

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

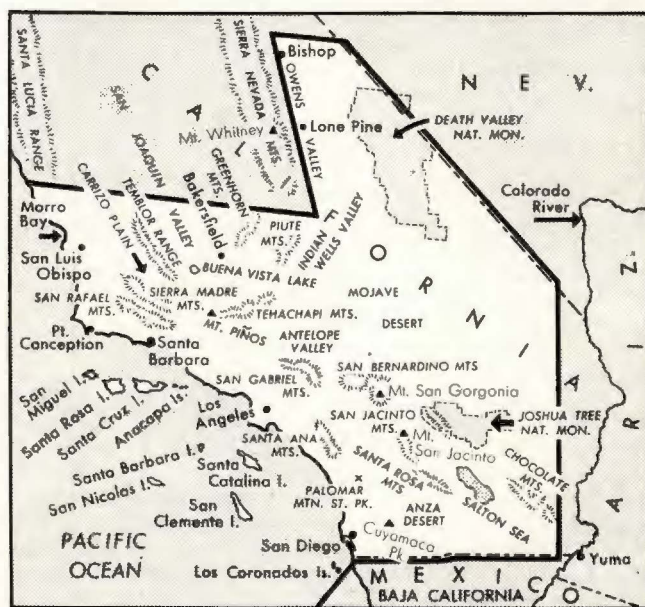
Guy McCaskie

The summer season was uneventful, with stable weather conditions and average temperatures for this time of the year.

ABBREVIATIONS — N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary, Ventura Co.; S.F.K.R.P. = South Fork Kern River Preserve, Kern County. 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 with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

LOONS THROUGH STORKS — A Pacific Loon at N.E.S.S., June 7 (REW) was far inland where very rare. A Com. Loon at Borrego Springs, San Diego Co., June 6 (REW) was at an unusual locality, especially so at this time of year. A Horned Grebe on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., June 26 (PEL) was one of a very few to be found summering in s. California. Eared Grebes are sporadic breeders in s. California, hence 14 pairs nesting around Wasco, Kern Co. (MOC, JW), and 2 pairs nesting in Ventura (JSR) this summer were of interest.

Brown Pelicans were more numerous than expected on the Salton Sea with 500± present July 4 (GMcC). An ad. **Olivaceous Cormorant** at N.E.S.S., June 20 (MAP) was probably the same bird as seen here off and on since 1982. Magnificent Frigatebirds were somewhat scarce with single immatures over Santa Monica and Santa Barbara June 24 (RS, CL), followed by one over San Diego July 17 (MN) and another working N along the coast between Ventura and Santa Barbara July 18 (TEW, CF,



BH), one at N.E.S.S., July 12 (MAP), and a 6th at S.E.S.S., July 30 (RH).

Since Am. Bitterns are very rare in s. California in summer, the presence of 2 pairs in the Prado Basin near Corona during June and July (LRH), one or two near Lakeview throughout the summer (AMC), and one near Imperial Beach July 16 (GMcC) were of interest. Great Egrets are still on the increase around Morro Bay, with up to 95 present in July along with

15 pairs nesting (TME); two on Big Bear L. in the San Bernardino Mts., June 14 (LRH) were at a most unusual locality. Up to six ad. Little Blue Herons were present around s. San Diego throughout the period with one pair raising two young near Imperial Beach (CGE); an adult at S.E.S.S., July 18 (GMCC) was the only one found away from San Diego. A Wood Stork in the Prado Basin July 7+ (JP) was the only one found away from S.E.S.S., where up to 200 were present during June and July (RH).

WATERFOWL — Up to 15 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, now somewhat rare in s. California, were at S.E.S.S. throughout the period, and were joined by an ad. **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** Aug. 1-4 (GMCC) to furnish the 7th record for this species in California. A Greater White-fronted Goose that took up residence with domestic geese in Ventura last winter remained through the summer (JSR) and a Snow Goose that did the same thing in San Luis Obispo also remained through the summer (TME), suggesting any goose has the potential of summering in s. California. Up to five Brant were present inland at N.E.S.S. during June and July (GMCC), two were at Salton City along the w. shore of the Salton Sea July 4 (JO'B), and two more were at S.E.S.S. at the end of the period (BED), along with the expected scattered summering birds along the coast between Morro Bay and San Diego Bay.

