

gered at Waubonsie W.M.A. from Aug. 4 through Aug. 13 (†SDi, †MPr, †TK, †Fu, ph. m.ob.)”

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central southern region



ROBERT D. PURRINGTON

The breeding season was dry and hot, almost unprecedentedly so. At New Orleans, virtually no rain fell in May and June, and much of July was dry as well, although normal July precipitation was reached in some areas with rains late in the month. The effect of this drought, coupled with record high temperatures throughout the period, was to cause shallow ponds and marsh habitat to go dry in many areas. In the absence of real comparative population data or studies of breeding success, one can only guess at the weather's full impact. There was no tropical weather to affect colonial nesting on the barrier islands along the gulf coast, a fact which contributed to the dry weather of June and July.

At least three trips were made to Louisiana's Chandeleur Islands, data from which will be presented below.

As usual, a little more than one-third of the records submitted for the period actually pertained to breeding species. The others are a mix of late spring or early fall migrants (mostly shorebirds), postbreeding dispersal (largely herons and allies), and the results of pelagic trips. This year there were two pelagic excursions, one out of Venice, Louisiana, June 13, and another off the Alabama coast July 11 (see below).

Abbreviations: Louisiana Ornithological Society (L.O.S.); Louisiana Bird Records Committee (L.B.R.C.); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Breeding Bird Survey (BBS).

BREEDING RECORDS, OR RECORDS SUGGESTIVE OF BREEDING

ANHINGAS TO WATERFOWL

Anhingas nested in *White*, AR, for at least the 2nd consecutive year, with an adult with two nestlings June 22 (KN). Other records June 6–July 25 in *Dyer*, *Shelby*, and *Lake*, TN (JRW), as well as in *Noxubee* (TS) and *Lowndes* (DP, JP), MS, June 7 and July 5, respectively, were of interest. As indicated last year, Brown Pelican numbers have exploded in Louisiana, with new nesting sites being exploited as the populations grow. Some of these include Grassy, Martin, Brush, and Mitchell islands., all in *St. Bernard*, censused June 17 (BV, MC). A careful count of 26,726 Cattle Egrets coming to roost on Bluff L., *Noxubee*, MS, July 25 (MC, m.ob.) was impressive, and up to 118 Wood Ducks were at the Arkadelphia Oxidation Ponds, *Clark*, MS, during June and July (DIH). A female N. Shoveler with at least five young in *Lake* June 27 (JRW, BMN) was unprecedented for w. Tennessee; there was one in *Lonoke*, AR, on the same date (LY, RD), and three summered at Tallahatchie N.W.R., MS (FB). One in *Clark*, AR, July 15–25 (DIH, DnH) was probably an early migrant.

DIURNAL RAPTORS

There were at least 3 active Osprey nests on Sardis L., MS, between March and late June (WMD), and single birds were in *Prairie*, AR, July 11 (KN, LDN) and at *Noxubee* N.W.R., MS, July 19 (PW). Around Blackwater Bay, FL, Morris Clark counted 15 active nests, and nests were found in *St. Martin*, LA, June 9 & 17 (BV, MC). Jennifer Coulson had 19 Swallow-tailed Kite nests under study during the nesting season, which produced 31 young, of which 23 fledged. Mortality was thought due to avian predation. Coulson had high counts of 93 in the Pearl R. Basin July 30, and 43 in the Pascagoula R. Basin, MS, Aug. 3. At least 20 were noted in *St. Martin*, LA, June 25 (LeR, LyR, RN), and post-breeding dispersal brought at least 14 to *Hale*, AL, July 18 (DPG, PJ et al). Although White-tailed

