.w. of Año Nuevo Pt. June 6 (†PP, P.R.B.O.) produced the first summer record for the Region. Following the large numbers

#### S.A.

Two **Marbled Murrelet** nests were discovered in Big Basin Redwoods State Park, Santa Cruz (Steven Singer, Nancy Naslund), the site of the first nest discovered in North America (Binford *et al.* 1975, *Wilson Bull.* 87:303-319). The Santa Cruz Marbled Murrelet Research Team (N. Naslund, S. & S. Singer, G.J. Strachan, R. Burton) used this unprecedented opportunity to observe these nests from long distance, but the nests were preyed upon by a Com. Raven and a Steller's Jay. Details will be published elsewhere.

of Horned Puffins chronicled in last season's summary, 26 were reported May 31-July 2 offshore from Sonoma to Monterey (P.R.B.O., ASH, JM, PhR, MLE, DLm). Additionally, one landed on F.I. July 6 (10th record there, but probably first to land), and another was found dead on Agate Beach, Bolinas, July 9 (fide KH).

**PIGEONS TO WOODPECKERS** — Two confirmed Band-tailed Pigeon nestings in n.w. Napa in June followed a long hiatus in that county (fide RbL). Following last year's remarkable eight, only one Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found on the coast this "spring": F.I., July 1. A previously unreported **Barred Owl** n.e. of Zenia, Trinity, Apr. 17-June 13 was in the same area where a pair was present April-June and September 1988 (P. Udd *et al.*). In Mendocino, one or two were found in Wheel Gulch, Ten Mile R., in July (J. Ambrose, K. Roberts). These are the southernmost Regional records of this rapidly invading species. The status of Long-eared Owl continued to be among the least understood of any species in our Region. Two at Sand Flat, near Big Meadow, Calaveras, July 29 (RJR) were presumably near a nesting area.

As in most years, Lesser Nighthawks reached the coast with singles at F.I. June 10 and July 12 and at Pt. Reyes June 17

(RS). Large concentrations of Com. Nighthawks were found at Bridgeport Res., Mono (150 July 24—PJM) and Manzanita L., Lassen Volcanic N.P. (70+ July 29—D. Holmes). One at Lakeport, Lake, July 8 (JPM) was in an area with few (any?) previous records. Single Chimney Swifts were identified at Pt. Reyes June 4 (RS) and Mono L. County Park June 10 (PJM). The latter furnished only the 2nd Regional record east of the Sierra/Cascade crest. Two probable Chimneys were in S.F. June 22 (ASH).

A ♀ Costa's Hummingbird at Westhaven July 31-Aug. 7 (GSL, LPL) provided the 3rd July/August Humboldt record in as many years. Single Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were in Mono at Tom's Place throughout the Period and at Hilton L. July 18 (both CDH). The status of Rufous and Allen's hummingbirds is far from understood in this Region. At C.C.R.S., 18 captured hummers were identified as Rufous in June and July, compared to only 13 Allen's. But as Bousman states: "the identification of imm. hummingbirds still represents a major problem." In the heart of Allen's nesting range in Marin, an exodus of hummers in the Inverness area June 19-22 reduced Allen's (males only?) numbers by 50% and *Selasphorus* sp. by 95%, and coincided with the appearance of many migrants on outer Pt. Reyes (RS).

Two Lewis' Woodpeckers in Del Puerto Canyon, Stanislaus, June 19 were considered post-breeding wanderers since they were out of suitable nesting habitat (HMR). Another wanderer near Caswell S.P., San Joaquin, July 29 (DGY) was on a more typical date but at a less expected location on the C.V. floor. An Acorn Woodpecker at Tom's Place June 5-6 (CDH) furnished a very rare Mono record. Six active Red-naped Sapsucker nests found in Emerson and Deep Cr. Canyons, Modoc, June 19-21 indicated how common this species is on the east side of the Warner Mts. (WDS, DnB). An adult with a juvenile near Emma L. July 20 (†D. & J. Dow) represented only the 3rd Mono nesting record.

**FLYCATCHERS TO CHICKADEES** — Thirteen-plus Willow Flycatchers from across the Region June 1-15 were considered migrants. Known or suspected breeding birds were three at the Klamath R. mouth, Del Norte, June 16-18 (KI *et al.*), an adult with a recently completed nest at Parsnip Springs, Warner Mts., Modoc, June 18 (WDS, DnB), and a singing male at Barney L., Hoover Wilderness, Mono, July 29 (HG). Monitoring continued at many other nesting sites in the Cascades and Sierra Nevada. Single Willow Flycatchers at Modoc N.W.R. July 4 (ECKB) and C.C.R.S. July 6 are less easily explained, but may well pertain to very late spring migrants. At least four Dusky Flycatchers in "burned over chamise/manzanita/mountain chaparral" on the ridge running from Cone Peak to the northeast June 6-July 2 may be newly established there (DR, RER). Chew's Ridge was the only previously known nesting site in Monterey. An *Empidonax* sp. in Del Puerto Canyon, Stanislaus, June 25 (RJR) was very unusual; it was considered a probable Dusky.

Extraordinary was a ♂ (probably first-year) **Vermilion Flycatcher** at the Big Sur R. mouth June 14 (†DEG, †DR, RFT). Previous Regional records come from Napa (one), Mono (2), and the San Joaquin Valley where 6 records include a previously unpublished male at Faith Ranch, Stanislaus, Dec. 31, 1987 (RMcN). A pair of Cassin's Kingbirds at a nest with young s. of Tracy June 3 represented the first breeding record in San Joaquin in 6 years (DGY). Western Kingbirds at Portola Valley June 26 and Webb Ranch June 28 were at potential nesting locations, although the species is still unconfirmed as a breeder in San Mateo (PJM). A W. Kingbird at McGurk Meadow, Yosemite N.P., July 28 (GF, KGH) was a high-elevation disperser. Point Reyes hosted two to three E. Kingbirds June 3-4 (AME, DSg, RS *et al.*) and one June 19 (RS). Another was at Ash Creek W.A., Modoc/Lassen, July 16 (S. McWilliams, J. Dunn). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Pt. Reyes June 10 (MLR, ALE *et al.*) was apparently different from one seen there in May. Two were found elsewhere: Gualala Pt. County Park, Sonoma, June 4-6 (B. & R. Crooks, †B. Perry, B.



Van Shaick) and Mono L June 28 (†Richard Hansen)

Passerine "fall migration" began very early this year at F.I. when a juv. Violet-green Swallow appeared June 2. A colony of 30+ pairs of Bank Swallows at Bridgeport, discovered June 12 (PJM), was only the 2nd known in Mono. Nesting was also suspected on the lower Salinas R., Monterey, where three were seen at the river mouth June 25 and five July 2 (PJM). Note, however, that one to five birds were seen at 5 other scattered non-breeding sites in the C.V. and Marin in mid-late June.

Coastal *Humboldt* is reaping the benefits of a gentle southward range expansion of Black-capped Chickadees. Although the species was recorded south to Eureka in the non-breeding season as early as the 1920s, nesting in the county was not proven until 1974. Nesting was suspected at Fairhaven in 1988 but unconfirmed south of Little R. prior to this year. A pair again frequented Fairhaven this summer and was seen bringing food to a nest hole in June, but no young fledged (RAE, GSL *et al.*). A pair at Woodley I., Eureka, was successful, however, as a family group was seen June 26–July 10 (RAE, GSL *et al.*). The species remains unrecorded south of Ferndale.

