

**MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION.**—Shearwaters, Pelicans, Cormorants—A dark phase Fulmar was found "moribund but alive" on a beach near



Monterey, July 11 (RLB & W. Reese), perhaps presaging a sizable fall flight. Excellent nesting success for the Brown Pelican was reported from Point Lobos south to Willow Creek, Monterey Co. (VLY), though no nests were seen on the offshore rock at Point Lobos where they have previously nested in small numbers (HLC). However, nesting of Brandt's Cormorant at Point Lobos has apparently increased, with 1300 on nests as against 800-1000 two years ago (HLC), and nesting of Pelagic Cormorants at this location was also successful (85-100 birds) (HLC).

Ducks—Two Gadwalls were in the salt ponds of SW Hayward, Alameda Co., July 2; the species formerly nested at nearby Alvarado, and may still do so (HLC). Southerly nestings of Wood Ducks from Tulare County were a female and 8 young at Hackett Lakes, Sequoia Nat'l Park, July 27 (Frank E. Mires, *vide MEM*) and a pair with 5 young below Lake Success (MEM); 13 scaup (sp.) at Oakland Airport dike on July 5 "appeared to be two families with young that must have been bred here" (ER &

Eleanor Hebard); Lesser Scaup have bred in the San Francisco Bay area, but probably only cripples. Summer stragglers included: up to 200 scaup in west-southwest Hayward, July 17 (HLC), 1 Bufflehead at Oakland Airport, July 5 (ER & Eleanor Hebard), 1 female Harlequin Duck at Pillar Point, San Mateo Co., July 10 at least through Aug. 22 (MM, TCK, G.G.A.S.), numbers of Surf Scoters at various points (Big Sur, Monterey Co., 50, July 6 [RLB]; Juan Creek, Mendocino Co., 8, June 23-Aug. 14 [RC]), including an albino male at Tiburon, Marin Co., Sept. 4 (WSP).

Hawks—White-tailed Kites were reported as "commoner than in previous years" at Merced Nat'l Wildlife Refuge (RRH), but none were seen in the area west of Alvarado where up to 20 were seen last fall (HLC), presumably congregating at a good food supply. A dark phase adult Swainson's Hawk, not normally found near the coast in this Region in summer, was seen in eastern Hayward, July 7 (HLC). Golden Eagles were seen near the coast at Hayward on July 6 and two different birds were on the Point Reyes Peninsula, Aug. 21 and 27 (all HLC). Reproduction of Golden Eagles was considered good in eastern Tulare County, at least 5 immatures and 2 adults being seen between July 25 and Aug. 16 (MEM). A Pigeon Hawk at Bell Springs, along the Eel River in Mendocino Co., Aug. 10 (LF) is one of few summer records for the state (there are no confirmed nesting records).

Pheasants, Partridges, Cranes—Ring-necked Pheasants were reported abundant on Merced Refuge, with nesting up to the first week in August (RRH), and they increased on Sacramento Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, more females with young being seen and broods being larger (Bill Thornton, *vide SRW*). A new introduced game bird is the Red-legged Partridge, introduced by the California Department of Fish and Game in San Mateo County in 1964; 2 banded birds were seen in Pomponio Canyon on June 13 (TCK). Sandhill Cranes were noted erratically throughout the summer at Merced Refuge (RRH)—their historic status in the San Joaquin Valley, though they have not often been noted there in summer in recent years.

Shorebirds—Nesting of Black Oystercatchers was suspected at Point Lobos (HLC) and at Duncans Landing, Sonoma Co., where 2 adults and an immature bird were observed on Aug. 11 (BDP). There was no evidence of nesting of Snowy Plovers, and only 5 birds were seen in the former good nesting area north of the mouth of Elkhorn Slough, Moss Landing, Monterey Co., but nesting success was "fairly good" among the salt ponds west of Hayward (HLC). The substantial spring and fall migration of Long-billed Curlews through the Central Valley has been mentioned in previous years (*cf. AFN* 17 (1):64 [1963]); this year about 50 birds summered at Delevan Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, Colusa Co., in addition to 50 at Sacramento Refuge until mid-June (SRW); 39 at Hayward, July 2-3 (HLC), were either summerers or very early migrants. The principal period of migration, in both coastal and valley areas, is in August.