Kites now breed regularly in s.w. Louisiana, three, probably breeding, in *Beauregard*, LA, June 20 (WC) were far east. The northernmost record was of two birds in *Arkansas*, AR, between June 18 and July 3 (LP, KR, JR). Two ad. N. Harriers in *Quitman* June 29 (FB) were at the location where the first Mississippi nest was found last year. Two nests of Sharp-shinned Hawks were found in *Jones*, MS: June 7–July 4, with two nestlings (DC, SwH, MW), and June 27–July 18 (DC, SwH, SWo), with three nestlings. There were also records from *Grenada*, MS (June 6; FB), and *Crockett*, TN (July 4; JRW). Although there were at least 9 records of Cooper's Hawk—all suggesting nesting—across the Region (AR, LA, MS, TN) between June 13 and July 10, the only confirmed breeding reports came from n.w. Florida, the 3rd and 4th area nesting records (EC, AR). A pair of Red-tailed Hawks in *Thibodeaux*, LA, June 20 (MR, BB, KC, RS) probably represented the southernmost breeding record for s.e. Louisiana.

RAILS TO TERNS

The following records of King Rail were notable: June 7 and July 4 in *Dyer*, TN (JRW), the latter involving a nest with 10 eggs; July 4 & 9 in *Lake*, TN (JRW); June 7 & 13 in *Noxubee*, MS (TS); and July 5 & 12 in *Tallahatchie*, MS (GK, SK). Two Purple Gallinules in *Lafayette*, AR, July 3 (KN, LDN) were unusual, but there were at least 3 breeding pairs with four–six young each in *Madison*, MS, between June 20 and July 25 (KH, BA, RH). Trips to the Chandeleur Is., LA, June 9–10 and July 13–14 by Cardiff and Dittmann yielded 9 pairs of Am. Oystercatchers; a nest with eggs was found on Curlew I. June 2–3 (LOM), and an adult with two chicks was located in *St. Bernard*, LA, June 17 (BV, MCC). There were at least 5 nesting pairs of Black-necked Stilts in *Tunica*, MS, June 6 (WMD); nine individuals in *Lonoke*, AR, June 27 (LY, RD); as many as 40 in *Tallahatchie*, MS, July 3–18 (FB, GK, SK); and a pair with three young in *Colbert*, AL, throughout the season (TMH). An Am. Woodcock at Pensacola June 17 (PT) provided only the 2nd summer record for n.w. Florida.

Three trips to Louisiana's Chandeleur Is. encountered at least five ad. "pure" Kelp Gulls: one on S. Gosier I. June 9, and four on Curlew I. June 10 & 13 (DLD, SWC, JG). Of the latter, one was paired with a Kelp × Herring hybrid (two chicks), one with a male Herring Gull (3 eggs), and there was one pure Kelp pair with 3 large young, two



This male Western Kingbird was part of Tennessee's first nesting pair at Shelby County from June 20 to July 11, 1998. Belying its name, this species is expanding to the east. Many of these birds are inhabiting power substations as this pair did. Also see the Middlewestern Prairie region. Photograph/J. R. Wilson

of which were banded (DLD, SWC, JG). Dittmann and Cardiff had about 20 Kelp × Herring hybrids of various kinds, showing "various mantle shades intermediate between Kelp and Herring." The Kelp situation itself has been problematical enough since their discovery in 1989, but the extensive hybridization means that observers will have to be especially wary as the birds disperse along the gulf coast in winter.

The Gull-billed Terns which nest on a Metairie, LA, shopping center rooftop successfully fledged over 100 young (RDP). An aerial census in the Atchafalaya Delta W.M.A., *St. Mary*, LA, June 4 (BV, MC) found about 500 nesting birds. On July 2–3, O'Meallie estimated the breeding Sooty Tern population on Curlew I. at as many as 200 birds, the highest number yet recorded.

DOVES TO WRENS

The Eur. Collared Dove explosion continues, as evidenced by 4 records each from Arkansas (19 individuals) and inland Mississippi (22). They have become a permanent part of the avian landscape in s. Louisiana and Mississippi. A pair of Inca Doves seen in *Columbia*, AR, June 6 (CC, SL) had been present for 6 months, and two in Reserve July 1–22 (RJS), well e. of their normal range in Louisiana, suggested nesting.

