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# NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORD PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION

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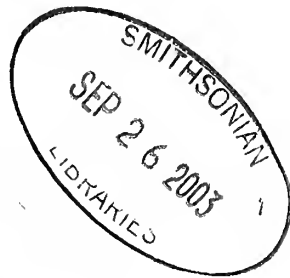
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Like airports most everywhere, the Sarnia Airport authorities in Lambton County, Ontario, mow the grass every summer. One unfortunate consequence of the mowing is the destruction of eggs or chicks of local Upland Sandpipers. Only one adult returned this year to the Sarnia airport grounds and set up territory in a bit of "no-man's-land." This and other grassland species struggled with widespread drought in the continent's interior this season, but some species were nonetheless reported to be doing well. *Photograph by Alfred Rider.*



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# Editors' Notebook

I will wager that virtually everyone reading this has participated in a Christmas Bird Count. But most of us, whether participating for the conviviality of the event or out of devotion to careful survey of birds on our patch (or for both reasons), don't spend much time thinking about the trends in bird distributions or populations that lie hidden in the millions of entries in the C.B.C. database.

I have to admit that I was not long ago a skeptic about the scientific use of data gathered on these counts. Too many variables came to mind that seemed to overwhelm comparability of counts from year to year: observers' varying skill levels and local knowledge; observer bias (spending half the day looking for a rare gull on the coast rather than dutifully counting House Finches at feeders in the suburbs); the variable timing of counts; and the capricious Weather. In the mid-1980s, when several young turks inherited a plum territory on a C.B.C. from a veteran of six decades of Christmas bird counting, they asked how he counted all the many thousands of gulls and vultures at the landfill. "Those aren't really birds," came the reply. "I count the cowbirds and leave." I try to refrain from odd anecdotes, but this observer was quite serious in his bias against the big off-eating species; there was something unseemly about them that made them unfit for the holiday tally. (The C.B.C. data for that count subsequently reflected an instant influx of about 10,000 Herring gulls!) As a participant in many counts in the mid-Atlantic, I can recall many similar idiosyncrasies or inconsistencies among counts.

But perhaps these differences are insignificant when we look at the C.B.C. data across large areas and across the years. Indeed, it was heartening to read Bruce Peterjohn's "Reflections on the historic, current, and future analyses of Christmas Bird Count data" in the annual journal still known as *American Birds* (100th count issue) and imagine the as-yet unwritten analyses of those data. There are naturally plenty of species for which trend analysis would suffer little from the variables that had preoccupied me. Two such species—the Hooded Merganser and the non-native Budgerigar, both striking species and hardly birds to be overlooked by birders—are considered in this issue. The papers by Bill Pranty and Stephen Davis both base their analyses largely on C.B.C. data, from Florida and New England, respectively. An observer living and birding on either end of the East Coast might glance at these papers and note: "Well, of course Budgies are declining in Florida." Or: "Of course Hoodies are increasing in Connecticut. I see evidence of that every time I go out birding."

But it takes more than a confidence in one's own casual local observations to make statements of this sort that will satisfy the community of scientists. Though no one would disagree with the conclusions of these papers—that Budgerigar populations in Florida have decreased dramatically in recent years, that Hooded Mergansers' numbers show an upward trend in New England—the demonstration of these contentions involves analysis beyond the obvious, and beyond the C.B.C. numbers themselves.

And just *where* would one look for information about Budgerigar populations in North America? Though in their checklists both A. O. U. and A. B. A. list Budgerigar as a firmly established, "naturalized" bird in Florida, no paper on the species has been published since its precipitous decline there, and no monograph on the species is slated for inclusion in the *Birds of North America* series, which does treat several other non-native birds. Pranty presents a thorough overview of the current Florida situation, along with many useful historical data.

While the Budgerigar's population has been relatively isolated in Florida (and so its increase and decline can be starkly graphed), Hooded Mergansers are more widespread; their apparent increase in New England might not reflect an increase in population at all but perhaps only a shift in wintering patterns. Davis's paper does not seek to make far-reaching

claims based on the data. Rather, he is satisfied to investigate the data in terms of several sets of variables among counts (latitude, longitude, temperature, and presence or absence of coastline) that might show statistical correlation with Hooded Mergansers' numbers in New England. His tests show an association of increasing numbers of mergansers with latitude and, to a lesser degree, with salt water but perhaps surprisingly, *not* with temperature.

Some readers will see the statistical analyses and turn the page (that "C-" in the statistics course still has some sting!). But we should all take a careful look at both articles, as they give us a sense of what can be done with C.B.C. data in our own areas—and convey how much work must be done to demonstrate even the most modest of scientific claims. Pranty, for instance, takes great care to "vet" the very C.B.C. data, which are never entirely free of human error. Though these articles have regional focus, both have broad implications for all regions.

Ever elusive in studies such as these that harness C.B.C. records is the cause or causes for apparent increases or declines. Both authors speculate on reasons for their subjects' change in status, but in both cases, there may be no certainty as to cause or causes. Pranty's analysis would appear to rule out harsh weather or disease as primary causes for decline; the possibility that House Sparrows and European Starlings outcompeted Budgerigars for nest cavities seems a good one (we're pretty sure that Hooded Mergansers didn't evict the Budgies, yes). Davis correctly indicates that study on a larger scale will be needed to identify causes for possible population changes in the merganser.

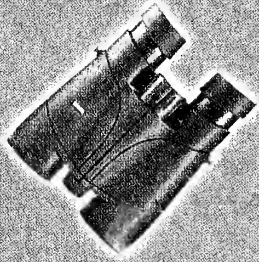
Along the lines of C.B.C. data, Mitra and Raithel have ventured beyond the December and early January period set for the holiday counts and conducted similar surveys on Block Island, Rhode Island, in November, December, and February, with the help of local students. Their findings, which may surprise even longtime observers, suggest that the reduction of half-hardy species from mid- to late winter is less likely to be a result of mortality (as commonly assumed) than of a continued post-migratory dispersal, or facultative migration. Another popular assumption—that the timing of C.B.C.s leads those surveys to include lingering southbound migrants, rather than wintering birds, in northeastern North America—also comes into question. The paper's findings support, as the authors write, "the existence of a natural distinction between late migrants and half-hardy wintering species in northeastern North America," a murky topic that has received little scrutiny in scientific papers but that is often taken for granted by birders in the field. We think of Northern Cardinal, for instance, as a largely sedentary species in winter, but the view from Block Island (which, like many offshore islands, has a clear advantage in documenting influxes) suggests that cardinals are prone to facultative migration in some numbers after an earlier late-autumn push. As someone who lives at the tip of the long Delmarva Peninsula, I'll be watching cardinals more carefully now.

## Debts of thanks

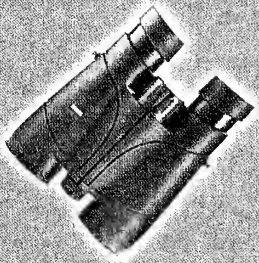
At the end of the Volume, the A.B.A. would like to express its deepest appreciation to the people who have spent many hours reviewing manuscripts over the past year. Our thanks to J. Van Remsen, P. A. Buckley, Guy McCaskie, Michael A. Patten, Kimball Garrett, Douglas B. McNair, Jon L. Dunn, Erik Hirschfeld, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Alvaro Jaramillo, W. Ross Silcock, and Marshall J. Iliff for their hard work on seven manuscripts this year. This issue was co-edited in part with the previous Editor, Michael A. Patten, and with Associate Editor Paul E. Lehman, both of whom have our especial thanks.

—Edward S. (Ned) Brinkley, Editor

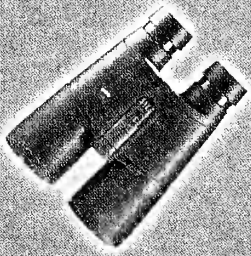
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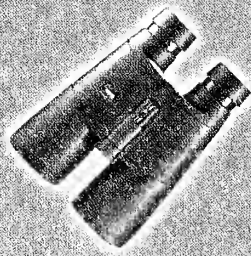
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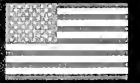
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# The Budgerigar in Florida:

## *Rise and Fall of an Exotic Psittacid*



A typical Florida suburban scene, with a Budgerigar, native to Australia, perched in an Oleander (*Nerium oleander*), a plant native to the Mediterranean. This image was taken at one of the species's last strongholds in Florida, at Hernando Beach, Hernando County, on 5 April 2000. Photograph by Peter S. Weber.

### Bill Pranty

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### Abstract

Since the 1950s, a population of Budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) has been present along the Gulf coast of central Florida, established primarily from intentional releases of thousands of individuals. By the late 1970s, the number of Budgerigars in the region may have exceeded 20,000, and breeding was widespread in specially-built nest boxes. But within a few years, the population "crashed" and has not recovered. Since 1994, fewer than 100 Budgerigars have been reported on Christmas Bird Counts, and probably no more than 150-200 remain in Florida. Eventual extirpation seems likely. The causes of the population decline are unknown, but nesting competition with House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) may have been the primary influence. The sizes of Budgerigar populations formerly present along the Atlantic coast of Florida seem to have been exaggerated.

### Introduction

Budgerigars (*Melopsittacus undulatus*) are small psittacids native to open habitats of the Australian interior (Forshaw 1977, Long 1981, del Hoyo et al. 1997, A.O.U. 1998, Juniper and Parr 1998). They are believed to be the most popular cagebird in the world, and have been bred in captivity in Europe since the 1840s (Forshaw 1977). Between 1925 and 1940, 240,000 Budgerigars were brought into the United States, with most of these "consigned" to California and Florida (Cooke and Knappen 1941). It is not clear whether these were wild-caught individuals imported from Australia, or were of captive-bred stock obtained from Europe. In the early 1960s, a "massive cottage industry" of private aviculturists producing Budgerigars had developed in the United States (Clubb 1992). Many of these aviculturists were located in west-central Florida, where the sub-tropical climate allowed large numbers of Budgerigars to be raised in screened porches and other outdoor enclosures. Not surprisingly, some Budgerigars escaped accidentally, while many others were released deliberately. Wholesale releases began in the 1950s (Lipp 1963, Edscorn 1977) and continued for an unknown number of years. Up to 3000 Budgerigars at a time reported-

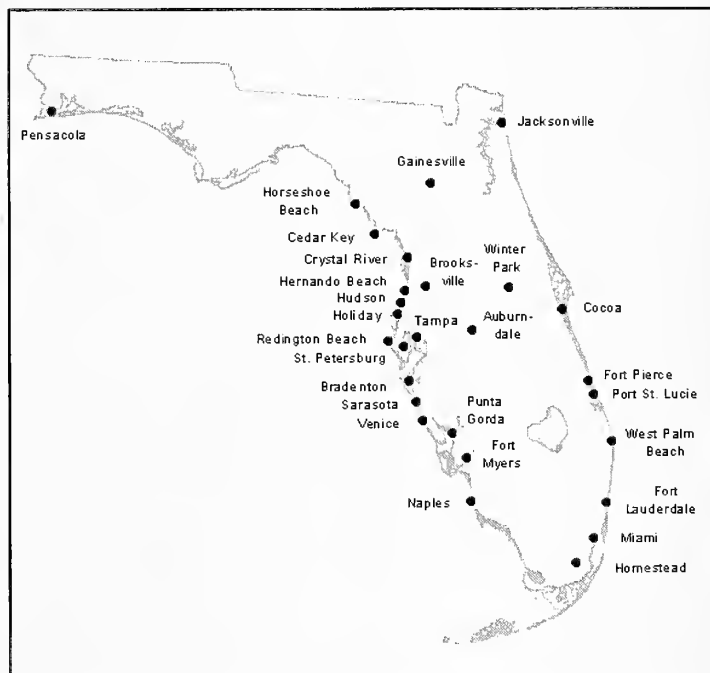


Figure 1. Map of Florida, showing most locales mentioned in the text that contain or contained Budgerigars. Of those sites not mapped, Shired Island is just east of Horseshoe Beach, Spring Hill is just east of Hernando Beach, New Port Richey is just north of Holiday, and Port Charlotte is just northwest of Punta Gorda. Zellwood is 35 km northwest of Winter Park. At their maximum established range in the late 1970s, Budgerigars were found in coastal areas from Hudson to Venice. They were not found in any substantial numbers more than 10 km inland, and in most areas were within 5 km of the Gulf of Mexico. Local escapees or releases were found widely elsewhere in Florida, and, except at Fort Lauderdale, these populations died out quickly. Today, Budgerigars are limited to Hernando Beach, and from Hudson to Holiday, and all individuals occur within 5 km of the Gulf coast.



ly were released (Shapiro 1979, Wenner and Hirth 1984), especially into the St. Petersburg area (Pinellas County), where they were considered a tourist attraction (Lipp 1963, Owre 1973, Shapiro 1979)! Once liberated, Budgerigars bred initially in natural and artificial cavities, but as the population grew, so did its popularity. Eventually, human residents (primarily retirees) provided Budgerigars with wooden nest boxes, which were used readily and nearly exclusively.

By the early 1970s, Budgerigars ranged along the Gulf coast of Florida from Hudson (Pasco County) to Venice (Sarasota County), a distance of 160 km (Fig. 1). Established populations were limited to residential developments directly along the coast (Shapiro 1979, 1980, Stevenson and Anderson 1994, pers. obs.) to five to 10 km inland (pers. obs.). Between the 1974-1975 and 1984-1985 Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.) periods, over 1000 Budgerigars were reported annually in the region, peaking at 6895 individuals during the 1977-1978 count period (Table 1). But by the early 1980s, numbers of Budgerigars had declined drastically, and fewer than 100 individuals have been reported on C.B.C.s since the 1994-1995 count period (Table 1, Fig. 2). Furthermore, their range has contracted to about 30 km of coastline between Hernando Beach (Hernando County) and Holiday (Pasco County). Except for frequent reports of usually single individuals that probably represent recent escapees, Budgerigars now are extirpated from all other areas in Florida.

Despite their popularity, little is known about Budgerigars outside of captivity. Only a single, short-term study of their distribution and breeding biology has been undertaken in Florida (Shapiro 1979, 1980, 1981, Wenner and Hirth 1984). Here, C.B.C. and other data are analyzed to reassess the range and numbers of Budgerigars in the state, and to estimate the size of the population at its peak. Some potential causes for the severe reduction of the population also are discussed.

## Methods

Prior to the 1960s, published information on Budgerigars in Florida was limited to a paper by Cooke and Knappen (1941), who mentioned solely that "[a] number" of individuals had been observed. Since the early 1960s, the primary sources of Budgerigar occurrence are C.B.C. data, a study conducted in 1978 (Shapiro 1979, 1980, 1981, Wenner and Hirth 1984), the Florida Breeding Bird Atlas Project, 1986-1991 (F. B. B. A.; Kale et al. 1992), and observations published in standard ornithological sources.

I searched all published Florida C.B.C.s since December 1960 for Budgerigar reports. In the online C.B.C. database (version 5.09) posted to the Audubon website <<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>>, I discovered several errors, most seriously the transposition of the totals of 83 and 0 Budgerigars on the 1971 New Port Richey and Orlando C.B.C.s, respectively. Therefore, I copied all C.B.C. data from *Audubon Field Notes*, *American Birds*, *Field Notes*, and *Florida Field Naturalist* (1985 North Pinellas C.B.C.; Woolfenden et al. 1994). Except for the 1998 West Pasco C.B.C., on which 13 Budgerigars were found, rather than the "3" that were listed in *American Birds* (pers. obs.), all data were copied as published. I question the "705" Budgerigars reported on the 1974 Sarasota C.B.C., which is more than five times greater than the next-highest total for that C.B.C. (Table 1). Results of the 1976 New Port Richey C.B.C. were not published in *American Birds* and now are lost, and this affects Fig. 2. The New Port Richey C.B.C. was renamed in 1989 as the "West Pasco (New Port Richey)" C.B.C.; to avoid confusion, the name West Pasco C.B.C. will be used exclusively in this paper. C.B.C. compilers in Florida routinely suppress reports of certain exotics (e.g., Muscovy Duck, *Cairina moschata*; pers. obs.), but I have presumed that all Budgerigars seen on C.B.C.s were reported to count compilers and were published.

For her Master's degree, Anne Shapiro (Wenner) studied the

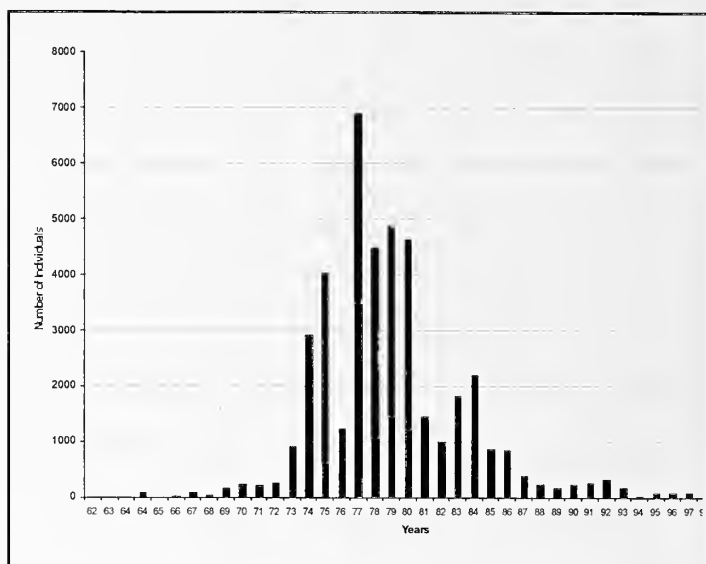


Figure 2. Budgerigars on Florida Christmas Bird Counts, 1962-2000. These data have not been adjusted by party hour or for any other factor. Results from the 1976 West Pasco C.B.C. were not published and now are lost. Sources: all Florida C.B.C.s published since 1961 in *American Birds*, *Audubon Field Notes*, *Field Notes*, and *Florida Field Naturalist*.

Budgerigar population at Holiday and New Port Richey for nine months in 1978. Two elements of her thesis were a mail survey and newsletter request to determine the range of Budgerigars in Florida, and a study of breeding individuals at Holiday. Shapiro never published her demography data outside of her thesis (Shapiro 1979), but her distribution data were published in a popular article (Shapiro 1980) and a formal paper (Wenner and Hirth 1984); a photo "essay" also was published (Shapiro 1981). In most cases, Shapiro used vague terms such as "common" and "abundant" when describing sizes of Budgerigar populations, rather than providing specific counts or estimates, and she did not reference C.B.C. data. Shapiro received information on the location and numbers of Budgerigars from more than 50 observers, and the sizes of some populations reported to her, especially those along the Atlantic coast, seem to have been exaggerated.

Other references searched for observations of Budgerigars were *Audubon Field Notes* and its successors through *North American Birds* (greatly assisted by Loftin et al. 1991), *Florida Field Naturalist*, the database of the unpublished Florida Breeding Bird Atlas Project (Kale et al. 1992), and two recent state bird books (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, Stevenson and Anderson 1994). Several other books and book chapters published in the past 15 years contain information on Budgerigars in Florida, but these simply referenced (and occasionally misinterpreted) data published in Wenner and Hirth (1984). Recent observations of Budgerigars also were taken from three Internet lists: "Birdbrains" <<http://birdbrains.listbot.com>> (obsolete in July 2001), BIRDCHAT <[birdchat@listserv.arizona.edu](mailto:birdchat@listserv.arizona.edu)>, and "FLORIDABIRDS-L" <[floridabirds-l@lists.ufl.edu](mailto:floridabirds-l@lists.ufl.edu)>. A request for information posted to the Parrot Data E-mail Club <[parrotdata@post4.tele.dk](mailto:parrotdata@post4.tele.dk)> maintained by Peter Them was forwarded to the Birding-Aus list <<http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/birding-aus>>, which brought in several responses about Budgerigars in Australia. Participants of a survey of Monk Parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*) throughout Peninsular Florida and the Keys in 1999-2000 (Pranty in prep.) were asked to record all other psittacids seen, and the lack of Budgerigar observations was taken into account here.

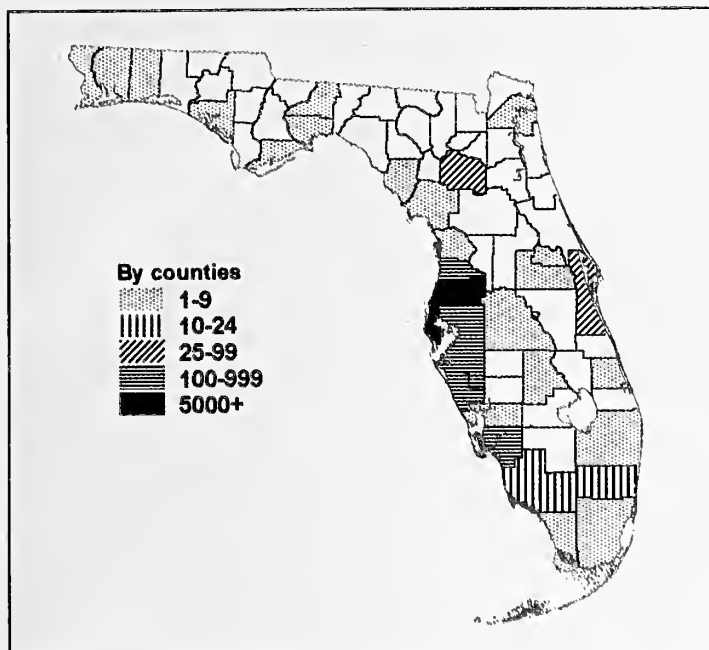


Figure 3. Distribution of Budgerigars in Florida, 1962-2001. Each of the 31 counties in which Budgerigars have been reported to occur are shaded according to the highest single count known, mostly obtained from C.B.C.s. For 20 (64%) of these counties, this total is less than 10 individuals. Four other counties each contained fewer than 100 birds. In only seven counties—all along the central Gulf coast, and with six of these adjacent—were more than 100 Budgerigars reported to occur. Pasco and Pinellas each contained more than 5000 Budgerigars; Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) referred to these counties as the species's "heartland." For counties along the southern Atlantic coast, I have used C.B.C. data to determine the highest totals, rather than the apparent anecdotal evidence published by Shapiro (1979, 1980) and Wenner and Hirth (1984).

**Distribution**

Cooke and Knappen (1941) were the first to mention Budgerigars in Florida, but they presented no data for locations, numbers of individuals, or years of occurrence. Since the 1960s, Budgerigars have been reported in 31 of the state's 67 counties (Fig. 3), but it was only along the Gulf coast of central Florida that populations exceeded 50 individuals and persisted for more than 15 years. Because the various populations have different histories, they are discussed separately.

**Peninsular Gulf Coast**

Budgerigars were first reported breeding at Redington Beach and elsewhere in Pinellas County in the 1950s (Lipp 1963, Stevenson 1963, Edscorn 1977, Robertson and Woolfenden 1992), and were considered locally common from Port Richey to Holiday (Pasco County) by 1963 (Dill 1981). They were first listed on a C.B.C. at St. Petersburg in December 1962, when six were reported, but the compiler noted that there were "hundreds now feral, nesting in tree cavities" (Woolfenden 1963). Shapiro (1979) suggested that Budgerigars may have first appeared at Fort Myers (Lee County) in the mid-1950s. Other Florida cities later colonized, through either population expansion or from independent releases, were Bradenton (Manatee County) by 1966, Sarasota and Venice (Sarasota County) by 1973, Tampa (Hillsborough County) in 1975, Bayonet Point/Hudson (Pasco County) by 1977, and Hernando Beach by 1991 (Table 1, pers. obs.).

C.B.C. data indicate that Budgerigars occurred regularly south to Venice, but during the 1970s, individuals were reported south of this locale, at Port

Charlotte and Punta Gorda (Charlotte County; Edscorn 1977), Fort Myers and Sanibel Island (Lee County; Shapiro 1979, Wenner and Hirth 1984), and Naples (Collier County; Shapiro 1979, Wenner and Hirth 1984). However, none of these populations persisted into the 1980s. Shapiro (1979) stated that the Budgerigars seen at Fort Myers were captive individuals and free to "come and go at will" from open aviaries, and she made only vague reference to their breeding outside of captivity at that locale. Budgerigars were reported on only four Fort Myers C.B.C.s between 1973 and 1982, with the highest total of 37 individuals in December 1979 (Table 1). They were never reported on the Naples C.B.C., the Peace River C.B.C. (which includes all of Punta Gorda and some of Port Charlotte), or the Sanibel-Captiva C.B.C. (Table 1). Based on these data, it seems that Venice marked the southern limit of the Budgerigar's established range along the Gulf coast.

A few Budgerigars were reported north of Hudson, which in the 1960s and 1970s marked the northern limit of their established range. There are reports of one and two Budgerigars at Bayport (Hernando County) in the 1960s (Stevenson 1964, Pantelidis and Stevenson 1969), and four or fewer individuals at Shired Island and Horseshoe Beach (Dixie County; Ogden 1973, Robertson and Woolfenden 1992) and Cedar Key (Levy County; Edscorn 1976, Atherton and Atherton 1982, Table 1) in the 1970s and early 1980s. The F.B.B.A. documented "possible" breeding—presumably a single individual seen once—at Crystal River (Citrus County) in 1990 (Kale et al. 1992). With such low numbers and no evidence of population persistence,

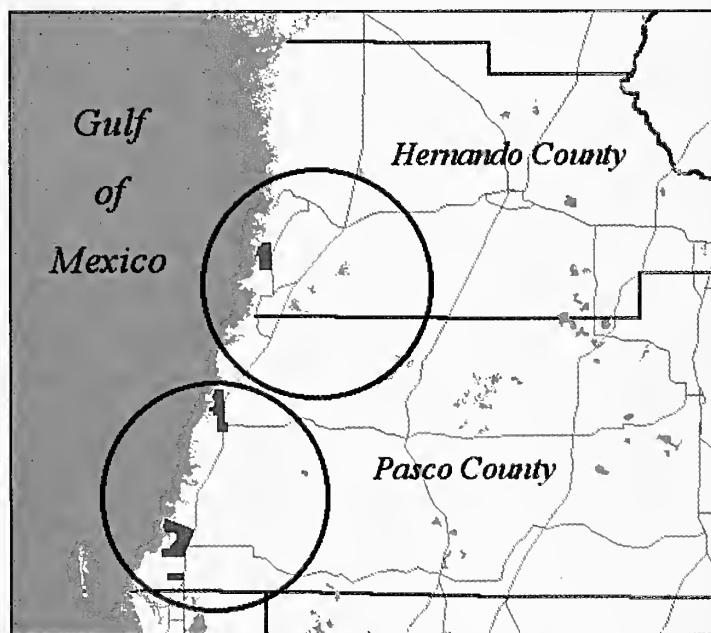


Figure 4. Current range (red areas) of the Budgerigar in Florida. Since the mid-1990s, Budgerigars have been restricted to small isolated "colonies" on or near the Gulf of Mexico in Hernando and Pasco counties. Circles for the Aripeka-Bayport (north) and West Pasco (south) C.B.C.s are shown; all known Budgerigars remaining in Florida occur within these two C.B.C. circles.

The two most reliable locations for Budgerigars are Hernando Beach and Bayonet Point. Hernando Beach is located along the Hernando County coast between County Roads 550 and 595. Budgerigars may be seen anywhere west of Shoal Line Boulevard between Eagle Nest Drive and Companero Entra, but recently they have been found most reliably along Gulfwinds Circle, accessed by heading west on Gulfview Drive and turning south at the "T," then angling back north. At Bayonet Point in Pasco County, Budgerigars roost with icterids and House Sparrows in trees at the junction of U.S. Highway 19 and State Road 52.



it seems likely that these Budgerigars were local escapees rather than individuals from established populations farther south. Shapiro (1979, 1980) and Wenner and Hirth (1984) reported "flocks" of Budgerigars at Spring Hill (Hernando County) apparently in the 1970s, and the F.B.B.A. documented "probable" and "confirmed" breeding at two sites there in 1988, including one site at least 20 km inland. However, the Spring Hill population never was again mentioned in print.

By the early 1980s, a decline in the range and numbers of Budgerigars along the Gulf coast was evident (Table 1, Fig. 2). During the F.B.B.A. (1986-1991), Budgerigars were "confirmed" to breed in the region in only Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties (Kale et al. 1992). They were not found at all by F.B.B.A. surveyors in Manatee County, although they persisted at Bradenton through December 1991 (Table 1). Budgerigars had colonized Hernando Beach by 1991 (Table 1), and these individuals also had been overlooked by F.B.B.A. surveyors.

Budgerigars were extirpated from Florida by the mid-1990s, except for coastal portions of Hernando and Pasco counties, where small numbers have persisted (Table 1, Fig. 4). A "colony" is present at Hernando Beach, and other individuals occur spottily from Hudson to Holiday. Both areas of current distribution are within C.B.C. circles, and C.B.C. data have been used to monitor these remnant populations. Since its inception in 1991, the Aripeka-Bayport C.B.C. has recorded a mean of 45 Budgerigars (range 8-137) at Hernando Beach, with counts of 30, 39, and 53 individuals in 1998, 1999, and 2000 respectively (Table 1). The Hernando Beach habitat occupied recently is less than 200 ha (pers. obs., B. Hansen pers. comm.). On the West Pasco C.B.C. since December 1990, a mean of 43 Budgerigars (range 11-60) has been seen, with counts of 13, 53, and 33 birds in 1998, 1999, and 2000 respectively (Table 1). Perhaps most of the Budgerigars remaining in Pasco County roost at Bayonet Point; recent counts from there include 52 on 5 December 1999 (K. Tracey *in Pranty* 2000), 92 on the fall 2000 North American Migration Count (N.A.M.C.) 16 September 2000 (K. Tracey pers. comm.), 25 on the C.B.C. 29 December 2000 (pers. obs.), and 45 on the fall 2001 N.A.M.C. 15 September 2001 (K. Tracey pers. comm.). Based on C.B.C. data and other recent observations, it seems that somewhat more than 100 Budgerigars remain in western Pasco County, and 50 or more exist in southwestern Hernando County. Outside these two counties, presumably escaped Budgerigars have been reported since 1999 in Hillsborough, Manatee, and Pinellas counties (J. Fisher, L. Snyder, M. Wilkinson *in litt.*, A. and R. Paul pers. comm.).

### Atlantic Coast

Cruikshank (1980) reported "scores" of Budgerigars "at scattered points" in Brevard County beginning in 1963, including one pair that apparently bred in an abandoned woodpecker cavity near Sharpes in 1968. Budgerigars were seen on five consecutive Cocoa C.B.C.s from 1971 to 1975, with the highest total of 11 in 1972 (Table 1). However, the Brevard individuals were not reported after 1975. There were reports that Budgerigars may have bred at Jacksonville (Duval County) in 1977 and previous years (Kale 1977), but these were never again mentioned (e.g., Jacksonville C.B.C.; Table 1), except for a single bird seen once in 1989 (Kale et al. 1992). Apparently from anecdotal information, Shapiro (1979) and Wenner and Hirth (1984) reported that Budgerigars were breeding at Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County) and Fort Lauderdale (Broward County), and that flocks were "common" from north of Fort Pierce south to West Palm Beach (Palm Beach County) and at Miami (Miami-Dade County, formerly Dade County). Shapiro (1980) called the Budgerigar "abundant" at Fort Pierce and Fort Lauderdale.

C.B.C. data offer a different view of the sizes of Budgerigar populations along the lower Atlantic coast. For instance, since the 1960s only *two*



Figure 5. A Budgerigar inspects a nest box at Hernando Beach, Hernando County, Florida, 5 April 2000. This paper suggests that competition with House Sparrows over such artificial cavities for nesting was a primary cause of the sharp decline of the Budgerigar in Florida. Photograph by Peter S. Weber.

Budgerigars have been found on Dade County C.B.C.s (singles in 1975 and 1994) and they have *never* been reported on the Fort Pierce C.B.C. or the West Palm Beach C.B.C. (Table 1). (Port St. Lucie mostly is outside the Fort Pierce C.B.C. circle). No subsequent reports of Budgerigars have been published for Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie, or West Palm Beach. Budgerigars were reported on 10 Fort Lauderdale C.B.C.s from 1973 to 1988 inclusive, with the highest total of 11 individuals in December 1977 (Table 1).

During the F.B.B.A. (1986-1991), Budgerigars were found along the Atlantic coast only in Miami-Dade and Duval counties, where "possible" breeding was documented at Jacksonville and four sites from Miami Beach to Homestead (Kale et al. 1992); the individuals that persisted at Fort Lauderdale to at least December 1988 (Table 1) had been overlooked. Subsequent to the F.B.B.A., only single Budgerigars have been reported along the Atlantic coast: in the Fort Lauderdale area, at Pembroke Pines (Broward County), and in the Miami area (Table 1, Pranty and Epps *in review*, J. Boyd *in litt.*); most of these individuals were seen only once. The seven or eight Broward County individuals seen since 1998 were blue or yellow morphs, which suggests strongly that they were escapees (Pranty and Epps *in review*). Given the low numbers of Budgerigars seen on a few C.B.C.s in the region 10-25 years ago (Table 1), it seems that the previous assessments of "common" or "abundant" Budgerigar populations along the Atlantic coast were exaggerated. Whether Budgerigars ever bred in southeastern Florida is uncertain, although persistent reports on the Fort Lauderdale C.B.C.s (Table 1) suggest that breeding perhaps did occur.

**Table 1. Numbers of Budgerigars listed on all published C.B.C.s in Florida**

YEAR	C.B.C.s	Totals	AB	BD	CK	CR	FM	GC	NA	NP	PR	SA	SC	SP	TA	VE	WP	CO	DC	FL	FP	JA	WB	BC	BK	GA	LK	LP	LW	OR	PE	
1962	1	6	nc	0	nc	nc	0	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	0	6	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	0	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	
1963	1	10	nc	0	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	10	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	0	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	
1964	1	100	nc	0	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	100	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	
1965	1	11	nc	0	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	11	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	nc	nc	0	
1966	2	32	nc	12	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	20	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	nc	nc	0	
1967	2	87	nc	7	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	80	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	nc	0	0	
1968	2	56	nc	28	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	nc	28	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	nc	0	0	
1969	2	184	nc	34	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	150	nc	nc	nc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1970	3	237	nc	175	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	50	nc	nc	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1971	4	214	nc	80	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	50	0	nc	83	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1972	4	269	nc	152	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	0	0	90	0	nc	16	11	0	0	nc	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1973	9	912	nc	371	nc	nc	2	nc	0	nc	nc	20	0	100	0	64	345	6	0	3	0	0	0	0	nc	0	1	nc	0	0	0	
1974	7	2910	nc	301	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	705	0	1800	0	18	81	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1975	8	4026	nc	470	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	nc	41	0	3000	cw	303	208	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1976	6	1254	nc	360	nc	nc	0	nc	0	25	nc	84	0	250	10	521	nc	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1977	7	6895	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	700	nc	24	0	5400	115	174	470	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	1	0	
1978	6	4478	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	nc	0	740	nc	13	0	3000	13	14	698	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1979	7	4878	nc	nc	3	nc	37	nc	0	525	nc	40	0	3800	65	0	408	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1980	8	4632	nc	nc	0	nc	9	nc	0	150	nc	24	0	3100	2	2	1341	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1981	9	1460	nc	nc	0	nc	0	nc	0	160	nc	104	0	900	16	23	253	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	cw	nc	0	0	0	
1982	9	1006	nc	3	0	nc	2	20	0	100	nc	2	0	750	4	28	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	
1983	11	1832	nc	12	0	nc	0	57	0	390	nc	36	0	570	40	104	600	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	nc	1	nc	0	
1984	9	2191	nc	49	0	nc	0	25	0	122	nc	121	0	1700	47	23	102	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	nc	0	
1985	6	884	nc	0	0	nc	0	4	0	100	nc	0	0	610	1	44	125	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	nc	0	
1986	8	862	nc	19	0	nc	0	0	0	170	nc	3	0	310	6	133	220	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0	nc	0	
1987	5	385	nc	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	135	5	52	190	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1988	9	241	nc	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	190	5	16	18	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	nc	0	
1989	4	167	nc	12	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	127	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1990	6	238	nc	0	0	0	0	4	0	16	0	0	0	135	0	22	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1991	7	255	39	1	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	0	0	100	2	7	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1992	5	329	137	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	70	0	20	52	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1993	4	177	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	0	0	13	0	0	60	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1994	5	23	8	0	0	0	0	cw	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1995	2	90	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1996	3	85	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	nc	0	0	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1997	2	85	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1998	2	43	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
1999	2	92	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	nc	0
2000	3	87	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	nc	0	
# Years			10	18	1	0	4	6	0	19	0	13	0	33	15	18	30	5	2	10	0	0	0	2	1	0	4	1	1	1	0	

Some counts on which Budgerigars were never reported are included if they are mentioned in the text, or are located in a county in which Budgerigars were observed. Twenty C.B.C. circles listed Budgerigars at least once, beginning with St. Petersburg in December 1962. C.B.C.s are arranged by region, beginning with the Peninsular Gulf coast, then the Atlantic coast, and concluding with all other regions combined. Sources: C.B.C. issues of *Audubon Field Notes*, *American Birds*, and *Field Notes*, and Woolfenden et al. (1994) for the 1985 North Pinellas C.B.C. Counts are abbreviated and include the county or counties in which they occur (in italics): AB=Aripeka-Bayport (*Hernando and Pasco*; all Budgerigars in *Hernando*), BC=Bay County (*Bay*), BD=Bradenton (*Manatee*), BK=Brooksville (*Hernando*), CK=Cedar Key (*Levy*), CO=Cocoa (*Brevard*), CR=Crystal River (*Citrus*), DC=Dade County (*Miami-Dade*), FL=Fort Lauderdale (*Broward*), FM=Fort Myers (*Lee*), FP=Fort Pierce (*St. Lucie*), GA=Gainesville (*Alachua*), GC=Gulf Coast Manatee County (*Manatee*), JA=Jacksonville (*Duval*), LK=Lakeland (*Polk*), LP=Lake Placid (*Highlands*), LW=Lake Wales (*Polk*), NA=Naples (*Collier*), NP=North Pinellas (*Pinellas*), OR=Orlando (*Orange*), PE=Pensacola (*Escambia and Santa Rosa*), PR=Peace River (*Charlotte*), SA=Sarasota (*Sarasota*), SC=Sanibel-Captiva (*Lee*), SP=St. Petersburg (*Pinellas*), TA=Tampa (*Hillsborough*), VE=Venice-Englewood (mostly *Sarasota* but some *Charlotte*), WB=West Palm Beach (*Palm Beach*), and WP=West Pasco (known as the New Port Richey C.B.C. until 1989; *Pasco*). A "0" (zero) indicates that no Budgerigars were seen; "nc" indicates that no count was published for that year. For birds reported during count week (cw), one individual is counted in the yearly totals. The report of "705" Budgerigars on the 1974 Sarasota C.B.C. is considered questionable here.

## Elsewhere in Florida

Away from the Peninsular coasts, Budgerigars have been observed widely in Florida, usually in very low numbers (Fig. 3), beginning in 1971 (Robertson 1972). Counties in which only one to four non-breeding individuals have been reported will not be discussed further. The largest number of Budgerigars found inland was at Gainesville (Alachua County), where "30 or more" were reported in the late 1970s (Shapiro 1979, Wenner and Hirth 1984). However, this population apparently disappeared quickly; Budgerigars were never listed on Gainesville C.B.C.s (Table 1), nor were they mentioned by Rowan and Manetz (1995). Rowan (in prep.) added only one other Alachua County occurrence: a single individual seen once in 1996. The "small colonies" of Budgerigars present at Winter Park (Orange County) presumably in the 1970s (Shapiro 1979, Wenner and Hirth 1984) also apparently vanished quickly; the Orlando C.B.C., which contained this area, listed only a single bird in 1977 (Table 1). The five individuals at Zellwood (Orange County) in 1972 (Ogden 1972) never were again mentioned. An anomalous report of 13 Budgerigars was listed on the 1983 Brooksville C.B.C. (Hernando County), the center of which is 32 km from the Gulf coast. This report, the highest inland C.B.C. total in Florida, and the only one for the Brooksville C.B.C. (Table 1), seems perhaps equally likely as referring to birds at Spring Hill (a small portion occurs within the circle), locally escaped or released individuals seen elsewhere, or even a data entry error. The F.B.B.A. "confirmed" Budgerigars breeding at Auburndale (Polk County) in 1987 (Kale et al. 1992), but high counts on nearby C.B.C.s at Lakeland and Lake Wales are one individual each (Table 1). Fewer than 20 Budgerigars have been found in Polk County since the 1960s (C. Geanangel in litt.). Perhaps no more than one pair of Budgerigars bred in a nest box at Pensacola (Escambia County) around 1991 (D. Ware in Stevenson and Anderson 1994, D. Ware in litt.); these were neither reported on Pensacola C.B.C.s (Table 1) nor mentioned by Duncan and Duncan (2000).

## Natural History

Despite their abundance in Australia and (formerly) Florida, little is known about the life history of Budgerigars outside of captivity. The Budgerigars in west-central Florida represent the only exotic population that has become established, even though individuals have been liberated in many regions of the world. From deliberate releases and accidental escapes, Budgerigars have been reported in Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Oman, Puerto Rico, the Society Islands, South Africa, Switzerland, Tasmania, the United Kingdom, and several U.S. states including California, Hawaii, and New York (Long 1981, A.O.U. 1998, Juniper and Parr 1998, e.g., Bannon et al. 2001).

**Demography.**—Shapiro's (1979) study of breeding Budgerigars at Holiday is the sole source of demography data for Florida. She monitored 31 nest boxes daily from 16 April to 15 December 1978, and added 22 boxes to the study in June to replace those abandoned by Budgerigars or usurped by House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*). Monitoring of seven boxes was discontinued at the request of property owners. Budgerigar pairs were believed to be monogamous and often defended nest boxes for "several" months before and after the breeding season. The first nesting attempt commenced in mid-March, and the last eggs were laid in mid-November. Nesting was initiated mostly in June and August. Eighty monitored pairs of Budgerigars produced 947 eggs in 168 clutches, including 46 eggs from the seven boxes later eliminated from the study. Of the 901 eggs with known fates, 384 (42%) failed to hatch, 142 (15%) hatched but the nestlings died before fledging, and 375 (41%) produced fledglings. Clutch size ranged from one egg to 12 eggs, with a mean of 5.8 eggs. Ninety-five (65%) of 145 clutches monitored through the nesting cycle

produced at least one fledgling. Causes of clutch failure included infertility, embryo death, lack of incubation, desertion, parental destruction, destruction of one clutch by a Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*), and destruction of several clutches by House Sparrows. Average time from egg laying to fledging for successful nests was 52.5 days, and the next clutch often was initiated up to 10 days before the final nestling of the previous brood had fledged. Twelve banded females monitored for the duration of the study produced between two and six clutches each, with a mean of 3.7 clutches. Most nestling mortality was attributed to starvation or illness, but some nestlings were "pecked to death;" it was not known whether these were killed by their parents, other Budgerigars, or other species. Only two instances of predation of adults or juveniles were observed: one by a house cat (*Felis domesticus*) and the other by a Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*).

Unrelated to Shapiro's study, a Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) captured a Budgerigar from a feeder at Bayonet Point ca. 1979 (pers. obs.), and another Sharp-shinned Hawk at Bayonet Point attacked a flock of 6 Budgerigars 15 Sep 2001 (K. Tracey in litt.). Since that time, Tracey (in litt.) has observed Merlins (*Falco columbarius*) attempt to capture Budgerigars on several occasions.

**Movements.**—In Australia, Budgerigars are well-known for their nomadic behavior, moving from site to site, often in large flocks, in response to changing environmental conditions (Forshaw 1977, Long 1981, del Hoyo et al. 1997, Juniper and Parr 1998). Several authors (Shapiro 1979, 1980, Wenner and Hirth 1984, Juniper and Parr 1998) have stated that the Budgerigars in Florida exhibited similar nomadic tendencies, but supporting data seem to be lacking. Indeed, the absence of large numbers of Budgerigars in Florida except along the immediate Gulf coast (e.g., Fig. 3) suggests that the low numbers seen elsewhere were local escapees, and may further suggest that populations along the central Gulf coast largely were sedentary. In sharp contrast to Budgerigars occupying often arid regions of Australia, their counterparts in suburban west-central Florida had essentially limitless, dependable, and year-round water and food resources at their disposal (Shapiro 1979, 1980, 1981, Wenner and Hirth 1984). Combined with abundant nesting sites provided nearby (often in the same yards), dozens of bird feeders and bird baths present in residential neighborhoods may have eliminated the need for Budgerigars in Florida to travel widely in search of food and water. Nevertheless, limited movements (ca. 5 km) were known to occur during the winter, as some birds left breeding areas to join communal roosts nearby (Shapiro 1979).

**Food.**—In Australia, Budgerigars feed primarily on grass seeds, with 39 species identified in one study (del Hoyo et al. 1997); commercial grain crops occasionally are depredated (del Hoyo et al. 1997, Juniper and Parr 1998). Feeding habits of Budgerigars in Florida have never been studied, but observations suggest that commercial bird seed is their primary food (Shapiro 1979, 1980, Wenner and Hirth 1984). Stevenson and Anderson (1994) added "weed and grass seeds" taken from "upper beaches and sandy lots," and thought that sown lawn grass seeds probably were eaten. Wenner and Hirth (1984) noted that Budgerigars fed on seeds of bahiagrass (*Paspalum*), but these were "rare events."

## Population Size

Shapiro (1979, 1980) and Wenner and Hirth (1984) monitored a Budgerigar roost in a residential development at Holiday from April through December 1978. They estimated that 6000 to 8000 birds used this roost "consistently" during that period, which may strengthen the hypothesis that Budgerigars in Florida mostly were sedentary. Shapiro's estimate of up to 8000 Budgerigars at the Holiday roost is the largest total reported in Florida, surpassing even all multi-party C.B.C. totals (Table

1). The Holiday roost, which apparently no longer is active, was within the West Pasco C.B.C. circle, in which only 698 Budgerigars were found in December 1978 (Table 1)—no more than 11% of the numbers Shapiro estimated from the Holiday roost! Despite this apparently severe undercount, C.B.C. data offer the only means of determining the size of the overall Budgerigar population in Florida. To the figure of up to 8000 Budgerigars found within the West Pasco C.B.C. circle are added high counts from other regional C.B.C.s. Maximum counts for the two Pinellas County C.B.C.s (North Pinellas and St. Petersburg) were 740 and 5400, respectively. The highest count from the Tampa C.B.C. was 115 individuals, while Manatee County C.B.C.s (Bradenton and Gulf Circle Manatee County) peaked at 470 and 57 Budgerigars, respectively. If the report of “705” Budgerigars on the 1974 Sarasota C.B.C. is discounted, then Sarasota County C.B.C.s (Sarasota and Venice-Englewood) contained up to 121 and 521 individuals, respectively. These totals add up to nearly 15,500 Budgerigars within eight coastal C.B.C. circles in a five-county area (Table 1). High totals on these C.B.C.s were obtained between 1975 and 1984, with most occurring during the 1976-1977 and 1978-1979 count periods. The highest cumulative C.B.C. total (6895 individuals) was obtained during the 1977-1978 count period (Table 1).

Nearly all areas along the central Gulf coast of Florida occupied by Budgerigars were within C.B.C. circles, except for a substantial portion of mid-Pinellas County. This area, especially barrier island communities between Clearwater Beach and Redington Beach, contained many Budgerigars that never were counted on C.B.C.s. Lipp (1963) claimed that “thousands” of Budgerigars were present in one mobile home development at Redington Beach. While this estimate likely is an exaggeration, the presence of large numbers of Budgerigars on the barrier islands have been confirmed by others (Dill 1981, L. Atherton in litt., W. Biggs pers. comm.). When these individuals are added to the nearly 15,500 Budgerigars accounted for within C.B.C. circles, and further considering that large numbers may have been overlooked during C.B.C.s (e.g., see above), it seems reasonable to conclude that 20,000 or more Budgerigars may have occupied the central Gulf coast of Florida at the height of their abundance in the late 1970s.

Currently, Budgerigars are restricted to small portions of Hernando and Pasco counties (Fig. 4), and cumulative totals on C.B.C.s have numbered fewer than 100 individuals since the 1994-1995 count period (Table 1). All habitat at Hernando Beach is surveyed on the Aripeka-Bayport C.B.C., and it is thought that nearly all Budgerigars are counted (pers. obs.). A few small “colonies” may be overlooked on West Pasco C.B.C.s because of their more extensive range within that count circle; the non-C.B.C. total of 92 Budgerigars on the fall 2000 N.A.M.C. was mentioned previously. Probably no more than 150-200 Budgerigars remain in Hernando and Pasco counties, a figure that represents a greater than 99% decline in their rangewide numbers since the late 1970s. The extirpation of Budgerigars from Pinellas County is especially noteworthy because several thousand individuals occurred there previously (Table 1). Populations in Pasco County, while still extant, have declined severely in the past 15 to 20 years. Curiously, the number of Budgerigars reported on Florida C.B.C.s has remained relatively stable since the 1995-1996 count period, with a mean of 80 individuals (range 43-92; Table 1, Fig. 2). Nevertheless, the eventual extirpation of Budgerigars from Florida seems likely.

### Population Fluctuation

C.B.C. data show a huge population increase during the mid-1970s, and a similarly dramatic decline through the 1980s (Fig. 2). Determining the causes of these fluctuations probably is impossible because the population was not under study during these periods, and published data (i.e., those

on C.B.C.s) are limited to the non-breeding season. Cumulative totals for all C.B.C.s increased more than 1000% in two years, rising from 269 birds during 1972-1973 to 2910 individuals during 1974-1975 (Table 1). Most of this increase occurred at St. Petersburg, where numbers exploded from 90 to 1800 birds (Table 1). This huge increase over a short period suggests that releases of large numbers of Budgerigars may have continued into the mid-1970s.

Perhaps even less certain than the causes of the population increase are the causes of its decline. Cumulative totals on C.B.C.s plummeted from 6895 Budgerigars during 1977-1978 to 385 birds ten years later (Table 1, Fig. 2). Potential causes of this decline include severely cold weather, nest box usurpation by House Sparrows, nest cavity usurpation by European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*), a reduction in the number of nest boxes provided, disease or epizootic (Hoffman 1995), a “boom-and-bust” cycle characteristic of populations of several other exotic birds, and perhaps several other “unaccountable” factors (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992). C.B.C. data show that Budgerigar populations built up steadily through the late 1960s and early 1970s, peaked in the late 1970s, then rapidly declined through the 1980s to (in most cases) extirpation by the early or mid-1990s (Table 1, Fig. 2). Every C.B.C. circle active during that period shows this trend, which suggests that the population decline was rangewide and synchronous. The following section discusses five potential causes of the Budgerigar’s decline in Florida.

**Winter freezes.**—A popular theory of the Budgerigar’s disappearance from most of its Florida range relates to the freezes that affected the central Peninsula during the period of the population decline. Between 1970 and 1999, four “extremely severe freezes” were recorded in the region: in January 1977, December 1983, January 1985, and December 1989 (Henry et al. 1994, R. Paul pers. comm.). Temperatures at Tampa dropped as low as  $-4^{\circ}$  C during December 1989 (Henry et al. 1994). However, C.B.C. data show no Budgerigar declines in the years following three of these freezes; in fact, the highest cumulative C.B.C. total was obtained 11-12 months after the January 1977 freeze (Table 1, Fig. 2). Only following the January 1985 freeze do subsequent C.B.C. totals reflect a noticeable decline in Budgerigar numbers (Fig. 2). But the apparent lack of effects of the three other freezes, coupled with the downward trend already obvious in the population by the mid-1980s (Fig. 2), suggests that any link between the January 1985 freeze and declining Budgerigar numbers is only a coincidence.

Several other points seem to rule out freezing temperatures as a cause of the Budgerigar’s decline. The first is that cold temperatures rarely cause direct mortality of birds; a lack of food—often caused by extreme weather events (e.g., sudden freezes or heavy snow cover)—is more often the culprit. Second, Budgerigars routinely experience near-freezing or freezing temperatures at night in Australia (R. Jack, L. Joseph, A. Burton, A. Overs in litt.), so they can tolerate cold temperatures to some degree. Third, given their high rate of reproduction in Florida (Shapiro 1979, 1980), it seems likely that the Budgerigar population would have rebounded in the 1990s following the freeze in December 1989. A similar weather-related cyclic pattern is shown by Carolina Wrens (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) in the northern limits of their range (Haggerty 1995). And fourth, all Budgerigars remaining in Florida are found in the two northernmost counties of their previous range, where temperatures are a few degrees lower than areas to the south (e.g., Hudson vs. Sarasota areas; Henry et al. 1994). If freezing temperatures caused the decline of Budgerigars, then one might have expected the northernmost population to have disappeared first, when in fact, it is the only one that has persisted.

**Cavity competition.**—Budgerigars in Florida have nested in natural and artificial cavities such as snags (Woolfenden 1963, Shapiro 1979,



1981, Cruickshank 1980, L. Atherton in litt., W. Biggs pers. comm.), davits (cranes used to lower and raise boats; Shapiro 1979, 1981, D. Freeman in litt., M. Wilkinson in litt.), street lamps (Shapiro 1979, 1981), and axils of Cabbage Palms (*Sabal palmetto*; G.E. Woolfenden in Stevenson 1963), but the majority of the population used custom-built "Budgie boxes." The small cavity entrance of these boxes kept out European Starlings, but House Sparrows could enter easily (cf. Fig. 5). Wenner and Hirth (1984) noted that Budgerigars at Holiday were "heavily dependent" on nest boxes, and that House Sparrows were their only competitor for this resource. Shapiro (1979) observed "many instances" when House Sparrows entered nest boxes occupied by Budgerigars, punctured and removed the eggs, and usurped the box. House Sparrows continue to compete with Budgerigars over nest boxes, and some residents at Holiday have reported local extirpations of Budgerigars due to House Sparrows as recently as 1999 (fide K. Tracey). The percentage of Budgerigars that bred in natural cavities in Florida is unknown, but probably it was a small fraction of those that nested in boxes. Budgerigars that nested in natural cavities apparently could not compete successfully with European Starlings (L. Atherton in litt., W. Biggs pers. comm.), which increased as a breeding species in Florida between 1969 and 1983 (Cox 1987). All published observations of Budgerigars nesting in natural cavities were in the 1960s and 1970s.

**Reduction of nest boxes.**—Probably every breeding population of Budgerigars in Florida was sustained by human residents who derived great satisfaction in having the birds nest and feed in their yards (Shapiro 1979, 1980, Wenner and Hirth 1984). Many residents provided multiple "apartment" nest boxes where a dozen or more pairs could breed simultaneously (photographs in Shapiro 1981). At least one Budgerigar population, at Madeira Beach on the barrier island in mid-Pinellas County, was impacted by a reduction in the number of residents who provided nest boxes. Redevelopment of this area from a retirement community to tourist-oriented motels and condominiums drove away the elderly residents who lived there, and this caused extirpation of the local Budgerigar population (L. Atherton in litt.). At Holiday and New Port Richey today, few yards still contain Budgerigar nest boxes (pers. obs.), undoubtedly because the birds largely have vanished from those areas.

**Disease or epizootic.**—Price (1980 in Friend et al. 2001) claimed that, "...parasites affect the life and death of practically every other organism." Nolan et al. (1998) estimated that *tens of millions* (emphasis added) of House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) were killed in the eastern United States by an outbreak of mycoplasmal conjunctivitis between 1994 and 1996. Friend et al. (2001) summarized 31 examples of diseases causing mortality of birds and other wildlife around the world. Budgerigars are known vectors of numerous diseases such as chlamydiosis ("parrot fever"), salmonellosis, and Newcastle disease (references in Shapiro 1979). In Florida, Budgerigars roosted in large flocks, often with other species such as Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*), American Robins (*Turdus migratorius*), European Starlings, and icterids (Shapiro 1979, 1981, Dill 1981, Wenner and Hirth 1984, pers. obs.), so the potential for widespread transmission of diseases or parasites was great. Hoffman (1995) believed that disease played a role in the Budgerigar's decline in Florida, but there seems to be no direct evidence to support this theory. One might have expected that numbers of "sick" or dead Budgerigars would have been noticed by the human residents in whose neighborhoods the birds roosted, bred, and fed. For example, a die-off of 100 Eurasian Collared-Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*) at St. Petersburg in June 2001, attributed to a pathogen, was publicized in the press (e.g., Hollingsworth 2001). No similar report of Budgerigar deaths in Florida is known to have been published (e.g., Stevenson and Anderson 1994).

**"Boom and bust."**—Populations of several exotic birds in North America have shown a rapid increase followed by a decline to, in some cases, extirpation. In southeastern Florida, populations of the Canary-winged [now White-winged] Parakeet (*Brotogeris versicolurus*) and Spot-breasted Oriole (*Icterus pectoralis*) declined in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, Smith and Smith 1993, Brightsmith 1999), which corresponds with the period of the Budgerigar's decline in west-central Florida. The decline of the oriole was attributed to freeze-related damage to fruiting plants on which the orioles fed (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992), but no clear cause was evident for the decline of White-winged Parakeets (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, Smith and Smith 1993, Brightsmith 1999). Garrett (1993) noted a similar decline of White-winged Parakeets in southern California during the same period. Crested Mynas (*Acridotheres cristatellus*) at Vancouver, British Columbia declined from many thousands of individuals in the 1920s and 1930s to fewer than 100 by the mid-1990s (Johnson and Campbell 1995). The causes of the myna's decline were thought to be increased competition with European Starlings for nesting sites, loss of agricultural foraging areas from development, maladaptation to the local climate, and a reduction of nesting sites due to changes in building structures (Johnson and Campbell 1995).

## Conclusion

Because the size of the Budgerigar population has remained severely depressed since the freeze in December 1989, some factor other than weather probably caused the decline and continues to keep numbers low. This factor could be competition for resources. Availability of food was probably never a limiting factor for Budgerigars, as they and other granivorous species of heavily suburbanized areas (primarily doves, icterids, and House Sparrows) were provided with a virtually limitless supply of commercial bird seed at many feeders (Shapiro 1979, 1980, 1981, Wenner and Hirth 1984). Competition over nesting sites may have been the primary cause of the Budgerigar's decline and may be the factor that has prevented the population from recovering. Competition with House Sparrows over nest boxes is the only potential cause of the Budgerigar's population decline that is supported by Shapiro's (1979) demographic study.

