

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Guy McCaskie

The summer season was about normal with average temperatures and rainfall confined to thunder showers in the mountains during July. Most observers concentrated their efforts on waterbirds, and only a limited amount of time was spent with landbirds in the mountains and deserts, although the riparian habitat along the south fork of the Kern River was well surveyed, giving us some interesting data from that area.

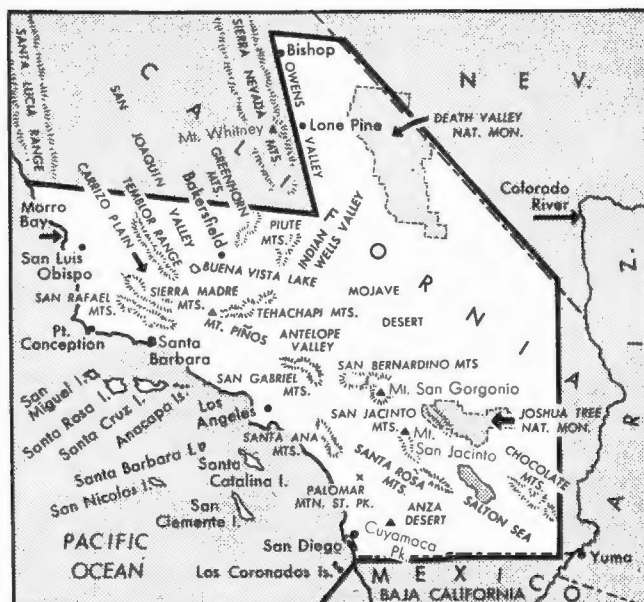
ABBREVIATIONS — K.R.P.: Nature Conservancy's Kern River Preserve near Weldon, Kern Co.; N.E.S.S.: north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.C.R.M.: Santa Clara River mouth, Ventura Co.; S.D.N.H.M.: San Diego Natural History Museum; S.E.S.S.: south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. *Birds of Southern California* by Kimball Garrett and Jon Dunn (1981) is the standard reference for the status and distribution of the birds in this Region. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file for *all* rarities listed in the report.

LOONS, GREBES — As usual all three of the regularly occurring loons were found summering along the coast with Arctic Loons the most numerous (120+ reported) and Red-throated Loons the scarcest (10 reported). A Com. Loon at Salton City along the w. shore of the Salton Sea June 5-6 (RH) was a late spring migrant, but four on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., throughout the period (PEL) and another on L. Ming near Bakersfield, Kern Co., July 5 (MaH) were evidently summering inland. An Arctic Loon on L. Cachuma July 2-20 (LBev) provided the second record of the species summering inland. The presence of a juv. W. Grebe riding on the back of an adult on Laguna L., near San Luis Obispo June 13 (DR) confirmed breeding at that locality.

SHEARWATERS — Three N. Fulmars off San Simeon, San Luis Obispo Co., July 29 (MB) had evidently summered locally; small numbers regularly summer off s. California following winters during which the species is numerous offshore.

PELICANS, FRIGATEBIRDS — A count of 45 Brown Pelicans, now regular post-breeding visitors to the Salton Sea, was made at that inland body of water July 31 (GMcC) after the first appeared in May; one on the California side of L. Havasu, San Bernardino Co., July 9 (DKr) and another on L. Hodges, San Diego Co., July 10 (KW) were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. Magnificent Frigatebirds were exceptionally scarce with 4 sightings at the Salton Sea during July and one along the coast at Aliso Beach, Orange Co., July 29 (V & WG).

