
SOUTHWEST REGION

Arizona, Sonora Janet Witzeman and David Stejskal

After an unusually wet spring, July was unusually dry, with the monsoons arriving very late. "On the north side of the Santa Rita Mountains, Botteri's Sparrows were present and far more vocal than usual in May, and less vocal than usual in mid to late July. The precipitation levels seemed a likely reason." (KK).

"Passerine migration (as well as the better known passage of shorebirds and hummingbirds) is usually well underway by the latter part of July. It seemed especially pronounced

this year, with larger numbers of some of the 'typical' July migrants (e.g., Bank Swallow, Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Tanager, Lark Sparrow) and some species showing up near record-early dates" (KK). Some early dates for fall migrants on the upper San Pedro River were Black-headed Grosbeak July 7, Western Tanager July 8, Yellow-headed Blackbird July 10, Solitary Vireo July 14, Lark Sparrow July 21, Western Flycatcher July 23, Warbling Vireo July 27, and Nashville Warbler July 30 (TC). Additional near record early dates were Gray Flycatcher August 1 at Happy Valley, east of Tucson, Hermit Warbler in the lowlands at Tucson by August 4, Nashville Warbler at Tucson by August 6

(KK), and Yellow-headed Blackbird at Tucson July 6 (GM). Migration seemed ahead of schedule in the Chiricahuas as well (RT); and in a Phoenix yard, six Northern Orioles were seen the last week in July (SD). More examples of early migrants are contained in the report.

Two on-going projects that are contributing greatly to our knowledge are the flora and fauna survey on the upper San Pedro River (having just completed its third summer) and the hummingbird banding program in southeastern Arizona (having completed its second summer). Results of these two works can be found in the report that follows.

Of course, no summer in Arizona can be complete without at least one visitor (and potential range extension) from Mexico. This summer was no exception.

ABBREVIATIONS — S.P.R. = San Pedro River.

PELICANS THROUGH WATERFOWL — An Am. White Pelican at Prescott from June 19 through the period (CT, m.ob.) represented the first full summer record for Yavapai County. There were only two wandering imm. Brown Pelicans reported: one s. of Tucson July 16 (JS) and one at Picacho Res., July 18 (Bob Perrill).

Least Bittern is a sparse and erratic summer resident in s.e. and s.c. Arizona, so of interest were the ad. male on the upper S.P.R., July 27–28 (DK, ph. TC et al.), one at Roper L. State Park, s. of Safford, July 21 (RBr), two at Picacho Res., July 5 (SG), and one along the Hassayampa R., s. of Wickenburg, July 10–11 (JC). The Great Blue Heronries on the upper S.P.R. contained 6+ nests s. of Hwy 90 and 11+ nests n. of Fairbank (DK, TC). An imm. Wood Stork at Prescott June 23–July 5 (BT et al.) represented the 2nd record for Yavapai County; the species is rare away from the Lower Colorado and Lower Gila rivers, and uncommon and irregular even at those locales.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck continued to increase; 62 were counted at Guevavi Ranch June 6 (DK, TC), and 35 were counted in various other areas of s. Arizona (DS). A Wood Duck, uncommon in summer in s. Arizona, was seen at a pond in Tucson June 12 (Bill Davis). An ad. Cinnamon Teal with four ducklings was observed at Ina Rd. pond, Tucson, July 12 (DS, RN, RP); the species is a sparse breeder in s. Arizona. Many ad. Redheads (35+) were seen at lakes in s. Apache County July 19–23, and young were seen at Sunrise L. (2 broods), Basin L. (one brood) and Crescent L. (one brood), suggesting the species may be more common as a breeder in the White Mts. than currently realized (KK, LHK). A subad. ♂ Surf Scoter was observed at Gila Farms pond, s. of Phoenix, on the odd date of July 3 (†RN), providing the first summer record for the state.



Male Least Bittern on the upper San Pedro River, Ariz., July 27, 1987. Photo/Troy Corman.



