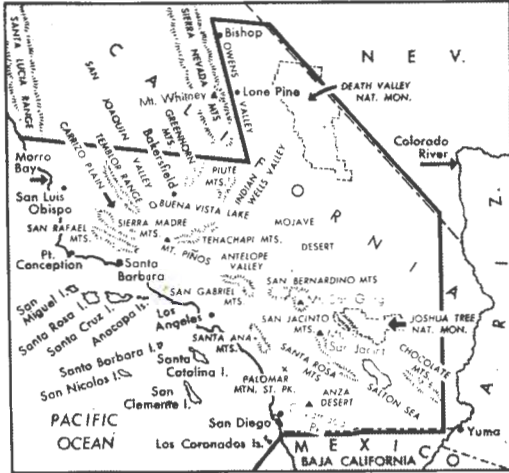


SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION / Guy McCaskie

Large masses of moist warm air moving into s. California from Mexico in July and August caused heavy thundershowers in the mountains and deserts, and ended a long period of dryness. In general the nesting season in the Region was a success. Many nests were located and known to have produced young to flying stage, and juvenile birds were commonly seen in the latter part of the summer.



The coastal mountain masses are apparently attracting pioneering birds of a variety of species. Some of these are suspected of establishing themselves as breeding birds, while others have already proved to have nested. Some are species extending their breeding grounds s. from the Sierra Nevada Mts. and others are moving w. from the mountains of the Great Basin. This development deserves much attention, and should be followed with interest.

Stragglers in the Region included a Red-headed Woodpecker at the Salton Sea, for the first acceptable record in California. Other unusual finds were a Sooty Shearwater on the Salton Sea, and two separate records of Black Skimmers from the same area.

GREBES — Eared Grebes nested on Baldwin L. in the San Bernardino Mts. this summer (EAC, SC, SW): 3 pairs were first noted nest-building June 13, 240 nests were counted July 28, and 6 of these still had eggs Aug. 15. Nesting is always somewhat sporadic in s. California due to fluctuations in water-levels from year to year.

ALBATROSSES, SHEARWATERS, PETRELS — A pelagic trip off San Diego July 17 was at a time when the water temperature was still quite cool (63°); a Black-footed Albatross, 2 Fulmars, 200 Pink-footed Shearwaters, 300 Sooty Shearwaters, and 30 Black Petrels were recorded (C.F.O.). On July 12 an estimated 7000 Sooty Shearwaters were

visible from shore in Santa Barbara (KA). A **Sooty Shearwater** was carefully studied at the north end of the Salton Sea on Aug. 14 (GMCC); it appeared healthy and flew strongly; this represents the first interior record for California.

PELICANS, BOOBIES, FRIGATEBIRDS — A few White Pelicans lingered through the summer on the Salton Sea, but there was no indication of nesting. About 100 pairs of Brown Pelicans nested successfully on the Los Coronados Is. (Joe Jehl), and some probably nested successfully on Santa Barbara I. where full grown young were seen standing in nests Aug. 21 (GMCC). An influx of Brown Pelicans and Blue-footed Boobies into the s.e. portion of the Region in early August will be fully discussed in the fall issue when all the records can be placed together; to date some 75 Blue-footed Boobies alone are known to have reached California. Along the coast single imm. Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen at La Jolla, San Diego Co. July 16 (fide GMCC), at Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. July 31 (fide GMCC), and at Malibu, Los Angeles Co. Aug. 10 (fide GSS), and an ad. ♀ was seen near Santa Monica, Los Angeles Co. Aug. 12 (Gilbert King, fide GSS); this species is a very rare late summer straggler to the coast of s. California (McCaskie, California Birds, 1:117-142, 1970). More unusual was an imm. studied at the Salton Sea for 10 minutes on July 31 (EC).

HERONS, IBIS — Cattle Egrets evidently nested again at the s. end of the Salton Sea, for adult birds were present in the area all summer, and were seen flying to and from the heronry at the mouth of the New River; at the end of the period the Cattle Egret was the most numerous heron in the Imperial Valley, and flocks of 200 and 300 individuals were commonly recorded feeding in irrigated fields. Least Bitterns were noted somewhat regularly along the s. shore of the Salton Sea and at nearby Finney L. in the Imperial Valley where they undoubtedly nested. As usual, Wood Ibis arrived at the s. end of the Salton Sea as a result of their post-breeding northward wanderings, reaching a peak of about 150 birds in mid-July; an exceptionally early individual was noted there June 6 (JAJ), but others did not arrive until three weeks later. Along the coast, where this species has been rarely reported in recent years, 4 were found at Carlsbad, San Diego Co. July 18 (Vincent Mowbray) with one remaining until the 31st (BS); one was seen at McGrath Park, Ventura Co. July 20 (ERA), and 3 were noted at the mouth of the Santa Clara River, Ventura Co. July 18 (AR & JS).

