

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

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The weather was milder than normal, with relatively cool temperatures along the coast. An abundance of water and lush growths of vegetation throughout the Region enabled water and landbirds alike to explore new breeding areas, giving us some interesting nesting records. The expected arrival of southbound shorebirds in late June, and an interesting variety of wood warblers throughout the summer, made for an exciting season.

Abbreviations: C.L. (*China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme n.e. Kern Co.*); E.A.F.B. (*Edwards Air Force Base, s.e. Kern Co.*); F.C.R. (*Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley Nat'l Monument, Inyo*); N.E.S.S. (*n. end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.E.S.S. (*s. end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.*); S.F.K.R.P. (*South Fork Kern R.*). As virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Michael A. Patten, P.O. Box 8612, Riverside, CA 92515) for all rarities listed in this report. Records submitted without documentation are not published.

LOONS TO FRIGATEBIRDS

Up to 14 basic-plumaged Com. Loons on L. Mathews, *Riverside* during June and July (SJM, CMcG) were unexpected since only a few have previously been found summering inland in S. California.

About 1500 Black Storm-Petrels in the San Pedro Channel June 5 (KLG) was a large number for this early in the year, and suggests breeding failures to the south.

An imm. Blue-footed Booby at N.E.S.S., July 25 (RMcK) is the first to be found in California since the influx in 1990 (AB 44:1184-1188, 1990). Brown Pelican numbers built up to more than 600 on the Salton Sea in late June and remained at this level through the end of the period; this species regularly disperses northward from the Gulf of California after nesting. An early influx of Magnificent Frigatebirds produced an immature over San Pedro, *Los Angeles* June 4 (JAJ), five more immatures along the coast June 26-July 11 (BED, PHB, BHs, PEL, GR), and at least five inland on the Salton Sea June 20-27 (KLG, GMcC, BM), but a single individual at Del Mar, *San Diego* Aug.

3 (H&JB) was the only one reported after that time.

S.A.

Unexpected were 4 normally pelagic birds inland on the Salton Sea July 10. A Cook's Petrel was at N.E.S.S., July 10-12 (GMcC, REW, MAP), believed to be the same bird seen at S.E.S.S., July 17 (GMcC, MAP) and back at N.E.S.S., July 25-Aug. 6 (RMcK, PEL, SEF, KLG, AS); remarkably, this is the 2nd to be found on this inland body of water, the previous one having been present 24-29 July 1984 (AB 38:1060-1063, 1984). A *Bulweria*, believed to be a Bulwer's Petrel, was watched in flight at 150-200 yards as it coursed back and forth across the mouth of the Whitewater R. at N.E.S.S. for about 3 minutes July 10 (GMcC, GH, TC); it was clearly a *procellariidae*, intermediate in size between a Black Storm-Petrel and a Cook's Petrel; it had long narrow wings pushed forward at the carpal joints and had a long tail that appeared pointed at the tip. A large dark shearwater off Salton City July 10 (MAP, GMcC) was too distant to be identified as to species. A Least Storm-Petrel at N.E.S.S., July 10 (REW, RAE, GMcC, MAP, MSM) gives us the 2nd record for this species inland, the previous record being of hundreds deposited on the Salton Sea and the Lower Colorado River by tropical storm *Kathleen* in September 1976 (AB 31:142-152).

There are now 18 records of 9 species of *Procellariiformes* on the Salton Sea. All are believed to reached this area by way of the Gulf of California. Most have appeared during calm conditions, the only obvious storm-related occurrences involving a Leach's and numerous Least Storm-Petrels immediately following tropical storm *Kathleen* in 1976. However, tropical storms in the East Pacific off the s. tip of Baja California could displace birds into the mouth of the Gulf of California; some might then move N to the head of the Gulf, become confused, and cross the c. 120 miles of low-lying land to the Salton Sea. It is therefore noteworthy that a tropical storm was off s. Baja during the first week of July 1993.

EGRETS TO RAILS

Great Egrets have only recently been found nesting away from the Colorado R. and the Salton Sea; therefore, the presence of at least 10 nests in a mixed colony of Snowy and Cattle Egrets s.e. of Bakersfield, *Kern* in May (SRG) and another with Great Blue Herons at the Jess Ranch in Apple Valley, *San Bernardino*, in April (SJM) are of interest.