**WRENS TO WOOD WARBLERS** — A Winter Wren and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at 7000' McGurk Meadow, Yosemite N.P., July 15 (MJL) were presumably high-elevation dispersers. A family group of five Mt. Bluebirds at Salmon Mt., *Humboldt/Trinity*, July 8 (RAE, GSL) was near the far w. limit of the species' breeding range in the Klamath Mts. region. Scratch the spring report comment about latest ever coastal Townsend's Solitaire. We have a new record: one at F.I. June 5. Also very late was a Varied Thrush on the island June 10. Wrentits are unknown east of the San Joaquin R. corridor in *Stanislaus*, so one at Turlock L. July 4 was considered a post-breeding wanderer (HMR).

Two rare thrashers were found at Pt. Reyes: a Brown Thrasher June 9–11 (ABtt *et al.*) and a **Bendire's Thrasher** June 11 (†DSg). The latter bird was *Marin's* first, as all previous Regional records are from F.I. (5) or the C.V. (2). An active *Phainopepla* nest near Pine Canyon, Mt. Diablo S.P., June 16 (KGH) represented, surprisingly, the first confirmed nesting for *Contra Costa*. A pair of adults with a juvenile at Jasper Ridge in July (J. Becker-Have *et al.*) provided *San Mateo's* 2nd known nesting. One or two *plumbeus* Solitary Vireos singing at Indiana Summit, s. of Mono L., June 8 (WDS) were in the same general area where a small population seems to be established. A **Philadelphia Vireo** at F.I. June 6 furnished only the 3rd Regional spring record. In contrast, a few Red-eyed Vireos are to be expected in June. Two were on F.I. June 6 and one was at Fairhaven June 26 (RAE).

The spring's warbler highlight was clearly the ♂ **Blue-winged Warbler** seen briefly at Trinidad S.B., *Humboldt*, June 27 (†GSL). About 10 previous California records (two Regional) all came from the southern two-thirds of the state. Single Tennessee Warblers were at Pt. Reyes (RS *et al.*) and S.F. (ASH) both June 1, five were on F.I. in the period June 5–8, and one was there June 26–27. Two coastal Nashville Warblers were found: F.I. June 5, and 30 mi s.w. of Año Nuevo Pt. June 6 (P.R.B.O.). A N. Parula at Bolinas Lagoon June 22 (BMx, KH) was the only one seen. Three Chestnut-sided and six Magnolia warblers were found along the coast in June. Another Chestnut-sided was at June L., Mono, June 17 (BHG). A warbler at Fairhaven June 14 resembled a ♀ Golden-cheeked Warbler, but an unstreaked gray back and yellowish sides to the vent indicated it was a hybrid from the group of similar, and known interbreeding, species including Hermit, Townsend's, Black-throated Gray, and others (†RAE *et al.*). One Blackburnian Warbler at F.I. June 12 was enough to provide for an average spring. A singing Yellow-throated Warbler was at Trinidad June 14 (†KI, †GSL). Five previous *Humboldt* records include a pair that attempted nesting in Eureka in 1982 (not Fairhaven, as stated in Morlan & Erickson, Supplement to the birds of northern California, 1988.). A

Blackpoll Warbler was singing at Pt. Reyes June 2 (RS)

Three Black-and-white Warblers were found on the Region's central coast in *Marin* and *San Mateo* June 4 and one was on the n. coast at Trinidad S.B. June 25 (GSL, LPL). Five Am. Redstarts on the central coast, one in *Del Norte*, and one in Mono in June were typical, but ten in *Humboldt* June 12–July 5 (KI, GSL *et al.*) were exceptional. Most surprising, in light of this, was a June 18 visit to *Del Norte's* Klamath R. mouth where no redstarts were found for the first time on a June/July visit this decade (GSL, RAE *et al.*). Ovenbirds were well reported with nine on F.I. and five others on the central coast June 3–16, one at Fairhaven June 28 (RAE), and a late bird at F.I. July 11. We have averaged nearly 10 per spring over the last 15 years. Two N. Waterthrushes were found on the coast: S.F. June 2–4 (ASH, SFB *et al.*) and F.I. June 27. Another bird near Silver L., Mono, June 17–24 (BHG, ES) was singing on territory for the 3rd consecutive year. The species nests as close as *Klamath*, Oregon.

Hooded Warblers made a strong showing with five found Singles were at F.I. June 5, Pt. Reyes June 12 (JM *et al.*). Mono June 24 (P. Wilburn), S.F. June 27 (S. Morrical), and Mt. San Bruno, *San Mateo*, July 21 (DES). Two Canada Warblers were also more than expected in spring. Both were at F.I.: June 12 and June 26. A Yellow-breasted Chat at Gazos Cr. Apr. 27–June 25 (RSTh *et al.*) and another at Pescadero Marsh May 28–June 4 (PJM *et al.*) were intriguing since there are no *San Mateo* nesting records. Overdue was *Stanislaus's* first nesting record at Orestimba Cr. June 27 (CB). A bird at the Big Sur R. mouth June 15 was believed to be a late migrant (DEG, *fide* DR).

**TANAGERS TO CROSSBILLS** — Three Summer Tanagers were more than expected. One was on F.I. June 4, one was in Pacific Grove June 9 (RFT), and one was in S.F. June 22 (ASH). The central coast supplied all 14–15 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks June 4–July 12 except for one at Tom's Place, Mono, July 1 (CDH). A Blue Grosbeak at Pt. Reyes June 4 (RS *et al.*) was a typical coastal vagrant, but *Santa Clara's* first at C.C.R.S. July 22 was more difficult to explain. Indigo Buntings were found on the central coast (nine to 10 in June), above Eagleville, *Modoc*, June 24 (KLH, PAW), and at the Modesto sewage ponds July 21–23 (†HMR, SLR, ERC).

Vagrant sparrows on the coast included one or two Brewer's at Pt. Reyes June 1–4 (RS, JM *et al.*), and single Vespers at F.I. June 6–7 and Pt. Reyes June 11 (DSg). The Pt. Saint George Grasshopper Sparrow found in spring was last seen July 6 (B O'Donnell). Lincoln's Sparrows are quite local as breeders in the higher Coast Ranges. Seven at Waterdog L., *Humboldt*, July 15–16 (LPL) and one at Snow Mt., *Lake*, July 15 (JRW, JPM) were in rarely birded locales. A vagrant White-throated Sparrow was at Pt. Reyes June 4 (RS, JM *et al.*). A Golden-crowned Sparrow at Palomarin July 10 and a White-crowned Sparrow of the race *pugetensis* at C.C.R.S. June 13 were both far south of their normal summer ranges. A juv. "Oregon" Juncò, with down tufts still visible on its head, had travelled some distance to reach Lodi L., *San Joaquin*, where it was found July 6 (DGY). The species is not known to nest anywhere in the C.V. Vagrant "Slate-colored" Juncos (same?) were at F.I. June 3 and Pt. Reyes June 4 (RS, JM).