GEESE, DUCKS — Three Black Brant at the n. end of the Salton Sea on June 4 (BB) were the latest recorded there this year; individuals have been summering there in recent years. Along the coast two Black Brant at the mouth of the Santa Clara River July 30 (LC, KA & TNM), and one near Oceanside, San Diego Co. through the period were the only summering birds reported. Gadwalls

normally nest s. to the c. San Joaquin Valley in California. It is therefore interesting to note that two pairs spent the summer in Carlsbad (AF, GSS), and that 10 were present near Oceanside during the period (AF), with one brood of ducklings seen at the latter locality. A ♂ Blue-winged Teal at the n. end of the Salton Sea July 3 (JF, EAC & SC) was the only one reported.

HAWK, CRANE, RAIL — An Osprey was seen at Playa del Rey, Los Angeles Co. on Aug 12 (JAJ), one or two were around La Jolla throughout the summer (AL), and one was present at the s. end of the Salton Sea after mid-July (GMcC, et al.); this species formerly nested in the Region, but that was many years ago, and these reports undoubtedly pertain to non-breeding individuals. A Sandhill Crane seen flying s. over the n. end of the Salton Sea Aug. 12 (GSS, KG & JD) was most unusual, for it is quite rare in this area during migration, but fall migrants would not be expected until October. The Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*) is still surviving along the s. shore of the Salton Sea; in the spring calling birds were heard at three localities there (GMcC et al.), and one was seen June 6 (JAJ). The California Fish and Game is becoming concerned about the welfare of this race and of those other races occurring along the coast.

SHOREBIRDS — Nesting records of Spotted Sandpipers in s. California are few, so it is interesting that a nest was found at L. Arrowhead in the San Bernardino Mts. in July (KG), and that two pairs were present around Baldwin L. in the same mountains during July (KG). A rather early Solitary Sandpiper was noted at Playa del Rey July 20 (HB). On Aug. 12 a **Wandering Tattler** was seen at the n. end of the Salton Sea (GSS, KG & JD); the fourth record for this inland locality. Two Knots at Salton City on the Salton Sea Aug. 7 (EAC, SC & JF) were the only individuals reported away from the coast. Baird's Sandpipers were quite numerous during the last month of the period. One at Oceanside July 16 (SW) was the earliest reported; elsewhere along the coast 2 were seen at Playa del Rey Aug. 12 (HB), up to 7 were found at Newport Bay, Orange Co. Aug. 13-14 (HB), and 2 were seen at San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego Co. Aug. 15 (GMcC). At the Salton Sea as many as 9 were found in a day after July 31 (GMcC, GSS, BB, et al.), and 17 were counted on Baldwin L. Aug. 15 (EAC, SC & KG). Six Stilt Sandpipers were noted at the s. end of the Salton Sea July 24-Aug. 14 (GMcC, JF, EAC, GSS, BB); this is the only locality where this species is regularly seen. As many as 20 Sanderlings were observed on the Salton Sea after July 31 (GSS, BB, GMcC), and one was seen on Baldwin L. July 21 (KG); this species is uncommon away from the coast. A Red Phalarope, apparently a ♂ in breeding plumage, was studied on the Salton Sea July 24 (GMcC & KG); a most unusual time and place for the bird.

