

/ Guy McCaskie

Environmental studies were conducted along the coast that produced many interesting data on the status of some waterbird species, but little work was done in the mountains, and the desert was all but ignored.

FULMARS, SHEARWATERS—A N. Fulmar was captured on the beach at Pt. Sal, Santa Barbara Co., July 23 (LB); this species is rare in s. California waters in summer. A New Zealand Shearwater at Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co., June 21 (RW) was one of a very few ever found in California waters in June. As usual, Sooty Shearwaters were the common shearwaters offshore, with large numbers visible from shore n. of Los Angeles in July.

more than eight present at the end of the period. Small numbers of Magnificent Frigatebirds appeared along the coast in July, with 22 reports involving 30 birds being received, and one over Chula Vista, San Diego Co., June 30 (BT) being the earliest. A Magnificent Frigatebird was at N.E.S.S. July 4 (AE) and four were together there July 19 (DP), with one or two remaining around the Salton Sea through the end of the period (GMCC), but one near Cuyama, Santa Barbara Co., July 22 (JH) and another over Big Bear L., in the San Bernardino Mts., July 16 (GB) were both at unusual localities.

A detailed map of Southern California and Northern Baja California, Mexico. The map shows major cities, geographical features, and transportation routes. Key locations include San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Jose. Geographical features include the Sierra Madre, Mojave Desert, Death Valley, and the Colorado River. Transportation routes include the Pacific Ocean, Colorado River, and various highways. The map is oriented with North at the top.

WATERFOWL—Gadwall were found nesting inland in the Antelope Valley (near Lancaster—KGa) and in the mountains of San Diego County (L. Henshaw—RHi), as well as at the Santa Ynez R. estuary (LB), Goleta (LB), the Santa Clara R. estuary (RW), Pt. Mugu (RW) and near Imperial Beach (EC) along the coast; numbers of breeding Gadwall appeared to be on the increase in s. California. At least 25 Blue-winged Teal were found along the coast of Santa Barbara and Ventura counties during June and July, with one pair definitely nesting at the Santa Clara R. estuary, Ventura Co. (RW); this is the first recorded occurrence of nesting along the coast of s. California. Wood Ducks were found nesting s. to L. Cachuma, where 2 broods were seen June 15 (LRB). A Ring-necked Duck, exceptionally scarce in summer, was at the Santa

Clara R. estuary throughout the period (RW), one remained near Beaumont, Riverside Co., during June and July (SG) and two more spent the summer on L. Hodges near San Diego (KW). A Canvasback remained at N.E.S.S. all summer (GMCC). A Bufflehead at Pt. Mugu through June 15 (RW), two at N.E.S.S., most of June (GMCC), and another at S.E.S.S., July 12 (GMCC), were all badly worn, and clearly attempting to summer locally. An Oldsquaw on San Diego Bay June 25 (EC) was undoubtedly summering locally. White-winged Scoters were exceptionally numerous along the coast, with counts such as 181 off Vandenberg A.F.B., July 29-30 (LB) and 54 at Pt. Mugu June 15 (RW), and one was inland at Salton City on the Salton Sea July 12 (DP). A Surf Scoter at Salton City July 19 (DP) was the only one found away from the coast. A Black Scoter, always rare in summer, was at the Santa Ynez R. estuary June 7-18 (PL). As usual a few Red-breasted Mergansers spent the summer inland on the Salton Sea, as well as along the coast with a high count of eight at N.E.S.S., July 12 (DP).

HAWKS—The only nesting Swainson's Hawks reported were a pair near Big Pine in the Owen's Valley (RW), another pair in the Lanfair Valley of e. San Bernardino County (AE), and a third pair in the Antelope Valley e. of Lancaster (JD); it is with regret that we monitor the decline of this fine species in California. A pair of Zone-tailed Hawks was again present on Santa Rosa Mt., Riverside Co., during June and July (WW); two young were hatched in a nest, but for some reason died before fledging. Seven Marsh Hawk nests were found at Harper Dry L., San Bernardino Co., during April and May (PR); this is a cultivated area far out in the Mojave Desert where breeding had previously been unrecorded.