Single E. Phoebes, were seen June 6 (RR) in *Bullock* (with nest) and *Macon*, AL; breeding is rare in Alabama's Inland Coastal Plain. There were 3 reports of W. Kingbird: June 6 in *Lauderdale*, TN (JRW, JA, DJ); a nesting pair in *Shelby*, TN, June 20–July 11 (JRW, m.ob.), the first breeding record for the state; and June 23 in *Tunica*, MS (BB, JZ). A Gray Kingbird in *Harrison*, MS, June 9 (GM) was unusual, and though the spe-



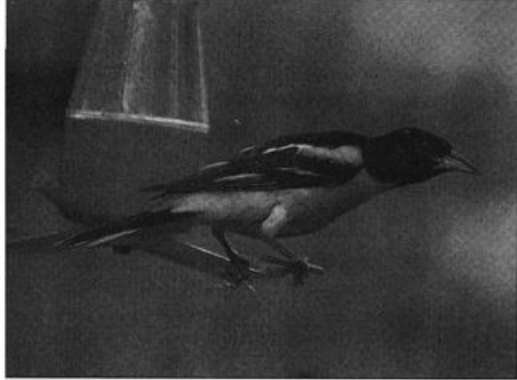
At the western edge of their United States breeding range was this family of Gray Kingbirds at Biloxi, Mississippi on July 25, 1998. Photograph/Keith Kimmerle

cies traditionally nests not far away, Duncan reported that it was almost absent in n.w. Florida this year. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers nested beyond their breeding range in *Union*, MS, June 21 (GK, SK, VS), and in *Jefferson*, AR, July 23 (KR, JR). There were 4 season records from Alabama: June 30 in *Lowndes* (PJ), July 18 in *Perry* (DPG, PJ), July 22–29 in *Decatur* (SWM), and during July in *Madison*, where 2 pairs raised at least two young (DRC, JW, KW, TAB, m.ob.).

The 3 records of Bell's Vireo all came from Arkansas and each suggested nesting: a singing male in *Arkansas* June 21 (KR, JR), a fledgling July 17 and a pair July 21, both in *Prairie*, AR (HP, MP). The only report of Warbling Vireo came from *Lowndes*, MS, near the Tombigbee R. July 5 (DP), the first summer record for the state away from the Mississippi R.. Tree Swallow records included a pair in *Oktibbeha*, MS, June 3–July 1 (TS, MS), the first nesting record for the Starkville area; one at Noxubee N.W.R., MS, June 7 (TS); 4 pairs using nest holes in *Pulaski*, AR, June 12 (LP, DZ); and two in *Lafayette*, MS, June 27 (WMD). Cave Swallows continue to nest under the US 82 Sabine R. bridge on the Louisiana–Texas border, with at least four June 26 (SWC, DLD). A Bewick's Wren nest watched from June 15 onward in *Harrison*, AR, fledged three young by July 3 (PE, WF, JAR).

WARBLERS TO ORIOLES

Presumed breeding Cerulean Warblers were heard singing by the Parkers in 3 Arkansas locations: in *Grant* June 8 and July 2 (HP,MP; 2), in *Clark* June 12 and July 6 (HP, MP), and in *Prairie* July 18. At least



Apparently present for their second consecutive breeding season were a pair of Baltimore Orioles at Kentwood, Louisiana, on June 18, 1998 strongly suggesting breeding in southeastern Louisiana where the species is unknown as a nester. Photograph/Walter Clifton

four singing male Swainson's Warblers were found s. of Little Rock near the Saline R. in *Grant* July 2 (WMS), a significant concentration for Arkansas. A summering Ovenbird was found July 2 (MP, MP) in *Grant*, where the species has not been known to nest. A singing bird was noted on the Forest BBS in *Scott* June 7 (MS, JRe), the first evidence of breeding in c. Mississippi. A single Scarlet Tanager was seen in *DeSoto* in n.w. Mississippi June 6 (WRP), and two territorial male Scarlet Tanagers were present at Noxubee N.W.R. June 8–July 27 (TS).

