



above in some areas of southern California. Only a wet March and the exceptional snow-pack which was 30 to 40 per cent above normal at the end of March, prevented serious drought in our Region.

The cold spring delayed the nesting season in high localities. It is difficult, however, to correlate this cool and dry season with population densities or nesting success. Most observers reported an average or good season. Usually there is not enough detailed information on any one locality to afford a firm basis for comparison.

An exceptional basis for future comparison will exist in the work of Mrs. Marianne Shepard at Jack London Ranch, Sonoma County, who reported on the success or failure of 142 nests. The variability of success among different groups of birds is suggested by these extracts from her figures:

Hole-nesting birds (Picidae, Paridae, Western Bluebird, House Wren)	
—	21 nests, 91% success
Fringillidae	—29 nests, 38% success
Cliff Swallow	40 nests, 12% success

Many mountain observers also reported an unusually heavy cone crop in all forms of conifers, following the unusually heavy winter snow-pack. This development is likely to prevent a recurrence next winter of the recent invasion of Clark's Nutcrackers and Evening Grosbeaks. (Reviewed by ROP)

Summering Water and Shorebirds—Non-breeding individuals of many species of waterbirds summer along the middle Pacific coast far south of their breeding grounds. Summering diving ducks (except scoters) usually represent crippled or otherwise incapacitated individuals, but quite substantial numbers of many shorebirds remain from the most southern wintering grounds northward. Why does this occur in some species, and not in others? What is the physiological reason for it? The ultimate answers will no doubt come from biochemical and physiological

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION.—The weather during the nesting season in coastal central California is regularly dominated by a large stationary High, which tends to prevent moisture-bearing north-west winds from reaching the coast from roughly April to October. Cool fogs hold daily temperatures along the coast in the 60's and 70's, while the Central Valley bakes under clear skies in 100° temperatures. Such traces of precipitation as may occur fall in extreme northwestern California or in the high Sierra.

The 1962 breeding season was exceptionally cool. Although April temperatures averaged above normal throughout the area, May temperatures were well below normal in all parts of the Region. At Mount Shasta City, for example, temperatures were ten degrees below normal for all but the first six days of May. June and July continued somewhat cooler than normal.

The usual winter and spring precipitation pattern was reversed, in that recorded levels were below normal in northwestern California while normal or

investigations, but the field observer can answer such questions as: What birds summer as non-breeders? What plumage are they in? What plumage do the migrants arrive in, and can they be distinguished from the summerers by plumage? Answers to some of these questions will be found in the shorebird section, but they can be asked of all the migratory waterbirds, and to a lesser degree of landbirds. (Reviewed by TC)

Grebes, Albatrosses, Shearwaters, Cormorants—

Some 150 to 200 Western Grebes apparently lingered near the mouth of the Russian River (observed June 23, July 15 and 19, *GLB*, *MM*); and 62 at the mouth of Pescadero Creek (July 21, *EAL*). Similar concentrations were reported from the same locations last summer.

Twenty-eight Black-footed Albatrosses were seen by the Santa Cruz Bird Club on their June 18 sea trip 5-6 miles offshore (*DBH*). Though these birds are usually silent along this coast, the "whistle-like screeches and deep cow-like moos" heard by these observers agree with the *Handbook of North American Birds*, which reports the birds "noisy in assemblies." June appears to be a peak month for numbers of this species off our coast. A Manx Shearwater seen on the same trip is very early, since this bird, unlike the other shearwaters seen on this coast, breeds in the northern spring.

Theodore Chase, Jr. reported on the Pelagic Cormorant colony on Bodega Head, unfortunately threatened by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's plan for a nuclear power plant there: "The colony numbered at least 63 nests, probably more, as some 200 birds were about. Incubation had begun June 3; hatching had been completed in one sub-colony on July 22, many young being quite well grown. (52 in 28 nests); all nests in another sub-colony still contained eggs (18 in 6 nests), while both young and eggs were found in a third. It seems unlikely that renesting, after loss of all eggs, occurred on such a large scale. It was my impression that all adults feeding young had lost the white flank-patches, while many birds on eggs still had them, suggesting a hormonal relation between reproductive state and plumage molt. The problem deserves further study."

