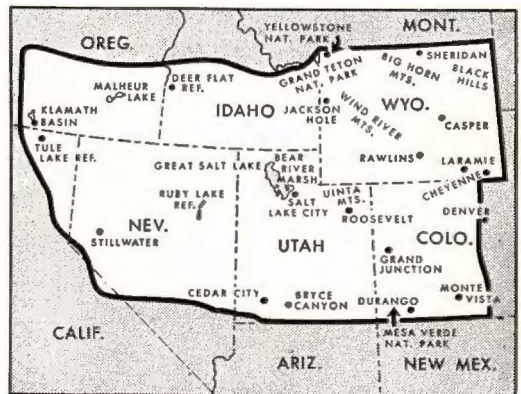


GREAT BASIN, CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.—The contrasts of the Region have never been more pronounced than during this



nesting season. The western Great Basin has been experiencing one of its worst droughts, with one of the driest years on record at Malheur Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon, whereas it was the second successive wet year for Wyoming and much of Colorado, Utah and Idaho, with the finest water conditions recorded to date at Monte Vista Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in southern Colorado. Banding data from the Front range of the Rockies west of

Denver showed that first broods in the wet belt were unsuccessful in many cases, but second broods fared better (SB). On the other hand, passerine nesting results were reported as particularly poor in the vicinity of Durango in southwestern Colorado (OR). A special note of thanks is due the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service for its Breeding Bird Survey program. This random sampling technique has sent birders into many areas that normally would have been overlooked.

Pelicans, Herons, Ibis—By mid-July 7000 White Pelicans were congregated at Malheur Refuge, probably because of the concentration of carp resulting from the lowering of the water level. There was a great increase in nesting of Com. Egrets, Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons at the refuge, with 400, 150 and 500 nests, respectively (ELMcL). An egret colony out in the center of Malheur Lake was occupied in late June, about one month behind schedule. It would almost seem that the birds realized that water levels were going to drop and that their food supply would be excellent and concentrated, which, of course, it was (ELMcL). In the Carson Sink of western Nevada, a large rookery containing 400 White-faced Ibis nests was located for the first time (JMD).

Swans, Geese, Ducks—Effects of the drought at Malheur Refuge included a reduction of Malheur Lake to only 8000 acres and only a negligible growth of sago pondweed, the principal food of migratory waterfowl at the refuge, a complete drying up of nearby Harney Lake, and a reduction of water levels in Blitzen Valley to only 30 percent of normal (ELMcL). All of this had a disastrous effect on waterfowl production at the refuge. Ruby Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in eastern Nevada, on the other hand, had good water conditions and successful waterfowl production, including 9 Trumpeter Swan cygrets (MJB). Fewer pairs of geese were present this year on the Snake River Islands section of Deer Flat Nat'l Wildlife Refuge in western Idaho, which may explain a 23 percent reduction in gosling production from that of last year (RVP). The excellent water conditions at Monte Vista Refuge and in adjacent San Luis Valley were the result of a big run-off from a very heavy snowpack and the heaviest summer rains on record; the colony of Canada Geese produced 600 young and there was excellent duck production of 23,000 young (CRB). A Pintail banded by Monte Vista Refuge personnel at nearby Hooper, Alamosa Co., Colo. on Sept. 8, 1964, was taken near Anderia, Russia on May 17, 1968 (CRB). The Wood Duck colony on the Carson River in western Nevada is doing well and made use of five nesting boxes set out for them this year (LDN). Bear River Marshes at the upper end of the Great Salt Lake received so much floodwater this June that waterfowl nesting was virtually wiped out, but renesting resulted in production of 18,000 young, slightly better than last year (PJF).

Golden Eagle—This species was reported to be holding its own in western Idaho (TL). Elsewhere in the Region it is doing fairly well at getting the young off the nests. At Malheur Refuge, 9 young

were raised to the flight stage (ELMcL). After this stage no one knows how they are doing.