With few shorebirds breeding in the Region, and the southward migration already perceptible by July 1, the latter is usually a major topic even in this season. The date of the first notable influx (over non-breeding summering birds) at a given place is remarkably constant from year to year, generally within a period of five days (of course, there is little variation in weather at this season to affect migration). The subsequent course of migration is less easy to define, as it is rare that there are enough observations of a species at one place to suggest more than a steady rise in numbers, or in some species (notably Western Sandpiper) a peak in mid-August followed by a drop before peaking again in October; shifts in time of arrival of the *bulk* of a species, or 'waves' within the total migration, generally escape us. A possible early arrival of the bulk of Willets is suggested by the observations of Dr. Howard Cogswell along 6¾ miles of San Francisco Bay, Hayward to San Lorenzo (this stretch held 3700 at its peak last October): 1200 had already arrived by July 2-3; on less than the total stretch 1820 were seen, July 17-18, and by Aug. 2 2800 were present. The first perceptible increase over non-breeding summers generally occurs about June 30. Among July (early) observations of Knot were 16 at Abbotts Lagoon, Point Reyes Penin., July 27 (*RS* & Kent Hall), believed to be the second Marin County record. Dowitchers were beginning to arrive on the east shore of San Francisco Bay by July 11 (*ER*) (normal date) and "calls of Short-billed and of at least a few Long-billed" were heard, July 17 and 31 (*HLC*). The first important arrival of Western Sandpipers in this area can be precisely dated: only 8 were seen along 6¾ miles of coast on July 2 and 3 (*HLC*); but 45 were at Bay Farm Island, Alameda, on July 5 (*ER*). Large numbers of Am. Avocets and Black-necked Stilts nested among the salt ponds of southwest Hayward (*HLC*); post-breeding influx was evident by July 31. Wilson's Phalaropes were reported from San Francisco Bay in unprecedentedly large numbers (but in areas not covered in previous years): 5100 in western and southwestern Hayward on July 2—mostly still in breeding plumage; only 950 on July 17, but over 20,000 on July 31. On the earlier dates they were segregated on a few salt ponds, only being seen mixed with Northern Phalaropes on July 31 (*HLC*). Numbers of Northern Phalaropes in the same area on these dates were 0, 3800, 13,000, plus 700 and 22,800 unidentified phalaropes on the last two dates; "area not covered in August, when numbers no doubt much higher."

Gulls, Terns, Alcids—A single Black-legged Kittiwake was reported from Pacific Grove, June 26 (*RLB*), contrasting with the numbers last summer at Point Lobos. Only one adult Least Tern was seen north of Moss Landing, formerly the northernmost breeding area of this species in California, but some of 15 seen near the mouth of Alameda Creek, eastern shore of San Francisco Bay, on July 31 were carrying fish to fledged young and scolded the observer; they are not believed to breed here, but where? (*HLC*). Elegant Terns arrived at Moss Landing by July 8, second earliest on record, but in-

creased only to 80-90 by Aug. 18 (*RLB*); in Richardson Bay, Marin Co. they were the commonest tern with a population of 150, with Caspian and Forster's decreasing from last year and few Royals seen (*LS* & *VDaC*). June and July observations of Marbled Murrelets along the San Mateo and Santa Cruz County coasts (*TCK*) add to the suspicion that the species breeds inland in this area (*cf. AFN* 14 (3):475 [1960]).

Goatsuckers, Hummingbirds, Woodpeckers—A nighthawk roosting in a cypress at Point Reyes on June 18 (*GM, AW*) was out of range for either species of this Region, the Common and the Lesser. Up to 8 nighthawks, apparently Common, at Beale AFB, Yuba Co., from June into August (*MP*) were perhaps simply feeding at a distance from their normal mountain breeding areas, but at any rate their possible breeding in the Central Valley is worth further investigation. The male Costa's Hummingbird previously reported from Pacific Grove, Monterey Co., (*RLB, VLY*) well north of its regular breeding range, apparently remained for the summer. At Yreka, Siskiyou Co., where the northernmost California specimen of the Black-chinned Hummingbird was taken some years ago, 3-4 males were present throughout the summer (*MLC*). The same observer had more Rufous Hummingbirds than usual through June and July, including a male present through July 11, before the influx of large numbers of fall migrants which follow the high country south. There was no evidence that either species bred. Along with more reports of the uncommon Pileated Woodpecker than are usually received in this Region was the account of a pair on Mt. Tamalpais, Marin Co. on June 5 at the southern extremity of its coastal range, and apparently the first Marin County record in four or five years (*LS*).

