

SOUTHWEST REGION

/Kenneth V. Rosenberg, John P. Hubbard and Gary H. Rosenberg

Early summer saw a continuation of the hot and dry conditions that prevailed in spring. However, the late June-July monsoon brought more rain to the Region than normal, allowing excellent vegetative growth and plentiful surface water in some areas.

When the summer picture was finally complete, we had learned much about the breeding species in several new areas. We want to express special thanks for detailed reports received from areas subjected to intensive inventory; especially to M. Kasprzyk *et al.*, in the lower Colorado Valley (hereafter, L.C.V.), W. Howe *et al.*, in the middle Rio Grande Valley (hereafter, R.G.V.), J. Trochet and A. McCallum in the Zuni Mountains area, J. Egbert in the lower Gila Valley of New Mexico (hereafter, G.V.), and C. Hunter *et al.*, in the Pecos Valley.

We also appreciate the increase in reports by our visiting birders, but we cannot stress enough the importance of including documentary photographs or detailed descriptions, so these may be reviewed by our local committees.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — A winter-plumaged Arctic Loon at Ramah Res., June 16 (†JT) and a White Pelican at Blue-water L., July 10 (DAM) were unusual summer stragglers in New Mexico. After several summers of residency at Abiquiu L., **Double-crested Cormorants** bred successfully for the first time in n. New Mexico, with 60 birds and 3 nests with young found there July 22 (*JPH *et al.*).

A Great Blue Heron colony near Glenwood, N. Mex., containing 11 nests and several large young July 27 (JPH, D. Nelson) is the first known from the San Francisco drainage. At least 12 ad. and imm. Black-crowned Night Herons along the Little Colorado R., near St. Johns, Ariz., June 12 may have represented a new breeding locality (DT). Reports of these herons in unusual places and/or numbers in New Mexico included three at Zuni June 29 (JT), two near Cliff July 26 (JE, JPH), and 12+ near Mesilla July 27-29 (DJ).

Unusual were lingering summer White-faced Ibises, with eight at Zuni June 2 and ten there June 26, and singles near Isleta, N. Mex., June 25 & July 10 (WHO *et al.*).

WATERFOWL — Blue-winged Teal were reported to have nested in Arizona, near Show Low (LP), with other birds in June at

suitable lakes near Flagstaff (JS). A ♀ Wood Duck remained at Nogales, Ariz., through the period (KK). At least 80 Com. Mergansers at Abiquiu L., N. Mex., July 22 included a female attending 35+ small young (*JPH *et al.*).

Up to 30 Redheads were at Zuni through early July (JT), and some may have bred. Apparent summer stragglers there in June included small numbers of Ring-necked Ducks, Canvasbacks and Buffleheads (JT). The latter two were also on several n. Arizona lakes, where not known to breed (JS).

RAPTORS — A count of 160+ Black Vultures near Nogales July 18 (GP) was exceptionally high for Arizona. Mississippi Kites have apparently declined in the R.G.V. in recent years, so up to four near Los Lunas June 26-July 16 were notable, as were singles at Bernalillo June 23 and near Isleta June 14 (WHO *et al.*). In addition, 1-2 near Mesilla, N. Mex., July 5 & 26-27 (DJ) and a probable one near Ft. Sumner June 23 (TH) were of interest.

Single Ferruginous Hawks at St. Johns, Ariz., June 12 (DT) and nearby Springerville June 28 (KR, ST) were in areas where breeding is possible but unrecorded. A Com. Black Hawk again summered in the Bill Williams

Delta, L.C.V., where first recorded in 1979 (MK *et al.*). Another 25 were counted in the G.V., May 15-June 16 (JE).

Central Arizona's desert-riparian nesting Bald Eagles had their best season in 5 years of study, with 14 young fledged from 7 active nests (*vide* R.D. Ohmart). Also in suitable breeding habitat was a ♂ Marsh Hawk flushed near St. Johns June 12 (DT); Arizona's first nest was found in 1980. A Peregrine visited Tucson July 23-30 (KK).