SHOREBIRDS—A Black Oystercatcher at Pt. Mugu July 2+ (RW) was away from known breeding localities. Single Am. Golden Plovers at the Santa Ynez R. estuary July 23 (RW), Goleta July 14-24 (LB), the Santa Clara R. estuary July 16 (GG) and near Imperial Beach July 26 (GMCC) were all fall migrants. A Whimbrel near Lancaster July 25 (JD) was one of very few ever found inland away from the Salton Sea in fall. Eight Wandering Tattlers around Pt. Sal July 15 (RW) were the first fall migrants noted this year. A Ruddy Turnstone at N.E.S.S., July 30 (KC) was inland. Seventeen Short-billed Dowitchers near Lancaster July 9 (JD) were fall migrants, the first being noted on the coast about a week earlier. Migrant Surf-birds appeared in n. Santa Barbara County in mid-July (four on July 17 and 11 on July 23) (RW). Seven Red Knots at S.E.S.S., July 12 (DP) were the only ones found away from the coast. An imm. Semipalmated Sandpiper at the Santa Ynez R. estuary July 29-30 (RW) was the first identified this fall. A Baird's Sandpiper at the Santa Maria R. estuary, Santa Barbara Co., June 18 (LB) and another there July 10 (LB) were both identified as adults, three at the Santa Ynez R. estuary July 29-30 (REW) being the first immatures of the fall. Exceptional was a Pectoral Sandpiper near Betteravia, Santa Barbara Co., July 21 (RW) and another at the Santa Clara R. estuary June 29 (REW) since few are record-

ed during the summer period in s. California. A Dunlin at the Santa Clara R. estuary July 13+ (LRB) was unexpected since few occur in California between May and September. An ad. Stilt Sandpiper at the Santa Maria R. estuary June 29-30 (LB) and another in Goleta July 6-16 (LRB) were along the coast where scarce, and were exceptionally early for fall migrants.

GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMERS—As usual a few Glaucous-winged Gulls summered along the coast, with eight reported in Santa Barbara County (LB), five in Ventura County (RW) and one on San Diego Bay (GMCC). Much more unusual was an imm. Herring Gull at the Santa Maria R. estuary July 31 (RW), another near Imperial Beach June 22 (GMCC) and a third at S.E.S.S. Aug. 9 (DP), since there are few specific records of this species in s. California during the summer. Up to five first-summer Franklin's Gulls were regularly seen at N.E.S.S. throughout the period (GMCC); non-breeding birds have been found on the Salton Sea most summers in recent years. Once again large numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls summered in the Region, with groups such as 30 at the Santa Maria R. estuary (LB), 22 at the Santa Clara R. estuary (RW) and ten near Imperial Beach (GMCC), still present along the coast at the end of the period, along with 20 inland near Lancaster throughout the period (JD). Of extreme interest was the presence of two pairs of Heermann's Gulls attempting to nest on Shell Beach Rocks off Vandenberg A.F.B. in May and June (GL, AD); both pairs built nests, and one nest contained an egg May 27, but both nests had been abandoned by July, indicating that the attempt failed. There is no previous record of Heermann's Gull nesting in California. [But see p. 926—Ed.] A Least Tern at Mitchell's Camp s. of Palo Verde June 19-20 (RM) is one of but two or three ever recorded along the Colorado River. Black Skimmers were scarce on the Salton Sea, and probably did not nest; however, 30± pairs did nest on San Diego Bay, with many juveniles flying at the end of the period. A Black Skimmer at Pt. Mugu July 19 (RW), two at the Santa Clara R. estuary June 10-14 (REW) and another there July 19 (RW) were the only ones found along the coast n. of San Diego.