Since Wood Ducks are considered casual in s. California in summer away from a few known nesting localities, a female accompanying six young in the Prado Basin May 7 (LRH) was of interest, and one in Santa Barbara July 11-31 (PEL) was unexpected. Up to 15 Green-winged Teal at N.E.S.S. along with up to 10 at S.E.S.S. throughout the summer (REW, GMCC) made a large number for this time of year, but of even greater interest was the fact that one of the males at N.E.S.S. was clearly of the Eurasian form, this bird being found June 3 (GMCC) and still present June 27 when well into eclipse plumage and barely separable from the associating Am. Green-winged Teal. Northern Pintails are considered uncommon and local nesters in s. California, hence a pair with three young near Lakeview Aug. 6 (AMC) and another pair with four young in Imperial, Imperial Co., during June (RH) were of interest. As usual a few Blue-winged Teal were present, with 20± along the coast and an additional 10± inland. A ♀ N. Shoveler accompanying seven young in Imperial in June (RH) established the first record for nesting in this area of California. A flock of up to 35 Am. Wigeon at N.E.S.S. throughout the summer (REW, GMCC) was an exceptional concentration for this time of year.

Up to three Canvasbacks were at N.E.S.S. through July 4 (GMCC), four were in the Prado Basin June 8 (LRH), one was in Orange June 13 (DRW), and two more were on Baldwin L. in the San Bernardino Mts., June 20 (REW), this being more than normally reported in summer. Since Ring-necked Ducks are considered casual in s. California after early June, three on L. Cuyamaca in the mountains of San Diego County July 19 (REW), one near Riverside July 19 (MAP), another in Saticoy July 7 (JSR), and a 6th at Deep Springs Aug. 7 (JLD) were of note. Three Greater Scaup, very rare in summer, were on Morro Bay June 6 (PEL), another spent the entire summer at Bolsa Chica (LRH) and another was inland on L. Perris, Riverside Co., June 18 (RMCK). A Com. Goldeneye, most unusual in summer, was on L. Isabella, Kern Co., June 27 (RSh). A Bufflehead, casual in summer, was on Oso Flaco L., San Luis Obispo Co., through June 30 (GPS), another was at the Santa Ynez R. mouth through June 12 (PEL), two were in Chula Vista throughout the summer (EC), and another was at S.E.S.S., June 7 (REW). A Com. Merganser on L. Cachuma June 26 (PEL) was the first to be found in Santa Barbara County in summer.

RAPTORS — An ad. N. Goshawk near Lawler Lodge in the San Jacinto Mts. of Riverside County May 30 (CMCG) was in an area where nesting has long been suspected but has yet to be proven. A pair of Zone-tailed Hawks again nested on Hot Springs Mt., San Diego Co., having young in the nest in July (JO'B); this species nests in the mountains of Baja California

north to at least the Sierra San Pedro Martir, and those found nesting in extreme s. California are undoubtedly from the Baja California population rather than from mainland Mexico and s.e. Arizona. Two or three Peregrine Falcons, believed to be from the population nesting in the Gulf of California, were present around the Salton Sea during June and July as usual; single birds found at 5 different localities along the coast between Santa Maria and San Diego could have been from the hacking program to reestablish this species as a breeding bird in s. California, but the birds seen around Morro Bay are known to nest locally.

SHOREBIRDS — Ninety Black-bellied Plovers at S.E.S.S., June 7 (REW) and 200± at the s. end of San Diego Bay June 1 (REW) indicated the numbers of this species that summer in s. California. Forty Snowy Plovers on Harper Dry L., San Bernardino Co., June 6 (EAC) were undoubtedly breeding at that location. Forty-five Semipalmated Plovers together on s. San Diego Bay June 1 (REW) made a larger-than-normal concentration for summer. Fifteen Black-necked Stilts on Big Bear L., June 14 (LRH) were at an unusual locality. Groups of 10 Greater Yellowlegs at N.E.S.S., June 13 (GMCC), five at S.E.S.S., June 7 (REW), 10 at Bolsa Chica June 28 (LRH), and up to 40 on s. San Diego Bay throughout June (REW) showed how common and widespread this species can be in summer. A Lesser Yellowlegs, considered casual in summer, was near Imperial Beach June 17 (REW). Two Solitary Sandpipers at Baker July 26 (CMCG) were the earliest reported this fall, and were followed by three more at 3 widely separated locations July 31 (PEL, AMC, GMCC). Ten Whimbrels on s. San Diego Bay throughout June (REW) and 15 at S.E.S.S., June 7 (REW) were summering, but two near Lancaster July 12 (JLD) were undoubtedly fall migrants. About 100 Ruddy Turnstones spent the summer on s. San Diego Bay (REW); one at S.E.S.S., July 18 (GMCC) and two more there July 25 (GMCC) were fall migrants at an inland locality.

