

SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona, Sonora

/Janet Witzeman and David Stejskal

Summer rains started about ten days earlier than usual and by the end of July had dropped more than twice the normal amount of moisture for this period. The result was beneficial not only for the food supply of late summer breeders, but should be for the eventual winter visitors as well.

This summer had its usual interesting finds of new breeding records from seldom-visited places, plus a new nesting record for the state—the confirmation of the long-suspected nesting of Wood Duck.

A surprise, but not completely unexpected, was the state's first Tropical Parula—in a riparian pine-oak woodland, not unlike the habitat where Gale Monson has observed the species in the mountains of northern Sonora.

Thanks again to visiting birders who have taken the time to call and/or write with details of their significant finds; special thanks to those who sent photographs to document the records.

ABBREVIATIONS — L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; P.R.D. = Painted Rock Dam.

GREBES THROUGH HERONS — Eight W. Grebes remained at Prescott until June 18, two until July 12 and one until July 20; there had been a few previous summer records in this area, but none of this duration (CT). One hundred Am. White Pelicans (sometimes present in large numbers in summer) were at Picacho Res. the week of June 10 (J. Scalero, *fide* DT); only one spent the summer at P.R.D. (TC, DS). Earlier than usual imm. Brown Pelicans were one at P.R.D. from at least June 11 through the period, joined by second one July 1 (TC, DS), and four at Arlington, w. of Phoenix June 28 (S. Cunningham, *fide* CH).

Double-crested Cormorants had almost ceased nesting in the Yuma area because of loss of habitat and human disturbance; however, this summer, due to improved habitat and food supply that occurred as a result of the flooding on the L.C.R., there were at least 27 dead trees containing 4-15 nests/tree near Yuma (DT). The only report of Magnificent Frigatebird this summer was of an immature seen n. of Ehrenberg July 2 (S. Clark, *fide* CH).

Great Egrets nested near Yuma for the first confirmed breeding in the state in a decade; nesting apparently also occurred there in 1983, but was not reported before this summer (DT). The report of 11 Cattle Egrets flying up Aravaipa Canyon June 14 (CR) was somewhat surprising for the season and place. The Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Dudleyville in May remained until at least June 16 (JSa).

WATERFOWL —

S.A.

The nesting of Wood Ducks in the state was documented by at least 2, probably 3 pairs that successfully fledged young at Granite Cr., Prescott in June (CT). In addition a female with seven young was observed along Oak Cr. n. of Cornville June 3 (M. Gooch, *fide* CT), a female with young at the Clarkdale sewage pond July 17 (CT), plus a pair July 15 and a female with five young flying N along Oak Cr. toward Page Springs July 19 (CT). Nesting of Wood Ducks in the Prescott area has been suspected since June 1975 when a female with two young was photographed at Peck's L. (Dave Brown); also previously unreported was a female with nine young observed on a small pond near Camp Verde May 29, 1981 (TC). The 2 or 3 broods of immatures with adults on Peck's L., Prescott in August 1983 (AB 38:231) probably represented a local breeding record as well. Other mid-summer records of Wood Ducks were a male and subad. male at Dudleyville June 16 through the period (DS, CH *et al.*) and a male at Nelson Res., White Mts., June 26 (TC).

Gadwalls nested for the 2nd year at Willow L. and Watson L., in Prescott where 7 to 8 pairs were counted (CT). A ♀ Gadwall with seven half-grown young July 17-19 at the Clarkdale sewage ponds represented the first nesting at that locale (CT).

Records of 4 other species of ducks were either the first or among only a few in summer for Prescott: 2 pairs of Green-winged Teals and a pair



of Redheads remained until July 17, seven Ring-necked Ducks remained through the period, and a ♀ Bufflehead remained until July 30 (CT). Two Canada Geese were still on Roosevelt L., e. of Phoenix the 3rd week in June (J. Poe). A Canada Goose June 11-July 1 and a Canvasback July 1 at P.R.D. may have been summering there (DS). A Green-winged Teal was still present at Arlington June 5 (DT). A late Red-breasted Merganser was at P.R.D., June 11 (TC).

RAPTORS — There were numerous sightings of Black Vultures this summer in the Patagonia area, where the species was historically rare (KK, m.ob.). One was in Douglas May 30 (TD); there have been very few records that far e. in the state. The Osprey is a sparse nester in the White Mts. of e. Arizona, so of interest were four circling together between Sprucedale and Beaverhead June 26 (TC).