ALCIDS—Common Murres were present along the entire coastline in July, but numbers found along the Santa Barbara and Ventura county coastline were unprecedented, with counts such as 21,000 at Pt. Sal Aug. 1 (LB) and 1020 at Pt. Mugu July 19 (RW). Pigeon Guillemots were found nesting on the coast of Santa Barbara County, with 10-12 pairs at Pt. Sal (LB) and 300-350 pairs at Pt. Arguello (GL); an immature at Pt. Mugu July 19 (RW) had wandered some distance from the nearest known nesting locality. Unexpected was a pair of Marbled Murrelets at Pt. Sal July 15+ (AD), this species is not known to occur s. of Big Sur in Monterey Co. during the summer. Possibly related to the influx of last winter were two Ancient Murrelets near Cayucos June 23 (JMc), two more at Pt. Arguello July 18 (AD, JN) and another at Pt. Mugu Aug. 3 (RW). Intriguing is a report of 25± Rhinoceros Auklets at Pt. Arguello throughout the sum-

mer (GL) with birds seen entering burrows July 17-18 (AD), but not found to have laid eggs. Rhinoceros Auklets are not known to nest s. of the Farallon Is.

PIGEONS THROUGH HUMMING-BIRDS—A Band-tailed Pigeon at the Santa Ynez R. estuary July 4 (LRB) was away from any known nesting area. A White-winged Dove at New Cuyama, Santa Barbara Co., July 17 (RHa) was w. of the species' normal range. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Tecopa, Inyo Co., July 4 (JT) was the only one found w. of the Colorado R. valley. A Long-eared Owl at Barka Slough, Santa Barbara Co., July 16 (RW) was in an area from which few have been recorded. Unexpected were up to 12 Short-eared Owls at Harper Dry L. during April and May, with 3 active nests discovered (PR), for nesting records are few for s. California, and this establishes the first occurrence of nesting in the desert region of s.e. California. Whip-poor-wills were heard calling near Big Pine in the San Gabriel Mts. June 15 (KGa); although there is strong evidence indicating this species breeds in the mountains of s. California, an actual nest and/or recently fledged young have yet to be observed. A Chimney Swift was at Goleta June 7 (EG), four were over Santa Barbara June 9 (LRB) and at least two were around Burbank June 3-July 15 (JD, KGa); this species is now found in s. California annually, occurring in late spring, with some non-breeders remaining through the summer. Territorial Costa's Hummingbirds were found throughout June and July as far n. as Pt. Sal (LB) which is significantly n. of the species' recorded breeding range along the coast. Active Allen's Hummingbird nests were found at Marina del Rey, Los Angeles Co., May 22 & 24 (JJ), and a third was found in Newport Beach, Orange Co., Apr. 19 (SR), both localities being outside the species' breeding range, but the subspecies involved was not determined in either case. The migratory form *sasin* nests s. to Pt. Mugu, and possibly Malibu (*Am. Birds* 33:897, 1979), whereas the resident race *sedentarius* occurs on the Channel Is., and the Palos Verdes Pen.; one form would appear as likely as the other. A territorial pair of Calliope Hummingbirds on Hot Springs Mt., San Diego Co., June 4-July 22 (PU, DWP) were a little s. of the species' recorded breeding range.

KINGFISHERS, WOODPECKERS—Two Belted Kingfisher nests were found in Santa Barbara County (RW, JGre), and 20± summering birds, some suspected to be on breeding territories, were present at various localities in the coastal lowlands, and along the w. slope of the mountains, s. to San Diego County; documented nesting records have been few indeed in recent years, and this species may be in trouble as a breeding bird of s. California. Three pairs of Yellow-bellied (Red-breasted) Sapsuckers nesting on Mt. Palomar (RH) were at the s. limit of the species' breeding range. An ad. Williamson's Sapsucker accompanied by two juveniles on Pine Mt., Ventura Co., July 30 (JGra) gives us the first evidence of nesting in this area of California.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS—An E. Kingbird at Tinemaha Res., in the Owens

