

Southern Pacific Coast Region

GUY MCCASKIE

Temperatures were in general higher than normal this summer, particularly so inland, and moist air from the south brought heavy rain to some areas in July. Noteworthy birding events included the first evidence of Tricolored Heron nesting in California, an exciting selection of shorebirds in July, a well-observed Sooty Tern and California's third Eastern Wood-Pewee.

Abbreviations: C.L. (*China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme n.e. Kern Co.*); N.E.S.S. (*north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.C.R.E. (*Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura Co.*); S.E.S.S. (*south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.*); S.F.K.R.P. (*South Fork Kern River Preserve near Weldon, Kern County*); T.L.D.D. (*Tulare Lake Drainage District ponds west of Delano, Kern Co.*). As virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only

the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included.

Storm-Petrels to Frigatebirds

Ashy Storm-Petrels were mist-netted on Anacapa I. in April (DW, BK) and May (HC) indicating that small numbers nest on this island; this species is known to nests on adjacent San Miguel and Santa Cruz Islands, but is previously unrecorded as a breeding bird on Anacapa I.

A Brown Pelican near Lakeview, *Riverside* July 17 (C-TL) was the only one reported inland away from the area of the Salton Sea. The only Magnificent Frigatebird reported was one over the open ocean between Ventura and Anacapa I., Aug. 2 (*fide* DDJ).

Hérons to Raptors

An ad. Tricolored Heron was along the coast at Upper Newport Bay, *Orange* June 19–27 (BA) and at nearby Bolsa Chica July 2–3 (DRW), another was inland at S.E.S.S., June 19 (RH, PU), and \leq three adults were there June 16–Aug. 13 (MAP, GMCC); in addition, the presence of two recently fledged young chasing an adult, and begging for food, at Ramer L. near S.E.S.S., Aug. 6–14 (HK, CB, GMCC) gives us the first evidence of nesting in California. About 100 Wood Storks (30% immatures) at S.E.S.S., Aug. 14 (MAP) was the largest number seen there in 10 years.

A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was at S.E.S.S., Aug. 10 (RH, KCM), and what was presumably the same bird was accompany-

ing Fulvous Whistling-Ducks on nearby Ramer L., Aug. 27–28 (EB); there are at least 12 previous record for this species in California, all from the area of the Salton Sea. The first "Blue" Snow Goose to summer in California was a cripple on Ramer L. throughout the period (GMCC). A ♀ Harlequin Duck at Cayucos, *San Luis Obispo* July 12+ (TME) was undoubtedly present all summer. A flock of 17 Red-breasted Mergansers at N.E.S.S., July 3 (MAP) was an amazing concentration considering the time of year.

The presence of a juv. White-tailed Kite at S.E.S.S., Aug. 14 (MAP) indicated this species nested in that general area this summer; this species has only recently expanded its breeding range into the Imperial Valley. An ad. Mississippi Kite over Bishop, *Inyo* June 20 (FB) was probably a lost spring wanderer. Two ad. Bald Eagles on L. Cachuma, *Santa Barbara* July 2 (JJD) were probably nesting as this species has in recent years. A Sharp-shinned Hawk at Cerro Alto Campground in the Santa Lucia Mts., *San Luis Obispo* June 5 (TME) was in suitable breeding habitat; there are less than a half dozen confirmed occurrences of nesting in S. California.

Plovers to Puffins

A Pacific Golden-Plover near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara* July 15–24 (BH, BCS) was considered an early fall migrant. A Solitary Sandpiper near Lancaster, *Los Angeles* July 16 (KLK) and another at S.E.S.S., July 23 (MAP) were the earliest this fall migration. As is usual in fall, a few Ruddy Turnstones were found inland, with one adult near Lancaster July 23 (KCM), another on Owens L., *Inyo* July 29 (JP), two at T.L.D.D., July 30 (MOC), and two more on the Salton Sea the same day (GMCC). A few Red Knots were also found inland, with one at T.L.D.D., July 30 (JCW) and at least eight more around the Salton Sea the same day (GMCC). At least three Sanderlings were inland in e. Kern between July 13 and the end of the period (DVB, MTH), and two more were on the Salton Sea July 30 (GMCC). Single ad. Semipalmated Sandpipers were found along the coast at the Santa Ynez R. mouth, *Santa Barbara* July 9 (BH) and in Anaheim, *Orange* July 28 (JEP), and inland at T.L.D.D., July 30 (RS). An ad. Rufous-necked Stint was well photographed at S.C.R.E., June 29–July 2 (BSi) and another adult was photographed at the Santa Maria R. mouth, *Santa Barbara* July 11–15 (BH); there are 8 previous records of this Asiatic "peep" in California, all being adults, and most in July. An ad. Baird's Sandpiper at the Santa Maria R. mouth July 5 (RGJ) and another near Lan-



