

**MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION.**—The weather this summer seemed normal for the Region. Most noteworthy was the quantity and lateness of spring



rains over much of the Region and of snow in the Sierra Nevada. On June 1 a very late snow storm in the Sierra caused the California Highway Department to close, for a time, U. S. Route 80 over Donner Pass (elevation 7228 ft.), which is normally kept open throughout most of the *winter*! Such conditions are reminiscent of 1963 (AFN 17:480).

The coast ranges and valleys dried out so quickly that one soon forgot about the late spring rains. However, the high mountain meadows of Tuolumne County were still lush with flowers into the last half of August, and Howard Cogswell reported that his observations indicated a comparable late nesting by at least some birds. Jon Winter, reporting from a U. S. Forest Service ranger station near Foresthill, Placer Co. did not feel that the late spring had much effect on the tree-nesting species but that ground-nesting birds were delayed. In the Springville area of Tulare County Mabel Mires felt that the season was late, with nesting not getting into full swing until July at the 6000-ft. level and even later in the very high ranges.

**Loons, Grebes, Albatrosses**—There were few reports of summering loons along the coast. The largest flock of W. Grebes was one of 18 on July 23 at Año Nuevo Point, San Mateo Co. (HLC). The outstanding rarity of the period was a sub-adult ♀ *Wandering Albatross*, which came ashore at Sea Ranch, Sonoma Co. on July 11. The bird remained on the cliff top until the following afternoon, when winds gave it an uplift to take off and disappear seaward. Although the bird was not seen by any bird-watcher, its characteristic tameness permitted at least two sets of good photographs to be obtained (Mr. and Mrs. Rex Hardy). From these photographs, Robert Cushman Murphy of the American Museum of Natural History had no difficulty in confirming the identification. The *A.O.U. Check-list of North*

*American Birds* (5th ed., 1957, p. 643), states: "North American records of this species of the southern oceans are unsatisfactory." There have been a very small number of reports of this species from the North Atlantic and North Pacific oceans. In Monterey Bay Black-footed Albatrosses increased from 4 birds on June 6 to a maximum of 20 on July 12 (AB).

**Shearwaters, Pelicans, Cormorants**—Eight Fulmars were in Monterey Bay on the unusual date of July 16 and Pink-footed Shearwaters reached a maximum of 29 on July 27 at the same place (AB). An estimated 34,500 Sooty Shearwaters were in Monterey Bay on June 27 and large concentrations were again there on July 5-7 and Aug. 8-13; on the latter dates the birds were feeding on spawning squid and came in to the edge of the kelp beds at Pacific Grove (AB). Large numbers of Sooty Shearwaters also were seen at Pescadero, San Mateo Co. on July 15 (RG); 3000 were seen in 30 minutes at Van Dorn State Park, Mendocino Co. on the same date (TC & ZC); 10,000 were observed going southeast at Santa Cruz on July 23 (HLC). A single Manx Shearwater was seen at Point Reyes Beach on Aug. 15 (RS). A regular census of Brown Pelicans at Moss Landing, Monterey Co. showed an increase from 109 on June 15 to 1110 on Aug. 9 (California Department of Fish and Game, William Reese). Twelve nests of Pelagic Cormorants, each containing 2 to 3 large young, were observed at Año Nuevo State Beach, San Mateo Co. on July 23 (HLC).

**Hérons, Ibises**—The site of a former large mixed heron rookery southwest of Guernsey, Kings Co. was found to be deserted on July 7, approximately half of the trees having been felled (HCL). Only 2 reports of Green Herons were received: single birds near Fremont, Alameda Co. on July 15 and west of Stratford, Kings Co. on July 28 (HLC). An immature Little Blue Heron at the Palo Alto Yacht Club on July 27 constituted the third record in recent years for the Region (DDeS). A Cattle Egret specimen in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, collected near Dos Palos, Merced Co. in January 1967 (Paul DeBenedictis, *vide* ROP), would appear to be the third record for the Region. The 3 Com. Egrets found during a tour of the San Joaquin Valley haunts of this species on July 28 were the only egrets found (HLC). Two Am. Bitterns at Pescadero on June 24 were indicative of coastal breeding (TC). White-faced Ibis are seldom recorded at this time of year but at least 5 were on the old Tulare Lake Bed south of Stratford on July 28 (HLC).