JAEGER, GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMER — A Parasitic Jaeger noted regularly near Oceanside June 12-July 10 (AF) was undoubtedly summering in the area. As usual a few W. Gulls (yellow-legged birds from the Gulf of California) appeared on the Salton Sea as the result of their post-breeding dispersal movements; 6 on July 3 (EAC, SC & JF) were the first noted, but 30 were there the following week (GMcC); 40 on Aug. 12 (GSS, KG & JD) was the largest number reported. Laughing Gulls reached the Salton Sea after nesting in w. Mexico, as appears to be normal; 50 on June 26 were the first noted, and 300+ on July 31 was the largest number reported; they were still quite common at the end of the period. A Laughing Gull at Playa del Rey June 10 & 21 (HB) represents one of the very few records from the coast of California. Between 1 and 4 Franklin's Gulls were regularly seen at the n. end of the Salton Sea after July 3 (EAC, RLeV, BB, et al.); the birds were not in breeding plumage, and were judged to be second year (imm. wing pattern but no black in the tail). A Black-legged Kittiwake at Playa del Rey July 27 (HB) was the only one reported this summer. Four Sabine's Gulls seen off San Diego July 17 (C.F.O.) were thought to be non-breeding individuals in their second year, and could well have been summering in the area. Up to 30 Gull-billed Terns were to be found around the s. end of the Salton Sea during the period, and four nests were seen there June 26 (GMcC); this species used to be much more numerous here 40 years ago. An adult Com. Tern seen at Baldwin L. July 27 (KG) establishes another record for the interior of California; formerly only two records were known in interior California, but it is now revealed to be a regular fall migrant through the Salton Sea and along the Colorado R. valley, and should be looked for elsewhere in s. California. Two Least Terns at the n. end of the Salton Sea July 8 (RLeV) and another at the s. end Aug. 12 (BBo) are of interest, because the species is only a casual straggler to the area. A lone ad. **Black Skimmer** was seen along the s. shore of the Salton Sea July 3 (EAC, SC & JF), and two more were continually present at the n. end between July 31 and the end of the period (GSS, BB, GMcC, et al.); there are only four previous records for California (McCaskie and Suffel, California Birds, 2:69-71, 1971).

ALCIDS — During a boat trip off San Diego July 17, 8 Xantus' Murrelets, 2 Craveri's Murrelets, 2 Cassin's Auklets, and a Rhinoceros Auklet were recorded (C.F.O.). Craveri's Murrelets are now being recorded off s. California regularly in small numbers after a long hiatus (see R. T. Peterson, A Field Guide to Western Birds, 1961); this indicates more a renewed interest in offshore observation than a change in the status of the murrelet. The Rhinoceros Auklet was undoubtedly a straggler, lingering in these waters after the wintering population moved n. to nest.

DOVES, CUCKOOS, OWLS, GOATSUCKERS, SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS — Ground Doves nested at Temecula, Riverside Co. this summer (AF); this species formerly bred only in extreme s.e. California but has now established itself as a permanent resident in the coastal lowlands s. of Los Angeles; Temecula adds another such nesting locality to an ever-increasing list. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo, now extremely rare in this Region, was seen in Santa Barbara June 14 (TNM); the date closely coincides with normal arrival dates of spring migrants in s.e. California and Arizona. Two Flamulated Owls were heard calling on Mt. Palomar, San Diego Co. June 13 (Art Morley) & 16 (GMcC et al.); this species is recorded nesting s. to the San Bernardino Mts. in the coastal ranges, but it would seem that suitable habitat is available in the more s. mountains of Riverside and San Diego Cos. Spotted Owl was reported from the San Jacinto Mts. and Mt. Palomar during the nesting season (MSanM, JF, et al.); it is probably relatively common in the mountain masses along the coast of s. California. A Short-eared Owl at the s. end of the Salton Sea Aug. 7 (JF & EAC) was extremely early for that locality. At least one calling **Whip-poor-will** was present at L. Fulmer in the San Jacinto Mts., being heard well into July (MSanM, EAC, GMcC, et al.); one was heard in Strawberry Canyon (elev. 6500 ft.) in the same mountain mass June 25 (JF), and another was heard near Julian in the Laguna Mts. of San Diego Co. July 8 (RG); a careful search of other localities in these s. mountains may produce additional records of this recent immigrant to California. The four **Chimney Swifts** reported at Encino in late May were last seen June 10 (JD). A ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird was found at Green Valley in the San Bernardino Mts. June 10 (SW); this is outside the species' range, but other birds of the Great Basin mountain ranges have become established here, and this hummingbird should be watched for in the future.