There has been no evidence of Tricolored Blackbirds nesting in *San Mateo* for 15+ years, so 20 at Moss Beach June 5 were of interest (PJM). The S.F. Bay area and C.V. account for all Regional records of Great-tailed Grackles. One in residential *San Jose* July 9–14 (BBrr) and one at Sacramento N.W.R., *Glenn*, July 17 (D. Wolsworth) furnished the 6th records for each area respectively. More intriguing was the report of a Com. Grackle feeding a fledgling (it has been suggested this may have been a hybrid—RHG) in the Riverdale area, *Fresno*, at least June 8–12 (H. Maddox, †B. Mertz). The report was accompanied by scant details, however, and should be considered tentative until an official decision is made by the

C.B.R.C. Unlike the Common Grackle, Great-tailed Grackle has colonized much of southern California in the last 25 years, even attempting nesting in S.F. from 1980–1983, and would be much more likely involved in the Fresno event. The only “Baltimore” N. Oriole found was at F.I. June 6–12.

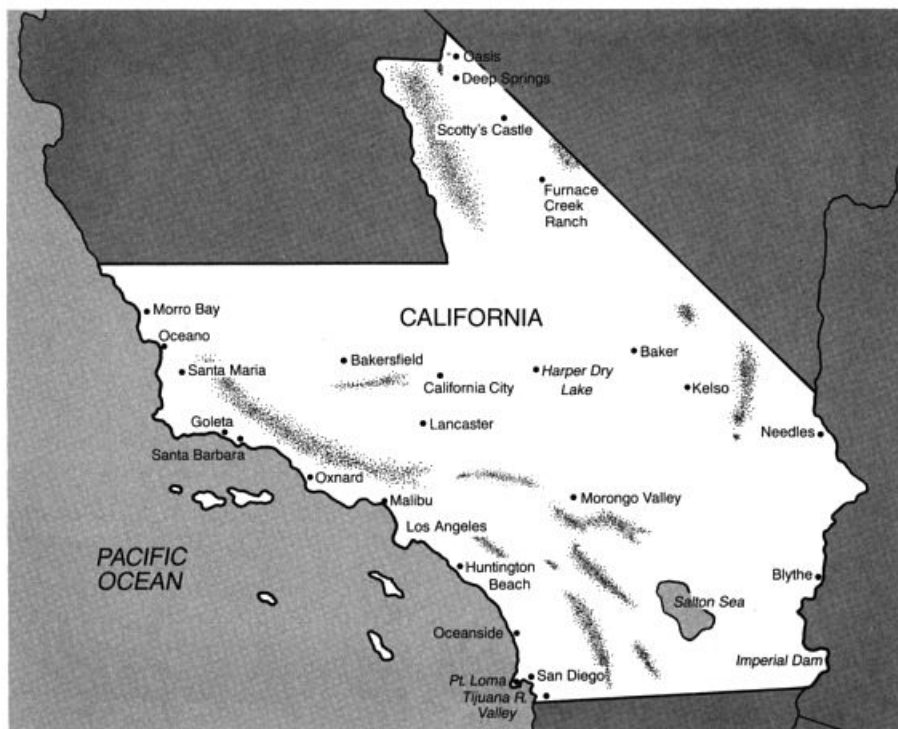
Purple Finches remain unconfirmed as *Stanislaus* breeders, as a pair with two apparent juveniles nearby in Orestimba Valley June 21 were considered too close to the Santa Clara line (HMR). Cassin’s Finches at Salmon Mt. and N. Trinity Mt., *Humboldt/Trinity*, July 8–15 (RAE, GSL, LPL) were at the periphery of their range, but three at Snow Mt. July 15 were the first recorded in Lake in the breeding season (JRW, JPM). Red Crossbills were found breeding along the central coast in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo.

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## SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie



As is normal, the summer season was dry, leaving Southern California very dry after the exceptionally dry winter and spring. Water levels at most reservoirs were lower than usual. From comments by observers who ventured into the mountains, it appears that drought conditions there kept populations of insectivorous birds quite low. Two seven-day cruises aboard the research ship the *New Horizon* in July produced reports of some unexpected seabirds. Waterbirds at the Salton Sea appeared to be in lower than expected numbers, possibly owing to the increase in salinity or to the declining overall quality of the water.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside County; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura County; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. Place names in italics are counties. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers,

only the initials of the observer initially identifying the bird are 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 FRIGATEBIRDS** — Loons were scarcer than normal along the coast this summer, especially south of Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara. A summer-plumaged Horned Grebe near Santa Maria July 4 (PEL) was most unusual. Since Eared Grebes are considered rare and sporadic breeders along the coast, the presence of 25 sitting on nests on Batiquitos Lagoon, San Diego, July 8 (JO) was of interest.

The only Black-footed Albatrosses reported were 10 in an area between 58 and 127 mi w.s.w. of San Nicolas I. on July 23 (PP), and 15 more in the same general area July 26 (RRV). Twenty-one Cook’s Petrels were seen between 31° 30’N–120° 17’W and 30° 49’N–121° 28’W on July 20 (PP), 11 were seen between 31° 43’N–121° 18’W and 32° 25’N–119° 58’W on

July 23 (PP), nine were in the area of 32° 40'N–121° 30'W on July 26 (RRV), and two more were relatively close to shore at 33° 55'N–121° 30'W on July 30 (RRV), all being over waters where this species undoubtedly occurs regularly. At least nine, and possibly as many as 13, **Band-rumped Storm-Petrels** in the area between 31° 11'N–120° 38'W and 30° 58'N–121° 24'W (between 134 mi s.s.w. of San Nicolas I. and 160 mi s.s.w. of San Nicolas I.) on July 20 (PP), and another only 15 mi w. of San Nicolas I. July 25 (RRV), were a real surprise, since there is only one previous record of this species in California waters. A **Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel**, a species recorded fewer than half a dozen times in California waters, was well seen and photographed at 32° 08'N–120° 37'W (about 83 mi s.w. of San Nicolas I.) on July 23 (PP).



*Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel about 83 miles southwest of San Nicholas Island, California, July 23, 1989. Photograph/Peter Pyle.*

Two Red-billed Tropicbirds about 65 mi s.w. of San Clemente I. July 19 (PP) were the only ones reported, this species appearing to be less numerous off s. California today than in the 1970s. Brown Pelicans were remarkably numerous on the Salton Sea this summer with 750 seen on only a portion of the Sea July 15 (GMcC), indicating at least 1000 present; one in flight near Riverside July 5 (DM) was most unusual. Magnificent Frigatebirds were less numerous than usual with two immatures over Goleta July 10 (MAH), one at Seal Beach, Orange, June 21 (JF) and what may have been the same bird over the Balboa Peninsula, Orange, June 22 (BA), and one around San Diego July 4–6 (JM) along the coast, and single birds inland at the Salton Sea July 15 (RMcK) and Aug. 9 (TP).

