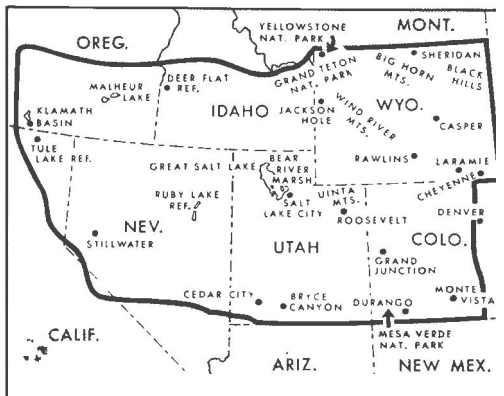


GREAT BASIN, CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.—This summer was hot and dry for almost the entire Region. Only the Rockies just



west of Denver did not complain of the drought. In most of central and northern Wyoming it has been the driest summer on record and average temperatures have been high. The effect on birdlife has probably been minimal, because no great waterfowl breeding area here is dependent on current precipitation, and landbirds don't fluctuate with rainfall. Out in the Great Basin, where precipitation makes so much difference in waterfowl production, it was the snowfall last winter that produced the water for this summer. The Great Basin big breeding areas such as Klamath, Malheur, Bear River Marshes, Stillwater, and Ruby Lakes depend on the snowfall in the mountains local to these refuges. The refuges themselves are in extremely arid country and the mountain ranges on which they depend are very dry with variable and intermittent winter snows.

Horned Grebes.—Horned Grebes are continuing to breed at Malheur in dry eastern Oregon, and the numbers are increasing. They were first found breeding there in 1958 (Marshall).

White Pelicans.—There were still 12,000 on Malheur eating carp on Aug. 12. With winds, pelicans, drought, and some poison the carp numbers in that area are rapidly diminishing so waterfowl food will have a chance to come back if there is any water. At present there is almost no water (Marshall).

Trumpeter Swans.—The Trumpeters did not do well in this Region this season. Of 20 Trumpeters present only 2 nests were found at Ruby Lakes in central Nevada and only 3 cygnets were present to date (D. A. Pierce, for Clair Aldous). On Flat Creek in the National Elk Refuge at Jackson in western Wyoming no cygnets appeared from 3 nests (Greenwalt). Only 2 nests were found at Malheur, but the results are not known yet.

Geese, Ducks.—Two immature flightless Snow Geese with a flightless adult were found on July 8 at Malheur (Marshall). This remarkable record may be the first nesting of the Snow Goose out of the Arctic. The young were captured and photographed. At Ruby Lakes in central Nevada the water level is extremely low and duck production was about 20 per cent less than last year. Their 70 pairs of Canada Geese raised only 2.6 birds per pair. Although Malheur Lake has almost dried up, the Blitzen River had good water, and since the waterfowl breed mostly along the river, production was normal.

At Bear River Marshes on the north end of the Great Salt Lake, in spite of the low water level, waterfowl production was good, being 15 per cent greater than last year. The Gadwall is the most common nesting bird with the Redhead next. The Redhead has been increasing tremendously. The fall build-up began very early at Bear River and there were 28,000 Redheads by July 11. By Aug. 15 there were 157,000 Pintails, which is a little low compared with the five-year average (Marvin P. Duncan).

At Stillwater Refuge in western Nevada the water level was low to start with and rapidly dried up so that waterfowl production was 3325 compared with 20,691 last year. Diving ducks were most affected. The adult birds were present but with their habitat drying up they did not nest (Kiger).

The Klamath Basin reported a total increase of 66 per cent in ducks over last year, a very poor year. However, production is still 28 per cent below the five-year average. Migrant ducks were coming into the Klamath Basin in numbers by July 31 (Bob Abney).

Hawks.—Nothing remarkable to note, except that Ernest Greenwalt found "Red-tailed and Swainson's Hawks parked their young on barns and poles on the east fringes of the National Elk Refuge at Jackson, close to the large ground squirrel colony and helped curtail the abundant supply of these rodents."

Sandhill Cranes.—In addition to Malheur, Ruby Lakes in central Nevada is another large breeding ground of this species in the Great Basin. There were 200 Sandhills at Ruby Lakes this season (D. A. Pierce).

Phalaropes.—Northern Phalaropes are common migrants in the Great Basin. Gleb Kashin reported thousands of them on the Great Salt Lake, Aug. 11. At Stillwater, in western Nevada, about one-third of the migrating phalaropes are Northern (Kiger). The rest are Wilson's, of course.

Gulls.—The 1957-1958 overflow of Malheur has left a Harney Lake which is drying up more slowly than Malheur itself. This made conditions on Harney Lake ideal for gulls, with small fish more available in the diminishing lake. There were 50,000 gulls this season—a mixture of California and Ring-billed. The California Gulls had a successful breeding season, with 1000 nests (Marshall).

Swifts.—A pair of Black Swifts (presumably breeding birds) were noted by Sidney Hyde on July 16 in the canyon of the Gunnison, 35 miles below Gunnison on the western slope of Colorado. The Black Swift is almost certainly a regular breeder in the canyon of the Gunnison.

Hummingbirds.—Mrs. Crews in the mesa country of western Colorado at Hotchkiss is having her usual summer influx of hummers and feeding about a pint of syrup a day. She has Black-chinned, Calliope, Broad-tailed, and Rufous steadily. In 1954 and again on Aug. 13th 6 birds that fit the description of male Allen's appeared. This should be too far east and north for this bird, but western Colorado with its different climate is as little known ornithologically as is any part of the United States.

Vireos.—Gleb Kashin had singing (Plumbeous) Solitary Vireos at Half Moon Lake in the Wind River Mountains of western Wyoming in July.

Bobolinks.—The distribution of the Bobolink is somewhat spotty in this area. L. M. Baylor found them breeding at Fort Hall Indian Reservation in southern Idaho near Pocatello on June 12.

Orioles.—C. H. Baer and Harold Holt in the last week of May and the first of June identified a Scott's Oriole on the south rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. This is the first record for the state of Colorado.

Grosbeaks.—There are numerous reports of Blue Grosbeaks from Grand Junction in western Colorado. Mrs. Gustafson of that area reported 2 breeding pairs near her home. A Blue Grosbeak also showed up just west of Casper in central Wyoming on July 9 (OKS).

—DR. OLIVER K. SCOTT, 437 E. 13th St., Casper, Wyo.