

## SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona, Sonora

/Janet Witzeman

During the summer of 1982 there seemed to be more and later lingering migrants than usual, plus an interesting assortment of northward wanderers from Mexico. However, the most significant discoveries of the summer were probably those of the regular breeding species in new areas. In many cases this represented not necessarily a range extension, but an extension of our knowledge from having explored new or seldom-visited areas. Throughout the following report are records from this summer's visits to the newly explored areas of Beaver Dam Wash at Littlefield in extreme northwestern Arizona, Pastora Peak in the Carrizo Mountains in the extreme northeastern part of the state, San Carlos Reservoir, southeast of Globe and the new sewage ponds at Holbrook.

Another important visit was made to Sonora, Mexico to two areas between Moctezuma and Mazagahin. In one canyon, only 120 miles south of the border, Danforth and Moorhouse recorded two Rufous-capped Warblers, four Streak-backed Orioles, two Nutting's Flycatchers 10-12 Buff-collared Nightjars and two Military Macaws! "Such stuff as dreams are made on" while birding Arizona's southern border.

In relation to that I would like to express appreciation for the ever increasing numbers of detailed reports and photographs that are sent to me by birders visiting southern Arizona from other states. However, especially in summer, there are still many sketchy reports or rumors of significant finds that are never documented. Most reports made to the Southwest Research Station never reach the ears of Arizona birders (who would like to hear about them) or more importantly, never reach the pages of the state's records. The taped bird alert message of the Tucson Audubon Society (881-WING) should be called by everyone visiting Arizona. The birder will learn not only valuable information about "what" and "where" but also the current



numbers to call to report rare and unusual findings. Please do not assume "you must have heard this by now" because in some cases we have not. And a phone call at the time of the sighting is more valuable than a letter "after the fact."

**PELICANS THROUGH FRIGATEBIRDS** —White Pelicans were wandering through the state in mid-June as they do occasionally. A flock of 112 stopped at the Mammoth sewage ponds n.e. of Tucson June 10 (BHa) and 40± visited the Chandler sewage ponds s. of Phoenix June 14 (*vide* PB). Finding fish at the larger San Carlos Res., a flock remained there at least during July (B. Thomas). The only area in the state where Double-crested Cormorants consistently nest is on the Lower Colorado River (hereafter, L.C.R.). On June 9,

50+, including one on a nest, were observed at San Carlos Res. (BHa) where the species was found nesting once previously—in 1968. An Olivaceous Cormorant, far w. of its normal range, was observed with a Double-crested in L. Havasu June 18 (†CH, RH, LL).

This summer's Magnificent Frigatebirds were two seen soaring in a strong wind on a stormy afternoon over the Interstate in Tucson July 29 by 2 sets of observers (GM, DL, S. Larson, B. Knapp). There has been only one previous record from Tucson; most have come from farther w. along the L.C.R., or Gila R.

**HERONS THROUGH WATERFOWL** — A Green Heron was seen at Vail L., near Flagstaff in early June (TM, JC) and four were at Beaver Dam Wash July 25-26 (JC, TS). There are few records of this species in n. Arizona. A small "invasion" of Little Blue Herons reached s. Arizona. In addition to the one in mid-May, there were three adults in Tucson June 7, another there July 10 (GM *et al.*) and possibly up to four at Hereford July 15 (T & CK). Another Louisiana Heron (the second this year) wandered N on the early date of June 22 and remained at least through July at Tucson (DS *et al.*). Several adult and at least one young Black-crowned Night Heron were observed during the summer at St. Johns, e. Arizona (BHe) where the species was first found nesting a year ago. Two were at Many Farms L., June 6 (BHa) and there were more mid-summer records than usual at Prescott where it is usually only transient (CT).