Hérons—Many reports of active Great Blue Heron nests from scattered colonies corroborated the impression that the species appeared more numerous along sloughs and bays in the Region; a newly reported rookery in Digger Pines at Natoma State Park, Sacramento Co. held 2 young on the somewhat early date of April 6 (*PMcB*). Near Yreka, Siskiyou Co., the adults were observed in an attempt to feed lampreys, which were apparently not accepted by the nestlings (*vide MSC*).

A newly discovered heronry on Brown's Island in the Suisun and Grizzly Bay area held the largest breeding population of Snowy Egrets reported in this Region in many years. Bill Griffith of the State Fish and Game Dept. first discovered the rookery and visited the area on April 17 with Howard Cogswell, who estimated the population of Snowy Egrets at about 100 pairs, and reported that the nests of the Snowies were nearly all in the lower halves of *Acacia*

trees on the only *dry* mound in that part of the island (not in tules as heretofore reported in the West). Most of the nests examined contained 2 or 3 eggs, a count gave 180 nests, some undoubtedly old ones. About 80 Black-crowned Night Herons were flushed in another part of the heronry. A local resident reports having seen the birds in these trees for 30-40 years, but the rookery does not seem to have been reported in the literature.

Waterfowl—A Canada Goose was incubating in a nest 30 ft. up in a large Jeffrey Pine in Lassen Nat'l Park, on May 6 (*EBB*); they occasionally raise young above the ground in nests of other large birds, but definite records are few. Blue-winged Teal were suspected to nest in the Sacramento Nat'l Wildlife Refuge (7 males, June 11, courtship display, *PdEB* & *MM*); and near Sebastopol (1 male, July 23, *GLB*). There are recent breeding records near Gridley, Butte Co. A report of a pair of Wood Ducks at Lake Tahoe on June 7 (*GMcC*) is one of the few records from the mountains, east of its breeding range in the state.

Small groups of non-breeding scoters apparently regularly linger along the coast during the summer, the highest numbers reported this year were at Patrick's Point, Humboldt Co. (about 200, July 26, *BDP*); and—similar to last summer—at Jenner, Sonoma Co. (100-150, June and July, *MM*). Surf Scoters outnumbered White-winged Scoters at a ratio of about 3:2. Other reports of single diving ducks during the summer on the coast most probably involve crippled individuals.

Hawks—Four young Red-shouldered Hawks hatched on April 27 or 28 in a nest built in a eucalyptus near Glen Ellen, Sonoma Co. and 3 successfully flew on June 7—the same date last year's brood left this nest (hatching date 1961: April 26, evidencing a nestling period of 40-42 days); the young and adults stayed together as a family group a little over one month (*MS*).

Four active Osprey nests—with a total of at least 7 young—were counted on June 24 along about 2 miles of coastal forest habitat bordering the Russian River west of Duncan Mills, Sonoma Co. (*GM, et al.*). This is a substantial increase over previous reports from that area. A falcon identified from a distance of 50 ft. as a female Pigeon Hawk near Mt. Lassen on July 15 (*JKC*) is of interest as the species is suspected to breed in northern California.

Grouse, Quail—Ruffed Grouse, introduced in Lassen County by the State Fish and Game Department, seem to be holding their own: one adult and two 2/3 grown chicks were flushed along Hat Creek, 25 miles north of Lassen Nat'l Park on July 5 (*MM*). Contributors on the coast were nearly unanimous in reporting an excellent season for the California Quail, with many newly hatched young recorded from May to late July. Mountain Quail seem to have fared equally well: four different coveys were seen near Manzanita Lake in Lassen Nat'l Park at the end of July (*EBB*), and 20 young with 4 adults near Camp Nelson, Tulare Co. on July 15 (*MEM*). On the north slope of Mt. St. Helena, Sonoma Co. within the breeding range of California and Mountain

Quail the two species were observed within a few hundred feet of each other on June 17 (*BDP*).