HERONS — Known nesting localities for Great Blue Herons are few; hence, it was of interest to learn of 6 active nests at Anaheim L., near Anaheim, Orange Co. (SJR) and 3 more active nests at nearby Vila Park Dam (IL). An ad. Little Blue Heron at N.E.S.S., June 6 (GMcC) was evidently a late spring vagrant. A pair of Little Blue



Heron nested for the third year in a row near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., fledging three young July 18 (EC), the birds being joined by a one-year old in the "calico" dress that same day (GMcC). A pair of Great Egrets fledged three young in a Great Blue Heron nesting colony at Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo Co. (TE); there were no previous nesting records for the coast of s. California. Some 20 pairs of Snowy Egrets again nested near Imperial Beach (GMcC) and breeding-plumaged birds around L. Hodges all summer (KW) were believed to be nesting locally. The ad. Yellow-crowned Night Heron found at San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego Co., May 30 was still present July 19 (TM). Two Least Bitterns in Santa Barbara throughout the summer (PEL) were the only ones reported from along the coast outside San Diego County, and one at K.R.P., all summer (JSR) was at an unusual locality being at 3000 ft in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mts. One or two Am. Bitterns at Vee-H Res., in Lake Forest, Orange Co., July 21-25 (EBP) and another at San Elijo Lagoon June 16 (TAM) were in areas suitable for nesting.

WATERFOWL — Up to six Brant at N.E.S.S., through July 24 (GMcC) were stragglers from spring. Two pairs of Blue-winged Teal accompanied by young at S.C.R.M., in June (MaH) were at the exact location of the first nesting record for the Region in 1980. A ♀ Wood Duck at L. Henshaw, San Diego Co., June 8-14 (RH) was far s. for the time of the year. Six Ring-necked Ducks on Big Bear L., in the San Bernardino Mts., June 19 (JO) were very late if not summering. A Canvasback, rare in summer, was in Carlsbad, San Diego Co., June 14 (TAM), up to four were at Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co., June 13-26 (LRB) and five were on Big Bear/Baldwin Lakes June 19 (REW). A Greater Scaup, casual in summer, was near Santa Maria, Santa Barbara Co., June 25-July 10 (LBev) and three more were at the Santa

Ynez R. mouth July 29 (LBev). A Bufflehead, not quite as rare as the preceding species in summer, was at Oso Flaco L., San Luis Obispo Co., July 26 (JSR), another was at Pt. Mugu June 6-13 (LBev) and a third was found near Imperial Beach Aug. 21-22 (GMcC). The ♂ Harlequin Duck originally found in Carlsbad in December 1977 was still present June 27 (JO). A White-winged Scoter, very rare inland, was at N.E.S.S., June 26-Aug. 7 (GMcC) and was accompanied by a Surf Scoter June 26-July 10 (SMD). A Hooded Merganser near Cayucos, San Luis Obispo Co., June 2-July 18 (TE) was the first known to have occurred in s. California in summer.

HAWKS, GROUSE — A Mississippi Kite in Long Beach, Los Angeles Co., June 21 (BD) and another near Imperial Beach July 18 (GMcC) were both one-year old birds with banded tails, and were only the third and fourth to be found along the coast. A Sharp-shinned Hawk, rare in the mountains of s. California in summer, was at the summit of Mt. Palomar, San Diego Co., July 14 (RHi). The presence of a juv. Swainson's Hawk near Lancaster, Los Angeles Co., Aug. 14 (KLG) suggested that the species again nested in the Antelope Valley; two immatures near Santa Maria July 24+ (TW) were the first to have been found in that area at this time of the year in modern times. One ad. Zone-tailed Hawk was present on Santa Rosa Mt., Riverside Co., June 19-July 17 (JO), but there was no evidence of nesting; this is the location where a pair attempted nesting during the past 4 years. Non-breeding Peregrine Falcons were seen at S.E.S.S., June 6 (JO) and Aug. 7 (REW), near Santa Maria July 10 (LBev), and in the San Diego area June 30-July 1 (EC) and July 3 (MBS). An ad. Sage Grouse accompanying a partially grown young at Reed Flat in the White Mts., Inyo Co., July 7 (G. Frederick, *vide* JLD) was at the extreme s. limit of the species' current range.

