

## SOUTHWEST REGION / Steve Alden and Scott Mills

Drought conditions continued in the Southwest throughout June and early July. Observers in all areas of the region reported record-breaking high temperatures. The urgently needed summer rains reached s. Arizona in the first week of July and by month's end



most regions of the state had reached the yearly accumulation average. Conditions in New Mexico, however, were considerably different. Reports indicated scattered, below-average precipitation and continued drought in the state.

Painted Rock Dam Reservoir, Maricopa Co., Ariz., normally dry, held a large accumulation of water from record winter and spring rains of recent years. This oasis in an otherwise arid region produced a number of firsts and unusual records. Reports of breeding success were mixed. Rufous-winged Sparrows were absent from traditional breeding areas in the vicinity of the Santa Rita Mountains, Ariz., and quail coveys were small with few reports of coveys of ten or more individuals. Most species seem to have bred successfully despite the drought or to have delayed breeding until the summer rains. Scattered reports of late or lingering species were received from many areas.

**PELICANS TO CORMORANTS**—An unprecedented number of sightings of Brown Pelicans was reported from s. Arizona. A flock of 14 immatures was observed s.w. of Phoenix July 8 (RW, JW). A second report of 14 in the same area on the same date (Jo Ann Pettiniccher, Leslie Henningsen) was undoubtedly of the same flock. Single birds were reported from near Sahuarita, Ariz., July 9 (Mrs. Terry Williams), Saguaro L. near Phoenix July 14-20 (Zona Brighton) and Cook L. near Mammoth, Ariz., July 10 & 19 (DD, JB). White Pelicans were reported as follows: 350 adults at Painted Rock Dam Res. (below, P.R.D.) since June 20 constitute the first July record for Maricopa County (GB, RN *et al.*), one Patagonia L., Santa Cruz Co., Ariz., July 1-2 (R&PP) and at two Elephant Butte Marsh, N. Mex., June 5 (CH). The first Maricopa Co. record for Magnificent Frigatebird was an immature at P.R.D., July 13 (RB, GB, RN). Over 20 Double-crested Cormorants were at P.R.D., July 6-August (JW *et al.*). Double-

crested Cormorants apparently enjoyed good nesting success at Elephant Butte Marsh, N. Mex. with many young observed out of the nest June 5 & July 9 (CH). An ad. Olivaceous Cormorant was found on a nest at Elephant Butte Marsh July 9 with two additional adults seen nearby (CH).

**HERONS, WATERFOWL**—Six Cattle Egrets were reported at P.R.D., July 17 (ST, DS) and three were observed near Camp Verde, Ariz., June 4 (L.D. Bailey). Fifty-four nests of Great Blue Heron from three rookeries in Grant Co., N. Mex. averaged three young per nest during early June (RF). An estimated 100 Snowy Egret nests at Elephant Butte Marsh June 5 contained eggs or downy young and on July 9 many fledgling birds, young in all stages of development and eggs were observed (CH). Three Least Bitterns were observed at Tucumcari L., N. Mex., June 16 (CH). Seven imm. Wood Storks were seen P.R.D., from July 10 on (SD, JW *et al.*).

Nesting success of Canada Geese at Bitter Lake N.W.R., N. Mex. was extremely low, with only one gosling produced from the 47-56 birds present all season (DB, GD). However, during the same period the 150-300 Mallards present produced about 250 young (DB, BS). Six Mallards were observed near Phoenix June 22 (RN *et al.*). A single Mexican Duck, north of its usual range in Arizona, was reported on the San Carlos Indian Reservation, near Globe July 26 (BJ). One pair of Blue-winged Teal was observed at San Simon Cienega, N. Mex., June 25 (E&SC). Black-bellied Tree Ducks were reported from St. David, Ariz. as follows: four June 30 (DD), one July 6 (DD) and one July 26 (SMi). Another was seen at the Guivabi Ranch, Santa Cruz Co., Ariz., July 31 (SMi, SSP).

**RAPTORS**—Mississippi Kites reports were as follows: Six (3 immatures, 2 adults, one age unknown) near Albuquerque July 11-20 (RT *et al.*), one Cedar Crest, N. Mex., June 11 (BM *et al.*), one Bosque del Apache, N. Mex., July 27 (Marjorie Williams) and one immature s.w. of Phoenix June 16 for the first county record (RN). Black Hawks nesting near Patagonia, Ariz. were apparently unsuccessful this year. The last reported sighting came on July 6 (AN). An ad. Golden Eagle was observed near a nest containing one or two dead young 20 mi. s. of Fruitland N. Mex., during the first week in June (AN). Only five additional sightings of this species were received for the period. An Osprey was sighted at Elephant Butte Marsh July 9 (CH) and another was seen P.R.D., July 8 (JW *et al.*). No reports of Peregrine Falcons were received.