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# The Changing Seasons

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**A**h, the summer birding doldrums. But wait—is summer birding really that uninteresting? The flow at our favorite migrant trap has typically slowed to a few drips by early June and is shut off completely by month's end, so we switch our interest to local breeding species. This is, after all, the primary breeding season for most temperate-zone birds and a time for us to study carefully what is occurring during this critical segment of their annual cycle. Summer also provides much-needed rest from hectic spring birding and exhausting Big Days. Myriad activities keep us active in the field each summer, including participation in state breeding bird atlas projects (New York and Maryland are each beginning work on their second comprehensive atlas projects, and several of the California counties are finishing their seconds), volunteering to help with local breeding bird studies, assisting with long-term monitoring projects (mainly for federal- and state-listed species), and perhaps running our favorite Breeding Bird Survey route(s). A few weeks later, and even sooner than that in some regions, we enjoy the onset of fall migration with the return of shorebirds (late June hardly seems like fall, but it is for many members of this group) and the post-breeding dispersal of other species, notably herons. In many parts of the West, mid-summer is proving to be a good time to look for stray eastern passerines, most probably holdovers from spring migration. And yes, there are also a few vagrants to pique our interest. All of this adds up to make summer a very exciting season, even though it lasts a mere two months!

The purpose of the "Changing Seasons" essay has been discussed in detail by several past authors, so I'll refrain from a thorough re-hashing of their points. *North American Birds* aims to provide a series of regional "snapshots" of what is occurring seasonally in North and Central America. The "Changing Seasons" provides a tight summary of the main themes of the regional "snapshots." This column is a place to discuss patterns that occur across regional boundaries and a place to highlight exceptional rarities and other notable records. It is also a venue to discuss patterns (e.g., range expansions) that cross both regions and seasons. What follows is a brief synopsis of some of the more interesting patterns that struck me as I read the regional reports. This summer also saw its share of notable rarities, many of them representing first state, provincial, or country nesting records, and I have highlighted these where appropriate. I encourage you to read the regional reports for additional details on these sightings, many of them detailed in Special Attention (S.A.) boxes. Enjoy!

## Weather patterns

Weather during the 2001 nesting season was unexceptional. Continentally, the season began with a series of moderate cold fronts marching across the eastern two-thirds of the continent, resulting in localized rainfall and snow and below normal temperatures. By mid-June, most of the continent was experiencing normal summer weather patterns, and this trend continued for the remainder of the period. Few tropical cyclones formed this summer, and the only storm to affect the United States' mainland was Tropical Storm *Allison*, which hit parts of the Southeast in early June and traveled up the Eastern Seaboard, inun-



This Mississippi Kite photographed at Amos, Abitibi was the first for Québec and possibly one of the northernmost in North America. The proliferation of this species well to the north of normal range is one of the more remarkable stories of recent summers. *Photograph by M. Lafleur.*

dating the Texas Gulf Coast and contributing tremendous amounts of precipitation as far north as New England.

On a finer scale, the regional weather patterns were more variable, although few were noted as being extreme. Dry conditions prevailed in the East (except for localized areas in the Southeast affected by *Allison*), and there were above-average temperatures in the Northeast and more normal temperatures in the Southeast. The mid-continent experienced cool, wet weather in early June, after which seasonably hot and dry conditions were widely reported. Farther west, the weather was even more variable. Parts of the northern Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin were exceptionally dry, while many areas of the Southwest received normal or above-normal rainfall. A major snowstorm in western Montana in early June (up to 15 inches locally) was unusual. Temperatures in this region were generally normal or slightly above normal. The Pacific Coast experienced wet conditions along the northern reaches, with drier conditions typifying the southern reaches; this entire region experienced normal or above-normal temperatures this summer. The Hawaiian Islands continued to experience long-term drought conditions, although above-average rainfall this summer might help reverse that trend. The only comment about weather patterns in Mexico was that it was very rainy throughout the period; weather conditions in the Central America and the West Indies regions were not noted.

Reports of breeding success from multiple regions indicated this was generally a good year, although the paucity of such reports makes any firm conclusions tentative at best. Broad-scale breeding failures were

reported only in western Alaska and resulted from a cooler-than-normal spring. Spotty drought conditions in the prairies—combined with greater-than-normal summer reports of certain species south of their breeding ranges—made me wonder if there were widespread nesting failures for American White Pelicans and Franklin's Gulls. As with any reporting system that relies on voluntary submissions, we generally hear about the extremes (species doing extremely well, or very poorly) and seldom hear reports when a species performance is closer to "normal." As noted by Bruce Mactavish in the Atlantic Provinces, "The lack of comments on the breeding success, positive or negative, indicates an average breeding season for birds." Knowledge of this reporting bias should temper our broader conclusions, although it often does not.

## BREEDING SPECIES

The nesting season is a time to pay particular attention to the primary reproductive period of birds. Our careful observations of breeding birds can help delineate range expansions (and contractions) and occasionally provide insight into general patterns in the population trends of some species. Collectively, this information is extremely useful.

## Range expansions

For a variety of reasons, many birds are expanding their known breeding ranges, some at lightning speed and some at a much slower pace. The mid-continent, a region of particular interest to me, provides an interesting example of increasing bird populations. There, several range expansions are underway, some because of true population increases, some because birders are simply looking harder, and some from a combination of these and possibly other factors. Biologists often suggest these changes are due to broad-scale habitat alterations, such as those brought about by conservation programs (e.g., the Conservation Reserve Program and land purchases by Ducks Unlimited, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and others). But northward expansions in breeding ranges are also thought to result from global warming (Thomas and Lennon 1999), although this pattern is correlative at best. Whatever the cause, it is clear that some species are indeed expanding.

One species that seems to be doing exceptionally well in the mid-continent is Mississippi Kite. I remember when, less than 10 years ago, even an isolated sight record in some parts of the upper Midwest was extraordinary. Now, they are regular migrants and local breeders there, and a hawkwatch in western Iowa recorded over 30 migrant kites last fall alone! Yikes! This northward expansion has originated from core breeding areas reaching as far north as central Kansas, central Missouri, and southern Illinois. Small breeding outposts persisted this summer in western Nebraska, central Iowa, and probably at a few as yet undiscovered sites in this region, while new expansion was noted in Illinois, Indiana, and western Missouri. Meanwhile, in the southeastern United States, they are also slowly expanding; in addition to the expected reports in the Central Southern Region, nesting occurred at multiple sites in North Carolina, while up to four individuals each were reported in Québec (first provincial record), at several sites along the Atlantic Coast north to Massachusetts, and in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Less expected were sightings in Nevada and far northern Arizona. As Mississippi Kites slowly reoccupy much of their former breeding range, we can only hope the same will eventually happen for Swallow-tailed Kites, whose populations have not shown increases in recent years.

Black Rail is one of the most secretive and little-known birds in North America, so news of large breeding populations is always welcome, especially in the interior, where there are but a few scattered known breeding locales. A late June nocturnal survey of selected wetlands along the

Arkansas River Valley in southeastern Colorado turned up an impressive 74 calling birds; just how many individuals breed in this area is unknown, but it could easily number in the low hundreds (read the Mountain West regional report for additional details). Away from coastal North Carolina, this may represent the species's largest known breeding population, and it is almost certainly the largest known inland population in North America. Farther north, intensive searches in western Nebraska turned up a single calling bird in a part of the state with several previous summer reports. At the southwestern limit of the breeding range, a small colony was rediscovered in Baja California, a population thought extirpated since 1928. Just how many breeding Black Rails remain undiscovered is tantalizing to ponder. In many parts of the interior, so little serious searching has been done that they could actually be locally common in the appropriate habitat. And given their secretive nature and late night calling habits, they can be surprisingly difficult to detect, even in areas they are known to occupy. Maybe it's time for birders in the mid-continent to burn the midnight oil and mount a serious effort to locate more Black Rails. Where will the next discovery occur?

Another species on the move, at least in mid-continent, is Sandhill Crane. The Greater Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*) has in the last two decades colonized southern Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota, northeastern Iowa, northern Illinois, and northwestern Pennsylvania, with a couple of isolated nesting records in south-central Nebraska (Sharpe et al. 2001). This pattern of expansion continued this summer with possible breeding noted in northwestern Ohio and southeastern Ontario; stragglers were in New Hampshire and Maine (is breeding possible in this region in the near future?). There is ample unoccupied nesting habitat in northwestern Iowa, western Minnesota, eastern South Dakota, and probably other parts of the upper Midwest; how long (note that the word "if" is not in this question) will it take for cranes to occupy these areas?

The continued expansion of Eurasian Collared-Doves certainly merits a brief discussion here (see Romagosa and McEneaney 2000 for more details). Despite the fact that they have been mentioned in many of the recent "Changing Seasons" essays, I couldn't resist the temptation to discuss them again. The explosion in their numbers has continued unabated, especially in the Great Plains, where they are now found in most of the larger towns north to western Nebraska, eastern Wyoming, and northeastern Colorado; observer effort is low farther north, but I suspect they are rapidly colonizing those areas as well. First state nesting records were reported in Iowa and Minnesota this summer. They are consolidating their range in the interior southeastern United States, with numerous records this summer from Mississippi, Arkansas, and Tennessee; an indication of their abundance in this region was the presence of a roost of 303 birds in Florida in mid-July, now a "typical" count. In the West, they continue to thrive in eastern New Mexico, and a pair was nesting in southern California (see Leukering 2001 for more details on their colonization of the southwestern U.S.). On the edge of their present range (this statement could well be obsolete by the time this is published) there were one to three birds each in Wisconsin, Idaho, Virginia, and Delaware. There is concern that Eurasian Collared-Doves could negatively impact native species, especially the Mourning Dove (Romagosa and McEneaney 2000). With this sobering thought, I'm pretty certain their rapid expansion is nothing to cheer about, unless they become supplemental accipiter food. Ted Floyd noted they "stormed into Nevada this summer" (first and second state records); too bad they probably won't storm out just as quickly.

White-winged Dove is another species that is showing signs of a breeding range expansion. It is occurring more frequently east of its regular breeding range, with possible nesting in Nebraska this summer,

close on the heels of a nest in northeastern Kansas last spring (L. Moore, pers. comm.); strays were widespread and were found as far afield as New Brunswick, Ontario, New York (Long Island), Pennsylvania, Delaware, North Carolina, Florida (several outside their normal range there), Alabama, and Manitoba. With the recent nesting record from North Carolina in 1998, it may not be too long before this species breeds elsewhere along the Atlantic Coast, although there is at least some debate as to the source of these birds (see Davis 1998).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher is a species that wanders widely and occasionally nests at locales far from its normal breeding range. This summer it was reported continent-wide in Newfoundland, Maine, Virginia (two), North Carolina (a nest), Georgia (another nest), Alabama (rare but increasing breeder with 1 new nesting locale this year), Ontario (2), Tennessee (two nesting pairs plus a single bird), Mississippi, Wisconsin (2, including one reported as an immature on the unlikely date of 30 June), Illinois (a nest), Kentucky, Nebraska, Montana, Colorado, Arizona, and California (two). Wow—that's a lot of lost flycatchers! The emerging pattern shows a slow breeding-range expansion in the mid-continent and Southeast, along with widespread vagrancy to the north of the breeding range and throughout the West (all non-breeders so far).

Clay-colored Sparrow is another species that may be slowly expanding its breeding range, especially in the eastern U.S. This summer it was noted as "solidly established" in northern New York. Wayward individuals, many of them singing birds (and thus potential breeders), were in Yukon Territory, New Brunswick, Québec (hybridizing with a Chipping Sparrow—a potential identification problem if they successfully produced offspring!), Ontario, Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, West Virginia, and Maryland. Extralimital reports in the West were fewer but included Idaho's first nesting record and a single bird in eastern Washington, where sporadic breeding is known.

A final species of interest here is Henslow's Sparrow. It was widely reported this summer, despite the fact that its inconspicuous nature makes it harder to detect than most other grassland sparrows. Almost any discussion of declining grassland birds in eastern North America quickly leads to this species, although the picture painted this summer (and in fact for the last several years) is anything but grim. They were widely reported in southern Ontario, New York, Pennsylvania (news of "hundreds" in the western part of the state was encouraging), New Jersey ("more...than in recent years"), Minnesota (reports from eight counties statewide were above normal), Arkansas, Kansas, and Nebraska. In the Middlewestern Prairie Region, Ken Brock noted they were "...reported in good numbers, but were not quite as plentiful as last summer." The real news came from farther west, where first nesting records were recorded in both North Dakota (two nests) and South Dakota. I suspect this apparent increase in their breeding range is a combination of several factors, only one of which may be a true population increase. Other explanations include shifts in distribution that reflect habitat changes (e.g., those caused by large-scale Conservation Reserve Programs), or simply the fact that birders there are looking harder. The latter explanation is especially appealing in the Great Plains, where birding coverage is particularly sparse. Stephen Stedman alluded to this detectability problem in an earlier "Changing Seasons" column (Stedman 1998), and I concur with his thoughts; the message "if you look, you will find" may be especially true with Henslow's Sparrows.

I'll pause a moment for a few final thoughts on range expansions. As I read through the regional reports, I am struck by how little mention there is of two other expanding species: Great-tailed Grackle and Shiny Cowbird. I know the grackle is still expanding in mid-continent (pers. obs.) and the southern Far West (it is mentioned in the Middle Pacific Coast through British Columbia regional reports), but the cowbird may

have slowed its spread since the mid-1990s (Pranty 2000). In terms of range expansions, it appears that at present, doves are "in" and icterids are "out." I concur with the urgings of past columnists here to monitor aggressively those species undergoing rapid range expansions. Birders need to make a more conscious effort to report sightings of *all* such expanding species so that we can later look back and have a sharper image of their pattern of expansion.

### Species of special concern

Bald Eagles have continued their remarkable recovery from population lows in the 1960s and 1970s and were mentioned in almost all of the regional reports. Increases in breeding numbers were noted in the Hudson-Delaware region (New York's breeding population has doubled twice since 1991), Ontario, Nebraska, and Kansas, and there were 1,102 territories counted in a survey of Florida (the greatest total since the survey began in 1973). Successful nesting occurred throughout the Middlewestern Prairie Region, several new nests were found in North Dakota, there was a suggestion of breeding in New Mexico, and they continued to recover as a breeding species in California. Additionally, there were numerous scattered reports from the edges of the present breeding range. Perhaps nowhere is this rapid increase more evident than in Iowa, where they have increased from a single nest in 1977 (the first since pre-1900) to eight in 1990, 84 in 1998 (Ehresman 1999), and about 130 nests in 2001 (B. L. Ehresman, pers. comm.)!

This summer was generally good news for the federally listed Piping Plover as well. A record four pairs bred at St. Pierre et Miquelon at the northeastern limit of their breeding range. They apparently did well on the central Atlantic Coast (Delaware and New Jersey), where increased numbers of nesting pairs were counted, although productivity was down slightly in some areas. Breeding success was not noted farther south, although near-average numbers of breeding pairs were present in both Maryland and Virginia. The Great Lakes' breeding population had 32 nesting pairs this year, including a nest at Green Bay, Wisconsin, the first local nesting record since 1941. Single birds at two locations in Ontario in early June were probably late spring migrants. The Great Plains population, the largest in North America, received few comments and thus one hopes experienced near-normal breeding success. Nesting numbers in Iowa were down to four pairs, but farther west there were record numbers (43+ pairs) nesting at Lake McConaughy in western Nebraska and an encouraging five pairs (is this really that encouraging?) nested in southeastern Colorado.

The news was decidedly mixed regarding other imperiled birds. On the bright side, a total of 1,085 male Kirtland's Warblers was counted in Michigan, the most since surveys began in 1951. There was also optimistic news about Black-capped Vireos in Oklahoma, although this may or may not have been aided by an active cowbird control program there (see Grzybowski and Pease 1999, Ortega 2000). The news was not so good for Hawaiian Crows ('Alala), now down to a single wild pair; this species may soon follow the trail of the California Condor and exist largely in captive or assisted settings.

### Notable breeding records

In addition to the above reports, there were many exceptional state and provincial nesting records this summer. Some of the more noteworthy reports included Red-necked Grebe in Iowa (second state nesting record), Leach's Storm-Petrel in Massachusetts (second nesting locale for the state), Tricolored Heron in Massachusetts (first nesting since the mid-1970s), Wood Stork in Alabama (first state nesting record), Gadwall in northern Mexico (first nesting record for that country), Bufflehead in South Dakota (second state nesting record), Purple Gallinule in



Oklahoma (second state nesting record), Wilson's Phalarope in Alaska (first state nesting record) and in Massachusetts, Heermann's Gulls (again) in northern California, Boreal Owl in New Hampshire (first state and Regional nesting record), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in Alaska (third state nesting record), Chimney Swift in New Mexico (first state nesting record), Alder Flycatcher in Indiana (first state nesting record), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Illinois (second state nesting record), White-eyed Vireo in Minnesota (second state nesting record), Northern Wheatear and Brown Thrasher in Newfoundland (first provincial nesting records), Golden-winged Warbler and Scarlet Tanager (in the Black Hills) in South Dakota (first state nesting records), Yellow throated Warbler in Minnesota (second state nesting record), Black-throated Gray Warbler in Montana (first state nesting record), and White-throated Sparrow in Illinois (first state nesting record). In the "probable breeding" category there were also a couple of notable reports, including Short-eared Owls in North Carolina and three potential firsts for El Salvador: Zone-tailed Hawk, Green (Red-throated) Parakeet, and Common Nighthawk.

## Miscellaneous

Several interesting nesting records did not fit into the above categories. Avoiding drought in the Great Basin, many waterbirds moved into the Pacific Northwest, and as a result, first nestings of White-faced Ibis in Washington, of Black-necked Stilt and Black Tern in western Washington, and Black-necked Stilt in Oregon were recorded. Wayne Petersen noted the continued decline in the number of nesting waders in New England, although they apparently did well in New York this summer (except for Cattle Egrets, which continue to decline Regionwide as a breeder). Common Eiders continued to consolidate their breeding range in New England, with a report of a group of 214 ducklings in Boston Harbor. That's a lot of duckling-kabobs for the local Great Black-backed Gull population! It was encouraging to learn of at least four Merlin nests in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota; hopefully this southward expansion into urban areas will continue. Common Nighthawks were almost universally lamented as "disappearing" from urban areas across the continent, whereas many species of diurnal raptors appear to be acclimating to cities and nesting in close proximity to human activities (New York City had eight nesting raptor species!), a trend seen in Europe in the last decade as well. A successful ground-nesting attempt by Flammulated Owls in Montana was probably unprecedented for that species. Golden-winged Warblers continue to lose ground against Blue-winged, but note the stable proportions in some parts of upstate New York, where the two apparently segregate by habitat. Finally, a comment on the decline of Horned Larks in southern Saskatchewan (see the Prairie Provinces regional report) caught my eye; this species is super-abundant in adjacent northeast Montana (pers. obs.). What's up on the Canadian side of the border?

## NONBREEDING SPECIES

While the emphasis in summer is on breeding species, there are also many reports of nonbreeders that draw our interest. The "summer" season, defined by arbitrary dates to include the months of June and July, means little to the birds we study. Northbound migrants of many species (White-rumped Sandpiper, both cuckoos, several species of *Empidonax*, Mourning Warbler, and many others) are still widespread as migrants in early June, and this pattern was especially evident this year with the cool weather pattern in late spring and early summer. Conversely, fall migration for a few species (most shorebirds, several hummingbirds, Yellow Warbler, orioles, and others) can be well underway by early or mid-July, and for some even earlier and at a time when the aforementioned species are still heading north. In addition, many Arctic and boreal breeders reg-

ularly summer south of their breeding ranges, while pelagic birds disperse north in fall (our spring) to spend their winter (our summer) in northern oceans. All of this means that there are many nonbreeding species to draw our attention during the summer months. The examples that follow highlight some of the more interesting such observations this summer.

## Summer loons

Over the past decade, and perhaps a little earlier, birders have been carefully studying and identifying loons summering south of their respective breeding ranges. As a result, we have seen a proliferation of records of unusual loons to the point that we cannot automatically assume they are all Common Loons. The summer 2001 season was no exception. Many loons other than Common Loons were reported, further dispelling the old assumption that most of these nonbreeders are Common Loons. Red-throated Loons were reported from several Great Lakes states (most were in early June, probably representing late spring migrants), in coastal Alabama (first summer record for the state), and a few summered off Baja California. Inland Pacific Loons were reported from Iowa, Nebraska, Texas, Idaho, Colorado, and at the Salton Sea in southern California, in addition to the normal scattering along the Pacific Coast. The only Yellow-billed Loon report was from interior British Columbia. This smattering of interesting loons should certainly make us continue to carefully scrutinize *all* summer loons seen away from the breeding ranges.

## Pelagic birds

This summer saw the continued saga of extraordinary pelagic finds off both coasts. The regular tubenoses were generally reported as numerous off the East Coast, especially numbers of Greater Shearwaters and Wilson's Storm-Petrels (see the Middle Atlantic Coast report for details on their occurrence in the Chesapeake Bay). Regular trips to the Gulf Stream off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, produced another Bermuda Petrel in addition to the more expected Fea's and Herald Petrels. But even more extraordinary was the presence of Manx Shearwaters, normally rare in summer off North Carolina; one was also noted off Bermuda. Farther north, Manx Shearwaters were reported in good numbers, including a count of 61 from shore in Massachusetts. Could this apparent increase in summer sightings south of the normal breeding range be indicative of large-scale failed breeding in the western Atlantic? Members of the Sulidae were also on the move: two Brown Boobies off New Jersey and the expected small numbers of Masked Boobies off the Southeast and in the Gulf of Mexico. A Long-tailed Jaeger was a great summer find off North Carolina. In Texas, a single Band-rumped Storm-Petrel was found inland after Tropical Storm *Allison*, the only "leftover" from this weak tropical storm. A pelagic trip into Mexican waters in the western Gulf of Mexico apparently recorded that country's first Tamaulipan records of Cory's Shearwater, Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, and Sooty Tern.

Likewise, pelagic birding off the West Coast produced a few interesting sightings this summer. Shearwater numbers, especially Pink-footed Shearwaters, were above average, while most reports of other tubenoses were as expected. Interesting albatross records included a Laysan inshore off southern California and a Short-tailed Albatross off Oregon (sixth record there in last 50 years). In southern California, a Dark-rumped Petrel as well as record numbers of Red-billed Tropicbirds at San Clemente Island made news. Magnificent Frigatebirds were scarce, although one off British Columbia was exceptional.

Arctic Terns are showing a pattern of slow increase in the interior during migration (May to October), although much of this increase may be



due to greater awareness and better identification skills. Nonetheless, recent nesting records in Montana (Dinsmore and Jorgensen 2001) and a single Arctic Tern courting a Common Tern at Chicago this summer (see the Middlewestern Prairie report) raise the possibility that there may be future nesting records of this species in the interior United States. In addition to the Illinois report, single adults were in Florida (first inland report for the state), Idaho, and eastern Washington, and two or three were in Colorado. In many parts of the Great Plains, I am beginning to think that an immaculate adult medium-sized *Sterna*, seen during summer away from any known nesting colonies, has a very good chance of being an Arctic Tern. The message here is that all *Sterna* at odd summer locales are certainly worth careful study.

## Hérons

Late summer is typically the time for post-breeding dispersal by herons, and this year was no exception. The usual post-breeding dispersal patterns were exhibited by many of the more common species, including Great and Snowy Egrets and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, all of which were widely reported. Among the "rarer" species, Little Blue Herons were notable in Manitoba (three individuals, including one as far north as Churchill!), and they nested in South Dakota. Tricolored Herons wandered more widely and included a single bird in Manitoba and a nesting report in South Dakota (third state nesting record). A white-morph Reddish Egret was exceptional in Colorado, and represented the second record of a white morph bird in the Great Plains, after a Nebraska record last fall. In accordance with the increases noted by Patten and Lasley (2000), out-of-range Glossy Ibis were reported in Ontario, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and single White-faced Ibis were found in New Jersey, Delaware, and Alabama. Some of these "increases" in reciprocal areas may simply have resulted from increased observer effort and better identification skills, although the westward expansion of Glossy Ibis is generally attributed to a true increase (Patten and Lasley 2000). Intriguing was the story of a nesting colony of White-faced Ibis in the Rainwater Basin of south-central Nebraska (J. G. Jorgensen, pers. comm.). The colony was abandoned in mid-summer, and many of the birds moved to a nearby wetland where two Glossy Ibis (an apparent pair) were subsequently discovered. It is quite possible these birds may have nested (or attempted to do so) with the White-faced Ibis. The co-occurrence of both species in the Great Plains suggests that all nesting *Plegadis* in this region should now be carefully scrutinized, as they cannot all automatically be assumed to be White-faced Ibis.

## Shorebirds

As I stated earlier, "summer" is a good season to see migratory shorebirds. Fall migrant shorebirds were widespread even as far south as Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies by mid-July, especially the typically "early" species such as Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary and Least Sandpipers. For some species, notably Piping Plover and Upland Sandpiper, peak numbers often occur in July; 57 of the former were already in coastal Texas by late July.

As expected, a few exceptional shorebirds were seen this summer. Two Bar-tailed Godwits were found in Washington, and another was noted in Hawaii; a Red-necked Stint was in California; and a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and an American Woodcock were in Bermuda. In addition, the more regular Eurasian species were found in small numbers on both coasts and at scattered inland locales: Ruffs were found in nine states and provinces, while single Curlew Sandpipers occurred in five coastal states. A wayward Purple Sandpiper was accidental at Churchill, Manitoba in early June. Another summer vagrant to interior regions is Red Phalarope, with singles reported this summer in Nebraska, New Mexico, and southern California.

## Eastern passerines in the West

As migration in the East slows down in late May and early June, birding continues to be interesting in many parts of the West. The annual phenomenon of eastern migrants appearing in the West through mid-June is well known. While many of the better migrant traps have already been discovered, there are apparently still a few hotspots that remain to be found, such as Warm Springs Ranch in southern Utah (see the Great Basin report for summer discoveries at this site).

The summer 2001 season was exceptional for some eastern passerines in parts of the West (see the Great Basin, Oregon-Washington, and Middle and Southern Pacific Coast reports for more details). The "usual" mix of eastern warblers included above-normal numbers of several species, plus near-record numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (Table 1). While these reports are obviously biased by factors such as where we bird (most effort is at known hotspots), or the timing of weather events relative to weekends (the days most birders are afield), patterns that appear to be real do occasionally emerge. Three of these species (Northern Parula, Hooded Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak) were widespread in this region in late spring, received special attention in the regional reports, and were probably the result of real increases in numbers of vagrants.

Table 1. Records of some eastern passerines in the western North America, summer 2001.

Species	Region								
	MT/ID	CO/WY	NM	AZ	UT/NV	OR/WA	n. CA	s. CA	BC
Blue-winged Warbler		1					1		
Golden-winged Warbler		1			1			1	
Northern Parula		1		1	2	1	19 <sup>1</sup>	5	
Chestnut-sided Warbler		3	2		2	3	6	1	
Black-throated Blue Warbler		1			2		1		
Prothonotary Warbler			1	1		1		1	
Ovenbird	1		1	4	1	1	6	2	
Kentucky Warbler		1	4	2				3	
Hooded Warbler			4	4	2		9	2	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	4	1+	1	3	5	11	30	10	3

<sup>1</sup>Nesting confirmed at one site, possible at two others

## Miscellaneous II

Recent increased attention to jaeger identification, coupled with increased study of vagrant individuals, has led to a better understanding of their distribution in interior North America (see Leukering 2000). Based on personal experience and a perusal of many past summer "Changing Seasons" summaries, I might add a third "rule" to Leukering's list: most "summer" jaegers inland tend to be Pomarines, with only a few Long-tailed Jaegers and almost no Parasitic Jaegers (at least not very many that are well-documented) being reported. Most inland summer jaegers also tend to be adults (or rarely subadults). This summer was no exception to the above patterns: single adult Pomarine Jaegers were found in Nebraska, Texas, and Colorado.

Not surprisingly, many of the "movers" of last winter lingered into the summer season. After a good irruption last winter, Rough-legged Hawks lingered south of their breeding range in small numbers. Mostly singles were reported in British Columbia, Washington, southwestern Manitoba, Minnesota, Michigan, several in southern Ontario, but unusually high numbers were noted along the St. Lawrence River in Québec. Snowy Owls staged only a minor irruption last winter (Brinkley 2001), although single birds carried south of the breeding range in Québec and Ontario. Probably as a result of the major irruption last winter (Brinkley 2001), many Northern Hawk Owls and Great Gray Owls stretched the southern limits of their breeding ranges this year; however, many of the reports did not specifically indicate nesting activity. Noteworthy summer reports included Northern Hawk Owls in British Columbia (two nests), Washington (first summer record for the region), Idaho (first state nesting record), Québec (probable nesting was noted at two southerly locales), northern Minnesota (four nests), and eastern Ontario. Great Gray Owls showed a similar pattern, with extralimital birds in Québec (confirmed nesting), Michigan, and Washington. Because these reports followed a major southward irruption last winter, the most interesting question: "Is this pattern temporary or permanent?" Only time will tell. Finally, a few Red-breasted Nuthatches lingered at southerly locales after a minor eruption last winter, including the first summer record for Baja California.

There were several other miscellaneous reports of note. A Long-tailed Duck was found in Montana (second state summer record) and another was notable in Wisconsin; this species is exceptional in the interior Lower 48 in summer. Up to seven Black-legged Kittiwakes summering in Baja California were noteworthy. An extraordinary Dovekie off Massachusetts was thought to be the latest ever for the region. Black-whiskered Vireos were reported in North Carolina, where they are accidental, and for the first time in summer in Texas. This species is a classic "stealth" vagrant, with records north only to Back Bay, Virginia; how long before one shows up farther north at Cape May or Cape Cod? Finally, Northern Wheatears lingered after their spring incursion in the Northeast with singles in New Hampshire and Vermont.

Lastly, when scanning the regional reports, there are always a few breathtaking numbers, sometimes of common species. Such reports this summer included 1500 Little Blue Herons at a roost near St. Louis, 263 Swallow-tailed Kites in the Pearl River Basin along the Mississippi/Louisiana border, 1400 Semipalmated Plovers at South Beach, Massachusetts, 15,000+ Common Terns nesting on South Monomoy I., Massachusetts, a concentration of 100,000 (!) Purple Martins in Texas, 13,000 Bank Swallows at Point Pelee, Ontario, and a report of 35 (!) territorial Hooded Warblers (counts of more than a single bird this far north are notable) at Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park in Minnesota. Many of us enjoy birding for spectacles such as these—I'll never forget the hordes of migratory Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes in the Great Plains in March, masses of shorebirds at Delaware Bay in May, and the winter roosts of tens of millions of blackbirds in parts of the Southeast. These events are

often awe-inspiring and provide the sense of excitement that keeps us in the field.

## Goodies

As usual, there were a few finds that defied imagination—birds that were so far out of range or season that their occurrence would almost never be predicted. These are the birds that keep so many of us in the field, always searching for that extraordinary find. Sightings falling into this category (some pending acceptance by local records committees) included a Shy Albatross off California, a Little Egret in Delaware, a Garganey in Nova Scotia, a Harlequin Duck in Arizona (second state record), a King Eider in Louisiana (found dead; third state record), single Swallow-tailed Kites in Kentucky (second record since 1900) and Wisconsin, a Wilson's Plover in Michigan (third state record), a Red-necked Stint at St. Pierre et Miquelon (second regional report), a Western Gull in Arizona (second state record), a Roseate Tern in Louisiana (first state record), an Elegant Tern in New Mexico (second state record) plus two more in Arizona, a Black Skimmer in Colorado (first state record) and another in New Mexico (third or fourth state record), a Whiskered Auklet in British Columbia (first provincial record), single Tropical and Tropical/Couch's Kingbirds along the Gulf Coast of Florida (pay attention to those wayward "Western" Kingbirds!), a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Newfoundland (a surprising first provincial record), Cave Swallows in Virginia, Oklahoma, and Kansas (the latter two were first state records), a Brown-headed Nuthatch in Illinois (first state record; same location that hosted a Red-cockaded Woodpecker last fall, so who knows what will be found there next?), a Tropical Parula in Arizona (second state record), single Yellow-throated Warblers in North Dakota and Idaho (both second state records), a Worm-eating Warbler in Oregon (second state record), an Eastern Towhee in Idaho (first state record, but there was no mention that a hybrid Spotted x Eastern Towhee was considered or ruled out), a Painted Bunting in Utah (first or second state record), and a Brewer's Blackbird in Newfoundland (first provincial record).

## Gleaning the most from field records

In the above discussion, I attempted to delineate patterns based upon the information in the regional reports. As a result of reporting biases, we may not know a species is expanding until the increase is well underway. It should be apparent that patterns are hard to define when data are lacking. I'm not saying we need detailed information on all of the common species, but are spotty data on the breeding success of a bird like the American Robin likely to be very useful? Well, probably not. But other species, those with special conservation interest, or those that are dramatically increasing or declining, or those whose breeding ranges or migration patterns are poorly known, may merit more attention. These are the species upon which we should focus our reporting efforts. And good reporting relies on good note taking.

In my experience, birders vary considerably in the details they record about their sightings while in the field. This can vary from simply keeping life or year lists to keeping far more detailed lists. Detailed lists can be daily lists, lists of species seen at a particular site by date, numbers of birds seen by site and date, or records of identifiable forms, races, subspecies, or identifiable age and/or sex classes, also by date and location. Obviously, records in the latter form are the most useful, although each type of record keeping has its own merits. As my birding companions can attest to, I carry a stack of 3x5" cards in the field and I am constantly scribbling details on the number, race, subspecies, age/sex, and other features (e.g., odd plumage details) of the birds I see. Such detailed records have immense value, but only a handful of birders keep them. It would be nice to see this pattern change. To that end, I would like to see

more birders jotting down notes while in the field, and then later transferring these notes to one of the many database management programs available for birders. This information can then, in turn, be used to contribute detailed reports that increase our general understanding of birds, provide a source of information for authors of state bird books, can be used to develop local bird checklists, and much more.

We should continually strive to expand our collective knowledge of birds, and contributing the most detailed records possible is the best way to accomplish this. If, say, you encounter multiple subspecies (or other identifiable classes) of a common bird in your area, there is great value in keeping track of each subspecies and reporting those data. As an example, how many birders regularly keep track of the races of Dark-eyed Juncos that occur in their area? In parts of the Great Plains where multiple races regularly occur, limited work suggests that individuals of different races may follow quite different migrational patterns, and their winter distributions can vary markedly between years. Such information is extremely interesting, and more birders should make an effort to collect these data. I cannot remember how many times I've heard another birder make a statement along the lines of "I saw 14 Sabine's Gulls in Wyoming this fall, but the state bird book says they are casual in the state." Well, the source data for that book probably relied on voluntary submissions by birders. If the published information is erroneous, it's probably because no one bothered to submit the correct information.

Many taxonomic changes have at their roots the careful observations of amateur field ornithologists. These careful observations cause birders and ornithologists alike to ask more complex questions, some of which result in detailed studies and eventual splits. There are hundreds of examples where such information might be collected: color morphs of species such as Reddish Egret or the jaegers (could migratory or dispersal patterns differ by color morph?), the age, sex, and color morph of Rough-legged Hawks (there is latitudinal segregation in winter based on age and sex), subspecies of Willets ("western" birds are common in migration and winter along the Atlantic Coast), age classes of many gulls, the three forms of Gray Jays (this could be useful for sorting out the source(s) of irrupting birds), the various subspecies of Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes (this information can be useful in pinpointing the source[s] of migrants using an area; see Lane and Jamarillo 2000a, 2000b, 2000c), the races of Palm Warblers, etc. Some of this information is already being collected and reported, and I applaud those who are contributing to this information gathering. But even broader support from birders is needed for us to better understand the life history traits of these and many other species.

A second, and closely related, reason for recording such data has to do with the ever-changing taxonomic status of many species (see Sibley 1997). Michael Patten (Patten 2000) touched on this subject recently, where he emphasized the lack of records of certain species (e.g., Atlantic Brant, *Branta bernicula hrota*, on the Pacific Coast) following a "lumping" of species; I would like to expand on his discussion. First and foremost, I want to emphasize information gathering *before* a potential species split. Over the past several years, the birding community has seen some rather profound changes in bird taxonomy (American Ornithologists' Union 1998). Advances in molecular tools, coupled with an increased interest in avian taxonomy and the somewhat plastic definition of a species, have led to the naming of several "new" bird species, clearly making this the era of the splitter. And while it is true that splits lengthen our bird lists, they also serve another important function: they force us to study many familiar species more carefully with the result that we learn more about them. Unfortunately, it often takes a split to motivate this additional study. While there are exceptions, how many birders carefully studied members of the "Solitary" Vireo complex before it was

split into three species in 1996? Or how about "Western" Flycatchers? Or even something as large and ubiquitous (at least at leks) as a Sage-Grouse? The point is that we typically do not, or have not, studied these species until after they were split. I urge birders to plan ahead: try to pay attention to identifiable forms, races, subspecies, etc., long before a potential split. Even if the split *never* occurs, this additional scrutiny fosters learning, which is certainly a core component of birding.

These pages cannot possibly serve as a complete treatise on this subject, but some species to pay particular attention to in the immediate future include Canada Goose (among others, the small Arctic subspecies *minima* may soon be a distinct species), White-breasted Nuthatch (the Eastern, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific subspecies can be readily separated by calls), Marsh Wren (eastern and western subspecies can be identified by song and plumage), Nashville Warbler (the two subspecies may eventually be split), Brewer's Sparrow (recent work suggests that "Timberline" Sparrow may soon be split from Brewer's Sparrow; see Klicka et al. 1999), Sage Sparrow (Johnson and Marten 1992), Fox Sparrow (four full species may soon result from potential splits; see Zink 1994 and Zink and Kessen 1999), Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (the Hepburn's race could well be a future split), and Red Crossbill (talk of major splits has waned in the last year; alas, the distinct forms often require recordings to separate them, at least definitively).

### Parting thoughts

As I wrap up this column, I have two messages I would like to re-emphasize. First, birders should continue to submit reports that are as detailed as possible, and these reports should certainly include information about current species of conservation interest (e.g., include more reports of the rapidly-expanding Eurasian Collared-Dove). Second, birders should think ahead to possible future splits and begin collecting the pertinent data now.

In a different vein, the contents of the "Changing Seasons" rely exclusively on the voluntary reports of birders. In some regions, concentrated birding activity and an efficient reporting system add up to very useful reports; editors in these regions do an excellent job of summarizing local patterns and identifying unusual sightings. Conversely, other regions may suffer in one or both of these areas, and the resulting reports are sometimes less useful. I will end by reiterating a plea of several past writers of this column: please be as thorough as possible when interpreting records in your Regions. Without your interpretation, editors might not mention the record or might misinterpret it. Neither outcome is beneficial.

### Acknowledgments

All of the regional editors deserve special thanks for continuing to volunteer to write their respective summaries. And kudos to everyone for submitting these reports in a timely fashion this season. Finally, I thank James J. Dinsmore, Joe Fontaine, and W. Ross Silcock for comments on earlier drafts of this column.

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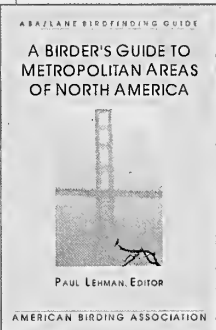
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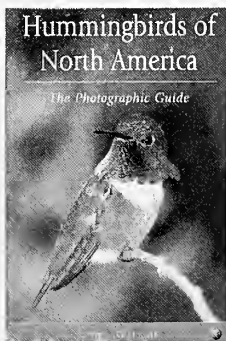
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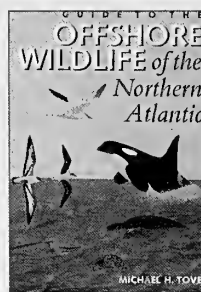
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# How to Read the Regional Report

## STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REGIONAL REPORTS

### Abbreviations used in place names

In most regions, place names given in *italic* type are counties. Other abbreviations:

A.F.B.	Air Force Base
B.B.S.	Breeding Bird Survey
C.B.C.	Christmas Bird Count
Cr.	Creek
Ft.	Fort
Hwy	Highway
I.	Island or Isle
Is.	Islands or Isles
Jct.	Junction
km	kilometer(s)
L.	Lake
mi	mile (s)
Mt.	Mountain or Mount
Mts.	Mountains
N.F.	National Forest
N.M.	National Monument
N.P.	National Park
N.W.R.	National Wildlife Refuge
P.P.	Provincial Park
Pen.	Peninsula
Pt.	Point (not Port)
R.	River
Ref.	Refuge
Res.	Reservoir (not Reservation)
S.P.	State Park
Twp.	Township
W.M.A.	Wildlife Management Area
W.T.P.	(Waste) Water Treatment Pond(s) or Plant

### Other abbreviations and symbols referring to birds:

ad. (ads.)	adult(s)
imm.	immature
juv. (juvs.)	juvenile; juvenile(s)
ph.	photographed
sp. (spp.)	species (plural)
subad. (subads.)	subadult(s)
tape	audio tape-recorded
v.t.	videotaped
†	written details were submitted for a sighting
*	a specimen was collected

**B**irds have no respect for range maps. Bird distribution in North America is constantly changing, as birds expand their ranges into new areas, disappear from former strongholds, or alter their patterns of migration.

Our knowledge of bird distribution is also changing constantly, as discoveries continue to come in. Keeping up with all these developments is a challenge for ornithologists, conservationists, and birders.

The Regional Reports, published four times a year, contain a wealth of information about North America's dynamic birdlife. When seeing the reports for the first time, they might appear difficult or technical, but they are not; anyone with any birding experience will find the reports easy to understand. We invite you to read the report from your area of the continent; we predict that the information there will alternately surprise you and confirm your ideas about birdlife in your region. To help you get started, here are answers to some questions that may occur to first-time readers.

### What kind of information is included? Do the Regional Editors just report everything that's reported to them?

Regional Editors do not report every sighting of every bird. Such a list would be huge, unwieldy, and not very useful. Instead, they solicit reports from as many observers as possible, screen the records for accuracy, choose those that are most significant, look for trends and patterns of occurrence, connect scattered bits of information, and ultimately come up with a concise, readable summary of the real bird news—the important avian events and trends of the season throughout their region.

### Why are there so many abbreviations in the text?

We abbreviate some frequently-used words and phrases to save space. Most of these are easy to understand and remember. (See the list of abbreviations at the end of this section.) In addition to these standard abbreviations, some Regional Editors use shortened versions of the names of some birding hot spots; they list these local abbreviations in a separate paragraph, just after their introductory comments and just before their main species accounts.

### What do the initials in parentheses mean?

Most records published in each report will be followed by initials, to indicate the source: the person(s) who found or reported the bird(s) mentioned. The initials may be followed by *et al.* (short for *et alia*, meaning “and others”), or preceded by *fide* (literally, “by the faith of”—meaning that this is a second-hand report, and the person initialed is the one who passed it along to the Regional Editor). A dagger (†) before the initials means that this person turned in written details on the sighting.

There are good reasons for giving credit to the observers involved. Readers may be reassured about the accuracy of surprising sightings if they know who the observers were; researchers who want to know more about a certain record may be able to contact the observers directly. In some cases, when a bird was seen by many birders, the Regional Editor may add “v.o.” (for “various observers”) or “m.ob.” (for “many observers”) after the first sets of initials.

### Who are the people who send in their sightings?

All observers are invited to send in notes to their Regional Editors: details on rare sightings, species that were scarcer or more numerous than usual during the season, unusual concentrations or migration, and so on. Reading the reports for your region for a few seasons is the best way to find out what kinds of information are desired. Although the Regional Editors cannot cite every record that they receive, every contributor helps them to produce a more thorough and accurate summary.

### Why are some bird names in heavier or blacker type?

We use **boldface** type to draw attention to outstanding records of rare birds. General categories of birds that the Regional Editors would place in boldface would include: any species that has been recorded fewer than 10 times previously in a given state or province; any new breeding record for a state or province; or any bird totally outside established patterns of seasonal occurrence. (For the most part, records are not boldfaced unless they are backed up with solid details or photographs.) Birders who like to know about rare birds (and most of us do) can get a complete run-down of the season's outstanding rarities by scanning all the Regional Reports for those boldfaced birds.

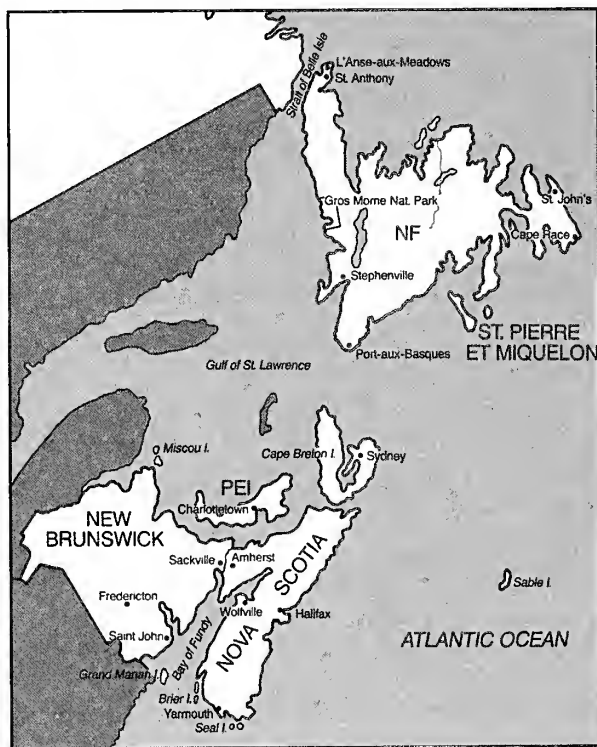
### Why are some of the place names in italic type?

In most of the regional reports, place names given in *italic* type refer to counties. (Italics represent parishes in Louisiana, and in parts of Ontario they may refer to districts or regional municipalities.)

### What are the boxes in the text marked “SA”?

“SA” stands for “Special Attention” (and, by coincidence, is pronounced “essay”). The purpose of the boxed essays is to draw attention to particularly noteworthy phenomena or trends. Likely SA topics include new population trends or new bird distribution patterns, unusual invasions or migration events, field research yielding new data, specific conservation problems that have an impact on birdlife, or detailed discussion of an outstanding (or perplexing) rare bird record. Experienced readers of *North American Birds* make it a point to flip through all the Regional Reports and read all the S.A.s, even in regions where they do not read the rest of the text.

# Atlantic Provinces



## Bruce Mactavish

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It was a dry, warm summer across most of the Region. The lack of comments on birds' breeding success, either positive or negative, probably indicates an "average" breeding season. A pair of Northern Wheatears raised two broods at Cape Pine, Newfoundland, 700 km south of the known breeding range. Rarity highlights were a Red-necked Stint at St. Pierre et Miquelon, a molting Garganey in Nova Scotia, a Loggerhead Shrike on an offshore island in New Brunswick, a Black-tailed Godwit, and two provincial firsts, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and a Brewer's Blackbird in Newfoundland.

**Abbreviations:** C.B.I (Cape Breton Island); C.S.I. (Cape Sable Island, NS); G.M.I. (Grand Manan Island, NB), SPM (St. Pierre et Miquelon, France).

## LOONS THROUGH RAILS

As usual, a pair of Red-throated Loons nested at Miquelon S.P.M (RE). Rare mid-summer grebes in Nova Scotia were 2 Horned Grebes 7 Jul at Summerville Beach (JH) and 4 Red-

necked Grebes 21 Jun at Hartlen Pt. (FL). The usual tens of thousands of Greater Shearwaters and Sooty Shearwaters fed on capelin off the s. coast of the Avalon Pen., NF in Jul (PLi et al.). The 100 Manx Shearwaters near Colombier I., SPM 1 Jul represented the largest concentration reported (LJ). Unusually high numbers of Wilson's Storm-Petrels were encountered on the Cabot Strait ferry between N. Sydney, NS and Port-aux-Basques, NF, with counts of 295 on 30 Jun and 75 on 2 Jul (RK). One hundred pairs of Double-crested Cormorants nesting on two islands in Groswater Bay made for the first known breeding occurrence in Labrador in nearly a century (KC *vide* PLI).

Hérons wandering n. of their breeding ranges were reported in below-average numbers: Great Egret numbered 3 in Nova Scotia, one in St. Pierre et Miquelon, and 2 in Newfoundland, while a single Little Blue Heron was noted in Nova Scotia, and there were no reports of Snowy Egret. More unusual was a single Tricolored Heron at Homeville, C.B.I., NS 1 Jun (RK et al.) and an imm. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at St. Pierre, SPM 26 Jul (PA). A Turkey Vulture in the Great Codroy Valley, NF 10–21 Jun was only the 3rd to be recorded on insular Newfoundland (DP, JW et al.).

A male Eurasian Wigeon at Cow Bay, NS 16

Jun was the only report of the species (CSS). The Garganey discovered at Amherst, NS in May was last seen 18 Jun (FL, CLS). A pair of Redhead remained at Riverside-Albert, NB until at least 10 Jun (DC). A female Hooded Merganser summering in St. John's was far from breeding sites in the w. half of the Region (PLi). A pair of Red-shouldered Hawks was at Sunpoke L., NB 11 Jun (DG, PP). Rough-legged Hawks were widespread on insular Newfoundland due to an abundance of voles (*vide* PLI). Five Common Moorhens were at their e. breeding stronghold, Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary, on 18 Jun (FL, CLS).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS

A new high total of four pairs of Piping Plover nested on the Isthmus of Miquelon, SPM (RE). An isolated n. population of 10 pairs of Killdeer had territories at Labrador City, Labrador (BD). American Oystercatcher continues to maintain a toehold as breeder in the Region, with 3 ads. and 2 juvs. present at The Cape, C.S.I., NS during Jul (MN). A Willet strayed e. to Grand Barachois, SPM 3–28 Jul (RE et al.). Up to 300 Whimbrel were at Barachois, S.P.M. 19 Jul (RE).

**SA** A host of early southbound shorebirds arrived in the last days of Jun. The diversity, as well as the numbers of some species, made this an extraordinary event. Early Hudsonian Godwits were 2 at Three Fathom Harbour, NS 21 Jun (FL), one at The Hawk, C.S.I. 28 Jun (MN), 5 at Morien Bar, C.B.I., NS 1 Jul (SM), and one at Grand Barachois, SPM 28 Jun (RE). The Hawk, C.S.I., NS also had 8 Ruddy Turnstones, 5 Red Knots, and a remarkable 700 Short-billed Dowitchers 28 Jun (MN). A further 60 Short-billed Dowitchers were at Three Fathom Harbour 27 Jun (IM). Perhaps related was the appearance of an impeccable, alternate-plumaged **Red-necked Stint** in company with an early Stilt Sandpiper and a White-rumped Sandpiper at Grand Barachois, SPM 1 Jul (RE et al.). This was the first for the French Islands and perhaps a 2nd for the Region.

A **Black-tailed Godwit** at Stephenville Crossing, NF 1–3 Jun was part of the moderate late May influx of European birds to the province (KK et al.). A Reeve at Portugal Cove S., NF 3 Jun (AH, JP) was followed by a spectacular white Ruff at the same location on 8 Jun (KS, GS). A molting Ruff was at Morien

Bar, C.B.I., NS 14–25 Jul (SM et al.). The only report of the increasing rare Wilson's Phalarope was a juv. 29 Jul at Morien Bar, C.B.I., NS (SM et al.). Two Red Phalaropes near Machias Seal I., NB on 23 Jun fell between migration periods (PLe).

Most midsummer jaeger reports were, as usual, from Newfoundland, where they join in with other seabirds and marine mammals to feed on spawning capelin. The highest of several counts was a mixed group of 55 Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers at Portugal Cove S. 28 Jul (AH, PLi). Four ad. Long-tailed Jaegers were migrating n. at O'Donnells, St. Mary's Bay, NF 4 Jun (AB). The lack of s. winds in May seems to be responsible for the complete lack of Laughing Gulls in Newfoundland during the summer, but Nova Scotia made up for it with 3 during Jun (*fide* BMy). A few Lesser Black-backed Gulls, all subads., were reported during the period in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. A pair of Great Black-backed Gulls attempted to nest far inland at Labrador City, Labrador (BD). Caspian Terns were rediscovered nesting in Hamilton Inlet, Labrador, with five nests on three islands (KC). Seventy Roseate Tern nests, an encouraging number, were tallied at The Brothers, NS (TD). Four Black Terns were at the e. edge of the breeding range at Amherst Point Bird Sanctuary 18 Jun (FL).

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

What would a summer be like without a **White-winged Dove**? This time it was at Sainte-Jacques *Madawaska*, NB 14 Jun (JB). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo, very rare in the Region outside of the autumn season, was an extraordinary find at Goose Bay, Labrador on 19 Jun (TB, JS). An unseasonable Snowy Owl was at St. Pierre, SPM 25 Jun (BL). An Eastern Wood-pewee was e. of mapped breeding range at St. Pierre, SPM 11 Jun (LJ). Newfoundland's long overdue first **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was beautifully photographed from a canoe by a nature photographer in a remote area of the central part of the province 3 Jul (DT). The first **Loggerhead Shrike** in the Region in years was obviously a vagrant on Machias Seal I., NB 8 Jun (AM). Philadelphia Vireo is a widespread summer singer in second-growth deciduous forest in w. Newfoundland, but the first actual breeding evidence was a singing male feeding a barely fledged young bird near Highlands 10 Jul (PLi, BMt). Seven territorial Philadelphia Vireos around Goose Bay, Labrador, during Jun was expected (TB, JS). A stray Purple Martin hit the end of the road at Cape North, C.B.I. 16 Jul (RK). House Wren, a rare breeder in New Brunswick, was heard singing 17 Jun Thomaston Corner (CA). A

total of 6 Golden-crowned Kinglets in Goose Bay during Jun were perhaps the first Labrador sightings of this inconspicuous summertime species (TB, JS). A female Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Mary's Pt., NB 10 Jun was probably a late migrant (DC).

**SA** One of the most extraordinary events of the period was a pair of nesting **Northern Wheatears** at Cape Pine, Avalon Peninsula, NF. This is 700 km s. of the previously known s. extreme of the breeding range in North America at Black Tickle, Labrador. Kim Eckert (Victor Emanuel Nature Tours) discovered the pair feeding fledged young on 15 Jul. On 18 Jul, the male was observed in care of 6 (!) large bobbing, bob-tailed fledglings. On the same date, the agitated female was seen entering a hole in a rock wall; she did not emerge for two hours (PLi, BMt). On several dates in August, the pair was seen carrying food into the hole in the rock wall, presumably raising another brood (KK et al.). This isolated breeding record follows a massive influx involving at least 42 storm-driven Northern Wheatears to e. Newfoundland in late May (cf. *N. A. B.* 55: 269-271).

A singing Gray Catbird at Goose Bay, Labrador 12 Jun was far n. of the breeding range (TB, JS). Nova Scotia's first confirmed breeding record for Brown Thrasher was a well-documented pair raising 2 young to maturity from Jun through Aug at The Hawk, C.S.I., NS (JN et al.). Meanwhile, a lost Brown Thrasher took up residence on Machias Seal I., NB during Jun (PLe). Bohemian Waxwing is widespread in small numbers throughout forested zones of Labrador in summer. The first breeding record was close to being confirmed with sightings of a pair of ads. repeatedly carrying insects 150 m across an area of old burned forest near Esker 28 Jun (BD) and 3 streaky juvs. among a flock of 20 ads. 7 Aug at Lobstick (BK, EK).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Totals of 5 Cape May Warblers, 2 Bay-breasted Warblers, and one Ovenbird found in the Goose Bay Labrador area in Jun were strong indications of breeding n. of published breeding ranges (TB, JS).

A lingering Clay-colored Sparrow sang at Fredericton, NB 28 May–6 Jun (DS et al.). A Field Sparrow singing in suitable breeding habitat at Brockway Airstrip, NB 21 Jun raised expectations of breeding once again in New

Brunswick (DG et al.). Intriguing were the sightings of possible Seaside Sparrows at LaHave and nearby Cherry Hill Beach, Lunenburg, NS in late Jul (JH). Generally regarded as a rare late autumn/early winter vagrant to s. ends of the Region, this saltmarsh sparrow could easily go undetected among the large coastal marshes of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick during the summer. Recently instigated surveys of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow in Nova Scotia revealed impressive populations of 60 pairs from Conrad's Beach to Lawrencetown Beach (DW et al.) and 75 pairs at Belleisle Marsh (JJN et al.). An indication of the abundance of Northern Cardinals breeding in s. Nova Scotia was revealed by an unorthodox survey method: visiting garage sales in the Yarmouth and Hebron area, where some 20 pairs were thus discovered (MN).

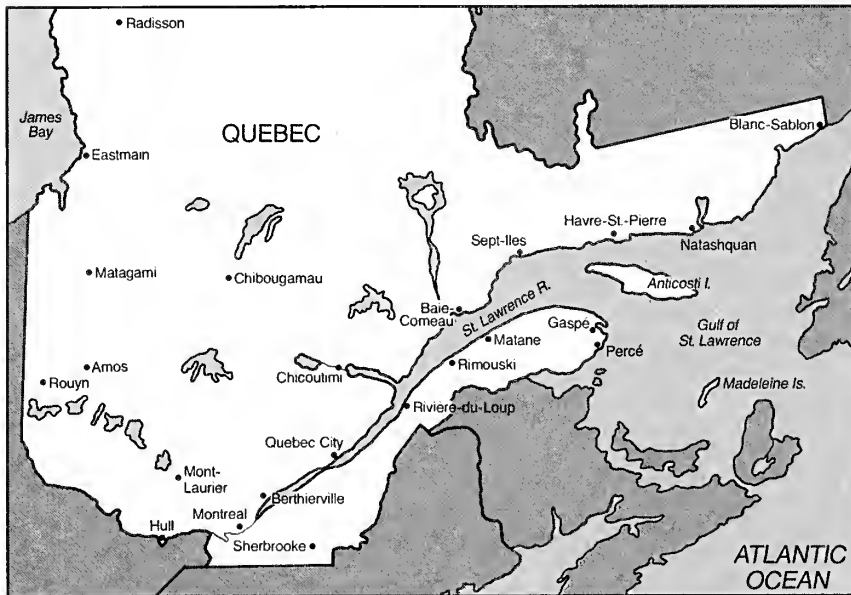
A male **Brewer's Blackbird**, well studied and photographed at Cape Race, NF 2–8 Jun, was a provincial first and one of the very few spring records for the Region (PLi, BMt et al.). Common Grackles well n. of typical breeding range were Jun singles at Labrador City (BD) and Goose Bay (TB, JS). Except for good numbers of White-winged Crossbills across Labrador, finches kept a low profile in the Region this summer.

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This summer, most of the Region experienced temperatures above normal, the deviation from the normal being the most noticeable on the east coast of Hudson Bay, where the mean temperature was 5 degrees Fahrenheit above the norm. Most of the inhabited part of the Region had below-normal precipitation, most particularly the Abitibi region. Only the North Shore had normal or slightly above-normal precipitation. No severe weather conditions adversely affected the breeding season. The only natural phenome-

non with potential negative effects on the breeding of woodland species was a severe defoliation caused by the forest tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria* Hbn.) in the Abitibi region.

