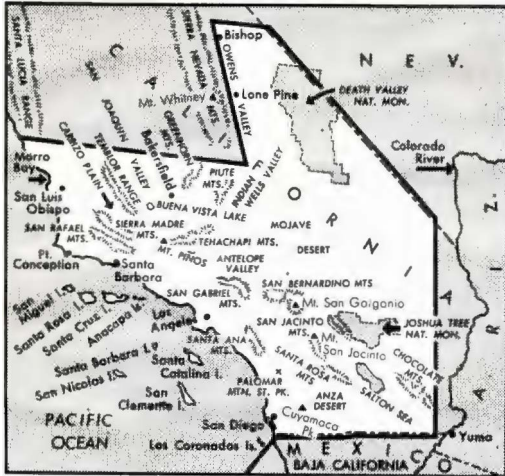


**SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION .** <sup>2</sup> The summer season tends to be a rather stable time of the year as far as bird movements are concerned. Most birds are busy with their nesting activities within their normal ranges, and very few stray far from their normal ranges to add that little bit of spice to a day's birding. This summer's single records of Roseate Spoonbill, Black Skimmer and Sabine's Gull around the Salton Sea and Chimney Swifts along the coast were all that were really unusual. In addition, a few casual strays such as the Magnificent Frigatebird and the Rose-breasted Grosbeak were reported on one or two occasions.

It is normal for a number of non-breeding individuals of many species whose breeding ranges are considerably to the north of the Region to remain



here throughout the summer. Almost all the regularly occurring species of ducks and geese have been found here during the summer months, but it is very likely that some if not most of these are crippled birds lingering from the previous winter's hunting season. The occurrence of shorebirds in non-breeding plumages is a regular phenomenon, and fairly large flocks of mixed species are to be found in some localities throughout the month of June. The Western Gull is the only gull nesting in the Region, but every summer small numbers of immature gulls, often in very ratty looking plumages, are present. Similarly, some Common Terns remain to pass the summer in the Region.

The heavy rains of the past winter produced a lush growth of vegetation throughout the Region. There was an ample supply of food for the seed-eating landbirds, and consequently many young were produced by the finches and sparrows nesting in the Region. Unfortunately the lush growth of vegetation becomes a fire hazard in the late summer, and we are having more than our share of large brush fires in the back country.

**Loons, Grebes** — Summering loons included a Red-throated Loon seen at Laguna Beach, Orange Co. on June 5 (GSS). A flock of Arctic Loons and two flocks of Red-throated Loons numbering about 70 individuals in all were seen flying northward off Goleta, Santa Barbara Co. on June 1 (RW); this date is very late for migrants. Eared Grebes were present in some of the coastal marshes throughout the summer but there was no indication of nesting. About 50 pairs of Western Grebes again nested on Sweetwater Reservoir, San Diego Co.

**Pelicans, Cormorants, Frigatebirds** — Again this summer there were no indications that the White Pelican was breeding in the Region, although a few non-breeding individuals were present throughout the season; this species formerly nested in at least two localities in Southern California. Brown Pelicans produced virtually no young at any of the colonies along the coast north of central Baja California (JJ). An immature Brown Pelican appeared at the north end

of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co. on June 7, with 2 seen there on July 26; 1 was observed at the south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co. on July 20; and 1 was noted at Salton City, Imperial Co. on Aug. 9 (GMCC, et al.). The species is now found regularly in limited numbers at this inland locality during the late summer; June 7, however, is quite early for one to arrive there. Double-crested Cormorants and Brandt's Cormorants had very poor nesting success, owing to the fact that they are now laying thin-shelled eggs (JJ); the accumulation of DDT in their systems is suspected to be the cause of this syndrome. An immature Magnificent Frigatebird was present in San Diego on July 17 and 18 (AC, GMCC, CL, et al.), and another immature was noted at Imperial Beach, San Diego Co. on July 29 (BS); the species is very rare along the coast of the Region.

**Hérons. Ibis** — Cattle Egrets again seemed to withdraw from the Imperial Valley, apparently to nest somewhere in northwestern Mexico; the species was present in diminishing numbers until early April, then none were found until July 12, when 4 were present; by Aug. 9, numbers had built up to 35 (GMCC). A large colony of Snowy Egrets was noted at the north end of the Salton Sea, and another large colony was noted at the south end of the Salton Sea. Least Bitterns were noted regularly around the Salton Sea throughout the summer. American Bitterns were suspected of having nested at Goose Lake, Kern Co. (JS); this is a rare nester in the Region. Wood Ibis were first noted at the south end of the Salton Sea in early July; their numbers then quickly built up to around 500 birds, indicative of a good flight year. White-faced Ibis were not present around the Salton Sea this summer; formerly this was a common nesting species in this area. An immature Roseate Spoonbill was present with the Wood Ibis at the south end of the Salton Sea, July 20-22 (GMCC, GSS, LS & TT); the spoonbill is a casual wanderer from the west coast of Mexico.