Least Bittern was suspected of nesting in a new area—at Chino Valley, n. of Prescott when one was found there in June 1977, but evidence was lacking until this summer when a pair and at least one downy young were observed (P. Schneider, *vide* CT). Six Least Bitterns were found in 2 new areas w. of Phoenix along the Gila R., near Arlington in late May-early June (DT *et al.*), and one was recorded July 22 at Picacho Res., where its occurrence in summer is erratic (GM). An Am. Bittern at Beaver Dam Wash July 25-26 (JC, TS) added to only a handful of summer records for the state.

Eighteen Wood Storks counted at Martinez L., L.C.R., June 20 was a high number for this uncommon summer visitor; nine were still there July 22 (W. Brehends). Another was at Cibola N.W.R., June 30 (DK *et al.*).

A Whistling Swan seen flying around San Carlos Res., June 9 was probably a hold-over from the winter invasion and provided the first summer record for the state (BHa).

An ad. Black-bellied Whistling Duck at Willow L., in Prescott July 23 (H & AG, CT) was n. w. of the species' normal range. A ♀ Green-winged Teal with two young at Tucson June 5 (GG) provided the first evidence of nesting away from the species' traditional nesting area on the Mogollon Rim. Blue-winged Teal observed on 3 of the seasonal lakes near Flagstaff through the summer (JC) and a pair at Pintail L., June 2 (SD, KK, HL, JW) suggested that the species may have been breeding at one or all of these localities. There is only one record of successful nesting in the state. Bufflehead were also present the entire season near Flagstaff (JC) and a female was seen spring Springerville June 8 (BHa), but so far there has been no nesting record for Arizona. The ♀ Wood Duck near Nogales was still present July 17 (RBr) and one was at Tucson July 31 (RN, VJ).

**RAPTORS** — Multiple **White-tailed Kites** were discovered at Marana, n. of Tucson—three June 5 (DS) and five July 15 (KK *et al.*)—and remained at least into August. The dozen or so previous records were of individuals, all in spring or fall. An extralimital ad. Mississippi Kite observed at Bill Williams Delta (hereafter, B.W. Delta) July 24 (†CH, DK) was the first for the L.C.R.

A pair of **Zone-tailed Hawks** was reported nesting for at least the second consecutive year at Pine L., in the Hualapi Mts., near the n.w. limit of the species' range (J. Gerhart, *vide* DT). An ad. and imm. Black Hawk were found July 22 in a new area—the Sierra Ancha Mts., n. of Globe (D. Theobald, L. Kepner). The **Ferruginous Hawk** is an uncommon resident of n. Arizona, so of interest was one near Petrified Forest N.P., June 4 (KK, SD, HL, JW). A pair of Marsh Hawks near Holbrook June 4 raised suspicions that the species might have been breeding there (KK *et al.*). Except for a pair found nearby in June 1977, there has been no evidence of breeding in e. Arizona since 1890.

Records of **Osprey** in n. and e. Arizona are scarce in summer. A pair was found nesting in late May-early June in a pine tree at 6500 ft in a canyon near Upper L. Mary (T. Britt); and the known nest site on the Black R., in the White Mts., was active again this summer (J. O'Neil, *vide* DT). An Osprey at Prescott July 7-9 was unusual for this time of year (CT).

**RAILS, SHOREBIRDS** — Sora has not been found breeding on the L.C.R., so of interest was one calling in the B.W. Delta June 8 (JJ). Common Gallinule is uncommon in n. Arizona; two were seen often on Vail L., in early June (JC, TM).

A late **Snowy Plover** at Lees Ferry June 10 (B. Brown *et al.*) was one of only a few records from the n. part of the state. Anomalous June records of Willets included two at Sierra Vista June 19 (DDa *et al.*), 45 at Cibola N.W.R., June 23 (DK, CR) and 25 at L. Havasu June 24 (DK, RH, JJ). The first **Whimbrel** appeared on the L.C.R., at Cibola on the early date of June 30 (DK). An early **Long-billed Curlew** arrived on the L.C.R., June 23 (JJ) and three were at McNeal, s.e. Arizona July 10 (AM).