Two pairs of Little Blue Herons nesting among 35 pairs of Snowy Egrets on the grounds of Sea World in San Diego fledged 5 young this summer (JRJ), and one or two more pairs were suspected nesting around nearby Imperial Beach at the same time (GMcC), but this species went unreported away from coastal *San Diego*. The maximum number of Wood Storks at S.E.S.S. this summer was 21 Aug. 8 (KM); the declining numbers of these birds reaching California undoubtedly reflecting breeding failures to the south in W. Mexico.

A Fulvous Whistling-Duck near Lakeview, *Riverside* July 17 (C-TL) is one of a very few found away from S.E.S.S. in recent years. A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck at N.E.S.S., July 12 (GH) is only the 2nd to be found away from the S.E.S.S. and establishes the 12th record for California. A pair of Wood Ducks near Pauma Valley, *San Diego* Mar. 29 (PU) were quite far south if nesting. Most unusual were two pairs of Blue-winged Teal, one accompanied by 11 flightless young, on E. Cronese L. near Baker, *San Bernardino* July 5 (SJM) since nesting is previously unrecorded in the e. portion of this Region; three pairs fledged young in Bolsa Chica in June (RAH) to establish the first nesting records in *Orange*. A Surf Scoter at N.E.S.S., June 9 (GH), and two more there July 3 through the end of the period (MAP, REW), were the only ones found on the Salton Sea this summer. A Com. Merganser accompanied by 10 young on Piru Cr. 1 mi upstream from L. Piru June 9 (SJM) provides the first evidence of nesting in *Ventura*.

A pair of White-tailed Kites near Cantil, where they are previously unrecorded in summer, during June and July (MTH) probably nested; a pair at a nest at S.E.S.S. throughout June (GMcC) and a recently fledged juvenile ca. 5 mi away June 2 (GMcC) gives us additional evidence of nesting in the Imperial Valley. An imm. Sharp-shinned Hawk at the base of the San Bernardino Mts. in San Bernardino July 12 (SJM) is one of a very few found in S. California in summer. A pair of N. Goshawks was on Mt. Pinos, *Kern* June 18 (KFC) where nesting was recently confirmed, one or two were in the Cottonwood Basin of the White Mts., *Mono* July 23 (REW) where nesting is suspected, and another was near Papoose Flats in the Inyo Mts. July 24 (REW) where previously unrecorded. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk perched near a known nest on Hot Springs Mt., *San Diego* June 26 (GMcC) strongly suggested breeding at this site this summer.

Two Blue Grouse flushed on the e. slope of Sawmill Mt., *Kern* May 1 (MOC) indicate that a small population still persists at this isolated location. A minimum of 96 Clapper



present June 27 (GMcC), and two more were at S.E.S.S., June 22 (CB). Most intriguing was an ad. **Gray-backed/Bridled Tern** at Bolsa Chica June 12 (LS); a similar bird was at this exact location in 1990 (AB 44:1187, 1990). Between 250 and 300 pairs of Black Skimmers successfully nested on the Salton Sea (KM) and more than 300 pairs successfully nested on the coast in Bolsa Chica (CTC).

A pair of Pigeon Guillemots at San Nicolas I., June 29 (GeM) was noteworthy because this species is not known to nest at this locality, and one flying past Crystal Cove S.P., *Orange* July 11 (MTH) was unusually far south. A Marbled Murrelet off San Simeon, *San Luis Obispo* July 6 (GPS) was at the s. limit of this species range.

