

Following a winter and early spring of abundant rainfall, the nesting season was accompanied by a normally dry summer. As a re-



Several of the newly-filled lake basins have proven to be a death trap for waterfowl. Buena Vista Lake in Kern County, by far the largest of these "new" lakes, has been plagued by a serious outbreak of avian botulism, reminding one of the similar situation in Ford Dry Lake as reported last year. Flooding of dry fields containing growing or dead terrestrial plants (wheat, grains, grasses, milo maize, cotton, alfalfa, etc.) resulted in the rotting of these plants and the growth of the botulism bacteria, *Clostridium botulinum*. Ducks and water birds feeding upon the decaying vegetation were poisoned by the toxins of these bacteria. Coots, however, seemed best able to resist these attacks. Attempts were made at Buena Vista Lake (which now contains almost 80 square miles of water) to drive off the incoming birds before they settled to feed. This situation shows signs of clearing before the fall and winter influx of waterfowl really begins. An interesting note was received (*vide* Nor-

summer. As a result of the earlier precipitation, flowering plants produced good crops of seeds, berries and fruits. Dry weather, coincident with high temperatures, resulted in another season of damaging forest fires, but thunderstorms in the mountain areas

*Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns.*—Black-necked Stilts were found to be nesting at Buena Vista Lake, Playa del Rey, and Bolsa Chica Gun Club as well as at the Salton Sea. A few non-breeding Wandering Tattlers were seen throughout the summer. The southbound shorebird migration began in late July and numbers of birds increased steadily throughout August. Ruddy and Black Turnstones were very early in arriving with

a few of both species present in late July. The large shorebirds (Willetts, Marbled Godwits, and curlews) were abundant with the greatest influx occurring in early August. More than 100 Hudsonian Curlews were reported from Corona del Mar in late July (Kahl). Am. Avocets were conspicuous by their reduced numbers at many shore localities which they formerly frequented. Black-bellied Plover and Ringed Plover were down, and Dowitchers, yellow-legs, "peep," and Sanderlings were normal. A few Lesser Yellow-legs were at Playa del Rey in late August (Ed.). Edward J. O'Neil, Manager of the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge, counted 9 adult Laughing Gulls at the Salton Sea this season and found 5 nests during late June and July. Also counted were 300 Gull-billed Terns with a total of 60 nests during June and July. Least Terns are becoming scarcer along the southern seacoast as more and more of their nesting grounds are being destroyed. Caspian Terns were present in large numbers (including a great many young birds) during August, with as many as 250 at Playa del Rey on August 24 (Ed.). No Royal Terns were reported. By this time last year the influx of Elegant Terns was at its peak (1100 birds), but to date none have been reported.

*Doves through Swifts.*—A pair of Ground Doves was present from April through August 21 near Whittier and successfully raised two young (J. H. Comby). Two pairs were seen in two other places near Anaheim during this period (*vide* JHC). Cecelia Foulkes reported a marked increase of White-winged

Doves, Mourning Doves, Gambel's Quail, and Road-runners in the vicinity of Mecca. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo again nested at Whittier Dam, being first heard on June 9 (JHC). R. N. Shuart reported 15 Burrowing Owls in a district of less than a square mile in Palos Verdes where empty lots are fast disappearing. A stray Vaux's Swift was at Corona, July 5 (Mellor).

*Passerine Land Birds.*—A nesting (?) Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen in the Botanical Garden at Santa Barbara, August 11 (E. Z. Rett). The Vermilion Flycatchers at Mecca raised 3 young (Foulkes), and it was generally reported that the nesting season just completed was a highly successful one except in those areas subjected to forest fires last year and this. Many young birds were seen and no doubt the abundant food crop was somewhat responsible. Orioles and Black-headed Grosbeaks had a fine year. Mrs. Will Williams reported from the vicinity of Granite Station, Kern Co., that House Wrens were increasing in the mountains and that Rock and Cañon Wrens were becoming very scarce. Olive-backed Thrushes were the most numerous for several years at Whittier Dam (JHC). For the second time robins nested in Santa Barbara (R. M. Colcord), and many nested in the foothills surrounding Los Angeles as well as in the city itself. Yellow-headed Blackbirds nested at Fisherman's Retreat, San Bernardino Co. (Belle Wilson).—ARNOLD SMALL, *Department of Life Science, Taft Junior College, Taft, Calif.* and ROBERT L. PYLE, *1143-21st St., Santa Monica, Calif.*