Black-shouldered Kites were "everywhere" in s.e. Arizona with repeated sightings of singles and pairs from Picacho Res. s. to Continental, with most reports from San Xavier and the Snyder Hill ponds in Tucson (*fide* SSu). A nest that fledged a high of five young June 14 was found in an emory oak near Sonoita (S. Franklin, *fide* J. Church, GM), the first nest at this elevation (*i.e.*, above 4000 ft) in Arizona; previous nests here have all been at lower elevations.

Individual N. Harriers were recorded on the late dates of June 4 in Prescott Valley (RH) and June 25 near Crescent L., White Mts. (TC); although suspected, there has been no confirmed nesting in e. Arizona since 1890. Early returning individual N. Harriers were sighted s. of Tucson July 22 (BD) and near Douglas July 31 (DD, RBa, AM).

RAILS THROUGH TERNS — A pair of Com. Moorhens successfully raised young in Chino Valley, n.w. of Prescott; records from that area are scarce (CT).

Two Semipalmated Plovers were at Prescott June 21-24 (CT); there are few June records for the state. Five late-staying Willets were in Prescott June 20, with one remaining until June 25 (CT). An ad. Short-billed Dowitcher at Tucson July 28 (KK) appeared to be of the race *hendersoni*; the status of this species in the state is still poorly understood.

An ad. California Gull mid-June to June 21 and an immature mid-June to Sept. 10 at Prescott provided the first summer records for Yavapai County (CT); the species is uncommon away from the L.C.R. A Caspian Tern at Prescott June 12 and two there June 24 were unusual for that area, especially at that time (CT). Two early ad. Caspian Terns were at P.R.D. July 1 (DS). An early Black Tern was at Prescott June 24 (CT).

DOVES THROUGH SWIFTS — Rock Doves (a pair with a fledged young) were found nesting in cliffs at Montezuma Castle N.M., July 7, in the manner of their wild ancestors (R. Russell, L. Murray): a habit not reported previously in Arizona, although the species does nest abundantly "in the wild" in towns. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was at Portal again, where locally rare, July 8-10 (RM).



Adult Spotted Owl in Scheelite Canyon, Huachuca Mts., Ariz., Aug. 3, 1984. Photo/Owen Schmidt.

Chimney Swifts were present in Tucson again—five were recorded on the U. of Arizona campus July 20 through the period (m.ob.). Five to 10 pairs of White-throated Swifts that nested at the U. of Arizona campus were away from their usual nesting locations in the nearby mountains (TH, N. Mays).

HUMMINGBIRDS — For the 4th consecutive year, a ♂ White-eared Hummingbird was recorded at Portal, this summer July 27 through August (S & WS, ph. OS). The ♂ White-eared in Madera Canyon in late May remained at least to June 2 (SK). A Berylline Hummingbird at Portal June 9 (†P.S. Boyd) represented one the earliest records for the state.



Two views of a male White-eared Hummingbird at Portal, Ariz., Aug. 2, 1984. Most reports of White-eareds in Arizona pertain to female or young male Broad-billed Hummingbirds; note the proportionately shorter bill and very prominent white facial stripe on this genuine White-eared. Photos/Owen Schmidt.

The Violet-crowned Hummingbird in Madera Canyon since late April was still present in late July (m.ob.); formerly uncommon there, this is the 3rd consecutive summer one has been recorded in Madera Canyon. Magnificent Hummingbirds at the n. edge of their range were two at the Tonto Fish Hatchery e. of Payson, May to September (*fide* DT); two on Signal Peak in the Pinal Mts., near Globe for the 3rd summer in a row were presumed to be breeding there (R. Heffernon, *fide* BJ).

More Lucifer Hummingbirds were recorded at Portal—at least one female June 5+ (C. Swartz) and regularly July 27 through August (S & WS). The species is probably nesting in that area. Costa's Hummingbirds usually disappear from their breeding range by early July, so of interest were at least three individuals at 2 areas in Phoenix through the period (DS, JW).

KINGFISHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Summer records of Belted Kingfishers in the White Mts. of e. Arizona continue to be significant as there have been no confirmed nesting records from there this century; one was seen on the Blue R., June 17 (RBr). Three to four were present along W. Clear Cr., s. of Sedona July 14-15 (CH, AL) not far from where the species was found nesting in 1980 and 1981. A Green Kingfisher at Guevavi Ranch, Nogales June 9 (G. Smith) and one at Kino Springs, Nogales July 27+ (JD *et al.*) may have been the same individual. The species has been scarce in recent years and there are few summer records overall. The individual at Patagonia in March was seen there again May 30 (R. Eakin).

