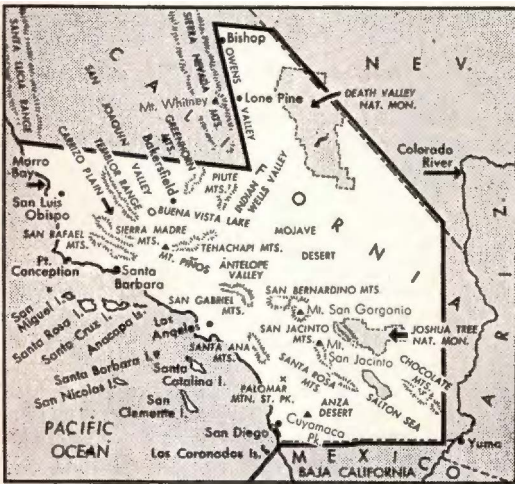


along many miles of even the lesser roads of Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties. Citrus groves, too, are disappearing at a rapid rate to make way for more huge shopping centers and housing. It simply is no longer profitable to hold land for agricultural or esthetic purposes. In order to facilitate maintenance and patrol of local parks set aside near metropolitan areas, the trend is toward removal of most shrubbery, leaving naked-trunked trees to proffer only meager shelter to shade-seeking birds—or humans. Consequently, the species that require low-level shelter are hard put to find breeding sites. Even hole-nesting kingfishers, woodpeckers, Ash-throated Flycatchers, and bluebirds are troubled to find suitable sites in sufficient supply and are increasingly restricted. In contrast, the adaptable and resourceful Starlings spread on. One pair even demonstrated an ability to make use of a simulated nesting hole high on a structural metal tower. Purple Martins, in small numbers now, are found breeding only in rugged “back-country” areas still offering large dead trees with hollows; martin houses are very seldom available to them. Such species as Trill’s and Western Flycatchers, Swainson’s Thrushes, Yellow Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Blue Grosbeaks are becoming harder to find because of habitat removal, although Swainson’s Thrushes appear to be able to adapt to surprisingly thin strips of woodland. Even Song Sparrows are having some difficulty as demonstrated by a pair that built a nest in a pile of newly pruned brush before it could be hauled away, had two eggs in the nest by the time it was destroyed by a probable cat, and nested again in a neighbor’s hedge. This nest was abandoned when the hedge was pruned, and the sparrows tried again, successfully, before the male ever stopped his persistent territorial singing!

The one saving feature in this saddening picture is that some communities and individual householders have maintained (or replaced) lush vegetation to the extent acceptable to many birds, notably in the Santa Barbara area. There, California Quail, Band-tailed Pigeons, House Wrens, Robins and Oregon Juncos are showing increases and higher breeding success. The outstanding native species favored is the Hooded Oriole, because of the prevalence of fan palms in civic landscaping. A tendency for favoring the Brown Towhee (so adaptable to human proximity) over the Rufous-sided Towhee (with its steadfast preference for wilder thickets) also seems apparent.

The aspect of increasing aridity also haunts the landscape as human demands mount for more water for recreation as well as for consumption. Heavier-than-ever beach usage threatens the very existence of Least Terns here. An attempt to fence people out of an important tern colony at Huntington State Beach during the nesting season was put into action this summer. More and more salt marshes, estuaries, bays, and sea coves are being transformed into expensive boat-infested marinas. Former fresh-looking stream beds are increasingly scraped bare and lined with concrete—where water still flows at all! Lakes are already the habitat, almost solely, of boats. What water

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.—Summer weather was typical for this area—almost unvarying dry sunny days near the coast, hotter inland



with some serious brush fires, and occasional thunder showers over the deserts. Changes in vegetation and land usage, however, are having profound effects on the nesting of birds. The accelerated clearing of native trees and thickets from the western portions of the Region for highway construction, housing tract development, and stream channel “management” are removing almost the last vestiges of native greenery from large expanses of land. It is distressing to see the bulldozing and burning of ancient oaks and gnarled willows, festooned with grapevines and rising from thick shady underbrush

does collect on industrially leased lands all too frequently is polluted with oil, detergent foam, trash, and other such by-products of densening civilization. Some attempts are being made to form recreational lakes from treated sewage effluent in Los Angeles and San Diego Counties, but these have not observably been attractive to birds at any season except insofar as bordering vegetation is allowed to grow. Although few species breed this far south, shorebirds and marsh dwellers are in particular trouble for they need living space eleven months of the year; there is a span of only about 4 weeks between the latest spring migrants and the earliest returning fall birds in the San Diego area—not counting many individuals, usually in non-breeding plumage, which remain as summering birds.

And yet, as this southern area is still in the rapidly changing transitional stages of transformation, birding can be exciting as shown in the seasonal notes of many who know that to bird here usually means much travel and many diligent looks into what vegetation still exists.

