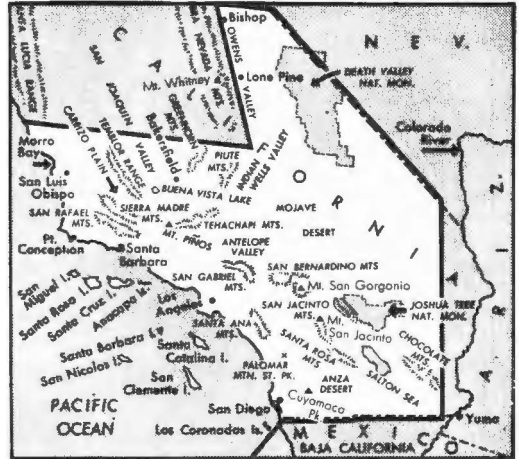


SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION /Guy McCaskie

June and July were cooler than normal and there was little thunder shower activity in the mountains or on the desert. The Salton Sea had very little out of the ordinary other than the now expected post-breeding water-birds that fly north from nesting grounds in western Mexico.



The mountain ranges attracted the most attention from active resident birders. In recent years a few species, derived from avifaunas of the Great Basin or the southwestern United States, have extended their breeding ranges into the mountains of southern California (see *Western Birds* 5:45-56, 1974). This summer's observations indicated Gray Flycatchers and Solitary Vireos (*V.s. plumbeus*) are still on the increase in the San Bernardino Mountains. Whip-poor-wills (first found in California in 1968) were present in three mountain ranges, and Hepatic Tanagers (first recorded in summer in 1967) were believed nesting in two of these ranges. Painted Redstarts, first found breeding last summer, may have nested again this year, and both Grace's and Red-faced Warblers, the most recent possible colonizers, were found in suitable nesting habitat in June.

GREBES — Eared Grebes were unable to nest on Baldwin L. in the San Bernardino Mts. this year because it was dry by early June; this species is not known to nest elsewhere in s. California.

PELICANS, FRIGATEBIRDS — Brown Pelicans appeared to have a successful nesting season on Los Coronados Is., and many young of the year were seen moving north along the coast in July. Very few Brown Pelicans found their way inland, with no more than six seen on the Salton Sea June 25 - July 31 (DVT,SC), but one captured in Seeley, Imperial Co. July 8 (DVT) and another found dead at nearby Ocotillo Aug. 2 (BP) were interesting for locality. As usual, a few Magnificent Frigatebirds were reported from along the coast with an

immature over Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo Co. Aug. 3 (FRT), an immature around Pismo Beach, San Luis Obispo Co. July 14-15 (FRT), another at Goleta, Santa Barbara Co. July 13-14 (GH), one over Marina del Rey, Los Angeles Co. July 13 (*fide* GSS), an ad. male near La Jolla, San Diego Co. July 28 (JRJ) and an immature off Ocean Beach, San Diego Co. July 10 (BP). An imm. and an ad. ♀ Frigatebird at the north end of the Salton Sea (hereafter N.E.S.S.) July 19 (GMcC,KG) were the only ones found away from the coast.

HERONS, STORKS, IBIS — Cattle and Snowy Egrets both appeared to nest later than usual at the south end of the Salton Sea (hereafter S.E.S.S.), for egg laying appeared to have just started when the colony was visited July 12 (DVT). Numerous Least Bitterns were to be seen along the lower Colorado R. and around the Salton Sea as usual; at least two pairs were believed nesting at a marsh in the Saline Valley, Inyo Co. July 25 (TH), and one was well seen near Goleta June 1 (GH). At least 35 Wood Storks were at S.E.S.S. on June 25, numbers built up to 300 within a week, then remained constant to the end of the period. An imm. Wood Stork at San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego Co., July 31 - Aug. 3 (AF) was the only one reported away from the Salton Sea, and is one of the very few found on the coast in recent years. A single White-faced Ibis in the Saline Valley June 8 (TH), and about 12 around S.E.S.S. all summer (GMcC), were the only ones reported; this species is continuing to decline in numbers in s. California.