SHOREBIRDS — A Black Oystercatcher near Imperial Beach June 13 (DPa) was at a most unusual locality. Semipalmated Plovers appeared more numerous and widespread than usual during July with 15 on Baldwin L., July 24 (EAC) and five near Tecopa, Inyo Co., July 24 (JT) being the most unusual. The presence of some juveniles among 15 Snowy Plovers near Tecopa July 22-31 (JT) strongly suggested nesting at that locality. An Am. Golden Plover near Pt. Mugu July 18 (TW) was the only one found. Two Whimbrels near Lancaster July 4 (KLG), another there July 24 (KLG), one near Palo Verde, Imperial Co., July 3 (JJ) and three near Blythe, Riverside Co., July 12 (JJ) were all in areas where very rare at this time of the year. A Solitary Sandpiper along the Santa Ana R., in Anaheim July 16 (DRW) and another near Lancaster July 24 (JLD) were the first of the fall migrants to be found this year. A pair of Spotted Sandpipers at L. Hodges throughout the summer were accompanied by a juvenile July 25 (EC) and three pairs were at San Elijo Lagoon throughout the period with two young seen June 6 (DPa) verifying nesting at that locality; prior to last year this species was not known to nest any farther s. than the San Bernardino Mts., and coastal Ventura County. A Wandering Tattler at Salton City June 6 (REW) was inland where considered casual. A Ruddy Turnstone near Lancaster July 24 (JLD) was one of very few found inland away from the Salton Sea. Unexpected was the discovery of a Com. Snipe nest at K.R.P., June 26 (TG); this species was believed to be all but extirpated as a breeding bird in this Region. A Red Knot near Lancaster July 21 (BD) was the only one found inland away from the Salton Sea. An ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper at S.E.S.S., July 31 (GMcC) was the only one reported. An ad. **Rufous-necked Sandpiper** at the S.C.R.M., July 11-17 (MiH) was the fifth to be found in s. California, but is likely the same bird present at this spot July 12-17, 1981 (*Am. Birds* 35:979, 1981). An ad. Baird's Sandpiper at Bataquitos Lagoon, San Diego Co., July 11-14 (GMcC), two along the Santa Ana R., in Anaheim July 16 (SG), one at S.C.R.M., July 23 (TW) and another near Lancaster July 24 (JLD) were the earliest of the fall migrants this year. A Dunlin, exceptionally rare in summer, was at S.C.R.M., July 11-14 (MiH), another was seen around San Diego Bay June 6-18 (REW) and a third was at the San Diego R. mouth July 9 (REW). A Red Phalarope along San Diego Creek in Irvine, Orange Co., July 21-26 (DRW) was inland.

JAEGERS, GULLS, TERNS — Eight Pomarine Jaegers off San Diego June 17 (DPo) was a large number for this time of the year. A Parasitic Jaeger, quite rare in summer, was in Goleta June 19 (PEL). A first-summer-plumaged **Glaucous Gull** photographed at Jalama Beach, Santa Barbara Co., July 3-24 (AA ph., S.D.N.H.M.) was the first ever found summering in s. California. As usual a few Glaucous-winged Gulls summered along the coast (15 reported) and one was

inland at N.E.S.S., June 6 (GMcC). A Herring Gull, much rarer than the previous species in summer, was at S.C.R.M., May 8-June 11 (LBev), two were at N.E.S.S., June 6-July 24 (GMcC) and another was at S.E.S.S., July 31 (REW). A second-summer-plumaged Mew Gull near Lancaster July 4+ (JLD) was the first to be recorded e. of the mountains away from the Salton Sea, and was one of very few to be found summering in s. California. A first-summer-plumaged Little Gull at N.E.S.S., June 6 (REW) was found dead a week later (*S.D.N.H.M.), and was the latest of this species found in California. A Heermann's Gull, casual inland, was at S.E.S.S., July 20 (DH). A first-summer-plumaged Sabine's Gull, rare in summer, was along the beach at Pt. Mugu July 12 (LBev). At least one pair of Royal Terns successfully raised two young among nesting Elegant Terns on San Diego Bay in June (REW); there were only two previous nesting records (both unsuccessful) for California. The elusive **Sandwich Tern** found around San Diego May 15 was last seen June 13 (GMcC).