GALLINULES TO GULLS — An ad. Purple Gallinule spent the period at a ranch pond near Hereford, Ariz. (E. Lehner *et al.*, ph., KR). A surge of early fall shorebirds was



Purple Gallinule, Hereford, Ariz., June 14, 1981. Photo/Ken Rosenberg.

noted regionwide, beginning in late June. For example, 400 birds of 8 common species were at a Phoenix pond by July 1 (KR). Among the rarities in New Mexico were single Am. Golden Plovers at Zuni June 24-26 (†JT) and Bosque del Apache N.W.R., June 17 (†JND *et al.*), the latter along with a Red Phalarope (ph., JND *et al.*); all were still in full breeding plumage. Other notables included a local first Short-billed Dowitcher at Zuni July 1 (†JT) and a total of five westerly Stilt Sandpipers in breeding plumage in late July at Abiquiu L. (*JPH), Cochiti (V. Hink), and Hatch (†RH). Late spring holdovers were a Stilt Sandpiper, a Baird's Sandpiper and three Long-billed Dowitchers at Bitter Lakes N.W.R. (WCH *et al.*), plus a Long-billed Curlew and a N. Phalarope at Zuni (JT), all June 2.

Common Snipe were again present at Parkview, with three there July 14 (JPH, J. Vaught), but breeding in New Mexico is still not confirmed. A flightless young Spotted Sandpiper at 8200 ft in Rice P., July 17 (DAM) was evidence of the first breeding record for the Zuni Mts. Wilson's Phalarope was added to the breeding avifauna of Arizona when 2 nests were found at Pintail L., near Show Low in June (LP). At Blue-water L., site of New Mexico's first nesting in 1980, a possible incubating male was flushed June 22; however, no nest could be found and no bird was seen there later (DAM). American Avocets also bred at Pintail L., as well as at several other new locations in n. Arizona.

California Gulls, first noted in summer in n. New Mexico in 1975, continue to build there with 60+ at El Vado-Heron lakes and small numbers at Eagle Nest and Abiquiu lakes in July; most birds were sub-adults and there was no evidence of breeding. Two second-year birds at Painted Rock Dam, Ariz.,



June 16 (DS) were also noteworthy. Arizona's third Laughing Gull was a breeding-plumaged adult at Cibola N.W.R., June 16 (†MK *et al.*). An imm. Heermann's Gull was reported from Nogales July 31 (†J. Johnson, J. Ivanov); virtually all Arizona records are in late fall.

DOVES THROUGH NIGHTJARS — A N-straggling White-winged Dove was between Grants and El Morro, N. Mex., June 1 (†JT). Common Ground Doves are now rare in New Mexico; two were in the Alamo Huecos Mts., July 7-8 (RH), and another was near Rodeo in mid-July (*vide* RH). A sensitive species in our Region, the Yellow-billed Cuckoo, was described as down by half in s.e. Arizona (RS), but numbers were the highest in 6 years in the L.C.V. (MK *et al.*). This illustrates the problem of making regional generalizations from local impressions. In the R.G.V., transects averaged three per 0.5 mi in riparian areas, and cuckoos were regularly present in treed residential areas of Albuquerque (WHO *et al.*).

A Ferruginous Owl in Sycamore Canyon, Atascosa Mts., July 4 was in a new Arizona locality (DS). Only 13 Elf Owls were counted in the G.V., May 15-June 16 (JE). Elf Owls have summered in Water Canyon, Magdalena Mts., since 1976, and in July a nestling was photographed there to substantiate breeding (PS), some 135 mi n.e. of the nearest known breeding areas. A Long-eared Owl on the San Francisco peaks n. of Flagstaff June 6 (DS) was one of few ever reported from the boreal forests of Arizona. Two Spotted Owls on the Zuni Reservation June 5 (JT) constituted the second record there and the first in summer.