Shorebirds—Although migration of this group almost spans the summer in our Region, some of the birds recorded in June are more likely summering individuals than "early" or "late" migrants. Following is the total number of non-breeding shorebirds reported from the coastal bays in mid-June (June 11 through 23, discounting repeat observations of presumably the same individuals): Semipalmated Plover (6); Black-bellied Plover (152, two groups); Ruddy Turnstone (4); Long-billed Curlew (40, one group); Whimbrel (1); Willet (several small groups, widespread); dowitcher (15); Marbled Godwit (270, 4 groups including 150 at Tomales Bay); Red Phalarope (1). Without observations of color-marked individuals, the status of these birds remains, of course, uncertain. However, correlating these records with data from previous seasons, it seems that some of the larger shorebirds (Black-bellied Plover, Willet, Marbled Godwit) summer on our coast regularly in fair numbers, while small ones (notably Dunlin) apparently do so rarely or not at all.

Several contributors remarked that Black-bellied Plovers observed in June were in non-breeding plumage, while the first migrants arrived in breeding plumage. On the other hand, Ruddy Turnstones were recorded in breeding plumage in June. Most shorebirds arriving during the first two weeks of July were in breeding plumage, while many appeared to be molting principally during the last two weeks of that month. However, the first Wandering Tattlers seen (July 22, *TC*) were in winter plumage.

In general, arrivals of migrants coincided very well with previous years, except for a Baird's Sandpiper 3 weeks early at the Carmel River (July 9, *RLB*). The three reports of single Knots in July (*EAA*, *TC*, *BDP*) may represent individuals caught up with dowitchers, two being specifically reported with them. As usual, Western Sandpipers were the first to move along the coast in large numbers: "Several thousand" were at Humboldt Bay on July 25 (*BDP*), and an estimated 8-10,000 were at Bay Farm Island on July 29 (*MM*).

Unusual inland records: A Snowy Plover at the Davis sewer ponds on July 29 (*PdeB*, *TC* & *ROP*) is the second-known record from the Sacramento Valley, though it breeds elsewhere inland in California. At the south end of Lake Tahoe, elevation 6200 ft., Guy McCaskie found a Snowy Plover on Aug. 8 (specimen), and another on Aug. 11; 2 Whimbrels on Aug. 3; a Sanderling on Aug. 8 (specimen) and one on Aug. 12 (first records for the Sierra). Several small groups of Marbled Godwits were seen in July and August at the south end of Lake Tahoe, with a peak of 70 on July 22 (*HLC*); there are only two previous records from that location.

Jaegers, Gulls, Terns—A Pomarine Jaeger was observed chasing terns at Wood's Lagoon, Santa Cruz Co. on May 22 (*JH*), the first May report in many years. A Glaucous Gull, "about into second year plumage," was identified at Bodega Bay on July 19 by Gordon Bolander and party; we have knowl-

edge of only one previous summer straggler record from our coast (specimen record, 1938). Migrating Bonaparte's Gulls were recorded unusually late: 200 off Santa Cruz during the first week of June (*vide DBH*). At about the same time, Heermann's Gulls arrived somewhat early from their southern breeding grounds (20, all imm., near Santa Cruz on June 4, *PdeB* & *ROP*); the first to arrive are the sooty-brown yearling birds.

A Common Tern collected from a group of three at the south end of Lake Tahoe on Aug. 12 is the first record from the Sierra, and one of the few inland specimens from our Region (*GMcC*). Seven Least Terns on June 16 at Bay Farm Island (*ER*) is the highest number reported there in recent years, and early for a location where they are usually recorded after the breeding season; they are not known to nest north of Monterey Bay. The first Elegant Terns at Moss Landing (3 on July 21, *EAA*) were a bit earlier than last year, though a month later than in the great invasion of 1960. A Black Tern at Conn Lake, Napa Co. on June 16 (*MS*) was unusual for summer east of its breeding range in the state.

Cuckoos, Owls, Swifts, Hummingbirds—A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was reported near Orangevale, Sacramento Co. on June 2 (*FGE*), and one was seen and heard in a cemetery in Sacramento on July 1 (*HK*, *vide FGE*); there are only 4 records in our files since 1956. Formerly "fairly common" in suitable habitat, this bird has almost become a rarity in central California. At Alameda, along San Leandro Bay, a nesting attempt of a Barn Owl inside a wood-lined cement cubicle slanted toward the bay, and open only at the top, was unsuccessful (*ER*, *HLC*).

