

SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona

/Janet Witzeman

The heavy winter and spring rains, and subsequent flooding in some areas, caused some habitat changes, especially along the Lower Colorado River where many study areas were flooded after the water releases from Hoover Dam. In Prescott, flooded creeks and lakes that backed up into surrounding woods created a good food base of frogs and snakes for herons and a Black Hawk that took advantage of the situation. Taking advantage of the situation—the habitat and conditions that existed this summer in Arizona—can be said to apply to most of the species in the following report.

Besides the reports of species nesting in new areas, first nesting records for the state were established for two species: Cave Swallow and White-tailed Kite. It was, in fact, as Glinski put it, a very "kity" summer. The White-tailed Kites were found nesting in not just one, but two areas, and a pair of Mississippi Kites was discovered nesting in a new area "next door" to one of the White-tailed Kite territories.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL — A loon (probably a Com. Loon) was at Lower L. Mary June 25 (TS); there are few summer records away from the Lower Colorado River (hereafter, L.C.R.). White Pelicans are irregular visitors in summer away from the L.C.R.: one was at Prescott June 6 for a first local record (CT) and one at Picacho Res., July 30-31 (JS). An early imm. Brown Pelican was at Painted Rock Dam June 14 (TC). Double-crested Cormorants nested again at Painted Rock Dam where they were first found nesting in 1979 and again in 1980; a nest with three young was observed there June 18 (RF). A pair of adults plus imm. birds at Watson L., Prescott all summer was an indication that the species probably nested there as well (CT); the species was also present all summer at Roosevelt L. e. of Phoenix (JP).

Great Blue Herons enjoyed a successful nesting season at 3 areas around Prescott where 43 adults and young were counted during the summer (CT). Once again Green Herons were found in the n., with singles e. of Tuba City June 11 (CLaR) and at Beaver Dam Wash June 24 (MK, BS); and there were more than usual at Prescott (CT). Wood



Storks on and near the L.C.R., where they are uncommon but regular, were five immatures at Cibola N.W.R., June 9 (CH, G. Gould) and one adult there July 9 (DK, LL), plus nine in Dome Valley June 24 (LL).

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks nested successfully at Nogales, where regular (KK *et al.*) and summered again at Hereford (JB, AM, DDa). One was at Phoenix July 29 (J. Everett) where the species is uncommon. Three pairs of Gadwalls that produced 28 young at Willow L., Prescott represented the first nesting record for that area (CT); the species breeds on high mountain lakes in n. Arizona. A pair of Redheads, an uncommon local breeder, raised a small brood at Patagonia L. (RS) for a first local record; the species has nested elsewhere in the Arizona lowlands.

RAPTORS —

S.A.

White-tailed Kites were found nesting for the first time in the state. In the pecan grove at Marana, n. of Tucson, where they were first discovered a year ago, a pair at a nest seen July 12 (RG) had produced three fledglings by July 25 (GM, BH, RBA); at least two young were with the pair there Aug. 12 (RG, GM). A pair and two nests was also discovered at a new area s. of Casa Grande July 29, and Aug. 5 two pairs were observed copulating and carrying nesting material (MJ, TG). By Aug. 12 two adults were seen in incubating posture on their respective nests 0.25 mi apart in the tops of cottonwood trees there (RG, GM). Additionally, two adults were photographed e. of Lochiel in the San Rafael Valley July 2 (B. Wheeler).

Mississippi Kites were also found nesting in a new area where one was spotted last August. At a pecan grove 0.25 mi from the White-tailed Kites at Marana, a nest containing a week old young was discovered July 12 (RG). However, the young was found dead near the downed nest Aug. 12 after a severe wind storm earlier in the week (RG, GM). Marana is s.w. of Winkelman, the species' traditional nesting site in the state.

It is interesting that both species of kites, having invaded the state from opposite directions, should be nesting so close together and in the same habitat. There was no record of either kite species in the state before 1970. The Mississippi Kite was first found nesting that year, and the first sight record of White-tailed Kite was not until 1972.

Single Black Hawks summered again at Bill Williams Delta (hereafter, B.W. Delta) (m.ob.), and for the first time at Prescott where the species has not been known to nest (CT). Swainson's Hawk is mainly known as a migrant on the L.C.R., so of interest was an adult at Cibola N.W.R., June 30 (LL, JJ). A Harris' Hawk observed on a nest in the Sulphur Springs Valley July 6 represented one of the few breeding records for extreme s.e. Arizona (AM, DDa *et al.*).

RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS — A Clapper Rail was seen July 21 and Aug. 6 at Picacho Res., where the species is found only intermittently (GM). An ad. Purple Gallinule, a casual summer visitor in s.e. Arizona, was photographed s. of Winkelman July 15 (ph. MO, KL), farther n. than previously recorded.