An organized search for Buff-collared Nightjars in s.e. Arizona June 14-20 resulted in the discovery of 2 new United States localities. Three birds were seen and heard in the Baboquivari Mts., w. of Nogales (*vide* SM) and one was near Tucson at Tanque Verde Wash (C. Dewoerd, S. Spitzer). In

addition, two singing birds were in Aravaipa Canyon (RD, DL), where first found in 1980, and one was reported from the New Mexico portion of Guadalupe Canyon (T. Kent). Most of these birds were relocated through the summer by many visiting birders. Local first Whip-poor-wills n. of their normal range were in 3 canyons in the Zuni Mts., in June-July (DAM).

SWIFTS THROUGH KINGFISHER — Five Black Swifts were seen over Lake Peak July 31 (JPH, W. Baltosser), for the fourth summer of record in the Santa Fe area; breeding is still unproven for the species in New Mexico. A *Chaetura* swift was in Albuquerque June 13 (HS), where no member of the genus is known in summer.

Hummingbirds of note were an imm. ♂ Costa's near Rodeo, N. Mex., July 21-27 (*vide* RWH), a ♀ Violet-crowned on a nest in Garden Canyon, Huachuca Mts., July 13, and two more at Ramsey Canyon July 23+ (RS) and a male in Water Canyon in July (ph. PS). A White-eared stayed for 3 weeks at Ramsey Canyon beginning July 5 and the May bird at Summerhaven remained through summer (m.ob.). The rarest hummer was a Berylline far from feeders in Carr Canyon, Huachuca Mts., July 31-Aug. 7 (†R. Linfield *et al.*).

Surveys of Arizona's Coppery-tailed Trogons this summer tallied 84 birds and 12 nests (R. Taylor); the densest United States population may be in remote Sycamore Canyon w. of Nogales where 20 were counted July 4 (DS). A nest of Belted Kingfisher at Blue-water Cr. furnished a first for the Zuni Mts. (DAM). A bird was seen entering a possible nest cavity near Sedona June 12-13, where Arizona's first 20th century breeding occurred in 1980 (JC, S. Emslie). Kingfishers also summered in the R.G.V. (WHO *et al.*) and in the Gila drainage, where a nest was found in the latter (JPH *et al.*).

WOODPECKERS AND FLYCATCHERS — The Red-headed Woodpecker is a declining species in parts of New Mexico; as shown by the presence of only five (all adults) seen in the R.G.V. this summer (Who *et al.*). New southerly nest records of woodpeckers in the R.G.V., included a Lewis' at Belen July 6, and a Downy at Los Lunas June 12 (Who *et al.*). Surprisingly, Downy Woodpeckers far outnumbered Hairies in that valley, with the latter reported only twice (Who *et al.*). A first local nesting by Downy Woodpecker occurred in the Zuni Mts., at Ojo Bonito Canyon May 15-July 4, and the first definite Ladder-backed for the Zunis were two at Bonita Canyon July 14-15 (DAM). An early lowland Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was near Glenwood, N. Mex., July 28 (JPH).

There were nine reports of E. Kingbirds in summer in the R.G.V., but only four Cassin's there through the period were fewer than expected (Who *et al.*). Straggling kingbirds included an Eastern at Richville, Ariz., June 13 (SB *et al.*), and single Thick-billed near Portal July 1 (†KG) and e. of there in New Mexico, at Double Adobe Ranch July 14 (†J. Cook, P. Packard). Similarly, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers appeared at Sonoita, Ariz., July 28 (†D. Patten) and near Sherman, N. Mex., June 11 (*vide JE*). A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher summered in Harshaw Canyon near Patagonia, Ariz. (KK).

A Hammond's Flycatcher nest and four singing birds in Big Water Canyon June 18-19 constituted a first breeding in the Zuni Mts. (DAM) and the southernmost ever for the species. Four singing males and a pair were also near Washington Pass June 10 (JT) for the first summer record in the New Mexico portion of the Chuska Mts.; Arizona's first nesting occurred nearby in 1980. Dusky Flycatchers in new areas of occurrence in New Mexico were up to four on the Zuni Reservation June 5-28 (JT), four on Mt. Taylor June 28-29 (DAM), and one in the Chuska Mts., June 11 (DAM).

