

Oregon/ Washington Region

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This summer was drier than the previous, more similar to the summer of 1994 in both precipitation levels and numbers of Black-throated Sparrows in the interior. On the ocean, the indications of seabird breeding success were grim again. Common Murres experienced abnormal levels of adult mortality on top of breeding failure. A strong northward movement of Heermann's Gulls and a small flight of Elegant Terns were reminiscent of El Niño/Southern Oscillation conditions, even though it has been three years since an ENSO event.

Abbreviations: Malheur (*Malheur N.W.R., Harney Co., OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor Co., WA*); Sauvie (*Sauvie I., Columbia Co., OR*); S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop Co., OR*).

Loons to Raptors

A Com. Loon in breeding plumage at Detroit L., *Marion, OR* June 27 (*fide JL*) raises suspicion of breeding at that locale, as they breed on similar reservoirs in the Washington Cascades. A pair of Yellow-billed Loon reports, both in non-breeding plumage, included one at Alsea Bay, *Lincoln, OR* June 1 (C. Coenen, T. Dreisbach, C. Lundberg) and one at Useless Bay, *Island, WA* June 22 (†SML). These are the first summer reports since 1989. An ad. Red-necked Grebe with one young at Turnbull N.W.R., *Spokane, WA* June 15 (G. Hoge) was at an unusual breeding location. Two ad. W. Grebe were found with at least two downy young at Fern Ridge Res., *Lane, OR* June 17 (TM); breeding at this westside location is not unusual in recent years. Four-five Clark's Grebe were performing courtship displays at Diamond L., *Douglas, OR* July 25 (DM). They are not known to breed at this location.

An astounding number of summer Laysan Albatross reports included three off Westport, *WA* June 8 (BL, RR), one off Taholah, *Grays Harbor, WA* July 1 (JS),

one off Cape Flattery, *Clallam, WA* July 3 (BT), and one off Westport July 20 (BT, TW). Both Black-footed Albatross and N. Fulmar were found in high numbers off Washington during June and July (BL, BT, TW). They were apparently more scarce off Oregon as indicated by counts of 22 albatross and 30 fulmar off *Lincoln* July 6 (G. Gillson). A Flesh-footed Shearwater off Cape Flattery, *Clallam, WA* July 5 (BT) was the only summer report. A Manx Shearwater off Westport July 20 (BT, TW, ph. B. Sherman) provided the first record since spring 1994. A very high count of 550 Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel off Westport, *WA* June 8 (BL) was accompanied by one Leach's. Another Leach's was seen from shore at O.S., July 8 (BW).

Eighteen Am. White Pelican on Sauvie June 1 (*fide HN*) was very unusual for early summer. Two Cattle Egrets were at Malheur June 2 (JJ) for the only report this season. A Snow Goose at O.S., July 26 (PtSu) was rare at any season there. The Emperor Goose that wintered along the Sandy R. e. of Portland remained through July (m.ob., *fide HN*). A ♂ Greater Scaup at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk, June 14 (fide HN)* furnished a very unusual Willamette valley summer record. Surveys of breeding Harlequin Ducks in the Oregon Cascades found low numbers, with barely half the numbers found in 1994 and 1995 in the Quartzville and Molalla R. basins (SD). In the Oregon Coast Range, where they are rare breeders, a hen was banded on the Nestucca R., *Tillamook*, in early July in the same area where breeding was confirmed in 1994 and 1995. Prior to banding, the hen was seen with several ducklings, but the young were not found at the time of capture (*fide SD & HN*).

Osprey bred at 2 Columbia R. shoreline locations at Pasco, *Franklin, WA (fide TG)*; they are rare breeders in the lower Columbia Basin. A White-tailed Kite near Junction City, *Lane, OR* July 2 (*fide T&AM*) provided the only report n. of the Rogue valley. A handful of Oregon Red-shouldered Hawk reports included one 3 mi s.e. of Cave Junction, *Josephine, June 1 (DM)*, an adult 16 mi e. of Sutherlin, *Dou-*

glas, July 29 (fide HN) and a nest in Brookings, *Curry*, that fledged two young June 26 (*fide CD*).