There is water again at the ponds in Willcox. Among the migrating shorebirds taking advantage of this were a Long-billed Curlew from at least June 24 through the end of the period (m.ob.) and a second one there June 29 (VM), a Marbled Godwit July 2 (JS) and up to 11 Stilt



Purple Gallinule, south of Winkelman, Cook's Lake, Ariz. July 15, 1983. Photo/Matthew O'Brien.

Sandpipers July 12-24 (GM, KR, RS *et al.*); one July 12 provided one of the early fall records for the state for Stilt Sandpiper, but not exceptional in the context of the species' overall migration. A Long-billed Curlew at Roosevelt L., July 4 to at least July 15 was in a new area (JP, DDe), as was one s.e. of Flagstaff in late June (TS). There are few records of Marbled Godwit in n. and n.e. Arizona—up to five were at St. Johns July 17-18 (BHe) and one at Prescott July 17 (CT). Fifty Marbled Godwits at Roosevelt L., July 16 (DDe *et al.*) was a larger-than-usual number.

Two pairs of Black-necked Stilts were at Cibola N.W.R., for most of the period, and June 19 one nest with 4 eggs was found there (JJ, CH), representing the first nesting record for Cibola N.W.R., and only the third for the L.C.R. Unfortunately, the nest was abandoned owing to the rising water levels (DK *et al.*). An avocet at McNeal, s.e. of Willcox June 6 (AM) was in a new location.

GULLS THROUGH SWIFTS — Franklin's Gull, an uncommon migrant, is sometimes seen in summer at Willcox; one was there July 12 (GM). Records of Forster's Tern are sparse in mid-to-late June on the Gila R.: one was at Gillespie Dam, n. of Gila Bend June 14 (TC).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo was recently a rare to uncommon breeder in the L.C.R. valley. However, extensive flooding in 1979 and 1980 of the Bill Williams R., resulted in destruction of much of the remaining prime habitat for the species, and censusing has shown that very few cuckoos now occur in areas where they were most common. Present flooding of the L.C.R., is probably going to result in more destruction of native vegetation with little or no plant regeneration; continued dramatic declines may be expected for the near future (CH *et al.*). Reports of Yellow-billed Cuckoo continued from the Portal area where it is uncommon; one June 10 and another July 9 (RM *et al.*). Two Groove-billed Anis straggled N this season: one was seen in Sycamore Canyon June 26 (JS) and one s. of Winkelman July 17 (MO, KL).

The Ferruginous Owl pair in n.w. Tucson, where found last year, were the only ones reported during the season (PB *et al.*). A Buff-collared Nightjar was detected in Tanque Verde Wash, e. of Tucson July 17 for the third consecutive year (CdeW).

Up to ten Chimney Swifts were present during July in c. Tucson, the only area in the state where the species has been found repeatedly (TH *et al.*).

HUMMINGBIRDS — A Plain-capped Starthroat was observed "in the wild" (*i.e.*, not at feeders) in Sycamore Canyon June 26 (†JS). There have been at least a half-dozen records of this species in the state. There were two Berylline Hummingbirds visiting feeders again this summer: one at Ramsey Canyon July 18-19 (†E. Franzgrote, †NC, T & DC, RS *et al.*), and another in Madera Canyon July 18 into August (SG, NC, PB *et al.*) where the species has been recorded once before.

Violet-crowned Hummingbird is uncommon at Patagonia; one was observed "in the wild" there during July (SB, JBo, RS), and July 27 a nest with an incubating adult was found at the Roadside Rest area (RS *et al.*). Previously the species was known to nest only in Guadalupe Canyon and the Chiricahua and Huachuca Mts. Farther n. at Madera Can-

yon, where the species is also uncommon, one was at a feeder July 12 into August (NC, PB *et al.*).

Two Anna's Hummingbirds were observed at Miami Gardens, w. of Globe, June 6 into July for the first summer record in that area (J. Spencer, *fide* BJ). Two ♂ Rivoli's Hummingbirds were recorded again at feeders on Signal Peak, Pinal Mts., n. of their usual range, during the period (R. Heffernon, *fide* BJ).

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A stray Thick-billed Kingbird was seen in Hereford July 9 (JB). A Say's Phoebe was nesting for the third time in a Phoenix yard July 8 (SD); the species is usually absent from s.c. and s.w. Arizona by July. Dusky Flycatchers are very local in the n. away from the White Mts.; several were seen and heard on Black Mesa near Kayenta June 2 (CH, CLaR), several were at Hart Prairie n.w. of Flagstaff June 28 and July 7 (RP, JC) and two in the Inner Basin, San Francisco Peaks July 15 (JC). An Olive-sided Flycatcher near Portal June 4 (RM) was a late migrant.