Several Willow Flycatchers were at Zuni in June (JT) for a new probable breeding area in w. New Mexico. Seventy-eight territorial Willows were censused in the G.V., in the period (JE), whereas only seven were in the R.G.V. (Who *et al.*). An active nest of Buff-breasted Flycatcher was found in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., July 1-3 (†KG), while 11 pairs were located by intensive searching in the Huachuca Mts., this summer (R. Bowers). An Olive-sided Flycatcher nest in Cottonwood Canyon July 8 (DAM) was a first for the Zuni Mts.

SWALLOWS THROUGH PARIDS — An ad. Tree Swallow feeding young near Redrock June 23 (RH) confirmed the second breeding record for the Gila drainage in New Mexico, and the species was apparently nesting at Clayton L., June 12 (K. Seyffert), for a local first. In Arizona, where nesting was first noted in 1973, 50+ Tree Swallows at Sunrise L., White Mts., May 30 (KR, DS) seem too late for spring migrants and suggested that the breeding population there may be larger than previously suspected. Five birds were at Long L., near Flagstaff June 10 (JS) and several were in the Zuni Mts., June 15-July 7 (DAM), but no evidence of nesting was found.

Black-billed Magpies now appear to be

resident at Cochiti in the R.G.V., where 30 were counted July 30-31 (Who *et al.*). The only White-necked Raven report from the R.G.V., was of five near Bernardo June 28 (Who). However, Com. Crows with young, were widespread there s. to Belen (Who *et al.*). Noisy juv. Clark's Nutcrackers in Cottonwood Canyon in late May were the first suggestion of nesting in the Zuni Mts. (DAM).

Black-capped Chickadee, only a recent resident in the R.G.V., was found to far outnumber Mountain Chickadee, with 300 vs 15 records there this summer. Most intriguing was the presence of mixed flocks and pairs in the area of overlap, with a probable hybrid seen and heard near Albuquerque July 8 (Who *et al.*). Mountain Chickadees at Aguirre Spring June 28 & July 4 (DJ) suggested that the species is resident in the Organ Mts., N. Mex. Bushtits were rare in the R.G.V., with ten at Corrales July 5 being the only ones reported (Who *et al.*).

WRENS THROUGH VIREOS — Bewick's Wrens in the R.G.V., were confined to the Cochiti area, except for one near Corrales June 2 (Who *et al.*). Most unusual were single singing Long-billed Marsh Wrens at Black L., Colfax Co., July 18 (JPH) and at Zuni June 2 (JT); breeding is known in New Mexico only in the San Juan Valley.

A pair of Gray Catbirds nested at Zuni in June (JT) for the first proven breeding in w. New Mexico. A Brown Thrasher at Petrified Forest N.P., June 14 (ST, LT) provided one of very few summer records for Arizona. A juv. E. Bluebird near Ft. Sumner, N. Mex., June 2 (TH) confirmed only the second local breeding record.

The prolific pair of **Black-capped Gnatcatchers** in Chino Canyon, Ariz., fledged their second brood of four, and were lining their third nest at the end of the period (SM, KK). Two Golden-crowned Kinglets on Mt. Taylor June 28-29 (DAM) and two on Sandia Crest, Sandia Mts., July 5 (HS) were only the second summer records for each New Mexico range.

Thirty-one Bell's Vireos were counted in the G.V., May 15-June 16 (JE). Most unusual were single **Yellow-throated Vireos** at Madera Canyon, Ariz., June 4 (†S. Gaulia) and at Zuni June 8 (†JT). Also out-of-range was a Bell's Vireo near Albuquerque June 22 and one-two Red-eyeds near Belen June 26 (Who).