Cranes to Alcids

A pair of Sandhill Cranes with a colt at Olallie Meadows, *Marion, June 16 (JL, BTi, SD)* furnished a rare Oregon Cascades breeding record. Three unusual summer records away from breeding areas were one June 6 at Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark, WA (E. Anderson)*, one June 9 at Atkins L., *Douglas, WA (DS)*, and one flying S over Walker Pt., *Lane*, in the Oregon Coast Range July 19 (TM). An Am. Golden-Plover at S.J.C.R., July 1-2 (*fide HN*) was early and provided the only report. The only reported Pacific Golden-Plover at O.S., July 26 (PtSu). Several pairs of breeding Black-necked Stilt at Swanson Lakes, *Lincoln, July 19 (JA)* represented a new Washington breeding location. Two Am. Avocet on the coast at the mouth of Hubbard Cr., *OR* June 9 (*fide CD*) represented the first *Curry* record. A territorial Solitary Sandpiper was in the Oregon Cascades at Olallie Meadows, *Marion, June 6-16 (BTi, SD)*, at the same location where a territorial bird was present last year. The only reports of migrants were singles at Reardan, *Lincoln, WA* July 14 (JA) and Skagit Flats, *Skagit, WA* July 29 (*fide BK*). An ad. Willet at Budd Inlet, *Thurston, WA* July 29 (B. Shelmerdine) provided a very rare summer record for Puget Sound. Long-billed Curlews at Heceta Beach, *Lane* July 17 (*fide T&AM*) and



at Waldport, *Lincoln*, July 23 (*vide* RB) were unusual summer records for the Oregon coast. A Bar-tailed Godwit at O.S., July 11–12 (PtSu) provided one of few July records. Reports of migrant Semipalmated Sandpipers were scarce: four were reported from w. Washington (BK, BL), four from w. Oregon (MP, DB, B. O'Brien), and three from e. Oregon (DB, C. Miller). Three Pectoral Sandpiper reports was above average: at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR July 17 (*vide* RB), at Youngs Bay, *Clatsop*, OR July 19 (MP), and at O.S., July 26 (PtSu). A ♀ and up to three ♂ Wilson's Phalaropes, a rare westside breeder, seen June 4–18 at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, OR (BTi, SD), were at a location where breeding has been documented. A sub-ad. Pomarine Jaeger in the Strait of Juan de Fuca off Port Angeles, *Clallam*, July 9 (PL) and an ad. Long-tailed Jaeger at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, WA July 26 (VN) were both very unusual summer inshore records. Early S. Polar Skua reports included one at 48 09 N, 125 28 W July 2 (BT) and two at 48 15 N, 125 36 W July 7 (BT). Summer reports of Franklin's Gulls n. of their breeding areas in s. Oregon included two adults at Atkins L., *Douglas*, WA June 9 (DS), one adult at Yaquina Bay, OR June 15 for the first June record for *Lincoln* (PaSu), and an immature at Taholah, *Grays Harbor*, WA July 28 (BL). Numbers of summering Bonaparte's Gulls in the interior included 11 in e. Washington (DS, PL, BW) and two in e. Oregon (DL). Heermann's Gulls came N in large numbers, with a high proportion of first-year birds. Migrants were first noted at Harbor, *Curry*, OR June 11 (DM). By July 7, numbers of adults and immatures were in Admiralty Inlet, WA (J. Duemmel). A count of 800 Caspian Terns at Swinomish Channel, *Skagit*, WA July 10 (*vide* BK) may indicate breeding there. Caspians have yet to establish a consistent colony site in Puget Sound. Elegant Terns appeared for the 8th consecutive year: July 29 five were at Charleston, *Coos*, OR (*vide* HN) and two were at the Siuslaw R. mouth, *Lane*, OR (B&Z Stotz). The peak count of Arctic Terns at their disrupted colony in Everett, WA, was eight June 4 (J. Flavin). Two reports of Arctic Terns offshore were unusual: three were off Westport June 8 (BL) and one was off Cape Flattery, *Clallam*, WA July 3 (BT). Two Forster's Terns were at Fern Ridge Res., *Lane*, OR June 27 (*vide* T&AM); they are rare on the westside at any season. Forty Black Terns at Fern Ridge Res., *Lane*, OR July 11 (*vide* T&AM) provided an indication that their only westside breeding pop-

ulation is sizeable. Reports away from breeding areas included one at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, OR June 29 (JL) and one at the Yakima R. mouth, *Benton*, WA June 12 (BW).