Loons through Ibis—It is normal for a few non-breeding loons to spend the summer along the coast, and these birds are normally in winter plumage; a Common Loon in full breeding plumage was seen at Laguna Beach, Orange Co. on June 14 (JJ), and a Red-throated Loon was seen at Santa Barbara on June 8 (JK). Brown Pelicans apparently remain close to their breeding colonies during June and July, and then disperse in early August; after being scarce, numbers built up very rapidly in the San Diego and Santa Barbara areas in August. Three Brown Pelicans at the Salton Sea on Aug. 8 (PC & GMcC) are of interest at this inland location. An adult *White-tailed Tropicbird* was present at Newport, Orange Co. between May 24 and June 23 (WH, JL, GMcC). This is the first record for the West Coast of the US. A full account with photographs will appear in the *Condor*. An immature Reddish Egret at the south end of the Salton Sea on Aug. 8 (PC & GMcC) is the first recorded in this area. Wood Ibis were reasonably common at the south end of the Salton Sea during July and August; one adult at Solana Beach between July 31 and Aug. 2 (WGL, DP, WH) was the only one found along the coast.

Hawks—California Condors can be found from Mt. Pinos, Ventura Co. throughout the year; 2 were seen perched there at a distance of 150 yds. on July 21 (R & MW). Two White-tailed Kites were reported leaving a nest at Camp Pendleton, San Diego Co. on May 8 (WGL) and a self-sufficient immature was seen at San Juan Capistrano, Orange Co. on April 20 (EP). There were 3 reports of the Osprey: 1 at Newport Bay, Orange Co. on June 30 (DAG); and again on July 18 (JJ); and 1 at San Clemente State Beach on July 29 (R & MW)—this may have been the same one seen regularly into August at San Onofre (SW, *vide* EP).

Waterfowl—A few summer stragglers of most species of waterfowl were noted in the Region throughout the period. Most of these birds were probably carrying shot received during the hunting

season. Black Brant were noted at a number of coastal locations, and 4 summered at the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. (JN). A Blue-winged Teal was noted in late June and early July at Solana Beach (DP).

Quail—Charles and Alice Richardson reported the largest number (larger families and more breeding pairs) of California Quail that they have had in the Santa Barbara area in ten years. It was considered an exceptionally fine year in Joshua Tree National Monument for the Mountain and Gambel's Quail; between 500 and 1000 Mountain Quail were using one spring, and an estimated 1000-2000 quail of both species were making use of another spring throughout the summer (JRY).

Shorebirds—It is hard to decide just which birds are summering in the Region. North-bound shorebirds are passing through as late as the end of May, and returning south-bound migrants, usually in full breeding plumage, can be found the first week of July. Clues may lie in the non-breeding plumage of the summering birds, combined with increases of birds present; tallying is worthwhile! The following is a list of the species found during mid-June on San Diego Bay—possibly the best location for these birds in the Region: Black-bellied Plover (100), Ruddy Turnstone (20), Long-billed Curlew (10), Whimbrel (2), Willet (300), Greater Yellowlegs (20), Knot (5), Least Sandpiper (10), dowitcher (20), Western Sandpiper (50), Marbled Godwit (200), and Sanderling (20). Elsewhere, other shorebirds were noted during June, including a flock of 50 Willets at Laguna Beach, June 14 (JJ).

During the first week of July, the early migrants—Whimbrels, Willets, Short-billed Dowitchers, Western Sandpipers, Marbled Godwits, and Northern and Wilson's Phalaropes—were present along the coast in fair numbers (e.g. 1000 Western Sandpipers on San Diego Bay on July 5). Two hundred Knots, all in breeding plumage, were on San Diego Bay on July 5 (GMcC); this is early for so many. The first Wandering Tattler was noted at Laguna Beach on July 26 (JJ), and the first Black Turnstones and Surf-birds were noted in San Diego on the same day; by Aug. 2, there were 5 Wandering Tattlers at Laguna Beach and 3 in San Diego.

Noteworthy shorebird records are: two nests of the Snowy Plover were found at Deep Springs, Inyo Co. (RS) a new breeding locality. A very early Am. Golden Plover, still in breeding plumage, was at Solana Beach between Aug. 1 and 9 (GMcC). Two Ruddy Turnstones were seen inland at the Salton Sea on Aug. 8 (GMcC & PC). A Knot, in breeding plumage, at the Salton Sea on July 19, and a Sanderling seen there on Aug. 8 (GMcC) were also unusual inland records. This summer Am. Avocets were found breeding for the first time at the south end of the Salton Sea (JN).

Gulls—Laughing Gulls were present at the south end of the Salton Sea all summer. As many as 4 juvenals were seen along with adults in August, indicating that they bred successfully. Non-breeding Franklin's Gulls were noted at the Salton Sea: a second-year bird was at the south end on July 18 and 19 (WH, DC & GMcC) and again on Aug. 8

(GMcC & PC); another second-year bird was at the north end of the sea on July 18 (WH, DC, & GMcC); an adult was there, Aug. 8 (GMcC & PC).