WOOD WARBLERS — Regularly breeding species offered few surprises this season. An Orange-crowned nest in Big Water Canyon June 18 (DAM) provided the first breeding record for the Zuni Mts. Some 58 Virginia's Warblers in lowland riparian areas of the R.G.V. June 23-July 31 are best considered early fall migrants, since this species was not present there earlier in June and is not known to breed in such riparian areas. Yellow Warblers were surprisingly rare in the R.G.V., with only 11 reported (Who *et al.*); this sensitive species deserves close monitoring in the Southwest.

Other notable finds were single Prothonotary Warblers in Arizona near Eagar June 12 (GR), Ramsey Canyon June 18-19 (*vide J. Epler*) and Patagonia June 19 (†C. Stewart),

and a Worm-eating at Richville, Ariz., June 28 (KR *et al.*). Also, single ♂ **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were at Richville June 28 (ST) and near Santa Fe June 3 (†A. Bissell); this species is very rare as a late spring vagrant in the Far West. Arizona's sixth and seventh **Yellow-throated Warblers** were at the s. rim of the Grand Canyon June 6 (†C. Staicer, C. Benkman) and in Cave Cr. Canyon July 11 (S. Cardiff). The state's sixth **Louisiana Waterthrush** also turned up in Cave Cr. Canyon July 25 (†RS).

S.A.

It seems appropriate that Arizona's first **Swainson's Warbler** would appear at the confluence of South Fork and the Little Colorado rivers above Eagar. This unique pocket of deciduous growth at 7500 ft is home for the Region's only breeding Veeries and Am. Redstarts. Its attraction to other "eastern" species is exemplified by the occurrence of Worm-eating, Yellow-throated, and Kentucky warblers this past May, in the very same trees that produced the Swainson's June 12. The singing bird was studied at close range and tape-recorded (†GR *et al.*) for the first record w. of the Great Plains (details to be published elsewhere).

Single Ovenbirds were noted at Prescott, Ariz., in early June (CT). Madera Canyon June 11 (S. Lambeth), and in the R.G.V., at Belen June 19 and near Los Lunas July 2 (Who *et al.*). Yet another Kentucky Warbler (the fifth in Arizona since early May) was at Cave Cr. Canyon June 29-July (†KG *et al.*). Hooded Warblers continue to appear in summer with females at Socorro, N. Mex., June 10 (†P. Basham), Patagonia June 19 (J. Drewek), and near Corrales, N. Mex., July 31 (Who *et al.*).

Less spectacular were single Black-and-White Warblers at Cave Cr. Canyon June 10 (*vide SG*) and Richville June 13 (ST *et al.*), single N. Parulas at Prescott in early June (CT), and Garden Canyon July 16 (C. Gambill), and single Am. Redstarts at Richville June 13 (ST *et al.*), Ganado, Ariz., June 14 (ST *et al.*), and near Albuquerque June 17-18 (Who *et al.*). Unseasonal Townsend's Warblers were near Casa Grande, Ariz., June 30 (DL) and near Corrales July 5 (T. Weaver). A Wilson's Warbler at Ramsey Canyon July 13 (RS) was an extremely early fall migrant, as was a Hermit Warbler in the Chiricahua Mts., July 25 (RS).

ICTERIDS AND TANAGERS — Notable June records of presumed breeding species on the Zuni Reservation included up to six E. Meadowlarks, six Com. Grackles, and three Great-tailed Grackles (JT); all were only recently reported in that area. A ♂ N. (Baltimore) Oriole photographed there was paired with a ♀ N. (Bullock's) Oriole and they are thought to have bred (JT). Summer Tanagers were present again in the Ft. Sumner area, N. Mex., with four there June 2-3 (WCH *et al.*).

FRINGILLIDS — Single Cardinals at Albuquerque July 27 (Who) and in the Alamo Hueco Mts., N. Mex., July 9 (RH), were stragglers at best. A singing ♂ Pyrrhuloxia n. of Ehrenberg July 4 (MK) provided the

second record for the immediate L.C.V., and the first for the Arizona side. The seventh United States occurrence of Yellow Grosbeak was a male at Madera Canyon June 20-26 (R. Newcomer *et al.*, ph., KR).