## PELICANS THROUGH TERNS

Once again this summer, an American White Pelican visited the Region. Its huge size allowed the bird to be seen from different locales around the Lachine rapids 23 Jun–3 Jul, including Île des Soeurs, LaSalle, and Sainte-Catherine (PB, m. ob.). A pair of Least Bitterns at Saint-Fulgence 26–31 Jul+ provided a first record for the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region (S. Belleau, m. ob.). In the s., this threatened species was surprisingly well in evidence; the Saint-Timothée marsh continued to be its stronghold, as shown by the presence of at least six pairs (A. Hogue). Great Egrets continued to infiltrate s. Québec. In addition to 20 birds at the Saint-Timothée marsh (m. ob.), 8 were seen at Pointe à Comtois on the s. shore of Lake Saint-Pierre 29 Jul (ND, D. Jauvin), while 4 young flapping their wings from the top of high trees at Île aux Hérons 29 Jul confirmed breeding there for the 4th consecutive year (PB).

Enriching our knowledge of the breeding distribution of Turkey Vulture was a nest containing 2 young found at Beauceville in late Jul (D. Parent, K. Poulin, *vide* L. Tremblay). Single Greater White-fronted Geese at Victoriaville 5 Jun (R. Lacerte, J. Nadeau) and Baie-du-Febvre

9–10 Jun (*vide* S. Houle) were somewhat unseasonal. The number of Mute Swans was higher than usual in the Region. In addition to an ad. at Beauharnois throughout the period, 2 imms. were at Neuville 6 Jun (D. Cloutier), 2 at Cap-Tourmente NWR 10 Jun–10 Jul (*vide* JL; no age reported), one at Bergeronnes 31 Jul+ (E & V. Bouchard), and one 3 Jun–15 Jul at Lac-Kénogami, Métabetchouan, and Sainte-Monique, three locales of the e. part of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region. A female Ruddy Duck with 7 ducklings at Saint-Fulgence 25 Jul provided a first nesting record for the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region (R. Poulin, N. Gagné).

A serious candidate for “the Bird of the Year Award,” an ad. male **Mississippi Kite** was enjoyed by many observers at Amos, Abitibi 6–29 Jun (C. Béland, m. ob., ph. M. Lafleur). The Abitibi region, located 500 km nw. of Montréal, has now provided Québec with three new species in the last four years, including a White-faced Ibis in 1997 and a Common Crane in 1999. The presence of ad. Bald Eagles in increasing numbers in the Estrie region might herald future nesting s. of the St. Lawrence R. Summering Rough-legged Hawks were abnormally common all along the St. Lawrence valley throughout the period. Single ad. Golden Eagles made untimely appearances at Gracefield 9 Jun (D. St-H et al.) and Hébertville 13 Jul (M. Tremblay, D. Gervais).

A pair of Sandhill Cranes with a flightless young at Moffet 20 Jul represented a first breeding record for the Témiscamingue region (R. Roy, *vide* J. Fréchette), while a bird at Bryson 12 Jun was noteworthy so far s. (M. Lalancette, P. Houde). For the 2nd consecutive year, a pair of Willets nested at Dune du Nord, Îles de la Madeleine (DGG, CA. Gaudet, C. Roy). One Willet was found, of all places, along Selbaie Road, in the middle of the boreal forest 27 Jun, providing a 2nd record for the Abitibi region (P. Drapeau, *vide* R. Deschênes).

Always rare, an imm. Long-tailed Jaeger was spotted from the Trois-Pistoles ferry 14 Jun (CG, CA). Great Black-backed Gulls appeared to be doing well in the Montréal area, as evidenced by the four pairs successfully nesting at the Lachine rapids (PB, JC. Sorel). A new colony of Black-legged Kittiwakes comprised of 137 nests was discovered 24 Jun near Les Escoumins at the w. limit of the species's range (CG, J. Desbiens, A. Boily). Caspian Terns are increasingly common in summer in s. Québec, where peak counts were 7 at Longueuil 17 Jun, 12 off Île des Soeurs 23 Jun, 12 at Île Charron 2–18 Jul, 20 at Maple Grove 7 Jul, and 13 at Île



Grosbois 8 Jul (*vide* PB); smaller groups were scattered throughout the Region. An early juv. was at Maple Grove 22 Jul, but local breeding remains to be confirmed. Two ad. *Chlidonias* terns flying away from the observer at Île Charron, Boucherville 23 Jun were believed to be **White-winged Terns** (Y. Gauthier). Both birds exhibited immaculate white tail and rump as well as white upperwings, contrasting with black head and body. Unfortunately, the underwing pattern could not be seen. Although there are now six records in the province, this is the first sighting involving two ads.

**OWLS THROUGH SPARROWS**

The Barred Owl nested well e. of its normal range in the province, as shown by the presence of an ad. and a juv. 5 Jul at Mont-Sainte-Geneviève, 36 km e. of Havre-Saint-Pierre on the lower North Shore (Y. Rochepault, CB). In the wake of last winter's invasion, an ad. and 2 juv. Great Gray Owls were found 15 Jul in the Réserve faunique des Laurentides, well outside their normal breeding range (Y. Hamel, J. Desmeules). Also exceptional was a pair at Pointe-au-Père for most of Jul (J. Marcoux, S. Rhéaume, m. ob.).

A Red-headed Woodpecker reported at Sainte-Pétronille 29 Jun–1 Jul represented the northernmost sighting for the summer (C. Touzin). The Abitibi region was graced by a singing Sedge Wren at Arntfield 6–7 Jun, the first ever for the area (F. Bédard). Most probably related to the unprecedented movement of Northern Wheatears in Newfoundland last Spring, 2 males of this species were found at Grande-Entrée, Îles de la Madeleine 7 Jun (CT, ML). For a 3rd consecutive year, the Golden-winged Warbler was almost absent from the Region (*vide* SD); no breeding attempts were noted even at sites where it used to nest. It is hard to explain the “crash” of the species considering the relative health of its habitat and the absence of the competitive Blue-winged Warbler in the Region. A Clay-colored Sparrow hybridized with a Chipping Sparrow at Saint-Fidèle 1 Jun–4 Jul (M. Robert).

The first Vesper Sparrow in Îles de la Madeleine since 1978 made a brief appearance at Pointe-aux-Loups 18 Jun (CT, ML). A totally unexpected Grasshopper Sparrow at Val d'Espoir 20 Jun–22 Jul represented the first ever for the Gaspésie region (M. Larivée, O. Deruelle). In its normal range in the sw. regions, the species seems to be disappearing, mainly on account of habitat loss; nevertheless, a pair was found carrying food at Saint-Lazare 21 Jun (PB), and singles were located at Charteris and at Yarm in Pontiac region 15 Jul

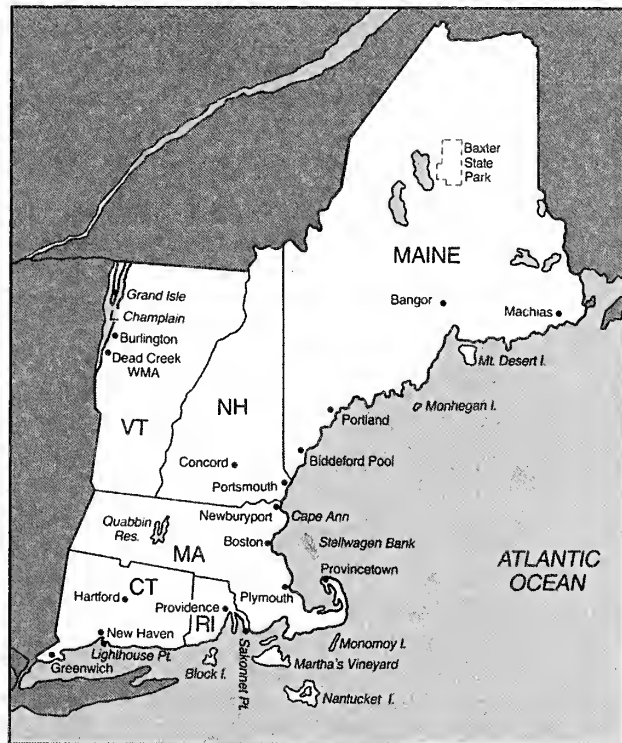
(D. St-H, G. Desjardins). Finally, Abitibi's first Lark Sparrow was a one-day wonder at Val-Senneville 21 Jun (S. Lehouiller).

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# New England



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**W**eather during the period was relatively uneventful this year. June was notably sunny and warm, with temperatures averaging several degrees above normal in Boston, even though rainfall actually exceeded the average by almost 2 inches. Jul was also sunny, but the month was dry and very cool, with the temperature averaging nearly four degrees Fahrenheit below normal. There seemed to be little indication that weather during the period had any appreciable effect on breeding bird populations, unlike the rainy and snowy March that definitely impacted nesting success of early

breeders such as Bald Eagles and possibly several other raptor species.

A brief summary of Regional breeding-season highlights includes the discovery of a new nesting locality for Leach's Storm-Petrels at the extreme southern terminus of the species's breeding range in New England; further indication of the negative impact of nesting Double-crested Cormorants on colonial water-bird nesting sites; confirmation that Common Eiders have firmly consolidated their breeding range to include Boston Harbor; indications that gull-removal programs in Massachusetts are beginning to pay dividends for breeding terns; information that Boreal Owls nested in northern New England; and a reminder that Chuck-will's-widows still remain to be confirmed as a breeding species in New England.

In addition to the above, notable rarities in

New England this season included Anhinga, a continuing (from May) Swainson's Warbler, and an extraordinarily late Dovekie in Massachusetts; a Painted Bunting in New Hampshire; and a White-faced Ibis and a Western Meadowlark in Maine.

**Abbreviations:** M.D.F.W. (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife); Muskeget I. (*Nantucket*, MA); Noman's Land I. (*Dukes*, MA); N. & S. Monomoy I. (Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, *Barnstable*, MA); Plum I. (Parker River N.W.R., Newbury/Rowley, *Essex*, MA); S. Beach (South Beach, Chatham, *Barnstable*, MA); Tuckernuck I. (*Nantucket*, MA).

### LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Most notable among several typical early-summer Red-throated Loon reports was a bird in the Connecticut R. at East Haddam, *Middlesex*, CT 16 Jun (J. Morin, *vide* GH). In Vermont, a total of 34 nesting pairs of Common Loons successfully reared 48 young, the greatest productivity in the state since 1978 (*vide* E. Hanson). Farther s., Massachusetts hosted 23 pairs, 11 of which fledged 8 young (*vide* BB). Pied-billed Grebes made news in Massachusetts when a pair raised 3 young at Willowdale State Forest, Ipswich, *Essex*, the first confirmed nesting in that county in many years (JB). "Tardy" best describes a Horned Grebe at Essex, *Middlesex*, CT 11 Jun (A. Griswold, *vide* GH).

Overall, inshore tubenose numbers were typical of recent past seasonal totals, with the notable exception of a robust count of 6 Cory's Shearwaters, 350 Sooty Shearwaters, 60 Manx Shearwaters, 850 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, and 6 Leach's Storm-Petrels tallied off S. Beach 29 Jul (JT). A three-hour seawatch that logged 61 Manx Shearwaters at Andrew's Point, Rockport, *Essex*, MA 26 Jul (RH) was equally noteworthy. More interesting was the discovery of at least three pairs of Leach's Storm-Petrels nesting on Noman's Land off Martha's Vineyard 13 Jun (TF), thus establishing a 2nd Massachusetts location for this species at the s. terminus of its breeding range in the Atlantic Ocean.

Disquieting news on the burgeoning Double-crested Cormorant front was suggested by the fact that on Little Gould I. in the Sakonnet R., RI, a cormorant colony that started with a single pair in 1987 and grew to 753 pairs in 1996 has now declined to 596 pairs, apparently because guano from the colony is killing the nest trees and rendering the island unacceptable to both cormorants and nesting herons (RF *vide* DE)! **Anhingas** in Massachusetts continue to tantalize those not



Another tale of northward is expansion is that of Black Vulture into New England. This bird was photographed smartly on 2 July 2001 at Halibut Point, Rockport, Massachusetts, just a stone's throw from the surf! *Photograph by Byard Cobb.*

able to be at the right place at the right time to see them; however, this season singles at Essex, *Essex* 17 Jun (TY) and Avon, *Norfolk* 19 Jun (RT) were especially well seen and described in flight.

The confirmed breeding of Least Bittern in Massachusetts at Rockport and Willowdale State Forest, Ipswich, *Essex* (v. o.) is noteworthy in light of the fact that the species is listed as Endangered in the Bay State. Elsewhere in Massachusetts, a count of fledgling wading birds at Kettle I., *Essex* 18 Jul (SP) included 140 Great Egrets, 300 Snowy Egrets, 10+ Little Blue Herons, 4 Tricolored Herons (the first confirmed Bay State nesting since the mid-1970s), and 30+ Glossy Ibises. Tricolored Herons also nested at Stratton I., Saco, *York*, ME for the first time since 1997 (*vide* KG). In Rhode Island, heron and egret nest tallies from the Sakonnet R./Narragansett Bay region included 219 Great Egrets, 86 Snowy Egrets, 16 Little Blue Herons, one Cattle Egret, 275 Black-crowned Night-Herons, and 185 Glossy Ibis (RF, *vide* DE). Practically all Ocean State wading bird species except Great Egret have shown notable declines since the 1970s, and this year's ibis total was the 2nd lowest in over a decade. Of special note was the reappearance 8–14 Jul of a **White-faced Ibis** in "fading plumage," originally seen in May at Scarborough, *Cumberland*, ME (LB, RL). Although there was speculation about the possibility of breeding (with what?) at nearby Stratton I., there was apparently no firm evidence to support such a claim.

Black Vultures continue to consolidate their claim in s. New England, as indicated by multiple reports from w. Massachusetts, including a bird sitting on rocks within 100 feet of the ocean (!) at Halibut Point S.P., Rockport, *Essex*, MA 2 Jul (ph. B. Cobb) and a road-killed individual found at Derby, *New Haven*, CT (*vide* GH).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

A reminder of the lateness of their migration and the overland track of their spring flight was provided by a Brant at Errol, *Coos*, NH 5 Jun (G. Gavutis) and 150 at Florence, *Hampshire*, MA 7 Jun (TG). A Northern Shoveler in the Lordship marshes in Stratford, *Fairfield*, CT 13 Jul (MS) was intriguing in that it was at a locality known to have hosted other uncommon breeding puddle duck species in the Nutmeg State. Waterfowl on the tardy side of the ledger included Ring-necked Ducks at Plum I. 6 Jun (RH), W. Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard 10–12 Jun (G. Ben David, *vide* B.O.) and Hadley, *Hampshire* 28 Jun (C. Gentes, *vide* B.O.); a Long-tailed Duck at Rockport, *Essex*, MA 26 Jul (J. Barber, *vide* B.O.); 2 Common Goldeneyes at Trustom Pond N.W.R., RI 18 Jul (CR); and a Ruddy Duck at Southwick, *Hampden*, MA 1 Jun (SK) and 2 at Melrose, *Middlesex*, MA 14–15 Jul (D. & I. Jewell). An amazing tally of 214 Common Eider ducklings in Boston Harbor, *Suffolk*, MA 8 Jun (P. Paton) suggests that this species has finally established a substantial Bay State breeding population

away from Buzzards Bay. Common Mergansers made news by breeding only a few mi from Bridgeport, *Fairfield* (D. Varza, *vide* GH), part of the gradual southward spread of this species as a breeder in Connecticut.

The continued recovery of Regional Osprey populations is perhaps best reflected by the fact that 41 nests fledged 77 young in Vermont, where numbers have exceeded the recovery goal set for delisting the species in 1994. The next step in the Vermont recovery plan is to try to link the Green Mountain State Osprey population with populations in Massachusetts and Connecticut by establishing a "breeding corridor" along the Connecticut R (*vide* L. Garland). The now-annual early summer appearance of Mississippi Kite in Massachusetts was this year provided by singles at N. Truro and Yarmouth, *Barnstable* 4 Jun (D. Manchester, *vide* B.O.) and 6 Jun (B. Loughran, P. Trimble, *vide* B.O.); another was at Oxford, *New Haven*, CT 24 Jun (K and B. Finnan, *vide* GH). Bald Eagles showed a similarly positive, though less dramatic, trend, as indicated by the presence of 3 nests at L. Umbagog, *Coos*, NH (*vide* WT), 12 territorial pairs in Massachusetts, 5 of which successfully fledged 10 young (*vide* TF), and a new pair in Connecticut's Housatonic R. drainage, a first successful breeding away from the Connecticut R. (*vide* GH). The confirmed nesting of Northern Harriers at Plum I. was the first in *Essex* in 40 years (RH). Elsewhere, six pairs of harriers raised 16 young at Tuckernuck I., MA (*vide* RV), and a pair was present throughout the period at Stratford, *Fairfield*, CT (*vide* GH). Sharp-shinned Hawks fledged 3 young at Willowdale State Forest, Ipswich, MA, for the 2nd confirmed nesting in *Essex* in as many years (JB). The almost meteoric increase and spread of Cooper's Hawks in s. New England was intimated by the presence of a nesting pair at unlikely (?) Tuckernuck I., MA (RV), and another pair nesting 30 feet above a well-used suburban driveway in Natick, *Middlesex*, MA (E. Taylor). Despite continued concern over diminishing American Kestrel numbers throughout the Region, a nest box trail maintained in cranberry bogs in *Plymouth*, MA this year produced 117 young from 38 occupied nest boxes out of a total of 65 boxes monitored (JM). Out-of-season migrant Merlins included singles at Truro, *Barnstable*, MA 6 Jun (MF), Plum I. 14 Jun (JS), and Grafton, *Worcester*, MA 22 Jul (ML), and nesting was confirmed at Hanover, *Grafton*, NH (*vide* WT) and Morrisville, *Lamoille*, VT 28 Jul (*vide* AA), and probable breeding took place at Camden, *Knox*, ME (*vide* JD). Information available at the time of writing indicates that 12 nesting

pairs of Peregrine Falcons in New Hampshire represented a modern-day high total, and in Massachusetts, four out of five breeding pairs successfully fledged 13 young (*vide* TF).

### RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The ever-elusive King Rail was reported from three Massachusetts localities this season (*vide* B.O.), and a total of 8 Virginia Rails at Noman's Land off Martha's Vineyard 16 Jul (RL) seemed like a surprisingly remote location for such a number. Aside from birds at two traditional Maine localities, the only Common Moorhen reported was one in Brookfield, *Worcester*, MA 3 Jun (ML). This species continues to decline in s. New England as many historic breeding localities change, either through natural wetland succession or by becoming overrun and despoiled by exotic or invasive vegetation. As has increasingly become the custom in recent years, no fewer than 3 Sandhill Cranes were present in both New Hampshire and Maine during the period (*vide* WT & JD).

American Golden-Plovers were somewhat unseasonal at Plymouth, *Plymouth*, MA 3 Jun (WP) and Duxbury, *Plymouth*, MA 3 Jul (DC), as were a Willet of the race *inornatus* at S. Beach 13 Jun (BN) and a lingering Purple Sandpiper at Seavey I., Isles of Shoals, NH 2-6 Jul (RS, AL *vide* WT). A Marbled Godwit at S. Monomoy I. 23 Jun (RL), a Curlew Sandpiper at Plum I. 27 Jun (RH), a Ruff at Monomoy I. 23-26 Jun (RL, BN), and 2 Red Phalaropes off Cutler, *Washington*, ME 23 Jun (PL) were also somewhat out of season. Based upon reports of a pair of American Oystercatchers with 2 young in the vicinity of Saco Bay, *York*, ME, it seems probable that the species nested successfully at Stratton I. again this year (*vide* JD).

Among the more notable tallies of tarrying northbound species were 250 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Plum I. 6 Jun (RH) and 45 White-rumped Sandpipers at both Plum I. 4 Jun (RH) and N. Monomoy I. 8 Jun (BN). Of the early southbound species, the most interesting were 7 Hudsonian Godwits at S. Beach 26 Jun (BN) and a Stilt Sandpiper at Plum I. 28-30 Jun (P. Brown et al.). Birds whose direction of migration was indeterminate included a Whimbrel at S. Wellfleet, *Barnstable* 19 Jun (J. Sones), another at Martha's Vineyard 13 Jun (MP, PL), and 95 Red Knots at South Beach 26 Jun (BN). The knots were likely southbound or overwintering. Peak shorebird counts made at South Beach included 1400 Semipalmated Plovers, 220 Willets, 95 Hudsonian Godwits, 2000 Red Knots, 3500 Sanderlings, 4000 Semipalmated Sandpipers, and 3200 Short-billed Dowitchers 27 Jul (RH, BN). Other seasonal high tallies were 480 summering Black-

bellied Plovers at S. Beach (BN), 750 Lesser Yellowlegs at Newburyport, *Essex* 12 Jul (RH), 6500 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Plum I. 24 Jul (RH), and 42 Stilt Sandpipers at Plum I. 22 Jul (RH). The continued presence of 2-3 Wilson's Phalaropes apparently holding territory at Plum I. throughout Jun suggests that they nested this year, just as they have presumably done irregularly since 1979 (v. o.).

### JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS

Jaeger totals were unexceptional this season, although reports of a South Polar Skua and 7 Pomarine Jaegers at Cox's Ledge s. of Block I., RI 3 Jun (CN) and a group of 9 Pomarine Jaegers observed following the clearing of an onshore fog bank at Sakonnet Point, *Newport*, RI 24 Jun (RE) were of interest. At L. Champlain, VT, where seabird watches have become increasingly organized in recent years, at least 4 jaegers were sighted during Jul (*vide* AA).

A Laughing Gull at Cabot, *Washington*, VT 15 Jul (*vide* AA) was notable so far inland, but it was eclipsed by an ad. Franklin's Gull at Plum I. 12 Jun (RH), where one to 2 Little Gulls and up to 3 Black-headed Gulls were also seen throughout most of the period (RH, v. o.). Perhaps more significant was the fact that the Massachusetts Laughing Gull breeding population of 1322 pairs was a 21% increase over last year and virtually represented a new modern-day high count (*vide* BB). Out-of-season Iceland Gulls included singles at Portland, *Cumberland*, ME 14 Jun (PL, LB et al.) and Bar Harbor, *Hancock*, ME 20-31 Jul (WTo). After last summer's Lesser Black-backed Gull explosion on Cape Cod, a high count of 4 at S. Beach 27 Jul (RH) seemed paltry; however, a tally of 26 Black-legged Kittiwakes at Chatham, *Barnstable*, MA 30 Jun (BN) was certainly unexpected.

Despite the presence of 2 Caspian Terns at Young I., L. Champlain, VT 23 Jul (*vide* AA), apparently no nesting evidence was obtained following last summer's tantalizing suggestion of the possibility. The only other Caspian Tern reports were of 5 individuals at three Bay State locations during Jun and early Jul (B.O.). Of 6 Royal Terns reported throughout the Region, one at Biddeford, *Saco*, ME 15 Jun (PM) was farthest north, but even more interesting was a Sandwich Tern at Stratton I., *Saco*, ME 18 Jun (PM) that represented only the 10th (?) record for the Pine Tree State. At White I. and Seavey I., Isles of Shoals, NH, a pair of Roseate Terns fledged one young for the first time ever among a colony of 800 pairs of Common Terns (DH, AL). Less heartening was the 20% decline in Roseate Tern pairs in the Bay State, down to

1697 pairs, from the last season; however, the reasons for the decline are unknown (*vide* BB). Common Terns received mixed reviews at Rock I. and Popasquash I., L. Champlain, VT, where 175 pairs represented the highest total since the 1980s, although the 14 surviving chicks was the worst productivity in 14 years (*vide* M. LeBarr). Farther s., at Muskeget I., MA, 165 nesting pairs of Common Terns represented a giant step in a recovery effort to get nesting terns back to that historic colony site (RV), and the Massachusetts state total of 14,378 pairs represented the highest since 1970 (*vide* BB). A pair of Forster's Terns present at Plum I. throughout Jun (RH) offered no indication of breeding this year. The only conclusive breeding of Black Skimmers in the Region was provided by approximately three pairs that fledged chicks at Cockenoe I., Norwalk, Fairfield, CT (A. Hand, *vide* GH) and three pairs at Monomoy (*vide* BB).

The alcid of the season was a **Dovekie** observed at Nahant, Essex, MA 23 Jun and 8 Jul (J. Jokela, RH) that established an extraordinarily late state record, if not a late date for the entire Region. Less remarkable, but nonetheless notable, was a Common Murre at Chatham, Barnstable, MA 1 Jun (PF), 3 Razorbills at Menemsha, Martha's Vineyard, throughout Jul (R. Cohen, VL et al.), and single Atlantic Puffins at Noman's Land off Martha's Vineyard 13 Jun (TF) and Plum I. 15 Jul (RH), with 3 at Rockport, Essex, MA 26 Jul (RH).

## DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

Enigmatic was a **European Turtle-Dove** killed by an automobile at Tuckernuck I., Nantucket, MA 19 Jul (N. Brewer, RV). Especially intriguing is the fact that increasing numbers of this species are appearing in Iceland, and in May 2001, a turtle-dove was recorded on the French island of St. Pierre in Atlantic Canada (*N.A.B.* 55:3). Slightly encouraging news about Massachusetts's beleaguered Short-eared Owl population came that two pairs raised 6 young at Tuckernuck I. and one pair raised 2 young at Nantucket I. (RV). If these insular breeding efforts cease, this species will be virtually extirpated as a breeder in New England.

A minimum of 11 calling Chuck-will's-widows at Martha's Vineyard 12 Jun (VL, PL) underscores with irony the fact that this species has yet to be confirmed as a breeder in New England. Likewise, a robust total of 59 Whip-poor-wills at Lancaster, Worcester, MA 14 Jun (RL) during a now-annual survey reinforces the value of monitoring known, high-density areas for this Regionally declining species. The scarcity of Red-headed

**SA**The most extraordinary discovery of the summer was the confirmation of nesting **Boreal Owls** in New England. Although the actual breeding confirmation did not come until early Aug, the genesis of the story occurred in the White Mountains of New Hampshire on 29 Jul, when Rob Sawyer and his son were hiking at 4310 ft on Mt. Pierce, Bean's Grant, Coos. Much to their surprise and delight, at 0730, the fortunate twosome discovered an ad. Boreal Owl along the trail they were hiking. The owl let them approach within 10 ft before flying and landing ahead of them several times, ultimately disappearing into the heavy spruce forest adjacent the trail. This remarkable sighting ultimately led to the discovery and videotaping of at least one juv. Boreal Owl in the same vicinity on 4 Aug (SM). More specific details and location information of this remarkable discovery will be included in a subsequent seasonal report; however, suffice it to say that this event marks the first confirmed breeding of this species in the e. United States.

This, however, is not the end of the story. Incredibly, in neighboring Vermont, a Boreal Owl flew into a mist net set for Bicknell's Thrushes, and subsequently a bird was heard vocalizing several times in the same area throughout Jun (K. McFarland et al., *vide* SM)! This is a story whose final chapter has yet to be written.

Woodpeckers in the Region was reflected by only two reports of singles at Pittsfield, Berkshire, MA (M. Thorne, *vide* B.O.) and Weston, Middlesex, MA 13–20 Jul (B. Fullerton, *vide* B.O.). Even more unusual was the presence of a pair of Three-toed Woodpeckers at Bethlehem, Grafton, NH 13–18 Jun (D. & G. McDonald, C. Bretton *vide* WT). This elusive woodpecker surely ranks as one of the rarest resident species in the Region.

A single-locality migration total of 4 Olive-sided Flycatchers at Martin Burns W.M.A., Newbury, Essex, MA 1 Jun (S. Hedman, *vide* B.O.) was well above most counts in recent years. Two Acadian Flycatchers at Martha's Vineyard 13 Jun (PL, MP) were at the same location where the species was first conclusively confirmed as a breeder last year. In light of the species's steady decline in e. Massachusetts, a count of 30 Least Flycatchers at Barre Falls

Dam, Barre, Worcester, MA 16 Jun (ML) was encouraging. Also in respect to this species, it is interesting to note that in 14 years of forest breeding bird monitoring at Hiram Fox W.M.A., Chester, Hampden, MA, Least Flycatchers declined from a high total of 27 birds in the early years to *one* this season, apparently in response to habitat changes produced by the forest-cutting practices of the mid-1990s (*vide* M.D.F.W.). The Region's only Scissor-tailed Flycatcher appeared at Topsham, Cumberland, ME 14 Jun–3 Jul (C. Jack et al., *vide* JD). "Seasonally anomalous" best describes the one-day appearance of a Loggerhead Shrike at Scarborough, Cumberland, ME 7 Jun (G. Shriver, *vide* JD). Yellow-throated Vireos were said to be more numerous than usual in cen. Massachusetts this summer (GL), and the presence of a Blue-headed Vireo at Tiverton, Newport, RI 17 Jun (RE) for the 2nd year in a row suggested the possibility of a modest range extension within the Ocean State. That Fish Crows are now established throughout Cape Cod in summer was indicated by one at Truro, Barnstable, MA 4 Jun (MF). Five Sedge Wren reports included 2 at Hadley, Hampshire, MA 1–5 Jun (B. Kane, *vide* B.O.), 2 at Durham, Strafford, NH 25–31 Jul (ph. SM), and one at Wesley, Washington, ME 10 Jul (*vide* JD). A comprehensive census by canoe of what may be the Bay State's largest colony recorded 304 singing Marsh Wrens along the North River, Plymouth, MA 14 Jun (DC, D. Peacock). **Northern Wheatears** made unusual early-summer appearances at Pondicherry W.R., Jefferson, Coos, NH 3 Jun (D. Govatski, J. Fyon, *vide* WT) and Rochester, Windsor, VT 24 Jun (H. & H. Brown, *vide* AA). These were likely tied to the influx of the species in the Northeast in late May.

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

As Golden-winged Warblers continue to decline in New England, this year a glimmer of hope came from the Nutmeg State, where four to six pairs were noted between Cornwell, Litchfield (M. Dahl, *vide* GH) and two locations in Canaan, Litchfield (J. Zipp, *vide* GH). A Tennessee Warbler at Wellfleet, Barnstable, MA 29 Jun (MF) was anomalous, as were a Northern Parula at Nantucket I. 27 Jun (S. Langer, *vide* B.O.) and a Bay-breasted Warbler at Barre, Worcester, MA 21 Jul (ML). However, a Northern Parula at Middleborough, Plymouth, MA 22 Jul (WP) was thought to be on territory at one of the few suspected nesting sites in Massachusetts. Four Cerulean Warblers on Mt. Holyoke, Hampshire, MA in Jun (GL) was quite a concentration for the Bay State, and at least one bird was back at Pawtucketaway S.P.,



Rockingham, NH 9 Jun (A. Delorey, v.o., *fide* WT). A singing **Swainson's Warbler** originally discovered in May remained at Naushon I., *Dukes*, MA until 3 Jun (S. Storer, *fide* B.O.). Always among the earliest fall warbler migrants, a Northern Waterthrush at Boston, *Suffolk*, MA 27 Jul (G. Tepke *fide* B.O.) was right on schedule. Louisiana Waterthrushes feeding young at Manchester 24 Jun (RH) confirmed a new, and only the 2nd known, breeding locality in *Essex*, MA. A Yellow-breasted Chat at Truro, *Barnstable*, MA 6 Jun (MF) was assumed to be a late migrant.

Out-of-place sparrows included Clay-colored Sparrow at Lancaster, *Worcester*, MA 12 Jun–6 Jul (RL), a Lark Sparrow at Tuckernuck I., MA 25 Jul (RV), and a Dark-eyed Junco at Melrose, *Middlesex*, MA 27 Jun (D. & I. Jewell, *fide* B.O.). In the absence of comprehensive grassland sparrow survey data this season, the most notable reports were 100 Vesper Sparrows at Columbia Falls, *Washington*, ME 26 Jun (N. Famous, *fide* JD) and 46 Grasshopper Sparrows at Lancaster, *Worcester*, MA 6 Jul (RL). A **Painted Bunting** at New Castle, *Rockingham*,

NH 11-13 Jun (v.o., *fide* WT) was one of very few records for the Granite State. Dickcissels in Connecticut at Hampden, *Middlesex* 4–5 Jun (J. Zipp, *fide* GH) and Litchfield, *Litchfield* 9 Jun (MS) appeared to be migrants or wandering birds.

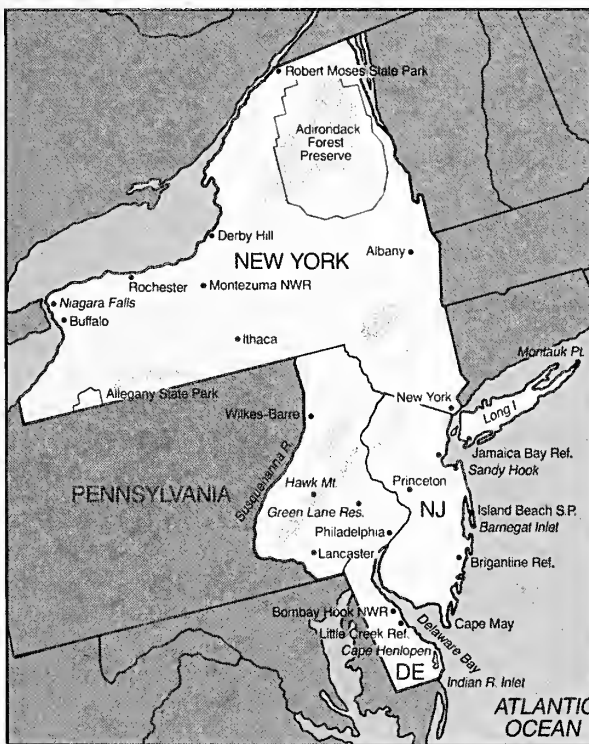
A **Western Meadowlark** discovered in May was still present at Norridgewock, *Somerset*, ME 14 Jun (WSL. Bevier, v.o., *fide* JD). Curiously, this species has notably declined as a vagrant to New England since the 1960s and 1970s, when it was significantly more regular. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were represented by singles at E. Kingston, *Rockingham*, NH 4 Jun (ph. SM) and Milford Point, *New Haven*, CT 5 Jun (F. McBride, *fide* GH). At the species's only breeding station in New England, a pair of Boat-tailed Grackles raised 3 young at Stratford, *Fairfield*, CT (D. Varza, *fide* GH). In Massachusetts, Orchard Orioles bred in Cheshire for the first confirmed nesting in *Berkshire* since 1948 (C. Quinlan), and a pair at Portland, *Cumberland*, nested at the species's only known breeding locality in the Pine Tree State (KG, *fide* JD). Seasonally extralimital

were pairs of Evening Grosbeaks at Barkhamsted, *Litchfield*, CT 22 Jun (D. Pelletier, *fide* GH), Carlisle, *Middlesex*, MA 20 Jun (D. Brownrigg, *fide* B.O.), and Mattapoisett, *Plymouth*, MA 7 Jul (M. LaBossiere, *fide* B.O.).

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# Hudson-Delaware



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**A**fter a wet late May, summer was dry, especially in the north. June had hot, humid periods, exceeding 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the Adirondacks, whereas July was more comfortable—a generally favorable breeding season weatherwise. Pelagic birding was exciting off Long Island and New Jersey 23–24 June, from shore as well as at sea, apparently coinciding with the presence of a plume of warmer water. In a relatively uneventful summer otherwise, rarities included Brown Boobies, the Region's second Little Egret, and a White-winged Dove.

Amidst relentless habitat degradation in the Region, we can celebrate a few victories. In the Port of Wilmington, state and local officials are restoring 190 acres of wetland as the Russell W. Peterson Urban Wildlife Refuge.

This downtown wetland with its skyscraper backdrop could rival New York's Jamaica Bay and Philadelphia's John W. Heinz Refuge (Tinicum). Piping Plovers rallied under stringent protection measures, and herons nested in New York harbor in numbers unimaginable 30 years ago. New York state's birders are producing a second atlas, twenty years after their first. This represents the first such follow-up effort, and some early results this summer proved of interest.

**Abbreviations:** Bombay Hook (Bombay Hook N.W.R., near Smyrna, DE); Brig (Brigantine Unit, Edward P. Forsythe N.W.R., *Atlantic*, NJ); Conejohela Flats (Susquehanna R. at Washington Boro, *Lancaster*, PA); Fort Drum (Fort Drum Military Installation, Watertown, *Jefferson*, NY); The Four Brothers (islands in L. Champlain, off Willsboro, *Essex*, NY); Jamaica Bay (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York City); Lakehurst (Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station, *Ocean*, NJ); L. I. (Long Island, NY); N.Y.D.E.C. (New York Department of Environmental Conservation).

## LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS

A survey of 130 upstate New York lakes and ponds 21 Jul by 200 volunteers for the new Adirondack Cooperative Loon Program found 306 adults, 59 chicks, and 6 imm. Common Loons (JO, N. Schoch). These figures start a new baseline, as earlier surveys were less thorough. Pied-billed Grebes, recently rated Endangered in Delaware, bred in three places in the n. of the state: Brandywine Town Center, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Natural Area, and Bombay Hook. The best place for them in e. Pennsylvania was Glen Morgan L., *Berks*, where 11 ads. and 15 chicks were observed 2 Jun (K. Lebo). Another fine population was 14 at Fort Drum (JBo). For the 2nd Jul in a row and 3rd time since 1997, a post-breeding Eared Grebe appeared 14 Jul and lingered at the Batavia W.T.P., *Genesee*, NY (BK, WW). The same individual(s) may be involved.

Tube-noses were abundant close to Long Island and the New Jersey shore 23–24 Jun but relatively scarce off Delaware. It was exceptional to see about 60 shearwaters, mostly Greater, near the surf line off Democrat Pt., *Suffolk*, L. I. (PLi, SM), as well as a few Greater inside adjacent Jones Inlet 23 Jun (RJK). Another floated past astonished swimmers at Monmouth Beach, *Monmouth*, NJ 24 Jun (D. Sutherland). Out of Barnegat, NJ toward Wilmington Canyon, also 24 Jun, a count of 400–500 Greater Shearwaters was high (B. Johnson). The only Manx Shearwaters reported were 2 ca. 20 mi s. of Montauk Pt., L.I. 12 Jul (S. Biasetti). Many

Wilson's Storm-Petrels came within a half-mile of Montauk 24 Jun (D. Heglund), and the same day, in bad weather, 37 were in the surf line near Cape Henlopen, DE (A. Dudley). One or 2 Leach's Storm-Petrels 9 Jun out of Lewes, DE constituted the 3rd Jun observation in a row; there are very few state records (APE, FONT).

Two **Brown Boobies** were convincingly described off Long Beach I., *Ocean*, NJ 8 Jun (D. & M. Burk), a 6th state record approved by the state's records committee. A few imm. Northern Gannets always summer offshore, but 65 passing Cape Henlopen in three hours in bad weather 23 Jun (A. Dudley) made for a Delaware summer high count. Although Brown Pelicans were scarce elsewhere, numbers took up residence in Barnegat Bay in mid-Jul. On 31 Jul, 420 were there, two-thirds of them ads. One partial nest was observed here, as in 1992 and 1994 (JBr, M. Gochfeld, FL). For the 3rd summer, the N.Y.D.E.C. oiled 5044 Double-crested Cormorant nests on Little Galloo I., in e. L. Ontario. Only 50 pairs fledged young, but since cormorant populations on the Canadian shore are uncontrolled, this program has uncertain effects (BL). Elsewhere, cormorant growth may be levelling off by natural processes and human disturbance. The New York harbor rookeries decreased slightly to 1178 nests (1312 last year), partly because the owners of Hoffman I. cut some trees (PK). A new footpath reduced the Stony Brook, L. I. colony from 75+ to three nests (D. Futuyama). On the other hand, the Four Brothers colony in L. Champlain vaulted from 1346 nests last year to 2437 (JMCP). Details of an **Anhinga** soaring over Hartshorne Woods Park, *Monmouth*, NJ 4 Jun (SB, LM) have been submitted to the New Jersey Bird Records Committee. Eight prior records have been accepted, mostly of birds in spring, and records have been increasing since 1990.

## HERONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

The New York City Audubon Society's Harbor Herons Project, in its 18th year, censused 1,655 nests of nine species on 13 islands (PK). This is remarkable success for an area empty of heronries before the Clean Waters Act began to take effect in the 1970s. Overall figures were roughly stable though slightly below the 1995 peak of nearly 2000 nests. The commonest species was Black-crowned Night Heron (63% of the total), followed by Snowy Egret (14%), Great Egret (13%), and Glossy Ibis (8%). A remarkable 34 American and 3 Least Bitterns were at Fort Drum (JBo), a density probably unmatched elsewhere in the Region. A stealthy kayaker confirmed the first Least Bittern fledgling in *Chester*, PA at Marsh Creek S.P. 19 Jun (J. McNamara). Up to 5 at Bombay Hook and 3

calling at Prime Hook N.W.R. 2 Jun (APE, FR) were good Delaware summer records.

The season's prize find was a **Little Egret** in breeding plumage, photographed at Bombay Hook 8–9 Jun (B. Cooper, J. Halpins) but undetectable afterwards among hundreds of other white waders. This was the 2nd regional record, following another in Delaware in Apr–Aug 1999. Cattle Egret populations have collapsed Regionwide. New York harbor nests have declined from over 100 in the early 1990s to three this summer (PK). Seven ads. were all the more remarkable at the Four Brothers 9 Jun (JMCP), where 20 bred in 1994. New York harbor is probably the n. breeding limit for Yellow-crowned Night Herons (two nests, down from 14 in 1995). Surprisingly, a pair fledged 4 young inland at Allendale, *Bergen*, NJ (S. Thomas, R. Fanning), far from their usual fiddler crab diet.

This summer's White Ibis, an imm., was near Mt. Gretna, *Lebanon*, PA 8–14 Jul (ph. D. Wheeler). When all the figures are in, Glossy Ibis will probably show major declines Regionwide, hopefully only part of a cyclical pattern. The New York harbor population was down from 271 nests in 1995 to 125+ this summer. One was a very good find at the Four Brothers 9 Jun (JMCP), where a pair bred in 1999, and a *Plegadis*, probably this species, was rare, though not unprecedented, at Buffalo 21 Jun (BK). Single White-faced Ibis at Brig through 24 Jun, Cape May on 29 Jun, and Bombay Hook were about par. First identified in the Region in 1977, they are now annual.

A Northern Shoveler, the Region's least common breeding puddle duck, had ducklings at Batavia W.T.P., *Genesee*, NY 8 Jul (G. Seamans). Among many summering nonbreeding diving ducks, a King Eider was noteworthy at Cape Henlopen, DE in late Jul (DH et al.). Common Eiders apparently nested again on Fisher's I., off e. Long Island, where New York's first breeding was recorded last summer; these would be the southernmost breeders anywhere.

## RAPTORS THROUGH GROUSE

Five species of raptor (Osprey, Red-tailed and Cooper's Hawks, Peregrine Falcon, and American Kestrel) and three species of owl (Barn, Eastern Screech-, and Great Horned) were confirmed breeding within New York City (RDeC). Osprey had variable success. They "really exploded" in Delaware, with 95 nests, 87 of them in *Sussex*. A pair nested successfully in Wilmington, and seven pairs fledged 13 young in New York City. On e. Long Island, however, productivity was poor (M. Scheibel), perhaps suggesting a food shortage.

The usual Mississippi Kites lingered sporadically into summer at Cape May, a subad. and an



Though South Polar Skua is well known as a late May through June migrant and summering species between North Carolina and New England, it is little known off states with less pelagic coverage. This individual was noted 9 June 2001 about 45 miles east of Fenwick Island, Delaware, a third state record. Photograph by Andrew P. Ednie.

ad., the latter last sighted 2 Jul (RC). Other late spring wanderers were at Hartshorne Woods Park, *Monmouth*, NJ 4 Jun (LM) and at Blue Mt. Lake, *Berks*, PA 2 Jun (H. & J. Silagy), the 2nd spring observation in a row for that county. Unusually late and farther afield were a subad. at Braddock Bay, *Monroe*, NY 30 Jun (DT), for the 2nd summer in a row, and another near Hellertown, *Northampton* 30 Jul (AK).

**SA** The New York breeding population of Bald Eagles has approximately doubled every five years since 1991; this summer, 56 breeding pairs (43 last year) produced 83 young (71 last year, reduced by heavy rains; P. Nye, N.Y.D.E.C.). We even began to hear grumbling about eagle depredation on young loons. Pennsylvania's 13 nests east of the Susquehanna R. included five in *Lancaster* alone. Some of these aeries were in farmland far from large bodies of water, a sign of increasing adaptation to human presence (D. Brauning, Pennsylvania Game Commission). Delaware's 17 active nests, one more than last year, fledged at least 20 young.

Cooper's Hawks continue to colonize suburbia. We learned of at least five such cases in e. Pennsylvania. A pair bred in the Bronx, New York City for the first time since 1955 (RDeC), and a nest at the John W. Heinz Refuge, *Philadelphia* (Tinicum) was the first in 50 years of observation (JM). Peregrine Falcons set more records in New York, with 45 breeding pairs (40 last year) producing 97 young (75 last year, when summer rains damaged productivity,

especially in the Adirondacks). Several new Adirondack sites, all natural, were especially welcome (B. Loucks, N.Y.D.E.C.).

Spruce Grouse were upgraded in New York State in Dec 1999 from Threatened to Endangered. A survey conducted in 2000–2001 of 24 historically occupied locations found half no longer occupied. These sites, estimated to contain 175–315 individuals in 1985–1987, now hold only about 88–158 individuals. Spruce Grouse are now limited to the nw. quadrant of Adirondack Park, mostly in *Hamilton* (JO).

## SHOREBIRDS

**SA** Piping Plovers recovered where they had some protection from predators and beach-buggies. New Jersey's breeding population reached about 121 pairs, the 3rd consecutive small increase, but productivity fell to 1.39 fledged chicks per pair, a little below recent years. The most productive area, North Brigantine Natural Area, *Ocean* achieved a remarkable productivity of 2.17 by closing some areas to off-road vehicles and by controlling predators with electric fences and nest enclosures (DJ). In Delaware, aided by a fox-trapping program, six Piping Plover nests fledged 9 young at Cape Henlopen. This was the best crop in years, but Delaware has no other breeding area (A. Doolittle).

In contrast to some recent years, all American Avocets had left Bombay Hook by mid-May. The first post-breeding returnees appeared 17

Jun and peaked at a modest 168 on 8 Jul (FR). Away from this stronghold, a wanderer ranged between Jones Beach and Jamaica Bay in Jul. Much more remarkably, 2 were at the Conejohela Flats on the Susquehanna R. 10 Jul (BS), and 2—possibly the same—were at Sweet Arrow L., near Pine Grove, *Schuylkill*, PA 25–28 Jul (T. Clauser et al.). A Willet, surely *inornatus*, visited the Conejohela Flats 3 Jul (BS, J. Book, E. Witmer, T. Garner). Another appeared the same day at Ocean City, *Cape May*, NJ (RC). One at Westhampton, L.I. 22 Jul (SM, PLi) was at the same place and nearly the same date as one last year.

It was even harder than usual to tell when spring shorebird migration ended and the first post-breeding birds returned. Surely a few non-breeders never leave. Likely examples this season would include a Black-bellied Plover 16 Jun at the Chazy Riverlands, *Clinton*, NY, on L. Champlain (B. Krueger, C. Mitchell) and 40 of the same at Stone Harbor Pt., *Cape May*, NJ 12 Jun (M. Fritz); single Hudsonian Godwits at Primehook N.W.R., DE 13 Jun (MG, BGP, SD) and at Westhampton Beach, L. I. 27 Jun; a Ruddy Turnstone at Myers Pt., *Oswego*, NY 11 Jun (D. Russell); and small parties of White-rumped Sandpipers in all three states 11–13 Jun; the latter were likely late spring migrants. Observers should note the plumage of these mid-Jun holdovers.

Despite unconfirmed reports of chicks in Delaware, the Region's southernmost Upland Sandpiper breeding site appears to be Lakehurst, NJ, which hosted about seven pairs this summer (J. Joyce, P. Bacinski, SB). They also bred on Long Island at Gabriskie airport, Westhampton, and at John F. Kennedy airport. Even in the extensive grasslands of the St. Lawrence R. basin, only 9 were at Fort Drum (JBo). Only 2 Curlew Sandpipers were found, well below the peaks of the 1970s. One at Bombay Hook in early Jun (CC, E. Short, SD et al.) held over from spring, while the other, at Stone Harbor Pt., *Cape May*, NJ 25 Jul+ (K. Karlson et al.), was presumed to be south-bound. Delaware was again best for Ruffs: a black male appeared at Bombay Hook 18 Jun and departed early 4 Jul; the same afternoon, a chestnut male showed up and remained through the month. A Reeve was at Jamaica Bay after 29 Jul (TWB et al.). A female Wilson's Phalarope at Bombay Hook after 15 Jun (MG, BGP) was probably an early post-breeding wanderer; this species has nested in this Region only on L. Champlain, NY.

## JAEGERS THROUGH TERNS

A South Polar Skua was remarkable inshore, among the tubenoses, off Democrat Pt., *Suffolk*,

L. I. 23 Jun (PLi, SM); the species frequents flocks of larger shearwaters in most summers off North Carolina (where it is occasionally seen from shore, mostly in Jun) and should be looked for in the Region at this time, particularly when shearwaters are present in numbers. If confirmed, this would be approximately the 9th New York observation since the skuas were split in 1977. Another was off New Jersey toward Wilmington Canyon the next day (B. Johnson). The FONT trip out of Lewes 9 Jun found another, the 3rd Delaware record, all in the past three summers. A Pomarine Jaeger was unusual off Robert Moses S. P., L. I. 24 Jun, and a light-morph Pomarine at Point au Roche, Clinton, NY on L. Champlain 15 Jul was a very early migrant or summer wanderer (D. Hoag).

The Laughing Gull colony near Kennedy Airport continues at about 3000 pairs; airport authorities still shoot birds on the runways, but less frequently, as fewer birds collide with aircraft than did in the past (DR). Errant Laughing Gulls in early June on L. Ontario at Hamlin Beach S. P., Monroe, NY (WS, DT, M. Davids) and at Myers Pt., Oswego (BF) were fairly typical, but 7 ads. were very unusual at Lock 7 on the Mohawk R. near Schenectady 25 Jul (RPY). Fewer Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls nested in New York harbor, partly because the islands are revegetating (PK). Summer records of Lesser Black-backed Gulls are increasing, but a third-year bird circling the boat 45 mi off Fenwick I. 9 Jun (APE, FONT) constituted a first summer pelagic record for Delaware.

Two Caspian Tern nests were found in Barnegat Bay, Ocean, NJ (JBr, FL), where only occasional single nests were found previously. The Roseate Tern count at Great Gull Island, off e. Long Island, was 1700, a little below last year but about the same as in 1999. The absence of any other important Long Island colony since the destruction by foxes of the Cedar Beach colony still causes concern (H. Hays). One Roseate loafed in a Barnegat Bay ternery sporadically through Jun (JBr, FL), but breeding remains unproven in New Jersey.

The Forster's Tern colony at Jamaica Bay, established in 1992, has increased to 80 pairs (DR). Farther e. on the s. shore bays of Hempstead, L.I., at their n. limit, Forster's Terns have increased to about 150 pairs (JZ).

Least Terns, always volatile in their nest-site selection and nesting success, responded to opportunity with a few huge colonies such as 195 pairs at Breakwater Beach, Mattituck, Suffolk (B. Prentice) and 625 pairs at Nassau Beach (JZ), both on Long Island. Smaller colonies had trouble fending off gulls and other predators, or were crowded out by Common Terns. The total New Jersey population was estimated at about 1500

ads., close to last year's census but well below the 2133 ads. estimated in 1991 (DJ). They are barely hanging on in Delaware; Delaware Shore S.P., where 200 pairs nested in the 1970s, had 12 nests this summer. The state's only other potential breeding area was Big Stone Beach, Kent, where a couple of grown young were seen 31 Jul (APE). Black Skimmers nearly held their own in New Jersey, with an estimated 2410 ads. These occupied only eight sites, however, compared to 14 in the mid-1990s, making them more vulnerable (DJ).

**SA** Black Terns are in serious trouble at the southeastern edge of their range. A N.Y.D.E.C. survey found only 132 pairs in New York State, down from 235 when surveys began in 1989. Jefferson led with 71, followed by 27 in Tonawanda W.M.A. and 17 in St. Lawrence. Monroe, which had supported 34 pairs in 1989, had only two in 2001. Only 13 sites were occupied, compared with 21 in 1994. One reason for the decline is increased vegetation density, due to invasive plants like purple loosestrife, and to the ending of water fluctuation by the operation of the St. Lawrence Seaway (I. Mazzocchi). Though s. lingerers have been noted in midsummer since 1921 (Witmer Stone, *Bird Studies at Old Cape May* [1937, repr. 1965], p. 594), they were more widespread this summer. Singles visited Northwest Harbor, L. I. 9 Jun (BMcG) and Island Beach S. P., Ocean, NJ 6 Jun (G. Wenzelburger), and 3 were at Bombay Hook 2 Jun, one of which remained to mid-Jun (FR). The latest was at Port Penn Interpretive Center, DE 2 Jul (Philadelphia Birdline), while one at Island Beach S. P., Ocean 8 Jul (A. Tongas) was probably returning.

### DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A White-winged Dove appeared briefly in Flanders, Suffolk, L. I. 10 Jun (A. Baldelli). Northern Saw-whet Owls "may be more common than we think" (BP). Fledglings were found in or near the yards of four experienced birders in the Oneida L. Basin of n-cen. New York (NG, J. Brin, E. Hahn, G. Alfano), as well as at Alfred, Allegany, NY (ph. EBr), the 2nd county record, as well as in the Adirondacks at Furnace Brook, s. Clinton, NY (E. Fitts). Common Nighthawks bred in a few rural sites, such as 26 atlasted in Fort Drum, including four nests (JBo), and three nests in Wharton State Forest, in the Pine Barrens of sw. New Jersey (C. Krilowicz). Almost none

remain in cities.

Although Whip-poor-wills have long vanished from interior lowlands, they are still "fairly common" on ridgetops in nw. Morris, Passaic, and Bergen, NJ, where about 35 were calling in the Ramapo, Copperas, and Green Pond Mountains 12-13 Jun (RR). At remote Fort Drum, 36 Whip-poor-wills were atlasted (JBo). Another stronghold for them is coastal scrub. This summer "dozens" were calling 9 Jun near Hampton Bays, L.I. (BMcG), while 4 were calling 2 Jun at Milford Neck W.A., Kent, DE (GL), an area known to birders as "goatsucker heaven." Several observers thought Ruby-throated Hummingbirds had a good season. Yunick was in a position to know: he banded a record 119 at Jenny L., Saratoga, NY (including 33 returns, 2 of them at least six years old). Their daily sugar water intake rose to 500 g at the end of Jul, when the young fledged.

Red-headed Woodpeckers appeared to extend their patchy distribution slightly in the lowlands. In New York, two nests were in Fort Drum (JBo), a pair was present at Como Park, near Buffalo (MM), and singles scouted in Chemung (C. & J. Wood) and in Tompkins (S. Podulka). Several sites near Cape May, NJ continue to be occupied. In e. Pennsylvania, we know of two locations in Berks (S. Fordyce, P. Saenger, M. Spence) and one in Bucks (AM). In Sussex, DE, a new site near Bridgeville (GL) has been added to the traditional two in Redding State Forest (APE, J. Swertinski) and at Assawoman W. A. (SD).

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH TANAGERS

We received two reports from n. New York of vanishing Loggerhead Shrikes, 2 at Long Lake, Hamilton 21 Jul (J. Collins), and one 24 Jun at Geneseo (J. Kimball). There were no indications of breeding.

Common Ravens are spreading out of the Allegany highlands into Wyoming and Erie, NY (fide MM) and now nest regularly in Morris and Passaic, NJ (RR, T. Vogel, B. Gallagher). Cliff Swallows have recently become established along the Niagara R. near Buffalo (BK, K. Fox). In Delaware, at the s. extremity of their e. coast range, they bred for the first time in five years, using two bridges over Appoquinimunk Creek near Odessa, New Castle. Sedge Wrens were not reported s. of Dutchess, NY (B. Kane); in addition to the usual upstate locations, a singing male was rare in the Adirondacks at Bloomingdale Bog, Essex 2 Jun-18 Jul (W. Lee, B. McAllister).

A census for Golden-winged Warblers in Luzerne and Wyoming, PA turned up only Blue-wingeds. Farther n., at Fort Drum, Blue-winged Warblers gained ground; 15 pairs were atlasted as against 33 Golden-winged Warblers (JBo). One place where Golden-winged Warblers have coexisted with Blue-wingeds for a century is Sterling



Forest, *Orange*, NY, where 19 were atlased in power line cuts in summer 2001 compared to 3 Blue-wingeds. The two practice habitat segregation, the Golden-winged Warblers preferring wetlands (J. Confer, S. Pascoe). Six Brewster's Warblers and 2 Lawrence's Warblers were reported in New York, and 2 of each were noted in e. Pennsylvania. Northern Parula fledglings at Hither Hills S.P. (E. Salzman, J. Giunta) confirmed the first breeding in 50 years on e. Long Island, following last summer's nesting on w. Long Island. Several observers commented on the abundance of Yellow Warblers in the Piedmont of Delaware and in se. Pennsylvania. At the John W. Heinz Refuge, 75–100 pairs have moved into new edge habitat created by cleaning an oil spill (JM).

Atlasing reveals a pattern of northward expansion of New York warbler ranges. Pine Warblers, formerly not found n. of Allegany S. P., now occur along the L. Ontario shoreline in *Niagara* (WW). Prairie Warblers were found in *Erie* for the first time (W. D'Anna, B. Potter), and a fledgling at Otisco, *Onandaga* 9 Jul (NG) was a first confirmation in the Oneida L. basin (BP). A remarkable 24 singing males are worth mentioning at L. Nockamixon, *Bucks*, PA in late Jun (Philadelphia Birdline). A Prothonotary Warbler feeding young in w. Monroe Twp., *Oswego*, NY 14 Jul (BP, J. Moore) was the first breeding record in the Oneida L. Basin since 1984. Hooded Warblers are turning up more often on the L. Ontario plain.

Among warblers in trouble, Ceruleans could be found in only one of 10 sites in n. *Morris* and s. *Sussex*, NJ, where they nested in 1991 (RR), and they were also missing at a traditional site in *Onandaga*, NY (BP). Otherwise, we had scattered reports from *Rockland* (RJK), *Oswego* (BF, M. Sarver, M. Williams), and *Tompkins* (K. Edelstein), all in New York. An impressive eight pairs of declining Yellow-breasted Chats were at L. Nockamixon, *Bucks*, their stronghold in e. Pennsylvania (B. Etter).

### SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

Clay-colored Sparrows, apparently moving in from Ontario, are now solidly established in n. New York. One nest near Andover, *Allegany*, NY 30 Jun (EBr) was near the state's first breeding site of 1971. Among many remarkable records tendered were the 16 in the St. Lawrence basin of n. New York, including a pair feeding young in Parishville Twp., a first confirmed breeding for *St. Lawrence* (BL); 13, including fledglings, in a Christmas tree plantation at Yorkshire, *Cattaraugus* (BK); and 3 at Lodi, *Seneca* (P. Hosner, C. Smith). A Lark Sparrow at Gabriskie airport, Westhampton, L. I. 19 Jul (B. May, T. Klauber) was a very rare mid-summer occurrence in New York. Henslow's Sparrows returned to their traditional site at W. Nicholson,

*Wyoming*, PA but apparently did not stay to breed (WR). More were found in New Jersey than in recent summers: Willowood Arboretum, Chester Twp., *Morris* (T. Halliwell, B&NM); Solberg Airport, *Hunterdon* (RR, W. Wander); Lakehurst; and the Alpha fields, *Warren*. For real numbers, however, one had to go to n. New York, where 14 were atlased in Fort Drum (JBo). Dickcissels tried again in the Region, though only in Delaware this time. Four or 5 males sang between Harrington and Milford, *Kent*, though breeding remained unconfirmed. This was not the same site as last summer.

Orchard Orioles bred in Central Park, New York City for the first time since 1908. It was a big summer for Pine Siskins in upstate New York. Outside the Adirondacks, they were present sporadically into Jul at Hamlin Beach on the L. Ontario shore in *Monroe* (WS) and at Amity L., *Allegany*, NY (VP). They bred at Woodhull L., *Oneida* (BP) and at Burdett, *Schuyler* (J. & S. Gregoire). At Jenny L., *Saratoga*, Yunick banded a record 131, including many fledglings; all had disappeared by 15 Jul (RPY).

### EXOTICS

A Ringed Turtle-Dove, a feral form frequently kept in captivity, was photographed near Smyrna, DE 31 Jul (CC), a reminder that it is imperative to scrutinize *Streptopelia* doves carefully. Two, perhaps 3 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were near Selbyville, *Sussex*, DE this summer, just north of the Maryland border (M. J. Iliff et al.).

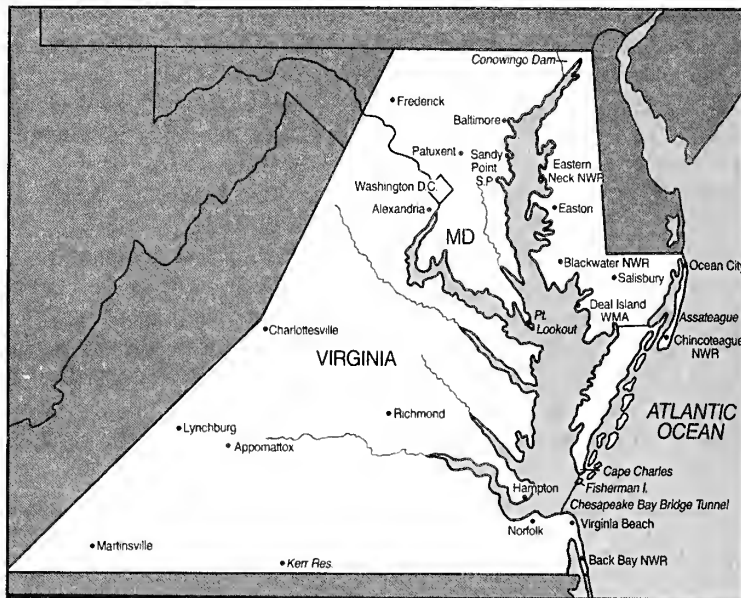
### ADDENDA & CORRIGENDA

The following items apply to the 2001 spring migration report. The observer of the Eared Grebe at Lansing, NY was K. McGowan. A single White Ibis was observed at Cape May, NJ 9 May (J. Pilgrim, A. Crutchley et al.). The ad. White-faced Ibis at Reed's Beach was found by R. Crossley and remained until at least 19 May, while the imm. was present 12–27 May (K. Lukens et al.), though apparently they were never seen together. The imm. White-faced Ibis at Bivalve preceded the ad. and was seen only 10 May (S. Rottenborn et al.). And the Brig White-faced Ibis was present 16 May–24 Jun (K. McLean et al.). Tom Bailey's Ross's Goose photograph was taken on 9 Mar, not 9 May. The Black Brant at Brig 8 Apr was reported only by G. Armistead (†). The Black Rail at Jake's Landing, NJ was noted by M. O'Brien. Tom Bailey's photograph of the Ruff was taken on 9 May, not 27 May. Dates for the Mew Gull were 5, 10 Mar rather than May. The Black-tailed Gull reported last season is potentially New York's 3rd, not 2nd, record.

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# Middle Atlantic Coast



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This summer was extremely cool and wet, much cooler than average. At Baltimore-Washington International Airport in June and July, more days stayed below 80 degrees Fahrenheit than crested 90 degrees, almost unheard of in the Region. On a few days, the daily high did not top 70 degrees; on 1 June, the low was a chilling 45 degrees! Average maximum temperatures for June and July hovered right around 84, with minimum temperatures averaging 64 in June and 62 in July. The 3.5 inches of rain per month was above average.

The cool and wet conditions must have affected nesting birds, but there were comparatively little data to suggest how. Clapp, who keeps close track of nesting phenology reported that "despite the very mild weather, a cold snap in Mar strongly affected nest initiation in nesting passerines in Northern Virginia, with it being average or perhaps even late in the regard, unlike last year, where birds were consistently early following a mild winter and a mild March." While most birders keep personal records of migrants and unusual breeders, observations and data such as these are most welcome for *North American Birds*. In Maryland, the new Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas project will begin

1 Jan 2002 and run for the next five years. Maryland's last atlas was completed in 1987 and published in 1996. For information on how you can contribute, contact Jane Coskren at <coskren@erols.com> or 410-381-7344. The Maryland Ornithological Society is seeking a full-time coordinator who will handle inquiries in the future.

**Abbreviations:** Bay (Chesapeake Bay); Chinc. (Chincoteague N.W.R., Accomack, VA); Craney (Craney Island Dredge Spoil Containment Facility, Portsmouth, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); Hart (Hart-Miller Dredge Spoil Containment Facility, Baltimore, MD); Middle Bay (Chesapeake Bay in MD, from Virginia line to Bay Bridge); p. a. (pending acceptance by state records committee); Upper Bay (Chesapeake Bay in MD, n. of Bay Bridge). Note that due to reporting biases, all locations can be assumed to be in Maryland except that each Virginia location is so noted the *first time* it is mentioned in the text.

## GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL

Always unusual in summer, a breeding-plumaged Horned Grebe was noted at Chesapeake Beach, Calvert 25 Jun–13 Jul (FS, JLS). Wilson's Storm-Petrel has recently been shown to occur regularly in the Maryland portion of the Bay, evidenced by a count of 10 from the Smith I.–Pt. Lookout Ferry 23 Jun (RFR, S.

Crabtree). A dozen seen off Hooper's I., *Dorchester* 13 Jul (M. Eanes) constituted only the 2nd county record, but given that it is just 20 mi n. of the above-mentioned ferry route, this is surely due more to lack of coverage than anything else. We are still learning the n. limit for this species in the Bay.

**SA** Brown Pelicans, surely the most dynamic of the species expanding their breeding ranges into the Region in the past two decades, continued to keep in the news, as Maryland's new nesters, the northernmost anywhere, enjoyed a second successful summer (Barnegat Bay, New Jersey's pelicans again made several "partial nests" in 2001 but have not yet laid eggs).

While Regional colonies remained stable, the massive mid-Jun influx of last year was not apparent in 2001. Last year, it seemed that the invasion in the Middle and Upper Bays may have occurred when the colonizing birds drastically exceeded the capacity of the several small islands, and prospecting birds pushed far into the Upper Bay in search of other nest sites. If last year's influx was comprised of "overflow" from the colonies, then perhaps this year's lack of an influx was the result of a stabilization of the population to match the carrying capacity of the Bay, as determined by the available nest sites. This year, there were sporadic reports from the North Beach, *Calvert* area but none farther flung than that. At the large colony at South Marsh Pt. just s. of the Maryland line, Brinker and others banded upwards of 1500 young pelicans this year. One-hundred thirty-two young were banded at Spring I., *Dorchester* 4 Jun (DBr, *fide* HTA), and a number of ads. frequented Bodkin I., *Queen Anne's* and even made nest platforms, but no eggs were laid.

A new colony this year was found on a small islet off the s. tip of Barren I., *Dorchester*, with 200 pelicans there (ca. one-third ads.) and 15 nest platforms noted 5 Jun (J. McCann, *fide* HTA), but apparently no eggs were laid. Interestingly Brinker's pelican banding efforts in the Bay are now yielding up to 100 recoveries annually, providing a useful portrait of their movements.

An American White Pelican noted at Bodkin I. 5 Jun (p. a., M. A. Todd) was seen on various dates in Jun on Bodkin I. (DBr) and various dates in Jul on Poplar I., *Talbot* (DBr), undoubtedly the same bird that followed a similar pattern

last year. The Fisherman I., VA White Pelican was absent again in 2001.

Five Anhingas heading n. over Cape Charles, *Northampton*, VA 25 Jun (ESB, SWH) were unusual; most Anhingas in the Region have been found in Apr, May, Aug, and Sep, though Jun 2001 saw three records of the species between New Jersey and Massachusetts. The one regular Regional location for Anhinga—Stumpy L. in Virginia Beach, VA—had at least one male throughout Jun and Jul. At Chimney Pole Marsh, *Accomack*, VA, about 20 Double-crested Cormorant nests continued this year (BW et al.).

A Least Bittern seen and heard at Airlie, *Fauquier*, VA 8 Jun (TMD) would be an unusual Piedmont breeding record if in fact the bird represented part of a pair. There was a small movement of Tricolored Herons away from their typical areas, including one at Jug Bay 23 Jul (DBy), 2 at North Beach 25 Jul (JLS, TH), with one remaining to 27 Jul (TH), 2 imm. at Hart 28 Jul (DBy, JLS et al.), and most unusual, one near D.C. at Hunting Cr., *Fairfax*, VA 28–30 Jul (KG). An all-time high count of nesting White Ibis was garnered this year, with 127 attendant ads. counted in mid-Jun (BW et al.) at colonies on Wreck, Cobb, and Fisherman Is., all in *Northampton*, VA. One Snowy Egret at Univ. of Maryland Central Farm was rare for *Howard* 30 Jul+ (SA, v. o.), while a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, rare for *Charles*, was noted at Mattawoman Cr. 22 Jun–8 Jul (ph. GMJ, GB). Two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Fletcher's Boathouse, D.C. 26 Jun–6 Jul (JHu et al.) were probably present through the season and nesting nearby. A White Ibis was at Craney 25–26 Jul, a location where the species has been noted irregularly in the past (AW, TG, BA, RK).

Not seen in the Region in summer for several years, single Tundra Swans alternated between Dyke Marsh, *Fairfax*, VA (KG, v. o.) and Broad Cr., *Prince George's* 27 May–27 Jul (DM), and there was one at Williamsburg, VA 30 Jul–1 Jul (BW). Two American Wigeon were at Hart 30 Jun (DBy), with one remaining 14 Jul (DBy, SR et al.), and a Canvasback was noted there 2 Jun (EJS) and 21 Jul (JLS, SR, CE). Four Green-winged Teal at Elliott I. 28 Jul (HTA, CE) were a bit unseasonal but probably represented early fall migrants. A male Hooded Merganser at Fletcher's Boathouse, D.C. 26–29 Jun (JHu, GM, BC) may have bred nearby, while a female at Hart 28 Jul+ (JLS, DBy et al.) was a bit more surprising, being in a freshwater dredge spoil impoundment 10+ mi from the nearest breeding habitat. Common Mergansers, at least one male and one female, were seen on the Potomac R. near the D.C.-*Prince George's* line from May through Jul (FS, DM, v. o.); these, plus another at Conowingo Dam, *Harford/Cecil* 23 Jun (*fide*

PS), were among the rarer summering waterfowl. Other noteworthy late ducks, in order of rarity in summer, were: a White-winged Scoter at Elliott I. 6 Jun (SA); a male Long-tailed Duck at Scientist's Cliffs 18 Jul (S. Hamilton); one to 3 Long-tailed Ducks at Ft. Smallwood, *Anne Arundel* 28 May–3 Jun (SR); a male Canvasback at Dyke Marsh 17 Jul (KG) and Hunting Cr. 22 Jul (SS), the latter two records possibly of the same individual; and single male Ring-necked Ducks in the Dyke Marsh area 6 Jun–23 Jul (KG, SS et al.) and at Airlie through 8 Jun (TMD). Both scaup were noted at several locations, and 2 Surf Scoters near Bodkin I. 6 Jul (J. Maloney, SA) rounded out the list.

### RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Noteworthy Mississippi Kites—which are rare but regular Regionwide now in spring and summer—were one first-summer bird at Great Falls, *Fairfax*, VA 3 Jun (R. Wall et al.), one at Cornfield Harbor, *Saint Mary's* 3 Jun (PC, A. Bishop), a first-summer bird over Dillwyn, VA, for a probable *Buckingham* first 3 Jun (D. Spears), one over Collingwood, *Fairfax* 15 Jul (B. Hutchinson), and one at Kibler Rd. and Maryland Rte. 314 on 28 Jul (a *Caroline* first; *fide* PS). Although the last report received of the pair of Mississippi Kites at Huntley Meadows County Park, *Fairfax*, VA was on 3 Jun (G. Weinberger), they may very well have been present through the summer. A very few Sharp-shinned Hawks turn up annually in mid-summer; singles in Jeffersonton 27 Jun (TMD) over I-295 and Suitland Parkway, *Prince George's* 30 Jul (MB) were both noteworthy. The Sharpie nest in Soldier's Delight, *Baltimore* still had a female sitting on it 20 Jun (S. Droege).

Extremely unusual for the Piedmont, with only three Regional records and just one prior for the Virginia Piedmont, a **Black Rail** heard 28 Jul+ (p. a. DFA, v. o.) at the Dulles Greenways Wetlands Mitigation Project, *Fairfax*, VA was later documented on audiotape (TMD). A Sora was unusual at a tiny city park pond in Patterson Park, Baltimore City late May–12 Jun+ (KEC), though breeding was never confirmed. Rare for *Harford* were at least 2 Common Moorhens in a beaver pond at the US Rte. 40 and Maryland Rte. 24 intersection 2 Jun (E. Blom). Unfortunately, the species may have disappeared now from Deal Island W.M.A., *Somerset*, a former stronghold. The American Coot at Dyke Marsh 24 Jun (SS) & 22 Jul (KG) was probably a late lingerer, as breeding is extremely unusual in the Region.

A flyby Piping Plover at North Beach 14 Jul (JLS) was a vagrant in the Maryland section of the Bay, where it has been seen about 10 times but not for about a decade. Piping Plovers, which benefited from several storm washovers

in recent years, reportedly had about 55 pairs breeding on the Maryland section of Assateague I. and another 25 on the Virginia section of the island (DBr, *fide* HTA). Wilson's Plovers continue to struggle, with their only remaining Regional toehold being on three Virginia barrier islands (Assawoman, Metompkin, and Cedar), where 47 ads. were counted in mid-Jun (BW et al.).

Black-necked Stilts again were found breeding at Elliott I., but they may have disappeared from Deal I., as for the first time in more than a decade they were not reported, despite several summer visits by birders. Breeding continues at Craney, where one chick was seen with 9 ads. 25 Jul (DLH, AW, TG) and may continue on the Chinc. causeway, *Accomack*, VA, where they were noted 28 Jul (LL). One at Back Bay N.W.R. 8 Jun (K. Kearney) was in a location known for small numbers in the 1990s when water levels were appropriate. American Avocet numbers were well above average. An unprecedented flock of avocets at Hart built from 22 birds on 30 Jun (DBy) to 24 on 28 Jul (JLS, SR et al.). Craney had good numbers as well, with 26 counted there 25 Jul (DLH, AW, TG), but these are still far below historical totals here. One avocet at Hart 9 Jun (EJS) and a *Talbot* first at Poplar I. 6 Jun (p.a. EJS) may have been early indicators of the movement. *Caroline's* 2nd American Avocet was found at Kibler Rd. 23–24 Jul (B. Byrnes, MH, vt. JLS, m. ob.). What was likely the same bird appeared 25 Jul (E. Gofreed, G. Brewer) at Ridgely W.T.P., which it flew in to inspect and then continued on.

A Ruff at Kibler Rd. 23–24 Jul (MH, m. ob.) constituted a *Caroline* 4th. Three southbound Red Knots at Fox I. 12 Jul (HTA) were noteworthy for the Bay. Still very unusual for D.C. (despite three reports this year), a Willet at Haines Pt. 30 Jul (PP) was presumably *inornatus*, though was not confirmed as such. Other identified Western Willets included one at North Beach 25 Jul (JLS, TH) and one at Hart 28 Jul (JLS et al.). Another Willet was at Hunting Cr. 1–4 Jul (P. Sullivan, SS). Unusual in n. Virginia, a Stilt Sandpiper was at Hunting Cr. 21 Jul (SS). Seven Hudsonian Godwits were at Craney 25–26 Jul (DLH, AW, TG), joined by a Marbled Godwit on the latter date (BA, RK). Long-billed Dowitchers in Jul included single ads. at Craney 23 Jul (D. Clark) and a calling one, rare for *Caroline*, at Kibler Rd. 27 Jul (JLS, MH).

Hart usually monopolizes many of the other shorebird highlights, with a **Curlew Sandpiper** among 2075 Semipalmated Sandpipers 2 Jun (EJS) providing the 5th report from this location and the 5th for the state. Also there 2 Jun were a Stilt Sandpiper and 2 Whimbrel (EJS). Other noteworthy counts of the weekly visits included 1020 Lesser Yellowlegs 14 Jul (DBy, SR et al.), 355

Western Sandpipers and one juv. Wilson's Phalarope 21 Jul (JLS, SR et al.), and 1870 Semipalmated, 277 Western, and 98 Stilt Sandpipers 28 Jul (DBY, JLS et al.).

## GULLS THROUGH WARBLERS

Rare in summer, a Bonaparte's Gull was seen on the Potomac in D.C. 31 Jul (GMJ). The **Kelp Gull** apparently continued through the season around Sandgates, *Saint Mary's*, though it was reported only 11 Jun and 16 Jul (JK). The Poplar I. Dredge Spoil Containment Facility, in *Talbot*, MD has been successful at attracting terns. This year, special island- and shell-mound habitats that were designed to support tern colonies attracted a colony of 400+ Common Tern and two smaller colonies of Least Terns (DBr). The Common Tern colony may in part be the displaced birds from Bodkin I., where large gulls have been increasing in number, which presumably has been much of the reason for the downturn in *Sterna* numbers there. The tern colony on Skimmer I., *Worcester* has suffered since large gulls recently colonized the island. This year, 570 Royal Tern eggs were counted there 6 Jun (JSW *vide* HTA). Common Terns are uncommon at best in the D.C. area and occur primarily in Sep and Oct; they are essentially unknown in Jun and Jul. Thus, one first-summer Common Tern at Hunting Cr. 1 Jul (KG) and 4 there 4 Jul (SS) bear mention and may be a product of recent increases in nesting in the Upper Bay on Poplar and Bodkin Is. A post-breeding congregation of 165 Least Terns at Hart was an excellent number 28 Jul (DBY, JLS et al.). Caspian Terns are rare through most of the Region in Jun and early Jul, but Hart has long hosted impressive summer concentrations, e.g. 172 on 2 Jun, 151 on 9 Jun, 181 on 7 Jul, and 214 on 21 Jul (EJS). The closest other counts were 12 on 3 Jun (BC) and 11 on 28 Jul (BC) at the Potomac R. below D.C. The current n. limit for Black Skimmer in the Bay is South Marsh I., *Somerset*, where 23 pairs are breeding among a large colony of Common and Forster's Terns (DBr, *vide* HTA). A larger Black Skimmer colony on Fox I., *Accomack*, VA, contained at least 85 ads. 12 Jul (HTA), while at the Royal Tern colony there 868 chicks were banded on that date (JSW, DBr, HTA et al.), down slightly from last year. Three Black Terns were at Dyke Marsh 31 Jul (KG), one was at North Beach 14 Jul (JLS, EB), and a late one, not surprisingly a first-summer, was at Poplar I. 6 Jun (EJS).

This was noted as another poor year for cuckoos (HTA, v. o.). The **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** from May continued through 1 Jul (KH) at the same *Culpeper*, VA farm field where the pair nested last year—alas, while the single male built a nest, there was no sign of a mate this year. Another Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was seen one

mi w. of Ruthsburg, *Campbell*, VA 19 Jul (T. Dalmás). A **Cave Swallow** at Cape Charles 5 Jun (ESB) followed on the heels of a similar sighting there last May and is the 5th documented report for Virginia. Although fewer reports were received than last year, Loggerhead Shrike nesting activity apparently continued in the Virginia Piedmont in some of the same areas reported last summer. Occasionally found straying away from mountain breeding grounds into the Region, a Blue-headed Vireo at Soldier's Delight, *Baltimore* 24 Jun (vt. RFR) and 4 Jul (JLS, EB) was a surprise. Another singing at G. Richard Thompson W.M.A., *Fauquier*, VA may be an indication of a wider movement away from breeding areas in the Appalachians to the west. Stasz believed the *Baltimore* bird to be *alticola*, based on the burry song. A Red-breasted Nuthatch lingered into Jun (B. Abrams) at a McLean, VA feeding station, surprising given the non-invasion year. A Marsh Wren singing at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens during 25 Jun–27 Jul (MB et al.) may have been the only summering bird, and only potential breeder, in the District of Columbia.

## WARBLERS THROUGH SPARROWS

A singing Tennessee Warbler at Schoolhouse Pond was notably late 6 Jun (JLS). Hooded Warbler is not detected particularly often in spring migration, so a late one in an urban garden in Cape Charles 5 Jun (ESB, SWH) was unusual. Migrant Prothonotary Warblers are also detected comparatively infrequently, and one 28 Jul (HTA, CE) in Elliott Village, Elliott I., evidences how early this species is migrating. A singing male Prothonotary Warbler was rare at Woodstock, *Howard* 23 Jun (J. & T.D. Coskren), while a singing male Blackpoll Warbler at Little Hunting Cr., *Fairfax*, VA 7 Jul (S. Williams) was extremely unseasonal but not without precedent in the Region; such birds are presumed to be extremely late northbound migrants.

The **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Kinder Farm Park, *Anne Arundel* continued through 27 Jul (D. Farner, ph.R. Wilson, au. Paul McGowan, v. o.). There was no suggestion of breeding, though the unprecedented summering event certainly raises the possibility, which is unknown in the Region but has occurred as near as Pennsylvania and is now extensive in upstate New York. A Lark Sparrow seen well near the Appomattox Court House National Historical Park 2 Jun (M. Stinson) was unusual and late for a spring bird, and though it has not happened in the Region since summer 1925, extralimital breeding could occur again at some point. A singing Vesper Sparrow near Snow Hill 16 Jun (SHD) is the first suggestion of nesting in *Worcester*, though there is ample appropriate habitat and they have bred

as near as *Wicomico* and *Accomack*, VA. A noteworthy concentration of Grasshopper Sparrows was discovered at Western Regional Park, *Howard*, where on 9 Jun 50–75 ads. were estimated in a field of grass and red clover (JS, B. Solem, N. Magnusson). On 4 Jul, at least 40 juvs. were counted (BO). At Chino Farms, the fallow fields are a Grasshopper Sparrow haven like no other, with 160+ singing males in 200 acres of habitat. Some 35 of those birds were returnees from the previous year, and 10 returned from two years prior. An agitated pair of Savannah Sparrows during Jun (TMD, JC) suggested nesting near Lakota, *Fauquier*, VA, which was confirmed when a dead fledgling was found and salvaged (\*USNM). Several others heard singing nearby 8 Jun (J. & T. Dalmás) indicate that this species may be a local, low-density breeder here. Although Savannah Sparrow is not an uncommon breeder in the Maryland Piedmont, the Virginia Piedmont apparently had only one prior breeding confirmation, in *Greene*.

A singing male Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Blackwater N.W.R. 12 Jun (D. Homan) was unusual for the Coastal Plain in mid-Jun and especially so for the Eastern Shore—a very late migrant? Another at Violette's Lock, *Montgomery* was bit late itself 2–3 Jun (D. Simonson). Although this was no great year for Dickcissels, observers have gotten more skilled at finding the small number that visit our Region annually. In Virginia's counties of *Fauquier* and *Culpeper*, the epicenter of last year's invasion, active observers turned up just a few, which suggests that last year indeed had an exceptional incursion. In Maryland, there were reports from *Frederick*, *Queen Anne's*, *Caroline*, *Dorchester*, and even s. *Anne Arundel* 17 Jul (JLS), but the most interesting story unfolded at Chino Farms, where University of Maryland students have been studying grassland birds. Dickcissel is an erratic and enigmatic breeder in the Region, so it was fascinating to have an account from Hafner of one nesting event this year. This year a male, banded last year as an ad. at the same location, appeared 30 Jun and sang consistently through 20 Aug, alternating its time between a favorite field and an alternate field up to *one mi away*. A second-year male made a brief one-day appearance 24 Jul, perhaps wandering in search of a suitable territory. A female, banded this year, appeared 22 Jul, paired with the singing male, and remained through 22 Aug, with nest-building observed 29 Jul, 4 chicks fledged 16 Aug, 2 of which were seen thereafter and one of which was banded. It will be fascinating to see if these birds show continued site fidelity next year. Bobolinks summered again at Ebenezer Church Rd., in *Loudoun*, where up to 3 males sang through Jun (JC).



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# Southern Atlantic Coast



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The weather this summer included relatively average temperatures with no prolonged hot spells. Precipitation was below average in most places, at least until late July. This meant a generally successful season for the breeding birds in the Region. Many observers reported that numbers of young and family groups seen were "up." Coinciding with this nesting success, the number of real rarities was down. Is there any correlation between mild breeding season weather and fewer wandering, nonbreeding birds?

**Abbreviations:** C. Hatt. (Cape Hatteras, NC); E.L.H. (E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton, GA); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper, SC).

## LOONS TO WOOD STORK

Summer reports of loons are not too unusual, but a Common Loon in full alternate plumage at North R., *Carteret*, NC 8 Jul (R&SB) was a surprise, as most summer loons are not in definitive alternate plumage. Pelagic trips off North Carolina once again found rare *Pterodromas*. On a trip out of Oregon Inlet 10 Jun, one **Bermuda Petrel** and one **Fea's Petrel** were observed (PG et al.). The more often-recorded Herald Petrel was located twice, with singles off Hatteras 8 & 28 Jul (BP et al.). Numbers of Black-capped Petrels, shearwaters, and storm-petrels were uneventful, with one exception. For some reason, **Manx Shearwaters** were present off Hatteras over most of the summer. One was found 7 Jul, an amazing count of 7–8 was made 8 Jul, and one was seen as late as 29 Jul (BP et al.). One wonders if the species had trouble at its breeding

locations in the North Atlantic? As usual, several seabirds were found on beaches this summer. Several Greater Shearwaters were found dead or dying in the C. Lookout, NC area in late Jun (JF, v. o.), and an Audubon's Shearwater was picked up at Blackbeard I. N.W.R., GA 17 Jul (MR).

Most unusual inland was the flock of 6 American White Pelicans in flight over the Etowah R., *Bartow*, GA 9 Jun (JS, BD). Where were these birds headed? The best count of this species was an impressive 136 at the S.S.S. 30 Jul (SC). Another rare inland pelican was the imm. Brown at Lake Park, *Lowndes*, GA 3 Jun (KA). Magnificent Frigatebirds graced all three states, with singles at Folly Beach, SC 1 Jun (TN), C. Lookout, NC 2 Jun (JK et al., *vide* JF), and Gould's Inlet, GA 6 Jun (*vide* LT). As is usual with this species, all individuals were present briefly and gone the next day.

Long-legged waders were present at inland sites as usual. The more interesting reports included an unexplainable American Bittern near Laurinburg, NC 22–26 Jul (BG), an ad. Little Blue Heron in *Greene*, GA 24 Jun (PS), and 14 Cattle Egrets at Rome, GA 7 Jun (MD). Reddish Egrets were reported less frequently this year, with only singles from North and South Carolina, and the best Georgia counts involving just 3 individuals. Wood Storks apparently did well in the Region this summer. The rookery (now two years running) at the Amphitheater Pond area of Jekyll I., GA included at least 62 nests during Jun (LT). Also, a wandering stork was unusual inland near Douglas, *Coffee*, GA 7 Jul (BZ).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was a surprise at the S.S.S. 19 Jul (SC). This individual was possibly from the nearby ACE Basin flock, although reports of these birds have been lacking of late. It would be nice to know the origin of these and other Black-bellieds in our Region. Several noteworthy summering ducks included an American Wigeon at Emory Univ., Atlanta, GA 14–31 Jul (JB et al.), a Blue-winged Teal in *Bartow*, GA 9

Jun (JS, BD), 2 Ring-necked Ducks at E.L.H. all season (no breeding reported; CL et al.), and a Red-breasted Merganser on the Shallotte R., Brunswick, NC 16 Jun (BPe).

Kites continue to be reported frequently across the Region. Very unusual for mid-summer were the 2–3 Swallow-tailed Kites in the Buxton, NC area 2–3 Jul (ML). The best count of Mississippi Kites was of 40 seen in one flock in the Ventosa area of Halifax, NC 9 Jun (RD). The few known North Carolina breeding locations were successful, according to those who monitored them. Northern Harriers were present at Alligator R. N.W.R., NC with 2–3 being found as late as 12 Jul (JL). Breeding most likely occurred, although no evidence was found. Noteworthy summer sightings of Sharpshinned Hawks included singles in Jasper, SC 11 Jun (WC) and at E.L.H. 28 Jul (CL). Also locally unusual in summer near the coast was a Broad-winged Hawk at Conway, SC 21 Jul (GP). Breeding season reports of American Kestrel are always worth noting. One was in Bartow, GA 9 Jun (JS, BD), and 2 ads. and one imm. were at the Cherry Hospital area of Wayne, NC 1 Jul (RD).

## PLOVERS THROUGH TERNS

The fall migration of shorebirds started as usual in Jul. Some of the more interesting inland reports included 2 Black-bellied Plovers near Rome, GA 28 Jul (JS, BD), a Sanderling at Jordan Lake, NC 21 Jul (JP), 29 Stilt Sandpipers at E.L.H. 25 Jul (CL), and 4 Short-billed Dowitchers at E.L.H. 28 Jul (CL). The Upland Sandpiper migration produced just a few: 2 at the New Hanover County Airport, NC 28 Jul (SCo) and one at the Bucksport Sod Farm, SC 29 Jul (ST). A Whimbrel at Jekyll I., GA 8 Jul (LT) was early for that s. location. There was another Ruff found at the S.S.S. 10 Jul (PS). This site has become one of the more dependable for finding Ruffs. Wilson's Phalarope reports included one at Pea I. N.W.R., NC 21 Jul (R&PT) and a peak of 13 at the usual S.S.S. location 30 Jul (SC).

Parasitic Jaegers are normally hard to come by in summer; thus of note were singles at C. Hatt. 22 Jun (SCa) and off Hatteras 29 Jul (BP et al.). Very rare and unprecedented for mid-summer was a Long-tailed Jaeger off Hatteras 7 Jul (BP et al.). Less unusual were migrant Long-taileds off Hatteras later in the month, 28 & 29 Jul (BP et al.). A gull photographed on the beach at the Cedar I., NC Ferry Terminal 8 Jul (R&SB) looked like an imm. Iceland at first, but was later thought to be some kind of hybrid due to several structural characters. Whatever it was, it was a most unusual sighting for mid-summer. Georgia had several summer Lesser



This Manx Shearwater was one of several spotted off Hatteras Island, North Carolina this summer; it is normally quite rare in summer in the Gulf Stream. Photograph by James Cameron.

Black-backed Gulls again, with the best count being 2 at St. Simons I. 6 Jul (GK, DD). Noteworthy inland terns included a Caspian at L. Wheeler, Wake, NC 9 Jun (SS) and a Least at E.L.H. 16 Jun (JS et al.). The latter, very rare that far inland, represented about the 3rd sighting for that location. Sooty Terns are found onshore almost annually. This year's reports included one in the lower Cape Fear R., NC in Jun (*vide* JO), one on New Dump I., Core Sound, NC 24 Jun (MB et al.), and one found dead at St. Simons I., GA 1 Jul (DD). And finally, a count of 250 Black Terns at Wolf I., GA 14 Jun (BW) was excellent for the summer.

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWING

The Beaufort, NC area still hosted White-winged Doves, with a pair present all season (SB, JF et al.). There have been White-wingeds here since about 1998. The only other report of this species was of one at a feeder in Douglas, GA 5 Jul (AB). Unprecedented in the Region, Short-eared Owls remained at Alligator R. N.W.R., NC throughout the summer, with at least 4 being seen several times (*vide* JL, v. o.). Although no definite breeding evidence was noted, nesting was certainly possible. The hummingbird migration started in Jul as usual, and at least one *Selasphorus* was noted, an imm. male at Simpsonville, SC 31 Jul (PW).

Providing a very rare summer report, an Olive-sided Flycatcher was observed at Pine Log W.M.A., Bartow, GA 29 Jul (GS), most likely a very early migrant. Several Willow Flycatchers were out of place with one in Forsyth, GA 15 Jun (JFI) and one in Cabarrus, NC 19 Jun (DS). The Region's two known Scissor-tailed Flycatcher nest sites were successful again this year: the

Monroe, NC birds raised 4 young (AO), and the McDonough, GA pair raised 3 in the first and one in the 2nd nesting (GM, v. o.). Of interest, an *additional* ad. male showed up at the Monroe site 5–9 Jul (AO)!

North Carolina's 5th Black-whiskered Vireo was at Baldhead I. 6–22 Jun (GMO, SCo, v. o.). There may have been 2 birds, as several observers heard 2 different birds singing at the same time. One of the birds was seen in company with a Red-eyed Vireo most of the time. The Anilorac Farm, Orange, NC Warbling Vireos successfully raised young as of 3 Jun (STh) for the 2nd year in a row.

House Wrens were found far to the e. on the Outer Banks this summer, with one at Southern Shores, NC 9 Jun (JL) and a pair on Collington I., NC in Jun (*vide* JL). A Gray-checked Thrush singing on Roanoke I., NC 19 Jun (JL) was very late, even for this notoriously late migrant. Rare summer reports away from the usual breeding range of American Robin included one at Blackbeard N.W.R., GA 5 Jun (PS) and one at Bainbridge, GA 21–31 Jul (MBe). Cedar Waxwings often linger to the e. of the normal breeding range. This season's reports included 5–6 in mainland Dare, NC 18 Jun and 3 in Manteo, NC 13 Jul (JL).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Reports concerning warblers were mostly about late-spring or early-fall migrants. One or 2 Black-throated Blue Warblers were late at the Savannah River Site, SC in early Jun (*vide* PC). Early migrants included a Black-and-white Warbler at Hofwyl Plantation, Darien, GA 6 Jul (DD) and a Northern Waterthrush at the S.S.S. 10 Jul (PS). The known breeding range of

Black-throated Green Warbler was extended southward in Georgia when up to 8 singing males and recently fledged juvs. were found at Pine Log W.M.A. 21 Jun (GB). There were also some lingering sparrows this summer, with a Savannah Sparrow being well described at the Aiken, SC Airport 28 Jun (*fide* AW) and a White-throated Sparrow at a feeder in Southern Shores, NC 17 Jun (*fide* JL). Breeding Dickcissels are always noteworthy in the Region. The pair from the spring season at Anilorac Farm, Orange, NC had eggs by 24 Jun and later fledged 3 young (KE, STh). Other Dickcissels this summer included 2 singing males near Cartersville, Bartow, GA 9 Jun (JS, BD) and one to 2 near Pettigrew St. Pk., NC 17 Jun (HL et al.). Very rare in mid-summer, a Yellow-headed Blackbird was at a feeder on St. Simons I., GA 8-9 Jul (EY). Another early migrant, especially that far s., was the Baltimore Oriole at Bear I., SC 14 Jul (DB). Red Crossbills are notoriously erratic in their wanderings and nestings. This summer, nesting was confirmed at Pine Log W.M.A., GA when 2 ads. with one juv. were seen 20 Jun (GB). There were also at least 5 others noted in the immedi-

ate area, so additional nesting could have taken place. And finally, a Pine Siskin at a feeder in Hopkins, Richland, SC 7 Jun (*fide* TK) was quite late, especially for that area of the state.

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# Florida



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Rainfall in June and July was heavy, partially replenishing the drought-diminished wetlands. At the end of the season, the water levels were nearing the bottom of the normal range. Unfortunately, the dry weather pattern returned at the end of the season, leaving the Region in a continuing drought pattern.

**Abbreviations/definitions:** C.P. (county park); E.L.A.P.P. (Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program); E.N.P. (Everglades National Park); L.A.R.A. (L. Apopka Restoration Area; Orange); P.P.M. (Polk phosphate mines); S.R.A. (state recreation area); W.C.A. (Water Conservation Area).

## LOONS THROUGH STORKS

Single Common Loons, scarce in summer, were at St. Teresa Beach, *Franklin* 7 Jul (JM) and Tram Road S.T.P., *Leon* 16 Jul (GM), and one in definitive alternate plumage was at New Port Richey, *Pasco* 14 Jul (EW). A single Black-capped Petrel was found ca. 19 km off Key Biscayne, *Miami-Dade* 14 Jul (APr). Quite unusual was an out-of-season Northern

Gannet found in a weakened condition inland at Crystal R., *Citrus* 13 Jun. More usual, but still a rarity, was another Northern Gannet at Cedar Key, *Levy* 18 Jul, found dead two days later (JF). An amazing number of American White Pelicans summered at L.A.R.A., with more than 1000 seen on seven dates, and a peak count of **2400** on 27 Jun (HR). Additional summering birds were at Bald Pt., *Franklin* 10–15 Jun (JD), Flamingo, E.N.P. (BR), and the *Miami-Dade* landfill (LM). A statewide Brown Pelican survey conducted 13–19 Jun found 6432 nesting pairs in 39 colonies, well below the statewide average of 9317 since the survey began in 1968. The reduction in number of nesting pairs was most noticeable from the middle Gulf coast southward, with a reduction of 47%, and along the Atlantic coast, with a reduction of 41% as compared to the average from 1968–1990. The reason for this decline is not apparent (SN). Bird I., *Franklin* was host to 269 Brown Pelican nests (JGo). Two key Tampa Bay area colonies were affected by raccoons (RP, AP).

Aerial wading bird surveys in the W.C.A.s indicated that abundances in 2001 were even higher than during 2000, which was 129% higher than in 1999, a year in which counts ran roughly three times higher than in 1998. This continues a trend of more birds coming into

the Everglades in the early dry season than have in the past (DG). The estimated number of wading bird nests (excluding Cattle Egrets, which are not dependent on wetlands) in s. Florida was 38,647—down about 5% from last year, which was one of the best years in a decade. Changing water patterns caused a substantial switch of nest locations from last year. In 2000, 81% of the nests were in W.C.A. 3, while only 38% of the nests were there in 2001. On the reverse side was Loxahatchee N.W.R., which contained 51% of the nests this year as compared to only 7% of the nests last year. E.N.P. and Florida Bay continue to contain only about 10% of the total wading bird nests, a trend that must be reversed as part of the ecosystem's restoration. Unfortunately, while nest attempts are normally a good indicator of nest success, this year that was not true, particularly for Great Egrets and especially for birds in W.C.A. 3. This seemed to be caused by continued drought followed by a rainfall event in Apr that caused water levels to increase quickly (DG). Of the 4168 Great Egret nests that were started in W.C.A.s 2 and 3, over 80% were abandoned or failed (PF).

An imm. Great White Heron at Newnans L., *Alachua* 18 Jul + (JN et al.) was unusually far n. Numbers of Snowy Egrets and Little Blue and Tricolored Herons were low again in the Tampa Bay area (RP, AP). Snowy Egret nest numbers in s. Florida were above last year's very high numbers (DG). Reddish Egrets nesting in the Tampa Bay area were likely at a post-plume-hunting high, with 86 pairs at 10 colonies, half of those at the Alafia Bank Sanctuary (RP, AP). Twelve Reddish Egrets were at Hagan's Cove, *Taylor* 30 Jul (JH, HA). A nesting colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons at Kissimmee Prairie Preserve S.P., *Okeechobee* contained 75 pairs (PS). Twenty-seven first-year Roseate Spoonbills were at Holiday, *Pasco* 6 Jul (KT). Roseate Spoonbills were at the same level as last year in the Tampa Bay area, with about 180 nests at 6 sites (RP, AP). White Ibis nest starts in s. Florida were down slightly from last year but still well above the 10-year average (DG). These numbers may be less reliable than usual, as many White Ibis initiated nesting, then abandoned their colonies in W.C.A. 3. Many of these birds apparently attempted to renest at Loxahatchee N.W.R. or at Pocket colony, likely resulting in fewer nesting pairs than nest attempts (PF). About 335 pairs of Glossy Ibis were found at four sites in the Tampa Bay area, about half the normal number, reflecting the dry foraging numbers (AP, RP). There was no statewide Wood Stork survey this year, but nest numbers were down in the Tampa Bay area (RP, AP) and



in s. Florida, though in s. Florida, the numbers were still well above the 10-year average (DG). As noted above, the large number of nest starts did not correlate with the number of young produced. This was true for Wood Storks as well, as they abandoned one large colony, and the Tamiami West colony had 1400 nests, but only 450 produced 900 young (PF). Four pairs with large downy young on Weeki Wachee R., *Hernando* 12 Jul were extraordinarily late (AP, RP).

### WHISTLING-DUCKS THROUGH PLOVERS

Hundreds of Fulvous Whistling-Ducks along with a few Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were found 8 Jul at Belle Glade Agricultural Station, *Palm Beach* (BH). Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continue to spread in peninsular Florida, with three reports from *Alachua* (LB, JH) to the n. and one report from Ormond Beach, *Volusia* (CS) on the Atlantic coast. One-hundred-fifty Mottled Ducks were found 16 Jun at Newnans L., *Alachua* (RR), 61 on 4 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR), and 27 were at L. Hamilton, *Polk* 18 Jul (BC, LC). Out-of-season ducks included a female Northern Pintail at W. Kendall, *Miami-Dade* 10–27 Jul (JB et al.), 4 Blue-winged Teal at P.P.M. 1 Jul (PT, CG), a single Blue-winged Teal on four dates at L.A.R.A. (HR), and 2 Ruddy Ducks at L.A.R.A. 21 Jul (DS, KR). The male **Masked Duck** with the all-blue bill, first found in the spring, was last seen 21 Jun at Pembroke Pines, *Broward* (AH, BH, RM).

A White-tailed Kite in *Palm Beach* 14 Jul (DSa) was the only individual of this scarce species reported. A maximum of 40 Swallow-tailed Kites was at L.A.R.A. 25 Jul (HR). The Wildlife Commission's statewide Bald Eagle survey found 1102 active territories (including a few w. of the Apalachicola R. in the Central Southern region), the highest total since the surveys began in 1973. An estimated 1311 young fledged (SN). Very rare in Florida in the summer, single Sharp-shinned Hawks were seen 22 & 29 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR). Single Short-tailed Hawks were seen 7 Jul (dark morph) and 28 Jul (light morph) at Weekiwachee Preserve, *Hernando* (CB, AH, BH), 10 Jul (dark morph) at Flamingo, E.N.P. (BR), and 29 Jul (light morph) at Saddle Creek C.P., *Polk* (DW, LS, LAL), with 2 (one light and one dark) at Tiger Creek, *Polk* 15 Jul (DGo, BCo). A Red-tailed Hawk summered s. of normal at W. Kendall, *Miami-Dade* (JB). The excellent total of 22 Crested Caracaras was found 25 Jun in *Okeechobee* (LG, PG). Uncommon in Florida in summer, single American Kestrels were found 15 Jul at

L.A.R.A. (HR) and 28 Jul at Sarasota (JD, KJ). A Black Rail was heard calling at the Belle Glade Marina, *Palm Beach* 14 Jul (PB, JV).

A Purple Gallinule was present 1–12 Jun at Boca Ciega Park, *Pinellas* (IH), where the species is very rare. Sandhill Cranes struggle to breed in the increasingly urban areas around Tampa, so a pair with a nearly grown young 2 Jun at Brandon (BP, DP) was encouraging. The reintroduced Whooping Crane again came close to nesting successfully, with 15 pairs formed, 9 territories defended, and 2 nests with eggs (SN). Single inland Black-bellied Plovers were at P.P.M. 17 Jun (PT, CG) and L.A.R.A. 25 Jul (HR). An American Golden-Plover in alternate plumage was at Homestead, *Miami-Dade* 22–27 Jul (VM et al.). Three pairs of Wilson's Plovers with chicks were at the Wolf Branch E.L.A.P.P. site, *Hillsborough* 24 Jun (DP, BP). Thirty Wilson's Plovers were at Lighthouse Pond, St. Marks N.W.R. 8 Jul (TC). The first migrant Semipalmated Plovers were 2 at L.A.R.A. 27 Jul (HR). A single Piping Plover was found 21 Jul at Crandon Beach, *Miami-Dade* (HD), while 4 were found 27 Jul at Ft. De Soto C.P., *Pinellas* (KA).

### OYSTERCATCHER THROUGH TERNS

A statewide American Oystercatcher survey was conducted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for the first time this year; it found 391 known or probable pairs along with 42 single birds, including some pairs on rooftops, particularly in *Pinellas* (ND). Black-necked Stilts were at L.A.R.A. throughout, with a maximum of 35 there (HR) and up to 8 at Newnans L., *Alachua* 16–26 Jun (RR, MM). Up to 4 American Avocets were at Newnans L. 3–21 Jun (MM, TW), with one at St. Marks N.W.R. 24 Jul (NW). A Greater Yellowlegs 17 Jun at L.A.R.A. (HR) could have been a summering bird, but 4 at St. Sebastian R. Buffer Preserve, *Indian R.* 26 Jun (DS) were certainly migrants, as were 17 Lesser Yellowlegs at the same time. A very unusual summer Solitary Sandpiper was at L.A.R.A. 18–22 Jun (HR). Four Willets 4 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR) were likely southbound migrants, as was one at Newnans L., *Alachua* 8 Jul (TW). The first returning Spotted Sandpipers were 7 Jul at Green Key, *Pasco* (JMc) and 11 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR). A Whimbrel was at Flamingo, E.N.P. 17 Jul (BR). Single Long-billed Curlews were at Cedar Key, *Levy* 26 Jul (GK) and Ft. De Soto C.P., *Pinellas* 27 Jul (KA). An Upland Sandpiper was found 27 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR). An inland Sanderling was at Belle Glade Agricultural Station, *Palm Beach* 14 Jul (PB, JV). The first returning Semipalmated Sandpiper was one 4 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR),

while the initial southbound Least Sandpipers were 43 at P.P.M. 1 Jul (PT, CG). White-rumped Sandpipers are one of the latest spring migrants. This Jun's records were of one on 7 Jun and 6 on 10 Jun at L.A.R.A. (HR), 2 at P.P.M. 17 Jun (PT, CG), and one at Viera, *Brevard* 21 Jun (AH, BH). The first Pectoral Sandpipers of the southbound migration were singles 15 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR) and 19 Jul at Homestead, *Miami-Dade* (LM). The first migrant Stilt Sandpipers of the "autumn" were found 8 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR). Thirty at Homestead 31 Jul + (RW, DL et al.) was the highest count of the season. A lone Buff-breasted Sandpiper was at L.A.R.A. 29 Jul (HR). Female Ruffs (Reeves) were at Viera, *Brevard* 10–11 Jun (DF, RW et al.) and at Homestead 26 Jul (JB et al.). A single Wilson's Phalarope was at Homestead 22 Jul (VM), and 2 were at Big Talbot Island S.P., *Duval* 24 Jul (KA).

Nesting Laughing Gull numbers in the Tampa Bay area remained stable, with about 19,300 pairs at four sites. The largest colony in the area and probably in the state was at Egmont Key N.W.R., with possibly 10,000 pairs (RP, AP). A first-year Great Black-backed Gull was near the *Miami-Dade* landfill 6 Jul (LM). Florida's first **Heermann's Gull** continued at Ft. De Soto C.P. throughout the season (LA, m. ob.). Eight Gull-billed Terns were at P.P.M. 17 Jun (PT, CG), and one was at Homestead 23 Jul (JR, MW). Gull-billed Terns nested at two Hillsborough Bay locations, with two and seven pairs present, respectively (RP, AP), and at Bird I., *Franklin*, with 22 nests (JGo). Caspian Tern nest numbers continue to increase slowly in the Tampa Bay area, with 107 pairs at two locations (RP, AP). Bird Island, *Franklin* had 206 nests (JGo). Royal Tern nests were found in the highest numbers in the Tampa Bay area in decades, with 3766 nests at three sites. Almost all the Royal Terns have left Passage Key N.W.R., as that island has eroded, and moved to Egmont Key N.W.R., where 3540 pairs were counted (AP, RP). Rare inland, single Sandwich Terns at L.A.R.A. 1, 4, & 15 Jul (HR) were the 2nd for this location. An astonishing 715 pairs of Sandwich Terns were at Egmont Key N.W.R. (RP, AP). Common Terns are quite scarce in Florida in the summer, and this year was no exception, with one at Huguenot Park, *Duval* 24 Jul (KA), 2 at L. Osprey, Sarasota 30 Jun (JD, JG), and up to 4 at L.A.R.A. (HR) the only reports. After last spring's record number of Arctic Terns, to have one this summer was perhaps not so surprising—but to have one inland was unprecedented. The **Arctic Tern** found by HR at L.A.R.A. 17 Jun was the first ever recorded

inland in Florida. Forster's Terns were present throughout the summer at L.A.R.A., with a maximum of 40 on 13 Jun (HR). About 6 pairs of Least Terns nested (unsuccessfully) at Wolf Branch E.L.A.P.P., *Hillsborough*, with a nest found and photographed 24 Jun (DP, BP). Black Terns were present at L.A.R.A. up to mid-Jul, with a maximum of 8 on 10 Jun (HR). A Black Noddy was seen 9 Jul at Dry Tortugas N.P. (EB).

## DOVES THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

A roost of Eurasian Collared-Doves at Winter Haven, *Polk* had 303 birds on 13 Jul (TP). White-winged Doves were n. of normal at Ocala and Gainesville. Eight Monk Parakeets through the season at Gainesville (DB) may represent a breeding population rather than the normal escapees in n. Florida. Mourning Doves are very common in Florida, but 2120 found 8 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR) was an impressive count. The northernmost Mangrove Cuckoos reported were single birds at Cockroach Bay, *Hillsborough* 2 Jun (BP, DP) and Weedon I. Preserve, *Pinellas* 18 Jun (RW). A Short-eared Owl flushed from the ground several times 27 Jun at Kissimmee Prairie Preserve S.P., *Osceola* (RMu) provided one of the few summer reports for Florida n. of the Keys. Another out-of-range report was of an Antillean Nighthawk heard calling 1 Jun in *Brevard* (BP). An impressive 517 Chimney Swifts were noted going into a single chimney at New Port Richey, *Pasco* 18 Jun (KT, LT). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird along the Loop Road, Big Cypress National Preserve, *Monroe* 7 Jul (PB, JV, BPU) was at the extreme s. end of the species's breeding range in Florida. Belted Kingfishers are quite rare in summer in Florida s. of the far n., so a total of six reports, including one from Flamingo, E.N.P. (BR), was definitely more than average.

A **Tropical Kingbird** was seen and heard calling 14 Jun at Ft. De Soto C.P., *Pinellas* (LA). Migrant Eastern Kingbirds were found 21 Jul at Weekiwachee Preserve, *Hernando* (AH, BH) and 28 Jul at Green Key, *Pasco* (KT). Fifteen Gray Kingbirds at Green Key 29 Jul (KT) was a good count. An excellent congregation of 3000 Purple Martins was at Dadeland, *Miami-Dade* 12 Jul (JR). A flock of 342 Rough-winged Swallows was at P.P.M. 1 Jul (PT, CG). Bank Swallows were present throughout the season at L.A.R.A. (HR). Migrant Bank Swallows were detected 12 Jul at St. Marks N.W.R. (TC), 13 Jul at Bald Pt., *Franklin* (CT), 14 Jul at Pahokee, *Palm Beach* (DS), 22 Jul at Playalinda Beach, *Brevard* (DS), and 24 Jul at W. Kendall, *Miami-Dade* (JB). Southbound Cliff Swallows were at St. Marks N.W.R. 8 Jul (JD), at

L.A.R.A. 8, 22, & 29 Jul (HR), and at Brown's Farm Road, *Palm Beach* 14 Jul (PB, JV). Fifty-four Barn Swallow nests were found at L.A.R.A. over the season (HR). Thirty Barn Swallows at Flamingo, E.N.P. 8 Jul (BR) and 20 at Homestead 8 Jul (JB) were likely southbound migrants. Also likely a migrant was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Largo, *Pinellas* 12 Jul (JFi).

American Robins are uncommon nesters in Florida, so one feeding a fledgling at Tallahassee 22 Jun (GM) was noteworthy. A Bahama Mockingbird was found 9 Jul at Dry Tortugas N.P. (EB). A Gray Catbird was at L.A.R.A. 20 Jun (HR), suggesting that it might be a summering bird. Common Mynas nested successfully for the first time at Key West, with a pair and 5 juvs. 31 Jul (JO). Migrant Yellow Warblers were at L.A.R.A. 11 Jul (HR), Magnolia Park, *Orange* 21 Jul (DS, KR), Green Key, *Pasco* 24 Jul (KT), and Dry Tortugas N.P. 26 Jul (NP). Late Black-throated Blue Warblers were found singing at Key West 10 Jun (JO) and A.D. Barnes Park, *Miami-Dade* 20–24 Jun (JR). Migrant Prairie Warblers were found 5 Jul in *Pasco* (BP), 11 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR), 12 Jul at Largo, *Pinellas* (JFi), and 19 Jul at A.D. Barnes Park, *Miami-Dade* (JR). A Palm Warbler 24 Jul at Green Key, *Pasco* (KT) was very early. Returning Black-and-white Warblers were found 7 Jul at O'Leno S.P., *Alachua* (JH), 15 Jul at Big Pine Key (CBo), and 27 Jul at Key West (JO). A late American Redstart was at West Lake Nature Center, *Broward* 4 Jun (BB), while the first returning individual was found 22 Jul at L.A.R.A. (HR). A Prothonotary Warbler 27 Jul at Green Key, *Pasco* (KT) was the first of the fall. The first southbound Louisiana Waterthrush was detected 5 Jul at Boca Ciega Park (JFi). A Kentucky Warbler was at Bonner Park, Largo, *Pinellas* 24–28 Jul (IH, JFi). A Common Yellowthroat at Big Pine Key 11 Jul (CBo) was likely a migrant, as they are not known to breed in the Keys. The first migrant Hooded Warbler was found 28 Jul at John Chestnut, Jr. C.P., *Pinellas* (RS). A Yellow-breasted Chat was singing at Crystal R. State Buffer Preserve, *Citrus* 4 Jul (BH, AH).

Bachman's Sparrows are known to breed in pine flatwoods throughout their range, but in Florida, they are also found in the same dry prairie habitat as the Florida subspecies of Grasshopper Sparrow. Surveys at Kissimmee Prairie Preserve S.P., *Okeechobee* found over 150 individuals (RMu). These same surveys found an excellent 90 singing male Florida Grasshopper Sparrows, even though they covered only about 9% of the available habitat (RMu). A late Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow

was found 11 Jun at Pablo Creek, *Duval* (SJ, KN). According to Jon Greenlaw (in litt.), Nelson's arrive back at their n. breeding areas "notoriously" late, because vegetation in their marshes tends to foliate later than the vegetation in marshes that support breeding Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows, for instance. Thirteen Seaside Sparrows were along a 1.6-km stretch of Bottoms Rd. at St. Marks N.W.R. 8 Jun (JD). A female-plumaged Indigo Bunting at Flamingo, E.N.P. 19 Jun (BR) was s. of normal. A male Dickcissel 29 Jul at Holey Land W.M.A., *Palm Beach* (DL et al.) was heard to make some guttural clicks while lightly pumping its tail, behavior that suggests a breeding bird (GB). Three male Shiny Cowbirds were at Ft. De Soto C.P., *Pinellas* 14 Jun (LA); up to 2 females and 6 males summered at Key West (JO). A Bronzed Cowbird on 11 Jul at Princeton, *Miami-Dade* (LM) was only the 2nd ever found in the summer. Two male and 2 female Brown-headed Cowbirds were the first to summer at Key West (JO). Unusual in the summer were single male American Goldfinches at Tallahassee 25 Jun (BS) and N. St. Augustine, *St. Johns* 26 Jun (JHo).

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# Ontario



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Ontario birders were heavily involved in collecting data for the second Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas. It was expected therefore that a larger number of interesting sightings would be available for this report. Unfortunately, the deadline for submission for the Atlas data was too late for the results to reach the subregional editors in time for this report, and thus many could not be included. The season was significantly warmer than usual. There was very little rainfall in July, creating drought conditions that changed the habitat at stopover sites for migrating shorebirds. Extensive mudflats were created in some marshy areas, and many of the usual mudflats dried up completely. The drought also prevented farmers from making a second cut of hay, which resulted in increased abundance of field breeders like Bobolinks. Among the unusual rarities were a mid-summer Boreal Chickadee near Hamilton, a Barn Owl near Sarnia, and a Northern Wheatear at Long Point.

**Abbreviations:** C.A. (Conservation Area); C.W.S. (Canadian Wildlife Service); K.F.N. (Kingston Field Naturalists); Long Point (Long

Point Bird Observatory, *Haldimand-Norfolk*); M. N. R. (Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario); Pelee (Pt. Pelee N.P. and vicinity, *Essex*); W. T. P. (Water Treatment Plant). Algonquin and Presqu'ile are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* refer to counties, districts, or regional municipalities.

## LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Single Red-throated Loons at Pickering, *Durham* 1 Jun (GC), at Burlington, *Halton* 2 Jun (KAM), and at Bluffer's Park, *Toronto* 8–10 Jun (CH, TC, *fide* ONTBIRDS) were late stragglers, as were 2 Common Loons at Pelee 3 Jun (KS). On the other hand, a Common Loon at Kettle Point, *Lambton* 4 Jul (AR) and 2 at Bronte Harbour, *Halton* 14 Jul (GE) were probably summering nonbreeders, as were single Horned Grebes in Hamilton Harbour 24 Jun (BCh) and at Rattray Marsh, *Peel* 21–24 Jul (CSAM, CH, *fide* ONTBIRDS). At the Rainy River S.T.P., 4 Eared Grebes were observed 1 Jun (DE, m. ob.). A pair was nesting at the Emo S.T.P., *Rainy River*, 7 Jun (DE, BR, GCo) and photographed 10 Jun (G&MP, RBHS). The nest subsequently failed owing to lowered water levels (DE). Of several pairs of Red-necked Grebes attempting to nest in the Bronte Harbour Marina, *Halton*, only one pair had some success. By the end of Jul, it had 2 fledglings and some eggs still to hatch. Another pair lost all seven eggs when the nest slipped off the

floating tire (GE). They had rebuilt their nest by the end of Jul (GE, m. ob.). A total of 18 Red-necked Grebes was in the area of Bronte Harbour, *Halton* during the greater part of the period (GE), and 42 were at Rattray Marsh, *Peel* 20 Jul (CSAM, *fide* ONTBIRDS). Altogether this indicates a significant s. expansion of their range. A flock of 7 Red-necked Grebes at Nym L., *Rainy River* 22 Jul were early fall migrants (SP).

American White Pelicans were seen regularly on L. Superior at Black Bay (AE) and Mission I., both *Thunder Bay* (BR et al.).

There were 3000 imm. Double-crested Cormorants along with 20 ads. at Kettle Point, *Lambton* 30 Jun (AR), providing evidence for the increase in the population of this species in the Great Lakes Region. A good place to observe Least Bittern this year was the St. Clair N.W.R., *Kent*; at least 9 were seen flying above the cattails in one hour 22 Jul (BAM). An apparently active nest of Least Bittern was at Miller Creek C.A., *Peterborough* (EN). At Horseshoe Bay on Lake Huron, *Bruce*, 3 Glossy Ibis were present until 1 Jun (CC). Three pairs of Great Egrets returned to nest on High Bluff I. at Presqu'ile for the 2nd year (C.W.S., *fide* MR). Otherwise there were few reports of Great Egrets from the Province except for 4 individuals at the Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto* 2 Jul (JSm) and one at High Park, *Toronto*, 7 Jul (RBHS), as well as the usual congregation of imm. birds in *Essex*: 184+ at Big Creek (KK, *fide* ONTBIRDS) and 200+ at Holiday Beach in June (FU, *fide* ONTBIRDS). A Black-crowned Night-Heron, a rarity for the Peterborough Area, was on a raft on the Otonabee River 14 Jul (BT). A record high number of 12 Mute Swans were in the Pelee Area 10 Jun (DW). A Brant lingered at Cobourg Harbour, *Northumberland* until 26 Jun (CEG), and another was at Driftwood P.P., *Renfrew* 5 Jul (BK, *fide* ONTBIRDS). Five families of Wood Duck at the Grand Bend W.T.P., *Lambton* were an unusual sight (AR). The Canvasback at the Leslie Street Spit, *Toronto* that provided the first nesting record for Ontario last year had abandoned the only nest with five eggs by 8 Jul this year (RBHS). Single Lesser Scaup at Hillman Marsh, Pelee 7 Jun–24 Jul (AW, et al.), at Cobourg Harbour, *Northumberland* 1 Jun–3 Jul (CEG), and at Darlington P.P., *Durham* 15 Jul (THo) were clearly out-of-season, as were single Greater Scaup at Tavistock W.T.P., *Oxford* 1–8 Jun (JH) and Mineral Springs, *Hamilton* 18 Jul (AW). Other lingering or summering nonbreeding ducks were a Ring-necked Duck at Humber Bay Park, *Toronto* 27 Jun (BY), a Long-tailed Duck at Prince Edward Pt., *Prince Edward* 27

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Jun (RTS), and a Common Goldeneye at Darlington P.P., *Durham* 2 Jul (THo). A female Common Eider on Amherst I., *Prince Edward* 1–30 Jun was helping female Canada Geese tend a nursery containing a large number of goslings (K. F. N.).

## RAPTORS THROUGH TERNS

There were three occupied Osprey nests in the s. Bruce Peninsula, *Bruce* during the period (JJ), more than in the last 40 years. A pair of Bald Eagles returned to nest at the Trent R. near Havelock, *Peterborough* and raised young (M. N. R., *fide* DS). Young Bald Eagles also fledged from two nests in the Kingston area, *Frontenac* (K. F. N.). This represents a steadily improving situation in areas where nesting ended some 50 years ago (RW). Rough-legged Hawks were much in the news. Two summered near the Alfred W. T. P., *Prescott and Russell* (JB, GP, *fide* ONTBIRDS), while a single was at Amherst I., *Prince Edward* 15 Jun (KF, AS). In the Thunder Bay area, several were noted, very unusual for Jun and Jul (CE, RS, NE), as were 3 the Rainy River District during the period (DE). Urban Peregrine Falcons nested in nine places, three pairs in Toronto, two in Mississauga, *Peel*, and one each in Hamilton, St. Catharines, *Niagara*, London, and Ottawa. Unfortunately of the total of at least 27 eggs, only 13 young fledged and 9 survived to independence, a considerably reduced success rate compared to that of the 2000 season (MG, *fide* www.peregrine-foundation.ca).

A female Ring-necked Pheasant with 8–10 young was seen in the Upper Humber Valley in Toronto, where this species had been thought to have died out 3–4 years ago (JI, *fide* SE). A rare Northern Bobwhite was singing in breeding habitat in Middlesex during mid-Jun (PR). A Yellow Rail was heard calling in the Kabitotikwia R. marsh on L. Nipigon, *Thunder Bay* 21 Jul (NE). A rare King Rail was at Long Point 25 Jun–31 Jul+ (RR, m. ob.). A s. extension of the breeding range of Sandhill Cranes is suggested by several birds seen and heard in three places in the Peterborough area; 2 were at the mouth of the Otonabee R. flying and calling 7 Jun (MT); at Goose L., 3 were seen in early Jul (MBa); and another 3 were flying near Pigeon L. 18 Jul (BL, DS). Elsewhere 2 were at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* 6 Jun (DL). Two ads. were at Sturgeon Creek, Pelee 4 Jun–31 Jul+ (AW), where they were joined by another 22 Jun (AW, et al.) and 2 more 5 Jul (AW). All 5 stayed past 31 Jul.

Late spring migrants were 15 Black-bellied Plovers at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* 7 Jun (FP). A Piping Plover was at Long Point 10–15 Jun (IR) and another at Presqu'île 2 Jun only

(JT, BF). An all-time record high count at Pelee was established by 579 Killdeer 16 Jul (AW). Single American Avocets were at Aylmer, *Elgin* 29–30 Jun (DMA, LW, *fide* ONTBIRDS), at Bond Head, *Durham* 1 Jul (ML, m. ob.), and at the Tollgate Ponds in Hamilton 22 Jul (MCR). Whereas a Greater Yellowlegs 2 Jun and one Lesser Yellowlegs 8 Jun (JH) at Tavistock, *Oxford* were considered late spring migrants, a Greater and a Lesser Yellowlegs at Pelee 22 Jun were likely early fall migrants (AW). All-time record high numbers of fall migrants were set at Hillmarsh and Sturgeon Creek, Pelee, by 44 Solitary Sandpipers, 91 Spotted Sandpipers, and 278 Least Sandpipers 16 Jul (AW). Short-billed Dowitchers were early fall migrants at Hillman Marsh, Pelee, with 4 on 29 Jun and 48 on 1 Jul (AW, DW). Three Willets at Cranberry Marsh 9 Jun (DL) were highly unusual. A Marbled Godwit was at Long Point 31 Jul (JA et al.) Flocks of 250 Ruddy Turnstones at Cobourg Harbour, *Northumberland* 5 Jun (CEG) and 600 at Prince Edward Pt., *Prince Edward* 7 Jun (RTS) were marginally late migrants for those areas, as were 15 White-rumped Sandpipers at Cranberry Marsh, *Durham* 8 Jun (MB) and 3 for the Tip of Long Point 16 Jun (MH). A Pectoral Sandpiper 25 Jun was Long Point's earliest fall record by almost three weeks (JA, MH). A flock of 38 Dunlin at Ryder Ponds in Whitby, *Durham* 8 Jun was remarkable (MB). A Dunlin in breeding plumage at Presqu'île 8–11 Jul (JT, m. ob.) was probably the earliest fall migrant for the Park. An ad. female Ruff at Hillman Marsh, Pelee 28 Jul was the 11th recorded in the last 12 years (AW). An out-of-season Parasitic Jaeger was resting on the water near Port Dover, *Haldimand* 3 Jul (GR, *fide* ONTBIRDS).

A Laughing Gull was at the Tip, Long Point 15 Jun (MH). A Franklin's Gull at Wildwood Lake, *Oxford* 9 Jul was the 2nd record for the county (JH). Single Little Gulls were at Long Point 1–2 Jun (IR), at Kingsville, *Essex* 7 Jul (DW), and up to 3 were at Hillman Marsh, Pelee, in mid-Jul (AW). Little Gulls are found regularly at Port Burwell P.P., *Elgin* from Jul to Oct, but 14 individuals 19 Jul were the largest number at this site (DMA, LW, *fide* ONTBIRDS). A highly unusual nesting site of three pairs of Ring-billed Gulls was found in an open field—a bison pasture—in the Thunder Bay Area 10 Jun (GCo, M&GP, RBHS). The nests were on low piles of straw. A California Gull at Long Point 30 Jun was only the 4th record there (IR). Whereas a single Forster's Tern at Presqu'île on 2 & 6 Jun was unusual (D&IS, TB), a flock of 215 Forster's Terns 1 Jul at Sturgeon Creek, Pelee (AW) was exceptionally high, although it was close to the breeding

grounds. South of their regular breeding range were nesting Bonaparte's Gulls near Dryden, *Rainy River* (PRa, BM). A colony of Black Terns has been discovered on the Matawin R., *Thunder Bay* (KM), and 124 were counted at the Kingsville, *Essex* waterfront 7 Jul (DW).

## DOVES THROUGH CHICKADEES

A White-winged Dove at Lappe, *Thunder Bay* 28–30 Jun was a rare vagrant (D&AC, m. ob.). The observation of a Barn Owl in *Lambton* 28 Jul was a very rare event for s. Ontario (AR). A Snowy Owl at Erieau Harbour, *Kent* 13–15 Jun (m. ob.) was extraordinarily late. Northern Hawk Owls nested and raised 3 young in e. Ontario near Alfred, *Prescott-Russell*, representing only the 2nd nesting record for the area (JB, m. ob., *fide* ONTBIRDS). Another pair nested near Verner, *Nipissing* and raised 4 young (RT, m. ob.), and six nesting pairs were recorded near Raith and Black Sturgeon L., both *Thunder Bay*, this spring (NE). All of these nestings are presumably the result of the record winter irruption of the species. Short-eared Owls were found at three new breeding locations in the Thunder Bay District (NE). A pair near Binbrook, *Hamilton* provided the first breeding record for *Hamilton* (PT). At Selkirk P.P., *Haldimand*, a juv. Northern Saw-whet Owl was banded 17 Jul (JBM) and may well represent the first breeding record for the county. A surprising number of Whip-poor-wills—15—was counted at Wainfleet, *Niagara* 2 Jul (YH). At the n. edge of their range, Whip-poor-wills were found n. of Kakabeka Falls (KM) and near Armstrong, both *Thunder Bay* (AH).

Red-headed Woodpeckers have suffered a severe decline in s. Ontario during recent years. It is encouraging, therefore, that reports of sightings and breeding have come from many different parts of the area. Thus most encouraging were 11 Red-headed Woodpeckers in the Rainy River Area 6 Jun (DE, BR), as well as probable nesting pairs at Darlington Park Road, *Durham* 14–29 Jul (ML, m. ob.), at a site near Cobourg, *Northumberland* in mid-Jun (CEG, SB), at Pinery P.P., *Lambton*, at Antrim, *Ottawa* 8 Jul (*fide* ONTBIRDS), and near Kleinburg, *York* during the period (JL). Four individuals were in Marcy's Wood at Abidon Point, *Niagara* 14 Jun (MT), and a family of 2 ads. and 2 juvs. were at Humber Marsh, *Toronto* 21 Jul (GCo).

All indicators of an ongoing increase in the population, at least 7 Acadian Flycatchers were noted migrating through Pelee 4–23 Jun (AW), 5 territorial males were in the Long Point Area (IR), 4 pairs bred successfully at Skunk's Misery near Newbury, *Middlesex* (PR), and a

singing male was at Halton Region Forest 8 Jun (JO, m. ob.). A pair of Eastern Phoebes at the De Laurier House, Pelee fledged 3 young 5 Jul, the first breeding record for Pelee in many decades (AW). A pair of Western Kingbirds nested on a microwave tower at Rainy River 14 Jun–6 Jul (GCo, RBHS, G&MP, DE). Single vagrant Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were at Whitby, *Durham* 15 Jul (CA et al.) and at the Embrun W.T.P., *Prescott-Russell* 25–26 Jul (JS, n. ob., *fide* ONTBIRDS). A s. breeding expansion of Blue-headed Vireos is indicated by the observation of ads. with fledglings on Canoe L. 15 Jul and Perth Road 21 Jul; both locations are n. of Kingston, *Frontenac* (RW). N. of typical breeding range was a pair of Warbling Vireos building a nest at the waterfront at Thunder Bay 10 Jun (BM, NE). Common Ravens are expanding their range in s. Ontario. One was at Grafton, *Northumberland* 5 Jun (CEG) and another at Long Point 5 Jun (JF), the 7th Long Point area record. A Saskatchewan Horned Lark (subspecies *enthymia*) at the West Beach, Pelee 5 Jun has not previously been recorded in Ontario (AW). An unusual event took place on Pelee I., *Essex* 30 Jun when a Bullfrog swallowed a newly-fledged Tree Swallow (DW, *fide* ONTBIRDS). A flyby of 13,000 Bank Swallows in two hours at the Tip at Pelee 29 Jul (AW) may have been an unprecedented spectacle. A **Northern Wheatear** was at Hastings Drive, Long Point on 8 Jun (RC, AM, et al.) and was a first for the Long Point Area; this bird could have been part of a late spring push of the species through e. Canada. A **Boreal Chickadee** at Beverley Swamp, *Hamilton* 10–11 Jun (AW, DG et al.) was the first since 1976 in this general area (AW).

## WRENS THROUGH FINCHES

A Sedge Wren at Fullerton, *Oxford* 1 Jun was the first reported in the area in 16 years (DB). An ad. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher with 3 young was near Wiarton, *Bruce* 26 Jun at the n. edge of its usual breeding range (JJ). Numerous sightings of Northern Mockingbirds, especially in the Greater Toronto area, attest to a large increase in the population, although more effort due to atlasing may account for some of the increase. A genuine increase in the population seems likely and can be accounted by a high rate of fledging, thanks to the dry summer. Confirmed breeding was reported from two sites in *Peel*, 11 sites in York, and eight sites in Toronto (RBHS, *T.O.C. Newsletter*, Sep 2001). In one 10 x 10 km square in the York Region alone, six active nests were confirmed and two more were probable (TH). As well, there was a number of single birds reported (TH, RBHS, WY). At least 3 Northern Mockingbirds were as far n. as the

Thunder Bay Area (m. ob.); the males were singing daily. Another bird was on the Sibley Peninsula, *Thunder Bay* (PC). A male Brewster's Warbler was in Kanata, *Ottawa* 8 Jul (CL, *fide* ONTBIRDS). A rarer female Lawrence's Warbler was at Dundas Valley, *Hamilton* 24 Jun (JO, m. ob.). An ad. male Northern Parula at Pelee 16 Jul was a record early fall migrant (AW, HTO). A male Blackburnian Warbler at Woodstock, *Oxford* 20 Jun was a late spring migrant (JH), whereas one at Pelee 21 Jul (PR, DMA) and another at Long Point 30 Jul (IR) were early fall migrants. More than 12 pairs of Cerulean Warblers were found at Skunk's Misery near Newbury, *Middlesex* during the season (PR). Single male Louisiana Waterthrushes in the Ganaraska Forest, *Durham* 2 Jun (RP) and at the Boyd C. A., *York* in mid-Jul (LN) were unusual. A singing male Kentucky Warbler was at Dundas Valley, *Hamilton* 28 Jun–mid-Jul (SMcG), and 2 were at Long Point 13 Jun (IR). The population of Hooded Warblers may be increasing: 10 were found at Marcy's Wood near Abidon Pt., *Niagara* 14 Jun (MT); 12 birds were reported from the Greater Toronto area; 12 breeding pairs were at Dundas Valley, *Hamilton*, for the period (BC, AW, SMcG); and at least 50 territorial males and 35 nests were recorded at Long Point (IR). Male Yellow-breasted Chats near Inverhuron, *Bruce* 6 Jun (DF) and at Ancaster, *Hamilton* 16–17 Jun (JH) were most unusual. A male Summer Tanager was present at Wilson Tract at Long Point during Jun and Jul (m. ob.). Only one Henslow's Sparrow at Roblin, *Lennox & Addington* 1 Jun (RW) was reported for the whole province. A White-crowned Sparrow was at St. Robert School, Markham, *York* 29 Jul (WY), the first summer record for the Greater Toronto area. Single Clay-colored Sparrows were singing at the Headquarters of Long Point for most of Jun (IR) and near Sauble Beach, *Bruce* 20 Jul (JJ). A Lark Sparrow was banded at Thunder Cape, *Thunder Bay* 8 Jun (BRod).

A singing Western Meadowlark, first heard in early Apr, was present at Clappisons Corner, Hamilton to the end of Jul+ (RD, m. ob.). Orchard Orioles were successfully nesting in both traditional and new locations. One pair was at Cobourg, *Northumberland* 21 Jun, along with a single bird (CEG). Single Orchards were banded at Selkirk P.P., *Norfolk* 17 & 26 Jul and 3 on 29 Jul (JBM), which suggested a good breeding season. Male Yellow-headed Blackbirds at the Port Darlington Marina, *Durham* 8 Jun (MB) and in Bond Head, *Durham*, 1 Jul were well outside their usual sw. Ontario range. The only noteworthy record from Algonquin for this season was a pair of Red Crossbills with 2 fledged young at Basin Lake Road 17 Jun (RSt).

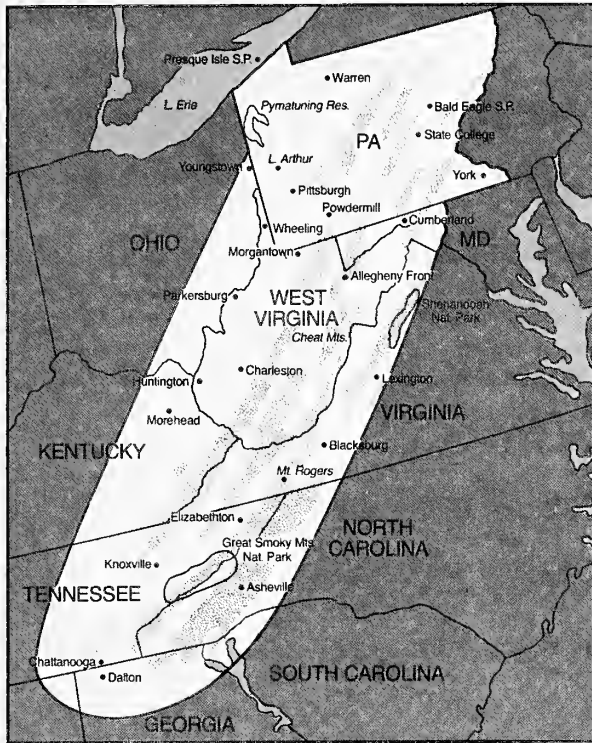
**Cited observers (subregional editors in bold-face):** Jody Allaire, **Robert Andrie**, Ted Armstrong, Charmaine Anderson, **Margaret Bain**, Mike Barker (MBa), Tony Beck, Siegmarm Bodach, Jacques Bouvier, Dave Brown, **Evelyn Brown**, Geoff Carpentier, **Cindy Cartwright**, Barry Cheriére (BCh), D. & A. Christianson, Glenn Coady (GCo), P. Colby, Rob Copeland, Mark Cranford (MCr), Thomas Crooks, Bob Curry, **Robert Dobos**, Sandra Eadie, Carolle Eady, **Dave Elder**, Gavin Edmondstone, Aarre Ertolahti, **Nick Escott**, Bob Falconer, Dave Fidler, J. Fisher, K. Fleming, Marcel Gahbauer, D. Gardiner (DG), **Clive Goodwin** (CEG), Al Harris, Y. Henderson, Matt Hindle, Tyler Hoar (THo), **Theo Hofmann**, **James Holdsworth**, Carol Horner, Jean Iron, **Joe Johnson**, Karl Konze, Burke Korol, Bob Lemon, Chris Lewis, Markus Lise, Doug Lockrey, Joan Love, Blake A. Mann (BAM), Dave Martin (DMA), Sheldon McGregor (SMcG), Craig S.A. McLaughlan (CSAM), Kevin McLaughlin (KAM), **John B. Miles**, Alex Mills, Kimberly McNaughton, Brian Moore, Erica Nol, Lionel Normand, John Olmsted, Henrietta T. O'Neill (HTO), ONTBIRDS (an email listserv by Ontario Field Ornithologists; for information: [www.interlog.com/~ofo](http://www.interlog.com/~ofo)), George & Mark Peck, Shirley Peruniak, Frank Pinilla, Gordon Pringle, Rayfield Pye, Brian Ratcliff, Penny Ratuszniak (PRa), **Peter Read**, **Ian Richards**, **Alf Rider**, Ron Ridout, **Maureen Riggs**, Garth Riley, Bruce Rodrigues (BRod), **Doug Sadler**, J. Slumkowski, A. Scott, Keith Sealy, Don & Ian Shanahan, **Roy Smith** (RBHS), Jake Smythe (JSm), R.T. Sprague, Mike Street, Rick Stronks (RSt), Rob Swainson, Richard Tafel, Monika Tan, Ben Taylor, Peter Thoem, John Thomson, **Ron Tozer**, Michael Turisk, Fred Urie, Dean Ware, **Ron Weir**, Linda Wlardaski, **Alan Wormington**, Bob Yukich, Winnie Yung.



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# Appalachia



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There was a consensus over most of the Region that the breeding season for a wide range of songbirds was among the most successful in recent years. This was certainly reflected in the number of recently fledged vireos, catbirds, wood-warblers, and sparrows captured for banding at both Powdermill Nature Reserve in western Pennsylvania and at the Southern West Virginia Bird Research Center. Heavy rains in the southern half of the Region may have improved nesting success for grassland species because of delays in the cutting of hayfields. In late July, these heavy rains also contributed to some good fallouts of shorebirds. A scattering of unusual nonbreeding bird sightings, such as Wood Stork in the Georgia mountains, a Mississippi Kite in northeastern Tennessee, and 2 American White Pelicans and a Least Tern in Pennsylvania, also added to the impression that it was a good summer for birding in Appalachia.

**Abbreviations:** G.R.W.M.A. (Grand R. Wild.

Management Area, *Trumbull*, OH); P.N.R. (Powdermill Nature Reserve, Rector, *Westmoreland*, PA); P.I.S.P. (Presque Isle S.P., *Erie*, PA).

## LOONS THROUGH STORKS

Reports of summering Common Loons included 2 birds as far s. as Watauga L., *Carter*, TN 9 Jul (*vide* RK), and one at Mt. Solon 16 Jun, the latter just the 2nd summer record for *Augusta*, VA (*vide* YL). Four family groups of Pied-billed Grebes totalling 19 birds were found at G.R.W.M.A. 7 Jul (DH); as usual, several pairs nested at Conneaut Marsh, *Crawford*, PA (DB, RFL, RCL), and a newly fledged young at Yellow Cr. S.P., PA 16 Jul represented the first confirmed breeding there (MH). Two out-of-season Pied-billeds were at Dillard, *Rabun*, GA 11 Jul (DF, AM), one was at Brainerd Levee, *Hamilton*, TN 5 Jul (BW), and another at Pipestem, *Summers*, WV 1 Jun (JP). A Horned Grebe was a rare summer find at Saybrook, *Warren*, PA 3 Jun (CNe). An **American White Pelican** strayed to P.I.S.P. 19 Jul (JMc), at the same time that another was observed 35 mi to the s. on the upper reservoir at Pymatuning L., PA (RCL, RFL). Two nests of Double-crested Cormorants were located at Rankin Bottoms, *Cocke*, TN 19 Jun (RK) for the Region's lone breeding report; the high count of nonbreeding birds was 28 at Pymatuning L., PA

18 Jun (RFL).

The number of breeding Great Blue Herons continues to increase throughout Appalachia; a large rookery at Lordstown, *Trumbull*, OH contained 374 nests 18 Jun (CB); in *Hawkins*, TN there were 126 nests at one rookery (RK), and there were over 30 known nesting colonies from the Knoxville area down the Tennessee R. to Chattanooga (RK). Up to 14 Great Egrets summered at Rankin Bottoms, TN, where they may have been nesting along with a small new colony of Great Blue Herons. The lone Snowy Egret report this season was of one at P.I.S.P. 6 Jun (JMc). Always a rare find in w. Pennsylvania, 2 Little Blue Herons were at Dunning Cr. wetlands, *Bedford* 10 Jun (TD), and there were 2 imm. at Woodcock L., *Crawford*, PA 6 Jul (RFL); in Tennessee, an imm. Little Blue was at Kingston Steam Plant 20 Jul (RH, DM). There were several reports of Cattle Egret in *Raleigh*, WV this summer (RC), and one from Rankin Bottoms, TN 3 Jun (RK). The 30+ Black-crowned Night-Herons that summered at Rankin Bottoms were presumed to be nesting nearby (RK); more unusual were the 2 ads. at Conneautville, *Crawford*, PA 15 Jun (CN), and an imm. at L. Osceola, *Henderson*, NC 31 Jul (RSe). Summering Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, rare in the Appalachians, were found at Elizabethton (RK) and at two localities in *Hamilton*, TN (KC), as well as in *Raleigh*, WV (RC). The **Wood Stork** seen soaring over the Toccoa R., *Fannin*, GA 26 Jul was very unusual for the mountains of that state (GB, DF).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

A Tundra Swan lingered at P.I.S.P. through 10 Jun (BG), a rare Regional summer record. Unseasonal sightings of ducks at Presque Isle included 2 American Wigeon 7 Jun (RSt) and a single bird 28 Jul (JMc), a Northern Pintail 17 Jul (GR), 2 Lesser Scaup 8 Jul (JMc), and 2 Red-breasted Mergansers 6 Jun (JMc). A male Blue-winged Teal remained at Brainerd Levee, TN through 15 Jun (KC); in Pennsylvania 4 ads. with 2 ducklings were seen 4 Jul at Imperial, *Allegheny*, providing just the 2nd county nesting record (BM). A Green-winged Teal at Bell's Lane, *Staunton*, VA 5 Jun established a new late spring date for that locality (AL). Common Mergansers continued to expand their n. Pennsylvania breeding range: a flock of 40, including many young, was seen in *Bradford* during late Jul (RSh), and a female with 7 downy young at Erie N.W.R. 6 Jun established the first *Crawford* breeding record (GM). The season's only report of Ruddy Duck was of 3 ad. males at Pymatuning L., PA 13 Jul (CN).

A Mississippi Kite at Greenville, TN 11 Jul was a first *Greene* county record (J&LR). A pair

of Peregrine Falcons was observed throughout the period at a railroad bridge below Chickamauga Dam, *Hamilton*, TN (KC), and a pair was also nesting in Great Smoky Mts. N.P. (RK, m. ob.). Several observers, from Pennsylvania to Tennessee, commented on the scarcity of Northern Bobwhites this season, but the species was thought to be increasing at several mountain stripmine sites in *Boone* and *Logan*, WV (RC). Virginia Rails and Sora had good breeding success at their stronghold at Conneaut Marsh, PA, where many young were observed (DB, RCL, RFL), and farther s., a Virginia Rail was heard calling at Mt. Nebo, *Garrett*, MD 18 Jun (FP). A pair of American Coot nested near Volant, *Lawrence*, PA, the Region's only such report (BD). Now firmly established as breeding birds in nw. Pennsylvania, several Sandhill Cranes were regularly seen in their usual *Lawrence* and *Mercer* sites (BD, NT), and there were additional reports of cranes in *Crawford* and *Venango* (KB, m. ob.).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

There was a good early shorebird flight through Appalachia. An American Avocet at L. Oneida, *Builer*, PA 1 Jul (DDr, DY) represented the earliest "fall" record for the state by two weeks. Following heavy rains, a flock of 142 Lesser Yellowlegs settled on a flooded field in *Greene*, TN 29 Jul (AH, JB); 30 were at Brainerd Levee (KC) on the same date; and 20 were on rain-soaked, freshly harvested sod fields at Hooper Lane, *Henderson*, NC 25 Jul (WF, BO). An exceptionally high count of 24 Solitary Sandpipers was made at Mosquito L. and G.R.W.M.A. 15 Jul (DH). Three Willets stopped over on one flooded field, and 7 at another site in *Greene*, TN 29 Jul (*vide* RK). In w. Pennsylvania, there were numerous, if widely scattered, reports of breeding Upland Sandpipers, with the best numbers in *Somerset*, including an observation of 2 ads. still in the company of at least 2 half-grown downy young on the late date of 7 Jul (RM); reports of at least 3 birds also came from *Garrett*, MD (FP). An early Whimbrel was a rare find at Hooper Lane, NC 25 Jul (WF, BO), and an early Red Knot appeared at P.I.S.P. 25 Jun (JMc). Over 20 Semipalmated Sandpipers stopped at Hooper Lane 25 Jul (WF, BO) and 50 at G.R.W.M.A. on the 29th (DH). Four White-rumped Sandpipers lingered at Dunning Cr. wetlands, *Bedford*, PA late May–5 Jun (TD). Five early Baird's Sandpiper were at Shenango Res., *Mercer*, PA 28 Jul (RSt), and one stopped at Mosquito L., OH the next day (DH). Stilt Sandpipers were widely reported in late Jul, with a high count of 25 in a flooded field in *Greene*, TN 29 Jul (AH, JB).

Very few unusual gull species strayed into Appalachia this summer; however, a Laughing Gull was a rare find at P.I.S.P. 6 Jun (BC), and a Bonaparte's at Prince Gallitzin S.P., *Cambria*, PA 23 Jun (JS) was a bit out of time and place. The number of nonbreeding Ring-billed Gulls continued to increase dramatically at Pymatuning L., PA, where well over 1000 could be seen on any day throughout the season (RCL, RFL), and they were observed to be increasing substantially in s. West Virginia as well (RC). A recently established colony of Herring Gulls at Pittsburgh continued to grow (SK), and 2 fledglings were also discovered 35 mi. up the Allegheny R. from Pittsburgh at Kittanning (PH). Two early Forster's Terns were a rare find at Swoope, *Augusta*, VA 29 Jul (AL), and a **Least Tern** appeared at Dunning Cr. wetlands, *Bradford*, PA 11 Jun (KG) as Tropical Storm *Allison* was moving up the Mississippi Valley (*vide* TD). One or two pairs of Black Terns again persisted in nesting in the Pymatuning L. region (RFL, RCL, DW), and 3 early migrants were a good find at Brainerd Levee, TN 28 Jul (*vide* KC).

## DOVES THROUGH WRENS

The **White-winged Dove** that had appeared at a feeding station in New Castle, PA this spring was last seen 15 Jun (CG); another that visited a feeder in Aaronsburg, *Centre*, PA 11–14 Jun (MKI) provided the 3rd w. Pennsylvania record. A Black-billed Cuckoo was a good find at a site at an elevation of over 4000 ft in *Monroe*, TN 12 Jun (KC), and 2 were near Bunch Gap, NC 9 Jun (WF, BO). At the S. West Virginia Bird Research Center, however, Black-billeds were found in the lowest numbers of the last 8 years (RC).

Short-eared Owls continued to increase as breeding birds in w. Pennsylvania, where they were found in at least six different sites, including a count of 6 birds at a reclaimed stripmine near Volant, *Lawrence*, PA (m. ob.). An organized census of Northern Saw-whet Owls in Pennsylvania—Project Toot Route—has shown the species to be unexpectedly widespread across the state; one route included 7 calling birds near Reynoldsville, *Jefferson*, PA 5 Jun (JF), and 2 birds near New Castle 10 Jun represented the first summer records for *Lawrence*, PA (BD). Farther s., a nest of Saw-whets was found at a box on Roan Mt., TN this summer (RK, AT). Common Nighthawks continued their long-term decline over much of the Appalachian region; at Morgantown, WV, it was speculated that the disappearance of a once-large colony may be due to predation on eggs and young by American Crows (GHB). Following a period of low numbers, Whip-poor-wills continued to make a comeback in s. West Virginia, where 57 singing males were listed at various sites this

summer (RC); good numbers were also found in the Pennsylvania mts., during Project Toot Route, including 6 at Central City and 10 at Mt. Davis, *Somerset*, PA (JPa).

After many years of declining numbers, it was encouraging that Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported to be increasing (and to have nested successfully) at a number of scattered sites in e. Ohio (CB, DH), w. Pennsylvania (BD, CL, RM), and w. Maryland (FP). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, with 2 newly fledged young, was found in *Johnson*, TN 19 Jun for the first confirmed breeding in the ne. part of that state (RK).

Alder Flycatchers appeared to be doing well in w. Pennsylvania, where they were widely reported (m. ob.), and the "usual" six to eight pairs summered at Roan Mt., TN (RK, AT). Willow Flycatcher populations, however, seemed down at P.N.R. (RCL, RM), and the species was in exceptionally low numbers in s. West Virginia (RC). Least Flycatchers were more common than usual across n. *Trumbull*, OH, where 6 territorial males were located through mid-Jul (DH). Great Crested Flycatchers were doing well in *Crawford*, PA (RFL), and in West Virginia, numbers were up near Morgantown (GHB) and the species considered abundant in the s. part of the state (RC). Eastern Kingbirds were described as common, with many family groups observed later in the season, on four grassland bird survey routes in *Bedford* and *Fulton*, PA (RM). A disjunct population of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers in e. Tennessee, first observed several years ago, again attempted nesting, with single pairs located this summer in both *Sequatchie* and *Marion* (*vide* KC).

Over 3000 Tree Swallows were staging for migration along a road crossing Conneaut Marsh, *Crawford*, PA on 19 Jul, and 50 Rough-winged Swallows were gathered there 25 Jul (RFL, RCL); both are good counts for the area. A high count of over 1000 migrating Bank Swallows was noteworthy in *Greene*, TN 30 Jul (DM). Single Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen at two sites in *Rabun*, GA along the Chatooga R. 11 Jul (DF), and breeding birds were found at Red River Gorge, *Wolfe*, KY for the 6th consecutive year (FR). The only report of Sedge Wren was of one near Worthington, *Armstrong*, PA 25–26 Jun (JF). Marsh Wren populations were good at Conneaut Marsh, PA, where 16 were heard along one short stretch of road at Geneva 15 Jul (RFL, RCL); four territories were located at G.R.W.A., OH throughout the summer (DH).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Over 40 Golden-winged Warblers made for an unexpectedly high count during an intensive



survey in *Carter*, TN (AT), but just 20 were banded at the S. West Virginia Bird Research Center, compared to an average of 51 for past years (RC). In Pennsylvania, just one was banded at P.N.R. (the 40-year average is 6), where none was known to have nested for the first time in 40 years (RCL, RM). Five Yellow-rumped Warblers were found at a probable nesting site at Elliott Knob, *Augusta*, VA 16 Jun (*vide* YL); the status of a bird at P.I.S.P. 7 Jun, where the species has not been known to breed, was uncertain (RSt). Yellow-throated Warblers are now firmly established along the Allegheny R. as far n. as Warren, PA, where at least three pairs were breeding in Jun (TG). Late migrants at P.I.S.P. 7 Jun included both a Pine and a Bay-breasted Warbler (RSt). Just two reports of Swainson's Warbler were received: one of 2 birds along Burrell's Ford Rd., *Rabun*, GA 11 Jul (DF), and the other of a bird heard singing at Red R. Gorge, KY 30 Jun (FR). No Kentucky Warblers could be found (DGD) in the Shenandoah Valley, VA this season, and the breeding population at P.N.R. seemed lower than during most recent years (RCL, RM). The number of breeding Hooded Warblers, too, may have been low at P.N.R.; but nesting success was apparently high, with 25, mostly imm. birds, banded during the 2nd half of Jul (RCL, RM). A male Mourning Warbler on Roan Mt., TN 23 Jun–1 Jul (AT) represented the first local summer record. Yellow-breasted Chats were missing from several nesting areas in s. West Virginia (RC) and were notably scarce in the Laurel Highlands of sw. Pennsylvania (RCL, RM).

In Pennsylvania, single Clay-colored Sparrows were found near Mill Run, *Fayette* 17 Jun (RM), at Worthington, *Armstrong* 25 Jun (JF), and 3 or more were near Phillipsburg, *Jefferson* 3 Jun (EZ); and even more unusual was a Clay-colored at Canaan Valley S.P., WV 11 Jun–24 Jul (MK, JN). Grassland surveys, conducted over nine w. Pennsylvania counties this summer, indicated that many grassland sparrows continue to be quite common in suitable habitat; hundreds of Henslow's, Grasshopper, and Savannah Sparrows were observed—most abundantly in *Clearfield* and *Clarion* (DB). Savannah Sparrow numbers were up in e. Tennessee, with at least 10 birds located in *Washington* and *Johnson* counties (RK). A late spring White-throated Sparrow was still at P.I.S.P., where the species does not nest, 7 Jun (RSt), and an early fall migrant or summer wanderer was banded there 17 Jul (RFL). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks appeared to be completely absent from traditional breeding sites in the upper Cedar Cr. Valley, *Shenandoah*, VA (DGD), but breeding populations seemed high in the Laurel Highlands and elsewhere in Pennsylvania

(RM, RCL). One or 2 pairs of Dickcissels were at a *Washington*, TN site for the 6th consecutive year (RK), and 3 were found in *Adams*, PA 24 Jun (PR). A Western Meadowlark first found at Trauger, *Westmoreland*, PA this spring remained there at least through 12 Jul (m. ob.); another appeared near Rebersburg, *Centre*, PA from 21 Jul through the end of the period (*vide* EZ).

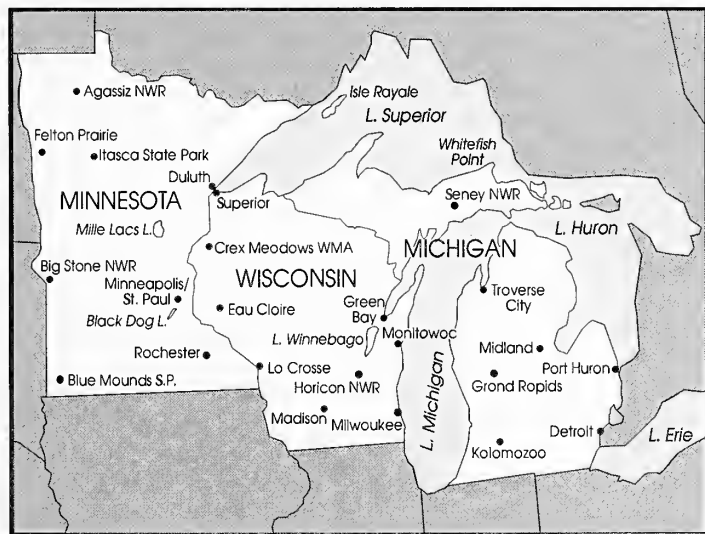
A Red Crossbill lingered at a bird feeder at Blue Ridge, *Fannin*, GA through 17 Jun (JD); small numbers were found on Roan Mt., TN during the summer (RK, AT), and a flock of over 75 was seen across the state line on Roan Mt., NC 30 Jun (WF, BO, MW); farther n., 2 were an unexpected find at Camp Michaux, *Cumberland*, PA 25 Jun (DHf). Considering the scarcity of Pine Siskins during the preceding winter and spring, surprising numbers of summering birds were reported from scattered sites across Pennsylvania; a female with a brood patch was banded at Athens, WV in Jul (JM), and a few summered as far s. as Roan Mt., TN (RK, AT).

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# Western Great Lakes



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**T**he Region was mostly cool and wet in early June, then generally hot and dry the rest of the period. During a brief respite from the heat in early July, temperatures dipped as low as 27

degrees Fahrenheit in northeastern Minnesota, and frost brushed across Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Pointe Mouillee managed the Leed Unit for fall shorebird migration, attracting 2 Reeves and creating the best habitat Michigan has enjoyed in years. Twenty-one shorebird species were recorded there 29 July, probably an all-time high for the Wolverine State in summer. Northern Hawk Owl, Eurasian Collared-Dove, White-eyed Vireo, and Yellow-throated

Warbler nested in Minnesota, while Wisconsin garnered most of the rarities, including Swallow-tailed Kite, Black-headed Gull, Groove-billed Ani, and Scissor-tailed Flycatcher.

**Abbreviations:** Big Stone (Big Stone N.W.R., *Big Stone* and *Lac Qui Parle*, MN); Crex Meadows (Crex Meadows W.M.A., *Burnett*, WI); D.N.R. (Department of Natural Resources); M.B.R.C. (Michigan Bird Records Committee); M.C.G.I. (Milwaukee Coast Guard Impoundment, WI); Murphy-Hanrehan (Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park, *Dakota* and *Scott*, MN); p.a. (pending acceptance); Pte. Mouillee (Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, *Monroe*, MI); Shiawassee (Shiawassee N.W.R., *Saginaw*, MI); W.B.R.C. (Wisconsin Bird Records Committee); W.P.B.O. (Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, *Chippewa*, MI).

## LOONS THROUGH IBISES

Migrant Red-throated Loons included singles at W.P.B.O. (MPe, GRU) and *Presque Isle*, MI (WNG) 2 Jun; more difficult to characterize were 4 in alternate plumage at Duluth, MN 8 Jul (SW). Virtually extirpated as a Minnesota breeding species, 2 Horned Grebes in *Kittson* 3 Jun (PHS) were probably late migrants, likewise one in *Alpena*, MI 1 Jun (WNG). Wisconsin's 27 Red-necked Grebes in *Winnebago* 17 Jun (TZ) and Michigan's 47 near Hessel, *Mackinac* 7 Jul (WNG) were exceptional counts for mid-summer. Michigan had 3 American White Pelicans on Arcadia L., *Manistee* 1–5 Jun (KW, RB, JS) and one at Shiawassee 18 Jul (BG, CSz).

Minnesota and Michigan each had single Snowy Egrets in Jun, but Wisconsin cornered the market with 3 at Green Bay all summer (JH), one at M.C.G.I. 31 Jul (JI), and one in *Dodge* (TW). Single Little Blue Herons graced *Outagamie*, WI 24 Jun (BSm) and *Washtenaw*, MI 25–26 Jun (HP, m. ob.). Except for 36 in *Winnebago*, WI 15 Jul (TZ), Cattle Egrets were scarce in all three states. Most unusual of 3 Minnesota Yellow-crowned Night-Heron records was a county first at Janesville S.T.P., *Waseca* 3 Jul (RBJ); an imm. at M.C.G.I. 31 Jul (JI) was the only other Regional report. Still casual but recently annual in Minnesota, a White-faced Ibis was photographed in *Mower* 19 Jun (JEM, RNS et al.).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH RAILS

Providing only the 3rd summer record for Minnesota was an ad. Ross's Goose near L. Lillian, *Kandiyohi* 27 Jun (RAE). A pair of well-documented Tundra Swans near Oslo, *Marshall* 15 Jun (EEF) piqued interest in Minnesota. Minnesota D.N.R. reported Blue-winged Teal

down 24% from last year and 39% below the long-term average. A male Cinnamon Teal near Ortonville, *Big Stone*, MN 3–4 Jun (RJS et al.) was an exceptional summer occurrence. Even more unexpected was the female Harlequin Duck in Michigan at Ludington, *Mason* 3 Jun (JH). Three White-winged Scoters were late migrants at W.P.B.O. 2 Jun (MPe, GRU). Furnishing the 7th summer record for Wisconsin was a Long-tailed Duck in *Door* 9 Jun (JSc).

Unexpected in ne. Minnesota, an ad. Swainson's Hawk provided a first county record for *Carlton* 9 Jun (TAT). Rough-legged Hawks at W.P.B.O. 15 Jun (LD) and *Pennington*, MN 29 Jun (RBJ) were probably late migrants; a few have summered in nw. Minnesota in the past. A **Swallow-tailed Kite** seen briefly at M.C.G.I. 23 Jun (JI) will be reviewed by the W.B.R.C. A Golden Eagle in *Waukesha* 17 Jun (JB, TRP) would provide Wisconsin's first Jun record (p.a.). Even one Merlin nest in Minnesota's Twin Cities would be amazing, but no fewer than 8 young were fledged by four breeding pairs this season (MJS). Providing one of Minnesota's few well-documented summer records was the Prairie Falcon near Rothsay W.M.A., *Wilkin* 9 Jun (SD, CRG, RG).

Spruce Grouse are rarely ever seen in Michigan's Lower Peninsula, so Jun reports of one to 2 in *Crawford* (*fide* JD), *Ogemaw* (JHi, RR), and *Oscoda* (JD, PH) were noteworthy. Lek counts of Sharp-tailed Grouse declined sharply in Minnesota (D.N.R.), down 43% in the e.-cen. region and 24% in the nw.; Michigan's sole report was from *Chippewa* (JG). Two Yellow Rails near Trout Lake, *Chippewa* 9 Jun (AMB) furnished Michigan's only report.

## SHOREBIRDS

Possibly summering were 4 Black-bellied Plovers at Pte. Mouillee 30 Jun (AMB), but 2 in *Alpena*, MI 18–19 Jun (WNG) and one at Pte. Mouillee 24 Jun (AMB) were most likely lingering spring migrants. An ad. **Wilson's Plover** at W.P.B.O. 15 Jun (p.a. TS) would be Michigan's 3rd; there was a well-documented Wilson's at this same location in mid-May, which will be treated separately by the M.B.R.C. High water and storms foiled nesting by Piping Plovers at the traditional Minnesota site in *Lake of the Woods*; intriguing was an ad. with 2 imms. in *Big Stone* 28 Jul (PCC). A Piping Plover nest in *Marquette* was the first documented along Wisconsin's Green Bay shoreline since 1941 (TE); elsewhere on the Great Lakes, 31 breeding pairs (30 of these in Michigan) fledged a total of 71 young (*fide* AMB). The 260 Killdeer at Big Stone 20 Jul (BEO) was Minnesota's 3rd highest count.

Two American Avocets summered in *Clay*, MN (TAT, ADS), and all 3 states had migrants in Jul; the earliest were 4 in *Vernon*, WI 3 Jul (RZ), 3 in *Van Buren*, MI 4 Jul (WMB), one in *Berrien*, MI 4 Jul, and 2 in Beloit, WI 7 Jul (DC). Minnesota had 2–6 avocets in four additional locations, Wisconsin had one in *Racine* 20 Jul (EH), and 3 were at Pte. Mouillee 29 Jul (AMB). Peak yellowlegs counts included 68 Greater at Big Stone 25 Jul (BEO) and 39 at Pte. Mouillee 20 Jul (AMB); Lessers peaked at 1104 on 20 Jul and 654 on 29 Jul at Pte. Mouillee (AMB), and 716 at Big Stone 20 Jul (BEO). Fifteen Solitary Sandpipers were at Pte. Mouillee 29 Jul (AMB). Two Willets in *Marshall* lingered until 3 Jun (PHS), while one in *Lyon* 30 Jun (PE) was an exceptional mid-summer occurrence in Minnesota. Michigan had a flurry of early Jul reports, including 3 at Warren Dunes S.P., *Berrien* 4 Jul (JP), one in *Ottawa* 4 Jul (SS), 7 at New Buffalo, *Berrien* 7 Jul (DV), and 2 in St. Joseph, *Berrien* 8 Jul (AMB). Unusual for location and number was a group of 19 Marbled Godwits in *Baraga*, MI 23 Jul (JY).

Ruddy Turnstones returned to Michigan 29 Jul, when 7 were at Pte. Mouillee (AMB). Minnesota and Michigan had the only Red Knots, one in *Polk* 3 Jun (PHS) and 4 in *Alpena* 4 Jun (KS), respectively. A Sanderling in *Becker*, MN 25 Jun (CRM) was possibly still northbound, while 2 in *Alpena*, MI 5 Jul (WNG) were probably early fall migrants. In w.-cen. Minnesota, separate surveys in *Lac Qui Parle* and *Big Stone* found peaks of 947 Semipalmated Sandpipers 28 Jul (PCC) and 670 Least 20 Jul (BEO). Peeps were down in Michigan, though 505 Semipalmateds were at Pte. Mouillee 29 Jul (AMB). White-rumped Sandpiper is normally exceptional as an early fall migrant in the Region; one in *Becker*, MN 25 Jun (CRM) was probably northbound, but one in *Dane* 1 Jul (PA) and 2 in *Vernon* 3 Jul (RZ) were either record-early returnees or summering in Wisconsin. Also early or summering were single White-rumped in *Berrien*, MI 2 Jul (CG, JW), Pte. Mouillee 6–21 Jul (AMB, RB), and *Marshall*, MN 21 Jul (PHS). Pectoral Sandpipers peaked at 330 at Big Stone 25 Jul (BEO). An impressive 650 Dunlin at Pte. Mouillee 3 Jun (AC) was followed by a summering individual 24 Jun–20 Jul (AMB). Stilt Sandpipers peaked when 229 were at Big Stone 20 Jul (BEO). Three Buff-breasted Sandpipers in *Meeker* 21 Jul (DMF) provided Minnesota's 3rd earliest fall date.

Never before have 2 Ruffs been seen together in Michigan; both were ad. females (Reeves) found by Byrne at Pte. Mouillee 12–20 Jul and 20–21 Jul. The Short-billed Dowitcher in *Becker* 24 Jun (PHS, PCC) was Minnesota's earliest

ever fall migrant; honors for high count went to Wisconsin, where 170 Short-billeds were in Dodge 7 Jul (DT), seconded by 80 at Pte. Mouillee on both 30 Jun and 29 Jul (AMB). Relatively early was a Long-billed Dowitcher at Pte. Mouillee 29 Jul (AMB). Wilson's Phalarope was reported in 17 Minnesota counties, well above the average of 10 counties over the past decade; fall migrants included 83 in Big Stone 29 Jul (PHS). One to 2 Red-necked Phalaropes lingered to 6 Jun in Marshall, MN (*fide* BAB); the first returning fall migrant was at Pte. Mouillee 29 Jul (AMB).

## GULLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Wisconsin's 3 Laughing Gulls were along Lake Michigan, in Sheboygan (D&MB) and Racine (KD), both 15 Jun, and M.C.G.I. 20 Jul (BB). Michigan had 2 in Berrien—an ad. at St. Joseph 2 Jun (JG) and an imm. at New Buffalo 17 Jun (TS). Wisconsin had 2 Franklin's Gulls along L. Michigan in early Jun (TW), plus one in Vernon 31 Jul (FZL). Four Little Gulls drifted between Manitowoc and Sheboygan 5–9 Jun (m. ob.); elsewhere in Wisconsin were one in Racine 17–18 Jul (KD) and 2 near Algoma, Kewaunee 22 Jul (TU). A **Black-headed Gull** at Algoma 22 Jul (p.a. TU) provided Wisconsin with its 4th summer record. An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull was in Kewaunee, WI 29 Jul (J&KS).

Eurasian Collared-Doves nested for the first time in Minnesota at Caledonia, Houston (PHS et al.); the first of three broods fledged 4 Jul (KAK). Elsewhere in Minnesota, one from May remained in Roseau (PHS, PCC), and another was documented in Renville 3 Jul (RBJ). Wisconsin had three reports, including in Manitowoc through 22 Jun, where a nesting attempt failed (CS), one in Ozaukee 21–25 Jul (JSo, TW), and another still in Oconto (J&KS), where present since May 2000. Most exciting was the **Groove-billed Ani** at Green Bay 30 Jun–3 Jul (BL, JH). This was Wisconsin's 15th ani but the first in summer; it appeared to be in good condition and was observed actively feeding.

Following last winter's record-high invasion of 190 Northern Hawk Owls into Minnesota, it was not surprising that breeding occurred, but the discovery of four nests (*Koochiching, Lake*, and two in *Cook*) was unprecedented. In addition, ads. were found feeding recently fledged young elsewhere in *Lake* 20 Jun (JWL) and in *St. Louis* 10 Jul (BAB). The final total of 394 Great Gray Owls during the 2000–2001 irruption was also an all-time Minnesota high, exceeding the 342 in 1995–1996. Michigan still lacks confirmed nesting records, so Great Grays in *Schoolcraft* 22 Jul (DE) and *Chippewa* during Jul (MM) were intriguing. Continuing their

recent upswing in Minnesota, 18+ Short-eared Owls were found in eight counties; Michigan had singles in *Hillsdale* (JR) and *Benzie* (MJ, PL). The only reports of Three-toed Woodpecker were from Spruce Road in *Lake*, MN (*fide* KRE). Michigan had one Black-backed Woodpecker near Trout L., *Chippewa* 17 Jun (JHa).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH MOCKINGBIRDS

Willow Flycatchers in *Chippewa* and *Mackinac* were unusual for Michigan's Upper Peninsula (TWh). Ani searchers in Wisconsin received a bonus when a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher lingered in *Door* 30 Jun–3 Jul (T&CS, JH); typically ethereal was one seen for a few hours at Trempeleau N.W.R., WI 12 Jun (LM). Loggerhead Shrikes were in nine Minnesota counties, close to the recent average; far from average was the successful breeding pair in *Kalamazoo*, MI (DP). One in *Monroe* 3–4 Jun was also noteworthy for Michigan (PCC, m. ob.). Providing Minnesota's 2nd breeding record, 4 young White-eyed Vireos (no cowbirds!) fledged from a nest at Rice Lake S.P., *Steele* (AEB). In Michigan, only 3–4 singing White-eyed were at Lost Nations State Game Area, *Hillsdale* (JR); others included one to 2 in *Lenawee* (SS) and singles in *Barry* (WMS) and *Cass* (WMB).

Minnesota and Wisconsin each had one Carolina Wren, in *Hennepin* 6 Jul+ (PG) and all season in *Jefferson* (KEH), respectively; completely unexpected was one banded in Michigan's Upper Peninsula at Vermillion, *Chippewa* 29 Jun (*fide* JM). If accepted by the M.B.R.C., a Bewick's Wren in *Saginaw* 16 Jun (MH) would be Michigan's first since 1993. Minnesota had Northern Mockingbirds in *Cook* 17 Jun (JWL et al.) and *Olmsted* 28–30 Jun (JGL et al.). Wisconsin's only report came from *Door* (BS), but mockingbirds were in nine Michigan counties.

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A singing Northern Parula at L. Bronson, MN 10 Jun (PHS) was a *Kittson* first. Still casual in Minnesota, a pair of Yellow-throated Warblers found 11 Jun (JMa, TAT) provided that state's 2nd nesting record when 3 young fledged in Acacia Cemetery, *Dakota* 30 Jun (BAF). Yellow-throated Warblers were also at Wyalusing S.P., WI, and *Allegan* and *Berrien* in Michigan. Michigan (D.N.R.) counted 1085 singing male Kirtland's Warblers, the most since surveys began in 1951! This was also the first time that more than 1000 males were reported. Wisconsin had Prairie Warblers in *Jefferson* (m. ob.), *Ozaukee* (*fide* BB), and *Waukesha* (MP).

Unusual in nw. Wisconsin was a territorial Palm Warbler in *Burnett* 9 Jun (TKS). A female Blackpoll Warbler at W.P.B.O. 2 Jun was late (MPe, GRU), but an inexplicably tardy male at the same location 21 Jun was probably a non-breeder (LD).

On the periphery of its Minnesota breeding range was a singing male Cerulean Warbler at Tamarac N.W.R., *Becker* through 29 Jun (*fide* BAB); a count of 15 pairs at Murphy-Hanrehan (BAF) was an encouraging tally. A Worm-eating Warbler in *Anoka*, MN 28 Jul (CF) was apparently an early fall migrant, while Michigan's only report was at Warren Dunes S.P., *Berrien* 9 Jun (KM, JW). Unpaired in Minnesota were singing Kentucky Warblers at Nelson Fen, *Olmsted* through 17 Jun (JDu et al.) and Murphy-Hanrehan (BAF). One Kentucky spent the summer in Michigan's *Hillsdale* (JR), and another was in *Jackson* 4 Jun (LC). An unprecedented 35 territorial Hooded Warblers were at Murphy-Hanrehan; five of seven nests checked were parasitized by cowbirds (BAF). Exceptional for Michigan's Upper Peninsula was the imm. female Hooded Warbler banded at Vermillion, *Chippewa* 14 Jun (*fide* JM). Minnesota mustered single Yellow-breasted Chats in *Winona* 13–15 Jun (CB, FZL) and *Dakota* 29 Jun (TAT), but no fewer than 6 were in *Dane*, WI 17 Jun (PA).

A male Summer Tanager in *Hillsdale* 1 Jun–22 Jul (JR, AMB) was at the same Michigan location where a pair was found last summer. Away from its Minnesota breeding range and possibly migrating was the Lark Sparrow at Blue Mounds S.P., *Rock* 28 Jul (TAT). Henslow's Sparrow fared well in Minnesota, with reports from five s. counties; others were unusually far n. in *Clay* (RJS et al.), *Douglas* (E&JE), and *Crow Wing* (WEN). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were in expected Minnesota and Wisconsin (Crex Meadows) locations, but one banded at Vermillion, *Chippewa* 14 Jun (*fide* JM) was Michigan's first since fall 1998 and 16th overall (p.a.). Red Crossbills nested in *Newaygo*, MI, where 2 ads. with 4 young were found 15 Jun (SR). Rarely noted in Minnesota during Jun, White-winged Crossbills were at the Sax-Zim bog, *St. Louis* (m. ob.).

## CORRIGENDA

Delete Veery in Madison, WI 12–23 Dec 2000 (*N. A. B.* 55: 174). The Cape May Warbler 2 Nov 2000 was in *Buffalo*, not *Portage*, WI (*N. A. B.* 55: 56). Great-tailed Grackles established territories and built nests at Grovers L. W.M.A. near the Iowa/Minnesota border in 1998, but neither eggs nor young were documented; change "nesting" to "probable nesting" (*N. A. B.* 52: 334).

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# Midwestern Prairie



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## LOONS THROUGH IBIS

For the 2nd time in seven years, a summer Pacific Loon appeared in Iowa. This bird occupied a sandpit s. of Iowa City 18 Jun–5 Jul (†MCD, †CE, †JLF, ph. THK). It was a good summer for Pied-billed Grebes, with an above-average number of nesting reports across the Region. Iowa's 2nd confirmed Red-necked Grebe nesting record was logged 4 Jul, when two nests were found at Cheever L. in Emmet (LAS). Peak nest counts for Double-crested Cormorants included 66 at L. Renwick, IL 28 Mar (AA) and 39 at Coralville Res., IA 26 Jun (MCD). Also noteworthy was a Double-crested nest at Clarence Cannon N.W.R., MO 20 Jul (SK).