**HERONS TO RAPTORS**—An Am. Bittern along the upper Santa Ynez R., Santa Barbara, June 9 (JMG) was in an area where considered unusual in summer. At least one pair of Great Egrets successfully raised young near Escondido this summer (JO) to give San Diego its first confirmed nesting record. Seven ad. Snowy Egrets accompanying five dependent young just to the s. of Bakersfield, Kern, June 20 (MOC) provided the first modern-day breeding record for this area of California. Up to six ad. Little Blue Herons were present around s. San Diego Bay this summer, with at least one pair raising young (GMcC). A bird initially thought to be a molting imm. Little Blue Heron in Playa del Rey, Los Angeles, July 22 through the end of the period (AW) had the head and scapular plumes of a breeding adult, so was variously considered a hybrid Snowy Egret x Little Blue Heron or a partially albino

ad. Little Blue. A Tricolored Heron, most unusual in summer, was in San Diego June 24–July 15 (BF). The imm. Reddish Egret that appeared at the mouth of the San Diego R. last Nov. 20 was still present at the end of the summer period. A Cattle Egret near Santa Maria July 19 (SEF) was in an area where this species is normally absent in summer. The ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in La Jolla paired with a Black-crowned Night-Heron, built a nest and stood by its mate sitting on the nest, but the eggs evidently did not hatch and it departed the area July 19 (JO'B). The two Wood Storks near Escondido since May 31 built a nest, but did not appear to hatch young, although they were still present Aug. 24 (DR); at S.E.S.S. no more than 20 could be found during July (GMcC), these being mostly adults; this is a far cry from the numbers occurring here 10 years ago, when virtually all were immatures.

As usual a few Brant could be found along the coast with one or two near Cayucos, San Luis Obispo, June 10–25 (TME), three on Morro Bay throughout the period (TME), up to six at Pt. Mugu, Ventura, through July (REW), up to four at Malibu Lagoon, Los Angeles, through June 19 (KLG), and at least one on San Diego Bay all summer (GMcC); in addition, up to seven were inland at N.E.S.S. during June (MAP) with all succumbing to the summer heat by July, but two at S.E.S.S. Aug. 17–31 (SEF) were evidently more successful. A ♀ Wood Duck accompanying three ducklings near Wynola, San Diego, June 28 (CGE) was unusually far south, and gave us the first evidence of breeding in the county. A ♀ Green-winged Teal accompanying two ducklings in the Fremont Valley n. of Mojave, Kern, July 29 (MTH) was most unusual, since there are only a handful of nesting records for the Region. Summering Canvasbacks included one on Batiquitos Lagoon July 29 (JO), another in Ontario, San Bernardino, July 29 (MAP), and a third at S.E.S.S. July 9 (MAP). Summering Ring-necked Ducks included one in Atascadero June 29 through the end of the period (TME), three or four in Saticoy, Ventura, May 26–Aug. 20 (RM), one near S.C.R.E. July 9–Aug. 11 (AB), another near Oxnard July 15 (RM), and one near Redlands, Riverside, June 12–July 9 (RMcK). Along the coast a Greater Scaup was found on Morro Bay June 10 (TME) and another was in Goleta May 24–June 30 (PEL), while a female spent the entire summer inland at N.E.S.S. (GMcC) and another was at S.E.S.S. Aug. 31 (JLD). Summering Surf Scoters were scarcer than usual along the coast south of Pt. Conception, and only nine summering White-winged Scoters could be found along the Santa Barbara n. coast where much larger numbers are the rule. Inland, 16 Surf Scoters were at N.E.S.S. June 25 (MAP) with five surviving through July, and another was at S.E.S.S. June 25–July 23 (GMcC). Two White-winged Scoters were at N.E.S.S. June 25 (BED) with one remaining through the end of the period (MAP). Two Buffleheads near S.C.R.E. July 9–Aug. 20 (RPH) were the only ones reported. A ♀ Com. Merganser with five or six young on Gibraltar Res., Santa Barbara, June 2 (JMG), and another female with five or six downy young on nearby Mono Creek June 6 (JMG), provided the southernmost records for nesting in California.

One of the 2 nesting pairs of Ospreys on L. Isabella, Kern, was feeding three young in the nest on July 29 (JCW) but the other nest was flooded by rising waters. Of extreme interest was a pair of **Northern Goshawks** that fledged two young from a nest on Mt. Abel, Kern, in June (GT), and another pair at a nest near the base of Mt. Pinos, Kern, at the same time (ASm); the only other record for nesting in s. California was represented by a set of eggs taken on nearby Mt. Pinos in 1904. A subad. Harris' Hawk was at the mouth of the New R. at S.E.S.S. June 25 (GMcC) where wild birds have not been known since the 1950s; this species is being reintroduced to the Lower Colorado R. about 80 mi to the east, and is known to be kept in captivity by "falconers." Early imm. Red-shouldered Hawks in the desert east of the species' normal range included one in the Fremont Valley June 10 (MTH) and another in Salton City, Imperial, July 9 (GMcC). A pair of Zone-tailed Hawks was again present on Hot Springs Mt., San Diego, this summer (JO'B), acting as if breeding but with the

nest not located. A Prairie Falcon near Montana de Oro S.P., San Luis Obispo, July 6 (TT) was the first ever in this area in summer.

**SHOREBIRDS** — Fall arrival dates for adults of some of the common shorebirds were: Black-bellied Plover at S.E.S.S. June 25 (GMcC), Semipalmated Plover at S.E.S.S. June 25 (GMcC), Greater Yellowlegs in Goleta June 17 (PEL), Lesser Yellowlegs on Whale Rock Res., San Luis Obispo, June 26 (TME), Willet in Goleta June 16 (PEL), Whimbrel at S.E.S.S. July 25 (GMcC), Least Sandpiper in Goleta June 26 (PEL), Western Sandpipers near Santa Maria and S.E.S.S. June 25 (PEL, GMcC), Short-billed Dowitcher in Goleta June 28 (PEL), Long-billed Dowitcher at S.E.S.S. June 25 (GMcC), and Wilson's Phalarope in San Luis Obispo June 13-14 (MM), with numbers increasing rapidly after these dates. An early Lesser Golden-Plover in Goleta after July 31 (PEL) was of the Asiatic form *fulva*. Up to five Black Oystercatchers around Ventura June 25-Aug. 7 (SEF) were unusual for summer, and one in La Jolla, San Diego, June 9-17 (BC) was in an area where considered very rare. A juv. Greater Yellowlegs at S.C.R.E. July 29 (SEF) was early. An ad. Solitary Sandpiper at N.E.S.S. July 15 (GMcC) was the first to be found this fall. Inland Ruddy Turnstones included single adults at Edwards, Kern, July 22 & 29 (MTH), two on the Tulare L. Evaporation Ponds near Delano, Kern, July 30-Aug. 2 (JCW), and four relatively early birds at S.E.S.S. June 25 (GMcC) and another there July 23 (GMcC). An ad. Black Turnstone at S.E.S.S. June 25 (BED) was an early fall migrant, and the first ever to be found inland in fall in this Region. Two Surf-birds in Santa Barbara July 11 (FS) were the earliest to be noted this fall.