WOODPECKERS, FLYCATCHERS, DIPPER, NUTHATCHES, KINGLETS — A **Red-headed Woodpecker** first noted at the s. end of the Salton Sea July 17 (Alfred A. Driscoll, fide EAC) was continually present until Aug. 22 (EAC, SC, GMcC, GSS, et al.); the bird was photographed (to S.D.N.H.M.), and represents the first acceptable record for California. Wied's Crested Flycatchers were still present in Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. in June and July, and it is assumed two pairs bred successfully. A Dipper seen in Palomar State Park on Palomar Mt. June 16 (Art Morley & GMcC) was at the extreme s. limit of its range in the coastal mountains, and represents one of the very few recent reports from that area. Red-breasted Nuthatches are apparently extending their breeding range to include the Palos Verdes Peninsula in Los Angeles Co. and Point Loma in San Diego Co.; single pairs are known to have nested successfully at each locality (Rusty Scalf, fide SW & Jean Craig); both areas are on the

coast and heavily planted with ornamental trees. Two Golden-crowned Kinglets were seen near the s. limit of their breeding range at Barton Flats (elev. 7500 ft.) in the San Bernardino Mts. July 3 (KG).

VIREOS, WARBLERS — One or two pairs of Gray Vireos were regularly noted around Round Valley in the San Bernardino Mts. during June and July (SC, KG, et al.); this species is much less common today than formerly. A pair of Solitary Vireos (*Vireo solitarius plumbeus*) was near Round Valley in the San Bernardino Mountains during July (KG); this race, normally occurring in the mountains of the Great Basin, has only recently arrived as a breeding bird in the San Bernardino Mts., and was unrecorded anywhere in California prior to 1960 (Cardiff, Condor, 65:534, 1963). A Red-eyed Vireo, a casual stray in s. California, was present in San Pedro, Los Angeles Co. July 12-13 (SW). A Black-and-white Warbler in Santa Barbara June 26 (BS) illustrates how late some vagrants can be in spring. A singing Nashville Warbler was at Barton Flats in the San Bernardino Mts. July 3-4 (KG); this species is unrecorded nesting s. of the Greenhorn Mountains at the s. end of the Sierra Nevada. Three or four pairs of Lucy's Warblers successfully nested at Morongo Valley (GSS, MSanM, et al.); this bird has only recently reached this locality as a breeding species, and is unrecorded to the northwest. A pair of Hermit Warblers was at Hanna Flats in the San Bernardino Mts. June 14 (SW), and a lone bird was seen at Buckhorn Flats in the San Gabriel Mountains June 17 (KG); this species is not known to nest s. of the Sierra Nevada. A ♀ **Blackpoll Warbler** was seen in San Pedro on June 28 (SW); this species is an extreme rarity in spring (McCaskie, California Birds, 1:95-104, 1970). MacGillivray's Warblers were present in Green Valley of the San Gabriel Mountains all summer (KG) with four ♂♂ banded there in June (SW); one was seen at Buckhorn Flats in the same mountains June 17 (KG), and another was found near Big Bear L. in the San Bernardino Mts. July 11 (KG); the species is being reported with increasing frequency in these mountain ranges each summer, but nesting has not yet been proven s. of Tulare Co. An Am. Redstart on Pt. Fermin, Los Angeles Co. June 11-13 (SW & GSS) was a late spring straggler.

TANAGERS, BUNTINGS — A ♂ Summer Tanager was seen in Whitewater Canyon, Riverside Co. July 31 (ERA & HB); this species has been suspected of nesting here, but proof is lacking. Most interesting was the presence of a pair of **Hepatic Tanagers** along Arrastre Creek near Round Valley in the San Bernardino Mts. July 10-27 (KG, GSS, et al.); this species is a casual straggler to California, however, there are two previous summer records from this area (May 21, 1967 and May 30, 1968), and the possibility of nesting should be considered. A ♂ Indigo Bunting banded in San Pedro July 19 (SW) and another

seen in Encino Aug. 3-4 (KG & GSS) were the only two reported.

CONTRIBUTORS — Kevin Aanerud, Ernest R. Abeles, Bill Boarman (BBo), Bruce Broadbooks (BB), Hank Brodtkin, Eugene A. Cardiff, Steven Cardiff, Edna Chamness, Herb Clark, Olga Clark, Leslie Cook, Philbrook Cushing, Jon Dunn, Jim Fairchild, Alice Fries, Kim Garrett, Russ Greenberg, Jerome A. Johnson, Ron LeValley, Alan Longhurst, T. Nelson Metcalf, Alice Richardson, Mike SanMiguel, Brad Schram, Janet Stevens, G. Shumway Suffel, Shirley Wells, California Field Ornithologists. — **GUY McCASKIE, San Diego Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California.**