Valley June 6 (CA), was in an area where nesting has previously been suspected. A nesting pair of W. Kingbirds in Goleta (LB) was unusual since the species normally avoids the immediate vicinity of the coast in summer. A Black Phoebe at the summit of Mt. Pinos (8000 ft) June 4 (GG) was at an unusually high elevation for the species. Two territorial ♂ Willow Flycatchers along the Santa Margarita R. near Fallbrook, San Diego Co., June 2-July 12 (SG) were the only ones known to remain through the summer; the s. California breeding population is virtually extirpated. A Dusky Flycatcher on Hot Springs Mt., June 3-4 (PU) and another on nearby Cuyamaca Peak June 17 (CE) were at the s. extreme of the species' breeding range. Tree Swallows have declined as a breeding bird in this Region, especially in the s. portion; hence, the successful nesting of five pairs near San Diego this summer (CE) was encouraging. A pair of Barn Swallows found nesting under a freeway bridge near Lancaster July 9 (JD) established the first breeding record in the Antelope Valley, and a pair feeding young at Leo Carrillo State Beach July 8 (KGa) documented nesting along the coast of Los Angeles County. Purple Martins still attract much attention, but less than 30 pairs could be located within the Region.

CHICKADEES THROUGH THRUSHES—Chestnut-backed Chickadees were found to be fairly common in willow thickets along the coast s. to the Santa Ynez R. valley, but absent s. of there (LB), indicating that the Santa Ynez R. marks the s. limit of this species' range today; 35 years ago (Grinnell and Miller, *Pacific Coast Avifauna* 27, 1944) Cambria marked the s. limit for this species. A Red-breasted Nuthatch on Hot Springs Mt., June 24 (DWP), was away from any known breeding locality. A pair of Winter Wrens was obviously on territory in Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co., May 21-July 31 (NCS), and seen carrying food (nest and young not seen); a nest seen here in 1978 (NCS) established the southernmost breeding locality on the coast of California, the species previously known to nest no farther s. than the Little Sur R. in Monterey County. A Cañon Wren at the Santa Ynez R. estuary July 31 (RW) had wandered some distance from the nearest known locality of regular occurrence. A singing Hermit Thrush on Hot Springs Mt., June 24 (PU), suggested a pair may be nesting at that locality; breeding is undocumented s. of the San Bernardino Mts. A Townsend's Solitaire on Mt. Palomar July 19 (RHi) was s. of the species' known breeding range in California.

VIREOS, WOOD WARBLERS—A Red-eyed Vireo, a casual straggler to s. California in spring, was near Escondido, San Diego Co., May 17 (KW). A Black-and-white Warbler near Blythe June 5 (RPM) was a late spring vagrant, but one at Garey, Santa Barbara Co., July 17-19 (RW) was believed to be summering locally. A Tennessee Warbler in Coronado, San Diego Co., June 21 (EC) was exceptionally late for a spring vagrant. The presence of a Nashville Warbler at Cortelyou Spring in the San Gabriel Mts., June 18 (KGa), suggested nesting at that locality. Three Hermit Warblers were seen in the San

Gabriel Mts. during June and July (KGa); this species undoubtedly breeds here in small numbers. A pair of MacGillivray's Warblers on territory at Toad Springs Campground on Mt. Able June 16 (GG) and a singing male along the upper reaches of Agua Blanca Creek, Ventura Co., June 25 (JGra) gave us the first evidence of nesting in this area; however, this species is well established as a summer resident in the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mts. to the s. and e. An Am. Redstart in Ojai, Ventura Co., June 16 (JGra) was a late spring straggler, but another at Garey July 17-23 (RW) appeared to be a non-breeding bird summering locally.