RAPTORS — Black-shouldered Kites were reported from Sulphur Springs Valley, Huachuca City, Sonoita, Green Valley, Marana, and Buenos Aires N.W.R.; two immatures were observed at McNeal June 20, and one immature there July 6 (AM). Another immature was seen at sewage ponds in Tucson July 26 (GR). A Mississippi Kite at St. Johns, n. of the White Mts., June 16 (†BH, fide GM) provided the first record n. of the Mogollon Rim by many miles. A ♂ N. Harrier was observed June 18 at San Bernardino Ranch, e. of Douglas, where a pair made an unsuccessful attempt at nesting in 1985; the species has not nested successfully in the state in this century.

A bird believed to be an ad. Great Black Hawk was well observed on the upper S.P.R., July 27 (†DK, †TC). There have been no confirmed records for the United States, but it was not completely unexpected. The upper S.P.R. habitat is similar to that in which the species lives not far south in Sonora.

A subad. Broad-winged Hawk was observed on the upper S.P.R., July 27 (†DK, †TC et al.); the few records of this uncommon visitor have been mainly in winter and spring, with only one previous summer record. Individual Zone-tailed Hawks were seen in the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation: near South Mountain July 18 and w. of Papago Farms July 30 (SL); the species is rarely found this far southwest of its usual range. One (and possibly a 2nd) ad. Ferruginous Hawk was seen near Petrified Forest N.P., July 22 (JW); the species is an uncommon resident of n. Arizona. A Peregrine Falcon, uncommon away from its breeding areas in summer, was seen at McNeal July 6 (AM).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH SWIFTS — An ad. Black-bellied Plover at a s.w. Phoenix sewage pond July 26 furnished one of the earliest fall records for the state (DS, RF). Two to three Snowy Plovers summered again at Willcox (m.ob.), but they apparently have not resumed nesting there. A Semipalmated Sandpiper at a Tucson sewage pond July 23–24 (Chip Francke, BZ), and an adult at a Phoenix sewage pond July 26 (†DS, RF) were among the earliest fall records for the state. More than 80 early (or late) Wilson's Phalaropes were seen at Willcox June 14 (TC).

Two late Franklin's Gulls were observed at Willcox June 1 (TC, DK, SL). Three late Caspian Terns were seen at sewage ponds in Tucson June 6 (Russell Duerkson).

Densities of Yellow-billed Cuckoos on the upper S.P.R. were up considerably from the previous summer. (There was also a higher number of cicadas). In 1986 there were 4.58 birds/100 acres; in 1987 there were 13.24 birds/100 acres (TC). One or two Yellow-billed Cuckoos were seen along the Hassayampa R., July 11 (JC, SD), and two were seen at Picacho Res., July 5 (SG).

A Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl was heard in lower Arivaipa Canyon July 28 (GM); another individual was heard July 26

on the S.P.R. at Dudleyville (JBo), where the species has been recorded during the previous 2 summers. A Spotted Owl was heard in Sycamore Canyon June 7 (TC) and two were heard there June 26 (RS); the species has nested in that canyon at least once, in late summer 1983.

A Chimney Swift, seen and heard at Prescott June 13, represented the first record for Yavapai County (CT).

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — A total of 1006 hummingbirds was banded during the last 2 weeks of July: 328 (of 11 different species) at Ramsey Canyon and 688 (of nine species) at Madera Canyon. Almost one-third of the birds banded at Madera were Broad-billed, compared to only one Broad-billed at Ramsey, a recapture of a male that had been banded the previous summer. About 30% of the 340 birds banded in 1986 were recaptured. The hope is to continue the study another 4 years and arrive at some meaningful conclusions regarding populations, site philopatry, and longevity records (D & LF, TCz).

A male and ♀ Berylline Hummingbird were observed at Ramsey Canyon feeders July 21 (†SSu) and the female was banded there July 22 (D & LF). *Mirabile dictu*, the banded bird turned up July 31 at Madera Canyon (DS, JCN, ph. RBo et al.)—where it remained for at least another 10 days.

The 2nd Violet-crowned Hummingbird to be banded in the United States was a juvenile bird, banded at Ramsey Canyon July 26 (D & LF). The first Violet-crowned had been banded the previous year (July 24, 1986) and it returned this year to the same area, where it was photographed May 27 (ph. RBo). Additional Violet-crowned Hummingbirds were present at the Patagonia Rest Stop, the Patagonia Sanctuary, and at Portal through the summer (m.ob.).