**SHOREBIRDS**—Mountain Plover appeared west of its normal nesting range when three adults and one nest were found 20 mi. s. of Fruitland, N. Mex., June 3 (AN). Two Black-bellied Plovers in breeding plumage were observed at P.R.D., July 28 (RW, JW, RB). **Snowy Plovers** with 10-15 young were seen at P.R.D., July 6 (GB, SD *et al.*). This is the first Maricopa County breeding record and one of the few records for the state. At Bitter Lake N.W.R. 250-300 Snowy Plovers were reported throughout the period with nesting activity observed June 28 (DB, GD). One to three Long-billed Curlews were seen at P.R.D., July 8-28 (JW *et al.*). Two

Whimbrels were at Bitter Lake N.W.R., June 9 (DB, EB). Marbled Godwits were at P.R.D. from July 8 on, with a high of 75 on July 19 (JW *et al.*). Twenty Willets were at P.R.D., July 6 on (JW *et al.*). A single Sanderling appeared s. of Chandler, Ariz., July 27 and three were at P.R.D. on the same day (RW, JW, RB). A flock of 60 Wilson's Phalaropes, all females, was seen at Bitter Lake N.W.R. on the late (or early?) date of June 27 (DB, BS). A flock of 50, mixed sexes, appeared July 29 (DB, BS).

**GULLS, TERNS**—Painted Rock Dam produced a single imm. California Gull July 13 (RN *et al.*) and 70 Ring-billed Gulls July 4 (m.ob.). A single Ring-billed Gull was observed Tucumcari L., N. Mex., June 16 (CH). **Least Terns** appeared at P.R.D., July 8-10 when three adults were seen, for the first Maricopa Co. record (RW, JW). Bitter Lake N.W.R. yielded two ad. and one imm. Least Tern July 16 and 27 more (seven immatures) July 22 (DB, BS). Seven to ten Forster's Terns were seen P.R.D. July 6 and a single Caspian Tern appeared July 13 (RN, GB, RB).

**CUCKOOS TO TROGONS**—Yellow-billed Cuckoos, although relatively common in riparian woodland throughout the region, were reported in unusually high numbers by many observers. Three **Buff-collared Nighthawks** were heard calling in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Occidental, ca. 8 mi w. of Moctezuma, Sonora, Mexico at late dusk July 9 (SSP, SA and Terry Johnson). The northernmost records for Sonora for this species are Guaymas and Alamos. Hummingbirds were particularly abundant in the region during the report period with many lowland reports and the usual influx of Mexican species in s.e. Arizona. A single Lucifer's Hummingbird was seen at Ramsey Canyon, Huachuca Mts., Ariz., June 28 (RW). Several lingering Costa's Hummingbirds were reported, one ad. male, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson (below, A.S.D.M.), July 6 (GM, Robert Pyle) and another at the same locality July 27 (GM). Anna's Hummingbird, normally a winter resident in Arizona but usually absent in late spring, was reported summering in Phoenix (three, one ad. male, a young male and a female) for the first summer record since 1971 (JW). Other reports include a male in Ramsey Canyon, Ariz., June 28 (RWi), and one female or imm. male, A.S.D.M., June 30-July 4 and two males A.S.D.M. July 4-July 13, (GM). A very early ♂ Calliope Hummingbird was seen at Portal, Ariz., June 13-17 (W&SS). One ad. ♂ Rivoli's Hummingbird at the confluence of the Salt R. and the Gila R., Ariz., June 24 (AR) was north of its usual range as was a ♀ Blue-throated Hummingbird gathering fiber from a clothesline in Rose Canyon, Santa Catalina Mts., Ariz., July 14 (SMi). One ♀ White-eared Hummingbird was observed at feeders from June 20, Portal, Ariz. (W & SS, Isabel Hicks). An ad. ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird, carefully described, was seen at feeders in Los Alamos, N. Mex., June 20 (WL). Coppery-tailed Trogons nested as usual in Cave Creek Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., Ariz.. Courtship was observed June 28 (R & PP) and presumably the same pair was observed at the nest hole apparently feeding young July 27 (SMi).