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH SPARROWS—A ♂ Orchard Oriole near the Ozena Ranger Station in the Cuyama Valley of Ventura Co., June 12 (JGra) was probably a late spring vagrant. The Great-tailed Grackle found at L. Cachuma May 6 remained through the summer (LRB). A ♂ Summer Tanager at Montaña de Oro S.P., near Morro Bay, June 3 (JFK) was a spring vagrant. A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen near Lompoc, Santa Barbara Co., July 21 (REW), another was in Goleta July 6 (LB) and a third was in Julian, San Diego Co., July 20-22 (FJ); one or two of these birds are found in s. California almost every summer. The only Indigo Bunting reported was a male along the upper Santa Ynez R., July 22 (JGre). Singing Lazuli Buntings present in citrus groves around Blythe during June (RPM) indicate the species is nesting in that area of California. One or two Green-tailed Towhees were seen on Hot Springs Mt. during June (PU) and twelve were counted on Cuyamaca Peak June 17 (CGE), marking the s. limit of the species' breeding range in California. A pair of Brown Towhees accompanied by two juveniles at 6200 ft on Mt. Palomar June 29 (RHi) was exceptionally high in the mountains. Most interesting was a singing Vesper Sparrow in Lockwood Valley, Ventura Co., June 12 (JGra), for the habitat there is suitable for nesting; however, except for their occurrence in one area in the San Bernardino Mts., this species is unknown as a breeding bird s. of Tulare and Inyo counties. Dark-eyed (Oregon) Juncos are now resident along the coast s. to the vicinity of Oxnard, breeding in areas supporting large stands of eucalyptus trees; in former years (Grinnell and Miller, *loc. cit.*) this species nested no farther s. along the coast than n. San Luis Obispo County. Sixteen Fox Sparrows were counted on Cuyamaca Peak June 17 (CGE), the s. limit of the species' range.

CORRIGENDUM—A line was omitted from the sentence about Clay-colored Sparrows in s. California during the winter of 1979-80, and it should be amended to read "...another in Long Beach Dec. 29+ (BD), one near Irvine Jan. 3-Feb. 29 (DW) and a fifth near Imperial Beach Nov. 25-Feb. 29+ (DPa)." (see *Am. Birds* 34:308, 1980).

CONTRIBUTORS—Carol Annable, Larry R. Ballard, Louis Bevier (coordinator for Santa Barbara County), Guy Boothby, Kurt Campbell, Jim Coatsworth, Elizabeth Copper, Richard Covert, Nancy Crawford, Anthony DeGange, Jon Dunn, Claude G.

Edwards, Doug Elerath, A. Sidney England, Michael Evans, William T. Everett, **Kimball Garrett** (KGa) (co-ordinator for Los Angeles County), Greg Gillson, Ken Goldman (KGa), Sharon Goldwasser, Jesse Grantham (JGra), Eileen Gray, Jim Greaves (JGre), Rob Hansen (RHan), Ron Haywood (RHay), Roger Higson (RHi), Janet Holbrook, Eric V. Johnson, Forrest Johnson, Jerry A. Johnson, Paul Jorgensen, John P. Kelly, J.F. Kilfoil, David King, Paul Lehman, Gary S. Lester, **Richard P. Martin** (coordinator for the Colorado River Valley), J. McDonald, Jim Morris, Jay W. Nelson, Dennis Parker, Terry Polanski, David W. Povey, **Sylvia J. Ranney** (coordinator for Orange County), Royce B. Riggan, Paul Roush, Larry R. Salata, Brad K. Schram, Arthur L. Souls, Hal and Nancy Spear (H & NS), Mike and Carol Stalder (M & CS), Glen Stewart, Margaret A. Stewart, Nathan C. Sweet, **Fern R. Tainter** (coordinator for San Luis Obispo County), Jan Tarble, Scott and Linda Terrill (S & LT), Betsy Tetlow, **Philip Unitt** (coordinator for San Diego County), Wesley W. Weathers, Ken Weaver, **Richard E. Webster** (coordinator for Ventura County), Doug Willick. Photograph on file (ph), San Diego Natural History Museum (S.D.N.H.M.).-**GUY MCCASKIE**, San Diego Natural History Museum, P.O. Box 1390, San Diego, California 92112.