**Geese, Ducks** — A few Black Brant that lingered at the north end of the Salton Sea until late June (GMCC) and 1 present at Buena Vista Lake, Kern Co. during June and early July (Bob Fischer, *vide JS*) were probably individuals that had moved north up the Gulf of California during the spring and became confused when they found themselves away from the coast. A few Black Brant spent the summer along the coast, as is normal. A Snow Goose summered at Newport, Orange Co. (GSS, JA). Fulvous Tree Ducks nested successfully at the south end of the Salton Sea, and about 150 individuals were seen there in early August. A pair of Gadwall was suspected of having successfully bred at Carlsbad, San Diego Co. (GSS, AF). Redheads nested in some of the coastal lagoons, as is normal. A male Harlequin Duck seen near Cambria, San Luis Obispo Co. on June 20 (DH) provided a summer record of a species that is very rare during the winter. Summering scoters along the coast included a few White-winged Scoters in the Santa Barbara area. Up to 7 Surf Scoters were continually present at the north end of the Salton Sea during the

period. A few Red-breasted Mergansers spent the summer on the Salton Sea and 1 was seen at McGrath Lake, Ventura Co. on July 23 (LC & NM).

**Hawks** — White-tailed Kites continue to increase in numbers and are found more frequently in close proximity to man. Many young birds were noted in the latter part of the summer, indicating that the species again had a successful nesting season. An immature White-tailed Kite seen near Yaqui Wells, San Diego Co. on Aug. 9 (GMcC) was east of its normal range. One or two Ospreys were present along the coast in the San Diego area throughout the summer; the species no longer nests in the Region. An adult Peregrine Falcon seen at the north end of the Salton Sea on June 14 and 26 (GMcC, CL, GC) was probably an individual that had wandered north from the Gulf of California where the species still nests.

**Shorebirds** — Summering shorebirds were noted in the larger lagoons and bays along the coast and at the Salton Sea throughout the month of June, as is normal. The first of the fall migrants were noted during the first week of July as usual. Some of the more interesting observations included 2 exceptionally early Mountain Plovers at the south end of the Salton Sea on July 28 (GSS); both were in summer plumage which indicates that they were not summering individuals. An early Am. Golden Plover was seen in San Diego on July 27 (GMcC). Two Knots were seen inland at the north end of the Salton Sea on July 26 (GMcC, GC). A Baird's Sandpiper was seen at Santa Barbara between July 30 and Aug. 8 (LC & RW), 1 was seen at the mouth of the San Luis Rey Creek, San Diego Co. on Aug. 4 (AF), and 1 was seen at the north end of the Salton Sea on Aug. 1 (LJ). Two Stilt Sandpipers were seen at the south end of the Salton Sea on July 20 (GMcC), 1 was seen at Goleta on July 27 (RW), and 1 was seen near Oceanside, San Diego Co. on Aug. 12 (RS); this species is regular in small numbers at the Salton Sea but is still rarely reported from along the coast.

**Gulls, Terns, Skimmers** — An immature Glaucous-winged Gull present at the north end of the Salton Sea until at least June 14 (GMcC) was a summering bird at an inland locality. Western Gulls (yellow-legged race) were found more regularly and in larger numbers at the Salton Sea this summer, with up to 50 individuals found in a day during July; the largest numbers were present at Salton City, but a few individuals were found at all the regularly worked points around the sea. It is conceivable that the species could become established as a breeding species in this area. A pair of Laughing Gulls observed at the north end of the Salton Sea on June 7 indicated that the species may have nested on the sea this year. During July and August up to 50 individuals were found together at the south end of the Salton Sea; these, however, are more likely to have been post-breeding wanderers from the west coast of Mexico than local nesting birds. A single second-year Franklin's Gull was seen at the north end of the Salton Sea on June 14 (GMcC & AC); this gull is very rare during the summer months. An adult Heermann's Gull was seen at Salton City on July 12 (GMcC & EAC); a dead adult was found at the south end of the Salton Sea on July 12

and healthy immatures were seen there on July 12, 20 and 26 (GMcC, et al.). This species was first found inland in California on the Salton Sea during the summer of 1967 but now seems to occur there regularly in small numbers; since it is unlikely that this striking gull was overlooked prior to 1967, it would appear that this tendency to wander north out of the Gulf of California into the Salton Sea is a new development. Black-legged Kittiwakes were present in varying numbers along the entire coast south at least to the Los Coronados Islands off northern Baja California throughout the summer; all appeared to be second-year birds and were undoubtedly non-breeding individuals that remained in the area after having arrived during last winter's heavy influx. A single second-year Black-legged Kittiwake present at the north end of the Salton Sea throughout June and July and to at least Aug. 1 (GMcC, LJ, LS, et al.) provided another inland record of the species. An adult *Sabine's Gull* was seen landing on and flying over the freeway near El Centro, Imperial Co. on July 27 (GMcC, CL & GC). This individual probably had been "trapped" in the Gulf of California while migrating northward in the spring, had become delayed at the head of the Gulf when it found itself forced to make an overland crossing, and then had mistaken the concrete freeway for water while crossing the Imperial Valley. Gull-billed Terns were found nesting at two localities along the south shore of the Salton Sea this summer, and the species was more numerous in that area than it has been in recent years. Forster's Terns nested successfully at the south end of San Diego Bay. Non-breeding Common Terns were present around San Diego and at the north end of the Salton Sea throughout the summer. Least Terns are still able to produce some young along our crowded beaches, but continued human disturbances to the nesting colonies are beginning to show their effects on the total number of birds present. About 50 pairs of Elegant Terns again nested at the south end of San Diego Bay among the many Caspian Terns nesting there; the post-breeding northward flight of Elegant Terns brought many more than the usual number of birds to the coast, with all observers along the coast commenting on the large numbers present. Two adult *Black Skimmers* seen at Salton City, Imperial Co. on July 12 (GMcC, TT & EAC) constituted the second record for the Salton Sea and the third record for California.