The only Red Knots found away from the coast were three on the Tulare L. Evaporation Ponds July 23 (MTH) and five early fall migrants at S.E.S.S. June 25 (BED). A Sanderling on the Tulare L. Evaporation Ponds July 30 was the only one found inland away from the Salton Sea. An ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper was at S.E.S.S. July 20 (NBB) and two more were at Edwards July 29 (MTH); the first of the juveniles were single birds near Santa Maria July 30 (KH) and in Goleta July 31 (PEL), and two at S.C.R.E. July 30-Aug. 5 (TEW). An ad. Baird's Sandpiper at Seal Beach July 8 (BED), another in Lancaster, Los Angeles, July 13 (NBB), and a third at Salton City on the Salton Sea July 15 (RMcK) were the only ones reported. A Dunlin, most unusual in summer, was at Bolsa Chica, Orange, June 11-16 (REW), and another was at Upper Newport Bay, Orange, July 8-15 (JB). A Stilt Sandpiper at Edwards July 22 (MTH) was the only one found away from the Salton Sea. A ♀ Ruff was at the Goose L. Evaporation Ponds near Wasco, Kern, July 28-Aug. 6 (JCW), and the male that has spent the past 7 winters on s. San Diego Bay was present there after July 19 (JW). Twelve Com. Snipe displaying at Cartago, Inyo, Apr. 30 (RRV) indicated this species was nesting at this location, and one to 3 pairs in the Garner Valley of the San Jacinto Mts., Riverside, fledged three young there this summer (RMcK) proving nesting at that locality; one along the coast in Atascadero July 16 (KAH) was exceptional considering the date. A Red-necked Phalarope near Cayucos, San Luis Obispo, May 25-June 17 (TME), and two in Goleta June 17 (PEL) were unusual for mid-summer, as was also the Red Phalarope at the Santa Maria R. mouth, Santa Barbara, July 15-30 (JSR).

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — Eight Pomarine Jaegers seen from Pt. Arguello, Santa Barbara, July 9 (SEF) were assumed to be summering locally. Six ad. Long-tailed Jaegers seen offshore July 28-31 (RRV) were early fall migrants. A S. Polar Skua, rare but regular off s. California in late spring, was near Santa Barbara I. June 10 (REW). An ad. Laughing Gull, very rare along the coast, was seen midway between Long Beach, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara I. June 19 (KLG), and another was present on Upper Newport Bay after July 29 (SG). An ad. Franklin's Gull near Santa Maria June 1 (SEF) was undoubtedly a late spring migrant, but another at China Lake, Kern,

June 24 (DBI) was a summer straggler, and another there July 25 (DB) was a southbound juvenile. Three ad. Heermann's Gulls were found inland with one on L. Henshaw, San Diego, June 24 (GMcC), another at N.E.S.S. June 25 (MAP), and the 3rd at S.E.S.S. the same day (MAP). Juvenile California Gulls returned to s. California a littler earlier than usual with three on the Salton Sea July 9 (GMcC). A first-summer Herring Gull, rare in s. California in summer, was at the Santa Maria R. mouth July 4 (AA), and one or two more were at N.E.S.S. during July (MAP). An ad. Yellow-footed Gull at Senator Wash, Imperial, July 27 (BED) was the first to be reported from along the Colorado R. Valley. A first-summer Glaucous-winged Gull was inland at S.E.S.S. July 15 (GMcC). A first-summer Black-legged Kittiwake in La Jolla after July 8 (BC) was summering locally. An ad. Sabine's Gull 70 mi s.w. of San Clemente I. July 19 (PP) was early for a fall migrant. At least six pairs of Gull-billed Terns again nested on s. San Diego Bay (EC), but numbers at the Salton Sea were very low (GMcC). The nesting colony of Elegant Terns at Bolsa Chica increased to over 1000 pairs this summer with more than 800 young fledged (LRH). A Least Tern at China Lake June 23 (DBI) was the first to be found in Kern. One hundred pairs of Black Skimmers successfully fledged about 100 young at Bolsa Chica (LRH), while another 20 pairs on Upper Newport Bay fledged 14 young (MTH), but none appeared to nest at the Salton Sea (GMcC).

As usual Marbled Murrelets appeared on the ocean off San Simeon, San Luis Obispo, in July with an adult accompanying a juvenile there July 19 (GPS); single birds south of there included one off n. Vandenberg A.F.B., Santa Barbara, July 23-Aug. 6 (KH), another at Pt. Arguello July 9 (SEF), and a third in Santa Barbara July 25 (FS). A Craver's Murrelet was flushed off the water about 55 mi s.w. of San Clemente I July 19 and three more were seen in the waters about 75 mi s.w. of San Nicolas I. on July 23 (PP). Up to 11 Rhinoceros Auklets were continually present off Shell Beach, San Luis Obispo, throughout the period (BS), and six more were at Pt. Arguello during the same time (KH), suggesting local nesting. A Tufted Puffin seen flying close to shore off n. Vandenberg A.F.B. July 9 (PEL) was remarkable considering how few are recorded in s. California. A breeding-plumaged **Horned Puffin** seen in flight at 31° 30'N-120° 18'W (about 120 mi s.s.w. of San Nicolas I.) July 20 (PP) was remarkable considering the time of year.

**CUCKOOS TO VIREOS** — Six pairs of Yellow-billed Cuckoos were present at s. California's last stronghold along the S. Fork of the Kern R. east of L. Isabella, managing to fledge six young from 4 nests (SL); a calling bird in the Prado Basin near Riverside June 22-Aug. 10 (DRW) was the only other one reported. Three calling Flammulated Owls on Big Pine Mt., Santa Barbara, June 21-22 (SEF) were in the same area as the one reported in the spring. A calling W. Screech-Owl at 7000 ft in the San Gabriel Mts., Los Angeles, June 13 (KLG) was at an unusually high elevation for this species. Three calling N. Pygmy-Owls were heard June 12 near L. Henshaw (CGE), where the species is considered quite rare. A survey conducted by the California Dept. of Fish and Game documented the presence of 17 to 24 Elf Owls at 10 sites along the Lower Colorado R. Valley (*vide* PM). A calling N. Saw-whet Owl at Buckhorn in the San Gabriel Mts., Los Angeles, June 13 (KLG) was in an area where small numbers appear to be resident. Forty-three Lesser Nighthawks together near San Juan Capistrano, Orange, July 13 (DBo) made a large number for a coastal location. A Black Swift at Pt. Buchon, San Luis Obispo, June 29 (TT) was in an area where nesting has long been suspected. Two Chimney Swifts over San Diego June 16 (PU) were the only ones reported this summer. A Hairy Woodpecker in the Prado Basin June 15 (DRW) was outside the species' normal range.

Up to 10 Gray Flycatchers, including four young, in Dry Canyon and along the N. Fork of Lockwood Creek in the

Lockwood Valley, Ventura, May 12–July 22 (FS) gave us another nesting locality for this species in s. California. A Cordilleran Flycatcher in pines on a dry slope at about 9500 ft at the upper end of Cottonwood Creek in the White Mts., Inyo, June 24 (REW) was possibly on nesting territory. Johnson and Marten (Auk 105:177–191, 1988) reported this species as nesting only in the extreme northeastern corner of California, but Miller and Russell (Condor 58:75–77, 1956) reported collecting a male nominate *difficilis* in breeding condition in this same area on June 27, 1954. That specimen should be checked for identity since the habitat in this area would appear to be more suited to the Cordilleran Flycatcher than the Pacific-slope Flycatcher. Two pairs of Brown-crested Flycatchers along the S. Fork of the Kern R. east of L. Isabella this summer (MW) were at the n.w. extreme of the species' range. A Cassin's Kingbird in the Fremont Valley July 29 (JCW) was only the 2nd ever in the desert region of Kern. A Barn Swallow in Huntington Beach June 10–11 (GMcC) showed plumage coloration and pattern normally associated with birds from Europe and Asia, indicating either that there is more variation in North American birds than generally believed or that a stray from Asia reached s. California.