More than 100 Red Knots spent the summer on s. San Diego Bay as usual (GMCC) and a bird in non-breeding plumage at S.E.S.S., June 7 (REW) was also probably summering locally; four to five at N.E.S.S., July 23-25 (RMCK) and two near Lancaster July 30 (NBB) were fall migrants. The first Semipalmated Sandpiper of the fall was a juvenile in Goleta July 23 (PEL), followed by an adult at S.E.S.S., July 25 (REW) and another juvenile at the Santa Maria R. mouth July 31 (PEL). A flock of 46 W. Sandpipers on s. San Diego Bay June 17 (REW) was an exceptional number for summer. An ad. **Rufous-necked Stint** at the S.C.R.E., July 4 (JSR) was only the 4th to be found in s. California. A Least Sandpiper, exceptionally rare in summer, was near Imperial Beach June 8 (REW). A Baird's Sandpiper on the Kern N.W.R., July 5 (HG) was an early adult fall migrant, followed by six juveniles at 4 different localities July 24-31 (CM, PEL, NBB, GMCC). A Dunlin, another exceptionally rare shorebird in summer, was near Wasco July 17-25 (MOC). About 250 Short-billed Dowitchers on s. San Diego Bay throughout June made an average number for summering at this location. A Stilt Sandpiper at S.E.S.S., July 25 (REW) was the first found this fall. Remarkable was a territorial Com. Snipe "winnowing" in flight and giving excited "yak-yak" calls from fence posts in the Garner Valley of the San Jacinto Mts., Riverside Co., May 30 (RMCK), as were one to four near Lakeview July 1+ (AMC), since nesting is unknown south of the extreme n. border of the Region; but two in the Prado Basin July 27+ (LRH) and one at the Santa Maria R. mouth July 31 (CM) were considered exceptionally early fall migrants.

SKUAS THROUGH ALCIDS — A S. Polar Skua, rare but regular off the coast of s. California, was off Morro Bay June 7 (BED). Five Laughing Gulls on the Salton Sea June 3 (GMCC) were the first of the post-breeding influx, which brought hundreds to that area in late June and throughout July; an adult at Morro Bay July 20 (JMcD) was along the coast where considered casual. Three Franklin's Gulls at N.E.S.S., June 6 (REW) and two more there July 4 (MJL) were the only ones

found on the Salton Sea this summer, but one on s. San Diego Bay June 14 (GMCC) was on the coast where most unusual at this time of year. A juv. Heermann's Gull, casual inland, was at N.E.S.S., July 18–25 (GMCC). A Sabine's Gull at S.C.R.E., July 4 (RJM) appeared to be in first-summer plumage, hence was probably summering locally. Gull-billed Terns, first seen on s. San Diego Bay Apr. 6, remained through the summer with at least 3 pairs present; single recently-fledged young were being fed by two different adults at widely spaced localities July 11+ (EC), giving us the first evidence of nesting along the coast of California. The nesting colony of Caspian Terns at Bolsa Chica increased to 120 pairs this summer (BS), and the Caspians were joined by 25 pairs of Elegant Terns (BS), to establish the first California nesting record for this species away from s. San Diego Bay. An ad. Elegant Tern at N.E.S.S., July 4 (BED) was only the 2nd ever to be found on the Salton Sea. Fifteen pairs of Forster's Terns were found at Bolsa Chica (BS) to establish yet another nesting locality for this species. Two Least Terns at N.E.S.S., June 6–7 (REW) and up to three at S.E.S.S. through much of June (RH) were at an inland location where one or two are found each summer, but two over downtown Los Angeles June 12 were totally unexpected. Black Skimmers were commoner than usual on the Salton Sea with 500+ pairs nesting at S.E.S.S. (RMCK); 50 pairs nesting at Bolsa Chica and 6 more pairs nesting at nearby Seal Beach (BS) indicated the species is attempting to expand its breeding range on the coast, and one to four at the Santa Ynez R. mouth June 12–July 11 (PEL) were quite far north.

Single Pigeon Guillemots in Santa Barbara July 20 (GT) and at Pt. Mugu July 26 (JSR) were both at localities where unexpected. A breeding-plumaged Rhinoceros Auklet at Pt. Arguello, Santa Barbara Co., May 15 (PEL) and four there July 10 (PEL) suggested nesting at this locality.

