

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.—Unusual summer weather prevailed throughout the Region during most of the nesting season. After a winter



of heavy rains and snow, mountain areas continued to have running water and snow banks well into August. The vegetation of the foothill areas was lush and abundant and the crop of seeds and berries was very heavy. All of

this spelled abundant food and water for the nesting birds. Herbage on the burned-over hillsides was profuse, hiding the scars of year-old burns. Forest fires were fewer than your editor can remember for this, the driest season of the year. Most reporters stated that the nesting of landbirds was very successful with large broods in evidence. Doves, pigeons, and quail were reported as very numerous and with large numbers of young birds feeding with the adults. The crop of conifer seeds, however, was somewhat meager, and it was the species that inhabit the chaparral and riparian valleys that benefited most substantially. Summer rain is almost unknown in the Region, but this year it was almost commonplace in the mountains, foothills and desert areas. Rains were so severe during the early part of the nesting season that some damage was done to nests and eggs. Warm, moist air from the Gulf of Mexico and from the eastern Pacific Ocean poured into the southern California area almost continuously during July and August, giving us fog and thunderstorms over mountain and desert areas in the late afternoons. A number of bad flash-floods in the desert areas were reported at this time. Some flash-flooding occurred in foothill canyons also. Between these intermittent storms, the Pacific High Pressure Area prevailed and strong winds swept the Los Angeles basin free of smoke and fumes for days on end. Summer temperatures in mountain and coastal areas averaged somewhat higher than normal for this period, but desert areas were very hot. During the storm periods, relative humidity was very high and the fire danger was low for this time of the year.

Loons, Pelagic Birds.—On June 26 a single Common Loon was at Lt. Maxton Brown Sanctuary and remained for two days (Mrs. Boyd Robinson) and 2 Arctic Loons spent the first week of July in the surf near Newport (Michael Jacobsen). A single Black-footed Albatross was found about 5 miles east of San Clemente Island, June 30 (Ed., Ben King, Jr.). On that same date these observers found more than 150 Pink-footed Shearwaters, about 100 Sooty Shearwaters, 11 Leach's Petrels, and about 75 Black Petrels. Dean B. Fisher, aboard a U. S. naval vessel operating from San Diego, made numerous observa-

tions during June, July, and August in the waters within 30 miles of San Clemente Island and between San Clemente Island and Point Loma. A summary of his valuable report is as follows: Black-footed Albatross—seen regularly but uncommonly throughout the period (from June 1 to August 15); no more than 7 were seen at any one time except on August 6 when a total of 112 albatrosses was counted at one time as they sat on the water some 25 miles west of Pt. Loma; Sooty Shearwater—commonest in June when groups of up to 90 birds were observed; a few were seen in July and August; the greatest number counted in one hour was 13; Pink-footed Shearwater—common throughout the period, though most abundant in the middle of July when up to 132 birds were counted in one hour; this species was almost always seen singly; Leach's Petrel—not seen in June but observed regularly in July and August; these birds were usually seen singly and all were the white-rumped races with 16 being the largest number seen at one time; Black Petrel—rather uncommon in June and July, but abundant in August; the greatest number observed in June or July in one hour was 20, but in August groups of up to 125 birds were seen following in the wake of the ships. In contrast to last year, no Skuas were reported from the offshore areas and only one report was received of a **Red-billed Tropic-bird**. This was an individual seen in late July near the eastern end of San Clemente Island (*vide* Mal J. Fink). A single **Magnificent Frigate-bird** was seen flying over the beach west of Zuma Beach, June 16 (R. Dudley and Vivian Ross) and was not seen again. The influx of tropical marine waters continued throughout the summer months (with a severe "red tide" evident during July). Sport fishing for such tropical species as barracuda and bonita (and even marlin) was reported as exceptional, and albacore (which prefer the cooler waters) avoided this coast almost entirely. A repeat invasion of Red-billed Tropic-birds and, Skuas however, did not materialize, much to the chagrin of those who searched for them with high expectations. It can only be assumed that the invasion of these species in the late summer of 1957 may have been due to causes other than those presumed (*i.e.* the influx of tropical marine waters).

Ibises, Flamingos, Sea Ducks.—For some reason as yet undetermined, the late summer influx of Wood Ibis into coastal San Diego County has been steadily declining during the past few years. This season only 3 birds were reported from July 12 until mid-August when they departed (Mrs. BR). A single White-faced Ibis was at the Lomita Gun Club, May 10 (Ed., DBF) and 3 were there on Aug. 16 (Ed., Herbert and Olga Clarke). An Am. Flamingo created a stir when it appeared at the Bolsa Chica Gun Club late in July. It remained throughout August, when it was learned that such a bird had escaped from Marineland of the Pacific at Palos Verdes at the end of July. The bird seemed in good health and was observed to fly and to feed. A few Red-breasted Mergansers spent the summer in coastal sloughs and lagoons. Only 2 Surf Scoters were in the surf between Newport and Huntington Beach whereas from 10 to 15 birds had

been seen there during the past three summers (MJ).

Hawks, Kites, Quail.—A single Ferruginous Hawk was observed in San Diego County along U. S. 101 near Oceanside, May 17 (DBF, John and Marilyn Bishop). White-tailed Kites appeared to have a most successful nesting season in southern California, due in part perhaps to the abundance of mice (these in turn were benefited by the seeds, berries and insects which were in profusion because of the heavy winter rains). California, Gambel's, and Mountain Quail were all reported in large numbers and with many young birds about. Large numbers of Mountain and Gambel's Quail (especially the former) were seen coming to the spring at Stubby Springs in Joshua Tree National Monument in August (Robert Blackstone).

