

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION.—It was cool and overcast for most of the Region until the first week of August. Perhaps this helped the nesting



season to be productive. For most species whose habitat requirements were met, this seemed to be the case. Mourning Doves, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Starlings, House Finches and House Sparrows had spectacular success, betraying their adaptive powers to spreading urbanization in coastal areas. So did Gambel's Quail in Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument. So did Hooded Orioles in spite of the fact that their favorite palm trees are now being removed. Mrs. Kryder of Claremont, Los Angeles Co., found that Hooded Orioles quickly accepted avocado, pomegranate, and especially, peach trees for nesting sites. Some nests were placed within six feet of the ground. Cliff Swallows, no longer nesting at the San Juan Capistrano Mission, have decreased by about 30 percent the number of nests built in the town this year, yet are adapting successfully to freeway bridges and tunnels, as long as a trickle of water for mud-making remains. Shirley Wells noted that these adaptive swallows are very plentiful around illuminated intersections and billboards, especially if there is open space nearby, even in metropolitan Los Angeles; they harvest attracted insects in the early morning and late evening. And in Elysian Park (whose fate hangs in the balance between a leveled convention hall site and a green park in the heart of the same metropolis and thus stands relatively neglected as far as city parks go), Sparrow Hawks and Red-shafted Flickers were feeding young among the picturesque dead snags so unusual for a city-enclosed park (SW). Barn Owls,

for 12 years now, have succeeded again in thin street-sized eucalyptus trees in a growing residential area near Capistrano Beach (AF). Least Terns increasingly accepted a protective snow fence on busy Huntington State Beach, Orange Co. (FZ). A significant expansion of breeding of Cedar Waxwings in southern California was confirmed when the nest was found as young were leaving it—a far cry from the normal range extending no closer than the northwestern corner of the state.

All species, however, do not possess the tremendous adaptive instincts of Starlings, and many species will be missed. As long as housing tracts start landscaping from bare soil, rather than plan around existing mature willows, cottonwoods, sycamores and oaks, with their entangled undergrowths so rich in the shy birds; as long as willow-shrub riparian cover is scraped away and replaced with ugly concrete channeling, marshlands filled for housing or converted to marinas, breeding success will be low for many species. In Santa Barbara, two of the most productive marshes have been filled since last summer. Yet a surprising array of rails, including Black Rail, bitterns, Snowy Plovers, and terns of several kinds manage, before motors roar into action each day, to find enough sustenance for nestlings, or some sort of daytime concealment in order to survive. As habitats providing adaptive potential decrease, though, so shall the numbers of such birds decline.

Small wonder, also, that Traill's Flycatchers, Ash-throated Flycatchers, Swainson's Thrushes, Yellowthroats, Yellow Warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chats, though quite adaptive and once numerous, are becoming a rare sight to behold or even hear above the roar of traffic on the nearby freeway. Herein, for those of us who are interested in birdlife and pleasant environment, lies the responsibility and challenge: 1) to unite with all outdoor-oriented groups for planned conservation of habitat and 2) to watch for changes in birdlife, and interpret the adaptation abilities of birds as we find them. May we have some successes in both!

Loons, Grebes, Pelicans, Boobies—Three Arctic Loons were reported within the period: a very late migrant in breeding plumage was seen, June 8, at Bolsa Chica (EC); 2 others, in nonbreeding plumage, summered near Laguna Beach, also in Orange County, from July 11 through August 8 (JAJ). The usual nonbreeding flock of Western Grebes northwest of Ventura was much smaller than usual—about 25 (NM), although about 60 were reported as late as June 27 (GSS). In contrast to the first week of August a year ago when 500+ Brown Pelicans were seen between Santa Barbara and Ventura, observers could find only singles (NM). A Brown Pelican, at the Salton Sea Nat'l Wildlife Refuge on July 10 (RRP); about 15 immatures there on July 24 (GMcC, A & JC), and another at the north end of the Salton Sea on the same day (LS) were unusual this far inland. A week later, not a single bird of this species could be found, leading us to conclude they had all flown back to the Gulf of California. An immature Blue-footed Booby was carefully identified at the northern end of the Salton Sea on July 24 (LS), perhaps a

vagrant from the Gulf. The last of the two Blue-footed Boobies at Puddingstone Reservoir as seen on May 9 (Leo Best). During a July 3-5 weekend camp of bird-banding on Prince Islet, about one-half mile from San Miguel Island, a single adult Brown Booby was seen and photographed as it was apparently defending a small nesting territory for the three days in a row (AC, HC, JS, *vide* GMcC). Any booby seen in this Region is quite unusual, although both species have been previously recorded.

Hérons, Ducks—Great Blue Herons, Snowy and Common Egrets were present in good numbers at the Salton Sea Refuge, but no nesting activity was noted (RRP). Only about 200 Wood Ibis were present from a June 24 arrival through July and August along the southern shore of the Salton Sea (GMcC)—far less than last year's 2000 (RRP). The first Fulvous Tree Duck brood was seen on July 10, but more were newly hatched through August (RRP). Of unusual recent occurrence were several reports of successful broods of Redheads: 4 pairs with ducklings were seen at the Salton Sea Refuge in July, totaling 50 present in early August (RRP); 3 pairs brought off 11 young at Buena Vista Lagoon, near Carlsbad in San Diego County, seen on June 29 and July 9 (SW & AF); 5 young Redheads also were noted, July 9, in the Torrey Pines State Reserve marsh in Sorrento Valley, San Diego County (SW). Non-breeding waterfowl that summered included 2 Com. Goldeneyes near the Salton Sea Refuge headquarters (RRP), and a female Oldsquaw unable to fly that remained with Surf Scoters and feral Mallards in Lower Newport Bay (GSS).