CUCKOOS TO PIPITS

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo in Ridgecrest, *Kern* June 13 (DVB) and another on the coast in Carpinteria, *Santa Barbara* July 19 (RWH) were away from any known breeding locality; 21 pairs at S.F.K.R.P. during June and July (SL) and up to seven individuals near Big Pine after June 28 (SL) were at known breeding localities. Long-eared Owls were more numerous and widespread than usual, with nests found along the coast at *Ventura* (VK), inland, near Shandon, *San Luis Obispo* (RZ); the high desert, at Antelope Valley (KLG); Owens Valley, near Olancho (T&JH); Death Valley Nat'l Monument, F.C.R. (GMcC); and the low desert, Coachella Valley N.W.R. (WRR). A pair of Short-eared Owls, a species now somewhat rare in S. California, near Lancaster, *Los Angeles* during May (KLG) probably attempted nesting. Calling Whip-poor-wills were at Hart Bar Campground in the San Bernardino Mts. in June (REW), around L. Fulmor in the San Jacinto Mts. in May and June (HK) and on Clark Mt. in e. *San Bernardino* May 22 (SBT). Forty Black Swifts were flying low over L. Elsinor, *Riverside*, during heavy rain on June 5 (HK, BM). An Anna's Hummingbird feeding a recently fledged young at F.C.R. May 21 (PAG) documents nesting at this locality. Two Williamson's Sapsuckers, including one carrying food near Papoose Flats in the Inyo Mts., July 24 (REW) were in an area where unknown as a breeding species. A pair of Brown-crested Flycatchers at Mojave Narrows Regional Park near Victorville, *San Bernardino* May 30 (SJM) and at least 3 pairs at S.F.K.R.P. throughout the summer (SL) were at the w. extreme of this species' known breeding range. Single E. Kingbirds along

Rails at S.E.S.S. this summer (MR) was well above average.

PLOVERS TO ALCIDS

An Am. Golden-Plover at C.L., July 12 (DVB) is one of a few to be found inland in this Region. A Pacific Golden-Plover near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara* July 27 (JMC) was the first to be found this fall. The first Solitary Sandpiper of the fall was one on Tinnemaha Res. near Big Pine, *Inyo* July 29 (T&JH). A group of five Black Turnstones on Mullet I. at S.E.S.S., June 17 (KM), with four July 10 (RMcK) and three still there July 16 (WRR), are the first to be found in summer on the Salton Sea. A Red Knot on Tinnemaha Reservoir July 29 (T&JH) was only the 3rd to be found in *Inyo*. The only Sanderlings found inland away from the Salton Sea were two at E.A.F.B., July 24 (MTH) and one to two on Tinnemaha Res., July 21-29 (T&JH). An ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper in Goleta, *Santa Barbara* July 22-25 (SEF), another near the Kern N.W.R., July 25 (JCW), and single juveniles in Goleta July 24-29 (SEF) and Irvine, *Orange* July 29-30 (RAH), were the earliest this fall. An ad. Baird's Sandpiper at the Santa Maria R. mouth, *Santa Barbara* July 6 (BHe) and a juvenile in Irvine July 30 (BED) were the earliest of each this fall. An ad. Pectoral Sandpiper in Goleta July 25-26 (PEL) was somewhat early. A molting ♂ Ruff, always an exciting find, was in Goleta July 20-Aug. 5 (PEL). A Com. Snipe near Anza, *Riverside* June 5 (GH) was thought to be on nesting territory, but another at Boulevard, *San Diego* July 6 (PU) was far from any suspected

breeding locality. Unexpected, considering the location and time of year, were two Red Phalaropes on Owens L., *Inyo* July 8 (T&JH).

An ad. Pomarine Jaeger at S.E.S.S., July 10 (GMcC, MAP) and another at N.E.S.S., Aug. 3 (PEL) may have moved N onto the Salton Sea during July; most of the previous Pomarine Jaegers seen on the Salton Sea were found during June and July. A S. Polar Skua in the San Pedro Channel June 5 (KLG) was at the peak of northward migration for this species off S. California, but six 2-3 mi s. of the w. end of Santa Cruz I., July 24 (MH) was more unusual. The arrival of an ad. Laughing Gull on San Elijo Lagoon, *San Diego* July 6 through the end of the period (DP) coincided with the annual influx of post-breeding birds onto the Salton Sea from the Gulf of California. Ten pairs of Gull-billed Terns successfully nested on s. San Diego Bay (JK, DS), this being the only locality on the coast of California where this species occurs; another 120 pairs successfully nested on the Salton Sea (KM), where they have breed since the 1920s. Caspian Terns again bred at S.E.S.S., with 60 found on Mullet I. in June (KM). Three pairs of Royal Terns successfully bred among the more than 1600 pairs of Elegant Terns at Bolsa Chica this summer (CTC). An Elegant Tern at S.E.S.S., July 10 (C-TL) is one of only a very few to be found away from the coast. An ad. Arctic Tern at S.E.S.S., June 27 (GMcC) and another at C.L., June 18 (DVB) were probably very late spring transients. A Least Tern, rare on the Salton Sea, was at N.E.S.S., June 9 (GH), two were there June 20 with one still

the coast near Morro Bay, *San Luis Obispo* July 1-2 (TME), around Lompoc, *Santa Barbara* June 25 (GL) and July 3-4 (BHi), and a 4th inland at S.E.S.S., July 10 (MAP) were unseasonable. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher on San Nicolas I. June 9 (GeM) was undoubtedly a late spring vagrant.