SA For the 6th consecutive year, **Com. Murres had a poor breeding season on the Oregon coast. Bayer reports that many abandoned eggs and chicks were noted at the Yaquina Head, Colony Rock, and Lion's Head colonies, all in Lincoln, in the latter half of June. Very few live chicks were observed during July. No murre chicks were found on the Thiel Cr. beached bird transect until August; >100 each summer is normal. The factor that made the summer of 1996 even more perilous for murres was abnormal amounts of adult mortality. Record numbers of dead adult murres were found in July on n. Oregon beaches. The Thiel Cr. survey found 200 dead in June and July—<50 are found most summers (RB). Counts of Com. Murres off Westport, WA, indicated a very low percentage of juveniles in the summer, which fell to record lows in the fall (TW). The murres seen off Westport are predominantly from the Oregon population.**

The peak count of Marbled Murrelets at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, WA was 81 June 10 (VN). Eight Ancient Murrelets seen on an oceanographic cruise off the Olympic Peninsula June 30–July 7 (JS, BT) were all in alternate plumage and may indicate that small numbers still breed off Washington.

Owls to Mimids

Urban Barred Owls are a good indication of how widespread the species has become in our Region. One at the Reed College campus, in Portland, was present all season (m.ob., *vide* HN). At least one was in Discovery Park, Seattle, where they have resided for years (*vide* RR), and a nesting pair found in Puyallup, *Pierce*, WA raised at least one young (TB, BL). Single Long-eared Owls at Bear Camp Botanical Area, *Curry*, OR June 6 (*vide* CD) and in the N. Umpqua Ranger District, OR June 8 (RM) were both in westside areas where the species may breed sparingly. One–two Boreal Owls were heard near Salmon R. Meadows, *Clackamas*, June 20 (TJ); they were reported from this Oregon Cascades location last year. A displaying Com. Nighthawk was at Oak Harbor, *Island*, July 10 (PL); they are rare breeders in the Puget Sound lowlands. Up to six Black Swift were at Salt Cr. Falls, *Lane* (SD), the

only known Oregon breeding location. Noteworthy counts away from breeding areas included five near Yachats, *Lincoln*, OR June 5 (*vide* RB), >500 at Spencer I., *Snobomish*, WA June 8 (*vide* RR), and two at Hat Point, *Wallowa*, OR June 21 (D Lucas). One–two Vaux's Swift seen at Richland, *Benton*, WA through July 22 furnished continuing evidence that the species may breed in the lower Columbia Basin (BW). A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird was at a Klamath Falls, OR, feeder all summer (KS, *et al.*) and another male was at Sawyer Park, near Bend, OR, all summer (G. Morgan); the species currently appears to be annual in Oregon on the e slope of the Cascades.