**Avocets** are expanding their breeding range in n. Arizona. At Petrified Forest sewage pond, where nesting was suspected last year, there were six pairs and one young June 2, and at Chinle sewage ponds were two pairs and one young June 4 (JW, KK *et al.*). The old Holbrook sewage ponds (now abandoned) hosted one of the first state nesting records—in the late 1960s (*vide* SD). A least eight pairs were nesting in June at Pintail L., near Show Low for the second year (LP), numbers were present at Chevelon Wildlife Area, s.e. of Winslow where nesting occurred for the first time a year ago (*vide* DT) and up to 20 were at Long L., near Flagstaff in early June where the species has nested in recent summers (JC). In s. Arizona about 10 pairs were breeding as usual at Willcox (SG), at the Phoenix sewage pond there was only one pair June 14 (PB, JW) and a pair acting territorial at the Arlington marsh w. of Phoenix in late May (DT, G. Burton).

**Wilson's Phalarope** (one pair) nested at Pintail L., where the species was first found breeding in the state a year ago (LP). A pair was at the Holbrook sewage ponds June 4 (HL, SD, KK, JW).

**GULLS, PIGEONS** — An ad. **Sabine's Gull** at a golf course pond in Green Valley June 4-7 (D. Shafter, GP *et al.*) was out of place and time to say the least. There are no previous summer records. A late **Franklin's Gull** and 40 **Ring-billed Gulls** were at San Carlos Res., June 9 (BHa).

Twelve **Band-tailed Pigeons** were observed on Pastora Peaks June 6 (BHa) and two were recorded in the nearby Chuska Mts., July 4, 1980 (K. & G. Rosenberg). There are only a few previous records in this infrequently visited part of the state.

**OWLS, NIGHTJARS** — A pair of **Ferruginous Owls** (first discovered in March) were feeding young July 3, and remained until at least July 25 (B. Bristow, GP, m.ob.). **Long-eared Owls** were found nesting in a new locality: an adult with three young were observed in Chino Valley May 23-June 26 (L. McClelland, ph., M. Durkos).

**Buff-collared Nightjars** continued to be found in new canyons. A pair was seen during the day in California Gulch in the Atascosa Mts., w. of Nogales June 20 (DDa, RBa) and at least four (including a courting pair) were seen and/or heard July 4 (RN, VJ, J. Kennedy). At least one was heard calling in Chino Canyon June 21 to at least late July (GM *et al.*), and one was heard in Sycamore Canyon July 3 (CDeW, JS *et al.*). At least two were in Arivaipa Canyon for the third year (m.ob.) and one returned to Tanque Verde Wash in Tucson where it was heard July 1 (CDeW, GM *et al.*). A **Whip-poor-will** heard in French Joe Canyon in the Whetstone Mts., June 3 was in a new locality (GM).

**HUMMINGBIRDS** — This summer was probably the best ever for the variety of "Mexican" hummingbirds that travelled into the canyons of s.e. Arizona, and the rarest of them came in twos. Two **Plain-capped Starthroats**, found frequenting a feeder in Madera Canyon July 17 (DS, RBo, JD *et al.*), remained at least to mid-August (R. Newcomer). The four or five previous records have all been of individuals. There were also two **Berylline Hummingbirds**: singles at Ramsey Canyon feeders June 22-27 (†JE, D & TC *et al.*) and at the Southwest Research Station (hereafter, S.W.R.S.), June 26-28 (S. Pimm *et al.*).

A ♂ **Lucifer Hummingbird** was at a feeder in Portal for 2 weeks in mid-June and again from July 28 into August (RM, JS, S & WS), and at least one female was there June 23-27 (†D. Williams, JB, DDe). A ♂ **White-eared Hummingbird** was at a Portal feeder from May 29 into early June (S & WS) and another was in Cave Cr. Canyon July 13 (RS).