**FLYCATCHERS TO KINGLETS**—One E. Kingbird was reported at Springerville, Ariz., June 23 (ST,BH) and another was seen along the San Pedro R. 17 mi. n. of Benson, Ariz., July 6 (BHe). A single Least Flycatcher was seen and heard at Sunrise, Ariz., June 22 (ST,SM,BH). A Willow Flycatcher was observed calling at the Southwestern Research Station, Chiricahua Mts., June 6 (SR) and a second was seen and recorded in s.w. Phoenix, June 22-29 for the first Maricopa County summer record (RB, RN *et al.*). A late Olive-sided Flycatcher was noted on Baboquivari Peak, Ariz., June 7 (GM). An unusual lowland record for Brown Creeper was one near Patagonia, Ariz., July 5 (DD,JB). Reports of Brown Thrashers included one at Bitter Lake N.W.R., June 13 (JC,BS), one at Pipe Spring Nat. Mon., July 9-15 (RW) and one at Sunrise, Ariz., June 22 (SM). A lowland report of Am. Robin was a single bird at San Xavier Mission near Tucson, June 18 (DD) and a single Rufous-backed Robin was sighted near Patagonia, Ariz., July 4-5 (Fred Gehlbach). A late Hermit Thrush was reported from A.S.D.M., June 2 (GM). A Swainson's Thrush at A.S.D.M., June 8 (GM) was late. The single Golden-crowned Kinglet at the Southwestern Research Station, June 29 (R&PP) was an unusually low count.

**SILKY FLYCATCHERS, VIREOS, WARBLERS**—Several unusual congregations of Phainopeplas were reported. Sixty-two were counted in Russell Gulch, Pinal Mts., Ariz., July 30 (BJ *et al.*) and June 22 over 500 were counted along a quarter-mile stretch of Sonoita Creek, 4 mi. w. of Patagonia, Ariz. (SMi, SA). One ad. Yellow-throated Vireo was observed near Seven Springs, Ariz., June 15 (GB). An ad. Red-eyed Vireo seen July 13 and again July 17 in s.w. Phoenix was the first county record (ST *et al.*). A Black-and-white Warbler was observed in Phoenix June 18 (RB *et al.*). A lingering Townsend's Warbler was noted at A.S.D.M., June 2 (GM). A late N. Waterthrush was observed at Ft. Bowie Nat. Hist. Site, June 11 (SR). A single Red-faced Warbler appeared west of its normal range on Baboquivari Park, June 7 (GM). American Redstarts were noted as follows: one (sex?) at Patagonia, June 22 (E&SC), three (one male, 2 females) at the confluence of Gila and Salt Rs., July 27 (J.M. Simpson). A ♂ **Blackpoll Warbler** in breeding plumage was observed in n.w. Phoenix July 18-20 for the first Maricopa County record and the fifth state record (DS *et al.*).

**ICTERIDS, TANAGERS, FINCHES**—A ♂ Orchard Oriole was observed at Bitter Lake N.W.R. from early May through June 28 (DB, JC, BS). A partial albino **Northern Oriole** was observed being fed by the parent birds in Albuquerque, July 4 (RT). The head and tail plumage were bright orange while the rest of the body and wings were white. The bill, legs and iris were pink. Throughout the period unusually large numbers of Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported attending feeders around Los Alamos, N. Mex. (WL). A first-year ♂ Summer Tanager was seen and heard at Cedar Crest, N. Mex., July 27 (BM). The second Arizona and U.S. record for **Yellow Grosbeak** was a female or first-year male at the Southwestern Research Station, June 7 (SR) and a female (possibly the same bird) reported in

South Fork, Cave Creek Canyon on the same date (David Wilcove, Mass. Audubon Soc.). A ♂ Painted Bunting was seen in Tombstone, Ariz., July 29-31 (DD,CM). Two Pine Siskins were observed in the Mazatzal Mts., Ariz., July 20 (ST). A pair of Am. Goldfinches was sighted in Kirtland, N. Mex., June 19 (Carol Shryock). The first summer record of Lawrence's Goldfinch in Maricopa County was a single male near Seven Springs, July 10 (Patrick Stejskal, DS *et al.*). Another first record for Maricopa County was of 10-12 singing Cassin's Sparrows near P.R.D., July 14 (RN, DS *et al.*). A Five-striped Sparrow nest containing three young was located July 31 along Sonoita Creek 4 mi. w. of Patagonia (SMi, SSp). A late Lincoln's Sparrow was seen at Ft. Bowie Nat. Hist. Site, Ariz., June 11 (SR).

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