**Geese, Ducks**—The only sizable summering flock of Black Brant consisted of 50 birds at Año Nuevo State Beach on Aug. 6 (AB). A maximum of 50 pairs of Gadwall were seen on the Palo Alto baylands, where nesting was proved (RG). Up to 75 pairs of Cinnamon Teal and 20 pairs of Shovelers were in the same area (RG). A single Oldsquaw summered at Moss Landing for the second successive year (WR). A flightless, molting ♂ Harlequin Duck was seen at Pacific Grove, July 29–Aug. 4 (AB, *et al.*). No summering scoter flocks were re-

ported. Ruddy Ducks raised broods at the Salinas River mouth and Roberts Lake, Monterey (AB). A ♀ Com. Merganser with 6 young was seen on the Arroyo Seco River on July 9 (VLY, RLB). It was reported by the Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club to have bred there successfully for the previous 3 years. This is the first breeding record for Monterey County and a considerable extension of range.

**Condors, Kites, Hawks, Eagles**—California Condors declined in the Springville area, Tulare Co. following the disturbance of their roosting area (MEM). Successful breeding of White-tailed Kites was reported from 5 miles south of San Jose (DDMcL), 10 miles northeast of Los Banos (*vide* ROW), and near Beale Air Force Base, Yuba Co., where a roost of 15 birds was observed in July and August (MP). A single adult Goshawk was seen at Duncan Peak Lookout, Placer Co. on Aug. 21 (JW). A Swainson's Hawk at the Los Banos Waterfowl Management Area on Aug. 5 (ROW) was the only report from the Region. A Rough-legged Hawk was seen at Duncan Peak Lookout on Aug. 17 (JW), a most unseasonal date for this species. Golden Eagles were thought to be holding their own in Placer County (JW) but declining in the Springville area (MEM). The only report of breeding Bald Eagles concerned a nest with 2 young in Shasta County (*vide* Mrs. Robert Clover). An attempt should be made to census accurately the breeding population of this species in the Region. Up to 8 pairs of Ospreys were present along the coast north of Point Reyes (J&RG); the species may have bred in the Bolinas area.

**Grouse, Quail, Rails**—The only Blue Grouse reported in the Region was a ♂ at Yosemite Nat'l Park on July 22 (J&RG, TC). California Quail broods did not appear until late June in Soquel, Santa Cruz Co. (FH). Bobwhite have been introduced in the Beale Air Force Base area and 1 or 2 were seen throughout June and July (MP). A pair of Clapper Rails with 2 young at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey Co. on June 15 constituted the first breeding record in the area for many years (Ed Pine, California Department of Fish and Game).

**Shorebirds**—A large migration involving 14 species was noted at Palo Alto, July 24-28 (TC, J&RG). Four to 5 pairs of Black Oystercatchers were on Año Nuevo Is., San Mateo Co. on June 3 and one nest was seen (AB). Breeding Snowy Plovers were seen at the Salinas River mouth, 2 broods on June 24 (AB), and at the Moss Landing saltworks, 1 brood on July 8 (ROP, TC). Killdeer were reported to have had good breeding success in the Los Banos area (ROW). Fewer summering Black-bellied Plovers than usual were found on South San Francisco Bay, with a maximum of 7 on June 30 (HLC). Six of this species at the San Luis Wasteway on July 28 were the first Central Valley migrants recorded (ROW). The first Surfbirds were back at Pacific Grove on July 23 (AB). A single Ruddy Turnstone in breeding plumage was at Alviso, Santa Clara Co. on July 5 (JG); 15 were at Año Nuevo Is. on Aug. 6 (AB). The first returning Black Turnstones reached Pacific Grove by July 10; about 300, a large concentration, were seen in the Año Nuevo Point area on Aug. 6

(AB). Some 25 Long-billed Curlews northeast of Fremont on June 30 provided an unusual date (HLC); the maximum in the Monterey Bay area was 111 at the Salinas River mouth on Aug. 13 (AB, WR). Fifty-five Whimbrels at the same place on July 16 (WR) was an early and large concentration. Wandering Tattlers returned to Pacific Grove by July 22 (AB); 30 seen on Año Nuevo Is. on Aug. 6 were all adult, as is so often the case with the early returns among shorebirds. Two to three Willets at the San Luis Wasteway on Aug. 18-22 were considered unusual (ROW). Greater Yellowlegs had returned to the Los Banos area by June 30 (ROW); 100 were south of Stratford on July 28 (HLC). A Lesser Yellowlegs, rather uncommon in the Region, was at Palo Alto, Aug. 4-6 (TC, HLC, RG). Two Baird's Sandpipers at Palo Alto on July 26 were early and the only ones reported (TC). It was hard to know whether 25 Short-billed Dowitchers at Dumbarton Point, Alameda Co. on June 30 were summering birds or first returns (HLC). The first returning Long-billed Dowitchers were seen in the Los Banos area on July 19 (ROW); 140 were southeast of Stratford on July 28 (HLC). On July 19 migrating Western Sandpipers made up 95 percent of the 2375 "peeps" there; at the end of the period they were equally abundant with Least Sandpipers in a total of 2000 on Aug. 23 (WR). A single Marbled Godwit was at the San Luis Wasteway on July 28 (ROW). On the same date 8000 Am. Avocets were seen in the area of the old Tulare Lake Bed southeast of Stratford (HLC); a pair at Moss Landing still had downy young on Aug. 13 (AB, WR). An estimated 10,000 Black-necked Stilts southeast of Stratford on July 28 (HLC) were considered mostly migrants. A Red Phalarope at the Salinas River mouth on Aug. 6 (WR) was early. Of 2090 phalaropes in the Elkhorn Slough area on Aug. 9, 98 percent were Northern and the remainder Wilson's. The latter species peaked in mid-July (California Department of Fish and Game and William Reese). Northern Phalaropes also summered there, with 45 seen on July 24 (AB).