More **Calliope Hummingbirds** than usual were reported: two males and at least one female were at Portal July 24 (SS), a male was in Madera Canyon July 26 (C. Babbitt) and a male and female were in

Ramsey Canyon July 28 into August (RS *et al.*). In the out-of-normal-place category were a ♂ Rivoli's Hummingbird in the Sierra Ancha Mts., July 25-27 (CT), an Anna's Hummingbird on Signal Peak, Pinal Mts., June 15-16 (D. Bailey) and a ♂ Anna's at Portal feeders July 17 (SS, RM).

Spring and summer records of Broad-billed Hummingbirds at Boyce Thompson Arboretum near Superior have been accumulating for years and it has been assumed that they nest there. The first proof occurred May 31 when a nest with two young was photographed there. A ♂ Broad-billed was seen nearby (BJ).

**KINGFISHERS THROUGH CORVIDS** — A pair of Belted Kingfishers was seen near the 1980 nest site at Spring Cr., near Sedona in late May (JC); and a pair was at S. Fork, near Springerville June 20 (JW *et al.*), but still no evidence of nesting has been found there in this century. A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker seen June 2 at Barfoot P. (JB) furnished about the third summer record for the Chiricahua Mts., where the species has not been found breeding.

A family group of Rose-throated Becards and an abandoned nest were seen during July in Guadalupe Canyon (RS, KK *et al.*). There is only one previous definite record from that area. A least one Oliveaceous Flycatcher in the Sierra Ancha Mts., June 8 (MA) was n. of its usual range. Twelve singing ♂ Dusky Flycatchers were counted in the Carrizo Mts., June 6, and four there July 5, 1981 (BHa) added another locality to the species' summer range in n. and n.w. Arizona. During a study of the breeding and life history of Buff-breasted Flycatchers, 39 individuals were tallied, most in the usual places in the Huachuca Mts., but also several in canyons on the w. side of the Chiricahuas and three in Rose Canyon in the Santa Catalina Mts., for the second time in recent years (RBo).

Two nests of Barn Swallows found June 22 in Tucson were in a new area (GM). Unusual was one seen in the Pinal Mts., June 7 (J. Loew). The Cave Swallow at Tucson was observed gathering mud June 10 (DS). Three Purple Martins were seen June 3 at Ganado L., where the species is uncommon (KK *et al.*) and one on the late date of June 19 at Sierra Vista (DDa *et al.*).

Clark's Nutcrackers, recorded in May, continued to be seen in the Chiricahua Mts. Up to five were there June 17-27 (KG *et al.*).

**TITMICE THROUGH PHAINOPEPLAS** — A Bridled Titmouse was at a low elevation in Tucson July 8 (DS). Red-breasted Nuthatches were unusually numerous in the s.e. mountains and one was near Marana July 10 for an unprecedented lowland summer record (KK, EC). A Le Conte's Thrasher near Poston July 18 (†CH) was away from its regular areas and habitat.

Two **Aztec Thrushes** were discovered: a female in Garden Canyon, Huachuca Mts., July 23 (†M. & T. Root) and a male in Madera Canyon July 28 (†D. Ekdahl, †C. Vigno). Curiously, the only previous records were of two individuals occurring in these same two areas and within a few days of each other (May 1978). How many more wandered into canyons not frequented by birders?

The Veery was not detected at its usual place at S. Fork, White Mts., in either June or July (RBr, DS *et al.*) however, a pair of Swainson's Thrushes was back at that location June 20 (and acting territorial) for the fifth consecutive year (JW *et al.*).

A pair of **Black-capped Gnatcatchers** with one young was observed throughout the period in Chino Canyon for the second year of successful breeding there (m.ob.). Two late Ruby-crowned Kinglets were still in Sierra Vista June 19 (DDa).

Phainopepla is usually absent from the L.C.R., in summer, so notable were at least three individuals around Ehrenberg and a pair at Cibola N.W.R., in July (JJ *et al.*). Several seen at Silver Cr., near Snowflake, n.e. Arizona June 8 (BHa) lends support to the theory that the species breeds in that area.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — A singing ♂ Red-eyed Vireo in the Santa Maria Mts., n.w. of Prescott July 10 (CT) adds to several summer records for the state and was the first for that locale.