Pair of Black Skimmers, 3 mi n. of Paloverde, Calif., in flooded fields, July 30, 1982. Photo/Dave Kreuper.

Two Black Skimmers at Bolsa Chica, Orange Co., June 21 (SG), one there July 11 (SG), up to four at Pt. Mugu July 3-12 (LBev) and up to five at S.C.R.M., June 24-July 17 (MiH) were along the coast and n. of San Diego County (this species is a permanent resident on San Diego Bay with 35+ pairs nesting this summer); two just n. of Palo Verde July 30 (JJ, ph., S.D.N.H.M.) were along the Colorado R., where recorded only twice.

ALCIDS — Common Murres were more numerous and widespread than usual, being found s. to the Mexican border, and in concentrations such as 1000+ off Cayucos July 29 (TE), 275 off Pt. Mugu July 3 (LBev) and 80 off Newport Beach July 29 (DRW). A Pigeon Guillemot at Pt. Mugu July 3 (LBev) and two there July 11 (TW) were at an unusual locality. A Rhinoceros Auklet off San Diego July 28 (DPo) was unusually far s. for this time of the year.

PIGEONS, CUCKOOS, OWLS, GOATSUCKERS — Single Band-tailed Pigeons on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co., June 5 (DPa) and July 3 (CGE) and two on Santa Barbara I., June 30 (GMF) were away from areas of regular occurrence. The occurrence of 15± Yellow-billed Cuckoos at K.R.P., throughout the summer (BE) was most encouraging and must make this locality the last stronghold for the species in California; one near Tecopa July 26-28 (JT) was the only other found in suitable breeding habitat away from the Colorado R.; one at Barca Slough, Santa Barbara Co., June 19 (PMcC) and another in Goleta June 25-26 (KB) were both along the coast where now considered an accidental straggler. Two Flammulated Owls, a bird we know little about, were heard calling at Buckhorn Flat in the San Gabriel Mts., July 8-13 (BWK). A pair of Elf Owls successfully fledged young from a nest near Needles, San Bernardino Co., June 26 (DPa); this appears to be the last locality in California where this species can be found. The presence of a downy young Long-eared Owl near Imperial Beach June 13 (EC) documents nesting at that locality. Up to two Whip-poor-wills were calling near Big Pines in the San Gabriel Mts., June 18-26 (KLG) and two more were calling around L. Fulmar in the San Jacinto Mts., June 12-July 3 (EAC); this species no doubt breeds each summer in the mountains of s. California but a nest has yet to be found. A Poor-will nest at Purisima Pt., Santa Barbara Co., July 9 (LBev) was unusually close to the ocean.

SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS, WOODPECKERS — Two Black Swifts at Montana de Oro S.P., July 12 (MWe) were far from any known nesting locality. A Chimney Swift, rare and local in the coastal lowlands of s. California in summer, was over W. Los Angeles July 12