CUCKOOS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Only 2 pairs of Yellow-billed Cuckoos were believed to have nested at S.F.K.R.P. this summer, even though an additional five to eight males and two females were also present (SL), and five to six territorial males were also at the Prado Basin June 3+ (LRH, MAP). These were all that were reported in s. California away from the Colorado R. valley. Territorial Flammulated Owls were found at Woody's Peak near Tehachapi, Kern Co., May 9–14 (MOC), at Buckhorn Campground in the San Gabriel Mts. in June (KLG), at Black Mt. Campground in the San Jacinto Mts. in June (RMCK), and on Hot Springs Mt. in June (JO'B), giving an indication as to how widespread this species is in s. California. A calling N. Pygmy-Owl at Grandview Campground in the White Mts., Inyo Co., May 23 (MAP) was in an area where few have been recorded. A pair of Long-eared Owls with three young along Mono Cr. in the Upper Santa Ynez R. valley in May (JMG) gave us one of a very few documented nesting records in Santa Barbara County in recent times. A pair of Long-eareds raised three young at Boulder Cr. Camp at 8000 ft in the San Bernardino Mts. in June (RMCK), and 5 active nests near Lakeview during the summer (AMC) illustrated just how common this species can be in some areas. A N. Saw-whet Owl was calling on Woody's Peak Apr. 10 (RSa), at least two were at Boulder Cr. Camp in the San Bernardino Mts. in June (RMCK), another was calling near Big Pines in the San Gabriel Mts., June 16 (KLG), up to five were found on Hot Springs Mt. during June (REW), and three juveniles were seen on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., San Diego Co., July 19 (REW). A Lesser Nighthawk in Santa Barbara June 24 (JLD) was in an area where the species is considered rare. Up to three calling Whip-poor-wills were in the area of Heart Bar in the San Bernardino Mts. in May and June (MAP) and three more were at L. Fulmar in the San Jacinto Mts. during the same period (GH), both localities being known summering localities for this species, even though there is still no concrete evidence of nesting anywhere in California.

Eight Black Swifts over Lawler Lodge in the San Jacinto Mts., May 30 (EAC) were at a known nesting locality, four at Ragged Pt. at the extreme n.w. corner of San Luis Obispo County June

21 (TME) could well have been nesting locally, but one over S.F.K.R.P., July 22 (SL) and three over the Prado Basin June 30 (LRH) were probably wanderers foraging for food far from nesting sites. Up to nine Chimney Swifts were over downtown Los Angeles throughout the period (KLG), one to two were at Meiners Oaks, Ventura Co., June 4–20 (RJM), two were near Corona July 22 (RMCK), and a *Chaetura* that appeared to be a Chimney Swift was over the Prado Basin all summer (LRH). An Anna's Hummingbird fledged young in Imperial in June (RH) to give us the first breeding record for s.e. California. Single ♂ Allen's Hummingbirds in the Greenhorn Mts. of Kern County July 3 & 18 (JW) were in an area where few have been positively identified. Three pairs of Downy Woodpeckers were found nesting in Victorville, San Bernardino Co. (SJM), a location somewhat outside the species' known breeding range. A Hairy Woodpecker along the Santa Ana R. near Norco, Riverside Co., June 22 (LRH) was in the lowlands where unexpected, especially in mid-summer.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS — Willow Flycatchers continue to have problems in s. California, with all but 3 of 18 nests found in S.F.K.R.P. being parasitized by Brown-headed Cowbirds (JH); four territorial males near Buellton, Santa Barbara Co., June 12 (PEL), four more in the Prado Basin all summer (LRH), and 2 pairs on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) were the only others reported. Single Hammond's Flycatchers in the Piute Mts., June 28 (MOC) and in the Greenhorn Mts., July 3 (JW) were in suitable nesting habitat, but s. of the species' presently known breeding range. A Say's Phoebe nest found in Irvine June 1 (DRW) was unusually close to the coast. Two pairs of Brown-crested Flycatchers at Ft. Piute, San Bernardino Co., May 16 (BB) and another at China Ranch near Tecopa May 26 (JML) were at the n.w. extreme of the species' breeding range. An E. Kingbird in Corona del Mar June 11–13 (JB) was a late spring straggler. At least 3 pairs of Mountain Chickadees nested in Victorville, a desert oasis, with young being fed by adults June 5 (SJM).