Quail, Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns—There was a bumper crop of Gambel's Quail with broods of 16 to 18 in Joshua Tree Nat'l Monument (JRY). The Am. Oystercatcher present at Avila Beach since last October, remained through Aug. 8 (T & M. Hyland). More inland records of shorebirds at the Salton Sea were: a Knot at the south end on July 24 (GMcC, A & JC); 3 Knots there on Aug. 1 (GMcC); a very early Stilt Sandpiper at the south end on Aug. 1 (GMcC, LS & DAG); and 5 Sanderlings at the north end in Riverside County on July 31 (GMcC & LS). Black-necked Stilts were much more successful than last year, according to reports from Santa Barbara (NM) and the Salton Sea (RRP). A build-up of shorebirds, gulls, and terns occurred, as usual, at the Salton Sea Refuge, during the last two weeks of July, with a record number of Am. Avocets, well over 10,000 being present (RRP). Immature Glaucous-winged Gulls were noted later than usual along the San Simeon shore, San Luis Obispo Co. in mid-June (EAP). Laughing Gulls still manage to hatch young at the Salton Sea: one adult and 4 young were seen along the southern shore on Aug. 1 (GMcC, LS & DAG). Only one pair of Gull-billed Terns could be found there this summer, but they raised 2 young at the New River delta (GMcC, LS & DAG).

Pigeons, Hummingbirds, Woodpeckers—Seven Band-tailed Pigeons flying over the desert, Aug. 5, between Yuma and Holtville, Imperial County, were far out of habitat; they were attracted to the oasis-

appearing Imperial Irrigation District Experimental Farm (GSS). Following an apparent scarcity of hummingbirds through late spring, these birds still seemed sparse along the coast. Only a few returning Allen's were noted, where some Julys bring them by the hundreds. As usual, in the Santa Barbara area, several Allen's Hummingbird nests were found (NM). At Modjeska Canyon, Orange Co., Tucker Sanctuary's feeders, however, attracted between 500 and 1000 Anna's and Black-chinned Hummingbirds regularly (ES). A few Williamson's Sapsuckers were feeding young on June 20 along the Los Angeles Crest Highway; another male was seen at the top of the San Jacinto Tramway, Aug. 3 (M & RW). A Hairy Woodpecker feeding young in a dead yucca stalk, June 19, at Charlton Flat, along the L.A. Crest Highway, seemed an unusual nesting adaptation (SW).

Flycatchers, Wrens—Cassin's Kingbirds seemed to fare well raising young in the Region, but Ash-throated Flycatchers seemed lower in success than usual—perhaps due to the heavy increases in Starling usage of holes this season. One pair of Ash-throated Flycatchers accepted a swinging nest-box among dense native shrubs in Modjeska Canyon and apparently was successful (Amy Olson, *vide* ES). Wied's Crested Flycatchers may have nested in Morongo Valley, near San Bernardino; if so, this is the first indication in the Region. Birds were present in June (GMcC & AC), and 6 were found there on July 25 (LS). House Wrens near the top of San Jacinto seemed to have had tremendous success judging from the abundant young on Aug. 3 (M & RW).

Robins, Waxwings—Robins continued to nest in small numbers in the Los Angeles area, such as Tapia Park (DAG), Pasadena (GSS), and Inglewood (SW) where mature trees and a parklike habitat exist. In Santa Barbara, however, there were practically none that remained to nest (NM). Cedar Waxwings, suspected of nesting last summer when 2 adults and an immature were noted through mid-summer at Doheny State Beach, Orange Co., have definitely been confirmed as breeding successfully this season. Three fledglings were observed as they left the nest, July 7, and were fed on *Myoporum* berries for several days in the immediate vicinity, although one weaker offspring did not survive the first night (Betty Berrigan, EAP, DAG, SW, and others).

The nest has been secured, photographed, and is lodged at the University of California at Irvine. As far as can be determined, this is the first record south of Eureka, Humboldt County, and it will be submitted to *The Condor*.

Warblers, Bobolink, Buntings, Sparrows—Scattered Orange-crowned Warblers were noted, occasionally singing, in Orange County locations which are outside normal breeding range: June 5 through July near Capistrano Beach (EAP), and on July 24 at Laguna Beach (EGT). The Hermit Warbler found at Buckhorn Campground in the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles County on June 13 was probably a late migrant (M & RW), but the singing Nashville and Hermit Warblers in the Greenhorn Mountains of Kern County, June 27, were at home in the southern tip of normal breeding range (M & RW). A Bobolink, just molting from breeding plumage, was discovered at the Niland Boat Landing at the Salton Sea, July 31—one of the few recent sightings of this species for the Region (GMcC & LS). An adult male Indigo Bunting was seen, June 13, east of San Juan Capistrano, Orange County (EC & BB)—an uncommon species that may be found at this time of year more than others. Lazuli Buntings in the Montecito-Santa Barbara area seemed much more numerous this summer than in others (MM, NM). Several observers considered the Black-chinned Sparrow on the increase as a breeding species along the Los Angeles Crest Highway (SW, M & RW).

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Note: R. Guy McCaskie will carry on as sole editor of the Southern Pacific Coast Region. Will contributors please send their notes directly to him at the end of each regular season at 5460 55th St., Apartment 15, San Diego, Calif. 92015?