caster July 16 (KLG) were the earliest this fall. An ad. Pectoral Sandpiper near Santa Maria July 18 (JMC) was considered early. An ad. Curlew Sandpiper photographed near Lancaster July 23–24 (KLG) was the eighth to be found in this Region and the first in *Los Angeles*. Two ad. Stilt Sandpipers at N.E.S.S., July 23 (GMcC) were in an area where considered rare. A brightly colored ♀ Ruff, a rare but regular visitor to California, was at S.E.S.S., July 23+ (SBT, GMcC) and another was at T.L.D.D., July 30 (JCW). A Com. Snipe in Irvine July 29 (RAH) was early for coastal S. California.

A Pomarine/Parasitic Jaeger at N.E.S.S., July 3 (GMcC) was either summering on this inland body of water, or had moved northward from the Gulf of California with post-breeding waterbirds that regularly reach the Salton Sea this time of the year. The discovery of a Laughing Gull nest with two recently hatched young at N.E.S.S., Aug. 5 (KCM) provides us with the first evidence of breeding on the Salton Sea since the 1950s. An early juv. Franklin's Gull at N.E.S.S., July 16 (GMcC, MAP) was followed by five more at various localities around the Salton Sea by the end of the month (GMcC) and another near Lancaster July 23 (NBB). An ad. Heermann's Gull, rare to casual inland, was at N.E.S.S., July 3 (GMcC), and a first-summer bird was at S.E.S.S., July 27 (KCM). Since Herring Gulls are very rare anywhere in s. California in summer, a first-year bird at S.E.S.S., July 23 (MAP) was of note.

A minimum of 100 pairs of Gull-billed Terns nesting on the Salton Sea were marginally successful (KCM), but a dozen pairs nesting on San Diego Bay all fledged young (EC). Caspian Terns again nested at S.E.S.S., with 120 pairs successfully fledging young (KCM). At least 6 pairs of Royal Terns nested with some 1200 pairs of Elegant Terns and ≥150 pairs of Black Skimmers at Bolsa Chica this summer (CC). An Arctic Tern at Bolsa Chica July 9 (DRW) was exceptional considering that this species is very rare on the coast during migration, and previously unrecorded on the coast in summer. The only Least Terns found inland were two at S.E.S.S., June 25 (K&CR). An ad. Sooty Tern was well studied at Bolsa Chica July 30 (DRW) and another was seen about 160 miles to the south in Ensenada, Mexico, 6 days earlier (K&CR, TW). An imm. Sooty Tern in San Diego ahead of a tropical storm Sept. 27, 1982 (AB 37:224) is the only accepted occurrence in California, though previously unpublished sightings of this species were made in San Clemente, *Orange* Aug. 13, 1968 (J. M. Davis) and at Venice, *Los Ange-*

les July 27, 1969 (L. Sansone), and a dark-mantled tern of this type was seen at Bolsa Chica Aug. 5, 1990 (AB 44:1187).

The presence of two–three Rhinoceros Auklets entering probable nest cavities at Harris Pt. on San Miguel I., Apr. 8–13 (DW, MC), and again in early May (HC, DW), indicates breeding at this locality. A Tufted Puffin on Prince I. off San Miguel I., Apr. 8–13 (GeM), and again in early May (HC), was at the same crevices occupied by 2 pairs in 1991 (GeM), strongly indicating nesting at this location; the current s. limit of known breeding is the Farallon Islands.