A male and ♀ Magnificent Hummingbird were present from late May to mid-June in W. Fork of Oak Cr. Canyon, where the species is not common (Gary Romig). A ♂ Lucifer Hummingbird was present at Madera Canyon feeders June 13+ (m.ob.); by late July there was a 2nd male, and both were banded (D & LF). Madera Canyon is a relatively recent place of occurrence for this species. Lucifer Hummingbirds were also present in the Huachuca Mts. and at Portal during the period.

Although Costa's Hummingbird is generally believed to disappear from the Tucson area by early July, careful attention to hummers at Sabino Canyon this year showed that this species remained fairly common through July and into August. Costa's is easy to overlook in summer; no ad. males were seen in this area after late May (KK, LHK). A ♀ Costa's with young in the nest was observed in Sabino Canyon July 8. Throughout July there were two to four Costa's daily in lower Sabino and scattered singles farther up the canyon, mostly females and immatures and a couple of imm. males (†KK). A ♂ and an imm. ♂ Costa's were seen in Madera Canyon July 12 (DS, RN, RP) and a ♂ Costa's was seen in Buckeye, s.w. of Phoenix, July 18 (DS, GR, R & JW). At least 12 Allen's Hummingbirds were banded in Madera Canyon in late July (D & LF). Basically unidentifiable in the field, the species undoubtedly has been overlooked, and has been considered to be an uncommon migrant.

An adult with a juv. Belted Kingfisher, plus two or three others, at Page Springs, w. of Sedona, July 23 (JCn, DS) represented the 2nd successful Arizona nesting of the species in this century. A number of Belted Kingfishers were also present again in suitable nesting habitat in the White Mts.: two at S. Fork of the Little Colorado R., June 27 (SD), an imm. female at McNary L., July 3, and a male and female at Greer July 5 (DK, TC). Two ♀ Green Kingfishers were observed July 9–10 on the upper S.P.R.; breeding was suspected when one individual flew twice to the same spot and disappeared behind a willow along the bank of the river (TC, DK). Two imm. females and an imm. ♂ Green Kingfisher were observed on the upper S.P.R., July 27–31 (DK, TC et al.).

Unprecedented numbers of Lewis' Woodpeckers nested in the lowlands around Springerville and Eagar, with 50+ birds

seen and adults feeding recently-fledged young at several sites July 20–21 (KK, LHK).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH PHAINOPEPLAS — Seven to eight calling N. Beardless-Tyrannulets were located between Charleston and St. David, upper S.P.R., during the period (TC, DK). The coastal form of W. Flycatcher (*E. d. difficilis*) is an abundant migrant through s. Arizona, but its status in n. Arizona is poorly known. At least three adults giving the typical calls of this form were present July 22 at S. Fork, near Eagar. The local form, *E. d. hellmayri*, was still actively nesting in the same area (KK). A pair of Dusky-capped Flycatchers was present all period n. of Fairbank, upper S.P.R. (TC, DK); there have been no records of breeding by this species on the S.P.R. A Great Crested Flycatcher was discovered in Sycamore Canyon June 6 (†TC, †DK); there have been only 3 previous state records. Two Thick-billed Kingbirds were found July 23 at Dudleyville (GR), n. of the species' usual range.

The first nesting of Barn Swallow in Maricopa County was established when two adults were observed nest-building July 11, and the nest found July 26, at the Gilbert sewage ponds, s. of Phoenix (DS, RN, RP, RF). The first nesting record for the Globe area was established June 19 when the nest was found; the young fledged July 17–18, and a 2nd nest was being constructed July 30 (Irving & Ruth McNeil, fide BJ). A wandering Clark's Nutcracker was seen in Prescott July 4 (BS).