A Yellow-billed Magpie near El Capitan, Santa Barbara, June 26 (TEW) was outside the species' present known range, indicating some individuals will move short distances on occasions. A pair of Am. Robins in Mojave, Kern, in June (MTH) appeared to be nesting, indicating this species is willing to adapt to man-made suitable habitat even when that habitat is in the middle of the desert. A pair of Plumbeous Solitary Vireos at Big Bear L. June (DRW) was a little outside the known breeding range of this race, and in habitat that appeared more suited to *cassinii*.

**WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES** — A Tennessee Warbler on Pt. Loma in San Diego June 11 (MAP) and another there June 14–16 (AME) were late spring vagrants, but a singing male in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, July 9–10 (BM) was unexpected considering the time of year. A Lucy's Warbler in Victorville, San Bernardino, was a little to the n.w. of the species' normal range. A ♂ N. Parula was along the S. Fork of the Kern R. east of L. Isabella on the unusual date of July 4 (SL). A Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler in Morro Bay S P June 24 (GPS) was away from known breeding locations. A late spring vagrant **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Deep Springs, Inyo, June 25 (REW) clearly had yellow lores and may have been of the nominate race; however, *albilora* can show yellow on the lores, and there is only one record of the nominate race in s. California. A Black-and-white Warbler on Pt. Loma in San Diego June 16 (OO) was evidently a late spring straggler. A ♂ Am. Redstart spent the summer in Oceano, San Luis Obispo (MP), molting from first-year to adult plumage during its stay, and another male found near Imperial Beach July 30 (GMcC) had probably summered locally. An Ovenbird on Pt. Loma June 17 (BP) was late for a spring vagrant. A N. Waterthrush in San Pedro, Los Angeles, June 22 (MK) was unusually late for a spring straggler.

Between 25 and 30 pairs of Summer Tanagers along the S. Fork of the Kern R. east of L. Isabella this summer represented the largest concentration left in California; one on Pt. Loma in San Diego June 17 (BJ) was a summer straggler along the coast. A W. Tanager in Upper Lopez Canyon, San Luis Obispo, July 1 (TME) was in a lowland area where nesting could occur. A ♀ Rose-breasted Grosbeak on Pt. Loma June 16 (AME) was a little late. Up to five ♂ Indigo Buntings in Goleta between July 8 & 29 (KB) were frequenting the same area as that used by a similar group this time last year, and a singing male in Huntington Beach July 16 (BED) was still present in August. A ♂ Painted Bunting seen in Coronado, San Diego, June 3 (EC) could just as easily be considered a spring vagrant as an escapee. A ♂ Dickcissel frequenting a feeder in Carpinteria June 6–7 (ASt) was probably a late spring vagrant. The presence of 12 Savannah Sparrows, including one juvenile, around

China Lake in June (MTH) extended the breeding range for this species southward from the Owens Valley. A pair of Dark-eyed Juncos was seen feeding young in Torrey Pines S.P., San Diego, July 22 (JRJ), documenting breeding at this coastal locality.

A Yellow-headed Blackbird at S.C.R.E. July 31–Aug. 22 (RM) was in an area of the state where considered very rare in summer, and several pairs were nesting in Los Alamitos, Orange, in June (DP). The ♂ Great-tailed Grackle initially found in Oceano in 1988 was still present at the end of the summer period (TME), at least eight different birds were present at various localities in Ventura during the period, and at least 3 pairs nested near Imperial Beach in June (GMcC), indicating this species is still expanding its range westward to the coast. At least 10 different Bronzed Cowbirds, including two juveniles, were seen in Brawley, Imperial, during June and July (GMcC); the summering population in this area may be increasing.

A few Red Crossbills were to be found in the mountains as indicated by one on Big Pine Mt. June 21 (PWC), another on Mt. Pinos July 1 (BED), and two in the White Mts. of Inyo June 25 (REW), and eight flew over the S. Fork of the Kern R. east of L. Isabella on July 8 (SL).

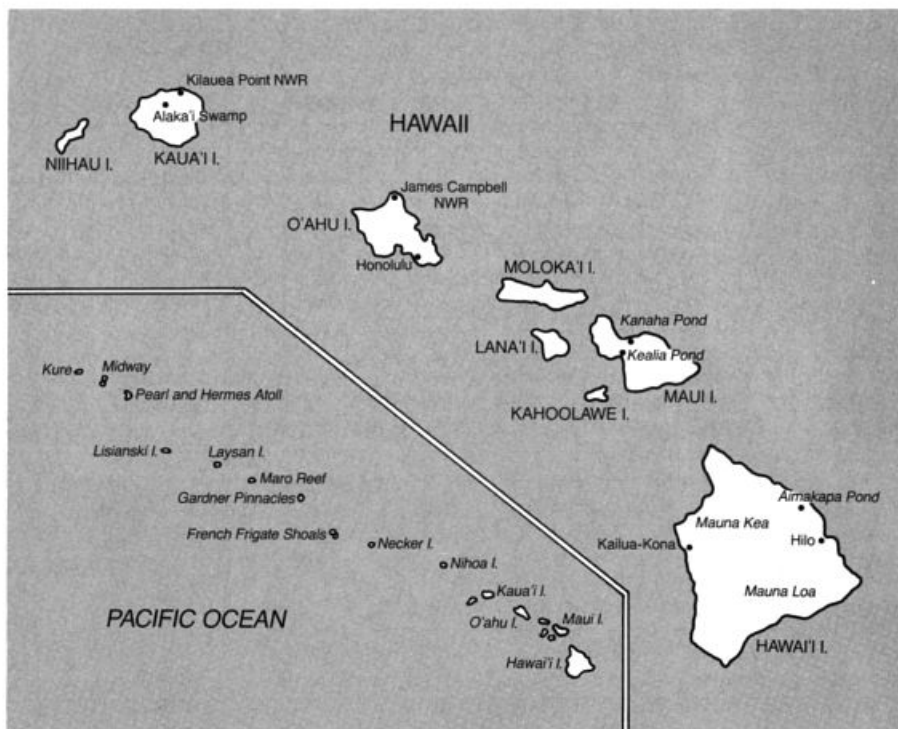
**ADDENDUM** — A report of subad. **Brown Booby** at the s. end of San Clemente I. May 13 (HK) was received too late to be included in the Spring Report.

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# HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

Robert L. Pyle



June and July, normally among the driest months of the calendar, were exceptionally rainy this year. Rainfall amounts exceeded normal at 28 of 32 stations, and 18 of those reported more than twice the seasonal normal. Only one young Hawaiian Crow ('Alala) was hatched successfully from eight eggs produced by the captive flock this year, and the apparently successful restocking of Endangered Hawaiian Ducks (Koloa) on O'ahu may actually be in serious trouble from a frustrating cause.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — F.F.S. = French Frigate Shoals; H. = Hawai'i I.; K. = Kaua'i I.; M. = Maui I.; O. = O'ahu I.; P.H.N.W.R. = Pearl Harbor Nat'l Wildlife Ref.

