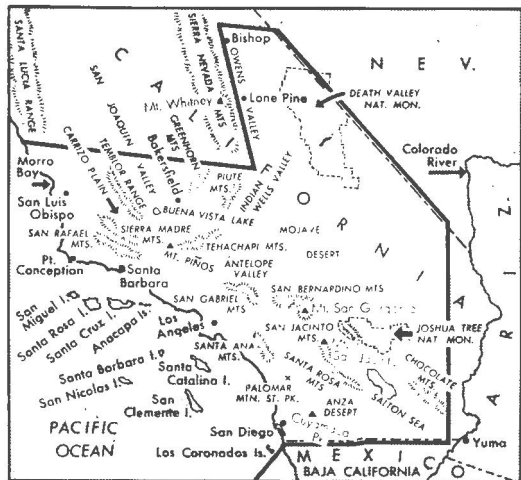


**SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.**—The nesting season in southern California (which commences here for some species as early as the end of



January) was extremely dry, and this was reflected in the overall success of nesting landbirds. The drought produced little herbage and seed foods for the birds, and as a result, nesting success was generally poor for the birds of the chaparral and mountain forests. Most observers reported poor nesting successes and smaller-than-normal broods. Lack of water in the foothills and mountains induced many birds to seek relief from the drought in gardens and irrigated areas. Certain springs which continued to flow throughout the summer attracted larger numbers of birds than usual. There was no measurable precipitation during June and the first half of July. However, during the latter part of July and the first three weeks of August some relief from the drought was affected by a series of tropical storms that raised the humidity level and brought much-needed rains to parched desert and mountain areas. It is significant that for the past three summers (following seasons of severe drought) we have had a rash of mid-summer thunderstorms, which originated in tropical waters to the south of us. For example, almost 3 inches of rain fell in Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument during the first three weeks of August. These summer storms were centered over the deserts and mountain ranges to the east of the Los Angeles basin, and although they did little to affect the success of nesting landbirds, they succeeded in reducing the fire-hazard in the forests.

**Loons through Cormorants.**—No loons were reported summering along the coast. A single Western Grebe remained at Bolsa Chica as during the past 5 years. Black-footed Albatrosses were present in small numbers (maximum 3 at once) during late July and through August west of Point Loma and near San

Clemente Island. Similarly, small numbers of Sooty Shearwaters were present throughout the summer, primarily near San Clemente Island. A single Manx Shearwater was seen near Los Coronados Islands about July 1 (Jay M. Sheppard), and a few Pink-footed Shearwaters were found in that vicinity throughout August. This was one of the poorest summers for petrels that I can recall. Normally one can find hundreds of Black Petrels during July and August between the mainland and the islands. From July 28 to Aug. 4 Sheppard saw only 7 Leach's Petrels, 4 Ashy Petrels and 2 Black Petrels near Los Coronados Islands. On Aug. 12 only a single Ashy and a single Black Petrel were found between San Pedro and a point some 12 miles west of San Clemente Island (Ed.). No other petrels were reported. No White Pelicans were reported nesting in the Region; Brown Pelicans seemed to have had fair nesting success. A **Brown Booby** was again seen near Prince Islet, off San Miguel Island, July 25-26 (Don Bleitz) where it has been reported on several previous occasions. During the summer cormorants of all species were very scarce along the coast, but their nesting success on the off-shore islands appeared good.

**Hérons and Ibises.**—Great Blue Herons (with three nests at each location) were reported nesting near Morro Bay (Alma Stultz) and Rancho Santa Fe (Minta Robinson). Snowy Egrets again nested successfully near both the north and the south ends of the Salton Sea. Three Am. Bitterns were found at Lt. Maxton Brown Sanctuary near Oceanside, Aug. 29 (MR). A small group of Wood Ibis again returned to the several coastal lagoons north of San Diego during late August. Eighteen were counted near Solano Beach, Aug. 29 (Guy McCaskie, Richard Stallcup) and a group of 14 was reported over Lt. Maxton Brown Sanctuary about Aug. 10 (*vide* MR). No report was received of the nesting success of White-faced Ibis at the south end of the Salton Sea, and 1 bird was found near Oceanside, Aug. 29 (GMcC. RS).