(JT), another remained around Burbank, Los Angeles Co., throughout the summer (KLG) and 6-8 were over downtown San Diego July 11 (EC). An unidentified *Chaetura* over L. Hodges June 19 (KW) and 2-4 at Santiago Oaks Regional P., near Orange June 15-July 15 (SJR) were probably Chimney Swifts, but another over the summit of Mt. Palomar July 7 (RHi) could have been a Vaux's Swift as 2 recent summer records of that species exist for the San Bernardino Mts., and Chimney Swifts are unknown in the mountains. An Allen's Hummingbird nest at the mouth of the Santa Ana R., Apr. 24 (LRH) and two juveniles just out of the nest in nearby Los Alamitos June 1 (SJR) were in coastal Orange County where breeding was first noted in 1980. The presence of a ♀ Calliope Hummingbird on Big Pine Mt., Santa Barbara Co., July 19 (LBev) indicated the species may nest there. A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird, a rare to casual straggler to California, in Short Canyon near Inyokern, Kern Co., Apr. 18 (RHa) was exceptionally far n. An Acorn Woodpecker on the beach in Encinitas, San Diego Co., June 3 (RHi) was unexpected. A ♀ Ladder-backed Woodpecker in Vista, San Diego Co., July 22 (CW) appeared to be only the second ever found along the coast.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — An E. Kingbird, extremely rare in summer, was along the upper Santa Ynez R., June 18 (NSt). A W. Kingbird nest near Santa Maria in June (LBev) and another in Goleta during May and June (KB) were both along the coast where the species is considered rare in summer. The presence of an ad. Wied's Crested Flycatcher near Tecopa accompanying two presumed young July 25-28 (JT) suggested nesting in that area; this species breeds along the length of the Colorado R., with one or two pairs nesting annually at Morongo Valley well to the w. of the Colorado R., and has only been found on 3 previous occasions in Inyo County. A Say's Phoebe on Pt. Loma June 5 (REW) was unexpected; wintering birds depart coastal San Diego County by early April. A survey of K.R.P., located 22 singing ♂ Willow Flycatchers (MOC) for what must be the largest concentration of nesting birds in s. California; 8-9 singing males along the Santa Margarita R., San Diego Co., throughout the period (LS) and two more near Imperial Beach June 13 (EC) were the only others believed nesting in the Region. A pair of Olive-sided Flycatchers raised two young in tall eucalyptus at San Elijo Lagoon May 2-July 5 (TM), establishing the first nesting record for the immediate coast of s. California s. of San Luis Obispo County; a territorial bird in Santa Barbara throughout the period (CG) indicated that nesting should be watched for in that area. Purple Martins continue to breed in limited numbers along the coast and in the mountains with nesting reported from 9 localities (120 ± birds).

THRASHERS THROUGH WOOD WARBLERS — A Brown Thrasher at K.R.P., June 22 (BE) was most likely a late spring vagrant, there being no midsummer records for the Region. A nesting pair of Bendire's Thrashers in Superior Valley n. of Barstow, San Bernardino Co., May 12 (ASE) and a singing male in Kelso Valley in e. Kern Co., June 18 (BE) were somewhat w. of the species' known breeding range in California. A pair of Am. Robins that raised young in Irvine this summer (SJR) appeared to establish the first nesting record for Orange County. The presence of two juv. Mountain Bluebirds on Big Pine Mt., July 21 (LBev) gave us the first evidence of nesting in Santa Barbara County. The ♂ White-eyed Vireo found in Goleta May 18 was still present at the end of the period (PEL) giving us the first summer record for California. A Hutton's Vireo on Pt. Loma June 3 (REW) was some distance from the nearest locality of normal occurrence. A Black-and-white Warbler at 6000 ft., in the Laguna Mts., June 5 (CGE) and another at Big Bear L. (6738 ft.) in the San Bernardino Mts., June 19 (REW) were both at unusual locations, very few having ever been found in the mountains; one at K.R.P., June 29-July 6 (BE) was in more typical habitat for a summering bird. A Tennessee Warbler on Pt. Loma June 21 (REW) was the latest of a number passing through this spring. A pair of Nashville Warblers accompanying two juveniles on Big Pine Mt., July 21-22 (JEL) gave us concrete evidence of nesting at that location. A pair of Virginia's Warblers near Weldon, Kern Co., June 27 (BE) strongly suggested nesting at that location; this is w. of any known breeding locality in California and on the w. side of the Sierra Nevada. A Lucy's Warbler near Imperial Beach July 19 (REW) may have summered locally as the earliest dates for fall vagrants along the coast are July 28 and Aug. 18.