GEESE, DUCKS — One Black Brant remained all summer at S.E.S.S. (DVT), and was the only one reported. Fulvous Tree Ducks were scarce at S.E.S.S. and there was no evidence of nesting this summer (DVT). Gadwall definitely nested in Inyo and San Diego Cos., for up to ten juveniles, accompanied by as many as ten adults, were present in Bishop during July (TH), and ten juveniles were counted at Carlsbad June 20 (AF); specific nesting records have been few in recent years. A few Blue-winged Teal were still to be found in early June, for a single male was seen in Bishop June 1 (TH), two males were at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley (hereafter F.C.R.) June 10-11 (BS) and two more males were on San Elijo Lagoon June 4 (GMcC). The ♂ Harlequin Duck was still present at Marina del Rey at the end of the period; it has been here continuously since 1972. A Surf Scoter at N.E.S.S. Aug. 2 (GMcC) had most likely arrived in the spring and been present all summer; this species is rare inland in California. Interesting was the presence of five Com. Mergansers on the Colorado R. below Parker Dam July 27 (FH); from the description of the plumage condition it was clear they were going to summer locally, for their flight feathers were missing.

KITES, HAWKS, OSPREY — The presence of a juvenile White-tailed Kite with an adult near Brawley, Imperial Co., May 3 (JD) strongly suggested nesting locally; unfortunately the juvenile was found dead May

23 (S&PK); this locality is outside the species known range. A pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks was feeding young at a nest in Icehouse Canyon of the San Bernardino Mts. Aug. 10 (HK); there are very few documented breeding records for California, but one of these was from the San Bernardino Mts. Only three of 15 Red-tailed Hawk nests found on Camp Pendleton, San Diego Co. failed (AF), indicating a successful breeding season for this species; the presence of two downy chicks in a nest at Rancho California, Riverside Co. June 10, indicated a very late start at nesting. Over half of the Red-shouldered Hawk nests found by Alice Fries in San Diego County failed; a most disturbing fact. Encouraging were five successful nests of Golden Eagle on Camp Pendleton (AF). As usual a few Ospreys were present along the coast and the lower Colorado R. throughout the period; a pair on Tinemaha Res., Inyo Co. (TH) and another pair on San Antonio L., Santa Barbara Co. (GH), were both thought to have attempted nesting.

RAILS, PLOVERS, SANDPIPERS — As usual Black Rails were easy to hear around Imperial Dam on the Colorado R. throughout the summer, but went unreported from elsewhere in the Region. A Com. Gallinule at F.C.R. June 10-11 was at an interesting locality for that time of the year.

Some shorebirds remained along the coast and around the Salton Sea throughout the summer, as usual. By mid-June the first of the fall migrant Wilson's Phalaropes were on the move, and by the first of July fair numbers of migrant Marbled Godwits, Long-billed Curlews, Willets, N. Phalaropes, Short-billed Dowitchers, Western and Least Sandpipers were present.

A Semipalmated Plover at Owen's L., Inyo Co. July 23 (TH) was interesting since inland records away from the Salton Sea are scarce. Snowy Plovers were found inland away from the Salton Sea on Owen's L., with up to 130 adults accompanied by downy young in July (TH), and near Tecopa, Inyo Co., with about 12 adults present throughout the period (JT). A pair of Willets near Big Pine, Inyo Co. in May and June (TH) was possibly nesting; this locality is a little south of the species known breeding range. A Spotted Sandpiper at Devils Gate Dam above Pasadena, Los Angeles Co., June 9 (GSS) may have been nesting locally; very few breeding records are known for s. California. A Ruddy Turnstone at N.E.S.S. Aug 2 (BP) was the only one found away from the coast. A Red Phalarope at N.E.S.S. Aug 2 (GMcC) was unusually early and at an inland locality. A Red Knot at N.E.S.S. Aug 2 (BP) was interesting since inland records of all migrants are scarce. A Sanderling at Salton City on the Salton Sea Aug. 2 (BP) was the first found inland this fall. Two Stilt Sandpipers at S.E.S.S. Aug. 2 (BP) were the first noted this fall.

JAEGERS, GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMERS — As appears normal the only jaeger reported was the Pomarine, with two in the Catalina Channel June 22 (GSS) and two more there July 31 (FH).