**SHEARWATERS TO DUCKS** — During the 3rd week of July, several Newell's Shearwaters (Threatened) were seen after dark flying just beyond the breaking surf near the river mouth at Lihue, K. (TH). Bright floodlights of beachside hotels provide good opportunities for seeing these birds, which otherwise are difficult to see while coming and going at night to their high mountain nesting sites generally inaccessible to the public. Good vantage points on Kaua'i, where most of the Newell's Shearwaters nest, have been the hotel complexes at Kapa'a and Poipu. An ad. male Lesser Frigatebird at Tern I., F.F.S., reported last winter, was seen occasionally through the spring until at least June 5. Two males were present Apr. 2 (DH et al., *vide* KM), a first for Hawaii as all prior records have been of single birds.

Staff of the Westin Hotel near Lihue, K., reported that five to six wild Hawaiian Geese (Nene, Endangered) now visit the hotel grounds regularly, with up to 15 seen once (*vide* TT). Six Hawaiian Ducks (Koloa, Endangered) were reported at Waiawa Unit, P.H.N.W.R., July 28 (PD), a high count for this locality.

**FRANCOLINS TO TERNS** — A Black Francolin heard calling June 11 along Napo'opo'o Rd. in s. Kona, H. (TP), was well south of the primary population center of this species on Hawai'i. A Lesser Golden-Plover at Pa'akai Pond, near Kane'ohe, O., July 9 with no black on the underparts may have been an oversummering non-breeder, while one with some black seen July 31 at Waialua Ponds, O. (PD), was

probably an early returning migrant. One Wandering Tattler and three Ruddy Turnstones at Aimakapa Pond, H., and two Ruddies at Keaholu Pt., H., July 2 (but no golden-plovers at either location), and three Ruddies at Pa'akai Pond July 9 (all RLP et al.) could all have been either oversummering or very early returnees. But 115 Ruddy Turnstones at Waialua Ponds July 31 (PD) were surely early returning migrants.

A bird seen closely standing on a small float at Kailua Beach Park, O., June 13 was carefully identified as a Great Crested

## S.A.

Hawaiian Ducks (Koloa, Endangered) from pure stock at the Pohakuloa state propagation facility have been reintroduced on O'ahu over the past two decades. They have reproduced quite successfully and now may be found in fairly good numbers at several favored localities. They are close relatives of the Mallard, but are believed not to interbreed with truly wild Mallards which come to Hawaii only in very small numbers as winter visitors. The behavior patterns of wild Mallards involving pair formation on the wintering grounds and migration to northern nesting grounds are not shared by the Koloa.

However, feral Mallards derived from captive and display stock have lost these behavior patterns. They are year-round residents and are seen frequently at the same wetlands as Koloa. Being noticeably larger, they can and do interbreed freely with Koloa. Preliminary genetic testing of supposed Koloa from J. Campbell Nat'l Wildlife Ref. on O'ahu this spring indicated that all birds tested were "swamped" with the gene structure of Mallard rather than matching the purebred Koloa (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service). Additional DNA analysis is underway.

Reestablishment of Koloa on O'ahu has required much effort and resources over a long time period, and the potential seemed good for extending the program to other islands. It will be a severe disappointment if this effort is found to be nullified by the presence of unnatural and uncontrollable feral Mallards.

Tern (TF) The observer had no prior knowledge of the bird of this species, a first state record and probably the same individual, that had wintered at Pa'akai Pond 4 km across the bay and within sight of the Kailua location. The bird at Pa'akai was last recorded there Mar. 27. A Common Tern at Honouliuli Unit, P.H.N.W.R., first seen in April, was still there July 31 (PD). A small tern at the same locality first seen in late July was identified primarily by color of rump and tail as a Least Tern rather than a Little Tern (PD). It was an adult in nearly full breeding plumage. One Blue-gray-Noddy was seen again at Tern I., F.F.S., June 7 & 14 (KN, *fide* KM). In the past these have seldom been seen at Tern I., although a few reside at La Perouse Pinnacle in the same atoll 12 km across the lagoon.

**SANDGROUSE TO SWIFTLETS** — A flock of 15 sandgrouse, presumed to be Chestnut-bellieds, was seen in flight in late July a few miles w. of Waimea, H., along Hwy 19 toward Kawaihae (TH). This is on the northern fringe of the currently presumed range of this species. Mourning Doves are rarely reported since the only established population in Hawaii is very small and thinly scattered over the n.w. part of Hawai'i I., generally on private lands. Thus it was a bonanza for birdwatchers when unprecedented numbers of this species were found feeding on a large pile of discarded barley chaff a few feet off the main road at Kawaihae Harbor. When first found June 25, more than a dozen Mourning Doves were among the hundreds of Rock, Spotted, and Zebra doves feeding on and near the pile (BM, RD). A week later 50+ Mourning Doves were counted there (RD *et al.*). Independently, a solitary ad. Mourning Dove was flushed June 4 from the roadside n. of Kawaihae near the 8-mile marker (TP).

A Barn Owl found dead at Mana, K., in June had been banded only 4 months previously at Hanalei, some 23 miles distant across the main mountains of Kaua'i (TT). Thirteen active nests of the introduced Gray Swiftlet were found June 30 in their regular known nesting cave in upper Halawa Valley, O. Most had eggs; a few had young birds or adults possibly incubating (DW *et al.*). Getting to the site is now much easier, using a new access road for a highway tunnel to be built near the nest cave. Swiftlet nesting may well be adversely affected by construction and use of the new tunnel.

**CROWS TO WAXBILLS** — The captive flock of Hawaiian Crows ('Alala, critically Endangered) at Olinda, M., produced 8 eggs during May and June, all by the same mated pair. One hatched successfully to become the 10th bird in the captive flock. Two eggs were infertile and 5 were lost at various stages of development (FD). No eggs were produced by the other 3 mated pairs, most of which are physically or behaviorally imperfect.

A bizarre sidelight occurred June 7 at the height of the 'Alala captive breeding activity. A dead crow (sp.) was found in a cargo container when it was unloaded from a ship in Kahului harbor on the same island with the captive flock. The container had been sealed since it had been loaded several weeks earlier in a European port. The crow was presumably a European bird, and will go eventually to the Bishop Museum. It provided an extreme example of ship-assisted transport of a bird held captive, probably inadvertently.

A Japanese Bush-Warbler was heard calling June 2 near 1000 m elevation on the wild, forested eastern slope of Haleakala Mt., near Kipahulu Valley, M. (CN). Another was heard June 15 at Paliku Cabin in the eastern end of Haleakala Crater (CN), about 9 km from the first sighting. Bush-Warblers have been reported a few times recently in other parts of Maui. But the Haleakala reports seemed to provide a parallel to last year's discovery of a colony of bush-warblers in a rarely-visited high mountain forest area on Kaua'i (AB 42:1343). How many other remote forested areas on other islands may now support bush-warbler colonies waiting to be discovered?

The enigmatic ♂ Great-tailed Grackle observed sporadically in the past year along the Honolulu waterfront was reported again at Sand Island Park June 26 (PB).

A pair of Common Waxbills finally abandoned its nest with 3 eggs in a main parking lot at Malaekahana Park near Laie at the n. tip of O'ahu. The nest and eggs were collected July 5 and given to Bishop Museum (AE). Common Waxbills also were seen July 13 & 14 carrying material to a newly formed nest in Kapiolani Park near the s.e. end of O'ahu (TH). This alien species was first discovered near Laie in 1976 and has since spread over the entire island, finally reaching the Kapiolani Park area within the past year or two. These two reports nicely document breeding by this species at opposite ends of its range.