Purple Martins, decreasing in numbers as a nesting bird in S. California, were found on Breckenridge Mt., *Kern* (one July 11, MOC) over the mouth of Big Santa Anita Canyon, *Los Angeles* (2 regularly May 31-June 24, MSM), along the E. Fork of Hemlock Cr. in the San Bernardino Mts. (A pair at a nest cavity May 14, SJM), near L. Hemet in the San Jacinto Mts. (one July 10, GH), around Volcan Mt. near Julian (3-4 individuals during May and June, PU) and in the nearby Laguna Mts. (3-4 pairs at nest holes during May and June, PAG).

A Swainson's Thrush near Cantil July 10 (MTH) was remarkably out of season. The presence of one to two Hermit Thrushes on Volcan Mt., May 31 (PU) suggests nesting at this location, which is just to the south of the s. extreme of this species' known range in California. A Varied Thrush on Big Pine Mt., *Santa Barbara* June 11 (TDW) was totally out of season. A pair of Bendire's Thrashers that fledged one young from a nest near Ocotillo Wells in e. *San Diego* in late April (PU) gives us the first record for breeding in the w. Colorado Desert. Two Am. Pipits at the summit of Telescope Peak in the Panamint Mts. June 12-24 (REW) and another at the summit of Mt. San Geronio in the San Bernardino Mts., June 29 (REW) were probably on breeding territories.

VIREOS, WOOD WARBLERS

Bell's Vireos appeared to be more numerous and widespread than normal this summer, with territorial males found as far north as the mouth of the Santa Maria R., *San Luis Obispo* May 26-June 5 (RAH) and at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley Nat'l Monument in late May and early June (REW, T&JH), and encouraging numbers such as 40 adults fledging 70 young along the Santa Clara R. in *Ventura* (JMG). A singing Red-eyed Vireo photographed near Big Pine July 3-7 (T&JH), another at c. 7500 ft along Cottonwood Cr. in the White Mts., July 23 (REW) and a 3rd at S.F.K.R.P. all summer (SL) were unexpected considering the time of year.

At least 4 pairs of Lucy's Warblers near Borrego Springs in e. *San Diego* this summer (PU) were at the w. extreme of this species' breeding range. A Virginia's Warbler at Onyx Summit in the San Bernardino Mts., July 27 (RMCK) was in an area in which nesting has previously been suspected, but the date does not rule out an early migrant. A pair of N. Parulas successfully fledged at least 2 young

in Nojoqui Falls Park, *Santa Barbara* in late July (CMCG, BHi), providing documentation of the 2nd nesting in S. California; other sightings of this species include single birds at Wildrose Ranger St. in the Panamint Mts., June 12 (REW), at S.F.K.R.P. all summer (SL), at San Marcos Pass near Santa Barbara June 13-15 (JH), at Charlton Flat in the San Gabriel Mts. July 2-3 (JG), at Mountain Home Village in the San Bernardino Mts. June 30 (REW), at Cactus Flat in the same mountains July 8 (REW) and at 5800 ft in the Laguna Mts., June 5 (CGE). A Chestnut-sided Warbler at Butterbrecht Spring near Cantil June 13 (JCW) was a late spring vagrant. A Magnolia Warbler at Butterbrecht Spring June 12-13 (MTH) was also a late spring vagrant, but a male at c. 7000 ft on Wyman Creek in the White Mts., *Inyo* July 16-18 (REW) was most unusual for summer. A ♂ Bay-breasted Warbler in Pine Valley, *San Diego* June 23 (CGE) was believed to be a late spring vagrant. A Black-and-White Warbler in Irvine, *Orange* June 25 (ADB) was unusual, considering the time of year, and the same can be said of two Am. Redstarts at the same location June 25 (ADB), another at Charlton Flat in the San Gabriel Mts., June 27 (JF) and a fourth in Encinitas, *San Diego* June 30 (BED). A Prothonotary Warbler in Carpinteria July 22 through the end of the period (SEF) had probably been present since late spring. Two Kentucky Warblers were found this summer, with a male in Encinitas June 30-July 19 (BED, DRW) and another male at c. 5000 ft. on Wyman Cr. in the White Mts. July 16-18 (REW). Single Hooded Warblers at Galileo Hill in e. *Kern* June 11 (RS), at Butterbrecht Spring June 13-19 (SL) and June 19 (SL), around Charlton Flat in the San Gabriel Mts. June 27-July 8 (KLG, BE) and near Boulder Oaks, *San Diego*, June 14 (PU) were the ones found this summer—a far cry from the numbers present a year ago. A Painted Redstart at Cloudburst Summit in the San Gabriel Mts., June 29 (KLG) was probably a lost summer wanderer.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