Great Blue Herons received few comments; the largest reported colony consisted of 482 nests at Clear L. in Mason, IL (RBj). As expected, Great Egrets were reported nesting in Illinois and Kentucky; peak counts of non-breeders included 500 birds at Horseshoe L., IL 15 Jul (FH), 211 in Jackson, IA 5 Jul (JLF), and 120 at Ottawa N.W.R., OH 1 Jul (EP et al.). Nesting Snowy Egrets were reported at the Sikeston, MO rookery, where 50 nests were counted (JWi). The largest concentration of Snowy Egrets consisted of 110 birds at Horseshoe L., IL 15 Jul (FH). It was a most impressive breeding season for Little Blue Herons, with nesting reported in Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri. The largest colony was at the Sikeston, MO rookery, where 150 nests were counted (JWi), but this species nested as far n. as L. Cal., where two nests were found 14 Jul (WJM). Peak Little Blue counts included an impressive 1500 at a roost near

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**A**fter mid-June, the Region experienced warm, dry conditions. However, residual moisture from heavy spring precipitation provided sufficient water to keep most wetlands hydrated and generate lush upland vegetation. In Illinois, Doug Stotz believed that it was a good breeding season, and in Iowa James Dinsmore suggested that both wetland and

grassland species did well. Most correspondents concurred with these assessments.

The breeding season's major downside occurred along the major river systems, where high water levels, especially in June, interfered with species that nest on or adjacent to the rivers. More positively, a spate of first nesting records was established and a surprisingly plump list of vagrants was recorded.

**Abbreviations:** Carl. L. (Carlyle L., IL), G.L.N.T.C. (Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Lake, IL), H.B.S.P. (Headlands Beach S.P., OH), L. Cal. (L. Calumet, Chicago);



Lambert Field, St. Louis on 16 Jul (Jerry Farm) and 391 at Horseshoe L., IL 15 Jul (DKa). Adding flavor to the season was an ad. Tricolored Heron at L. Cal. 17 Jun (†WJM, JA). Breeding Cattle Egrets were reported only at L. Barkley, KY, where several hundred pairs nested (BPB) and in the colony behind the Sikeston, MO Pizza Hut, which yielded 100 nests (JWi). Black-crowned Night-Herons nested in Illinois, Missouri, and Ohio. The largest colony, among several Illinois breeding sites, was at L. Cal., where some 300+ birds (including fledglings) were noted (WJM). In Ohio, 9 nesting Black-crowneds were reported along Mill Creek in *Hamilton* 9 Jun (Tom Uhlman).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

As has been the case in recent years, small numbers of nonbreeding Snow Geese summered in the Region. This summer one to 7 Snows were found in seven Iowa counties, and 5 more were reported in Illinois. The establishment of reintroduced Trumpeter Swans as a breeding species continued this summer, with a report of nine "wild" nests in Iowa (BE). Mute Swans, which are well established as breeders in the Chicago area, appear to be expanding. This summer, three broods were reported in c. Illinois (HDB, VK) and Kentucky's first apparent "natural" nesting occurred in *Muhlenberg*, where a pair with one cygnet were noted (BPB, PM, WR). A few "migrant" dabblers lingered to breed in the Region. The most noteworthy of these included a female Gadwall with 9 young at L. Cal. 15 Jul (†WJM, GW), several broods of Northern Shovelers at Union Slough N.W.R. and Maynard Reece W.M.A., IA (MCK), and a pair of Green-winged Teal with young in *Emmet*, IA 14 Jul (LAS). Five species of nonbreeding bay ducks were also reported. The most unusual of these was a female Greater Scaup at Pipe Creek W.M.A., OH 11 Jun (RHn, SA). A tardy male Bufflehead lingered at Spring Run W.M.A., IA until 16 Jun (LAS). Evidence of nesting Hooded Mergansers came from every state except Ohio, suggesting that this species had a better-than-average nesting season.

Breeding Ospreys strengthened their foothold in the Region, with nesting reported in every state except Kentucky. Mississippi Kites followed a similar pattern. Nesting was reported at traditional sites in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa; expansion into w. Missouri also occurred, as attested by a nest found near Joplin (Chet and Karen Lang). Single extralimital nonbreeding Mississippi Kites were seen in *Ohio*, KY 13 Jul (DR) and near Kansas City, MO (SMc). A most surprising



This alternated-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper was present at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Illinois 10-13 June and was enjoyed by many. Photograph by David B. Johnson.

find was a **Swallow-tailed Kite**, discovered at the Central Kentucky W.M.A., *Madison*, KY 31 Jul (†MBm, CLc). This bird, which provided that state's 2nd record since 1900, reportedly kettled upward and departed northward. Bald Eagles experienced another good breeding season, with reports of nesting success from every state except Kentucky. The Region's only reported Northern Harrier nesting occurred in *Muhlenberg*, KY, where several pairs were observed (MM et al.). An astonishingly early Merlin at Conneaut Harbor, OH 27 Jul (KMe), preceded that state's earliest fall record by almost a month.

King Rail reports were up this summer, with one in *Adair*, MO 6 Jun (SK), a single at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., OH 8-9 Jun (Troy Shiveley et al.), a pair and 5 young in *McHenry*, IL 15 Jul (BS), and one at Clarence Cannon N.W.R., MO 20 & 22 Jul (SK, JM, CM). Nesting Virginia Rails were observed at L. Cal., where young were found 15 Jul (WJM). Summer Virginia Rail reports also came from nine other Illinois and three Iowa locations, suggesting a good breeding season for this species. Soras were even more widely distributed; the most impressive single report consisted of four nests, each containing 11-12 eggs, at Streets L., *McHenry*, IL 4 Jun (BS). Once again, multiple Common Moorhens were reported in all six states, suggesting that

their population is flourishing once again. The summer expansion of Sandhill Cranes in the Region continued, with reports from every state except Kentucky. Two ads. and 2 young were reported in *Williams*, OH 30 Jun and 7 Jul (Jeff Grabmeier et al.), suggesting the possibility of nesting in the nw. corner of the state. Sandhills also nested at 10 n. Illinois locations.

### SHOREBIRDS

Reports of early southbound plovers included a Black-belled in *Union*, KY 31 Jul (BPB), an American Golden-Plover in *Dickinson*, IA 30 Jun (LAS), and a Semipalmated at Clinton L., IL 4 Jul (RTC). The nesting efforts of Iowa's Piping Plovers were unimpressive, with only three pairs at the MidAmerican Energy Ponds 14-15 Jun (JJD) and a nest with four eggs at Port Neal, which was ultimately abandoned (BFH). The only migrant Piping Plover was an ad. that tarried on the Indiana lakefront at Miller Beach 20, 21, & 23 Jul (JMc, MT, BG et al.). Except for the absence of breeding reports, it was a typical summer for Black-necked Stilts. A vagrant stilt was in *Fayette*, KY 3-4 Jun (JWm), two pairs were at Clinton L., IL 4 Jul (†RTC, HPa), and singles were at five locations in Missouri (TG, BB). American Avocets were scarce, with one to 9 birds reported in each of the four n. states. Willets

**SA** Readers of this journal are no doubt all too familiar with the expansion of gull numbers, especially Ring-billed Gulls, over recent decades. This summer, the Middlewestern Prairie Region may have experienced the first step in a further expansion of the Ring-billed Gull population. In Des Plaines, Cook, IL, Ring-billeds established a nesting colony atop the flat roof of a building. Although the nests were not visible, on 1 Jul some 500 ads. flushed from the rooftop and about 120 recently fledged young were seen around the building and at a nearby retention pond. Several dead juvs. were also found adjacent to the building. Subsequent observations revealed many birds too young to fly (AA, DJ, CN). Clearly, if this new nesting concept catches on with the Ring-billed Gull population in general, *Larus delawarensis* may ultimately earn the name "Urban Gull."

appeared in good numbers this summer, with peak counts of 40 at Michigan City Harbor, IN 30 Jul (BG) and an impressive inland tally of 28 at Saylorville Res., IA 2 Jul (SR, *vide* SJD). More Upland Sandpipers than normal were reported: observations came from 12 Iowa counties, eight Illinois locations, four Indiana sites, and two Ohio counties. In addition, Uplands were deemed plentiful in w. Missouri (JWi). It was a good summer for Whimbrel: 6 were reported along the Indiana lakefront, 3 were seen on the Ohio lakefront, including a lingering bird at Medusa Marsh 22–30 Jul (JHd, BW), and a single was at G.L.N.T.C. 30 Jul (AA, CN). A remarkably early Hudsonian Godwit appeared in Fremont, IA 19 Jul (JLF) to provide that state's first Jul record and the earliest fall migrant ever recorded in the Region.

Interesting reports of the smaller shorebirds included a late spring Sanderling in Union, KY 2 Jun (BPB), a count of 210 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Sheldon Marsh W.M.A., OH 30 Jul (VF), a late White-rumped Sandpiper at Mississinewa Res., IN 14 Jun (Haw, SSc), 2 extremely tardy Pectoral Sandpipers in Sangamon, IL 14 Jun (HDB), a record-early Stilt Sandpiper at Grand Kankakee Marsh, IN 4 Jul (KJB), 339 Short-billed Dowitchers at Sheldon Marsh, OH 22 Jul (JHa, BW), and 2 rather early Long-billed Dowitchers at Port Neal, IA 21 Jul (BFH). In the rare shorebird category, an alternate-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper at G.L.N.T.C. 10–12 Jun (SH, CF, ph., m. ob.) provided a season highlight for

many observers. Encouragingly, migrant Wilson's Phalaropes were reported in every state except Kentucky, with juvs. observed at Maynard Reece W.M.A., IA 1 Jul (LAS) and nesting suspected at Eagle Lake W.M.A., IA (WF). In contrast, Red-necked Phalaropes were scarce; the only reports involved 2 at Secret L., IA 19 Jul (JLF) and one at L. Chau. 27 Jul (RTC).

## GULLS THROUGH TERNS

Laughing Gulls were less widespread than normal, with reports from only three states: four in Illinois, three in Ohio, and one in Iowa.

As expected, small numbers of Caspian Terns were reported in most states; however, breeding was not reported. Peak counts included 47 at Michigan City Harbor, IN 28 Jul (JKC et al.) and 25 at G.L.N.T.C. 14 Jun (KAM, UG). In Jun, the small Common Tern colony at G.L.N.T.C. had 20 active nests; however, they were subsequently destroyed by predators (DD). This species also nested at the two established colonies on the Ohio lakefront (*vide* RHn). Perhaps the season's single most remarkable report consisted of an ad. Arctic Tern that arrived at the G.L.N.T.C. Common Tern colony 16 Jun, then settled in and remained through the period (†SC, AA, CF, ph., m. ob.). As most previous Arctic Tern occurrences in the Region have been all too brief, this lingering bird provided an unprecedented opportunity for birders in the Region. Interestingly, on 16 Jun the bird was observed attempting to copulate with a Common Tern (SC). Although breeding was not reported, the expected small groups of Forster's Terns appeared across the Region; the peak tally was 30 at Hallett's Quarry, IA 2 Jun (WO). Least Terns were quite active in the Region this summer. High water in the lower Ohio R. inhibited nesting at many traditional sites along the river (BPB). As a result, many of the birds that normally nest on the major rivers apparently dispersed inland, providing increased nesting at nonriparian locations and a host of extralimital occurrences. Eighty Least Terns and 57 nests—both record highs—were counted at the Gibson, IN, colony 22 Jun; unfortunately, severe predation reduced the number of fledglings to 2–5 (JSC). At the Iowa MidAmerican Energy Ponds, where Least Terns regularly nest, seven nests were observed, which is the highest number since 1991 (JJD). Reports of out-of-range nonbreeders included 3 at R.E.D.A. 2–17 Jun (DB, et al.), 2 in Alexander, IL 9 Jun (KAM), a single in Saline, MO 13 Jun (JL, JWi), one at G.L.N.T.C. 27 Jun (SH), an ad. at Spfld. 5 Jul (HDB), 15 at Swan Lake N.W.R., MO 11 Jul (SK), and 3 at Horseshoe L., IL 21 Jun (KAM, Cli). Most encouragingly, a total

of 17 Black Tern nests was found at three locations in McHenry and Lake Counties in ne. Illinois (BS). Two Black Tern nests were also reported in Dickinson, IA (LAS).

## DOVES THROUGH VIREOS

In addition to numerous birds at established sites across the Region, European Collared-Doves appeared at new locations in Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky. Iowa's first Collared-Dove nest, which contained 2 young, was recorded 17 Jul in Kossuth (HPE, THK, ph.). In the Chicago area, some 22 Monk Parakeets nests were reported at five locations (AA, DSt, WJM). Reports of nesting Short-eared Owls increased this summer, with an ad. and young at Prairie Ridge W.M.A., IL 8 Jun (LH, SSI) and an ad. and 2 young in Seneca, OH 5 Jun (TBa). Although the count of 9 Chuck-will's-widows in Hamilton, IL 18 May (LSy), constitutes one of the better tallies reported in recent years, it pales compared to the 141 male Whip-poor-wills logged in Sand Ridge State Forest, IL 26 Jun (RBj). At least eight Yellow-bellied Sapsucker nests were found in e. Ohio (TL, LRo) and two in Iowa (KH, *vide* JV, DKO). Elsewhere, an impressive 5 sapsuckers remained in Jo Daviess, IL in Jun (DW).

An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Swan Lake N.W.R., MO (HL) 19 Jul was remarkably early. Following a decade-long search, Indiana's first Alder Flycatcher breeding was confirmed 8 Jun at Pigeon River W.M.A. (ne. Indiana), when two nests were found; one nest failed and the other yielded 3 young (LAC, DGo). An impressive count of 20 Willow Flycatchers was recorded in Spring Creek Valley Forest Preserve, Cook, IL 20 Jun (AA et al.); this site also produced 3 Least Flycatchers on that date (AA et al.). Western Kingbirds occupied their usual range in Iowa and Missouri, and nesting was confirmed at three locations in Illinois (HDB, KAM, DKa). The 2nd Illinois Scissor-tailed Flycatcher breeding record occurred in sw. Union, where a nest was observed 9 May–15 Jul (SB, m. ob.). An out-of-range Scissor-tailed was seen at Fort Campbell, KY 30 Jun (DM). Bell's Vireo reports surged in Ohio, where birds were located at five sites (two is more typical) in four sw. counties (m. ob.).

## SWALLOWS THROUGH FINCHES

The largest swallow concentrations were comprised of Bank Swallows, with 2000 at Coralville Res., IA 27 Jul (THK) and 1500 at Forney L., IA 5 Jul (BKP, LJP). Observers in both Illinois and Indiana noted an expansion of Cliff Swallows this summer. A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches with young was observed in Hocking, OH 4 Jun and in Wolf, KY 1 Jul

(FR); both sites have become established nesting areas for this species. More unexpected was a single Red-breasted Nuthatch at Illinois Beach S.P. 14 Jul (VK, et al.). Lightning really does strike twice at the same place. At Illinois Beach S.P., site of last year's Red-cockaded Woodpecker visit, a **Brown-headed Nuthatch** was discovered 11 Jul and remained through the summer season (BS, †WS, ph., m. ob.). This bird was photographed and if accepted will become the first confirmed Illinois record. In Indiana Don Gorney's unrelenting search for Brown Creepers yielded a hefty 51 birds this summer. The only successful Bewick's Wren nesting occurred in *Adams*, IL, where a pair and two young were observed 20 Jun (KAM). An unmated Bewick's Wren spent early Jun in *Warren*, KY but failed to attract a mate (BPB, MH et al.). It was apparently a fine season for Sedge Wrens as breeders, or probable breeders, were reported in all six states. A very tardy Gray-cheeked Thrush was seen in *McHenry*, IL 14 Jun (KAM).

A record-late Tennessee Warbler was observed at Michigan City Harbor 25 Jun (DP). Magnolia Warblers were reported from an impressive 23 sites in *Lake*, OH (JP). Some interesting warblers were discovered in s-cen. Indiana. Five singing Black-throated Greens were found in Hoosier National Forest 8–23 Jun (LSt, BM) and 2 male Blackburnians were found at different *Monroe* locations 8 & 18–19 Jun (†LSt, ph.). A record-early Bay-breasted Warbler was seen near Iowa City 29 Jul (JLF). The Region's only Swainson's Warbler reports came from Missouri, where this species was recorded in *Oregon*, *Taney*, and *New Madrid* (JWi). The presence of a male Mourning Warbler in Lowden-Miller S.F. 7 Jul (DSt) suggests the possibility of breeding at that site.

A Clay-colored Sparrow mist-netted in *Hancock*, IA 1 Jun may have been a late migrant; however, this location is only one county away from the 1999 nesting site. Another Clay-colored remained at Oak Openings Park, OH through 10 Jun without evidence of nesting (m. ob.). A major cause for optimism came from Fort Campbell, KY, where researchers discovered small numbers of **Bachman's Sparrows** at that installation (Daniel Moss, *fide* BPB). This constitutes the Region's first summer report of this species, outside Missouri, in more than a decade. Some 25 Lark Sparrows were counted at the Savannah Army Depot, IL in Jun (DW), and an out-of-range bird appeared at Grand Kankakee Marsh, IN 28 Jul (JKC et al.). Several mind-boggling Grasshopper Sparrow counts attest to the abundance of this species during this breeding season. The peak tally was 269 in the Savannah Army Depot, IL in Jun (DW), but

other excellent counts included 63 in Urbana, IL 17 Jun (RTC) and 38 at the Hawthorne Mine, *Greene* and *Sullivan*, IN 25 Jul (LSt). Henslow's Sparrows were also reported in good numbers but were not quite as plentiful as last summer. Illinois's first confirmed **White-throated Sparrow** nesting was logged in Chicago, where a pair and one or more fledglings were observed 30–31 Jul (†CW, KW, DSt). Also quite extraordinary were an ad. White-crowned Sparrow in Chicago's Olive Park 31 Jul (DSt) and a Harris's Sparrow in *Sioux*, IA 16 Jun (KH, *fide* JV). The latter provided Iowa's 3rd summer record.

The season's peak Blue Grosbeak counts included 9 at the Hawthorn Mine, IN 25 Jul (LSt) and 7 in Belknap, IL 5 Jun (VK). There was no information about nesting success of the East St. Louis Painted Buntings, but at least one bird lingered in the area into early Aug (DKa, KAM, m. ob.). Within their normal range, a pair of Painted Buntings visited a Springfield, MO feeder throughout the period (Mike Skinner), and 3 others were reported in sw. Missouri. Although Dickcissels were plentiful, most correspondents believed that their numbers were lower than last year. Bobolinks also had a good season, with counts exceeding 50 birds recorded in three states; the peak tally consisted of a flock of 141 females, molting males, and imms. at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, IL 21 Jul (RTC). A pair of Yellow-headed Blackbirds was at Mallard Club Marsh W.M.A., OH 4 Jun (RHn, SW), but there was no confirmation of nesting at last year's sites. Most unexpected was a lone Pine Siskin in *Dent*, MO 18 Jul (Loretta McClure). Two Eurasian Tree Sparrow nests, found in Burlington, IA 24 Jun (PL), constituted that state's 3rd and 4th nesting records.

**CORRIGENDUM**

The 29 Oct 2000 Indiana Little Gull was at Hurshtown Res. (*Allen*), not Salamonie Res. as reported in *N. A. B.* 55: 60.

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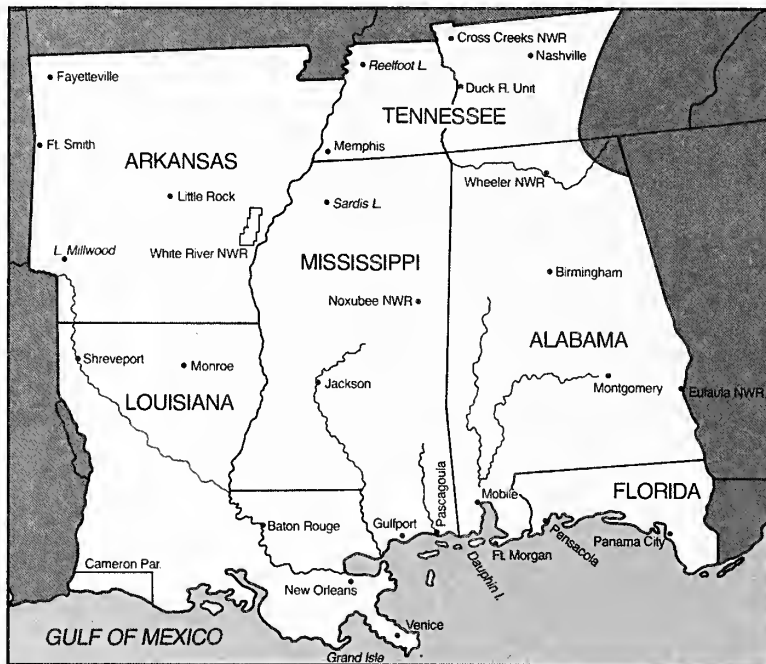
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# Central Southern



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The most important event of the breeding season, especially along the coast, was the breaking of a drought that had persisted for nearly a year and a half. Tropical Storm *Allison* brought torrential rains to s. Louisiana and Mississippi in early Jun, but normal rain patterns returned over much of the Region, continuing through August, at least. As is so often the case, the effects on bird populations are mainly conjectural, but whatever impact the dry conditions may have had during the two recent springs would have been ameliorated by June's rains.

One effect of the lengthy drought was to bring hypersaline conditions to much of the coastal salt marsh, resulting in a massive die-off of *Spartina alterniflora* in Louisiana, but there was no obvious evidence of impact on Clapper Rail or Seaside Sparrow numbers. On the other hand, the impact of Tropical Storm *Allison* on the barrier islands was decidedly negative, at least initially, with reports of disruption of Brown Pelican and tern nesting colonies. The early date of *Allison* may have permitted renesting.

**Abbreviations:** L.B.R.C. (Louisiana Bird Records Committee); O.A.S. (Oktibbeha Audubon Society)

## LOONS THROUGH ANHINGAS

One of the more remarkable records of the season was a **Red-throated Loon** at Dauphin I. 11 Jun (JFP, LB, BE, MVH), the first summer record for Alabama. A mostly alternate-plumaged Common Loon was at Bald Knob N.W.R., AR 14–23 Jun (KN, LDN, BA), and a highly productive pair of Pied-billed Grebes produced a total of 9 young in two nestings in *Shelby*, TN (WRP, VR); the species is a rare and local nester in the state. Although a Cory's Shearwater seen 28 mi sse. of the South Pass of the Mississippi R 29 Jun (SWC, DLD et al.) was one of only a handful that have been carefully documented from Louisiana, the species is surely regular in summer in the n. Gulf. Further evidence came the next day 36 mi s. of Orange Beach, AL, where the species was also recorded (LG, SWM et al.). The Louisiana pelagic trip also found a single Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, a regular species over deep water in summer; the bird was about 40 mi sse. of South Pass, with another 26 mi s. of South Pass 21 Jul (SWC, DLD et al.). About 24 Wilson's Storm-Petrels were recorded on the two trips, ca. 18–40 mi sse. of South Pass. Finally, a subad. Masked Booby was seen 17 mi sse. of South Pass on the 29 Jun trip. Single

Northern Gannets, which are "rare but regular" off the Alabama coast in summer, were seen 65 mi ssw. of Orange Beach 30 Jun (LG, SWM et al.) and at Gulf Shores 13–15 Jul (DJS).

Inland reports of summering or lingering American White Pelicans included one in *Iberville*, LA 2 Jun (JVR), 58 in *Morehouse*, LA the next day (GL), 110 in *Oktibbeha*, MS 4–8 Jun (TS), and 2 in *Choctaw*, AL 15 Jun (SWM). In company with a large group of white pelicans in *Desha*, AR 28 Jul was a single Brown Pelican (KN, LDN), and another was seen in *Henry*, AL 7 Jul (WDR). These inland records were unexpected, but about 10,000 Brown Pelicans were breeding on Plover I., LA, near the mouth of Baptiste Collette Bayou 27 Jun (CGB, EC, JM), about three weeks after Tropical Storm *Allison*. Single Double-crested Cormorants were in *Washington*, AR 2 Jun (MMI), in *Bossier*, LA 10 Jun (LRR, KF), and in *Plaquemines*, LA 27 Jun (CGB); all were unusual. Up to a dozen Anhingas throughout the period at Noxubee N.W.R., where they have nested the past two years, were likely breeding (TS, GS).

## HERONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

In the face of recent declines, nesting season records of Least Bitterns are of interest; the only reports received were inland at Noxubee N.W.R., MS throughout the season (TS) and 25 Jun at Reelfoot L., TN (KL). Although a tally of 27,087 Cattle Egrets at Noxubee 25 Jun (MC, O.A.S.) was impressive, the count was down by about 20% from last year. There was only a handful of reports of post-breeding waders found inland, mostly of Tricolored Herons, seen during Jul from *Butler* (AM) and *Montgomery* (CTS), AL, *Lauderdale*, TN (JRW), and *White*, AR (KN, LDN). There were also 7 White Ibis in *Morgan*, AL 28 Jul (BG et al.) and a Glossy Ibis in *White*, AR 12 May–30 Jun (KN, LDN). A White-faced Ibis in *Mobile*, AL in mid-Jul (KK et al.) was only the 11th state record. **Wood Stork** nesting was apparently confirmed for the first time in Alabama based on one at Brickyard L. carrying "nesting material" 2 Jun (LS), and 7 individuals in the Mobile Delta 1 Jun (BS) also suggested nesting; both localities are in *Baldwin*. Nonbreeding storks were seen from early Jun through the end of the period in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, highlighted by a count of 1570 in *Vermilion*, LA 18 Jun (BF, GB).

Three Northern Shovelers in *Vermilion* 2 Jun (DMD, RCD) were very late, but a female **King Eider** found dead on N. Breton I. 31 May



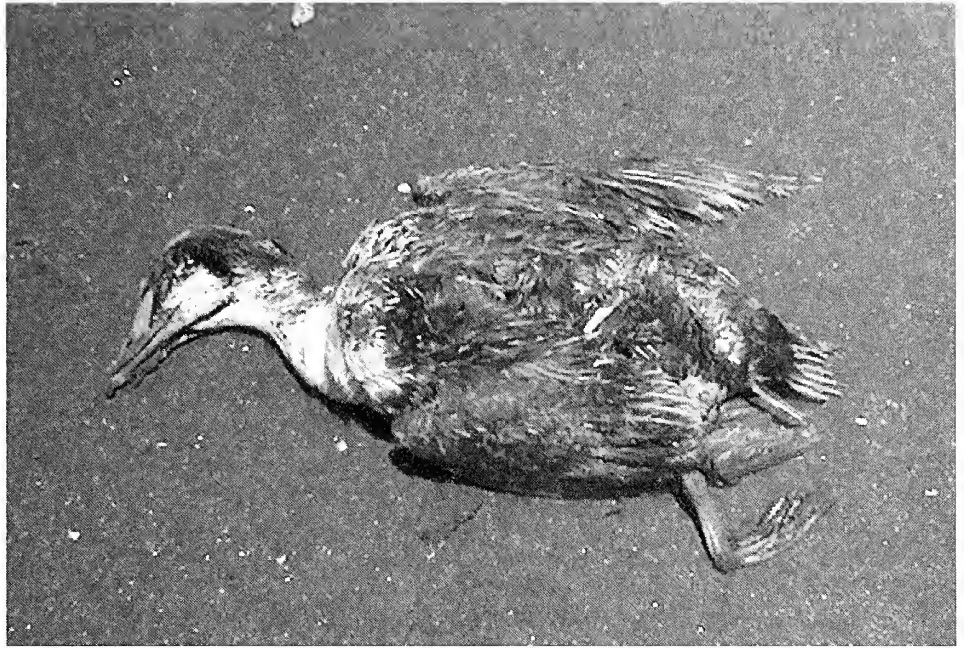
(JM, EC, BH) established the 3rd record for Louisiana, all since 1994, and all in late spring or summer. There were three reports of summering Ruddy Ducks, each involving at least one male in alternate plumage, in *Elmore* and *Hale*, AL (TAP, RRR) and near Arkansas City, AR (KN, LDN).

## DIURNAL RAPTORS

Jennifer Coulson's continuing aerial counts of Swallow-tailed Kites in the Pearl River Basin on the Louisiana–Mississippi border yielded a peak count of 263 on 27 Jul (JOC, TDC, DB, PS), and 25 more were counted in the Atchafalaya Basin 3 Jul (JOC, CR, PS). There were reports of Mississippi Kites at the edge of their range in n. Mississippi (*Monroe* and *Noxubee*), Arkansas (*Crawford*), and Alabama (*Fayette*) in Jun. Bald Eagles were present in Tennessee at Eagle L. W.M.A. in Jun (BC) and in *Obion* 5 & 25 Jun (WRP; KL). An ad. in *Bolivar*, MS 25 Jun (NH, JCH) was near where they have nested for several years. Two reports of Northern Harriers 19 Jun in *Jefferson* (GDJ) and in *Cleburne* the next day (HHW, ASC) were the first Jun records for Alabama in over 50 years. A pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks seen in *Pope*, AR late May–Jul apparently fledged one young shortly after 6 Jul (LA); another was seen in *Pulaski*, AR 2 Jul (EH). There were four breeding season reports of Cooper's Hawks from Arkansas, consisting of single individuals in *Cleburne*, *Poinsett*, *Washington*, and *White* (KN, LDN, MML), and there were three nesting records from w. Tennessee (SNM, CHB, VR). There was continued evidence of increased nesting in se. Louisiana this season (JOC, TDC, RDP, MM, DM). Single Swainson's Hawks were seen in *Benton* 4 Jun (KN) and in *White* 21 Jun (MML), the latter very far from their normal breeding range in Oklahoma. One in *Cameron*, LA 11 Jul (GG) was also quite far east. American Kestrels were seen in *Okaloosa*, FL 19 Jul (DW) and in *Lee*, AL 23 Jun (GEH), where they are rare breeders, while a 30 Jul record of a Peregrine Falcon in *Mobile* (HH, WL) was the first summer record for Alabama's Gulf coast.

## GALLINULES THROUGH CUCKOOS

Purple Gallinules at Noxubee N.W.R. early May+ on provided the 3rd area nesting record (3 ads. and 5 imm.; TS, m. ob.), and a pair in *Arkansas*, AR 28 Jul (KN, LDN) had fledged 2 young. Also nesting at Noxubee N.W.R. was a pair of Common Moorhens with 2 young, for the 2nd e.-cen. Mississippi nesting record (TS, MS). Late northbound shorebird migrants included an American Avocet in *Benton*, AR 2 Jun (RHD) and a Whimbrel in *Vermilion*, LA



This dead subadult male King Eider found on North Breton Island, Louisiana, was photographed 31 May 2001. There are very few records of the species for the Gulf of Mexico. Photograph by Ed Creef.

(DMD, RCB) on the same day. White-rumped Sandpipers 17 Jun in *Shelby*, TN (JRW) and 21 Jun in *Benton*, AR (MML) were likely very late northbound birds as well. One 31 Jul in *White*, AR (KN) is less easy to classify but was presumably southbound and hence quite unusual for the Region. Among early fall migrants were: several Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs in *Mobile*, AL 3 Jul (WDR), Lesser Yellowlegs in *Shelby*, TN 1 Jul (2; JRW) and *Oktibbeha*, MS 6 Jul (TS; the earliest ever there by one day); a Long-billed Curlew 7 Jul on the Mobile Causeway (SW, BE); Marbled Godwit in *Baldwin*, AL 4 Jul (KK); a Baird's Sandpiper 29 Jul in *Colbert*, AL (SAW, DJS, the earliest fall record for Alabama); a Stilt Sandpiper in *Oktibbeha* 6 Jul (TS; the earliest ever there by five days) and another 8 in *Shelby*, TN on 8 Jul (JRW); and a Common Snipe in *White*, AR Jul (KN, LDN). Other early shorebird migrants in Alabama included Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, and Wilson's Phalarope.

In association with the Brown Pelican colony on Plover I., LA were approximately 1500 breeding pairs of Laughing Gulls 27 Jun (CGB, EC, JM); a single individual in *Monroe*, MS 15 Jun (WP) was unusual at that inland location. Roof-top colonies of Gull-billed Terns were noted in at least three New Orleans area locations, totalling at least 250 pairs (RDP, PY, DM). Lack of easy accessibility made it impossible to judge reproductive success. A Caspian Tern was present throughout the period in

*Shelby*, TN (JRW, m. ob.), and there were inland records from *Choctaw* and *Monroe*, AL 15 & 24 Jun, respectively (SWM; LG). A putative Roseate Tern was seen in *Lafourche*, LA 17 Jun (MM, DM, RDP, PW, p.a.). If accepted by the L.B.R.C., this well-studied bird would be a first record for Louisiana; no photographs were obtained. A Forster's Tern 9 Jun in *Oktibbeha*, MS (TS, MS) was the latest in spring by 12 days for the Starkville area. Least Terns were seen inland: a single bird in *Iberville*, LA 9 Jun (JVR), 2 in *Noxubee*, MS 29 Jul (MC), and one in *Benton*, AR 29 Jul (RHD). A Sooty Tern was seen from land at the w. end of Dauphin I. 1 Jul (KK); the species may have nested in Alabama for the first time this year, on Pelican I. (GDJ).

Eurasian Collared-Doves were recorded on 10 stops (14 individuals) of the Macon, MS B.B.S. route 3 Jun (TS, JB); 3 were recorded throughout the period in *Clay*, AR (GH), where they have become fairly regular; and there were two records from w. Tennessee: 6 on 4 Jun in *Lake* (WRP) and one in *Germantown* 11 Jul (WRP). White-winged Doves in Gulf Breeze, FL 10 & 15 Jul (RAD, LD) were the 3rd and 4th Jun records for nw. Florida. Two summered at Foley, AL as well (*fide* HH). Up to 6 Inca Doves coming to feeders in Texarkana, AR as late as 17 Jul (JT) had first been noted the previous Dec. A Common Ground-Dove in Hot Springs, AR 1 Jun (TM, *fide* LA) was unusual, as were Black-billed Cuckoos 2 Jun in *Obion*, TN (JRW), 3 Jun in *Washington* (RHD), 4 Jun in *Pope* (LA), and 10 Jun in *Logan* (JS), all in Arkansas.

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

A late Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in the Fayetteville area and 6 Alder Flycatchers at the same locality, all 2 Jun (MMI), were noteworthy. Six singing male Willow Flycatchers found 16 Jun in *Boone*, AR (SJG, JOG, JS, PS et al.) were in an area where they were not previously known to nest (MM). The **Great Kiskadee** resident at Venice, LA since at least Apr 1999 was noted again 28 Jul (LE). Although the bird built nests in 1999 and 2000, there was no evidence of one this year. Continuing the recent trend of spring records along the Gulf coast was a **Tropical/Couch's Kingbird** at Gulf Breeze 25 Jun (RAD), the 8th area record and the 7th since 1992. Ingold found three Western Kingbird nests in *Caddo*, LA 24 Jun (JI), among the first for Louisiana; there were two successful nestings in *Shelby*, TN, the 2nd and 3rd for the state, with 4 young in each nest (JRW), while a nest in *Little R.*, AR also produced 4 young (CM). Wilson also had a Mississippi record of the species, of a single bird n. of Tullula 3 Jul (JRW). Gray Kingbirds nested in Pensacola and Gulf Breeze, FL but have not returned to their traditional "stronghold" at Ft. Pickens since Hurricane *Opal* (RAD). Scissor-tailed Flycatcher is a rare but increasing breeder in Alabama. This year, a new nest site was found near Montgomery 13 Jul (DJS), and single birds were in *Shelby*, TN 30 Jun (JRW) and in *Bolivar*, MS 4 Jul (ph. JRW).

Though Blue-headed Vireo is a sparse and local breeder in n. Alabama, 14 individuals were recorded on 11 stops on a B.B.S. route in *Cleburne* 15 Jun (CDC). An even rarer breeder in n. Alabama is Warbling Vireo, which was found at two locations in *Lauderdale* 2 Jul (TMH) and 14 Jul (SH, DH, HHW). The only Purple Martin roost on which data were submitted—in Shreveport, LA—contained an estimated 200,000 individuals 25 Jul (JI). Tree Swallows observed nesting in *Oktibbeha*, MS in the spring were still present 11 Jun, when 7 were seen (TS). They nested in *Lauderdale*, AL as well, where 18 young fledged from four nests in bluebird boxes by 14 Jul (PDK); as many as 22 were noted in that location 9 Jun. There was another nest in Henson Springs, AL (JJ). A singing male House Wren in *Clay*, AR attempted to nest in a bluebird house in Jun but failed to find a mate, and another singing male was found on the Old Milo, AR B.B.S. route 10 Jun (LA).

A singing Veery was noted in the Richland Creek Wilderness, *Searcy*, AR 13 Jun (LA); the species normally nests no nearer than cen. Tennessee. Gray Catbirds, rare breeders along



This Western Kingbird was noted near Tullula, Mississippi, well to the east of normal range; it was photographed here 3 July 2001. Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.

the Gulf coast, were observed in *Covington* 25 & 29 Jun (RLW, RC; DMW). Cedar Waxwings, rare in summer even in Arkansas, were seen in *Cleburne*, *White*, *Benton*, and *Pope* (KN, GS, LA, RHD). In the latter case, 3 juvs. accompanied 2 ads. 4 Jul (LA).

## WARBLERS

Records of breeding season warblers, generally singing males, included a Blue-winged Warbler in *Lonoke*, AR 17 Jun (DMP, SP), a Cerulean Warbler in *Fayette*, AL 16 Jun (DRC, RCu), singing Chestnut-sided Warblers in *Newton* (4; MMI) and *Fulton*, AR (one; LA) in early Jun, and seven reports of Black-throated Green Warblers involving more than 10 individuals and at least 6 territorial males from *Johnson*, *Polk*, *Yell*, and *Newton*, AR (LA, RHD). A singing Worm-eating Warbler in *Escambia*, FL 2 Jun (RAD) was possibly breeding, and territorial males in *Conecuh*, AL 6 Jun (RLW) and nearby *Covington* 25 Jun (RLW, RC) also raised that possibility. Of Swainson's Warbler, which draws attention because of its high priority status, there were records from *Oktibbeha* and *Noxubee*, MS, involving 4 birds (TS, MS), single individuals in *Stone* and *Grant*, AR (KN, LDN; RHD), and reports from Hatchie N.W.R. (DDP), *Shelby Forest* (WRP), and *Shelby Farms* (WRP), all in w. Tennessee. Donate

Roome, graduate student at Tulane University, found 45 Swainson's nests, double last year's total, mostly in the Pearl River bottoms of se. Louisiana.

Among other interesting records, a Tennessee Warbler in Memphis, TN 4 Jun (GeP) was the latest ever for the state, and a Yellow Warbler in Gulf Breeze 18 Jun (RAD) established only the 2nd Jun record of a northern-race bird for Florida. Also unprecedentedly late, in this case for w. Tennessee, was a Blackpoll Warbler 4 Jun in *Hardeman* (DP). A Prothonotary Warbler on the Green Canyon #177 oil platform 22 Jul (TR) was presumably a southbound migrant, while an ad. male Mourning Warbler in *Grant*, AR 10 Jun (RHD) was evidently a tardy northbound migrant.

## TANAGERS THROUGH CROSBILLS

Five territorial male Scarlet Tanagers were found during B.B.S. and breeding bird atlas field work in *Clark*, AR 9 Jun and in *Garland* and *Parry* 12 Jun, all by Helen Parker, and there were four records from w. Tennessee as well. Of interest in view of recent declines and in any case a species that is scarce in w. Tennessee, a Bachman's Sparrow was discovered in *McNairy* 13 Jun (WRP, VR, RI). There were five reports of nesting Lark Sparrows from Mississippi: 3 & 9 Jun in *Noxubee* (11 birds; TS,

JB, MS), an ad. with young in *Sharkey* 3 Jul (JRW), and 7 seen 20–21 Jul in *Lowdner* (PJB). The species is a rare nester in the Starkville area. At least four pairs bred in *Lawrence*, AL as well (CDC et al.), and there were other Alabama records from *Morgan* and *Lauderdale*. Grasshopper Sparrows were found in *Noxubee* and *Clay*, MS in Jun (JB, TS, MS, PJB), with singing males at the latter location. A Henslow's Sparrow 6 & 26 Jun in Fayetteville, AR (MML) was far from the only other breeding site in state, in *Franklin*. Single White-throated Sparrows in *Stone*, AR 2 Jun and in *Lawrence* 3 Jun (KN, LDN) were very late, and a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak in *Lauderdale* 1 Jun (PDK, DEK) was the latest spring record for Alabama. Three first-year male Painted Buntings near Macon, MS, at the edge of their nesting range, were seen 3 & 9 Jun (TS, JB, MS), and there were three records from cen. and s. Alabama (DMW, LG). A male Shiny Cowbird at Dauphin I. 15 Jun (WDR) was only the 2nd Jun record but the 20th overall for Alabama. Records of Bronzed Cowbirds in outlying *Terrebonne*, LA 14 (MPo) & 24–28 Jun (LE) were of interest despite their massive presence in the New Orleans area. Also unusual was a pair of Orchard Orioles in *Boone*, AR 26 Jul (MMi). Red Crossbills continue to occur at the known breeding site in Talladega N.F., *Cleburne*, AL: 7 were there 15 Jun (CDC).

### CORRIGENDA

Corrections to last year's nesting season report (*N. A. B.* 54, No. 4): The early Wood Storks reported as having been seen 18 Jun (2000) were actually in *Chilton*, AL, not *Lauderdale* (*vide* GDJ). In Arkansas, Lesser Yellowlegs reported 28 Jun were actually seen 21 Jun; a Semipalmated Sandpiper was reported as 14 Jun rather than 17 Jun and was probably a northbound migrant; a Western Sandpiper was seen on 26 Jun, not 21 Jun. All records by MML.

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This Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was found in Shelby County, Tennessee 30 June. The species is certainly increasing as a breeder in parts of the Region, particularly Alabama. *Photograph by Jeff R. Wilson.*

# Prairie Provinces



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**S**parsely June precipitation was not enough to alleviate drought conditions in the western half of the region. Many water bodies in southeastern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan remained dry or nearly so. In contrast, southern Manitoba and extreme southeastern Saskatchewan received copious amounts of rain, creating numerous temporary ponds but also flooding out potential nest sites. Manitoba enjoyed a rush of rarities in the first half of June, but Regionwide hot weather—plus abundant mosquitoes in the southeast—kept birding activity to a minimum in July.

**Abbreviations:** C.N.S.C. (Churchill Northern Studies Centre, groups I and II); N.L.A. (North shore of L. Athabasca, AB); Outpost (Outpost Wetlands Natural Area, AB); S.R.V. (Sheep River Valley, AB).

## HERONS THROUGH RAPTORS

For the 6th consecutive summer, a Great Egret returned to Innisfail, AB (*fide* RH), and another

was near Calgary, AB 27 May–7 Jun (DK, BH). A Snowy Egret was a rare visitor at Frank L., AB 13 Jun (PR). Three **Little Blue Herons** visited Manitoba, boosting the provincial total of about a dozen previous reports. An imm. was seen near Woodlands 5 Jun (FB), an ad. was at Whitewater L., MB 9–10 Jun (IW, DD et al.), and astoundingly an ad. visited Churchill 4–18+ Jun (BC, m. ob.). At one point, the latter bird wandered from its favorite fishing spot at Twin Lakes into town, where it was relentlessly harassed by Arctic Terns. Whitewater L. produced a Tricolored Heron 2–3 Jun (RP, LV et al.). White-faced Ibis were restricted to a few locations, with a high count of 20 at Frank L. 22 Jul (DC, DP).

Three Brant at Churchill 14 Jun were rare spring migrants (LdM, C.N.S.C. II), while a swan there in mid-June was generally believed to be a Trumpeter (m. ob.). A pair of Trumpeter Swans with 3 young was noted at Outpost 27 Jun (D&TD). A Eurasian Wigeon at Rattlesnake Res., Medicine Hat, AB 8 Jun was late (EML, RS). A King Eider 10 Jun (PT, C.N.S.C. I) and an albino White-winged Scoter through much of June (BC, m. ob.) were good finds at Churchill.

Ospreys enjoyed good nesting success in Saskatchewan: 22 young were banded in eight accessible nests out of 10 found n. of North Battleford alone (SH et al.). A Swainson's Hawk at Banff N.P., AB 9 Jul was uncommon for the mountains (JR). Swainson's and Ferruginous Hawks had poor productivity in

community pastures in southwestern Saskatchewan, due to low Richardson's Ground Squirrel numbers. Ironically, they fared better in (partial) cropland with more ground squirrels. A Rough-legged Hawk summered at Oak Hammock Marsh, MB (m. ob.). A Golden Eagle at Churchill 5 & 10 Jun was rare (PT, PG, C.N.S.C. I). New raptor-banding records were set along the South Saskatchewan R. in Saskatchewan: 20 young Golden Eagles from 11 nests and 51 Prairie Falcons from 12 nests (SH et al.).

## RAILS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A Yellow Rail at Outpost 27 Jun was s. of its usual range (D&TD). A Whooping Crane lingered near Andrew, AB 29 May–18 Jun (DBv, *fide* RH). A Black-necked Stilt was at Channel L., SK 5 Jun (AS); others were at Khedive L. (DP), where two pairs with 4 fully-fledged young 7 Aug provided Saskatchewan's 2nd known successful nesting (MB, CBj, JW). Two American Avocets at Churchill 3 Jun were accidental (BC), while 252 Greater Yellowlegs provided a high count there 20 Jul (BC). Flocks of Marbled Godwits, including 250 and 100 near Brooks, AB 21 Jun (DK), 100+ at Reed L., SK 8 Jul (RKR), and 400 at Brooks 19 Jul (DK), suggested drought-related breeding failure. Single Ruddy Turnstones at Langdon 2 Jun (TK) and at Frank L. 28 Jul (D&LF), a Red Knot at Frank L. 28 Jul (D&LF), and a Western Sandpiper at Calgary 30 Jul (TK) were all Alberta rarities. A Purple Sandpiper at Churchill 7 Jun was an accidental spring migrant (C&ET, RK et al.); a 14 Jun sighting there lacked details. Manitoba's 5th **Curlew Sandpiper**, likely an ad. female, obligingly lingered at Whitewater L. 2–7 Jun (RP, LV, m. ob., ph.). Wet conditions in s. Manitoba favored Common Snipe, 52 of which were tallied at 36 stops on the Camper, MB Breeding Bird Survey 20 Jun (KG).

A Parasitic Jaeger at N.L.A. 11 Jun was rare for summer (RT), while a Franklin's Gull at Churchill 9–10 Jun was accidental (JN, EI, PT et al.). Twenty-five hundred Franklin's Gulls, hawking insects while moving w. at S.R.V. 20 Jun, were likely displaced by drought (WS). Best of the Churchill gulls included up to 8 Little Gulls in mid-June (BC, m. ob.), single Mew Gulls 17 Jun (m. ob.) & 8 Jul (BC), a "Nelson's" Gull 8–9 Jun (PT, RK et al.), a Great Black-backed Gull 6 Jul (PS), and a maximum of 3 Ross's Gulls 31 Jul (MBR et al.). Also of note for Alberta were 2 Mew Gulls at N.L.A. 11 Jun (WN, RT, DV) and 3 at the confluence of the Slave and La Butte Rivers 16 Jun (RT), a Sabine's Gull at Ft. Chipewyan 10 Jun (RT), and 150 pairs of Caspian Terns—the province's largest colony—at Egg Island, L. Athabasca 11 Jun (WN, RT, DV).



Manitoba's 2nd **White-winged Dove** was a well-described one-day visitor to a Stonewall yard (D&LO, K&BG). A Mourning Dove at Ft. Chipewyan 9–10 Jun was n. of its known range (RT, DV). A Black-billed Cuckoo at Chain Lakes P.P., AB 19 Jun was rare (TK); the only Saskatchewan record was at Tyvan 30 Jul (BL), but above-average numbers were present in extreme se. Manitoba (PT). Manitoba had only one known pair of Burrowing Owls, near Oak L. (KDS, m. ob.). Rare in Alberta's mountains was a Long-eared Owl at Canmore 23 Jun (KB). Saskatchewan observers shared Manitobans' concern about the precipitous decline of Common Nighthawks (RKR et al.). A Whip-poor-will at Regina, SK 7 Jun was the city's first (CP, RKR et al.). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird nest at Earl Grey, SK 8 Jun was one of few ever found in the area (S&RE, CB, RKR). Lone Rufous Hummingbirds wandered e. to near Taber, AB 23 Jul (M&RB) and Medicine Hat 27 Jul (DB). A female **Red-bellied Woodpecker** at Earl Grey 6–7 Jun was Saskatchewan's 7th and first since 1991 (CB). For the 2nd summer in a row, a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers summered well s. of the usual range at Balgonie, SK (RL).

**PASSERINES**

There were four Olive-sided Flycatcher reports at Churchill 7–13 Jun (m. ob.). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at S.R.V. 13 Jun was rare (WS). Three Eastern Kingbird sightings at Churchill 3–6 Jun possibly involved the same bird (DBg, C.N.S.C. I, BC, m. ob.). A Loggerhead Shrike near Camper 20 Jun was unexpected so far n. (KG). Singing male Cassin's and Blue-headed Vireos held territories less than one mi apart in Calgary in late Jun (ASL). Although still abundant along the U.S. border, there was concern about the continued decline of Horned Larks elsewhere in s. Saskatchewan (RKR). An undocumented Rock Wren at Churchill 4 Jul represented the 3rd local report in five years (RJ et al.). Poor Mountain Bluebird productivity resulted in the lowest number of young banded in Saskatchewan since 1983 (SH et al.). A Wood Thrush was rare near Winnipeg 12 Jun (DBy), as was a Varied Thrush near Lac la Biche, AB 2–3 Jun (FM, RT). Northern Mockingbirds were at Churchill 5 Jun (m. ob.), at Chaplin, SK for most of the period (JB et al.), and near Saskatoon, SK 7–10 Jun (D&CM, *vide* SH).

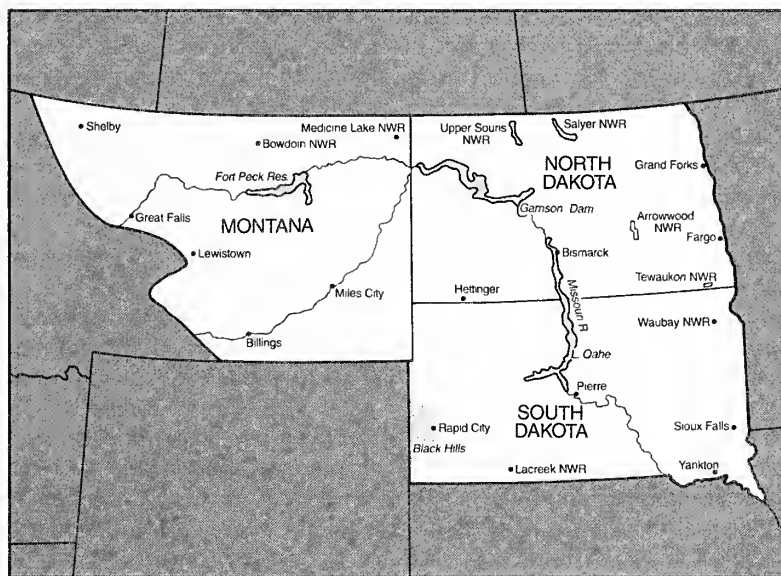
Single Cape May Warblers at S.R.V. 6 & 27 Jun were the first observed there in summer (WS). A Black-throated Green Warbler at Churchill 8 Jun was locally very rare (JC et al.). A Black-and-white Warbler at S.R.V. 6 Jun was new for the valley (WS). Yellow-breasted Chat

numbers were higher than usual near Medicine Hat, AB (PH). Unidentified tanagers, thought not to be Western, were noted near Claresholm, AB 19 Jun and at Calgary 28 Jun (TK). Lark Bunting numbers were low, even in the arid southwest of Saskatchewan (RKR, CP, m. ob.). The reported scarcity of Le Conte's Sparrows across the Region contrasted with higher-than-usual numbers of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows. The latter species appears to have extended its range in s. Alberta in recent years (MH). Another species in well-above-average numbers at Medicine Hat was the Lazuli Bunting (PH). A Common Grackle was a rare visitor to Churchill 12 Jun (C.N.S.C. II). Locally rare in summer was a Cassin's Finch at S.R.V. 16 Jul (WS, RW).

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# Northern Great Plains



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**A**s has become the pattern in recent years, it was a fairly wet season. July was particularly wet, with above-average precipitation in most areas. However, with the preceding five months very dry, many areas were still below

average for the year. Water levels in the eastern Dakotas remain very high. A severe storm hit the Fort Peck, Montana area 24 July, and many injured birds were noted.

Among the numerous significant breeding records noted this season were first nestings for Golden-winged Warbler and Henslow's Sparrow in South Dakota, Black-throated Gray Warbler in Montana, and Henslow's Sparrow in North Dakota.

## BITTERNS THROUGH HAWKS

As noted in previous columns, the expansion in range, and the increase in numbers, of long-legged waders continues unabated. A Least Bittern 16 Jun in *McKenzie*, ND was well w. of the species's range in the state (JPL). Three Great Blue Heron rookeries in *Grand Forks*, ND included at least 30 nests (EEF, DOL). It was only a few years ago that the first nesting for the county was recorded. Casual in Montana, single Great Egrets were seen at Freezeout L., MT 30 Jun and the last two weeks of Jul (MS, TB, JS).

Now seemingly regular in North Dakota, a Little Blue Heron was two mi from the Canadian border 9 Jun for a first county record in *Rolette* (REM). Fourteen Little Blue Heron nests were noted in the *Brown*, SD rookery 3 Jul (DAT). The 3rd nesting for the state, a **Tricolored Heron** nest was also noted in that rookery the same day (DAT). Until recently considered rare on the e. edge of North Dakota, 15 Green Herons were tallied in Richland 4 Jul (CDE, JPL). A flock of 160 White-faced Ibis near Freezeout L., MT 23 Jul was of notable size (MS).

With the population of Snow Geese ballooning ever larger, summer reports of the species continue to proliferate. At least 13 reports came for North Dakota and two from South Dakota. Only the 2nd confirmed nesting for South Dakota, young **Buffleheads** were noted 9 Jul in *Roberts* (BH). A brood at Medicine L. N.W.R., MT 23 Jul furnished the first confirmed breeding there (RS). In North Dakota, nearly 1000 Buffleheads were counted in 18 road-mi in Kidder 1 Jul (LI). A rare breeder at the extreme n. edge of the Region, a Common Goldeneye brood was seen at Bowdoin N.W.R., MT 13 Jun (DF), and two broods found at Ft. Peck in mid-Jun were the first recorded in that area (CC). The first breeding record in decades for North Dakota, a brood of **Common Mergansers** was found at Devil's L. in early Jun (BB).

Summer sightings of **Ospreys** in the Dakotas continue to increase. In South Dakota, the only known nest in recent years has been at Pactola Res. in the Black Hills. This year, new nests in the hills were discovered in *Custer* 23 Jul and *Lawrence* 29 Jul (JLB). The Regionwide expansion of Bald Eagle nesting was particularly evident this year in North Dakota. New nests were discovered in *Walsh*, *Rolette*, and *Ramsey*, and ads. were seen in five other counties where nesting is not confirmed. A flock of 200 Swainson's Hawks in *Stanley*, SD 30 Jun contained mostly one-year-old birds (DB, RDO).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH VIREOS

Recorded for only the 2nd time as a south-bound migrant in the state, a Whimbrel was at Lostwood N.W.R., ND 17 Jul (TG). Casual in summer in Montana, Whimbrels were noted at Bowdoin N.W.R. 3 Jul (DP) and at Freezeout L. 22 Jul (TB). Very unusual in Jul in South Dakota, a White-rumped Sandpiper was in *Brown* 14 Jul (JSP, RFS).

Speculation about Herring Gulls nesting in North Dakota has gone on for years, but no confirmation has been documented. This year 3 agitated ads. were found on a probable nesting island at Audubon N.W.R. (CH, REM).

Three Burrowing Owl reports were received from e. of the Missouri R. in the Dakotas. They were noted in *McPherson*, SD 24 Jun (JDW). In North Dakota, a single was near Parshall in Jun (BM), and a family group was found in *Logan* 16 Jul (RHO). At least 50 pairs of Short-eared Owls were in *Grand Forks*, ND grasslands during the season (DOL, EEF).

Several North Dakota observers commented on the low numbers of Common Nighthawks. Regular migrants in the Black Hills of South Dakota, Rufous Hummingbirds peaked at 5 on 11 & 31 Jul in *Custer* (KH). A Red-bellied Woodpecker carrying food for young in *Richland*, ND 17 Jun provided the 3rd nesting record for the state (REM).

Still not confirmed nesting in South Dakota, an Olive-sided Flycatcher was singing in *Lawrence* 1 Jul (MMM). Southwest of usual range, an Alder Flycatcher was singing in riverside willows on the Lower Missouri R. at the N. Unit of T. Roosevelt N.P., ND 24 Jun (REM).

After three records this spring in South Dakota, another White-eyed Vireo sang for most of the period in *Union* (DS). Probably a very early migrant, a Blue-headed Vireo was in *Moody*, SD 7 Jul (JSP). A rare breeder in the Turtle Mts. of North Dakota, 2 Philadelphia Vireos were in *Bottineau* 16 Jun (REM).

## RAVEN THROUGH WARBLERS

Two Common Ravens were well s. of known breeding areas in *Ransom*, ND 27 Jun (KLP). Very rare breeders in the Black Hills, broods of Pygmy Nuthatches were noted in *Pennington*, SD 1 & 9 Jul (TBW). Two Brown Creeper reports from North Dakota included a single 26 Jun at Lostwood N.W.R. (KS) and one at Sully's Hill N.G.P. 28–29 Jul (JPL). There are no nesting confirmations for the state. A Rock Wren carrying food for young in *Stutsman*, ND in late Jun provided the first nesting for

the county and the easternmost record in the state (KE, MI).

In 1996, a small population of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers was found in Bear Canyon of the Pryor Mts., MT. An expanded search this year in canyons w. of the original area found one to two family groups in each canyon. Three nests were found (JM, PH). Brown Thrashers at the w. edge of their range included one near Choteau, MT 4 Jun (DC, JM) and another near Freezeout L. 29 Jun (MS, JS).