Yellow Grosbeak, Madera Canyon, Ariz., June 26, 1981. Photo/Ken Rosenberg.

Two imm. ♂ Varied Buntings in the Alamo Hueco Mts., N. Mex., July 7-8 (RH) were local firsts. A ♂ Painted Bunting at Leasburg June 29 (†K. Gould) was the second recent reported in summer in the lower R.G.V. of New Mexico. Another male at the tiny oasis of Sanders in n.e. Arizona June 14 (CT, ST) was unexpected. Lazuli Buntings considerably outnumbered Indigos in the Sandia Mts. (HS) and at Zuni (JT), but the reverse was true in the R.G.V. (WWho *et al.*).

An Evening Grosbeak at a nest at Capulin

Spring, Sandia Mts., June 21 (HS *et al.*) furnished a first breeding record for that range. A very late ♀ Purple Finch at Richville, Ariz., June 13 (ST *et al.*) furnished perhaps a second summer occurrence in the Region. Cassin's Finch reports included small numbers near Zuni in June (JT), at Capulin Spring, Sandia Mts., June 1 (HS), and at Santa Fe July 18-19, including a full-grown fledgling (JPH).

Rufous-sided Towhees were widespread and numerous in the R.G.V. (WWho *et al.*) in contrast with their spottiness farther s. in the valley. Savannah Sparrows again summered at Bluewater L. (DAM), where first recorded in 1980 for New Mexico's first proven breeding; several at Black L., Colfax Co., N. Mex., July 18 (JPH) were also probable breeders. Extraordinary were three Vesper Sparrows in grassland at Elgin June 27-28 (JBD) providing first summer records in s.e. Arizona.

An ad. Cassin's Sparrow with three dependent young near Hachita July 14 (RH) represented one of the few known instances of breeding in s.w. New Mexico. This species was substantially scarcer than usual on June breeding surveys in e. New Mexico. A Gray-headed Junco near Redrock, N. Mex., June 24 (RH) was very early and unusual in the lowlands. Chipping Sparrows were present in the R.G.V., during most of the period, but were not thought to have nested there (WWho *et al.*). Late migrant Brewer's Sparrows in-

cluded three s. of Ft. Sumner June 2 (TH), whereas singles at Bernalillo July 15 and Los Lunas July 28 (WWho *et al.*) were early. Two singing Lincoln's Sparrows in Diener Canyon June 26, with one remaining all period, were summer firsts for the Zuni Mts. (DAM).

ERRATUM — Prothonotary Warbler, Albuquerque May 2, 1981 (AB 35: 851) was banded by T. Bidell, not W. Howe.

ABBREVIATIONS — †, written details on file with New Mexico Ornithological Society or Arizona Bird Committee, *, specimen.

CONTRIBUTORS (Area compilers in boldface) — S. Burge, J. Coons (Flagstaff), W. Davis, R. Dummer, J.B. Dunning (JBD), J.N. Durrie (JND), J. Egbert, K. Garrett, S. Goldwasser (Tucson), A. Higgins, T. Hildebrandt, R.W. Hill, W. Howe (WWho—Middle Rio Grande Valley), W.C. Hunter (WCH), D. Jones, M. Kasprzyk (Lower Colorado River), K. Kaufman, T. Kent, D. Laush, D.A. McCallum (DAM), S. Mills, L. Piast, G. Porter, H. Schwarz, J. Shipley, P. Stacey, R. Stallcup, D. Stejskal, S. Terrill, L. Terrill, D. Todd, C. Tomoff (Prescott), J. Trochet, J. Witzeman (Phoenix).—KENNETH V. ROSENBERG, 1010 W. 17th St., Tempe, AZ 85281; JOHN P. HUBBARD, 2016 Valle Rio, Santa Fe, NM 87501; GARY H. ROSENBERG, 1010 W. 17th St., Tempe, AZ 85281.