Red-naped Sapsuckers occur regularly at several westside locations in the Cascades reports this summer came from Elephant Mt., *Douglas*, OR July 2 (*vide* RM), the Beckler R., *Snobomish*, WA June 16 (DBe), and at the Hardy Burn, *Skagit*, WA June 16–July 5 (*vide* BK). A pair of Williamson's Sapsucker feeding young in a nest at Abbott Burn, n.w. of Timothy L., *Clackamas*, OR June 27 (TJ) provided an unusual westslope breeding record. This summer was 2nd only to 1993 for the number of Least Flycatcher reports, exceeding last summer by at least two. Washington had the most reports: one at Northrup Canyon, *Grant*, June 2 (PtSu), two at Indian Camp, *Douglas*, June 9 (DS), one singing at Liberty, *Kittitas*, June 10–15 (K Aanerud, m.ob.), one at Elioka L., *Spokane*, June 14–23 (JA), one at Steigerwald Lake N.W.R., *Clark*, June 15 (WC), one singing at Trout L., *Klickitat*, June 19 (WC), two at Noisy Cr. Campground, *Pend Oreille*, June 21 (BLa, NLa), one singing at Ft. Okanogan S.P., *Okanogan*, June 22 (JA), and one singing male banded at Turnbull N.W.R., *Spokane*, June 25 to July 9 (*vide* RR). The only Oregon report was one singing near Monument, *Grant*, July 16 (P. Adamus). One singing Dusky Flycatcher near Deadwood in the Lane Coast Range July 5 (AC) was noteworthy, they are found only rarely in the Range, although they are probably more widespread than currently thought. Similarly, four singing at Beckler R., *Snobomish*, WA June 16 (DBe) and several present at Jackman Cr., *Skagit*, WA June 21–July 5 (*vide* BK) were from westslope areas, where they may be regular. A singing Pacific Slope Flycatcher at Buford Cr., *Asotin*, in the Blue Mts. of Washington June 15 (MS) was in an area where Cordilleran is believed to predominate. Ash-throated Flycatchers at Jerry's Flat June 16, at the Agness Guard Station June 26 (CD, JB), and at the Chetco R., June 17 (DM) all furnished unusual

Curry records; they are rare on the Oregon coast. Three at Wenatchee, *Chelan*, July 23 (PtSu) were at the n. edge of their Washington range. Only one W. Kingbird was reported away from breeding areas: at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, WA June 6 (VN). On the westside, E. Kingbirds are probably regular breeders in the Skagit valley, the Snohomish R. delta, and the Sandy R. delta; birds were reported from all 3 areas this summer. Elsewhere on the westside, singles were near Canby, *Clackamas*, OR June 8 (*vide* HN), Seattle, WA June 15 (*vide* RR), Steigerwald Lake N.W.R., *Clark*, WA June 15 (WC), and Siltcoos Outlet, *Lane*, OR July 14–17 (*vide* T&AM & RM).

Breeding Horned Larks have become hard to find in the Willamette Valley, except for a few locales like Baskett Slough N.W.R., so numbers found along Farmers Rd., *Polk* June 16 (*vide* JL) was pleasant news. A colony of 50 Bank Swallows was at Jerry's Flat, *Curry*, OR (CD, JB), which is their only breeding population near the coast in the Region. Two lingering Blue Jays were reported from Kingston and Hansville, *Kitsap*, WA June 1–4 (*vide* RR) and from Conway, *Skagit*, WA June 9 (S. Atkinson). The W. Scrub-Jay at Point No Point, *Kitsap*, WA June 5 provided the 3rd record for the area (VN). They are still rare in Tacoma, WA, where one was noted July 26 (BL). A White-breasted Nuthatch at Long Ranch July 22 (CD) provided the 3rd *Curry* record; their range does not reach the coast regularly. Common Bushtits at Rock Cr., *Klickitat*, June 2 were at the e. edge of their Washington range (*vide* RR).

Seven reports of Rock Wren from the w. Oregon Cascades is more than usual: three singing at Galesville Dam, *Douglas*, June 15 (*vide* RM), one on Mt. Pisgah, *Lane*, June 19 (*vide* MN & T&AM), one near Warner Mt., *Lane*, June 22 (T&AM), one at Cougar Dam, *Lane*, July 8 (T&AM), and one between Roaring Cr. and N. Fork Breitenbush, *Marion*, June 16 (BTi, SD). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Mt. Pisgah, *Lane*, June 7–July 27 (RK, m.ob.) was n. of the regular breeding range. A pair of W. Bluebirds bred at Flaming Geyser S.P., WA; they are a rare *King* breeding species (*vide* TB). Territorial ♂ Gray Catbirds at Tumalo Cr., *Deschutes*, June 18+ (D. Hale) and at Beaver Cr., *Wasco*, July 6 (DL) were w. of their regular range in Oregon, although the *Wasco* site has held birds previously. A pair of N. Mockingbird that bred near Richland, *Benton* had one young July 29 (BLa, NLa *et al.*). Other Washington records included one s. of Ellensburg, *Kittitas*, June 16 (D. Victor) and one at Seattle June 17 (*vide* RR). A *California Thrasher* was reportedly found dead near

White City, *Jackson*, May 21 (J. Flory, *vide* HN); hopefully the specimen was saved to confirm the 3rd Oregon record.