Owls, Swifts, Hummingbirds—Several Barn Owls used Wood Duck nesting boxes on the Carson River of western Nevada (LDN). This species is spotty in occurrence in the Rockies and the Great Basin. Black Swifts were observed at Parowan, Iron Co., Utah on June 12 (SM). This is the only easily accessible place in the Region where they are seen regularly. Chimney Swifts were again reported at Cheyenne, Wyo., July 5-10 (MEH). Apparently eastern Wyoming is the western limit of their range. A Vaux's Swift was seen on July 19 at Nampa, Canyon Co., Idaho (HES) which is somewhat east for the species. One wonders about the nesting status of the Rufous Hummingbird in the Rockies. There are no nesting records of this species in the Region, but they are frequently seen in June and July. Gleb Kashin observed his first bird of the year on July 20 in the Wasatch Mountains of Utah, and many were present in the Front range of the Rockies from mid-July onward. Six banded at Rocky Mountain Nat'l Park, July 22-25 (AC) were all females with bare and warm brood spots. It was certainly a great year for hummingbirds in this part of the Rockies, with more than 70 banded in Rocky Mountain Nat'l Park in a few hours, July 22-25 (AC). The explanation given for the banding of so many, more than in any previous year, is that they came to feeders in greater numbers because the dry July had yielded a poor flower crop, but this must have been a local phenomenon since just south of this area there was tremendous summer moisture. Hummingbirds were reported as scarce farther west in the Durango, Colo. area (OR) where they are normally very common.

Flycatcher, Blackbirds, Tanager—An Ashthroated Flycatcher seen near Dubois in central Wyoming on July 17 (MB) was farther north than previous records. In contrast to their former abundance, Brewer's Blackbirds continued to be relatively scarce in central Wyoming (OKS). This is a great shame since these birds eat grasshoppers, of which we have more than our share. Now we have grasshopper-poisoning programs which kill more birds. There is a suspicion that bird-poisoning programs of grain farmers in Nebraska may have something to do with the smaller numbers of Brewer's Blackbirds now present. A Scarlet Tanager seen at Genoa in western Nevada on June 8 (FR) must have been an accidental straggler.

Finches, Sparrows—A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was present for two weeks beginning on June 7 at Evergreen in the Rockies west of Denver (WWB) where the species has been considered rare; 2 seen east of Dubois, Wyo. on June 8 and 10 (MB) were very far west for this species. An Indigo Bunting was seen at Newcastle, Weston Co., Wyo. on June 25 (LM), and 2 others were observed at Sheridan, Wyo. in June (TK). This is a regular but uncommon visitor in eastern Wyoming. Another Indigo Bunting was noted on June 7 in the Cedar Valley of southern Utah (SM) where the species is very unusual. Evening Grosbeaks were found nest-

ing at Evergreen, Colo. on June 10 (*SB*); this species is an unusual breeder at that locality. Many Grasshopper Sparrows were found nesting in patches of native grass in the Lance Creek area of eastern Wyoming where the species was previously considered uncommon, and four pairs of Black-throated Sparrows were noted on June 7 southeast of the Steens Mountains near Fields in southeastern Oregon (*HBN*) where this species is presumed to be nesting but is rarely reported. Both of the preceding reports resulted from the Breeding Bird Survey program. A White-winged Junco was seen on June 19 near Sheridan, Wyo. (*TK*), 150 miles west of the Black Hills where the species is supposedly confined.

Contributors—*MB*, Mary Back; *MJB*, Mark J. Barber; *SB*, Sylvia Brockner; *WWB*, William W. Brockner; *CRB*, Charles R. Bryant; *AC*, Allegra Collister; *JMD*, Dr. John M. Davis; *PJF*, Phillip J. Feiger; *MEH*, Mary E. Hanesworth; *GK*, Gleb Kashin; *TK*, Tom Kessinger; *TL*, Tom Love; *ELMcL*, Eldon L. McLaury; *LM*, Louis Moos; *SM*, Stewart Murie; *LDN*, Larry D. Napier; *HBN*, Harry B. Nehls; *RVP*, Ronald V. Papike; *OR*, Oppie Reams; *FR*, Fritz Ryser; *OKS*, Dr. Oliver K. Scott; *HES*, Mrs. H. E. Shaw.—**DR. OLIVER K. SCOTT**, 437 East 13th St., Casper, Wyo. 82601.