Terns—Gull-billed Terns bred in small numbers at the south end of the Salton Sea (FG); as many as 30 birds were seen in a day. In the San Diego Salt Works, Fred Gallup found 315 nests of Forster's Terns, 215 nests of Caspian Terns, and 43 nests of Elegant Terns. Least Terns bred in a large colony at Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. and with some success behind a snow fence at Huntington Beach, but only small numbers were found breeding at Camp Pendleton, San Diego Co. (WGL) and near Santa Barbara (S.B.A.S.). It is a real question how long these terns can compete with any success with humans on the beaches. Three adult Least Terns were seen at the Salton Sea, Riverside Co. on June 27 (GMcC); the first published inland record for California.

Pigeons, Doves, Cuckoos—In the Santa Barbara area the Band-tailed Pigeon has been attracted by the abundance of food and the lush vegetation (mostly due to the planting of exotic plants), and now many breed there (S.B.A.S.). A Ringed Turtle Dove was present in Santa Barbara throughout the summer (MM); this is somewhat outside its restricted range. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo has become alarmingly scarce in California during recent years, but a few still occur along the Colorado River, and were found there in good numbers in July; one at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. on June 27 was probably a migrant (GMcC).

Swifts, Hummingbirds, Sapsuckers—A very late Black Swift was seen in Santa Barbara on June 21 (WA). A pair of Vaux's Swifts, present throughout the summer in Santa Barbara, may have bred (MM); this is some distance south of the species' known breeding range. This was considered a poor year for breeding hummingbirds in the Santa Barbara area (C & AR). The first migrant Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds were noted along the coast in San Diego County during the first week in July, and both species were common a week later. A pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, one of which showed some of the characteristics of the *nuchalis* race, was feeding young in the San Gabriel Mts. on July 18 (GSS); this race rarely breeds so far west.

Flycatchers, Swallows—The Cassin's Kingbird is now apparently a regular breeding species at Deep Springs, Inyo Co. and this year nests were seen (PDeB & GMcC)—a northward range extension for eastern California. A *Wied's Crested Flycatcher*, the second record for this Region, was seen at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. on June 27 (GMcC); this species may be spreading westward. Vermilion Flycatchers had a successful breeding season at Morongo Valley, the only location from which breeding was reported. The Cliff Swallows did not nest on the San Juan Capistrano Mission this year, although they did on various nearby buildings (EP); diminishing numbers may be caused by crowd disturbance coupled with lack of a dependable supply of mud.

Wrens, Thrashers, Robins—Cactus Wrens were discovered breeding in the Baldwin Hills, Los

Angeles Co.—a rather surprising locality in that terrain (DAG). Five Bendire's Thrashers were seen on the San Bernardino County desert near Needles on June 19 (RS & AW). Robins are extending their breeding range in this Region; city parks and some residential areas now provide the green habitat that they require for nesting. In San Luis Obispo they bred for the first time (AR); a few pairs nested at Rancho Park, Los Angeles (DAG); nesting was noted in sections of San Diego.

Gnatcatchers, Waxwings, Warblers—The Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*P. m. californica*), which has been driven from most of its former range along the coast of the Region, bred successfully near Dana Point, Orange Co. At least 3 pairs were actively engaged starting in March (EP). Two Cedar Waxwings, probably summering birds, were noted during July and August at Dana Point (EP). A stray Am. Redstart was noted at Deep Springs, Inyo Co. on June 20 (RS & AW); another was at Dana Point, Orange Co. on June 28 (EP).

Orioles, Grackles, Tanagers—The breeding Hooded and Bullock's Orioles had mostly dispersed from their nesting locations by early August as is normal. Hooded Orioles seemed especially successful; this colorful species will probably continue its increase as fan palms are favored plantings in the Region. An adult male *Boat-tailed Grackle*, the first for the Region, was seen at the south end of the Salton Sea on July 18 (GMcC, DP, DC & WH). There is one recent record along the Colorado River in California, just east of this Region, but the species is known to be spreading. Two pairs of Summer Tanagers finally arrived at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. and finally bred; this is the only Regional locality where the species nests regularly. A stray Summer Tanager was seen at Dana Point, Orange Co. on July 7 (EP).

Grosbeaks, Buntings and Sparrows—A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was present at Deep Springs, Inyo Co. on June 20 (RS & AW); another was discovered at San Juan Capistrano, Orange Co. on July 25 (EP). A molting Indigo Bunting was seen at Deep Springs on June 28 (RS & PDeB). For the third successive year, a small colony of Grasshopper Sparrows bred successfully near San Diego. Oregon Juncos were considered to have had a very good breeding season in Santa Barbara (C & AR)—an area in which they were not known to breed in 1944; young juncos out of the nest at Tapia Park, Los Angeles, indicate a likely breeding record for this lowland locality (DAG).

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