A **Yellow-throated Warbler** in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahuas from late June at least to July 7 (ph., EAC) was in the same area where one was found July 1981. Of the 9 state records 5 have been in summer. As usual there were numbers of Hooded Warblers, Ovenbirds and Am. Redstarts—three of each this summer. A ♀ Hooded was at the S.W.R.S., June 26-July 18 & 30 (KG, PL, RS *et al.*), a male was at Patagonia July 18 (KK *et al.*) and another male was in Cave Cr. Canyon July 30 (RS *et al.*). Individual Ovenbirds were at Portal June 12 (RM), one banded at Tucson June 24 (P. Walters) and at Cibola

N.W.R., July 9 (†DK). Individual Am. Redstarts were a female near Snowflake June 8 (BHa), one at the S.W.R.S., June 27 (KG) and a female at Patagonia July 18 (KK). A singing ♂ N. Parula was found s. of Mt. Union June 6 (CT).

Lingering late migrants were a Nashville at Patagonia June 13 (DS) and a Townsend's and three Yellow-rumped warblers at Ramsey Canyon June 19 (DDa). In a class by itself was the extremely low-elevation Red-faced Warbler in a Phoenix yard July 27 (Z. Brighton).

Orange-crowned Warbler was found nesting in a new area, the Bradshaw Mts., s. of Prescott—the first time in 1981 and again this summer (CT). Olive Warbler has occurred the past two summers near Stoneman L., s. of Flagstaff, and this year in mid-June one was found feeding young in a nest for the first breeding record in that area (C. Staicer, J. Brown). Individual ♂ MacGillivray's Warblers found in the Carrizo and nearby Chuska Mts., July 5-6, 1981 and males singing in the Carrizos June 6 this year (BHa) suggest the species may be breeding at these new locales.

**BLACKBIRDS** — Eastern Meadowlarks were found in three areas where they had not been recorded previously: one was singing at Anderson Mesa, s.e. of Flagstaff June 2 (JC), one was singing at Blue, e. Arizona June 18 (RBr) and at least three were singing near Globe June 24 (BJ). A colony of 100 Yellow-headed Blackbirds with at least 20 fledglings observed in July at a marsh n. of Elfrida (DDa) was farther s.e. than the species previously nested. Bronzed Cowbirds were noted to be more established than ever in the Prescott area (CT). One was recorded June 30 at Cibola N.W.R., where the species is scarce (JJ).

**FRINGILLIDS** — Single ♂ Cardinals were on the L.C.R., at Poston July 25 and Ehrenberg all season (RH, LL). A probable Painted Bunting was heard singing at Cibola N.W.R., July 19 (†CH, JJ). A Varied Bunting at Ft. Huachuca June 3 (JD, RBo) was the first for the Huachuca Mts. Notable records of Indigo Buntings were of one at Beaver Dam Wash July 25, 26, two males at Fredonia July 24 (JC, TS) and one (a white-bellied bird) singing in the White Mts., s.w. of McNary June 9 (BHa).

Evening Grosbeak has been recorded in the Huachuca Mts. only in recent years; this summer four were found in Carr Canyon and one in Ramsey Canyon June 19 (JS), and again in Sawmill Canyon (KK). Two were seen July 27 at Young in the Sierra Anchas where the species is erratic (CT). A singing ♂ Lawrence's Goldfinch near Superior July 8 (SW) was farther e. than the species has been recorded in summer.

The Yellow-eyed Junco was still present on Mt. Union near Prescott in mid-June (D. Moll). Brewer's Sparrow was found breeding in early June at Williams Valley n.w. of Prescott for the second year. Although breeding was suspected in summer 1980 when the species was first discovered there, documentation occurred only in 1981 when young were found (CT). An imm. White-crowned Sparrow seen near the base of Green's Peak July 10 (SW) lends credence to the supposition that the species breeds in the White Mts.

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