Western Gulls (yellow-legged) were first noted on the Salton Sea June 29, and rapidly built up in numbers with 30 or more seen in a day at the end of the period;

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these birds, probably a distinct species from those W. Gulls breeding on the coast, regularly appear on the Salton Sea as post-breeding visitors from the Gulf of California. Juvenile California and Ring-billed Gulls were not noted in s. California until Aug. 2, when individuals of both species were present on the Salton Sea. Laughing Gulls, regular post-breeding visitors to the Salton Sea, arrived on the Sea in late June, and reached a peak of about 200 a month later; about 50 per cent of the birds present this year were young of the year. A late spring migrant Franklin's Gull was seen between Oxnard and Santa Barbara I. May 30 (KG); this species is scarce in California and few records are from the open ocean. An imm. Heermann's Gull was at N.E.S.S. July 27 (FH); this species is a casual wanderer to the Salton Sea and accidental elsewhere inland. A Black-legged Kittiwake was noted off and on throughout the summer at Newport Bay, Orange Co. (HK *et al.*). Four Sabine's Gulls, without black heads, off San Simeon, San Luis Obispo Co., July 10 (JB) were probably non-breeding birds summering locally.

Most unusual was an **Arctic Tern** well studied on Tinemaha Res. Inyo Co. June 13 (TH); the only other inland record of this species for California was one found dead at Bridgeport, Mono Co. May 22, 1973 (*Am. Birds* 27: 815, 1973). Least Terns still have problems finding undisturbed nesting sites; nesting at Oceano, San Luis Obispo Co. was halted by the constant use of the area by dune buggy enthusiasts, however, nesting was at least partially successful on Terminal I., Los Angeles Co., Huntington Beach, Orange Co., and at Camp Pendleton and Mission Bay, San Diego Co.

About 40 Black Skimmers were present on the Salton Sea at the end of the period; one pair successfully raised one young from a nest at the south end of the sea (DVT), and eight nests, all with eggs, were found at the north end of the sea Aug. 16 (GMCC).

ALCIDS — Two **Horned Puffins** seen 5 mi. s.w. of Pt. Piedros Blancos, San Luis Obispo Co., July 13 (JB) were the only ones found during the summer; a situation somewhat amazing considering the numbers seen in May.

DOVES THROUGH SWIFTS — A White-winged Dove in Claremont, Los Angeles Co., June 26 (LAS) was the only one found away from its normal desert range. Yellow-billed Cuckoos were still nesting in the thickets above Laguna Dam on the Colorado R. but nowhere else in the Region.

Two juvenile Spotted Owls were found at Nojoqui Falls Park, Santa Barbara Co., May 26 (J. Parkinson, *fide* GH), and a pair at L. Fulmor in the San Jacinto Mts. June 8 (GSS) was accompanied by two young; this owl remains relatively common in suitable habitat in the mountains of s. California. An active Long-eared Owl nest was under observation in Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. in April and May (GSS) and another nest at Yaqui Wells, San Diego Co. fledged two young in early May (JD); few nests have been found in recent years. A pair of Saw-whet Owls on Mt. Palomar, San Diego Co. May 19 (JD) appeared to be on territory; this locality is close to the species' southern

limit for nesting. Whip-poor-wills continue to draw attention after being discovered in the San Jacinto Mts. in 1968 (*Calif. Birds* 2:33-36, 1971); two calling birds were present on Clark Mt., San Bernardino Co. June 2 (WS), another was found at the upper end of Arrastre Creek in the San Bernardino Mts. June 17 (GSS), and one was at L. Fulmor throughout June (HK,DE). Common Nighthawks appeared scarcer than usual around Baldwin L. in the San Bernardino Mts. this summer; this is the only locality in s. California where this species occurs.

Black Swifts undoubtedly nested at Fallsvale in the San Bernardino Mts., for two were seen there throughout June (GSS,PU), and three pairs were present at Sturdevant Falls in the San Gabriel Mts. July 25 (GSS); few documented nesting records exist for s. California. Most interesting was the presence of two Chimney Swifts in Monrovia, Los Angeles Co. July 11-30 (MSM); this species appears to have spread westward in recent years.

HUMMINGBIRDS, KINGFISHERS, WOODPECKERS — A juvenile Allen's Hummingbird, barely able to fly, on the Palos Verdes Pen. July 11 (SW) indicates that nesting continues into the summer months, much later than indicated in the literature. An active nest of the Belted Kingfisher was found at L. Silverwood, San Bernardino Co. in June (BAC), and a pair at South Fork Campground in the San Bernardino Mts. in late June (JD) was also probably nesting locally; there appears to