Bachman's Sparrows, which are scarce in the Starkville area of e.c. Mississippi, were seen in *Winston* and *Noxubee* June 3–19 and July 16, respectively (TS), the latter representing a new location for the species. Up to four Henslow's Sparrows (three adult, one juvenile) in the Flanagan Prairie Natural Area, *Franklin*, July 6–22 (WMS, m.ob.) were the first ever in the breeding season for Arkansas. A pair of Baltimore Orioles in *Kentwood*, LA, June 16 (OC, WC, FS) apparently had been present in the breeding season last year. There was no previous evidence of nesting in s.e. Louisiana.

RECORDS PRESUMED TO BE OF NON-BREEDING, POST-BREEDING, OR MIGRANT BIRDS

LOONS TO COOT

A Pacific Loon at Gulf Breeze, FL, June 1 (DB) provided the 5th summer record for the Florida panhandle. Records of summering Com. Loons included birds in lower *Plaquemines*, LA, June 14 and July 2 (CF, BR); one June 18 in *E. Baton Rouge* (CF), which was captured and sent to the Baton Rouge zoo for rehabilitation; and 17 July 29 off Panama City Beach (DPM), a surprising summer concentration. Two **Cory's Shearwaters** were recorded on the June 13 L.O.S. pelagic trip out of Venice: 36 mi s.s.e. of South Pass of the Mississippi R., and 58 mi

s. of Southwest Pass. Both observations were lengthy and resulted in excellent photographic documentation (RDP et al). The L.B.R.C. has added the species to the state list. The June 13 trip also produced four Wilson's Storm-Petrels and one probable Band-rumped. The July 11 trip out of Baldwin, AL, recorded three Wilson's and six Band-rumped storm-petrels, both 74–85 mi s. of Baldwin (GDJ, CD, LFG, BCC, JTG, DPG, SWM). The latter represented the 5th Alabama record. While N. Gannets are known from the n. gulf coast mainly in winter, summer records are increasingly frequent. This season one was found dead in *Cameron*, LA, July 3 (JK, JW), and as many as eight were seen from the beach off Panama City, FL, July 29–30 (DPM). An imm. Neotropic Cormorant in *Lake*, TN, June 7 (JRW, JA, DJ, ES) furnished the 6th Tennessee record. The most interesting Double-crested Cormorant was one on an oil rig 100 mi s. of Grand Isle, LA, June 27 (NR). Unprecedented was the summering of up to 120 Am. White Pelicans at Tallahatchie N.W.R., MS, throughout the period (FB, WMD, GK, SK, BB, WRP).

Far out of season was an Am. Bittern in *Cameron*, LA, July 5 (JK, MG, DR). A total of 450 Great Egrets at Tallahatchie N.W.R. July 18 (BB, WRP) was impressive, as was a one-day push of 300+ post-breeding Snowy Egrets in *Shelby*, TN, July 3 (JRW). Post-breeding dispersal of Tricolored Herons brought single birds to Tallahatchie N.W.R. June 29 (FB, GP); *Desha* and *Lonoke*, AR, July 17 (KN, LDN); and *Madison*, MS, from mid-July onward (KH et al). White Ibis also dispersed widely, turning up in n. Mississippi, Arkansas, w. Tennessee, and n.w. Florida. A single White-faced Ibis was found inland in *Tallahatchie*, MS, July 11 (JRW, GK, NH, AJ), and Roseate Spoonbills turned up in *E. Baton Rouge*, LA, July 19 (DC) and *Desha*, AR, July 25 (KN, LDN). Post-breeding Wood Stork numbers were impressive, highlighted by 2000+ in *Iberville*, LA, June 18 (RH, RM, MH); 465 in *Noxubee*, MS, July 28 (KN, LDN); and 385 in *Hale*, AL, July 29 (GDJ, DGJ). There were also 92 in *E. Baton Rouge*, LA, July 22 (DC) and 140 in *Desha* and *Chicot*, AR, July 25 (KN, LDN). Three in Ft. Walton Beach, FL, July 29 (DW) established the first July record there. There were 3 records of Black-bellied Whistling Duck from Arkansas: July 2 in *Little River* (KN, LDN; 2) and July 3 in 2 *Lafayette* locations (KN, LDN; 10). There were 22 records of "summering" ducks, including 5 each of Ring-necked Ducks (four in Arkansas) and Lesser Scaup. Of interest were single Surf