Doves to Swifts

Up to three Com. Ground-Doves, originally found in March, remained in Nipomo, *San Luis Obispo* through the summer (PAW). An Inca Dove at Desert Center, *Riverside* May 29–June 5 (C-TL) was away from areas of known regular occurrence. At least 50 (20 pairs and 10 unmated males) Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at S.F.K.R.P. throughout the summer (SAL) and six more were in the Prado Basin, *San Bernardino-Riverside* during the same period (JEP), but the species was unreported elsewhere in the Region. Two calling Whip-poor-wills at L. Fulmor in the San Jacinto Mts., June 4 (RMCK) were at a location where breeding has long been suspected, but a nest has yet to be found in California. Three Black Swifts near Norco, *Riverside* June 15 (JEP) were probably foraging for food, and traveled from nesting sites in the mountains n. of the Los Angeles Basin. Two Chimney Swifts in San Diego June 29–30 (PU) were along the coast where small numbers are found each summer. A Chimney Swift found clinging to a telephone pole at S.E.S.S., June 25 (K&CR) is the first to be found in this area, and three *Chaetura* over Big Pine July 10 (T&JH) were suspected to be this species.

Flycatchers to Vireos

An Eastern Wood-Pewee tape recorded in full song in a restricted area on Big Pine Mt., *Santa Barbara* June 24–July 8 (JH, GT) appeared to be defending territory, and is the first to be positively identified in California since one was captured on S.E. Farallon I., June 15, 1975 (DeSante and Ainley. *The Avifauna of the South Farallon Islands*. Studies in Avian Biology No. 4) and a singing bird was seen near Manteca Aug. 18–Sept. 17, 1983 (AB 38:243). A nesting pair of Vermilion Flycatchers in the Leona Valley w. of Palmdale, *Los Angeles* May–July (RAE) was a little to the n.w. of

this species' known breeding range; nesting pairs at C.L. (JS) and in nearby Ridgecrest (JS) during the same period were at the n.w. extreme of this species' known breeding range. Five pairs of Brown-crested Flycatchers were suspected to breed in S.F.K.R.P. this summer (SAL), this being the n.w. extreme of this species' range. An E. Kingbird near Inyokern, *Kern* June 12 (TM) was a late spring straggler, but one at Tinnemaha Res. near Big Pine July 17–Aug. 3 (T&JH) and another at nearby Owens L., July 4 (KK) may have summered locally.

The presence of a pair of Brown Creepers feeding a recently fledged young in Santa Maria July 1 (WP) furnishes the first evidence of nesting on the immediate coast s. of the area around Morro Bay.

A pair of Am. Robins nest building in Brawley Apr. 16 (GMcC), with the adults remaining through most of the summer but with no evidence of young fledglings, is the best evidence to date for breeding in *Imperial*, but two in this same area Aug. 2, 1993 (MAP, RAE) indicates this species may have previously attempted nesting. A ♂ Yellow-throated Vireo near Weldon July 7–30 (MHa) was the first to be found in *Kern*. A Hutton's Vireo photographed at Galileo Hill in extreme e. *Kern* July 30 (MTH) was most unusual considering the desert location and time of the year; there are less than half-a-dozen valid records of this species in the e. portion of this Region. Two Red-eyed Vireos at the S.F.K.R.P., June 10+ (SAL) appeared to be a mated pair, but no nest was found.

Wood Warblers

A Lucy's Warbler at Galileo Hill July 30 (MTH) was only the 4th to be found in *Kern*. A Virginia's Warbler near Big Bear L. in the San Bernardino Mts., June 18 (DRW) was in an area where breeding has been suspected, so it could have been summering locally. But another in Chatsworth, *Los Angeles* July 11 (AS) was w. of the mountains and remarkably early if a fall vagrant. A N. Parula at S.F.K.R.P., June 12 (TG) was in an area where this species has previously summered, but one near Palmdale June 10 (RAE) and another near Cantil, *Kern* June 16 (MTH) were at known "vagrant traps," and so considered late spring wanderers. A most interesting discovery was that of a ♀ Black-throated Gray x Hermit Warbler hybrid paired with a Black-throated Gray Warbler at Charlton Flat in the San Gabriel Mts., attending a nest with young in June (KLG). A very late spring Black-and-white Warbler was near n. Vandenberg A.F.B., *Santa Barbara* June 13 (FS) and a suspected summering bird

was near Weldon July 8 (MTH). A Worm-eating Warbler photographed on the open desert near Twentynine Palms July 18 (SIT) was unexpected considering the time of the year, and is only the 4th to be found in *San Bernardino*. A singing MacGillivray's Warbler in Doan Valley on Mt. Palomar June 9 (MBS) is the first suspected territorial male of this species to be found in *San Diego*, though the species is known to nest in the San Bernardino Mts. and suspected to nest in the San Jacinto Mts., a short distance to the north. A ♀ Hooded Warbler at the S.F.K.R.P., July 11 (SAL) was probably summering locally. A pair of Painted Redstarts nest building at Barton Flats in the San Bernardino Mts. May 20–22 (MCL) had deserted the area by May 30 (MAP), and another in suitable breeding habitat near Cloudburst Summit n. of Chilao in the San Gabriel Mts., May 1 (GP) could not be found there after; successful nesting is yet to be proven in California.