be no previous record for nesting in San Bernardino County. Many Lewis' Woodpeckers were nesting in Big Pine, Inyo Co. this summer (TH); breeding in the Owen's Valley is sporadic at best.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — An E. Kingbird in the Saline Valley, Inyo Co. June 8 (TH) and another at F.C.R. two days later (BS) were stragglers from the late spring movement of vagrants. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in El Monte, Los Angeles Co., July 23 (D. Marqua, *fide* GSS) was certainly lost. A pair of Wied's Crested Flycatchers nesting in Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. were the only ones found away from the Colorado R. Valley. A singing Willow Flycatcher near Santee, San Diego Co., Aug. 6 (PU), and another at nearby Otay L., July 13 (BP) are of interest since the species appears to be gone from the area as breeders. Gray Flycatchers are now relatively common breeding birds in the eastern parts of the San Bernardino Mts. after being detected there first during the summer of 1966. Olive-sided Flycatchers were present at sea level in Santa Barbara all summer, and a juvenile was caught there July 2 (W. Abbott, *fide* GH).

Interesting was the report of Cliff Swallows nesting on Yellow Pines at Baldwin L. in the San Bernardino Mts. (SW); nests located on anything other than man made structures are rare, and the trunks of trees provide a most unusual substitution.



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VERDIN, NUTHATCHES, THRASHERS, VIREOS — The presence of a pair of Verdins with young 10 mi. n.w. of Rosamond, Kern Co. May 12-29 (SW) extends the breeding range some 65 mi. to the west. One of two pairs of Red-breasted Nuthatches on Clark Mt. in e. San Bernardino County during May and June (KG,WS) and a pair on Mt. Palomar, San Diego Co. May 19 (JD) all appeared to be on territory; nesting is unknown in either area. A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches again nested on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co. where the species is now a rare resident after having become established as a breeding bird about ten years ago. Interesting were up to six Bendire's Thrashers present at the base of the San Bernardino Mts. near Yucca Valley in June and July (FH) for few records exist for that area.

Bell's Vireos are still holding on near Duarte, Los Angeles Co., where at least three singing males were present (MSM), and around San Diego, where 14 singing males were located (DR,PU); unfortunately many nesting attempts by this species end up with the proud pair feeding a Brown-headed Cowbird. Gray Vireos were located on Clark Mt., in the New York Mts., and on the e. side of the San Bernardino Mts. this summer; the status of this species requires monitoring since numbers are declining in California. Again "Plumbeous Vireos" were nesting in the e. parts of the San Bernardino Mts. this summer (H & PB *et al.*) with a pair at the upper end of Arrastre Creek within 5 - 10 mi. of nesting *cassinii* (KG); it will be most interesting to see if breeding will occur between these two distinct-looking forms of Solitary Vireo when they finally get

together. A Red-eyed Vireo at F.C.R. June 10 (BS) must be considered a part of the late May - early June movement of vagrants.

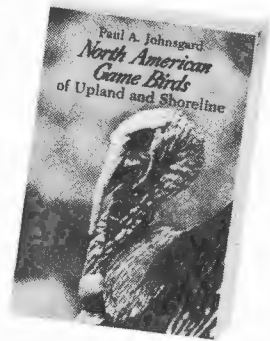
WARBLERS — A Black-and-white Warbler in the Saline Valley June 8 (TH) and another near Tecopa June 20 (JT) were stragglers from the spring movement, but a male near Otay L. San Diego Co. July 13 - Aug. 21 (BP) appeared to have summered in the area. A Tennessee Warbler at Oasis, Mono Co. June 1 (TH), and another there June 10 (TH) must be treated with the other stragglers occurring in late May and early June. A singing ♂ Nashville Warbler near Green Valley June 11 (SW), another at the upper end of Arrastre Creek June 2 & July 5 (SW,KG), and three more near Fallsview in June (SW) were all in suitable breeding habitat of the San Bernardino Mts.; nesting has yet to be documented for the s. California mountains. Virginia's Warblers, obviously on territory, were seen in Wyman Creek Canyon of the White Mts. and on Clark Mt. during May; both localities are known to support small breeding populations. Nesting Lucy's Warblers at F.C.R., around Tecopa, near Baker and in Morongo Valley were all at the fringe of the species' range in California. A ♂ Magnolia Warbler at F.C.R. June 11 (BS) was a late spring vagrant. At least three territorial ♂ Hermit Warblers were present around Green Valley in the San Bernardino Mts. during June and July (H&PB,SW), and a juvenile just out of a nest there on July 4 (KG) is the first positive evidence of nesting in s. California. Most interesting was a ♂ **Grace's Warbler** at the upper