Vireos to Finches

Red-eyed Vireos have a limited distribution in w. Oregon, so the following records were of interest: three at the S. Santiam R. near Crabtree, *Linn*, June 6 (*vide* JL), one near Scio, *Linn*, June 17 (*vide* MN), one at Jasper County Park along the Willamette R., *Lane*, July 23 (*vide* T&AM), and one at Roslyn L., *Clackamas*, June 7 (*vide* HN). Numbers were noted at Sauvie, at Grand I. n. of Salem, and at the Sandy R. mouth (HN). Leading a reasonably good list of vagrants were ♂ N. Parulas at Malheur June 24 (C. Herziger) and at the Hanford Site, *Benton*, WA June 11 (*vide* TG). A ♂ *Magnolia Warbler* was at Fields June 5 (AC). In Washington, singing ♂ *Magnolias* were at Twisp, *Okanogan*, June 15–July 4 (m.ob., ph., R. Sullivan) and at Mt. Leona, *Ferry*, July 10 (†H. Curl). A ♂ *Blackburnian Warbler* near Almira, *Lincoln*, June 25 (†C. Buechele) provided the 4th Washington record. A territorial ♂ *Kentucky Warbler* at Dead Cow Cr., Fremont N.F., *Lake*, June 24–July 20 (P. Bridge, D. Sherman *et al.*) represented the 3rd Oregon record, and a ♂ *Canada Warbler* in Portland June 24–25 (GL, m.ob., ph.) furnished the 5th Oregon record. Yellow-breasted Chats at unusual locations included coastal singles at Newport Res. and at Toledo, both in *Lincoln*, OR June 1 & 3 (*vide* RB), and a Puget Sound bird at McChord A.F.B., *Pierce*, June 20 (RR).

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reports totaled nine; well above average. In Oregon, a male was at Malheur June 1 (AC, H. Herlyn), a male was in Eugene June 23 (*vide* T&AM), a singing male was near Biggs, *Sherman*, June 29–30 (L. Rems, m.ob.), and three males were in *Curry*: at Hunter Cr., July 1–8, at Gold Beach July 7–8, and at Brookings July 17 (all *vide* CD). In Washington, two were reported without details from *Skagit*: one at Pleasant Ridge June 1 and one at Clear L., June 14 (both *vide* BK). A singing male was at Coppei Cr., *Walla Walla*, WA June 12 (J. Nestler). A ♂ Indigo Bunting photographed in Redmond, *King*, WA June 1 (*vide* RR) provided the only report. A ♂ Dickcissel at Malheur June 9 (H. Snyder) and again June 25–27 (S. Croghan) represented the first record for the refuge. Up to six Green-tailed Towhees—and a nest—were found at Biscuit Ridge, *Walla Walla* (m.ob.). This location is one of 2 known breeding sites in Washington.

A pair of Clay-colored Sparrows bred near Spokane, WA, again (JA, m.ob.);

elsewhere in Washington, one was singing on the Yakima Firing Range, *Yakima*, in June (†AS) and two were along the Cameron Lake Rd., *Okanogan*, July 24 (PtSu). A singing ♂ *Black-chinned Sparrow* on Stukel Mt., *Klamath*, furnished the first Oregon record since 1990 (KS *et al.*). The Lark Sparrow at Agness, OR June 26 (CD, JB) represented the 2nd *Curry* record, and was very surprising for mid-summer near the coast. Black-throated Sparrows returned to e. Washington in numbers less than 1994, but still overwhelming all other years. Records included two from *Benton* (BLa, NLa), ten from *Kittitas* (AS, PL), four from *Yakima* (AS), and two from *Grant* (AS, JA). All records were from lower elevation areas of the Columbia Basin.