Nonbreeding Surf Scoters sometimes summer well south of their breeding range. This eclipse drake was at Horn Island, Mississippi, on June 17, 1998 seeming out of place in the sweltering Gulf Coast summer. Photograph/Allan J. Mueller

Scoters on Curlew I. June 10 (SWC, DLD), present since May, and on Horn I., MS, June 17 (AM, CD, DM, DG).

Bald Eagles, rare in summer in Louisiana, were seen in the Bonnet Carre' Spillway June 17 (RJS) and in *Sabine*, LA, July 1 (GL); even more surprising was a Peregrine Falcon at Tallahatchie N.W.R. July 18 (BB, WRP).

SHOREBIRDS

Among the 60+ records of migrating or summering shorebirds, were the following a basic-plumaged Am. Golden Plover in *Dyer*, TN, July 4 (WGC, JRW) was far out of season, and up to 10 Semipalmated Plovers on Louisiana's Chandelers June 9 & 11, plus a similar number in *Cameron* June 26 (DLD, SWC), were unusual for this "in between" date. A **Wilson's Plover** in *Prairie*, AR, July 25 (KN, LDN, JRW) provided only the 3rd state record, and three at Bayou Sauvage N.W.R. July 26 (DPM, PY), represented only the 2nd New Orleans record. A Piping Plover on Breton I., LA (SWC, DLD) was only the 2nd in "summer" for s.e. Louisiana. Single individuals, probably southbound, were in *Prairie*, AR, July 18 (KN, LDN); *Howard*, AR, July 19 (CM), July 26 in *Shelby*, TN (JRW); and *Noxubee*, MS, July 30 (TS).

Other summering (or perhaps very late) shorebirds included: Upland Sandpipers June 14 & 20 in *Caddo/Bossier* (PMD, SON) and June 28 in *Colbert*, AL (TMH), Whimbrels on Curlew I. June 10 (SWC, DLD) and in *Cameron*, LA, July 5 (JK, MG, DR); Long-billed Curlews in *Cameron* June 26 (DLD, SWC), *Plaquemines*, LA, July 3 (CF), and N. Gosier I. July 14 (SWC), Marbled Godwits on S. Gosier I. June 21 (DPM, MM, RDP); Red Knots in *Cameron* July 3 & 5 (JK, JW, MG, DR); White-rumped Sandpipers in *Plaquemines*, LA, July 2 (CF); Dunlin in *Cameron*, LA, July 5 (JK, MG, DR) and in *Prairie*, AR, July 3 &



Another bird well south of its summer range and very unseasonable was this second year Glaucous Gull at Baptiste Collette Bayou, Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, on June 21, 1998. The first June record for southeastern Louisiana. Photograph/Robert D. Purrington

12 (KN, LDN); Short-billed Dowitchers June 21 on S. Breton I., LA, and June 26 in Cameron, LA (SWC, DLD); and Long-billed Dowitcher June 21 in Benton, AR (MMI).

Among early fall migrants were Greater Yellowlegs June 29 in *Noxubee* and *Tallahatchie*, MS (TS, FB); Lesser Yellowlegs June 29 in *Quitman*, MS (FB); a Solitary Sandpiper in *Colbert*, AL, June 28 (TMH) and in *Tallahatchie*, MS, July 3 (FB); a Wilson's Phalarope in *Colbert*, LA, July 22 (TMH); and a Red-necked Phalarope July 12 in *Prairie*, AR (KN, LDN).