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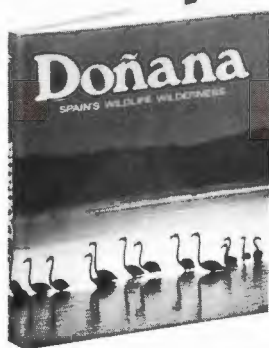
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end of Arrastre Creek in the San Bernardino Mts. June 15 to at least July 3 (KG, BB, JK *et al.*); this is only the fourth record of the species in California. A ♂ Bay-breasted Warbler on San Clemente I. July 9 (KG) must have been a very late spring vagrant. Singing ♂ MacGillivray's Warblers were found at five different localities in the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mts. in June and July (H&PB, SW), but no nests were located even though an adult carrying food was observed in Green Valley July 4 (KG); an actual nest has yet to be found in s. California. A ♂ **Red-faced Warbler** on Clark Mt. June 22 (NKJ) may have been the same bird seen there May 17; this species is as rare as the Grace's Warbler in California. A ♀ Am. Redstart at F.C.R. June 10 (BS) and a male on the Palos Verdes Pen. June 12 (J. Morton, *vide* GSS) were both part of the late spring movement of vagrants; a male near San Diego July 17 (DR) must have been a lost summer wanderer, but what of a singing male near Seven Oaks in the San Bernardino Mts. June 2-10 (SW) and an imm. male at nearby Arrastre Creek July 3 (HK)? A pair of Painted Redstarts was at South Fork Campground in the San Bernardino Mts. May 30 to at least July 12 (SW, DE *et al.*), but no nest could be found, and a single bird was seen at the upper end of Arrastre Creek June 16 (KG, JD); the status of this species in California was recently summarized (*Western Birds* 5:94-96, 1974).

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, TANAGERS — Three Bobolinks at F.C.R. June 10 (BS) were the latest reported for last spring. A pair of Scott's Orioles in Wyman Creek Canyon of the White Mts. May 23 (DDeS) and four territorial males at Joshua Flats, s.e. of Big Pine, May 10 (TH) were at the extreme n. limit of the species' range in California. Two or three pairs of Great-tailed Grackles are believed to have nested at Ramer L. near S.E.S.S.; these were the only birds found west of the Colorado R. this summer. Two unusual hosts for the Brown-headed Cowbird were documented by the presence of a pair of Bushtits feeding a young cowbird on the Palos Verdes Pen. in early June (SW), and an ad. Black-tailed Gnatcatcher seen feeding another cowbird at Laguna Dam June 30 (GSS). The presence of a ♀ Bronzed Cowbird at Jacumba, San Diego Co. June 29 (GMCC) would suggest that this species was present at that locality for the third consecutive summer. An ad. ♂ Scarlet Tanager at Morongo Valley June 5 is one of the very few recorded

in California for spring. A pair of Hepatic Tanagers undoubtedly nested on Clark Mt. (WS), and another pair was present at the upper end of Arrastre Creek in the San Bernardino Mts. in June (H&PB). Away from the Colorado R. valley the only breeding Summer Tanagers were a pair in Morongo Valley, and another pair at the Brock Experimental Ranch; this species appears to be on the decline in California. A ♂ Summer Tanager at F.C.R. June 11 (BS) was a vagrant out of its normal range.

FINCHES, SPARROWS — A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Oasis, Mono Co. June 10 (TH), a female nearby Deep Springs June 19 (JD), and another female at F.C.R. June 11 (BS) were all spring vagrants; there is no simple explanation for occurrences like the male appearing on the Palos Verdes Pen. July 31 (SW). A ♂ Indigo Bunting seen on the Palos Verdes Pen. July 31 (SW) was at the same locality as one seen May 14, and is believed to have been present there all summer. Savannah Sparrows nested around Big Bear L. this summer with two nests found on June 1 (SW); documented breeding records are few, but a number are always present in the San Bernardino Mts. each summer. The late White-crowned Sparrow in San Diego was still present June 11 (PU). A pair of Fox Sparrows at 10,000 ft. in the White Mts., Inyo Co., May 12 (TH) was at a high altitude for nesting. Lincoln's Sparrows were seen at three localities in the San Bernardino Mts. this summer and undoubtedly nested; this species is known to nest only in the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mts. in s. California.

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