It was reassuring to learn that the Veery was still returning to its summer home in the White Mts. at S. Fork, where it was heard singing during June and early July (RBr, SD, TC). The Wood Thrush at Patagonia remained at least to June 7 (Dave Pearson, RS, RN). A Gray Catbird at Paradise, Chiricahua Mts., June 13 (RT) represented about the 6th time the species has been recorded in the Portal area in late spring/early summer.

A late Cedar Waxwing was seen in Prescott July 4 (BS). High numbers of Phainopeplas nested in the evergreen woodlands around Prescott (CT), as well as in the vicinity of St. Johns, White Mts., where at least 80 to 100 individuals (not limited to the Little Colorado R.) were counted and many nests were seen (BH).

VIREOS THROUGH FINCHES — Densities of Bell's Vireo on the upper S.P.R. were up to 12.9 birds/100 acres as compared to 10.5 birds/100 acres in 1986 (TC, DK). A Gray Vireo was heard singing on Mount Lemmon June 6 (JBa, JSm); the species has seldom been recorded in the Santa Catalina Mts. A Yellow-throated Vireo was found at Patagonia June 3–7 (JBa, JSm et al.); there are now about 6 June records for the state and about 19 records overall.

An unseasonal ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler, seen near Woods Canyon L., n. of Payson, July 8 (Helen Francher, fide SD), provided one of only a few summer records of this species for the state. A late singing imm. ♂ Townsend's Warbler was observed in the Pinal Mts. near Globe June 4–6 (Rick Hefferon). A ♂ Blackburnian Warbler at Charco, Tohono O'odham Reservation, June 24 (SL) was indeed a surprise; all records but one of this uncommon migrant have been in fall. An Am. Redstart was present through the period at Patagonia (m.ob.). A Worm-eating Warbler at S. Fork, White Mts., June 28 (RF) provided the 5th mid-summer record of this species for the state and the 27th overall. A Louisiana Waterthrush was banded in Ramsey Canyon July 28 (†D & LF) and became the 9th to be recorded in the state between mid-July and mid-August. Two Hooded Warblers were observed during the season: one at Patagonia June 9 (Dave Thayer) and one in e. Tucson June 19 (Tod Eskque). Olive Warblers were found to be in higher numbers than in previous summers in the Sierra Prieta and Bradshaw Mts., near Prescott (CT).

A singing Fan-tailed Warbler was discovered June 7 in Sycamore Canyon (†ph. DK, †ph. TC) where it remained at least until July 4 (m.ob.). The bird may have been present since at least May 24, as a description given of an unidentified singing bird in the same area matched this bird (fide JBa). There had been 3 previous records in Arizona and the United States.

Densities of Summer Tanagers on the upper S.P.R. were up to 54.5 birds/100 acres, compared to 30.5 birds/100 acres in 1986 (TC, DK).

A **Yellow Grosbeak** was observed at Kino Springs July 17 (†William Pieper, †Richard Ruhme), the first to be recorded in the state since 1983. Varied Buntings are quite local in the Tucson area; a new location was upper Caliente Wash, e. of the Catalina Hwy, where at least three were present in late July (KK). Another Varied Bunting, a male, was seen in Catalina State Park July 13 (CT). There were three Painted Buntings reported during the period: a male at Guevavi Ranch July 26 (BZ), a female on the upper S.P.R., July 27–30 (†DK, †ph. TC et al.), and a male on the upper S.P.R., July 30 (†TC).

A late Lincoln's Sparrow was seen on the upper S.P.R., June 2 (TC). June 13 in Sawmill Canyon, Huachuca Mts., Red Crossbills (irregular breeders here) and Evening Grosbeaks (now regular breeders here) were both observed feeding young (RS). Two Evening Grosbeaks, perhaps wandering in from nearby mountains where they have been known to breed, were seen in Prescott July 29 (CT). A ♀ Evening Grosbeak frequented a feeder in a s.w. Phoenix yard from July 10 at least until Aug. 23 (ph. Leanna Shaberly, ph. RW). There are no previous low elevation summer records for the state.

CORRIGENDUM — Arizona did not get its 2nd Tropical Parula as stated in *The Changing Seasons*, AB 41:249. In the Winter report, AB 41:314, the Tropical Parula was listed only as possible. There is still only one confirmed Arizona record.

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