Tanagers to Finches

An estimated 35–45 pairs of Summer Tanagers in the Kern R. Valley e. of L. Isabella throughout the period (TG) were at the n.w. extreme of this species' breeding range; a singing male near Big Pine July 2 (T&JH) was n. of this species' range, and a pair that successfully raised young near San Dimas, *Los Angeles*, in July (SJM) and a single bird near Santa Paula, *Ventura* June 5 (JG) were w. of this species' range. A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak near n. Vandenberg A.F.B., June 13 (FS) and another in Santa Barbara June 27–28 (CL) were lost summer stragglers. Territorial Indigo Buntings included 20 in the S.F.K.R.P. throughout the period (SAL), and one near Big Pine July 2 (T&JH) in the interior portion of the Region, and one at n. Vandenberg A.F.B. through June 26 (FS) on the coast. One in Arcadia, *Los Angeles* July 16–17 (MSM), another in Irvine, *Orange* July 21 (BSa), and a 3rd at the same location July 23 (RAH) were considered early fall transients.

Three territorial ♂ Black-throated Sparrows near Aguanga, *Riverside* in May (SJM) were on the coastal slope with California Gnatcatchers and "Bell's" Sage Sparrows; this species is normally found only to the east of the crest of the coastal mountains. Interesting reports of Grasshopper Sparrows included five singing males near Yucaipa, *San Bernardino* in April (SJM) and "several" singing males at the n. end of the San Fernando Valley, *Los Angeles* in April (RB); numbers of this species have been greatly reduced due to development of open grasslands w. of the coastal mountains, and the San Fernando Valley location

is already slated for development. A Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco at Butterbreed Springs n. of California City, *Kern* June 11 (MTH) would appear lost.

Up to three Bronzed Cowbirds at Desert Center May 29–June 5 (C-TL, MAP) were outside the limited area of known regular occurrence along the Colorado R. and in the Imperial Valley.

Red Crossbills were widespread, but in small numbers, in the San Gabriel Mts. throughout the period, and included a flock of six with a juvenile at Charlton Flat June 5 (JF).

Contributors (County coordinators in boldface): Bruce Aird, Ron Beck, Floyd Bero, Cosmo Bloom, David V. Blue, N. Bruce Broadbooks, Eric Brooks, Eugene A. Cardiff (*San Bernardino*), Harry Carter, Mike Cassazza, Jaime M. Chavez, Mark O. Chichester, Charlie Collins, Elizabeth Copper (*San Diego*), Don DesJardin (*Ventura*), Jennifer J. Duvail, Tom M. Edell (*San Luis Obispo*), Richard A. Erickson, Jon Fisher, Terri Gallion, Kimball L. Garrett (*Los Angeles*), Jim Greaves, Mary Halterman (MHa), Robert A. Hamilton, Joan Hardie, Matt T. Heindel (*Kern*), Tom & Jo Heindel (*Inyo*), Roger Higson, Brad Hines, Richard G. Jeffers, Kathy Keane, Brad Keith, Howard King, Cin-Ty Lee, Stephen A. Laymon, Joan E. Lentz (*Santa Barbara*), Michael C. Long, Clint Loomis, Gerry McChesney (GeM), Robert McKernan (*Riverside*), Stephen J. Meyers, Mike San Miguel, Terri Middlemiss, Kathy C. Molina, Waller Park, Jim Parker, Michael A. Patten, Gerald Phillips, James E. Pike, Kurt and Cindy Radamaker (K&CR), Florence Sanchez, Bill Sauer (BSa), Rick Savall, Joyce Seibold, Brad C. Schram, Brad Silesen (BSi), Scott I. Taylor, Scott B. Terrill, Guy Tingos, Andrew Starrett, Mary B. Stowe, Philip Unitt, Pat A. Wells, Darrell Whitworth, Douglas R. Willick (*Orange*), John C. Wilson, Tom Wurster. An additional ≤50 observers who could not be individually acknowledged submitted reports this season.

—Guy McCaskie, *San Diego Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, P. O. Box 1390, San Diego, CA 92112.*