The lone Cave Swallow that has summered at Tucson for the past 4 years, was joined by a mate this year, and the pair (using an old Cliff Swallow nest) produced three fledglings by July 11 (TH *et al.*), to establish the first nesting record for that species in the state. A pair of Barn Swallows also nested on the U. of A. campus at Tucson—the first time since 1942 (TH). Another Barn Swallow nest, found in a new location in n. Arizona, was on a building in a meadow s. of Williams July 12; the species was known to be present in the area since the 1960s but the search for a nest went unrewarded until this summer (CT).

WRENS THROUGH VIREOS — A Canyon Wren was heard July 20 at 9500 ft in the San Francisco Peaks, an unusually high elevation (JC, HW). A single Veery was found June 11 s.w. of Springerville (RF), the species' only known locality in the state, where it has been found since 1975 but was not detected in 1981 or 1982. A Townsend's Solitaire, in Miller Canyon, Huachuca Mts., July 9 provided probably only the third summer record for s. Arizona (JB).

The pair of Black-capped Gnatcatchers in Chino Canyon was seen with five young from their first nest July 2, and was building a second nest nearby July 25 (RS, JD *et al.*). Phainopeplas were reported to have had their first good breeding season in 4 years on the L.C.R. (DK), had a successful breeding season and were widespread in the Upper Sonoran Zone around Prescott (CT) and were common around Portal in July (SS). A male at 7800 ft in Hart Prairie June 28 (RP) was at an unusually high elevation.

A ♂ White-eyed Vireo, photographed and tape-recorded in n.w. Tucson July 18-25 (T. Meyer, ph. GM *et al.*), was the first to be documented in the state and the first in summer. The 3 or 4 previous sight records had all been in the fall. Bell's Vireo is a rare breeder on the L.C.R., but fortunately this summer most of the known summering areas over the past 10 years were occupied by singing males (DK *et al.*). This summer's records of Red-eyed Vireo were one at Patagonia June 3 (*fide* SK) and two at Page Springs, s. of Sedona June 30 (*fide* CT).

WARBLERS — Yellow Warbler was considered to be extirpated from the L.C.R. area since the 1960s. However, there has been some evidence of local nesting since 1977, and this summer a singing male that remained on territory throughout the summer was located e. of Tacna (DK *et al.*). A singing imm. Olive Warbler was observed near Stoneman L., s. of Flagstaff where a nest was found last year (C. Staicer, J. Braun, JC). Fifteen MacGillivray's Warblers at Hart Prairie June 28 constituted an unusual number (RP).

This summer's Hooded Warblers were a singing male at Page Springs Hatchery from at least late June into early September (A. Greene, V. Gilmore, RF *et al.*) and a female in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., July 20 (JD). A ♀ Am. Redstart was seen July 17 at S. Fork, s.w. of Springerville where the species has nested in the past (RBr).

BLACKBIRDS THROUGH SPARROWS — Bobolinks were found in a new area: at least two males and a female were observed in a marshy meadow at Payson, below the Mogollon Rim, n.e. of Phoenix from at least July 1 to mid-August when two ♂-plumaged birds were seen with a male (C. Belkowski, A. West, PB *et al.*). There are only a few scattered summering and breeding records for n. Arizona. A ♂ Brewer's Blackbird at Lost L., L.C.R., June 9 was unseasonal (CH). Yellow-headed

Blackbirds return very early to s. Arizona lowlands; for example there were $100 \pm$ at a pond in Kansas Settlement July 15 and 75 in Elfrida July 27 (AM, DDa).

Summer Tanager is suffering the same fate as the Yellow-billed Cuckoo on the L.C.R.: destruction of habitat—and worse, is even more restricted in its habitat requirements. There were only about ten birds present in known areas of use this summer at Cibola N.W.R., and B.W. Delta (CH *et al.*).

A singing ♂ Cardinal, uncommon on the L.C.R., was present all June n. of Ehrenberg (m.ob.). Indigo Bunting is a regular summer resident in riparian areas of s.e. Arizona; six males at the Muleshoe Ranch Preserve July 6 was a good count (AM, DDa *et al.*). A singing male was at Cibola N.W.R., June 10-12 (DK, KC, LL). The species is an uncommon and local summer resident on the L.C.R.

Red Crossbills, irregular residents in Arizona mountains, were present in several areas (RS, CT), including forests near Prescott where the "birds will probably nest" (CT). Two pairs of Black-chinned Sparrows with three young were found in July above Portal (RS, JD); the species is only a local breeder in the Chiricahua Mts., having been located at this spot as recently as 1979.

CORRIGENDUM — Singing ♂ Dusky Flycatchers in the Carrizo Mts., in June 1982 and July 1981 added another locality to the species' summer range in n. and n.e. Arizona (not n.w. Arizona). *AB* 36:1005.

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