Flycatchers, Nutcrackers—A Western Kingbird at Point Pinos, Monterey Co. on June 24 (*HLC*) was an unusual coastal observation of a normally interior species. This species was observed dominating Ash-throated Flycatchers in fights for telephone wire perches in the Central Valley (*VKC*). Clark's Nutcrackers were seen at unusually low elevations for the date (July 6-7) at Hat Lake, Lassen Co. (6500') and near Susanville, Lassen Co. (4500') on the east slope of the Sierra (*MM*).

Chickadees, Bushtits, Creepers—Chestnut-Backed Chickadees, whose gradual establishment on the west slope of the Sierra has been the object of continuing interest over the past decade, seem "permanently settled" at Potato Patch Camp, Tehama Co. (3500') although no breeding evidence has yet been found (*EH*). Two observers reported independently an apparent "up-mountain" movement of Bushtits, perhaps after early breeding: as early as May 19, 2 birds were at Kennedy Meadows, Tuolumne Co. (6800') and in June birds were observed at Tuolumne Meadows (8900') and at Manzanita Lake, Lassen Volcanic Nat'l Park (5847') (*MM, EH*). A Brown Creeper, alternating between the one available tree and the resident biologist's trousers leg at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory on July 22 (*HLC*) was another sign of how early and how insistently post-breeding

dispersal may begin in this Region.

Starling, Warblers—Starlings continue to fill in the gaps in their breeding range, such as coastal Santa Cruz County (PH) and the Sierra (VKC). "It's now breeding everywhere." (HLC). Although reports of nesting warblers were infrequent this season, evidences of stragglers from the spring migration nearly met the first dispersal of fall migrants southward and to the lowlands. In addition to the June 6 warbler wave reported in the Spring Migration issue, a singing male Blackpoll Warbler at Point Reyes on June 7-8 (KRS, Dds) and an Am. Redstart there on June 16 (GM & AW) and again for another banded at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory on June 29 (RS, Lillian Henningsen) continued the now well-established pattern for vagrant warblers in this Region: late in the season, and concentrated near the coast. But was the Am. Redstart at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co. on Aug. 15 (KRS) coming or going Fall?

A Hermit Warbler at Lafayette, Alameda Co. on Aug. 11 was clearly a down-mountain wanderer, while the Townsend's Warbler at Knight's Lake, El Dorado Co. on Aug. 13 was already well south of its Pacific Northwest breeding area (LF).

The possible effect of unseasonal heavy rains in the Sierra in mid-August upon post-breeding dispersal interested a number of observers in the Region. It was suggestive that in two widely separate lowland localities, at Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co. (BDP) and at Beale AFB, Yuba Co. (MP) the first apparent migrant warbler groups were found on Aug. 15 and 14, respectively, "after the rain." These reports reinforce others in recent years which suggest that migrants may be found regularly in the Central Valley by August. At the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, non-breeding species made their appearance even as early as the third week of July; all of these birds appeared to be immatures, especially those examined in the hand (RS). At the same time, two mountain observers (EH, LF) found the number and density of passerine species much reduced by mid-August.

Fringillidae—Pine Grosbeaks seemed to enjoy good numbers; the largest of several reports was of 100 birds around Knight's Lake, El Dorado Co. on Aug. 13-21 (LF). The Grasshopper Sparrow, whose distribution has been considered spotty in this Region, appears to occur at a density of 30 territorial males per 5 acres in suitable grasslands around the Point Reyes Bird Observatory (RS). A close observer of the mountain race of the White-crowned Sparrow (*Z. l. oriantha*) reports two broods in the same territory, presumably by the same parents since only one pair bred in that particular Yuba Pass valley (6700'). Although *Z. l. nuttalli* raises more than one brood, this phenomenon had not been observed in *oriantha*. The variable environmental conditions and shorter breeding season in the Sierra call for more investigation of this practice (MM).

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