**Jaegers, Gulls, Terns**—A single adult Pomarine Jaeger in Monterey Bay on July 24 was the first to return (AB). Breeding Western Gulls were recorded as follows: Año Nuevo Is., 50 pairs on June 3 (AB); Yerba Buena Is., 140 birds on June 14, possibly breeding (HLC); Brothers Is., San Pablo Strait, 40 pairs with young on June 22 (HLC); Farallon Islands, several thousand pairs on June 14 (HLC). Flocks of California Gulls at Tuolumne Meadows and Tenaya Lake in Yosemite Nat'l Park on July 15 were thought to be trans-Sierra migrants (AB). Six Mew Gulls, 3 adults and 3 immatures, at the Salinas River mouth on Aug. 6 were very early for the Region (WR). Three summering Bonaparte's Gulls were at Moss Landing on July 8 (ROP, TC). The first Heermann's Gull was a bird at Pigeon Point, San Mateo Co. on June 24 (TC & ZC); a steady northward migration involving 500 birds was observed at Año Nuevo Point on July 23 (HLC). Three adult Sabine's Gulls had returned to Monterey Bay by July 27 (AB). After having been suspected of breeding in the East Bay, Least Terns were finally

proved to have done so when 3 nests were located at Alameda in June (M. Shepard, *vide* ROP). This is the northernmost known breeding site on the Pacific coast. There was no evidence of breeding for this species at Monterey Bay. Few Elegant Terns had appeared by the end of the period; 14 at Moss Landing on Aug. 13 was the largest number as well as the most northerly location (WR). Black Terns, always uncommon migrants in the coastal area, were seen at Palo Alto, July 28-Aug. 4 (RG), and at Moss Landing, Aug. 9 (WR), both reports being of single birds.

**Alcids**—Several adult Com. Murres accompanied by half-grown young had reached Monterey Bay by July 27. These birds were presumed to have made the journey by swimming from their nearest breeding colony on the Big Sur coast 20 miles to the south (AB). At Pigeon Point on June 24, 17 Pigeon Guillemots were breeding on a large rock south of the point (TC & ZC). Of 35 birds observed on July 29 at Pacific Grove no fewer than 15 were young of the year, which would appear to indicate good breeding success (WR). At Año Nuevo Is., where the absence of mammalian predators encourages this species to nest in very accessible locations, evidence of a wide-ranging nesting period was found on Aug. 6 when, in addition to fledged young on the water and almost-fledged young in the nest, at least one pair had a newly hatched chick and chipped egg (AB). Two Marbled Murrelets seen at Pigeon Point on July 1 provided the fifth successive summer record from that location (TC, G.G.A.S.); 2 were also seen at the mouth of Waddell Creek, San Mateo Co. on July 23 (HLC). Some 250 adult Cassin's Auklets were banded on the Farallon Islands between June 7 and 14 (C. John Ralph, John Smail); a flock of 60 was off Point Lobos on Aug. 6 (RLB). Rhinoceros Auklets summered in Monterey Bay with a maximum of 12 on July 27 (AB). A sub-adult *Horned Puffin*, seen at close range from a boat in Monterey Bay 6 miles southwest of Santa Cruz on June 6, appeared healthy and was observed to fly (AB); most other California records of this species refer to sick or dead birds.

**Doves, Owls**—Mourning Doves were reported to have started nesting on the early date of Jan. 15 at Soquel, Santa Cruz Co. (FH). Flammulated Owls were heard and seen for the second consecutive summer at Junipero Serra Peak, Santa Lucia Mts. (VLY & RLB). This locality is south of the more accessible Chews Ridge, where they were reported calling well into July, though less frequently than in the spring (WR, ROP, TC). A fledgling of this species was picked up alive near Foresthill on Aug. 6 (JW); although within the known Sierra Nevada range, this record establishes a new locality for this little-known owl. The Great Gray Owl nest found last year at Crane Flats, Yosemite Nat'l Park was reported destroyed (RG); however, individuals of this species were seen in the same vicinity (Marianne Shepard, *vide* RG). A Short-eared Owl was seen on June 8 at the Los Banos Waterfowl Management Area, where it formerly nested (ROW); this species has not been reported in the Central Valley during the summer in



recent years.