Four Gray Flycatchers were seen near Blue, White Mts., June 17 (RBr)—s. and e. of the normal summer range of this species. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a sparse summer visitor, remained in Patagonia July 11 into August (H. Childs, ph. OS, m.ob.).

Two ad. Tree Swallows tending a nest cavity June 18 at Pinewood, s. of Flagstaff (JSh) established a new locality for this species, which was first found nesting in the state as recently as 1973. Only the ♂ Cave Swallow was seen this summer at Tucson, and not after June 2 when it was believed the bird died (TH *et al.*). At least 4 pairs of Barn Swallows successfully nested in Prescott for the first breeding record in that area (CT). Breeding pairs were in Williams again, where a nest was found a year ago (CT). An adult and an imm. Barn Swallow in w. Phoenix July 3 indicated a possible breeding record (TC).



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (evidently an adult in molt) near Patagonia, Ariz., July 27, 1984. Photo/Owen Schmidt.



Male Black-capped Gnatcatcher in Sycamore Canyon, Ariz.—a new location for the species—June 13, 1984. Photo/Paul Cozens.

DIPPER THROUGH PHAIÑOPEPLAS — A Dipper was discovered in Wood Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., June 10 (TD); the species is rarely found anywhere in s.e. Arizona in summer. A pair of Black-capped Gnatcatchers was found and photographed in a new location, near the Mexican border in Sycamore Canyon, Atascosa Mts., June 13 (CR, ph. P. Cozens).

A high population of Phainopeplas and increased nesting activity was observed in the Prescott area during the summer (CT). The species was also seen more frequently in Portal in late July; in the past it was not recorded there in summer (S & WS, RM).

WARBLERS — Tropical Parulas, the first for Arizona, were discovered in Madera Canyon—a male July 14 (†T. & L. Army, ph. T. Zurowski), then a pair July 18 (DS, GM, JW, RBr *et al.*). The male continued to be seen off and on into September and had probably been present since May when, as we learned later, the sighting of a Tropical Parula was reported by a neophyte birder; a parula-type song was heard in that area in June (R. Taylor).

A small population of Orange-crowned Warblers nested again in the Bradshaw Mts., s. of Prescott; as many as seven singing males with females were present in a ½-mile stretch (CT). The species was also found breeding on the Mogollon Rim, e. of the Payson Hwy July 14-15 (CH *et al.*). Evidence of breeding MacGillivray's Warblers away from their well-known "home" in the White Mts. is of interest—ten singing males were recorded near Knolls L., s.w. slope of the Mogollon Rim July 14-15 (T. Martin, CH). Olive Warblers were found nesting again in the Sierra Prieta Mts., w. of Prescott (CT). An Olive Warbler found June 17 on the e. fork of the Black R., White Mts., was in an area where records are scarce (RBr).

A ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler at Kayenta May 22 was noteworthy (†PL); most records of this species in the state have been in fall. A ♀ Townsend's Warbler in Chino Canyon June 27 (†S. Stedman) was in an odd place for that late date.

Individual Black-and-white Warblers are found occasionally in summer—a female was in a yard s. of Phoenix June 23 (PB). This season's records of Am. Redstart were provided by a male e. of Onion Saddle, Chiricahua Mts., June 9 (†E. Morrell) and a singing first-year male June 24 at Watson L., Prescott (CT) where the species has bred once. A ♂ Ovenbird found singing at Prescott June 23-July 1 (CT) was the 3rd in summer for that area and about the 10th in summer for the state, although many of these "summer" records must have involved late spring vagrants. A singing ♂ N. Waterthrush at Granite Cr., Prescott June 24-26 (CT) was of course far s. of that species' summer territory; there were no previous summer records for the state. The ♂ Hooded Warbler at the Page Springs Fish Hatchery near Sedona spent its 2nd summer there and remained into September (AG, m.ob.).

BUNTINGS THROUGH CROSSBILLS — Many Indigo Buntings were reported again this summer as usual (m.ob.). A ♂ Varied Bunting at Boyce Thompson Arboretum June 9 (†J. Burns, B. Hunter) was far n. of its normal range.

A singing ♂ Five-striped Sparrow was seen in late July at the Roadside Rest in Patagonia (JA)—the site where the species was first found breeding in the United States in 1969.

Many Red Crossbills remained through the period around Prescott where nesting occurred earlier in the year (CT); and several broods of recently-fledged young were observed on the North Rim of Grand Canyon in early June (KK). Five Red Crossbills were in Madera Canyon July 23 (TC), and four at Portal July 30 + were at a lower elevation than usual (S & WS).

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