JAEGERS TO HUMMINGBIRDS

A jaeger seen well and photographed 64 mi s.s.w. of Southwest Pass on the June 13 L.O.S. pelagic trip was thought to be a Parasitic, the record is pending action by the L.B.R.C. Post-breeding Laughing Gulls wandered to *Dyer* and *Lake*, TN, as early as June 7 (JRW, IA, DJ), and were in *Caddo/Bossier*, LA, June 14 & 18 (PMD), *Panola*, MS, July 21 (WMD), and July 28 in *Quitman*, MS (FB, GP). A Glaucous Gull near Venice, *Plaquemines*, June 21 (DPM, MM, RDP) furnished the first June record for s.e. Louisiana. There were scattered records of Least Terns in n. Mississippi and Arkansas between June 2 and July 25. One in *Oktibbeha*, MS, June 13, uncommon in spring, was the latest ever by 5 days. The June 13 pelagic trip out of Venice, LA, produced a record total of 125 Bridled Terns, 30–67 mi s. of the mouth of the Mississippi R., and four were recorded July 11 53–72 mi. s. of Baldwin, AL (GDJ et al).

A White-winged Dove in *Oktibbeha* June 17 (TS) furnished the first area record; another was in *Rankin*, MS, July 17 (KH, RH). One in *Little River* June 24 (DA) represented the 3rd occurrence for Arkansas. As interesting was a single bird on an oil platform 100 mi s. of Grand Isle, LA, July 1 (NR). One in Gulf Breeze, FL, July 7

(RAD, LD) furnished the 2nd July record for the area. A Com. Ground Dove in *St. Tammany*, LA, July 29 (CGB) represented one of few July records for the state. Earliest ever for Louisiana was a Buff-bellied Hummingbird in *St. John* from July 28 onward (SN, RJS et al).

FLYCATCHERS TO FINCHES

There were 3 Arkansas records of late Olive-sided Flycatchers, in Fayetteville June 6 (MMI), at L. Millwood the next day (CM), and in *Clark* June 11 (HP, MP). There were 2 June records of yellow-bellied kingbirds in Louisiana; one on Breton I. June 10 (SWC, DLD) remained unidentified, but another in *Calcasieu* June 25 (SWC, DLD, JW, *) was a Tropical/Couch's type whose identification may depend on biochemical analysis. There is no previous June record for the complex for Louisiana. Amazingly, two very vocal **Couch's Kingbirds** were at Gulf Breeze, FL, July 7 (RAD, LD, EC, PT, AF et al), and a Tropical/Couch's type was there July 14 (RAD). The Couch's record was the first for n.w. Florida and the 4th state record. Far out of season was an Am. Pipit at the Ft. Walton Beach, FL, landfill July 29 (DW), the first area July record.

Perhaps the most remarkable record of the season was of a singing male **Yellow-green Vireo** on Hackberry Ridge, *Cameron*, LA, July 3 (JK, JW). Two individuals seemed to be present 2 days later (MG, DR), raising a possibility of nesting, not confirmed.

Two Bank Swallows in *Noxubee*, MS, July 6 (TS) were assumed to be early south-bound migrants, and at least four others were seen in *Tallahatchie* and *Quitman*, MS, July 13–28 (FB, WMD, GP). Two ad. male Mourning Warblers in Fayetteville, AR, June 6 (MMI) were late migrants. A Lark Bunting at Ft. Morgan, AL, July 17–18 (BCG, m.ob.) provided the 6th state record, and the earliest ever.

There were 3 reports of Red Crossbills: up to four in *Cleburne*, AL, June 4–21 (BS, m.ob.); one near Oxford, MS, June 16 (GK, SK), perhaps the first June record for Mississippi; and one July 2 in *Sevier*, AR (DA). Very late, especially on the coast, was a male Am. Goldfinch in Pass Christian, MS, June 10 (BL), as was a female in Gulf Breeze, FL, June 20 (BK, CK). A female Evening Grosbeak in *Dyer*, TN, June 7 (JRW), was the latest ever for w. Tennessee by over a month.

ADDENDUM

Received from w. Tennessee, but too late for inclusion in the main body of the report,

were nesting Cedar Waxwings in *Carroll* June 15 (RF), and a Virginia Rail heard in *Fayette* June 1–25 (PG), where an adult and young were observed in May.

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