A N. Parula was along Mono Cr., in the upper Santa Ynez R. area June 13-14 (JMG) and another was near there along the Santa Ynez R., July 1 (JMG); there is only one previous summer record for the

Region (Am. Birds 35:980, 1981). A ♂ Yellow-throated Warbler on the lower slopes of Mt. Pinos June 19 (HC) was at a most unusual locality and should be considered a late spring vagrant. A ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler in downtown Los Angeles June 17 (KLG) was also a late spring vagrant. The presence of nine singing ♂ MacGillivray's Warblers at Cero Alto, San Luis Obispo Co., throughout the summer (TE) and two more along the Santa Clara R., near Santa Paula June 9 (LJ) strongly suggested nesting at these lowland localities; documented nesting records for s. California are confined to mountain localities, but nesting occurs along the coast of n. California s. into Monterey County. A ♂ Hooded Warbler, unrecorded in midsummer, was present along Mono Cr., in the upper Santa Ynez R. area June 23-July 9 (JMG). Up to three Painted Redstarts, a species for which there is but one breeding record, near the lower end of Big Bear L., June 14-July 3 (J & ER), up to two in Deep Cr. Canyon near L. Arrowhead June 20-July 25 (JDB), one in the nearby town of Lake Arrowhead Aug. 1 (JDB), and another along the Angeles Crest Highway in the San Gabriel Mts., June 18 (KLG) were all in suitable habitat for nesting.

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH SPARROWS — A ♂ Bobolink at Piedras Blancas June 9 (NSw) was a spring vagrant on the coast. A ♂ N. (Baltimore) Oriole on Pt. Loma June 13-15 (REW) was one of very few to be found in s. California in summer. A ♀ Great-tailed Grackle feeding two recently fledged young at a small marsh in Anaheim at the end of July (SG) documents the first nesting along the coast of s. California for this species whose range is continuing to expand. A ♂ Bronzed Cowbird was well observed in Morongo Valley June 4 (SP); this species is a rare but regular summer visitor to the Colorado R. valley, with but a handful of occurrences known to the West. Unprecedented was a ♂ Scarlet Tanager in Hollywood July 17 (TP), the species being a casual vagrant to s. California with no previous occurrences between June 24 and Aug. 23. A pair of Hepatic Tanagers again nested along Arrastre Cr., e. of Baldwin L., in the San Bernardino Mts., with one or two juveniles accompanying the adults July 11 (BWK). As usual, a few Summer Tanagers wandered to the coast with one in Goleta July 19+ (TW), one near Saugus June 6 (KLG), another in Hollywood July 18 (KLG) and a fourth near San Diego July 21 (CGE); one at Baldwin L., in the San Bernardino Mts., June 5 (DRW) was at an unusual locality, and the presence of 10+ pairs at K.R.P., throughout the period (BE) extended the species' breeding range NW some 110 mi from Morongo Valley.

Two Pyrrhuloxias seen in Corona, Riverside Co., July 23 (MM) were far to the w. of the species' normal range and may have been escapees. Of the six Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reported, the male at the top of Mt. Palomar July 25 (RHi) was at the most unusual locality. A pair of Indigo Buntings again nested at Morongo Valley (EAC), and the presence of 4-5 males at K.R.P., along with another male near Blythe throughout the period (BE, SC) suggested nesting at those 2 locations. A ♂ Painted Bunting, a casual straggler to California, near Blythe July 2+ (SC) was the first apparent non-escapee to be found in summer. Two Red Crossbills, a poorly understood species, were seen on Big Pine Mt., July 21 (LBev) and four more were found on Mt. Pinos Aug. 6 (PS). A pair of Sage Sparrows accompanied by a juvenile at Harper Dry L., July 24 (EAC) were outside the species' known breeding range. A Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco in Tecopa July 30-31 (JT) was certainly out of place at this desert location far from any known breeding locality for the species.

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