**Waterfowl through Quail.**—Ruddy Ducks and Cinnamon Teal had fair nesting results, but Fulvous Tree Ducks were below normal in the Imperial Valley. A pair of Surf Scoters was still at Lower Newport, July 9 (G. Shumway Suffel). White-tailed Kites were difficult to find during the summer, probably because of their retiring habits during the nesting period. An Osprey was seen at Upper Newport Bay, Aug. 28 (GMcC. RS), and a Peregrine Falcon flew over Mt. Wilson, Aug. 12 (Russell and Marion Wilson). Chukars were reported as abundant and followed by many young in the higher regions of Death Valley Nat'l Monument (Roland Wauer). Quail generally had a poor nesting with small coveys reported, and many flocks appeared in gardens and other urban areas.

**Shorebirds.**—For reasons as yet difficult to explain, shorebirds of a number of species were abundant throughout the summer months despite the continued destruction of suitable habitat. Some species, such as Black Turnstones and Wilson's Phalaropes, appeared very early along our shores, while other species, notably Knots, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Solitary Sandpipers, were commoner than usual. Black Oystercatchers nested in small numbers along the gravelly beaches

south of Morro Bay. Snowy Plovers had a difficult nesting season because of the constant intrusion of people into their habitat. Black-bellied Plover were present in small numbers throughout July and August. Three Black Turnstones were seen at sea about 60 miles southwest of San Diego about July 1 (JMS) and one bird was at Malibu, Aug. 5 (Ed.). Twenty Ruddy Turnstones were found at San Diego Bay and 5 more at Solano Beach, Aug. 29 (GMcC. RS). One Solitary Sandpiper was at Solano Beach, Aug. 29 (GMcC. RS), and 3 were at Upper Newport Bay, Aug. 26 (David Robison). The only Wandering Tattler reported flew by Will Rogers State Beach, Sept. 3 (Ed.). McCaskie and Stallcup found 1 Lesser Yellowlegs at Sandyland, Aug. 28; 20 at Solano Beach, and 30 at Oceanside, Aug. 29. In addition, on Aug. 29, they found 5 Knots at San Diego Bay and 20 at Oceanside. A Pectoral Sandpiper was at Malibu Lagoon, July 22 (DR). No Baird's Sandpipers were reported. Dowitchers of both species and small numbers of Marbled Godwits were found throughout the summer. Small groups of Am. Avocets and Black-necked Stilts were found nesting at Sandyland, near Ventura, Bolsa Chica, and some of the lagoons in coastal San Diego County, while the majority of these birds had successful nestings in the Imperial Valley; no nestings were reported from the dried-out lakes of the San Joaquin Valley. Wilson's Phalaropes appeared very early this summer; 1200+ were counted at Upper Newport Bay, July 8 (RW, MW). They also were abundant on the lagoons of coastal San Diego County and in Death Valley during this time. Along with them, however, were only a very few Northern Phalaropes. By the last week of July only a few hundred Wilson's remained but the numbers of Northern Phalaropes had swelled to several thousand at Upper Newport Bay and at Lt. Maxton Brown Sanctuary. It was estimated that there were more than 7000 Northern Phalaropes at Lt. Maxton Brown Sanctuary, Aug. 26 (RW, MW). Only about 20 Red Phalaropes were found between San Pedro and San Clemente Island, Aug. 12 (Ed.).

*Jaegers through Terns.*—Owing perhaps to the scarcity of Elegant Terns coastwise during the late summer, the flight of jaegers was one of the poorest in memory. Only one Pomarine Jaeger was seen near San Clemente Island, Aug. 12 (Ed., George A. Hall, Irving Burr), and one off Sandyland, Aug. 28 (GMcC. RS). A Skua was sighted near San Clemente Island, Aug. 12 (Ed., GAH, IB). Early Sabine's Gulls were seen—1, 55 miles west of San Diego, Aug. 1 (JMS), and another near San Clemente Island, Aug. 12 (GAH, IB). Gull-billed Terns had a very poor nesting season at the Salton Sea, where only 11 pairs could be found (Fred Gallup). Royal Terns were unreported during the summer, but Caspian Terns again nested successfully on south San Diego Bay. Only about 14 nests of Elegant Terns were found there (Robert Blackstone). Away from the San Diego area, no Elegant Terns were found aside from 2 at Malibu, Aug. 28 (GMcC. RS).