**NATIVE HAWAIIAN FORESTBIRDS** — Intensive surveys of native forestbirds in Hakalau Nat'l Wildlife Ref. this spring and summer found some encouraging indications of successful nesting activity. Researchers found 15 nests of 'Elepaio (MK, *fide* JL) and 6 nests of 'Oma'o (JL, MK). Significantly more fledglings of Hawai'i Creeper (*Endangered*) were netted and banded this year (JL). 'Akepa (*Endangered*, a primary study species) fledged young successfully from at least 8 of 15 documented nesting attempts. Two nests were attended by males in 2-year-old subad. plumage, the first evidence of breeding by "sub-adult" males of this species (JL). But again this year fewer young of the traditionally more abundant 'Amakihi were netted and banded. A female 'Amakihi missing its lower mandible was banded in November 1988 and recaptured June 16 this year, indicating survival for at least 7 months in this condition (JL).

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SUSAN THOMAS

# WEST INDIES REGION

Robert L. Norton



Rainfall during this season was the lowest recorded in several years as measured at Cruz Bay, St. John, with a seasonal deficit of 18%. However, Sladen reported that about three-fourths of an inch of rain fell on eastern St. Croix between May 31 and June 2, filling salt ponds and flooding at least 29 known Least Tern nests. A similar catastrophe occurred at Anegada, British Virgin Islands, where the scores of Sandwich and Royal terns that normally nest on inland sandbars of Flamingo Pond were drowned out by the heavy rains of late May.

Ruud van Halewyn, who has been studying terns and other seabirds on Aruba for several years, indicated that in general the "dark-backed" terns (Brown Noddy, Sooty, and Bridled) did not fare as well this season as they had last year. The "light-backed" terns (Roseate, Common, and Cayenne, but not Least Tern) either increased or held steady. Nesting Laughing Gulls also increased as never before, and may have reduced the nesting success of the Cayenne Terns.

Hemispheric coordination of seabird studies, particularly for species of pantropic or cosmopolitan distribution, would serve to monitor regional populations with a view toward global assessment. In addition, it could provide meaningful insight regarding the condition of the marine environment.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.V.I. = British Virgin Islands; P.R. = Puerto Rico; U.S.V.I. = United States Virgin Islands; V.I. = Virgin Islands.

**SHEARWATERS TO SHOREBIRDS** — An Audubon's Shearwater was seen on the evening of June 23 about 8 mi s.w. of Freeport Harbor, Grand Bahama (PWS, SAS). On Grand Cayman, a Least Bittern was flushed from the airport pond July 19 and another from Prospect Marsh July 20 (PWS, SAS), raising questions as to their status there; Bradley (1985) considered them to be uncommon winter residents (August to May). Least Bitterns were common June 26 at Caymanus Marsh, St. John (RLN, DL), where breeding is almost certain. A Great Blue Heron seen July 18 at Barkers Swamp, Grand Cayman (PWS, SAS), provided the first summer record there.

On St. Croix, a juv. Great Blue Heron seen July 30 at Southgate Pond (FS) indicated that nesting had taken place again, although no nest was found as in previous years. Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen on Grand Cayman at Prospect Marsh and the North Sound area (PWS, SAS), providing summer records for a species that was previously considered a winter resident.

Ten West Indian Whistling-Ducks—among the most threatened species of the Region—were noted July 19 at Prospect Marsh, Grand Cayman (PWS, SAS). An eclipse-plumaged ♂ Blue-winged Teal July 20 at the same location furnished one of the earliest (or latest?) records for the Cayman Islands. Two Ospreys, apparently of the North American race, oversummered at St. Croix (FS).

American Oystercatchers nested at Green Cay N.W.R., St. Croix, and other pairs were suspected of nesting at Ruth Island, a dredge spoil cay off Krause Lagoon, St. Croix (FS). Two Greater Yellowlegs were noted July 20 at Collier's Pond, Grand Cayman (PWS, SAS), perhaps indicating the first wave of migrant shorebirds in the western Caribbean region. Willets seen July 19 & 20 at points on Grand Cayman (PWS, SAS) were probably residents.

**GULLS TO COWBIRDS** — A 2nd-year Ring-billed Gull remained at Beef Island, Tortola, B.V.I., through June and into July (RLN) for the first oversummering of a north temperate *Larus* in the Virgin Islands. Eight Gull-billed Terns were noted June 5 at Anegada, B.V.I., but no nests could be found in the usual sites (RLN). A subadult Com. Tern was seen at Anegada June 5 (RLN). Whether the species is nesting in the Virgin Islands or oversummering with other terns remains to be determined. Common Terns were found nesting in the U.S.V.I. several decades ago, but confirmation of breeding in the latter part of this century has been elusive. On a small cay off Cooper Island, B.V.I., 189 Roseate Tern nests were counted June 15 (RLN). The colony had an average clutch size of 1.47, virtually the same as in another Roseate colony of 124 nests counted in the B.V.I. more than 2 weeks earlier (RLN). Sladen managed to locate only 60 Least Tern nests on St. Croix this year, with the largest group at Southgate Pond. Unprecedented numbers of non-breeding Black Noddies (250+) were seen at San Nicolas, Aruba, June 3 (RvH). In



addition, a Black Noddy was seen in June among nesting Brown Noddies at Frenchcap Cay, St. Thomas (WS), and another was photographed at Cayo Noreste off Culebra, P.R., June 13 (WC, RM). An expansion of breeding birds into the Lesser Antilles should be watched for in the future.

A White-winged Dove seen at Great Pond, St. Croix, July 1 (FS) may have provided the 2nd record for the V.I. Cuban Parrots are evidently common on the east end of Grand Cayman, where family groups were noted July 19 and later (PWS, SAS). Gray Kingbird apparently has been confirmed as a breeder on Grand Cayman, where adults and juveniles were seen July 18 (PWS, SAS). A female or immature martin seen July 19 at South Sound Swamp, Grand Cayman (PWS, SAS), could have been any one of several possibilities. Purple Martin has been reported to be a common July migrant in the Caymans, but a wandering Caribbean Martin (*Progne dominicensis*) from Jamaica or Gray-breasted Martin (*P. chalybea*) from Yucatan would also seem possible. In addition, Cuban Martin (*P. cryptoleuca*) breeds only on Cuba and the Isle of Pines, but its winter range is unknown. All of these forms, which apparently constitute a superspecies, can be extremely difficult to separate in the field. A ♂ Shiny Cowbird at Anegada June 5 (RLN) was the first of its gender there, and suggested that parasitism of that island's landbird fauna is now established.

**ADDENDUM** — Several notable records for spring 1989 were received from Aruba (RvH). The first known nesting of Olivaceous Cormorant there was established by about 15 pairs. An ad. Long-tailed Jaeger seen May 18 provided the first Netherlands Antilles record, and two other jaegers (sp.) were noted from San Nicolas Island, Aruba, May 19–23. One or more Great Blue Herons seen May 10–14 at San Nicolas Island appeared to be "relatively dark birds" (RvH). Roseate Terns did fairly well, according to van

Halewyn by starting to nest earlier (May 3) and suffering less egg loss to gulls than in 1988.

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