Grasshopper Sparrows are rare in the Willamette Valley. One was singing in "native prairie" n. of Coburg, *Lane*, in early June (RK, *vide* T&AM) and two were at Peterson Butte, *Linn*, July 10 (*vide* SD). A *Le Conte's Sparrow* at Meadow Cr. Campground, *Chelan*, June 2 (†DS) provided Washington's 4th record. Smith found at least three White-crowned Sparrows (*Z. l. oriantha*), apparently breeding near timberline at Mt. Misery, *Garfield*, in June, settling some speculation about the presence of this subspecies in the Blue Mts. of Washington. A breeding plumage ♂ Lapland Longspur at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, OR June 25–26 (R. Gerig, BTi) was a midsummer rarity.

A ♂ Great-tailed Grackle summered at Malheur (*vide* G. Ivey), but there was no indication of breeding. A pair of Pine Grosbeaks were in the Blue R. drainage along Cook Cr., *Lane*, July 22 (M. Hunter); they are occasionally found in the Oregon Cascades during summer, but breeding has never been confirmed. A Cassin's Finch found between Roaring Cr. and S. Fork Breitenbush, *Marion*, OR June 16 (BTi, SD) was unusual for the w. Cascades. Red Crossbills at Malheur June 25 (S. Cassel) and in Hines, *Harney* (L&S Hammond), may have been precursors to the fall movement. In the Oregon Cascades and Coast Range, they were found in scattered, small numbers as usual (*vide* HN).

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Middle Pacific Coast Region

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Abbreviations: B.S.O.L. (*Big Sur Ornithological Laboratory, Monterey*); C.B.R.C. (*California Bird Records Committee*); C.C.R.S. (*Coyote Cr. Riparian Station, Santa Clara*); C.V. (*Central Valley*); Cyn. (*Canyon*); F.I. (*Southeast Farallon I.*); H.S. (*Hayward Shoreline, Alameda*); S.F. (*San Francisco*); ph. (*photo on file with Regional Editors*). All records from F.I. and Palomar should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

Loons to Pelicans

Two Pacific Loons straggled inland: Detert Res., Lake, June 4 (JRW) and Paicines Res., June 12+ (RMrr, †KVV), *San Benito's* first. The imm. Yellow-billed Loon at Albion R. mouth, *Mendocino*, lingered to about July 4 (D. Weibe, R. Weibe, m.ob.). Single ad. Red-necked Grebes lingered at Pt. Reyes to June 16 (ES), and returned to near *Mendocino* July 21 (CEV, DAE) & 26 (DT; same bird?) and *Humboldt Bay* July 31 (JCPo). A bird at Elk Head, *Humboldt*, June 22 (B. Critch, S. Critch) was immature.

Three Laysan Albatrosses offshore *Marin* and *Sonoma* July 21 (BDP, RS) matched last summer's high. A *Parkinson's Petrel* (*Procellaria parkinsoni*) over the Pioneer Canyon 36 mi off Pt. Montara, *San Mateo*, June 7 (†DGA, PP) made a startling first North American record. This New Zealand breeder winters in the e. tropical Pacific, but was not expected n. of tropical waters; although the

waters at Pioneer Canyon were unseasonably warm, the temperature was only 12–13°C. The only previous *Procellaria* in North America was a beached White-chinned Petrel in Texas April 27, 1986, that was not identified until 1990. An Ashy Storm-Petrel netted at night on Ano Nuevo I., *San Mateo*, June 25 (GJS) raised the question whether the bird was prospecting or already nesting there.

The Region's 6th Red-footed Booby found observers 5.5 mi s. of Soquel Pt., *Santa Cruz*, July 10 (ph. †JDv, W.B. Tyler). An evening count of 7955 Brown Pelicans passing Pelican Rock, *Santa Cruz*, June 6 (DLSu) represented the largest number on record in the Region.

Hérons to Waterfowl

Two–three Least Bitterns seen regularly at the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant demonstration wetlands from early May–mid-July (*vide* R. Jones) suggested possible breeding. This species' status in our Region remains poorly understood. We currently average one–two reports every other year. An imm. Little Blue Heron at Princeton, *San Mateo*, June 23–29 (†RSTh, †BMcK, DPo) provided just the 3rd county record.

Summering Greater White-fronted Geese included winter hold-overs at El Estero, *Monterey*, through the season (m.ob.) and Colma, *San Mateo*, June 30–July 14 (PJM). Brant were noted in