*Alcids.*—Pigeon Guillemots had a good nesting season near Morro Bay (AS). Only 5 Cassin's Auklets were seen near Los Coronados Islands during the first week in August (JMS). On Aug. 12 we had a singular experience with Xantus' Murrelets about 8 miles

southwest of the western end of San Clemente Island. At 4:30 A.M. we counted and estimated more than 350 circling the lights and settling into the water around our drifting boat. They appeared to be attracted to the lights and then moved on, and were replaced by others. This was strange since on the following morning and for the remainder of the day we saw not another murrelet. This experience was difficult to explain in light of the following facts: Xantus' Murrelets normally finish nesting by mid-July; the young leave the nest and seek the water about 2 days after hatching; the birds normally are not nocturnal, but leave the nesting burrows shortly before dawn and return to them at twilight or just after dark; they are relatively non-migratory.

*Pigeons, Doves, Hummingbirds.*—Band-tailed Pigeons near Claremont nested as early as the end of January, as an injured fledgling was found there on Feb. 22 (L. A. Shelton). A Ground Dove was found near Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley Nat'l Monument, July 9 (RW). Both Ground and White-winged Doves had successful nestings in the Coachella Valley during May and June. In general, both Anna's and Black-chinned Hummingbirds had only fair nesting success.

*Flycatchers, Swallows.*—An Eastern Kingbird was reported near Mar Monte Slough, Santa Barbara in late August (*vide* Egmont Z. Rett) and another was collected near Oceanside, Aug. 29 (GMcC. RS). Ash-throated Flycatchers appeared in good numbers in residential parts of Los Angeles (although no nests were found). The Olive-sided Flycatcher is probably a regular nesting species now at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, as adults were feeding 2 young there, Aug. 2 (EZR). Swallows of all species apparently fared better with their nesting activities than did most landbirds. Purple Martins were found at Chilao, June 10 (RW, MW), and at Irvine and O'Neil Parks, July 8 (RW, MW). On July 30 a lone Purple Martin was seen flying over the Long Beach Freeway in Long Beach (Ed.).

*Ravens through Phainopeplas.*—An albino Raven was seen throughout the summer at Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley Nat'l Monument (RW). Both Pigmy and Red-breasted Nuthatches were found in San Marcos Pass near Santa Barbara, Aug. 22 (EZR). More Robins nested in lowland urban areas during this season. A few Cedar Waxwings remained near Santa Barbara as late as June 17 (EZR)—and this seemed to confirm this general condition. Phainopeplas were scarce in the desert areas but appeared in unexpected coastal areas and in unusual numbers in the foothill areas away from the deserts.

*Starlings, Warblers, Tanagers.*—Pauma Valley was added to list of nesting sites of the Starling in southern California this year (FG). Late Townsend's, Hermit, and MacGillivray's Warblers were found at Buckhorn Flats in the San Gabriel Mountains, June 10 (RW, MW). A Northern Waterthrush was collected at Furnace Creek Ranch, D.V.N.M., Aug. 18 (RW). Bullock's Orioles had only moderate nesting success while Hooded Orioles brought off very few young birds. After a superb spring flight a small number of Western Tanagers lingered in San Marcos

until at least Aug. 1 (EZR) and through August at Morro Bay (AS), but no nest was found.

*Grosbeaks, Finches and Sparrows.*—Black-headed Grosbeaks seemed to have had a good season as many young were reported. A male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** came daily to a feeder at Idyllwild, May 16-23 (Marguerite Courtney, *vide* Norman H. Mellor), and a male Cardinal was reported from Santa Ana, Aug. 19 (*vide* Margaret Harding). A pair of *Pyrrhuloxias*

were again reported from Cottonwood Springs, but indications are that these were released cage birds. Lawrence's Goldfinches were fairly common along mountain streams and at springs throughout the summer. Black-chinned Sparrows were reported by a few observers to have had a very successful nesting.—ARNOLD SMALL, 3028 *Caendish Drive*, Los Angeles 64, *Calif.*