

pictorial highlights

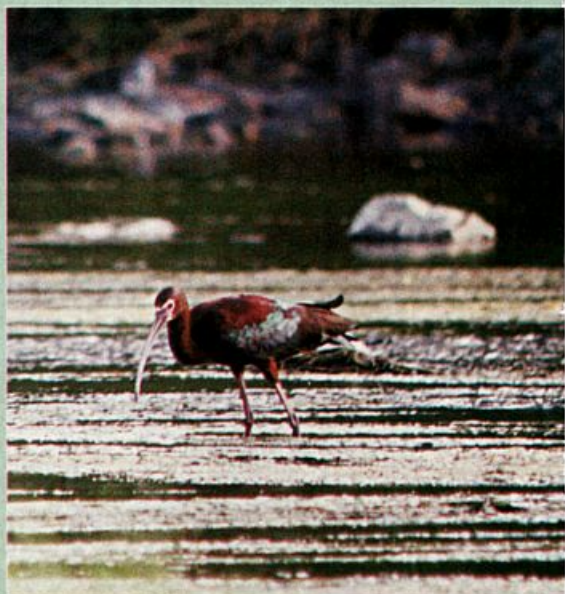
The Nesting Season



One of the classiest visitors of the summer season, a male Mongolian Plover was present for three days in late July at Charlestown Breechway, Rhode Island. This photograph taken on 25 July documents a first Regional record and only the second occurrence on the North American Atlantic Coast (see the Regional SA). Photograph/Arie Gilbert



This stunning adult Yellow-nosed Albatross, observed for over two hours off Matinicus Rock on 6 July, represented at least the third occurrence for Maine. The light gray head is characteristic of the nominate race *chlororhynchos* from the South Atlantic. Note the Great Black-backed Gull for a size comparison. Photographs/Anthony Hill



An adult White-faced Ibis, Québec's second record since 1997, remained in Saint-Hyacinthe 30 July through 3 August and offered splendid views of its field marks. In this photo taken 1 August, note the slightly reddish legs and the wide white border surrounding the red facial skin and red eye. Photograph/Michèle Lafleur

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A Little Egret at Bombay Hook, Delaware, for most of June and July was assumed to be the same bird that showed up at Little Creek 25–27 April 1999. Here the Little (below) appears with a Snowy Egret on 13 June. Note not only the distinctive pair of long head plumes but also the much duller yellow lores, the thicker, slightly longer bill, and the thicker and longer neck on the Little Egret as compared with the Snowy. Photograph/Frank Rohrbacher



Kingbirds were in the news throughout the continent this summer. A Cassin's Kingbird photographed by Ian McLaren on 17 July at Little Harbour, Nova Scotia, was a first Atlantic Provinces Regional record and one of a very few ever along the eastern coast outside of the fall season. Western Kingbirds reached New Brunswick, western New York, and Wisconsin, and successful breeding



was recorded at various locations in the Middle Western Prairies and Central Southern regions. This nesting Western Kingbird photographed by Charles Mills on 12 June in Miller County, Arkansas, did not succeed in fledging young.



The Tropical/Couch's Kingbird photographed by Jim and Charlene Malone on 3 June in Monroe County, Illinois, provided a first Middle Western Prairie Regional record; other representatives from this sister species pair also made noteworthy appearances or nesting attempts in Louisiana, western Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and southern California.

This immature Brown Creeper (left) was out of the nest for less than a day when it was photographed on 5 July at Fort Harrison State Park, Marion County, Indiana. Brown Creepers were unusually plentiful this summer in the Middle Western Prairie Region. Photograph/Don Gorney



ADDENDUM: Finally identified as a specimen nine months after it succumbed to a cold snap on 15 January 1998, this immature male Streak-backed Oriole first appeared at a feeder in Mercer, Wisconsin, in early January of the same year. However belatedly, it became an exciting first Western Great Lakes Regional record (see the SA). In addition to the combination of diagnostic plumage characters, note the straight culmen on the relatively substantial bill. Photograph/Thomas Schultz



An adult Little Stint (right foreground) poses with a Least Sandpiper on 11 July, the first day of its weeklong stay at Cape May, New Jersey. Among its salient characters are its dark legs, white throat, bold distinct spots on sides of breast, and rufous edging on the upperparts with orange-buff face and sides of breast. Photograph/Kevin Karlson



A male Buff-breasted Flycatcher discovered 14 June in the Davis Mountains—not far from the site of the bird pictured in the spring's Pictorial Highlights—led to the confirmation of the first Texas nesting of the species. Both the adult perched near the nest and the female shown on the nest were photographed on 17 June. The nesting was successful: two recently-fledged young were discovered on 31 July. Photographs/Greg Lasley



A Gray Flycatcher, photographed 11 July, was present in northwest Calgary from late June through early July. The photo reveals a sharply bicolored lower mandible, much longer and thinner than that of Dusky or Hammond's flycatchers, which also tend to show more blending of the light base and darker tip. The bill is also much thinner than that of Alder or Willow flycatchers, and the fairly prominent eye ring (barely contrasting with the pale gray face) mediates against those two species as well. Note the proportionately long tail, and if you remain unconvinced, know that the bird was also tape-recorded. This was the first confirmed Gray Flycatcher sighting for Alberta and the Prairie Provinces. Photograph/Greg Olin

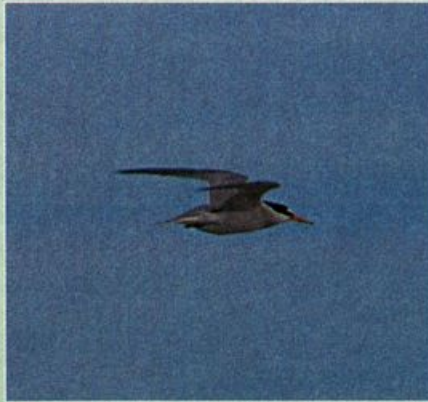


This Gray Catbird seen and photographed 1 July at Churchill, Manitoba, was just one of the many "southern" rarities that appeared in Churchill early this summer. See the SA in the Prairie Provinces report for more examples. Photograph/Robert Mumford

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Rose-breasted Grosbeaks made widespread noteworthy appearances this summer in Texas, New Mexico, Nevada, southern California, Utah, Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, and British Columbia. This male at San Geronimo, Marin County, 25 June was among a dozen Rose-breasted Grosbeaks summering in northern California. Photograph/Rich Stallcup



A truly outstanding event for ornithology in the A.O.U. Check-list area was the occurrence of Little and Least Terns together for many weeks in breeding plumage when they can best be distinguished—followed by egg-laying by both species! The Least Tern in flight (left) was photographed 24 June by Peter Pyle (HRBP-1236); the Little Tern (right) was photographed 24 May by Bert McKee (HRBP-1237), both at Sand Island, Midway Atoll. Compared to the pale gray, noncontrasting rump and center tail of the Least Tern on the left, note the white rump and tail of the Little Tern which contrasts sharply with its gray mantle. See the SA in the Hawaiian Islands report for the exciting details.



Mist-netted along the Devil's River in Val Verde County on 20 June, this Rufous-capped Warbler established the fifteenth accepted Texas record and was the first ever to be banded in the U.S. Photograph/Brent Ortego



Great-tailed Grackles continued to expand their range in northern California. This male photographed on 15 June sired young that fledged from two nests at Roberts Lake, Seaside—the first to be documented in Monterey County. Photograph/Don Roberson