Four territorial Hepatic Tanagers on Clark Mt., May 22 (SBT) were at a seldom visited but long suspected breeding locality. Single Summer Tanagers near Pala, *San Diego* July 2 (JCL), near Banning, *Riverside* July 12 (RMCK), in Riverside July 15 through the end of the period (MAP), along San Francisco Canyon near Newhall, *Los Angeles* May 21 (SJM) and near Big Pine all summer (T&JH) were west and north of this species' known breeding range in California. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Galileo Hill July 10 (MTH) would appear lost. A ♂ Indigo Bunting paired with a Lazuli Bunting near

Ramona, *San Diego* May 28 (CGE) was believed to have successfully fledged young; other reports of Indigo Buntings included four at S.F.K.R.P. all summer (SL), and single birds near Big Pine June 10 (T&JH), on Vandenberg A.F.B., May 21-July 6 (MW), at 3500 ft in the San Gabriel Mts., June 7-July 6 (C-TL), at ca. 6000 ft along Arrastre Cr. in the San Bernardino Mts., June 24 (REW), at Cushenbury Springs, *San Bernardino* July 8 (REW), in Morongo Valley, *San Bernardino* June 12-19 (MAP), and near Pine Valley June 17-24 (CGE), most appearing to be first-summer males.

Black-chinned Sparrows arrived earlier than normal (eight singing males near San-tee, *San Diego* Mar. 18, HLJ), were more widespread on the coastal slope than normal (3 on the Palos Verdes Pen. May 12, MCW) and pushed farther N than usual in the e. portion of the Region (one at 7800 ft above Big Pine May 22, T&JH). Six to eight juv. Sage Sparrows of the race *canescens* were on the coastal slope of the San Gabriel Mts., June 27-July 4 (JF); these sightings confirmed the pattern noted by Ned K. Johnson of desert-slope breeding *canescens* moving up-mountain and coastward after breeding, bringing some into contact with coastal *bellii*. A Savannah Sparrow carrying nesting materials on the Carrizo Plain, *San Luis Obispo* Apr. 28 (KAH), a nest near Cantil in June (MTH), and a recently fledged juvenile accompanied by an adult at E. Cronese L., July 16 (GH), were all far from any previously known nesting localities. Grasshopper Sparrows appeared more numerous and widespread than usual, as suggested by a singing bird in Malibu Cr. S.P., *Los Angeles* June 5-6 (RB), some 75 around L. Skinner, *Riverside* throughout the summer (RMCK), and multiple singing birds at half-a-dozen sites around San Diego (CGE, JCL) in May. A White-crowned Sparrow near Big Bear L. in the San Bernardino Mts., June 19 (HEC) was identified as *oriantha*, the race suspected to occasionally breed this far south.

Great-tailed Grackles continue to expand their range in S. California with breeding, or suspected breeding, as far north as Oceano, *San Luis Obispo* (female carrying nesting materials May 16, KAR), the Buena Vista L. Rec. Area near Bakersfield (two males displaying May 2-5, SRG) and Bishop, *Inyo* (multiple pairs nesting, T&JH). A ♂ Bronzed Cowbird was well north of its known range at F.C.R., June 13 (REW).

Red Crossbills moved into the Coastal Mountains this summer as indicated by up to 14 on Big Pine Mt. during July (JMG, MAH), up to 16 on nearby Figueroa Mt. in late July (JH, JEL), 20 on Mt. Pinos after early June (BHe, JEL), up to 30 in the San Bernardino Mts. during July (HK, REW),

one or two in the San Jacinto Mts. in early July (PU), and up to 15 around the Laguna Mts. during the last half of July (GLR, PAG).

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