Twenty Red-breasted Nuthatches were found on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) indicating how common this species now is in an area where unknown as a breeding bird as recently as 20 years ago. Two pairs of White-breasted Nuthatches in Victorville all summer (SJM) were unexpected. An ad. Pygmy Nuthatch seen feeding a young bird in the Greenhorn Mts., June 27 (MOC) were the first to be found in this mountain range. A singing Winter Wren in Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co., June 3–7 (CM) was in an area where nesting has been suspected but has yet to be proven. A Golden-crowned Kinglet near Buckhorn Campground June 16 (KLG) was the first ever to be found in the San Gabriel Mts. in mid-summer; up to five on Hot Springs Mt. during June (REW) and 25 on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) were in areas where nesting is yet to be proven. Twelve to 15 pairs of W. Bluebirds nested in Victorville, with many fledged juveniles in evidence in late May (SJM), this location being a little to the e. of the species' previously-known nesting range as well as being out on the Mojave Desert. A Townsend's Solitaire on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) was s. of the species' known breeding range. A singing Hermit Thrush in Santa Barbara June 1–July 8 (JEL) was along the coast where totally unexpected in summer. A pair of Bendire's Thrashers with recently hatched nestlings near Twenty-nine Palms May 11 (AMC), and another pair that fledged two young in the Kelso Valley, Kern Co., in mid-June and then laid 4 eggs in a 2nd nest in early July (RSh) were both on the extreme fringes of the species' breeding range. Eleven Cedar Waxwings spent the entire summer in Brawley (RH), in what would appear to be most unsuitable temperatures.

WOOD WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES — Two Nashville Warblers in the San Bernardino Mts., June 20 (REW) and two more at Mill Cr., San Jacinto Mts., throughout June (RMCK) were in areas where nesting has long been suspected,

but is yet to be proven. Two Virginia's Warblers at the upper end of Arrastre Cr., San Bernardino Mts., June 20 (REW) were in an area that may be just in the process of being colonized. Four N. Parulas were found, with a male in Villa Park, Orange Co., June 13 (DRW), another male in Mission Viejo June 17 (GF), a 3rd male in Goleta July 14–Aug. 16 (TEW), and a female there July 18–23 (PEL). Four Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warblers on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) were outside the species' known breeding range. A singing Hermit Warbler along Arrastre Cr., San Bernardino Mts., June 20 (REW), and single birds at Dawson Saddle and Buckhorn Campground in the San Gabriel Mts., July 16 (KLG) & 28 (GB) were all three in areas where small numbers undoubtedly nest every summer; however, an immature on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) was probably a very early fall migrant. A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler near Imperial Beach July 15–16 (REW) was the first to be found in s. California in July. Single Black-and-white Warblers, rare in summer, were in Villa Park June 13 (LRH) and Goleta July 14–Aug. 27 (TEW). An Am. Redstart, also rare at this time of year, was in Carlsbad June 27 (HK). Two to three MacGillivray's Warblers on Black Mt. in the San Jacinto Mts. throughout June (RMCK) were undoubtedly nesting. Three Hepatic Tanagers on Clark Mt., May 28 (HG) and three to four along Arrastre Cr., San Bernardino Mts., during June (MAP) were at known nesting localities. An amazing 30–40 pairs of Summer Tanagers summered at S.F.K.R.P. (SL) and 3–4 pairs summered in Victorville (SJM), but a female in Santa Barbara July 29–Aug. 30 (VC) and a male in Julian, San Diego Co., June 22–24 (GJ) were both far from known breeding localities. Two N. Cardinals at Laguna Dam June 21–July 2 (RH) gave us only the 2nd record for this area of California. A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak in San Diego June 16 (AZ) was the only one reported this summer. Five ♂ Indigo Buntings at the S.F.K.R.P. throughout the period (SL) and another in the Prado Basin June 19 (MAP) appeared to be on breeding territories, but one in Ojai June 17 (RJM) and another in Mill Creek June 10 (HC) were probably late spring vagrants. Three ♂ Rufous-crowned Sparrows in Cedar Canyon, e. San

Bernardino Co., May 10 (SFB) and an adult seen feeding young in nearby Mid Hills May 23 (EAC) were undoubtedly of the race *scottii*, only recently found in this area. A White-crowned Sparrow present in the Prado Basin from the winter remained until the remarkable date of July 2 (LRH); another at Bluff L. in the San Bernardino Mts., June 21 (REW) was in an area where nesting is possible. A ♀ Bobolink at Harper Dry L., San Bernardino Co., June 6 (EAC) was a late spring vagrant. Again small numbers of Bronzed Cowbirds were found summering in Brawley with young being fed by orioles in June (CGE). A ♂ N. (Baltimore) Oriole present in Bakersfield June 9+ (RC) was one of very few found summering in California. Four Red Crossbills, a highly erratic species, were seen in the San Bernardino Mts., June 20 (REW). The presence of five Pine Siskins, including one juvenile, on Middle Peak of the Cuyamaca Mts., July 19 (REW) gave us our first indication of nesting in San Diego County.

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