**Doves, Owls, Swifts** — A Band-tailed Pigeon seen on Point Loma, San Diego Co. on July 6 was outside the species' normal range. White-winged Doves appeared to be more common than normal around the Salton Sea. Ground Doves continued to build up in numbers west of the coastal mountains in the area south of Los Angeles County. Spotted Owls were again found in the San Jacinto Mountains and in the mountains of San Diego County but not as often and not in such numbers as were found last summer. Common Nighthawks were found commonly in the San Bernardino Mountains in the vicinity of Hannah Flats. At long last the Black Swift has been proven to nest in Southern California where it has long been suspected to nest: one nest was found at Big Falls near

Falls in the San Bernardino Mountains on July 27 (JS) and another nest was found behind a small waterfall about nine miles east of Hemet in the San Jacinto Mountains on June 21 (JS). Two or three additional Black Swifts were seen in the San Jacinto Mountains (JS) and 2-3 were seen around the waterfalls in Santa Anita Canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains throughout most of the summer. Four Chimney Swifts were seen together in San Diego on June 19 (GMC); a few were seen in this area last summer, and it will be interesting to see if they continue to appear each year. A swift that could be identified only as a *Chaetura* sp. was seen at Chantry Flat near Mount Wilson, Los Angeles Co. on July 7 (LJ).

**Flycatchers** — Wied's Crested Flycatchers again nested at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co., the westernmost outpost of the species' range. Gray Flycatchers were found to be fairly common as a breeding species in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Big Bear Lake. Vermilion Flycatchers were found nesting at Morongo Valley and in the San Diego area.

#### **Dippers, Thrashers, Thrushes, Kinglets, Waxwings**

Dippers were found nesting along the fast-flowing streams in the San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. Le Conte's Thrashers were more numerous in the southwestern portion of the San Joaquin Valley this summer due to the added amount of grass induced by last spring's heavy rains. A pair of Robins successfully nested on Mount Palomar, San Diego Co. (AM); this is the first nesting record for this mountain range. Two or three pairs of Golden-crowned Kinglets were found at Hannah Flats in the San Bernardino Mountains in late June (JA); this is the southern limit of the species' breeding range in California.

**Vireos, Warblers** — Numbers of Bell's Vireos appear to be in a steady decline; the destruction of the species' preferred habitat and the increase in the number of Brown-headed Cowbirds are both major factors involved in this decline. Gray Vireos were again found breeding in the Round Valley area of the San Bernardino Mountains and in the New York Mountains of eastern San Bernardino County — the only localities within the Region where this species has been found in recent years. Lucy's Warblers remained at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co. throughout June (AS, et

al.); nesting was suspected but could not be substantiated. The species is not known to nest this far west. A MacGillivray's Warbler was seen at Buckhorn Campground in the San Gabriel Mountains on July 20 (RM); this warbler is not known to nest this far south though it has often been suspected of doing so. An Am. Redstart seen at Finney Lake, Imperial Co. on June 17 (JL) was a late spring straggler. A singing male Painted Redstart was seen near Springville, Kern Co. on July 4 (RS), and another singing male was seen on the lower slopes of Mount Palomar near Puma Valley, San Diego Co. on June 25 and Aug. 6 (EB); there is but one previous record of the species for the summer period in this Region.

**Blackbirds, Orioles** — A Boat-tailed Grackle was seen at Finney Lake on June 17 (JL); 3 were seen there on June 28 (AS); and 4 were seen there on Aug. 9 (GMC). Obviously this species is beginning to settle in this area, and it should not be too long before it is a fairly common nesting species in the Imperial Valley. Several pairs of Scott's Orioles were seen in Quatal Canyon, Ventura Co. during May and June (JS, AS); this locality is west of the coastal range and therefore west of the species' known range.

**Finches, Sparrows** — An adult male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen regularly in El Cajon, San Diego Co. between July 29 and Aug. 10 (TM); it was frequenting a sunflower patch along with a female and a begging young, both of unknown species (Rose-breasted or Black-headed). A female Indigo Bunting banded on Point Loma on June 24 (GC) was a late spring straggler. Grasshopper Sparrows were fairly common around San Juan Capistrano, Orange Co. (GSS). Black-chinned Sparrows were much more numerous than usual throughout the chaparral in the coastal foothills, a result of an ample food supply due to the growth induced by last winter's heavy rains.

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