Sandpipers, Stilts, Avocets.—Small numbers of Willets, godwits, and other non-breeding shorebirds were seen throughout the summer season. Fall migration of the shorebirds, which commences here in July, will be discussed in the next issue of *Audubon Field Notes*. A single Pectoral Sandpiper was at Mission Bay, July 30 (Arthur and Jean Morley, MB). About 200 Black-necked Stilts were in the vicinity of Bolsa Chica during the summer and apparently had a successful nesting season as did the Am. Avocet. Numerous young Black-necked Stilts were also seen at the Ventura County Gun Clubs.

Jaegers, Gulls.—In the waters near San Clemente Island, Dean B. Fisher observed a single Pomarine Jaeger, July 1, and another on Aug. 6. Single Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers were seen along the beach near Bolsa Chica, July 10 (Ed., DBF). Between July 19 and the end of August great numbers of Heermann's Gulls were on the beaches between Avila and Oceano. South from Oceano for at least 5 miles loose flocks of from 50 to 500 birds each were scattered at relatively close intervals. It was estimated (by A. I. Roest) that from 8000 to 10,000 birds were present.

Terns, Alcids.—Nesting of the Least Tern in our Region continues to decline owing to the reclamation of suitable nesting habitat for recreational purposes. The post-breeding influx of Elegant Terns from Mexico (and perhaps other countries to the south of us) began when small flocks appeared in mid-July. By July 17 more than 50 had appeared at Santa Barbara (Waldo G. Abbott) although none were seen until September near Malibu to the south. Twelve Elegant Terns were near Ballast Point in San Diego Harbor, July 25 (DBF). About 60 were near Sunset Beach, July 10 (Ed., DBF) and this constituted the first sighting. On July 21 some 700 terns, probably of this species, were seen on Mission Bay (AM, JM). On August 1 650 Elegant Terns were counted on Mission Bay (DBF) and on Aug. 10 more than 200 were counted on the salt reclamation ponds of south San Diego Bay (AM, JM). More than 1300 Elegant Terns were counted near Sunset Beach, Aug. 24 (Ed., HC, OC) and by this time "hundreds" were observed near Playa del Rey. Two Xantus' Murrelets were seen near San Clemente Island, June 30 (Ed., BK, Jr.) and 2 more were seen 20 miles east of the northern end of San Clemente

Island (DBF). Unusual was the report of a single Marbled Murrelet in the surf at Newport, June 29 (MJ, Richard Suter).

Pigeons, Doves, Hummingbirds.—Large numbers of Band-tailed Pigeons were reported nesting in Santa Barbara this year (WGA); their increase as a breeding bird in that area has been noted by Abbott for the past 20 years. Abbott also writes of observing attempted copulation between a male Spotted Dove and a female Mourning Dove. Three known nests of the Ground Dove were found near San Diego, two of which were used for a least 3 broods this summer (AM). Migrant Allen's Hummingbirds (total of 15) were seen on several areas 5 to 20 miles south of Tijuana, Baja California, July 26 (DBF). Some 45 Rufous Hummingbirds were in the vicinity of the summit of Mt. Pinos, Aug. 16 (Ed., Irving Burr). Some 250 hummingbirds were at Tucker Sanctuary, Modjeska Canyon, Orange Co., Aug. 10. It was estimated that there were about 120 Anna's, 65 Black-chinned, 35 Rufous, 20 Costa's, and 12 Allen's (Margaret Harding). On August 24 at Pine Cove, Idyllwild, some 300 hummingbirds were counted as they came to the feeders of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Wright. Mrs. Harding estimated that there were 150+ Anna's, about 75 Black-chinned, 30 Rufous, and 15 Costa's.

Swallows, Magpies, Jays.—Nesting of most species of passerines was very good with large numbers of young being brought off. Cliff Swallows were reported as having largely deserted the Pasadena area this summer (MJ) but a very large nesting colony of more than 500 took up nesting activities at the highway bridge over Malibu Creek at U. S. 101 in June (Ed.). Purple Martins were reported as fairly successful in nesting activities in Orange County and in a few mountain areas such as Charleton Flats (Thomas R. Howell). Several Black-billed Magpies were reported in the city of Los Angeles, but these might represent escapes. Some 50 Pifion Jays were seen frequenting the golf-course area near Big Bear Lake in mid-July (Ethel West).

Wrens, Thrushes.—Bewick's Wrens were reported as very numerous in foothill areas where Michael Jacobsen counted about 200 along a 3-mile stretch of trail near Altadena in July. Robins nested commonly in West Los Angeles and Beverly Hills (Ed.) and small numbers were found nesting throughout the lowlands of Los Angeles County such as in North Hollywood (Marion Wilson).

Orioles, Tanagers.—A Bullock's Oriole was found nesting at El Capitan Beach State Park near Santa Barbara, June 5, and is the first record of this species nesting on the ocean side of the Coast Range between Ventura and Gaviota Pass (WGA). Illustrative of the nesting success of some passerines was the fact that some 18 Hooded Orioles (with many young included) came to hummingbird feeders in one yard in Santa Ana during the summer (Mrs. WH). There was also some evidence that Western Tanagers nested in small numbers in lowland oak canyons this summer. At least 12 were in Eaton Wash., Aug. 7 (MJ).—ARNOLD SMALL, 3028 Caven-
dish Drive. Los Angeles 64, Calif.