The little-known Flammulated Owl was again heard in Yosemite Nat'l Park in June (*GMcC*), and one was heard and seen in an open pine grove near Ben Lomond, Santa Cruz Co. on Aug. 4 (*RS*), for the first record known to us from the coastal mountains. A Short-eared Owl on July 31 near Cotati, Sonoma Co. is one of the few seen in mid-summer west of the Sierra in recent years (*JRA*); the species formerly nested locally in the Valley and on the Coast.

Vaux's Swifts were reported to nest in chimneys in Ventura, Humboldt Co. (3 records, *vide BDP*); in Santa Rosa (eastern fringe of breeding range, 2nd year, *NM*); and in Saratoga, Santa Clara Co. (successfully for the fourth consecutive year, *EDS*). Unlike their eastern counterpart, the Chimney Swift, the western species rarely resorts to this man-made structure for nesting sites. As in many previous seasons, Vaux's Swifts were again widely reported from the Sierra (4 counties) in June and July, yet there is no definite nesting record from the mountains in our Region. Almost all prior records having been of foraging groups, a report of adults and immatures in the tops of tall conifers is of particular interest: 4 or 5 adults in top of Red Firs at China Flat, El Dorado Co. on June 9 and 10; and 20 adults and immatures, spending most of day and twilight hours in tall Red Firs and Jeffrey Pines, July 20, 21 and 22, at Chapman Creek, Sierra Co. (*FGE* & *SA*).

Seven localities reported a dearth of hummingbirds. Rather than reflecting an actual decrease in the

population, these reports may reflect the absence of large local concentrations; an abundance of bloom at native flowering shrubs this summer may have scattered the birds over larger areas. In contrast, north of Yreka, hummingbirds were considered numerous, with four species present in June: Calliope and Anna's, regular summer visitors, were joined by Rufous on June 10, and at least one Allen's on June 17 (MSC), the latter a casual fall migrant away from the coast.

Woodpeckers, Horned Larks, Swallows—An Acorn Woodpecker at 5000 ft. along Highway 49, 2 miles west of Sattley, Sierra Co. on June 9 (PdB & MM) is one of the few that have been recorded east of the Sierra. A Downy Woodpecker, drumming in riparian habitat at an elevation of 6550 ft. at Lily Lake, El Dorado Co., July 24 and 25 (HLC); and a pair present in June and July at Tahoe City, 6250 ft. (GMcC), suggest breeding at this high altitude. A nest of a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker located 25 ft. high in a Lodgepole Pine at Lassen Nat'l Park is unusual for a bird that normally builds its nest not higher than 8 ft. from the ground (EBB); a nest near the Yuba Pass fledged young on July 9 (BCS).

Though conspicuous and easy to observe, onset of flock formation after the nesting season is seldom reported: On July 20, "hundreds" of Horned Larks were gathered in Lacey Valley, Sierra Co., 6000 ft., where similar flocks were seen in previous years during the summer months (BCS). Violet-green and Cliff Swallows "appeared in flocks and seemed on the move" about July 10 near Fort Bragg (RC); and a flock of 200 Violet-greens was lined up on telephone wires in the Lake Almanor area on July 29 (PdB, et al.). On June 28, Cliff Swallows were observed to gather in flocks prior to leaving their nesting site near Cotati, Sonoma Co. (500 in flock, JRA). Bank Swallows moved through the Lake Tahoe area in small numbers (up to 10) on July 27, 29 and Aug. 12 (GMcC). Twenty-five active nests of this species were reported at an established colony near Watsonville; this year all nests were built in a recently sheared-off wall (DBH). An attempt to build in a new slide at a former nesting site at Soquel, Santa Cruz Co. was unsuccessful (JH).

Nutcrackers, Nuthatches—The unprecedented record of 2 Clark's Nutcrackers remaining at a feeder in Pacific Grove, Monterey Co. throughout the summer until at least Aug. 3 (fide GPL) favors reports of suspected nesting on the coast. However, careful investigations of these reports by Harry C. Smith in the Santa Cruz area and George P. Lamont on the Monterey peninsula brought forth little substantiating evidence. It was generally felt that nesting may have been attempted, though all evidence was purely circumstantial, including the discovery of 2 empty nests. "Feeding of young" and "carrying of sticks" may have represented courtship feeding and premature nesting behavior. The species was considered to be present in "normal" numbers in the mountains this summer.