**Nighthawks, Swifts, Hummingbirds**—A nighthawk, not identified as to species, was seen in Palo Alto, Santa Clara Co. on July 21 (DG). Although the Com. Nighthawk breeds along the coast as far south as Sonoma County, there are more records of Lesser Nighthawk from the San Francisco Bay region. Three reports of Com. Nighthawks in the Sierra indicate that they may be more common in the high mountains than is generally believed. Black Swifts were found at several locations along the coast north of Santa Cruz, where they are known to breed. The nest found and photographed last year by Ronald Branson was seen to contain an incubating bird on July 9 (AB). As many as 7 were seen on July 26 near Foresthill, where they have not been previously reported (JW). A pair of Black-chinned Hummingbirds that arrived on May 10 at a feeder in Redding, Shasta Co. remained until July 1 (MC); this species was again reported from South San Jose, Santa Clara Co. with a ♀ noted in late May but not seen again until the second week in June, when she brought 2 young to flowers (DDMcL).

**Flycatchers, Jays, Nuthatches, Starlings**—A phoebe (sp.) was observed flying near the San Francisco lightship located some 9 miles offshore on June 14 (HLC). Fog and overcast made identification as to species uncertain; however, any phoebe species at this location is noteworthy. McLean reports that street tree spraying has eliminated W. Wood Pewees from his area in South San Jose. An Olive-sided Flycatcher was found on June 14 on South East Farallon Is., where it is considered a vagrant (HLC). Gray Jays were found at Van Damme State Park, Mendocino Co. on July 9 (JDD&RG); one of the three birds seen was thought to be a sub-adult because of its somewhat different plumage. A young-looking Scrub Jay was noticed at the high Sierran elevation of 7182 ft. in Placer County on Aug. 15 (JW). A Red-breasted Nuthatch spent the entire summer at the low coastal locality of Lafayette, Contra Costa Co. (LF). The Starling population increase in the coastal urban areas was pointed out by McLean's report of a flock of 250+ milling up and down two streets in South San Jose this summer.

**Vireos, Warblers**—Solitary Vireos were considered to have bred far more abundantly than usual in the foothills of the coastal Santa Cruz Mts. and in the lowlands of the Sierras (DDeS). McLean blames street tree spraying also for the complete elimination of Warbling Vireos in his area of South San Jose. A Tennessee Warbler in breeding plumage was seen and heard singing on June 21 in Oakland, Alameda Co. for one of the few spring records of this species (RS). A ♂ Audubon's Warbler was seen feeding a young bird on the rather southern and coastal locality of Chews Ridge, Santa Lucia Mts. (ROP). This species also was seen feeding young in Tuolumne County in the Sierras on Aug. 19, a date which the observer considered late in the season (HLC). An early Townsend's Warbler migrant was found on Aug. 9 on Duncan Peak, Placer

Co. (JW). The first Monterey County specimen of an Ovenbird was caught by a cat in Pacific Grove on June 16 (E. Hurlbert, WR). An Am. Redstart, now considered a very rare late spring migrant, was found on June 4 on the Point Reyes Peninsula (JDD&RG, DDeS, R. Griswold).

**Blackbirds, Finches**—A Yellow-headed Blackbird, rare along the coast, was seen at the mouth of the Carmel River, Monterey Co. on Aug. 17 (RLB). Several observers commented on the abundance of breeding Lazuli Buntings throughout the Region. Lawrence's Goldfinches also appeared to be more abundant than usual, with as many as 60 in one flock near the mouth of the Salinas River, Monterey Co. on July 8 (ROP & TC). A flock of 20 Red Crossbills remained until the late date of June 8 in the coastal locality of Monterey (RLB). A Brewer's Sparrow was banded and photographed on the coast at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Marin Co. in early August (fide ROP).

**Observers**—A. J. and Lilly B. Argante, Ronald L. Branson, Zoe Chandik, Marguerite Clover, Howard L. Cogswell, Val DaCosta, Dave DeSante, Lynn Farrar, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Jeff Gilligan, Joe, David, Doug, and Russ Greenberg, Jack Guggulz, Florence Haas, Emilie Hodnette, Ralph A. Hudgins, Donald D. McLean, Mabel E. Mires, Robert O. Paxton, Michael Perrone, Jr., William Reese, Robert Richardson, Elsie Roemer, Rich Stallcup, Emerson Stoner, Roger O. Wilbur, Jon Winter, Vernal L. Yadon.—THEODORE CHANDIK, 4238 Rutzelma Ave., Palo Alto, Calif. 94306 and ALAN BALDRIDGE, 770 Terry St., Monterey, Calif. 93940.