Pigmy Nuthatches, first recorded in Golden Gate Park during the fall of 1961, remained through the

summer; a nest with young being fed was observed in mid-May—the first for San Francisco (FP, CS).

Thrushes, Starlings—A Varied Thrush feeding 2 fledglings in Sequoia Park in the city of Eureka on Aug. 23 (NM) provides a late nesting record for the sparse breeding population in the northwestern part of the Region. Another report of interest in this family is that of 2 Swainson's Thrushes singing simultaneously on July 22 and 25 in riparian woodland at Lily Lake, southwest of Fallen Leaf, El Dorado Co., another locality of possible breeding of *H. u. swainsoni* near the western border of its range (HLC).

The large wintering population of Starlings in the Santa Rosa area, 20 miles from the coast, disappeared after March 15, and none were seen there during the summer months (JRA); however, flocks containing 60-80 per cent juveniles reported from various inland locations in July vouch for expansion of the breeding population in the interior of the Region.

Vireos, Warblers—A Solitary Vireo—not known to breed in the Valley—was seen in Caswell State Park on June 26 (PdB). June seems to be the month to find accidentals in California: A Red-eyed Vireo, discovered singing in a poplar tree on June 9 just west of Sattley, Sierra Co. remained in the same group of trees until June 19 (MM, BS, CS and many other observers), the fourth record for the Region. A Parula Warbler was collected on June 18 near Sebastopol, Sonoma Co. and a second singing male was observed there on June 23 (GLB, et al.), the third occurrence in the Region. A male Magnolia Warbler, found dead on June 19 in residential Carmel by Calvin Meyer (fide RLB) is the sixth occurrence in our Region.

Early movement away from nesting areas is suggested by the following records: A "migratory movement" of Black-throated Gray Warblers along Laguna de Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co. on July 25 (GLB), and a female in residential Monterey on July 30 (RLB); an immature Hermit Warbler in oak trees near Oakland on July 27 (MM); and a female MacGillivray's Warbler in a yard in Lafayette, Contra Costa Co. on July 17 (LF). Discussion of these and other local late summer movements, as well as "up-mountain dispersal" of lowland nesters, properly belongs in the Fall Migration issue.

Orioles, Cowbirds, Sparrows—New locality records for Hooded Orioles were received, but no further extension of range seems indicated. The most northern record came from San Rafael, Marin Co. (1 imm. male, June 14, WMP); 2 pairs in the Walnut Creek area are the first on record in Contra Costa County (no nests located, LF, HA); 3 birds were recorded for the second year at Courtland, Sacramento Co. in May, and 4 other sightings were reported within 5 miles of that Delta location (ERP). They were most widely reported from Santa Cruz and Alameda Counties; a pair in Berkeley raised 2 broods (constructing separate nests for each), the young leaving the nest on June 8 and July 27 (PdB).

A pair of Ruby-crowned Kinglets was feeding a young Brown-headed Cowbird during the last week of August at Virginia Lakes, Mono Co., elevation

9400 ft. on the eastern drainage of the Sierra (MS); a most unusual host species and a high altitude. However, *east of the Sierra* this cowbird (*M. a. artemisiae*) has been recorded to 11,600 ft. in the White Mountains, Mono Co.

Four young Brewer's Sparrows fledged on Aug. 1 from a nest in a *Ribes* bush adjacent to sage-brush at Winnemucca Lake, 9000 ft., Alpine Co. (MS); this sparrow is infrequently reported in the high Sierra, but is known to follow sage-brush up from the Great Basin. Two White-crowned Sparrows, first believed to be nesting at Lafayette, disappeared after May 15, but a belated record of actual nesting there in 1957 was supplied (LF). The breeding record undoubtedly involves the subspecies *nutalli*, which is usually restricted to the coastal fog belt, but has been reported previously as nesting in central Contra Costa County. A Golden-crowned Sparrow, apparently with an injured wing, appeared at a San Rafael feeder on June 18 (WMP), about 6 weeks after the wintering population had departed.

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