A **Golden-winged Warbler** with 2 young in *Meade*, SD 26 Jul furnished the first nesting record for the state (JLB). Not confirmed nesting in *McHenry*, six Orange-crowned Warbler territories were found at Denbigh Exp. Forest, ND during the season (REM). First confirmed breeding in South Dakota in 1997 in *Meade*, **Chestnut-sided Warblers** again nested in the county, with a young bird seen 29 Jul (JLB). A very early Magnolia Warbler was in Medicine L., MT 8 Jul (TB). Marking the first nesting for *McHenry*, and the southernmost for the state, Myrtle Warblers were feeding a young bird at Denbigh Exp. Forest, ND 8 Jul (REM).

A pair of **Black-throated Gray Warblers** was found in Bear Canyon, Pryor Mts., MT 3 Jun. Subsequently seen by many, a nest was found 16 Jun. This provided the first nesting for the state and the 6th state record for the species (PH, LH). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was found singing in the Ponderosa Pine Area of *Slope*, ND 7 Jun. The bird was taped and photographed the next day, a 2nd documented record for North Dakota (DNS). A pair of Hooded Warblers was defending a territory 10 Jun in *Lawrence*, SD (MR). The one nesting record for South Dakota is from the Black Hills area.

## TANAGERS THROUGH CARDINAL

A Scarlet Tanager nest in *Pennington*, SD 15 Jul furnished the first nesting record for w. South Dakota (TBW). A Spotted Towhee was singing 16 Jun in the Turtle Mts. of *Bottineau*, ND (REM). Previously, only Eastern Towhees have been found in this area.

Pushing the n. edge of their range in e. North Dakota, 3 Field Sparrows spent the season on the *Walsh/Grand Forks* border (EEF). A **Henslow's Sparrow** nest with young was found 15 Jun in *McPherson*, SD. This provided the first nesting for the state (LI). The first state nestings for North Dakota were also recorded this season. A nest with young was recorded in *Richland* 24 Jun (FV, AB, GK, LF), and a 2nd nest was found in *Kidder* 8 Jul (LI). Another singing Henslow's was noted in *Kidder* in late Jun (KE, MI).

It was a very good year for Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows. Fifteen to 25 per day were tallied in late Jun in *Eddy*, ND (LI, DH). The species was also reported from *Brown* (JSP, RFS) and *McPherson*, SD, and 3 males were noted in the Medicine L., MT area (EM).

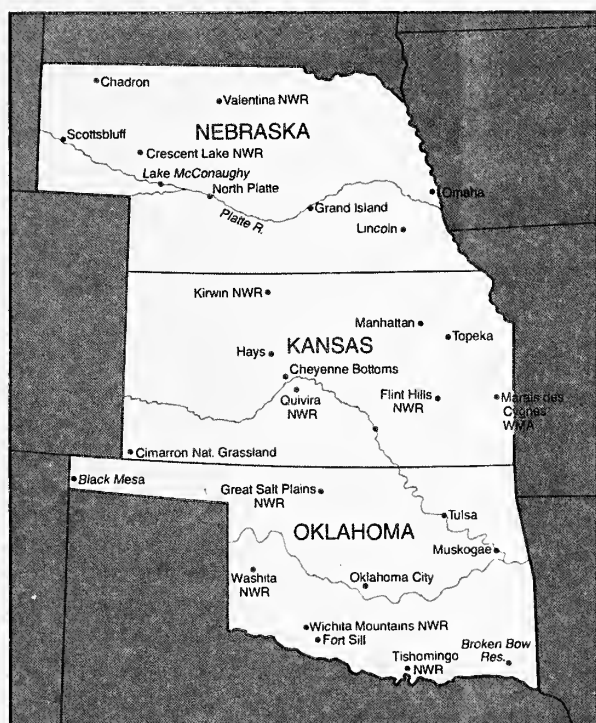
Casual in w. South Dakota, a Northern Cardinal was in Rapid City 4 Jul (JLB). A pair was feeding young in Fargo, ND in Jun, providing the first nest record for the state since 1986 (CC).

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# Southern Great Plains



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As is typical of summer seasons on the Plains, this one was chiefly interesting for records of waterbirds, at least before many marshes and waterholes dried up. Vagrants from the Gulf coast wandered northward in limited numbers across the Region, with the exception of southeastern Oklahoma, which once again was inundated with southern waders. Although some species—such as White-faced Ibis, American Avocet, and Black-necked Stilt—appear to be doing well as

nesters, Western and Eared Grebes have not fared as well. Other marsh and freshwater species, although present in variety, were quite localized at widespread locations.

Whether from absence, heat, bugs, lack of pursuit, or otherwise, it was a less eventful season for landbirds, though these are difficult data to interpret. Cave Swallows were much in the news: sightings this season suggest as yet undiscovered breeding within the Region.

**Abbreviations:** Cheyenne Bottoms (Cheyenne Bottoms W.M.A., *Barton*, KS); Hackberry (Hackberry Flats W.M.A., *Tillman*, OK); L. McConaughy (*Keith*, NE); L. Ogallala (*Keith*, NE); Quivira (Quivira N.W.R., *Stafford*, KS); Rainwater Basin (pothole area in s.-cen. NE); Red Slough (Red Slough W.M.A., *McCurtain*, OK).

## LOONS THROUGH DUCKS

Among the stranger summer finds, but one occurring more frequently in recent years, is the 7th summer record of Pacific Loon for Nebraska, this one at L. Ogallala 3–23 Jun (SJD, TJ, BP, LP). Clark's Grebe appears to be more frequent as well: as many as 36 at L. McConaughy and L. Ogallala 29 Jun, with 16 others reported in w. Nebraska, 6 of them in *Lincoln*, NE 21 Jul (SJD). Two Clark's were located in *Cimarron*, OK 26–29 Jun (JWA, JS), with one at Cheyenne Bottoms 21 Jul (MG).

Neotropical Cormorants from Oklahoma included one to 5 at Red Slough (DA, m. ob.), with singles w. *Cimarron*, OK 28 Jun (JWA, JS), and Hackberry 19 (JAG, VF) & 27 Jul (KM, LT, JDT). Nesting was noted among the 23 Anhingas at Ward L., *McCurtain*, OK 12 Jun (DA, JWA).

A few Least Bitterns were found this season at locations scattered from *Cedar*, NE 29 Jun (SVS) and *Lancaster*, NE 2–23 Jun (LE) to Red Slough, where up to 15 individuals and nesting activity were observed 5 Jun–25 Jul (DA, m. ob.). Rare in the Region, Tricolored Herons were located at Cheyenne Bottoms 8 Jun (GP), Quivira 13 Jun (SP, CH), *Alfalfa*, OK 17 Jul (JWA), and, of course, Red Slough (2 birds; DA, m. ob.). A juv. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was in *Clay*, NE 1 Jul (JGJ). The explosion of Glossy Ibis observations of recent years continues: one was documented in *Clay*, NE 14 Jul (JGJ), only the 2nd for Nebraska, with one or 2 there 20 Jul (WRS, SJD). Other Glossy Ibis were noted in *Major*, OK 8 Jun and 6 Jul (JWA), Hackberry 19 Jul (JAG, VF), and Cheyenne Bottoms 21 (MG) & 27 Jul (B&NB). The increase in Glossy Ibis records (and numbers) has accompanied a similar increase in White-faced Ibis, which were found at a new nesting location—Hackberry—confirmed 19 Jul (JAG, VF). A minimum of 25 pairs and six

nests counted 24 Jun in *Clay*, NE represented the first nesting record for e. Nebraska and 4th for the state. Away from Red Slough, the only White Ibis reported was one 26 Jun in *Texas*, OK (JWA, JS), out to the west.

Still unusual finds are Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, with one from *Major*, OK 8 Jun (JWA) and one to 4 from Red Slough 13 Jun–31 Jul (DA, m. ob.). Summer vagrant waterfowl included many of the now usually reported species. More remarkable among them were the 90 Snow and 2 Ross's Geese in the e. Rainwater Basin 2 Jun, one of the latter remaining until 15 Jun (JGJ). A Cinnamon Teal was still present at Hackberry 15 Jun (LT, MT), with 21 Cinnamons in *Texas*, OK 15 Jul (JWA). Male Ring-necked Ducks were found in *Clay*, NE and *York*, NE 15 Jun (JGJ), while a female and yearling-male Red-breasted Mergansers summered at L. Ogallala (SJD).

## HAWKS THROUGH TERNS

Occasional in summer, an Osprey was in *Keith*, NE 11 Jun (RK, *fide* SJD), possibly a late-migrating imm. The growing information on nesting Bald Eagles from Nebraska and Kansas is most encouraging. One of very few summer reports was that of a male Merlin in *Sioux*, NE 12 Jul (RW). A Peregrine Falcon in the e. Rainwater Basin 2 Jun (JGJ) was believed a record-late spring migrant for Nebraska (*fide* WRS). A dark Peregrine was noted at Cheyenne Bottoms 17 Jul (DG).

Black Rails are reported annually from Quivira, a location presumed to be isolated from other breeding sites. Persistent searching by Dinsmore at Panhandle marshes in Nebraska located a Black Rail at Facus Springs 9 Jul, with 4 Virginia Rails also present (SJD). A surprising find for Oklahoma were the 5 Soras in *Texas* 15 Jul (JWA, SP). A scattering of Common Moorhens was located in the Region n. to *Clay*, NE 20 Jul (SJD). And quite a delight for many birders was the concentration of up to 8 Purple Gallinules (and nesting activity) at Red Slough through most of the period (DA, m. ob.).

Summer is normally a hiatus period for shorebirds, with many lagging on their north-bound migration or beginning their south-bound movement—or just hanging around to confuse their status in the Region. Some assignments of migratory direction become quite arbitrary in late Jun and early Jul. Two apparently tardy Black-bellied Plovers were noted 2 Jun in the e. Rainwater Basin (JGJ). Up to 6 Black-bellieds were noted at Hackberry 15 Jun (LT, MT). A northerly Snowy Plover was photographed at L. McConaughy 21 Jul (SJD). Most encouraging for the jeopardized popula-

tions of Piping Plovers were the record 62 tallied at L. McConaughy 21 Jul, 49 of them imms. (RK, *fide* SJD). Three migrant Pippings were located in *Pawnee*, OK 21–22 Jul (GK, MK), with one at Quivira 27 Jul (BF). Two ad and 2 juv. Mountain Plovers were observed in *Kimball*, NE 9 Jul (SJD).

One Greater and 7 Lesser Yellowlegs at Hackberry 22 Jun (LT, MT) were likely early migrants. Unusual in fall was a Whimbrel 16 Jul in *Texas*, OK (JWA). But what can one say about a Marbled Godwit 13 Jun at Quivira or the 4 at L. McConaughy 17 Jun (SJD)? Also problematic in terms of their migratory direction were 2 Pectoral Sandpipers 24 Jun in e. Rainwater Basin (JGJ).

In the possibly “quite tardy” category were 2 Ruddy Turnstones in *Jefferson*, KS 3 Jun (AS, TFI) and a Sanderling in the e. Rainwater Basin 2 Jun (JGJ), with an amazing 79 at L. McConaughy the next day (SJD). Returning southward were a Semipalmated Sandpiper at L. McConaughy 29 Jun (SJD), 28 Baird's Sandpipers at L. McConaughy 9 Jul (SJD), and a Short-billed Dowitcher 4 Jul in *Riley*, KS (LJ). Exceptional in some regard were the 300 Wilson's Phalaropes in *Texas*, OK 26 & 29 Jun (JWA, JS). Quite early was a molting ad. Red-necked Phalarope in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 22 Jul (SJD). Exceptional by any standard was a **Red Phalarope** in basic plumage in *Clay*, NE 15 Jun (WRS).

The ad. light-morph **Pomarine Jaeger** 21 Jul at L. McConaughy (SJD, WRS) must have been a sight, but it was the 3rd Nebraska summer record, all of ads. (*fide* WRS). A Laughing Gull 27 Jul at Cheyenne Bottoms (BF) was the most exceptional gull reported for the season. Somewhat surprising was a Common Tern at L. McConaughy 3 Jun (SJD), with 2 at Quivira 13 Jun (SP). Least Tern chicks counted in Tulsa 30 Jun came to 23 (*fide* BH).

## DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

A single ad. White-winged Dove with a few smaller unidentified doves appeared in Kearney, NE (RN). White-winged Doves were also reported from four locations in Kansas (*fide* LM), and in Lawton, OK (JAG, VF). An Inca Dove was noted in *Meade*, KS 13 Jun (TF).

Along the westernmost periphery of their range were the several Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in *Harlan*, NE in summer 2000 (GH, WH). Another Ruby-throated was observed just n. in Kearney 6 Jun (*fide* LR, RH). Two Calliope Hummingbirds were the stuff of envy in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 30 Jul (KL), likewise the single Calliope in *Finnney*, KS 29 Jul (L&BR). A Rufous Hummingbird appeared in Alma, NE 7 Jul (GH, WH), an early date, with

four other sightings later in Jul for the Nebraska Panhandle (*fide* WRS). A Lewis's Woodpecker was a long way from home in *Geary*, KS 10 Jun (DR).

Two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were banded in *Keith*, NE, with one seen and heard even farther w. in *Garden*, NE 3 Jun (SJD). A pair of Willow Flycatchers nested unsuccessfully but far s. for the species at Red Slough 5 Jun–25 Jul (DA, MD, m. ob.). Ash-throated Flycatchers on the edge of what may be an expanding range were the 3 in *Texas*, OK 15 Jul (JWA, SP) and 2 in *Morton*, KS 5 Jun (AP, S&KS). Only casual in Nebraska, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was rather far w. in *Morrill* 9 Jun (AK). Numbers of Black-capped Vireos topped 600 pairs this season in *Comanche*, OK, where a prescribed burning program and aggressive cowbird control are helping recovery of this federally Endangered species (JAG).

Perhaps expected in the wake of last year's tentative sightings were the **Cave Swallows** discovered at two locations in the Region. The first 2 were juvs. or yearlings at Cheyenne Bottoms 13–15 Jul (SP, CH, m. ob.). A possible ad. was later seen there 27 Jul (BF). The 2nd location was at Hackberry, where 3 juvs. and one ad. were discovered 19 Jul+ (JAG, VF, m. ob.). It is quite possible that Cave Swallows are currently breeding in the Region, but their nesting areas have yet to be discovered.

Among a meagre list of more exceptional passerines was a Veery singing in *Washington*, NE 7 Jun (JB), probably a late migrant. A male Blackpoll Warbler in *Garden*, NE 3 Jun (SJD) was late and w. of areas of typical occurrence. Unusual anytime but also on the late side was a Black-throated Blue Warbler 4 Jun in *Morton*, KS (AP, S&KS). A female Summer Tanager wandered w. to *Garden*, NE 3 Jun (SJD), one of few records for the Nebraska Panhandle.

Five Henslow's Sparrow were noted in *Lancaster*, NE 30 Jun (KP) and another in *Franklin*, KS 4 Jul (MG, ML); one hopes this unobtrusive species is more widespread than these few records indicate. The scattering of Swamp Sparrow records along the s. edge of their breeding range included one *Phelps*, NE 7 Jul (LR, RH), and up to 7 at the w. end of L. McConaughy 17 Jun (SJD).

A male Lazuli Bunting in *Knox*, NE 5 Jun–3 Jul (MB) was quite far e. of the expected summer range. A peculiar outpost for Lazuli Bunting is the Wichita Mts., OK where about 20 males, some of them mated, were located this season (JAG). Interesting was a flock of up to 61 Red Crossbills, including 2 streaked juvs. in *Scotts Bluff/Banner*, NE 15 Jun–7 Jul (SJD, KL, AK, TJ). An analysis of Red Crossbills in Sowbelly Canyon 9 Jun (EB) suggested two



types, a large-billed form resembling Type 6 and a smaller-billed form closer to Type 2. Two distinct vocalizations were heard but apparently not pegged to Type (EB). (The subspecies traditionally accepted as breeding in Ponderosa Pines in nw. Nebraska is *benti*, a large-billed form.) Certainly exceptional was a male White-winged Crossbill in *Scotts Bluff/Banner*, NE 15–23 Jun (SJD, TJ), only the 2nd documented summer record for the Region.

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## Spring Migration: 1 March–31 May 2001

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There is an aura to the Great Plains in spring, an aura of expansiveness overlain by collective memory of historical abundances—the great herds of bison, wealth of game animals, and sky-darkening clouds of birds. This season, at the scattered oases of its managed wetlands, some of the Region's past splendor could be imagined: waterfowl of several species and cranes were counted in poetic phrases that signify almost countless thousands of birds. Many concentrations of waterfowl were estimated in five or even six digits, as were groups of several shorebird species. The rush of all these wings must simply be experienced first-hand.

On the negative side, the ice storms of the previous winter took their toll. Across Kansas and Oklahoma, many observers noted the reduced numbers of Carolina Wrens, and Carolina Chickadees and Northern Cardinals were likely also similarly affected. It will be interesting to inspect more carefully the results of monitoring schemes such as the Breeding Bird Survey to match observers' impressions with available standardized data.

Discouraging too was the slow showing of Neotropical migrants. Even in the main time-windows and main eastern areas of migration, many were hard to come by. Though there were some extralimital observations, precious few of some expected species were found—such as Nashville Warbler or Chestnut-sided Warbler in eastern stretches.

**Abbreviations:** Cheyenne Bottoms (Cheyenne Bottoms W.M.A., *Barton*, KS); Funk Lagoon (*Phelps*, NE); Hackberry (Hackberry Flats

W.M.A., *Tillman*, OK); L. McConaughy (*Keith*, NE); L. Ogallala (*Keith*, NE); Quivira (Quivira N.W.R. *Stafford*, KS); Sooner L. (*Noble* and *Pawnee*, OK); Rainwater Basin (pothole area in south-central Nebraska); Red Slough (Red Slough W.M.A., *McCurtain*, OK).

### LOONS THROUGH DUCKS

L. Tenkiller, a clear-water reservoir in *Cherokee/Sequoyah*, OK, attracts an inordinate number of loons compared to other sites in the Region. In addition to the many Commons were 2 Red-throated Loons 2 Mar (JWA) and one to 2 Pacific Loons 7 Apr–14 May (JWA). Another Red-throated was located at Sooner L. 29 Mar (JWA).

A Red-necked Grebe at L. Ogallala 28 Apr (SJD) was the 8th reported, but first documented, spring record for Nebraska. In a still-developing pattern for Clark's Grebe, 2 were noted at L. McConaughy 9 Mar (SJD), the earliest arrival on record for Nebraska. Rather far e. was a Clark's in *Knox*, NE 14–16 Mar (MB). Another Clark's was located 17 Apr at Cheyenne Bottoms (RK), with 3 there 20 May (W.A.S.) and 2 in *Cimarron*, OK 21 Apr (JWA).

Neotropical Cormorants appear to be increasing. This season, they were reported at Cheyenne Bottoms beginning 7 Apr (SS, LH), *Mitchell*, KS on an early date of 15 Mar (PL), *Cowley*, KS 8 Apr (3 birds; GY), Tulsa 11 May (JL, PS) and Red Slough (one to 2 birds) by 1 Apr (DA, BH). An Anhinga in *Nowata*, OK 29 Apr (BG, MD) was n. of most.

The only reports of Least Bittern were of one to 3 at Red Slough beginning 30 Apr (DA et al.), and 2 in *Sarpy*, NE 21 May (BP, LP). The 3rd documented record of Tricolored Heron for Nebraska was an ad. in *Hitchcock* 29 Apr (SJD). Normally a very rare summer

vagrant, others were reported from Cheyenne Bottoms 28 Apr–6 May (m. ob.), *Douglas*, KS 5 May (AP, RB), *Jefferson*, KS 16 May (RF), and Quivira 30 May (RP, MP), with one to 3 at Red Slough beginning 5 Apr (DA, BH). Also with more sightings this season—exceptionally to more westerly reaches of the Region—were Glossy Ibis. This season, individuals were noted in *Kingfisher*, OK 19 Apr (2 birds; JWA, JS), *Texas*, OK 21 Apr (JWA), *Morton*, KS 5 May (SS, MR), and *Barton*, KS 15 May (TC). White Ibis numbers built to 400 at Red Slough by 10 Apr (DA, BH); among them was a Roseate Spoonbill 12–13 May (BH, FH).

Just a shadow of last year's numbers, single Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were in *Major*, OK 7 (PB) and 30 Apr (JAG). Part of the Plains' splendor this season were "several hundred thousand" Snow Geese in the Rainwater Basin 16 Mar (LR, RH), with 150,000 at Funk Lagoon 25 Mar (LR, RH). Probably also part of increasing populations were the 5,600 Ross's Geese with about 8,500 Snows noted in *Lancaster*, NE 25 Mar (WRS, JSu). Exceptionally late were 2 Ross's in the e. Rainwater Basin 27 May (JGJ).

A migrant Trumpeter Swan was in *Dixon*, NE 2 Mar (JJ), 7 were in *Keith*, NE, and 13 were seen in *Keith/Garden*, NE (JF, SJD), the latter two observations both 4 Mar. Another Trumpeter was noted in *Elsworth*, KS 13 Mar (D&PR), with 2 in *Kearney*, KS 3 Mar (TS, SSh). Two Tundra Swans wintering at Red Slough were last noted 6 Mar (DA). Two more Tundra Swans were with Trumpeters at L. Ogallala 4 Mar (SJD, JF); and another was noted flying over Nebraska City 10 Mar (LF). Currently of uncertain origin, 2 Mute Swans were present in *Creek*, OK 7–20 Mar (F&LH, GK).

A Eurasian Wigeon appeared in *Clay*, NE



This Wilson's Plover discovered at Sooner Lake, Oklahoma 5 May 2001 was only the second for the Region. A scarce species in North America, it is a red-letter find anywhere in the continent's interior. Photograph by James W. Arterburn.

24 Mar (JGJ), with a possible 2nd at another location in *Clay* 31 Mar (JGJ). The only American Black Duck reported was in *Linn*, KS 17 Mar (MC, MM). Two Mottled Ducks were flushed at Hackberry 9 May (JAG). Cinnamon Teal were widely reported this season, with high counts of 32 at Hackberry 14 Mar (JAG) and 12 in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 29 Apr (KL). By late May, a number of waterfowl species were tardy, vagrant, or had begun breeding.

Important and outstanding high counts included 73,000 Northern Pintail 17 Mar (JGJ) and 1,514 Canvasback 24 Mar in the e. Rainwater Basin (JGJ), with an incredible 40,500 Redhead there 31 Mar (JGJ). The 43 Greater Scaup at L. Ogallala 17 Mar (SJD) and 39 at Sooner L. 29 Mar (JWA) were at the peak of migration time for this species. An exceptional surprise was a subad. male **Harlequin Duck** in *Wyandotte*, KS 7–10 Mar (DH, RMc, m. ob.), a first for the Region if accepted. A White-winged Scoter, only casual in spring, was in *Chase*, KS 4 Mar (GF), with another in *Lancaster*, NE 27–31 Mar (LE, BP, LP). Long-tailed Ducks included singles in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 12 Mar (KL), *Douglas*, KS 17 Mar (RA), and *Cheyenne Bottoms* 1 Apr (PM, ME, m. ob.). More exceptional was an orange-billed female Barrow's Goldeneye at L. Ogallala 4 Mar (SJD, JF), with males in *Johnson*, KS 7–9 Mar (ML, m. ob.), and *Sedgwick*, KS 16 Mar (PJ), and a female in *Saline*, NE 1 Apr (MOr).

## HAWKS THROUGH GULLS

Current signs of a better time for Bald Eagles were the 185 in *Keith*, NE 9 Mar and 111 in *Lincoln*, NE 4 Mar (SJD). Nesting now occurs at more locations in the Region than can be reported individually. Of very few reports from w. Kansas were 3 Broad-winged Hawks in *Scott* 12 May (TS, SSh, M&MR). Peregrine Falcons now include a growing number of birds that probably winter, including 3 seen in *Kearney*, NE 9–16 Mar (RG). Migrants may be broadening their migration windows, with a possible early arrival in *Knox*, NE 29 Mar (SVS). In addition, breeding Peregrines occur in Omaha, with 3 chicks present at the end of May (*vide* WRS).

Black Rails were found at Quivira by 5 May (GP, DS, MS). Only a few King Rails were reported, those from Hackberry 22 Apr (KM, LT) and 24 May (JAG), *Douglas*, KS 5 May (PW, RW), and *Red Slough* 1 May (DA, SW). Seven Virginia Rails in *Keith/Garden*, NE 9 Mar (SJD) apparently wintered. Among the Region's splendors were the 350,000 Sandhill Cranes in *Hall* and *Buffalo*, NE 22 Mar (LF, CF).

High counts of Black-bellied Plovers for the Region included 98 in the e. Rainwater Basin 19 May (JGJ). A Snowy Plover was noted as far n. as *Hitchcock*, NE 29 Apr (SJD). A pure surprise was a **Wilson's Plover** located at Sooner L. 3–5 May (JWA, JC, KK, m. ob.), only the Region's 2nd. A few Piping Plovers moved

through Oklahoma and Kansas 17 Apr–12 May.

Certainly on the rise in recent years are reports of Whimbrel. Surprisingly early were one at Quivira 14 Apr (SS, DB) and 2 on 21–22 Apr at Hackberry (LT, MT). High counts included 44 at Hackberry 6 May (LT, MT) and 35 at Sooner L. 23 May (JWA, JS). Several excellent counts for Hudsonian Godwits included 150 at *Cheyenne Bottoms* 14 Apr (SS, DB) and about 420 at Hackberry 28 Apr (JAG). Rather early for Nebraska were 2 Marbled Godwits in the e. Rainwater Basin 7 Apr (JGJ), with one rather late in *Lancaster*, NE 26 May (LE). Ruddy Turnstones were more widely reported this season, with 2 early arrivals 2 May in *Oklahoma* (JAG), and a record 51 at Sooner L. 23 May (JWA). Almost unheard of in spring, Red Knots were present in unprecedented numbers: singles were observed at Quivira 12 (SS, MR) & 20 May (W.A.S.), with 2 at Hackberry 22 (LT, MT) & 24 May (JAG, VF), and 26 in *Russell*, KS 23 May (PJ).

The status of Dunlin in Mar and early Apr, before their normal migration period, is difficult to assess. This season, 5 were noted as early as 14 Mar at Hackberry (JAG), with one in *Thurston*, NE 7 Apr (BFH). The 4,500 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Hackberry 28 Apr (JAG) was an astounding number in our experience. Short-billed Dowitchers migrate through the Region in a narrow window, and largely in the eastern parts of the Region, but difficulty in identification still clouds the record. This season, reliable reports of 2 birds came from Sooner L. 23 May (JWA) and Hackberry 24 May (JAG), with 6 birds in *Sarpy*, NE 25 May (CNK). Red-necked Phalaropes graced Nebraska and Kansas in a very narrow window 23–28 May, with up to 8 individuals reported in both *Cherry*, NE 23 May (CGr) and *Washington*, KS 25 May (DT). Only 2 were seen in Oklahoma, those in *Alfalfa* 22 May (JM et al.) Much rarer and almost unheard of in spring were Red Phalaropes, with singles in *Fillmore*, NE 28 Apr (JGJ), and Quivira 30 Apr (MI, JF) & 6 May (DS, GP, MS).

As observers keep checking the increasing numbers of gulls, the rarer ones are seen in higher frequencies. This season, L. McConaughy hosted one to 2 ad. Mew Gulls 9–25 Mar (SJD, WRS). A record 30,000 Ring-billed Gulls was estimated in *Harlan*, NE 15 Mar (PL), with 11,000 in *Lancaster*, NE 25 Mar (WRS). Among about 1300 Herring Gulls at L. McConaughy 9 Mar were 13 Thayer's Gulls (SJD); the last was noted 15 Apr (SJD). Kansas posted at least 12 Thayer's, the last noted 3 Apr at *Cheyenne Bottoms* (MR). Surprising was a carefully studied first-winter Iceland Gull at L.

McConaughy 24 Mar (WRS, JSu).

Lesser Black-backed Gulls included 2 at L. McConaughy—an adult present 4–25 Mar (SJD, JF, WRS) and a second-winter bird 17 Mar (SJD). A first-winter **Glaucous-winged Gull** was identified in *Lincoln*, NE 3 Mar (AB), the 3rd for Nebraska if accepted by that state's Records Committee. An amazing 15 Glaucous Gulls were still at L. McConaughy 9 Mar (SJD), with 9 others from the rest of the Region, all noted in Mar. Among the better gull finds was a Great Black-backed Gull in *Coffey*, KS 10 Mar (ML).

## DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

Eurasian Collared-Doves have become more commonplace, with breeding birds established in many towns across the Region. Also expanding and establishing local breeding groups are White-winged Doves. Nesting was noted in *Atchison*, KS 16 May (TA, NBo, m. ob.). A small group could be located in Lawton, OK (KM), with singles noted at eight other locations in the Region. With them are Inca Doves, up to 15 counted in *Meade*, KS (TF), with singles in *Crawford*, KS (MPr), *Comanche*, OK (KM, SM), and *Oklahoma* (SSt).

One species observed less frequently is Black-billed Cuckoo, with only 6 reported from Nebraska (*vide* WRS), none elsewhere. A total surprise for a non-invasion year was an imm. Snowy Owl on the ice in *Lancaster*, NE 25 Mar (WRS, JSu). Also a real "zootie" was a **White-throated Swift** trapped in a granary in *Ford*, KS 23 Apr (K&MS, SB). Not a normal spring occurrence, a male Broad-tailed Hummingbird visited a yard in *Finney*, KS 12 May (M&PR, TS, SSh), while a female Rufous Hummingbird visited another yard there (TS, SSh).

A Dusky Flycatcher in *Kimball*, NE 9 May (SJD, JF) will provide the first spring record for Nebraska, pending acceptance by that state's committee. A genuine ornithological event was the incursion of Vermilion Flycatchers into new areas of the Region. In Kansas, the first was photographed in *Barton*, KS 15 Mar. (Mrs. B), with others in *Morton* 5 Apr (DV, FV, L&RS) to 6 May (SS, MR), *Meade*, KS 15–16 Apr (GSc), and *Leavenworth*, KS 19 May (D&AR). In Oklahoma, a pair was located in *Cimarron* 7 Apr (EE) through at least 20 Apr (JWA), with singles in *Comanche* during mid-Apr and *Tillman*, OK 14 Apr (LT, MT, KM).

Among e. vireos wandering onto the Plains were a White-eyed 22 Apr in *Finney*, KS (MO), and a Yellow-throated in *Dodge*, NE 20 May (LR, RH). A Western Scrub-Jay wandered e. to *Grant*, KS 7 Mar (JT), while a peculiarly sta-

tionary Pinyon Jay was in *Gray*, KS until at least 27 Apr (MCu). White-breasted Nuthatches wintering in w. portions of the Region are likely the *cookei* race: one so noted was in *Kimball*, NE 22 Mar (SJD), with another in *Sioux*, NE as late as 9 May (SJD). This was probably not a good year for Carolina Wrens, populations from Nebraska to Oklahoma having taken serious hits from this winter's ice storms.

Among the species with both e. and w. subspecies traversing the Region is the Hermit Thrush. Fewer data exist for w. forms in the Region. Individuals of the Rocky Mountain subspecies of the Hermit Thrush were noted in *Sioux*, NE 2 May (SJD). No small surprise was a Varied Thrush in *Box Butte*, NE 9 May (LW). A nest box program in the mesa country of nw. *Cimarron*, OK netted a nesting pair of Mountain Bluebirds observed 15–17 May (B&DG). A Townsend's Solitaire wandering e. to *Sedgwick*, KS was observed 1 Mar (CG), and a Curve-billed Thrasher was seen w. in *Grant*, KS 4 Mar (JT). The only Bohemian Waxwings reported were 2 at L. Ogallala 9 Mar (SJD).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

As the years progress, warblers on migration seem to be increasingly scarce. However, picking up in recent years, 9 Golden-winged Warblers were reported from Nebraska in the period 5–12 May (*vide* WRS), with 5 from Kansas (*vide* LM). Westerly were a Blue-winged Warbler in *Finney*, KS 23–25 Apr (MO), a male Chestnut-sided Warbler in *Garden*, NE 19 May (KMD), a Pine Warbler in *Sedgwick*, KS 22 Apr (LH), and a Cerulean Warbler 7 May in *Sedgwick*, KS (DV, KK, MLe). Worm-eating Warblers showed up 17 (DF) & 21 Apr (TS) in *Finney*, KS and 27 Apr at *Cheyenne Bottoms* (RK). Also westerly were single Hooded Warblers in *Finney*, KS 2–15 May (MO) and *Dakota*, NE 5 May (*vide* BFH). Among the rarest warblers in the Region is Cape May. Singles were in *Washington*, NE 7 May (JGJ), and *Riley*, KS 15 May (LJ). Another hoped-for species for many in the Region, a Connecticut Warbler was found 12 May at *Sarpy*, NE (BPa *vide* BP, LP). A Palm Warbler at L. Ogallala 28 Apr was of the subspecies *palmarum* (SJD). Only 4 Bay-breasted Warblers were reported for the entire Region, including singles in *Wayne*, NE 7 May (MB), *Sarpy*, NE 8 & 19 May (*vide* WRS), and *Linn*, KS 12 May (MC).

A small up-note were the 24 Scarlet Tanagers counted in *Tulsa* 5 May (JL, PS). Others were noted w. in *Scott*, KS (MRy), *Quivira* (SS, MR), *Sedgwick*, KS (PJ), and *Cowley*, KS (JN), all coincidentally 12

May—the Spring Migration Day Count. Certainly a tough bird to see, even when present, was a Green-tailed Towhee 6 May in *Finney*, KS (MO, LRi, TS, SSh). Always surprising are migrant Baird's Sparrows. This season, one was observed in *Gosper*, NE 1–2 May (GW, EB). And always interesting, 1075 McCown's Longspurs were present during mid-Apr in *Kimball*, NE, with 730 eastward in *Cheyenne*, NE 14 Apr (SJD). Very early arrivals were an Indigo Bunting in *Otoe*, NE 13 Apr (LF, CF), and Orchard Orioles: one also in *Otoe*, NE 11 Apr (LF, CF) and another in *McCurtain*, OK 6–12 Apr (BH).

After the winter's rosy-finch excitement, the last Gray-crowneds sighted were 20 at *Sioux*, NE feeders 9 Mar; at least one Hepburn's-race Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch and one **Black Rosy-Finch** were with them (HKH). Surprising was a small array of Red Crossbills in Kansas, including a "flock" in *Sedgwick* 17–23 Mar (MTh), 2 in *Riley* 5 Apr (DBu), 2 in *Pottawatomie* 5 Apr (DG, LED), and 4–10 in *Finney* 21 Apr–6 Jun (MLk, TS). A Lesser Goldfinch in *Oklahoma* 31 Mar (BHo) was outside normal limits for the species. An Evening Grosbeak noted 8 & 29 Mar in *Finney*, KS (TS, SSh) was the sole representative of this increasingly rare species.

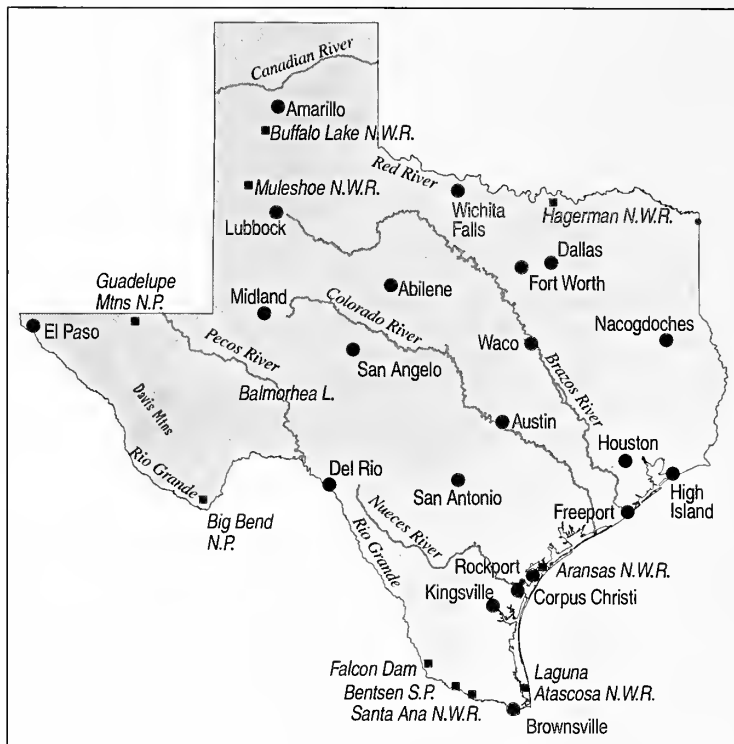
## Cited observers (area editors in boldface):

KANSAS: Ted Anderson, Robert Antonio, Mrs. Bachman (Mrs. B.), Scott Baugh, Nancy Bonner (NBo), Richard Bean, Doris Burnett (DBu), Dave Bryan, Ted Cable, Mark Corder, Mike Cummings (MCu), Marsha Ebaugh, Leon Edmunds (LED), Greg Farley, Richard Field, Doug Floto, Joe Fontaine, Dan Gish, Chet Gresham, David Henness, Larry Hesed, Marshall Iliff, Pete Janzen, Lowell Johnson, Kenn Kaufman, Rich Kostecke, Mary Lake (MLk), Mark Land, Paul Lehman, Mike Lesan (MLe), Patty Marlett, Mick McHugh, Roger McNeill (RMc), **Lloyd Moore**, John Northrup, Mary Osterbuh, Galen Pittman, Alexis Powell, Ralph Pike, Matt Pike, Martha Price (MPr), Mike Rader, Mike Ramsey (MRy), Mike & Pam Ramsey, David & Alison Reber, Leonard Rich (LRi), Dave & Patty Ruitz (D&PR), Georgia Schmalzreid (GSc), Scott Seltman, Kathy & Mark Sexson (K&MS), David Seibel, Tom Shane, Sara Shane (SSh), Lawrence & Ruth Smith, Mike Stewart, Dan Thalman, Max Thompson (MTh), Jeff Trotman, Don & Fran Vannoy, Phil Wedge, Roy Wedge, Wichita Audubon Society (W.A.S.), Gene Young. NEBRASKA: Elaine Bachel, Aaron Brees, Mark Brogie, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Kathy Mihm Dunning, Larry Einemann, Carol Falk, Laurence Falk, Joe Fontaine, Carlos Grandes

(CGr), Ruth Green, Robin Harding, Helen K. Hughson, Bill F. Huser, Jan Johnson, Joel G. Jorgensen, Clem N. Klaphake, Kathy Larson, Paul Lehman, Mark Orsag (MOř), Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Bill Parker (BPa), Lanny Randolph, Steve Van Sickle, **W. Ross Silcock**, John Sullivan (JSu), Leona Weed, Gertrude Wood, Nebraska Ornithologists' Union (N.O.U.). OKLAHOMA: Dave Arbour, **James W. Arterburn**, P. Beech, Jeff Cox, Melinda Droege, E. Edgar, Vic Fazio, Bonnie Gall, B&D Germany, Joseph A. Grzybowski, Berlin Heck, F. Hendershot, F&L Hickson, Bill Horn (BHo), George Kamp, Kenn Kaufman, L.&G.Leslie, Jo Loyd, Jeri McMahon, Kurt Meisenzahl, Sharon Meisenzahl, Pat Seibert, Jerry Sisler, S. Stoodley, Lou Truex, Mary Truex, Steve Webber.



# Texas



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### Chuck Sexton

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**S**ome stark contrasts of climate played out across Texas this season. While Tropical Storm *Allison* deluged the southeast corner, Big Bend National Park was going through its second driest summer in the past 25 years. The northern Panhandle was quite green and moist into June, but almost all parts of central Texas from Abilene south to the Lower Rio Grande Valley were very dry. Many areas from Austin up to Amarillo suffered through July with excessive heat, setting records for the number of days over 100 degrees Fahrenheit by late summer. The breeding season was understandably beneficial for waterbirds and for most passerines in the wetter areas. With the exceptions of the drought-plagued Rio Grande corridor, earlier rains still allowed for a reasonable nesting effort for most birds.

Tropical Storm *Allison* developed quickly in the northern Gulf of Mexico in early June. After making landfall near Galveston on 5

June, rather than dissipating, it proceeded to wander back and forth over the Houston area for the next five days, dumping as much as 20–35 inches of rain and paralyzing Texas's largest city. Probably due to the storm's nearby point of origin and short offshore life span, a single Band-rumped Storm-Petrel found in Seabrook, Harris County on 6 June seems to have been the only overt storm-blown stray. The storm's legacy was expressed subsequently in an excellent breeding season for freshwater species such as Pied-billed Grebe, Least Bittern, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, King Rail, Purple Gallinule, and Common Moorhen...along with a bumper crop of mosquitoes.

**Abbreviations:** L.R.G.V. (Lower Rio Grande Valley); S.W.T.P. (Southside Water Treatment Plant, Dallas); T.B.R.C. (Texas Bird Records Committee); U.T.C. (Upper Texas Coast). The following are shortened names for the respective local, county, state, or national parks and wildlife refuges, etc.: Alazan Bayou, Anahuac, Aransas, Balmorhea, Big Bend, Big Bend Ranch, Brazoria, Buffalo Lake, Dolan Falls, Laguna Atascosa, Muleshoe, Palo Duro





This male Tropical Parula and its mate made an unsuccessful nesting attempt at Davis Mountains State Park, Jeff Davis County, Texas. Photograph by Greg Lasley.

Canyon, Richland Creek, Sabal Palm, Sabine Woods, San Bernard, Santa Ana.

### LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Quite odd for the summer season, a breeding-plumaged Pacific Loon was picked up in a parking lot in San Antonio 17 Jun and brought to a veterinary hospital (GLi). The bird was treated and released the next day on a lake in nearby Boerne. A Western Grebe lingered in *Lamb* 5 Jun (CS), and 2 more were at Buffalo L., *Randall* 7–27 Jun (CS, KS), rare summer sightings in the High Plains. Good numbers of Clark's Grebes spent the season at McNary Res., *Hudspeth* for the 4th consecutive year, producing at least 8 young (JPa, MA). Only 3–5 Western Grebes were present there, with no evidence of breeding. A pelagic trip off of S. Padre I., *Cameron* 18 Jul encountered one or possibly 2 Leach's Storm-Petrels and 9 Band-rumpeds (PHo, BMc). On a follow-up trip in the same area on 20 Jul, 21 Band-rumpeds were tallied (PHo). By far the best find of the 18 Jul pelagic trip was an imm. **Red-billed Tropicbird**; if accepted by the T.B.R.C., this would be about the 5th Texas record. A Brown Booby appeared in the Brownsville Ship Channel at S. Padre I., *Cameron* 30 Jun–16 Jul (S&GC, m. ob., ph. BMc); there was some question if the bird could be of the e. Pacific *brewsteri* race. Perhaps a few more American White Pelicans than normal stayed the summer at scattered locations; one on the Rio Grande downriver from Big Bend 2 Jun was a

little curious (MRy), and 80 up at Buffalo L. was a record setting number there (KS). Double-crested Cormorants nested in small numbers once again at Palo Duro Res., *Hansford* and at Buffalo L., but the few nests at the latter locality were abandoned by late Jun (KS). More significantly, four nests were discovered at Sam Rayburn Res., *San Augustine* 15 Jul (DW), a first confirmed effort in the county and reservoir. A single Anhinga circling with Wood Storks and White Ibis in *Bastrop* 8 Jul was unseasonal there (BFR). Many observers commented on the high numbers of Magnificent Frigatebirds hanging around Galveston Bay, sometimes numbering in the dozens.

An American Bittern at Alazan Bayou, *Nacogdoches* 24 Jun (JFa, CCr) provided a first Pineywoods summer report. Despite sweeping statements in most general references that the Least Bittern nests statewide, it remains a rare bird in the Panhandle, where suitable habitat is local and not easily accessible. A single bird was seen in *Collingsworth* 10 Jul (Bpi), and another was a nice find at San Solomon Cienega at Balmorhea 5 Jul (TJ, m. ob.). A Great Egret flying down Madera Canyon 4 Jun in the Davis Mts. was certainly out of place (KB). A successful breeding season for Reddish Egrets on the coast led to a bumper crop of juvs. dispersing inland; there was an interesting record at Granger L., *Williamson* 22 Jul (TF), and a 2nd *El Paso* record 18–31 Jul (†JZ, m. ob.). Also rare in w. Texas were Yellow-crowned

Night Herons at McNary Res. 7–23 Jul (JPa, JZ, MSc) and at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village Nature Trail 22 Jul (VE, BZ).

Symptomatic of the flood of long-legged waders inland were reports of White Ibis: a record 53 at Austin's Hornsby Bend 28 Jun (BFR); 200 at Fiberboard L., *Angelina* 2 Jul (GG, NB); and up to 80 at Chappell Hill, *Washington* in the latter half of Jul (DVo). A total of 31 Glossy Ibis was found at various *Calhoun* locations 30 Jul (BFR), and the species was encountered in small numbers in Beaumont and at Anahuac, but no nesting evidence was documented (ErC, JWh). A Glossy strayed to S.W.T.P. in Dallas 16 Jul (DH). Roseate Spoonbills wandered inland to *Bastrop*, *Burleson*, and *Freestone*, with one early bird at Richland Cr. in the latter county 30 May (DH, BG). The push of Wood Storks up into e. Texas was widely reported, with small numbers showing up as far inland as *Marion* and *Freestone* in the first few days of Jun. A Black Vulture away from the Rio Grande at Big Bend Ranch 31 Jul was unexpected (KB, JG, CE).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

Over 15 species of waterfowl garnered attention as summering lingerers, but there were relatively few interesting strays or breeding records. A group of 3 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks resided at the Rio Bravo Wetland Park in El Paso from 28 May onward (JSp, m. ob.), only the 2nd county record. Three Muscovy Ducks were seen at Chapeño, *Starr* 10 Jun (MM), and Tim Brush and others found an estimated 6–8 Muscovies (along with a rare summer Wood Duck) on a river trip in that section the next day. A few pairs of Mallards bred at Stillhouse Hollow Res., *Bell* (RP), but reports of eclipse birds and some ducklings in *Freestone* and *Williamson* were confusing, as both Mallard and Mottled are rare possibilities here (KG, DDC, TF). A drake Cinnamon Teal in Hermann Park, *Harris* 4 Jun was late for the U.T.C. (LR). Exciting news came in the form of a report of a female **Masked Duck** with 8 downy young at Brazoria 19 Jun (JWi). Single Masked Ducks were at Sabal Palm 8–11 Jun (RG) and near Rockport 22–26 Jul (MM, MCo ph., † to T.B.R.C.).

Four Ospreys were reported in cen. and e. Texas in Jul away from areas where we normally encounter the species in summer; one pair nested at L. Livingston, *San Jacinto*. A few Swallow-tailed Kites were detected in *Liberty* and *Jasper* but within their known recent digs. An early migrant Swallow-tailed had made it to Laguna Atascosa by 20 Jul (SL). A White-tailed Kite in El Paso 11 Jun was the first county record since Oberholser collected the species

there in 1938 (JZ, MSc); delightfully, an ad. with 3 young was detected 12 & 25 Jun (JPa, BZ). Although it had previously been documented that post-breeding Bald Eagles from Texas moved well to the n. in the United States in summer, it was clear that at least a handful of ads. and fledglings lingered at e. Texas reservoirs this year. The Davis Mts. hosted a nesting pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks in late Jun (KB et al.), a first confirmed record for the county. Cooper's Hawks were confirmed breeding in *Williamson*, and there were interesting sightings in *Callahan* se. of Abilene 4 Jun, in Amarillo 5 Jun, and in *Angelina* 26 Jun. A pair of Gray Hawks was seen occasionally in Limpia Canyon near Fort Davis from 30 Mar through the summer (*vide* KB); they were presumed to be nesting, but the site is on private land. Two pairs of Common Black-Hawks in the Davis Mts. fledged single young, but the pair at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village lost their one nestling. Territorial pairs of Broad-winged Hawks were rarities at two *Bastrop* locations; fledglings were seen at the S.P. there in late Jul (BFr). A juv. Broad-winged in cen. Austin 16 Jul suggested an urban park breeding record (TE). A successful pair of Swainson's Hawks at Granger L., e. *Williamson* may have been a first confirmation for that area (TE, BFr). A Ferruginous Hawk hanging around *Carson* in the cen. Panhandle was s. of the species's known nesting range (JR, MoS). A Merlin in Alpine 23 Jun was a first summer record for *Brewster* (DWWh), but a handful of Peregrine reports across the state in the last week of Jul is consistent with the known pattern of early southbound arrivals.

Nesting Purple Gallinules at two sites in *Angelina* were considered nice finds. Common Moorhens nest only at scattered localities in the Panhandle; ads. with chicks were found 5–29 Jul within the city limits of Amarillo (BPi, EK). Twenty-six Snowy Plovers at Indianola, *Calhoun* 30 Jul (BFr, PHo) and 57 Piping Plovers at Bolivar Flats 22 Jul (PB, WB) were significant concentrations at this season. Rather local but widespread inland in Texas as a breeder, up to 6 Black-necked Stilts in *Burleson* in Jul provided a first summer record for that region. Up to 500 non-nesting American Avocets made for an early concentration at Buffalo L. 8 Jul, no doubt driven there by disappearing playa lakes. There were early southbound Willets 15 Jul at Buffalo L. (BPi), 20 Jul at Stillhouse Hollow L. (GCr), and in *Briscoe* 28 Jul (m. ob.), all single birds. A rare nesting effort of Spotted Sandpipers was confirmed by an ad. with flightless young at Buffalo L. 2 Jul (EK, LKJ); 9 others were reported in the Panhandle in Jun and Jul. A

Long-billed Curlew found inland in *Waller* 4 Jun (FC), an extremely rare Hudsonian Godwit at Buffalo L. 7 Jun (CS), and a Sanderling at Rita Blanca L. 12 Jun (KS) were just a few of the many northbound shorebirds that lingered well into Jun (m. ob.); just a heartbeat later, several early southbound species were being reported, including a Long-billed Curlew that had arrived in Midland by 30 Jun (RMS) and Marbled Godwits in *Nueces* 1 Jul (MC). A Hudsonian Godwit that dropped into Brazoria 15 Jul–4 Aug (JO, RWe) was a rarity for the southbound side of the season, as was a White-rumped Sandpiper at the same location on the first date (JO).

### JAEGERS THROUGH KINGFISHERS

A first for the High Plains was a Pomarine Jaeger in Lubbock 1–5 Jul (AF, ph. JB). June saw a number of late or out-of-place larids; Laughing Gulls were in *Freestone* 2 Jun and *Bastrop* 28 Jun; and Franklin's Gulls, Caspian, Forster's, and Black Terns were sprinkled around cen., w., and n. Texas. A few California Gulls were at McNary Res. and Ft. Hancock in Jun. The pelagic trip off S. Padre I. 18 Jul encountered only 3 Bridled and one Sooty Tern (PHo, BMc). The Black Skimmer colony at Dow Chemical in Freeport, *Brazoria* had its best nesting season since the late 1960s, with 725 fledged; an additional 400 unfledged young were present at the end of the period (JH, TT). Vagrant skimmers were at San Antonio's Mitchell L. 4 Jul (MH, WS) and at Austin's Hornsby Bend 10 Jul (PW).

*Bailey*, *Cherokee*, *Coke*, *Lipscomb*, and *Robertson* were filled in on the map of Eurasian Collared-Dove sightings. Common Ground-Doves were singing at San Bernard throughout the period (RWe, JO), and 3 were found in *Waller* 7 Jul (FC). Unexpected summer Groove-billed Anis were in Big Bend 30 Jun (GCl) & 22 Jul (VE, BZ) and at Anahuac 15 Jul (2nd summer U.T.C. record; DVe). Elf Owls were detected (and presumed nesting) in two locations in the Davis Mts. in Jun. A few Barred Owls and a handful of Chuck-will's-widows heard in *Donley* 30 May–16 Jun were rare finds for the Panhandle (JB, BPi). Three Chimney Swifts were in Brownsville 3 Jun, possible nesters; the breeding status of this species is poorly understood in the L.R.G.V. (BMc). A Green Violet-ear appeared at Volente, *Travis* for the 2nd year in a row 19 Jun–16 Jul (AS, ByS, m. ob.). One of the season's most extraordinary finds was the ad. male **Costa's Hummingbird** that visited a feeder in the Davis Mts. about 8 mi nw. of Ft. Davis, *Jeff Davis* 10 Jun+ (†V&NR, ML, W&JC, m. ob.). This first county record is about the 9th for

Texas and a first "summer" record as well. A male Ringed Kingfisher at L. Bastrop 8 Jul may have been one of the birds reported a few mi away earlier in the year (BFr). A Green Kingfisher on the Brazos R. in *Washington* 19–20 Jun was extralimital (DVo).

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH CORVIDS

An extremely out-of-range **Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet** was discovered 28 Jul at Cibolo Cr. Ranch in *Presidio* (†BZ, VE). This is the first Trans-Pecos record of this species, the first outside of deep s. Texas. Its location so far to the w. caused speculation that it might actually be from a w. Mexico population, analogous to occurrences of Ruddy Ground-Dove in that area of Texas. An Eastern Wood-Pewee was identified at Palo Duro Canyon 5 Jul (EK et al.), an area where neither wood-pewee species is known to nest. Multiple Dusky Flycatchers were again noted on territory near the summit of Mt. Livermore in the Davis Mts., and the pair of Buff-breasted Flycatchers on that preserve made two nesting attempts (KB, m. ob.). A Black Phoebe at Hornsby Bend, *Travis* 24 Jun was odd (RKa). Eastern Phoebes nested out of range in *Gonzales* and *Brazos*, and a pair nested for the first time within Amarillo. A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers nested successfully in Jun at Muleshoe (m. ob.); not to be outdone, a male Vermilion was displaying even farther n. at Palo Duro Res., *Hansford* 5 Jun (KS). There were reports of 3 Dusky-capped Flycatchers at three locations in the Chisos Mts. of Big Bend 6–22 Jun (m. ob.); unlike last year, no nesting activity was noted. Another Dusky-capped was in the high country of Davis Mts. Preserve 4 Jul (KB et al.). The extralimital Great Kiskadees at Baytown were seen as late as 16 Jul, but nesting was never confirmed (DSa, DD). Even farther astray was a single Great Kiskadee observed 12 & 18 Jun in Chappell Hill, *Washington*, and 2 birds there in late Aug (MAG), providing a first for the Central Brazos Valley. Tropical Kingbirds nested for the 6th year in a row at Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground (RiW, m. ob.); fledglings were noted there 7 Jul (MAd). A Couch's Kingbird at Sabine Woods, *Chambers* 10 Jun is one of few summer records for the U.T.C. (JWh). There were multiple Cassin's Kingbirds in *Hudspeth* in early Jun, including a nesting pair 30 mi n. of Sierra Blanca (JPa) and birds at unusual low desert locations.

Finding Bell's Vireos in the Panhandle in summer is always newsworthy. Eight singing Bell's were found in *Donley* 30 May–3 Jun (JB), and another was at Muleshoe 5 Jun (CS); a fledgling was noted at the latter locality 17 Jun (JB). It was also nice to hear of successful nest-

ing of Bell's in e. Texas in *Henderson* (GLU, DW). In a week-long survey, Maresh found 7 male, 3 female, and 2 nestling Black-capped Vireos in the Chisos Mts. area of Big Bend. A pair of Black-capped on territory in c. *Concho* 9 Jun provided a long-overdue county record (CS). Of note was an unseasonable Plumbeous Vireo in Midland 3 Jul (DHu, m. ob.). A pair of Warbling Vireos on territory in e. *Travis* 22 May–19 Jun and another singing male in nearby *Bastrop* 18–19 Jun were unprecedented for the Austin area (BFr). Another Warbling Vireo was out of place at Big Bend Ranch 31 Jul (KB, JG, CE). One to 2 Yellow-green Vireos were reported periodically through the summer at Sabal Palm (*fide* BMC). A Black-whiskered Vireo on w. Galveston I. 26 Jun–4 Jul provided a first summer record for Texas (ph. JSt). One Western Scrub-Jay from the winter invasion just didn't want to leave El Paso; it was still hanging around 15–16 Jun (JSp). A few of the invasive Pinyon Jays were still s. of Alpine 11 Jun (DO). Unusual summer Common Ravens were in *Carson* 16 Jun (EK, RSc, et al.; first county record) and *Oldham* 24 Jun (BPi).

## SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS

Despite the Jul heat, it was a very good nesting season for Purple Martins in the Panhandle (JR). By mid-Jul, a post-breeding mass of 100,000 martins had gathered at L. Livingston, *Polk* (GR), and another 50,000 had gathered on the Texas A&M Univ. campus in College Station (D&SWi, DPh). Single Tree Swallows lingered in *Hemphill*, *Williamson*, and *Bell* into late Jun, and nesting was suspected but not confirmed at all three locations. One or 2 Carolina Wrens were at Big Bend Ranch 13 Jun–31 Jul (m. ob.) and were suspected of nesting, the westernmost outpost for the species in Texas. A House Wren near Texline, *Dallam* 6–13 Jun was away from known breeding areas (CS, KS). One to 2 e. Bewick's Wrens were nice finds for ne. Texas 23 Jun–4 Jul in *Harrison* (ERy). Clay-colored Robins were confirmed nesting at Santa Ana by late Jul, and a trip down the Rio Grande between Roma and Rio Grande City encountered 10 Clay-colored (TBr). An American Robin at Rio Grande Village was a first Jun record for Big Bend (TPa). There was a smattering of late Jun and Jul records of Gray Catbirds on the coast as far s. as Aransas, most believed to represent an early southbound movement. A Sage Thrasher in El Paso 18 Jul was an extremely early migrant (BZ, VE).

In their only known outpost away from the Chisos Mts., 2 Colima Warblers were found in the Davis Mts. Preserve 23 Jun (KB et al.) where one had been detected in May. A male

Northern Parula in w. El Paso 28 Jun was believed to be the same bird present since early May (JPa). The nesting pair of Tropical Parulas in Davis Mts. S.P. was last seen 10 Jul; a nesting effort in May was abandoned. Among the very latest or out-of-place warblers were the following: Magnolia at Midland 3 Jun (DHu), Black-throated Blues in *Brewster* 13 Jun (COK) and *Bastrop* 25 Jun (SM), Blackburnian in *Marion* 12 Jul (HB), and Blackpoll at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 16 Jun (JWh). Brush Freeman's tally of territorial warblers in *Bastrop* included one Yellow-throated, 5+ Swainson's, 20+ Kentucky, and 9+ Hooded; numbers like these hadn't been detected there in a decade. An apparently territorial MacGillivray's Warbler was found high in Davis Mts. Preserve late May–23 Jun (KB et al.). As the dome of high pressure and hot temperatures set up over Texas in early Jul, the usual suspects for early fall migrants began showing up: a Black-and-white Warbler at High I. 30 Jun was probably the earliest of all; by mid- to late Jul, Black-and-whites were scattered from Big Bend to the Panhandle and southward. Louisiana Waterthrushes were also found in late Jul from Buffalo L. down to Sabal Palm. Rarely reported in migration, a **Golden-cheeked Warbler** was described at Boot Spring in Big Bend 28 Jul (LL). A male Rufous-capped Warbler banded at Dolan Falls, *Val Verde* two years ago was recaptured 23 Jun, and a female was captured the next day (*fide* RD).

## TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

An imm. male Scarlet Tanager was a delightful surprise in *Llano* 13 Jun (DB), but in the "wildly unexpected" category was a nesting pair of Western Tanagers with 4 fledglings 8 Jul in the Panhandle in *Bailey* (RSm)—"Just how far out of range is that?" quizzed Seyffert. A Black-throated Sparrow in *Garza* 1 Jun was noteworthy (AF). Symptomatic of the good breeding season in cen. and e. Texas, a juv. Grasshopper Sparrow was found at Alazan Bayou, *Nacogdoches* 17 Jul (JFa), where the species is rare and local. A Swamp Sparrow seen at High I. 24 Jun and heard again 30 Jun was only the 2nd summer U.T.C. report (DVe). Eking out an existence trapped in a grocery store, a White-crowned Sparrow "lingered" to 12 Jun in s. Austin (CSh); another White-crowned was in the wilds of w. *Edwards* 21 Jun (JM). Lark Buntings, Blue Grosbeaks, Indigo and Painted Buntings, and Dickcissels all had banner breeding seasons in range. Most unusual were territorial Indigo Buntings in the Davis Mts. as high as 7500 ft elevation, and another in the Chisos Basin of Big Bend 5 Jun–9 Jul (MF). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Ft. Bliss, *El Paso* 3 Jun was astray. In the Hill Country, a

Yellow-headed Blackbird near Comfort 14 Jul was perhaps southbound (SWie). There was a first *McLennan* record of Bronzed Cowbird 22 Jun and 2 Jul in China Spring (FBu) and the first nesting record of the species (a Jul fledgling) in Lubbock (AF). Two Hooded Orioles were studied carefully near Lockhart, *Caldwell* 4 Jun (SAS, WaR), probably a first Austin-area record (*fide* JHan). Rare and sporadic in the summer, a Red Crossbill was in Boot Canyon 22 Jun (JO). An especially late Pine Siskin was in *El Paso* 6–8 Jun. A few ad. American Goldfinches seen in Jun and Jul in and around Huntsville were also very interesting (BCh, BMu); there is no confirmed nesting in the Pineywoods (*fide* CSh).

## ADDENDUM

In the previous winter column, I inadvertently overlooked a significant report of a first-winter **Iceland Gull** described by two observers at S.W.T.P., *Dallas* 4 Feb 2001 (BG, RR, † to T.B.R.C.).

## CORRIGENDUM

On closer inspection of the video, a Red-necked Grebe reported in w. Texas at Imperial Res. 22 Dec 2000 appears to have been a Horned Grebe.

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# Idaho-Western Montana



Owl and Clay-colored Sparrow in Idaho and Black-necked Stilt in western Montana. Just as interesting were rare bird highlights that included the Region's first Eastern Towhee and second Yellow-throated Warbler.

**Abbreviations:** A.F.R. (American Falls Res., by American Falls, Idaho); Camas (Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID); Lee Metcalf (Lee Metcalf N.W.R., Ravalli, MT); I.B.O. (Idaho Bird Observatory at Lucky Peak, near Boise, ID); Market L. (Market Lake W.M.A., Jefferson, ID).

## LOONS THROUGH MURRELETS

A breeding-plumaged Pacific Loon that stayed in Bonner, ID until at least 16 Jun (LH, CS) provided a rare summer record. American White Pelicans were unusually plentiful in s. Idaho, and good numbers were reported n. of typical range: 8 showed up in Boundary, ID 2 Jul (PC), one stopped in Nez Perce, ID 11-12 Jul (KC), and about 20 stayed in Lake, MT (DC) throughout the period. Waders also strayed n., including single Great Egrets near Whitefish, MT 5 Jun (BT) and at Lee Metcalf 9-27 Jul (WT), and a Green Heron at Lee Metcalf 4 Jul (CK). An apparent summering Snow Goose at A.F.R. 13 Jul (BD) was noteworthy. Harlequin Ducks made news in both states: one strayed to Coeur d'Alene L., Kootenai, ID 24 Jun (SL), and a female with hatchlings near Missoula, MT (MCo) 8 Jul provided the 2nd local breeding record in 30+ years. A Long-tailed Duck that showed up in Flathead 20-27 Jul (DC, BR) represented a 2nd summer record for Montana.

A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk in Madison, MT 2 Jun (MB, JP) was at least a month late.

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The summer of 2001 brought normal to slightly above-normal temperatures and precipitation to the Region. Unfortunately, rainfall was poorly distributed, with storms tracking mainly through northern parts, leaving large areas of southern Idaho critically dry. A surprising snowstorm that hit western Montana in early to mid-June was the weath-

er event of the season, dumping up to 15 inches of wet snow, that caused considerable damage to trees and disrupted nesting birds across an extensive area. The summer rains did little to reverse the trend of declining lakes and reservoirs that was set in motion by last winter's deficient snowpack. The inevitable draw-down of these inadequately filled impoundments resulted in significant nest abandonment by waterbirds but provided expansive mudflats that attracted more than usual numbers of migrating shorebirds.

It was a very exciting summer, with new nesting records added for Northern Hawk



Up to 8 **Black-necked Stilts** summered and fledged young in *Flathead* (BR), furnishing w. Montana's long-anticipated first nesting record. Sadly, Idaho's only reported Upland Sandpiper was in *Bonner* 6 Jun (BB); they appear to be dangerously close to extirpation in the Gem State. The best shorebirds of the period were a Whimbrel near Missoula, MT 1 Jun (LW), a very early Stilt Sandpiper at A.F.R. 28–29 Jun (DCl, CT), and a Short-billed Dowitcher in *Flathead*, MT 31 Jul (BR). Unlike in recent years, a Franklin's Gull seen at Mann L., ID 3 Jun (KSo) was the only one reported n. of expected range in se. Idaho. Both rare and a bit late was an ad. Arctic Tern that graced A.F.R. 18–25 Jun (DCl, CT). An incredible sighting of an **Ancient Murrelet** on a remote section of the Middle Fork of the Salmon R., *Valley* and *Lemhi*, 26 Jul (MH) provided Idaho's 5th record.

### DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

Up to 3 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** continued near American Falls, ID throughout the period (CT), although no nesting was reported. Yellow-billed Cuckoos are one of Idaho's most endangered birds, but surprising numbers were reported this season. Up to 4 were discovered in *Blaine* 24 Jun (DT), and singles were found in Idaho Falls 25 Jun (KJ), *Bingham* 19 Jul (JT), *Boise* 11 Jul (CSy), *Canyon* 14 Jul (CSy), and *Jefferson* 9 Jul (CW). A *ground-nesting* Flammulated Owl with fledglings found in a burned forest near Darby, MT 15 Jun (KS) was likely unprecedented. One of the major highlights of the season was the discovery of a pair of **Northern Hawk Owls** with fledglings at a remote mountain lake in *Boundary* 12 Jul (ph. LB, EC, MCr) that provided Idaho's first nesting record. An out-of-range Broad-tailed Hummingbird that frequented feeders near Bozeman, MT in early Jun (JP, R&RW) was newsworthy.

Two **Alder Flycatchers** were found in *Flathead*, MT 10 Jun (DC), where they are less than annual migrants. Idaho's very local Least Flycatchers were reported at expected locations in *Boundary*, *Camas*, and *Jefferson* throughout the period, but others in *Adams* 10 Jun (DT), *Custer* 18 Jun (HR), and *Minidoka* 22 Jun (SB) were much more unusual. Idaho's 10th **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** was captured 23 Jul at I.B.O. (JC), where all records of this enigmatic species have been made. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher found near Three Forks 10 Jun (BP) was Montana's 11th.

### JAYS THROUGH GRACKLES

Blue Jays are now considered common resi-

dents in Kalispell, MT (DC), but one near Bozeman, MT 22 Jun (JP) was very unusual. A Purple Martin in *Broadwater*, MT 29 Jul (R&RW) was the Region's first report in many years. Northern Mockingbirds were unusually scarce in Idaho; 2 in *Bingham* 14 Jul (JTU) were the only reports. It was an outstanding season for rare Parulidae. The lineup of best warblers included a Tennessee Warbler in *Boundary*, ID 6 Jun (DD), Idaho's 4th **Northern Parula** at Market L. 8 Jun (GR), Idaho's 10th **Magnolia Warbler** in Moscow 10 Jun (CS), Idaho's 2nd **Yellow-throated Warbler** in *Fremont* 18 Jun (†DCl, ph. CW), a Black-and-white Warbler in *Bingham*, ID 11 Jun (DM), and single Ovenbirds at Camas 2 Jun (MJ, DT) and near Bozeman, MT 7 Jun (JP). Apparently, Idaho's Rose-breasted Grosbeak "invasion" continued past the spring season, with singles found in *Oneida* 2–28 Jun (JS) and near Boise 9–14 Jun (D&EF, m. ob.), and a pair in *Jefferson* 10 Jun (TK).

The bird of the season was the Region's first **Eastern Towhee** at Market L. 3–4 Jun (D&EF, m. ob.). Also exciting was the discovery of a pair of **Clay-colored Sparrows** with nestlings in *Bonner* 15 Jul (DD, m. ob.) that provided Idaho's first nesting record. Idaho's Great-tailed Grackle numbers were the lowest in at least three years, with sightings of 5 that included a fledgling at the resident colony in Marsing, *Owyhee*, ID 20 Jul (RLR, DT) and a male near A.F.R. 20 Jul (CT). Idaho Common Grackles were observed in *Bingham* and *Fremont*, where they are rare but now expected, but singles at Camas 2 Jun (DT) and in Boise 25 Jun (MC) were more unusual.

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# Mountain West



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This summer in the Region appeared normal in temperature and moisture in the southern portions but drier in the northern and western portions. The southern "monsoons" developed early this year and continued through the season. This was especially true in the mountain area of Colorado and in the Denver/Platte River basin.

**Abbreviations:** S.C.L. (Strauss Cabin L., Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, CO).

## LOONS THROUGH RAILS

A basic-plumaged ad. Pacific Loon was at S.C.L. 16 Jun–31 Jul+ (NK, m. ob.). An ad. Neotropic Cormorant was at Windsor L., *Weld* 27 Jun (AS). Rarely reported in nw. Colorado, a Double-crested Cormorant was reported from Dinosaur N.M., *Moffat* 9 Jun (CD, BW, GG, LC). An ad. Tricolored Heron was at S.C.L. 17–22 Jun (NK, RK, DAL, m. ob.). Colorado's 6th **Reddish Egret**, a subad. white morph, frequented Neenoshe Res., *Kiowa* 5–31 Jul+ (DN, m. ob.). Colorado's 4th White Ibis, an ad., was at the w. end of J.M.R.

1–2 Jun (TD, DJ, DN, CL). With the overpopulation of Snow Goose, summering individuals have become more regular; singles were reported from five Colorado counties, while another was at Table Mt. W.M.A., Goshen, WY 16 & 29 Jun (SJD, WRS).

Several Mottled Ducks (or hybrids) were at Rocky Ford W.T.P., *Otero* 2–4 Jul (DF, JB, TL, MJ, BKP); there are no accepted records of this species in Colorado. A male Ring-necked Duck was at S.C.L. 13 Jun (SJD). A late male Greater Scaup was at Orlando Res., *Huerfano* 9 Jun (TL, NG), while summer Buffleheads included a late male there 9 Jun (TL, NG) and up to 2 females at S.C.L. 13 Jun–11 Jul (SJD, LS, NK). Most unusual were summer records of Hooded Merganser: 2 late first-spring males at Ft. Collins, *Larimer* 1 Jun (DAL); a female at S.C.L. 18 Jun (SJD); 3 females at Bump Sullivan Res., Goshen, WY 29 Jun (SJD); and 2 females at Huerfano Res., *Pueblo* 28 Jul (CLW, BKP). Colorado's 5th **Common Black-Hawk** was an ad. found e. of Montrose 9 Jun (SJD). This record may indicate a potential range expansion, as it was the 3rd record of the species in Colorado this year. An ad. Peregrine Falcon at Adobe Cr. Res., *Kiowa/Bent* 4 Jul (TL, NG), another ad. at Barr L., *Adams* 23 Jul (TL, JB), and yet another at Chico Basin Ranch, *El Paso* 27 Jul (Stacey Scott) were possible breeders on the e. Plains. Most unusual in summer, an ad. Merlin was reported from Black Mountain, *Hinsdale* in early Jul (PO).

**SA** On the evening of 22–23 Jun, the regional editors conducted a rail survey of *Bent*, *Otero*, and *Pueblo* counties in Colorado in an effort to determine where populations of Black Rail occur in se. Colorado and to estimate their numbers. The effort began at sunset and continued until approximately 0400. The wind was calm after a large thunderstorm, and temperatures ranged from 92 down to 65 degrees Fahrenheit. The thunderstorm caused several large wetland areas e. of J.M.R. to remain unsurveyed. Heard individuals were counted; no playback or prerecorded calls were used to stimulate calling. The areas covered were from the w. end of J.M.R. (high water line/tailwater wetlands); w. along roadside wetland ditches and irrigation tailwater areas; and into *Pueblo*. Most wetland areas contained vegetation dominated by high sedges and rushes 12–40 cm high, with some taller areas of cattail and bulrush. The count total included 85 Virginia Rails, 53 Soras, and an amazing 74 Black Rails, including *Pueblo*'s first Black Rail just e. of Avondale. Other small populations of Blacks occur in other Arkansas Valley counties, such as *Baca*, *Prowers*, *Crowley*, and *Kiowa*. Well over 100 Black Rails might have been counted had it been possible to expand the survey area to include other probably suitable wetland areas.

## CRANES THROUGH SKIMMER

Southeast of normal, a pair of Sandhill Cranes fledged 2 young at Glendevey, *Larimer* 24 Jun, the first breeding record for that county (NK). A late American Golden-Plover was in *Larimer* 1 Jun (NK). Colorado's Piping Plover breeding population rebounded from one pair in 1998 to five pairs in 2001. Three pairs successfully fledged 7 young in 2001, the best year since 1997. A female banded in another state joined this population (no one is color-marking Piping Plovers in Colorado; *vide* DN). High counts of 20 Greater Yellowlegs and 37 Lesser Yellowlegs were tallied at Table Mt. W.M.A., Goshen, WY 29 Jun (SJD). Five Willets at Miramonte Res., *San Miguel* 26 Jun (CD, BW) were a little early. Noteworthy was a Long-billed Curlew well into the mts. at Blue Mesa Res., *Gunnison* 16 Jun (DF) and 5 at Table Mt. W.M.A., Goshen, WY 22 Jun (SJD). Also of note were 9 Marbled Godwits at Miramonte Res., *San Miguel* 26 Jun (CD, BW), a Ruddy Turnstone at Adobe Creek Res., *Bent* 29 Jun (CLW, BKP), and single Semipalmated and Stilt Sandpipers at Table Mt. W.M.A. 16 Jun (SJD).



A subadult white-morph Reddish Egret (on the right) at Neenoshe Reservoir, Kiowa County, Colorado, entertained local birders from 5 July to the end of the period; it furnished the sixth Regional record. This digiscoped image was taken on 20 July. *Photograph by Chris Wood.*

WRS). Four Red-necked Phalaropes at Bump Sullivan Res., Goshen, WY 22 Jul were the only ones reported (SJD).

For the 3rd summer, a **Pomarine Jaeger** was reported in Colorado: an ad. light morph. at Upper Queens Res. 3 (DF, JB) & 10 Jul (TL, NG) was carefully studied. An ad. Laughing Gull at Adobe Cr. Res. was observed depredating Least Tern nests in mid-Jun (DN). This or another ad. was at Jet L., Kiowa 19–29 Jul (DN, m. ob.). On 19 Jun, 9 Franklin's Gulls with dependent young were at Walden N.W.R., Jackson (NK); this is the only known breeding site in Colorado. Rare summer visitors, single ad. Herring Gulls were at J.M.R. 3 Jun and Pueblo Res. 24 Jul (both BKP). Possibly the first summer record for the Region, a Glaucous-winged Gull in third-summer plumage was at Boyd Lake S.P., Larimer 16 Jul (DF). An ad. Great Black-backed Gull visited at least five reservoirs (up to 40 mi distant) in e. Colorado all summer—in one instance, the bird was observed trying to mate with a California Gull (DN et al.).

Up to 14 Caspian Terns remained at S.C.L. 3 Jun–17 Jul (NK, DAL, m. ob.). Single **Arctic Terns** were described from S.C.L. 17–18 Jun (SJD, m. ob.), Windsor L., Weld 22–27 Jun (SJD, m. ob.), and Bonny Res., Yuma 1 Jul (LS). Despite four consecutive years with high reproductive success, Least Tern numbers in e. Colorado dropped from 33 pairs in 1998 to 25 in 1999, 19 in 2000, and only 20 pairs in 2001. This summer, 31 young fledged (DN). N. of normal was an ad. Least Tern at S.C.L. 25 Jun (SJD). A high count of 32 Black Terns at two sites s. of Alamosa, Alamosa 20 Jul appeared to be breeding. The Region's first **Black Skimmer** was an ad. at Jet L., Kiowa 19–21 Jul (DN, m. ob.).

## DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

A Eurasian Collared-Dove at Montrose 9 Jun

(SJD) was the first West Slope record for Colorado. A pair of White-winged Doves at Pueblo was observed mating 3 Jun, but no young were observed (VAT et al.). Black-billed Cuckoo reports included one in Fort Collins, Larimer 10 Jun (NK) and one at Chatfield Res., Jefferson 28 Jul (AS, JK). Nesting Western Screech-Owls fledged one young at Green R. Campground in Dinosaur N.M., Moffat 12 Jun (CD, BW, GG, LC). Also in Dinosaur N.M., several Burrowing Owls were seen 10 Jun (CD, BW, GG, LC). A male Lesser Nighthawk was seen near Billy Creek S.W.A., Ouray 23 Jul (DF, CLW). A *Chaetura* swift was observed with Violet-green Swallows near Ridgway, Ouray in Jul (CC). Two Acorn Woodpeckers were w. of Pagosa Springs, Archuleta 10 Jun (SJD). A single Eastern Wood-Pewee was singing at Morrison Park, Jefferson 5 Jun (AS, KS), and another was at Tamarack Ranch S.W.A., Logan 14 Jun (DF). A singing Alder Flycatcher was along the S. Platte s. of Ft. Lupton, Weld 4 Jun (CLW, TL). Rare in the mts., an Eastern Phoebe was at Antero Res., Park 2 Jul (RL). Vermilion Flycatchers again nested at Higbee Cemetery, Otero this summer. N. of normal were an Ash-throated Flycatcher near Lander, WY 2 Jun (DF, m. ob.) and a Cassin's Kingbird at Table Mt. W.M.A., Goshen, WY 22 Jul (SJD). An ad. female Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was w. of Last Chance, Washington 24 Jun (DR ph.). Rarely reported from the w. slope, a Red-eyed Vireo was noted s. of Olathe along the Uncompahgre R., Montrose 1 Jun (CD, BW). A Winter Wren was seen in R.M.N.P., Boulder 29 Jul (GW). Veery numbers appeared to be higher this year: one w. of Sargents, Gunnison 14 Jun (JB); 7 heard along Trout Cr., Routt 17 Jun (CC); 3 in Left Hand Canyon e. of Ward, Boulder 22 Jun (TL); 2 in Huerfano S.W.A., Huerfano 7 Jul (NG); and one

along the Conejos R. w. of Fox Creek, Conejos 11 Jul (JB). A Gray-cheeked Thrush was at Flagler S.W.A., Kit Carson 1 Jun (CLW).

## WARBLERS THROUGH CROSSBILLS

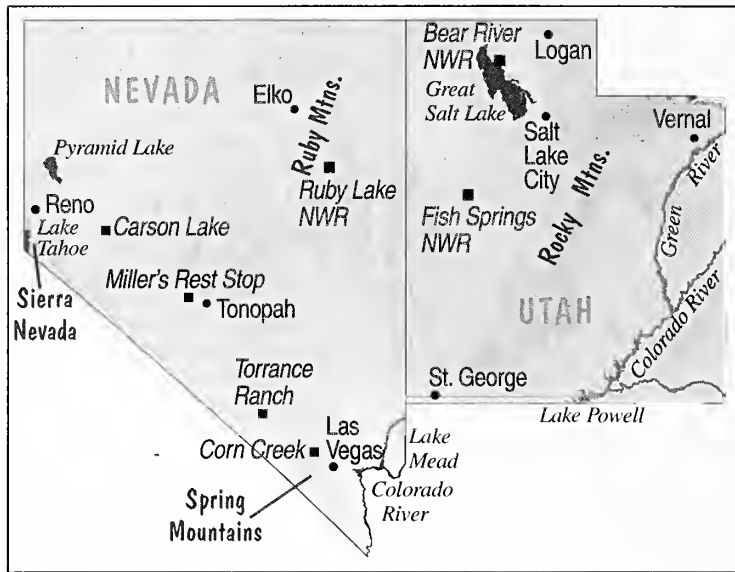
It was a good season for rare or uncommon e. warblers lingering or summering in the Region. A male Blue-winged Warbler was in Colorado City, Pueblo 1 Jul (BKP), and a male Golden-winged Warbler in Red Rocks Park, Jefferson 5 Jun (NG, TL, CLW, AS). A male Northern Parula was s. of Cook L., WY 24 Jun (Nick Block). Chestnut-sided Warbler reports included 3 males: Pass Cr., n. of La Veta, Huerfano 6 Jun (DAL); Colorado City, Pueblo 8 Jun (DS); and a late bird on the Apex Trail, Jefferson 22 Jul (DF). An early Townsend's Warbler was near Canon City, Fremont 31 Jul (AV). A male Prairie Warbler along the Apex Trail 21 Jul (CLW) provided one of the few summer records for this species in Colorado. A male Blackpoll Warbler in Dearlodge Park, Moffat 9 Jun was a late migrant (CD, BW, GG, LC). Single Black-and-white Warblers included a male at Castlewood Canyon S.P., Douglas 24 Jun (LS) and a female w. of Ft. Collins, Larimer 9 Jul (BKP, DB, m. ob.). A male Kentucky Warbler was a prize in Colorado City, Pueblo 29 Jun (BKP, SC, DS).

A male Summer Tanager was discovered at Sawhill Ponds in Boulder 24 Jun (MP). Several Savannah Sparrows were reported above 11,800 ft in the S. San Juan Wilderness Area, s. of Platoro Reservoir, Conejos (SA). Rare in summer, a male Northern Cardinal was at Rocky Ford, Otero 28 Jul (CLW, BKP). Rare in the mts. w. of the Continental Divide, a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was found in Vail, Eagle 10–11 Jun (Bob Righter), while an ad. male Indigo Bunting at Lander, WY 8 Jun was a good find there (DF, m. ob.). Both species strayed strongly w. in the previous spring. A male Bobolink was displaying near La Veta, Huerfano 28 Jun (TL, NG). Two Scott's Orioles were detected along the Ninaview B.B.S. route, Las Animas 6 Jun (CLW, BKP). A pair of White-winged Crossbills, scarce in summer, were ne. of Rico, Dolores 4 Jul (CD, BW).

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# Great Basin



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It is usually hot and dry during the summer months in the Great Basin, and this year was no exception. In Reno, only 2.8 in of precipitation had fallen in the twelve-month period ending 30 June 2001—making it the driest fiscal year in more than a century. In the minds of many birders, low water is associated with good shorebird conditions; but there was no water at all in many of our wetlands, especially in the western part of the Region. Consequently, shorebirds were scarce or simply absent at most sites except for the Great Salt Lake. The “fall” shorebird flight seemed to be somewhat early, with boreal and Arctic breeders showing up in southern Nevada by the end of June. The dry weather throughout the West was thought to be connected with the appearance of several southern vagrants in our Region.

**Abbreviations:** A.I.C. (Antelope Island Causeway, *Davis*, UT); B.C. (Big Canyon, *Washoe*, NV); B.R., Bodyfeldt Ranch (*Nye*, NV); C.L. (Carson L., *Churchill*, NV); C.C. (Corn Cr., *Clark*, NV); F.S.N.W.R. (Fish Springs N.W.R., *Juab*, UT); H.B.V.P. (Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, *Clark*, NV); L.L. (Lead L., *Churchill*, NV); M.V.W. (Meadow Valley Wash, *Lincoln*, NV); M.R.S. (Miller's Rest Stop, *Esmeralda*, NV); O.C.T. (Ophir Creek Trail,

*Washoe*, NV); W.S.R. (Warm Springs Ranch, *Clark*, NV).

Records marked with a dagger (†) were documented with a written description. Records marked with an asterisk (\*) are subject to review by the appropriate state records committees.

## BITTERNS THROUGH FALCONS

Two Least Bitterns—an apparent pair—at Pahranaagat N.W.R., *Lincoln*, NV 16 Jun (JC) were the only report of the species. Green Herons were noted at three southerly locations: along the Muddy River, *Clark*, NV throughout Jun (JW & NM); in M.V.W. 7 Jul (SS); and at Berry Springs Marsh, *Washington*, UT, where a nest with 4 young was discovered 22 Jul (RF & RD).

A female Wood Duck with chicks at the Carson R. Diversion Dam, *Churchill*, NV 8 Jun (TL, MM) provided the only confirmed breeding record for the season. A Northern Pintail with 3–4 young in M.V.W. 7 Jul (SS) represented a southerly extreme for breeding in the state. The Blue-winged Teal is an uncommon breeder in the Great Basin; this summer, there were reports from Saltair, *Salt Lake*, UT 18 Jun (CN) and from four Nevada locations 2 Jun–14 Jul (v. o.). Canvasback is rare in s. Utah during the summer, so the individual at Stratton Pond, *Washington*, UT 8–22 Jul (RD) was notable. Also notable was a pair of Ring-necked Ducks at Mountain Home, *Duchesne*, UT 4 Jul (BR & LR). There were 2–3 Common Goldeneyes at H.B.V.P. during the surprising time span of 29

Jun–15 Jul (RS & JC). A Red-breasted Merganser at Parowan, *Iron*, UT 12 Jul (RD) was unusual. A dark-morph Ruddy Duck at H.B.V.P. 5–20 Jul (ph. JS et al.) was interesting.

Summering or breeding Ospreys were noted at four locales in nw. Nevada (v. o.), and a breeding pair at Deer Creek Res., *Wasatch*, UT had fledged one young bird by 22 Jul (JB, KB). A **Mississippi Kite** (\*) was a one-day wonder at W.S.R. 6 Jun (ph. JW). Summering Bald Eagles were found at two spots in the Carson Range of w. Nevada: at Galena County Park, *Washoe* 3 Jun (LW et al.) and at Spooner L., *Douglas* 11 Jun (*vide* LW). Red-shouldered Hawks were seen at three Nevada locations 13–31 Jul (v. o.) and at F.S.N.W.R. 16–19 Jul (JG). A Zone-tailed Hawk (\*) was at W.S.R. 6 Jun (JW). Peregrine Falcons were found at three Nevada locations 5 Jun–14 Jul (v. o.) and at A.I.C. 21 Jul (DJ, LJ).

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

At least 7000 American Avocets were at L.L. by the early date of 20 Jun (BH), and more than 11,000 were at C.L. 25 Jul (TF). The first Greater Yellowlegs showed up at H.B.V.P. on the somewhat early date of 29 Jun (RS). The only Lesser Yellowlegs was a single bird at H.B.V.P. 1 Jul (RS). Solitary Sandpipers were reported from H.B.V.P. 15 Jul (JC) and Lake Shore, *Utah*, UT 22–31 Jul (v. o.). A **Wandering Tattler** (\*), first reported in May, continued at A.I.C. until 3 Jun (v. o.). Some 30 Marbled Godwits were at L.L. on the slightly early date of 20 Jun (BH). Three Red Knots were at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, *Box Elder*, UT 26 Jul (CN, TS). Several Sanderlings, leftovers from the strong passage in May, lingered at A.I.C. until 4 Jun (KC); meanwhile southbound Sanderlings at four Utah locales 9–31 Jul were led by 26 at A.I.C. 27 Jul (EC).

The **White-rumped Sandpiper** (\*) flock at Ouray N.W.R., *Uintah*, UT had dwindled to 2 by 10 Jun (v. o.), and a lone bird made a surprise appearance at F.S.N.W.R. 6 Jun (JBa). A Baird's Sandpiper at C.L. 25 Jul (TF) was the state's only report, but reports from three Utah locales 13–27 Jul (v. o.) were led by 43 at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, *Box Elder*, UT 27 Jul (EC). An early Pectoral Sandpiper was at Paragonah Pond, *Iron*, UT 14 Jul (RD). Two Stilt Sandpipers were at Provo Airport Dike, *Utah*, UT 31 Jul (DS et al.). At least 6000 Long-billed Dowitchers were at C.L. by 25 Jul (TF). Some 4000 Wilson's Phalaropes gathered at L.L. 20 Jun (BH), and 10,000+ were at C.L. by 25 Jul (TF). The Red-necked Phalarope maximum was 800+ at Soda Lake, *Carson*, NV 25 Jul (TF). The highest count of Franklin's Gull was of 4266 at A.I.C. 21 Jul (DJ & LJ). A Herring Gull was at the unusual location of Quichapa L.,





This adult Mississippi Kite photographed on 6 June was one of many outstanding regional records from Warm Springs Ranch, Clark County, Nevada in the early summer of 2001. Photograph by Jack Walters.

*Iron*, UT on the unusual dates of 5–8 Jun (†RD). Common Terns made a good early showing in Utah, with reports at three locales 18–22 Jul led by 17 at the Geneva settling ponds, *Utah* 18 Jul (RSt); meanwhile, a single Common Tern at the Ruby L. Fish Hatchery, *Elko*, NV 28 Jun (WW) was notable. A **Least Tern** (\*) at the Geneva settling ponds, *Utah*, UT 22 Jul (JB & KB) was a great find.

**SA** Until recently, the Upper Muddy R. Valley of Clark County, Nevada, wasn't even on the radar screens of most area birders. During field work for the *Nevada Breeding Bird Atlas* (1997–2000), however, this drainage was discovered to harbor breeding Clapper Rails, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Vermilion Flycatchers, Brown-crested Flycatchers, and Cassin's Kingbirds. The Upper Muddy R. has also emerged as a prime spot for passerine vagrants and stray raptors. In 2001, researchers from the Great Basin Bird Observatory and the University of Nevada at Reno conducted bird surveys along the river, to try to get a quantitative handle on breeding bird densities in the valley. One site alone—the privately held Warm Springs Ranch—supported 10+ pairs each of Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Vermilion Flycatchers. Meanwhile, strays such as Mississippi Kite, Zone-tailed Hawk, Worm-eating Warbler, and multiple Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found right through the summer season at Warm Springs Ranch.

## DOVES THROUGH VIREOS

**Eurasian Collared-Doves** (\*) stormed into Nevada this summer. A bird along the Muddy River, *Clark* 7 Jun (NM & KM) was a probable state first, and an individual at Panaca, *Lincoln* 7 Jul (ph., †SS) was well described. By 11 Jul, there were 2 at Panaca (SS). A Band-tailed Pigeon at B.R. 8 Jun (DT) was unusual. White-winged Doves are regular in Nevada only in the far s. reaches of *Clark*; it was notable, then, that the species was reported from five n. *Clark* locales during the reporting period (v. o.). An amazing 14–15 Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at W.S.R. in late Jun (†PSu, JW et al.), and singles were noted at B.R. 7–8 Jun (JBr, DT), along the lower Provo River, *Utah*, UT 3–4 Jul (DS et al.), and at Lytle Ranch, *Washington*, UT 22 Jul (RF et al.). A possible Elf Owl (\*) was heard at Lytle Ranch, *Washington*, UT 21–22 Jul (RF et al.); the species has occurred here in the recent past. A well-described female **Magnificent Hummingbird** (\*) was at Stout Canyon, *Kane*, UT 24 Jun (†SS & PS). An Anna's Hummingbird was at Reno until 23 Jun (RR). At least 6 "fall" migrant *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were back at the O.C.T. 1 Jul (JD & TF). Two Acorn Woodpeckers were at Devil's Canyon, *San Juan*, UT 26 Jun (DG).

An Olive-sided Flycatcher at the low-elevation site of B.C. 31 Jul (FP) was early. A *Contopus* flycatcher at C.C. 7 Jun was a good match for Eastern Wood-Pewee (\*), both in terms of plumage seen and vocalizations heard (†RS); the observer did not get to study the bird long enough to make a definitive identification, however. Black Phoebe at Rancho San Rafael Park, *Washoe*, NV 24 Jul

(FP) and at B.C. 31 Jul (FP) were northerly; meanwhile, 8 birds were counted in M.V.W. 7 Jul (SS). Vermilion Flycatchers numbered in the double digits at W.S.R. in Jun (PSu et al.), and singles were found at three other *Clark* locations 14 Jun–24 Jul (v. o.). Brown-crested Flycatchers at five Nevada locales 2–20 Jun (v. o.) were led by an impressive 6 birds at W.S.R. 20 Jun (JW). A silent *Myiarchus* flycatcher at M.R.S. 14 Jun was thought to be a possible Dusky-capped Flycatcher (\*; †JBr). Cassin's Kingbirds numbered one to 5 at four Nevada locales 9 Jun–28 Jul (v. o.). An Eastern Kingbird strayed to B.R. 2 Jun (JB et al.).

A Bell's Vireo at Tonopah 2 Jun (GS et al.) was northerly. A belated report of 2 singing Gray Vireos in the Palmetto Mountains, *Esmeralda*, NV 27 May (JD) was noteworthy; this area is well to the n. and w. of where the species was documented during the recently completed *Nevada Breeding Bird Atlas* (1997–2000). A possible Philadelphia Vireo (\*) was reported from M.R.S. 10 Jun (JBr), and a Red-eyed Vireo (\*) was at Boyd Siding, *Lincoln*, NV 7 Jul (†SS).

## SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS

Purple Martins were confirmed as breeders in Spanish Fork Canyon, *Utah*, UT 11–12 Jul (KC et al.). A juv. Black-capped Chickadee was netted at the Mary's R. banding station, *Elko*, NV 29 Jul (KV). A singing Winter Wren was at Chimney Beach, *Washoe*, NV 14 Jul (TF); the species remains unconfirmed as a Nevada breeder. At least 6 American Dippers remained in downtown Reno until 23 Jun (TF, KS).

A possible Veery (\*) was reported from Tonopah 2 Jun (JBr, DT). Migrant Swainson's Thrushes included 2 at Tonopah 2 Jun (JBr, DT) and 3 at B.R. (JBr, DT) also 2 Jun; meanwhile, a lone Swainson's Thrush at Navajo Lake, *Kane*, UT 1 Jul (SS & PS) indicated possible breeding well to the s. of the species's normal range. Unusual was a Hermit Thrush seen at a nest in riparian habitat on the canyon floor at Zion N.P., *Washington*, UT 2 Jun (SS et al.). The last *Catharus* thrush of the spring migration was an unidentified individual at C.C. 7 Jun (RS). One or 2 Gray Catbirds were at B.R. 2–10 Jun (JBr et al.), and reports from four Utah locales were led by 6 at North Arm Natural Area, *Weber* 3–24 Jun (CD et al.). A tardy Cedar Waxwing at C.C. 14 Jun (JC) was way to the s. of the species's breeding range in Nevada, while 6 northerly Phainopeplas at Duncan Creek, *Iron*, UT were a 2nd county record (SS).

Warblers of note included the following: a **Golden-winged Warbler** (\*) a little ways to the w. of Eureka, *Juab*, UT 16 Jun (EH); single

Northern Parulas (\*) at B.R. 14 Jun (JBr) and at Springville, *Utah*, UT 15 Jun (JH et al.); a singing Chestnut-sided Warbler (\*) at Yerington, *Lyons*, NV 6 Jun (CR, DH) and another at B.R. on the unusual date of 9 Jul (JBr); one or 2 Black-throated Blue Warblers (\*) at B.R. 8–10 Jun (JBr, DT); a tardy Myrtle Warbler at B.C. 8 Jun (TF, TL); 2 early Audubon's Warblers at Duncan Creek, *Iron*, UT 29 Jul (SS) and 5–6 at B.C. 31 Jul (FP); an early Townsend's Warbler at Aspen Grove, *Utah*, UT 27 Jul (EH); a Black-and-white Warbler at B.R. 2 Jun (JBr et al.); American Redstarts at three Nevada locales 2–30 Jun (v. o.); a **Worm-eating Warbler** (\*) at W.S.R. 1 Jul (GS); an Ovenbird (\*) at B.R. 2 Jun (JBr); single Northern Waterthrushes at M.R.S. 1 Jun (JBr & DT) and at C.C. 5–7 Jun (RS); and single Hooded Warblers (\*) at Dyer, *Esmeralda*, NV 3 Jun (DT et al.) and Capitol Reef N.P., *Wayne*, UT 27 Jun–3 Jul (TC); the latter bird, a male, was banded there.

## TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Summer Tanager at Dyer, *Esmeralda*, NV 3 Jun (GS) and 2 at B.R. 12 Jul (JBr) were somewhat northerly, while a stray to Holladay, *Salt Lake*, UT 7 Jul (SC) was well to the n. of its normal range. Meanwhile, a good 9 individuals were tallied in M.V.W. 7 Jul (SS). An Abert's Towhee at Pueblo Park, *Clark*, NV 4 Jul was notable; the species is highly sedentary in Nevada and had never before been reported from this location (RS). A Grasshopper Sparrow (\*) near Caliente, *Lincoln*, NV was seen carrying food or a fecal sac (†WW), and 2 birds were noted at A.I.C., *Davis*, UT 3 Jun (JB, KB). Lincoln's Sparrow is poorly documented as a breeder in Nevada, so the following records were of note: 4 ads. on the O.C.T. 1 Jul, including an individual seen carrying food (JD, TF); at least 6 ads. in Lamoille Canyon, *Elko* 10 Jul, including 3 seen feeding young (MP, LP).

Stray Rose-breasted Grosbeaks lingered at four Nevada locales 1 Jun–3 Jul (v. o.), but the only Utah report was an ad. male at F.S.N.W.R. 30 Jun (JBa). A male **Painted Bunting** (\*) at Providence, *Cache*, UT 20–25 Jun (JL, WL), if accepted by the Utah records committee, would be the first or 2nd for the state. Indigo Buntings at five Nevada locales included 3 males in M.V.W. 7 Jul (SS); meanwhile, there were reports of single birds at three Utah locales 24 Jun–8 Jul (v. o.). Two Bobolinks were seen near Lamoille, *Elko*, NV 27 Jul (JE & SW), and one was at Goshen Canyon, *Juab*, UT 8 Jul (EH). A possible Common Grackle (\*) was at Tonopah, *Nye*, 9 Jul (†JBr). Northerly Hooded Orioles were found at Reno, *Washoe*, NV 29 Jun (BG) and at Fallon, *Churchill*, NV 30 Jul (MA).

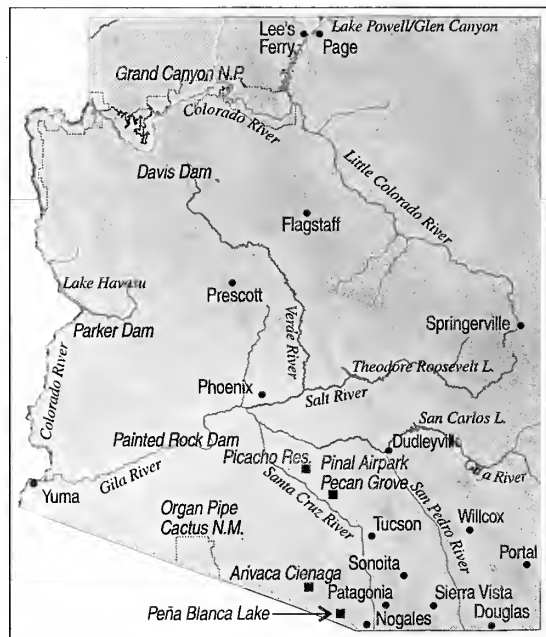
Multiple rosy-finches atop Mount Grant, *Mineral*, NV 22 Jun (LW) were interesting. Given the proximity of this site to the Sierra Nevada, it seems most likely that the rosy-finches were Gray-crowned—a species that could not be confirmed as a breeder during the *Breeding Bird Atlas* work (1997–2000). Two or 3 Pine Grosbeaks on the O.C.T. 1 Jul (JD, TF) were the only report. Red Crossbills were present in good numbers in the Carson Range, *Washoe*, NV, but the only other Nevada report was of 3 birds at Mt. Moriah, *White Pine* 28 Jul (JE & SW). A black-backed Lesser Goldfinch at Oxbow Park, *Washoe*, NV 26 Jul (JEL) was interesting; this form is occasionally reported from our Region.

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# Arizona



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**T**he summer season saw good breeding productivity, which will likely help many species recover from the drought conditions of the past several years. By July, juveniles of many passerine species were being seen in good numbers. Although the season started at an above-average level of rainfall, our typical monsoon pattern dried up early, leaving vegetation browner than normal. The period was marked with several quality birds: Harlequin

Duck, Western Gull, and Tropical Parula all made only their second appearances in the state, while Eastern Wood-Pewee and Crescent-chested Warbler, two other accidentals, were also reported.

**Abbreviations:** A.B.C. (Arizona Bird Committee), A.V.S.T.P. (Avra Valley Waste Water Treatment Plant); H.R.P. (Hassayampa River Preserve); S.T.P. (sewage treatment plant); W.W.D. (Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area).

## GREBES THROUGH HAWKS

Although there was no sign of breeding, Eared Grebes were found in the southeast during Jul; 2 were at W.W.D. 6 Jul (PS, JM), and one was at Willcox 9 Jul (B&JS), with 3 present there 28 Jul (MMS). Western Grebes were noted away from known breeding areas in the state: one at Avra Valley S.T.P. 10 Jun (JH, JHi) and several, with one Clark's, at W.W.D. 1 Jun (SH). American White Pelicans are rarely found in the southeast, and it is even more unusual to find large concentrations there. This summer, 50–65 were counted at W.W.D. 22 Jun+ (m. ob.). Post-breeding subad. Brown Pelicans show up almost annually in the s.-cen. part of the state, especially along the lower Gila R. drainage; therefore, one found in sw. Phoenix 16 Jun (RD) was not unexpected, but another individual found at W.W.D. 6 Jul+ (PS, JM) was more unusual. The population of Neotropic Cormorants that has been present the past several years along the confluence of the Salt and Gila Rivers in e. *Maricopa* continued to flourish this summer, with as many as 40 seen 24 Jun (TC); although breeding has yet to be confirmed here, there is little doubt that it has taken place. Other reports away from Patagonia L. were of 6 at Arivaca L. 24 Jun (MMS) and an individual at Arizona City 20–23 Jul (TC et al.).

Least Bitterns were found away from previously known locations at Castle Rock in ne. Tucson 8 Jul (BN) and Safford 19 Jul (JW). From the Gulf of California, wandering imm. herons included a Tricolored at Reid Park, Tucson 8–21 Jul (SS, ph. MMS et al.), and a "calico" Little Blue at Safford 19 Jul (JW); both are still considered casual in the state. Of the many Cattle Egrets reported during the summer, reports of individuals carrying nesting material and of at least 3 "scruffy young" at a large heron rookery near Thatcher 17 & 19 Jul (BM, JW) were of particular interest and confirmed nesting at a new location in the state. Noteworthy White-faced Ibis reports included up to 6 sw. of Phoenix 23 Jun–7 Jul (TC, PM) and 3 on 6 Jul at W.W.D. (PS, JM); last year's

nesting colony along the Colorado R. remains the only breeding record for Arizona.

Casual during the summer away from known breeding areas, 3 Wood Ducks were at Kingfisher Pond 23 Jul (CDB). Gadwall breeding continued for the 2nd year at Nogales, where three family groups were reported at Palo Duro Cr. Golf Course pond 23 Jun–5 Jul (BW, MMS). Other lingering or early arriving ducks were 2 American Wigeon at Nogales 23 Jun (BW) and an individual at Reid Park 25 Jun (MMS), and 2 Northern Pintails at W.W.D. 16 Jul (SH). Ring-necked Ducks were observed at Willcox 1 Jun (SH) and at Tucson's Agua Caliente Park 9 Jun (JH, MMS), and a single Lesser Scaup was still at Phoenix 16 Jun (MC). Very exciting was Arizona's 2nd **Harlequin Duck**, which was found and remained along the Colorado R. in the Grand Canyon from 7–30 Jun+ (CL, M&HY). Interestingly enough, some observers attempted and were able to identify this bird from the rim of the canyon. Oh, what a good scope will do!

Ospreys in the s. are always of interest during the season; individuals were at Arivaca L. 16 Jun (JH, CS) and Willcox 18 Jun (GB). Very unusual and n. of known breeding sites, a single **Mississippi Kite** was observed at Flagstaff 21 Jun (TK), and a little s. and w. of there at Chino Valley, up to 4 were present, including 2 ad. and 2 imm. birds 1 Jun+ (EM, CST, RDU); both were the first local records. An extralimital Gray Hawk was away from favored habitat at Fort Bowie National Historic Site 29 Jul (SW), and the pair of Red-shouldered Hawks that nested at H.R.P. last year was once again present throughout the period. They apparently made another attempt at raising young, though to date we have received no reports as to their success (NL). A Sandhill Crane reported at Luna L. in mid-Jul (DT) was unusual.

## STILTS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

This appeared to have been a very good year for Black-necked Stilts; unusually high concentrations included 100 at Tucson 13 Jul (MMS) and 65 at the A.V.S.T.P. 17 Jul (MMS). A Semipalmated Plover at the A.V.S.T.P. 16 Jul (JH) was early. Migrant Willets are always of interest; 2 were at Willcox 1 Jun (SH) and another 2 at A.V.S.T.P. 5 Jul (MMS). The only Marbled Godwit reported was one at W.W.D. 27 Jul (MMS et al.). A rare fall transient, a single ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper was at the A.V.S.T.P. 21 Jul (CDB). Somewhat early, Stilt Sandpipers were one each at A.V.S.T.P. and Willcox, both 25 Jul (JH, GB). The only Short-billed Dowitcher of the season was at A.V.S.T.P. 13 Jul (JH). Early by about a month was the Common Snipe at Willcox 25 Jul (CDB, LB).

A casual wanderer from the Mexican coast, a Laughing Gull was at W.W.D. 26 Jul+ (RT, AC, NMC et al.). One of the best birds of the season was the state's 2nd **Western Gull** found at the Green Valley S.T.P. 4–15 Jul (ph. BS, MMS et al.). The only other state record is of an imm. bird at Parker Dam in Dec 1946. Unfortunately for many, the plant was closed and off-limits at the time, causing most birders to miss the third-year gull. As an aside, it seems probable that this bird was indeed the large dark-mantled gull seen flying over Tucson 24 Jun (DS). A casual transient, single Caspian Terns were reported sw. of Phoenix 24 Jun (TC) and in Gilbert 15 Jul (DC). Black Terns were found in average numbers, with singles at Nogales and at the Green Valley S.T.P. 16 Jul (MMS, RH, PS) and 2 present at W.W.D. 21 Jul (KK). Another larid of great interest this season was **Elegant Tern**: 2 different individuals were found, one at A.V.S.T.P. 18–29 Jul (RT, BB et al.; ph. GHR) and the other at W.W.D. 21 Jul (KK, NMC, AC, AM). The Avra Valley individual was found dead 31 Jul (MI, \*Univ. of Arizona). Still casual in the state, a Least Tern was discovered at W.W.D. 30 Jul (RP, BM). This is particularly interesting, as most of the state's records are from late spring or early summer.

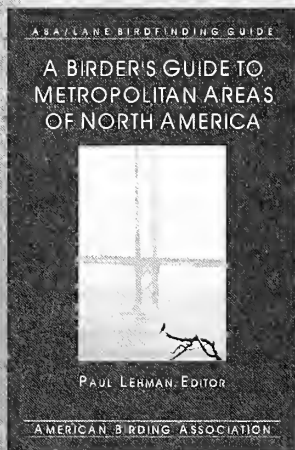
Eurasian Collared-Doves continued to be reported at previously known sites: Willcox, Sierra Vista, Palo Verde, and Cameron, with new reports coming from Thatcher (JW). A wandering Common Nighthawk was heard at Tucson 20 Jun (JB). Rare and irregular, a heard-only Buff-collared Nightjar was in Chino Canyon 16 Jul+ (DQ, J&RH). Always of interest, a White-eared Hummingbird nest with 3 young was discovered in Greenhouse Canyon in the Chiricahua Mts. 31 Jul (MS, RT), and Berylline Hummingbirds once again nested in Ramsey Canyon 28 Jun (MP, CC et al.). The hummer of the season was definitely the **Plain-capped Starthroat** found in French Joe Canyon 25 Jul+ (BS, MI, MMS, JB et al.). An extralimital Elegant Trogon was found 9 Jul in the Rincon Mts., which is the n. limit of the species's breeding range (RH<sub>a</sub>).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was seen and heard along the San Pedro R. at Fairbank 13 Jun (JM). If accepted by the A.B.C., this would be only the 8th state record. From year to year, the breeding range and number of individual Tropical Kingbirds seems to expand and contract in the state. This year was one of expansion. Nesting was documented in *Maricopa* for only the 2nd time when a pair raised a single fledgling at H.R.P. 30 Jun (JW), and on 28 Jul, an impressive 40 pairs were estimated along a

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15-mi section of the Santa Cruz R. between Tubac and Ruby Road (TC). This area is primarily privately owned and is known to contain the most persistent and largest breeding population in the state and country. Casual in Arizona, the *Maricopa* Scissor-tailed Flycatcher from last year seems to have returned to the Phoenix area again. This year it was found 10 Jul+ (SK, SG et al.).

Vagrant vireos were well represented this summer; a White-eyed was in Whitetail Canyon, Chiricahua Mts. 4 Jul (BB, RT); many people saw a Yellow-throated in Miller Canyon 24 Jun–5 Jul (JH, SG, audiotape CDB); a Yellow-green was found in Portal 14 Jul (DJ); and a Red-eyed was along Harshaw Cr. 20 Jul (RH, JLD, audiotape PD). All are either accidental or casual. Gray Catbirds were discovered in a couple of new *Apache* locations along Nutrioso Cr. 22 Jul and at the Wenima Wildlife Area (DR, GC).

The **Crescent-chested Warbler** first found at Bog Springs in Madera Canyon 24 May continued until at least 1 Jun (BM, MMS). This constitutes only the 5th state record. Northern Parula, a rare transient, was at Cave Cr. Canyon 24 Jun (CG). Perhaps the most exciting find of the season was the singing **Tropical Parula** that was in Miller Canyon 20 Jun–14 Jul (JB, MMS, BP, vt. GHR, audiotape CDB et al.). The bird's prominent black mask and broad white wing-bars make it likely to have been the expected w. Mexican race *nigrlora*. This was only the 2nd state record, the other record found under similar circumstances in Madera Canyon in 1984.

Other interesting warbler reports included a Yellow-throated 5 Jul in Casa Grande (NB); a Black-and-white at Rustler Park 19 Jun (BB); an American Redstart at Arivaca Cienega 6 Jul (NM, SJ et al.); and a Prothonotary in Cave Creek Canyon 15 Jul (CG). Four individual Ovenbirds were found this summer: at Canyon Creek, Mogollon Rim 3 Jun (TC), San Francisco Peaks 4 Jun (JG), French Joe Canyon 24 Jun (SC), and Tumacacori National Monument 7 Jul (one banded; WT). About normal, 2 Kentucky Warblers were reported, singles at Cave Creek Canyon 5 Jun (SW, CG) and Ash Canyon in the Huachuca Mts. 1 Jul (TC).

Three singing MacGillivray's Warblers, discovered in a previously unknown breeding location, were along Canyon Cr. on the Mogollon Rim 3 Jun (TC). A single Hooded Warbler was found at Whitetail Canyon 24 Jun (RT, CG), up to 2 were sw. of Prescott 1 Jun–7 Jul+ (CT), and another single was at Cave Springs 10 Jul (GR, TL). Red-faced Warbler was confirmed nesting for the first time in *Maricopa* at Slate Creek Divide 10 Jun (SG).

One or more Rufous-capped Warblers have been present in French Joe Canyon for several years now, and this year nesting was confirmed there when individuals were seen carrying nesting material on 14 Jun (NP, SH). The true picture of Flame-colored Tanager in Arizona is made very convoluted by the presence of so many birds that show characteristics of Western Tanager. Interesting and probable hybrid tanagers were once again the subjects of conversations in Arizona this year, with reports of such birds in Miller and Carr canyons. A bird thought to have been a pure Flame-colored Tanager was seen in Miller Canyon 11 Jul (JB, MMS et al.).

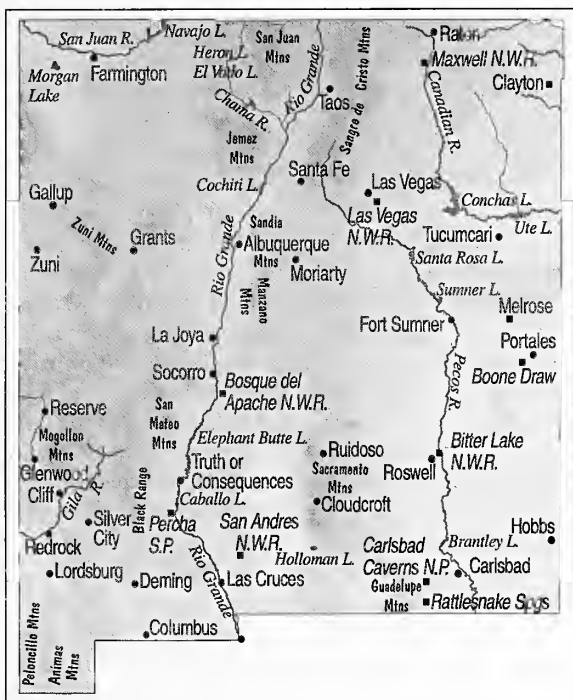
Late Green-tailed Towhees were individuals at Portal 19 Jun (NMC) and at Kingfisher Pond 14 Jun (SH). A rare transient, single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were at Phoenix 17 Jun (BG), Oak Creek Canyon 18 Jun (DH), and at Flagstaff 15 Jul (DH). Indigo Buntings were widely reported this summer, with the highest concentration being 15 individuals along the Santa Cruz R. near Tubac 28 Jul (TC). The status of Painted Bunting has certainly changed over the last decade. Previously all reports (a couple every fall) were heavily scrutinized as possible escaped cage birds from the Nogales area. This year, as an example, we received too many reports to list. Peak movements seemed to be during the last week of Jul. Rare during the summer in the southeast, flocks of Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at A.V.S.T.P. 30 Jun (MMS) and Willcox 9 Jul (B&JS).

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# New Mexico



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Summer 2001 was marked by widespread and relatively ample rainfall, especially during July. Breeding bird studies proceeded on several fronts, and a new nesting species was added to the state list.

**Abbreviations:** B.L.N.W.R. (Bitter Lake N.W.R.); Bosque (Bosque del Apache N.W.R.); E.B.L. (Elephant Butte L.); Maxwell (Maxwell N.W.R.); N.R.T. (n. Roosevelt migrant trap near Melrose); R.G.V. (Rio Grande Valley).

## LOONS THROUGH QUAIL

On the lingering loon front, 4 Commons were late at Conchas L. 2 Jun (JO); another Common remained at Maxwell all season (ph. DC). There was both good news and bad for Eared Grebes at Maxwell—57 nests were active at Lake 14 on 14 Jul, but these were all destroyed by rising reservoir levels 18 Jul (DC); 17 nests were elsewhere on the refuge 14 & 21 Jul (DC). In *Rio Arriba*, some 300 Eared Grebes were nesting at Dulce L. 22 Jul (BL), and 12 nests were at Stone L. 5–6 Jul (DS). Up to 12 Clark's Grebe nests were at Maxwell 17–

30 Jul (DC), where there was a single Western nest 30 Jun (DC). In *Rio Arriba*, Western Grebes abandoned the drying Stinking L., but there were 31 nests at Stone L. and young at both Enbom L. and Mundo L. 5–6 Jul (DS), plus 17 nests at Dulce L. 22 Jul (BL). Numbers of American White Pelicans increased noticeably in several areas by mid-Jun, suggesting possible breeding failures farther n.; notable were 75 at Maxwell 2 Jul (DC) and 43 at B.L.N.W.R. 6 Jul (GW). A Neotropic Cormorant strayed n. to Maxwell's Lake 12 on 9 Jul (vt. JO) and Stubblefield L. 14 Jul (vt. JO); another was on the Gila R. near Riverside 13 Jul (RSS).

No American Bitterns were reported, but one to 2 Least were at Tucumcari L. 15–16 Jun (JP) and Bosque 3 Jun (JO) and 15 Jul (PS). An imm. **Reddish Egret**—New Mexico's 12th—was at E.B.L. 29 Jun (vt. JO)—1 Jul (JP). White-faced Ibis nests irregularly in New Mexico; this season some 30 nests were active at Bosque 28 Jun (JO, J. Taylor). Adding to Roswell's reputation for strange encounters, 2 ad. **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** put in a brief appearance at a pond near the airport 1 Jul (SW). Providing a local first was a Wood Duck at Miami L. 25 Jun (DC). Mexican Ducks were much in evidence in the sw., including 180 at Lordsburg 23 Jul (SW, RW) plus broods at Tyrone 17 Jun (EL) and in the Animas Valley 5 Jun and 1 Jul (AC, NM-C).

Late was a pair of Ring-necked Ducks at Albuquerque 19 Jun (R. Yaksich). Hooded Mergansers nested successfully at Bosque, where there was a female with 2 young 17 Jun (JO), plus other young at two additional refuge locales 5 & 12 Jul (JO).

There was continued good news for Ospreys, as the number of known nesting pairs increased to nine, with eight in the Heron-El Vado area and one at Cochiti; this summer, eight of the pairs fledged 19 young (DS). Continuing another remarkable colonization story, a total of seven White-tailed Kite pairs was monitored in s. New Mexico, and three of them fledged 10 young May–Jun (RM); a single White-tailed was near Rodeo 29 Jun (vt. JO)—7 Jul (JP). Noteworthy Mississippi Kites were one circling over Madrid 20 Jun (LS) and a kettle of 25 at Texico 23 Jun (JO); w. to the R.G.V. were singles at Albuquerque 16 Jul (DH) and Los Lunas 1 Jul (BV). An ad. and a juv. Bald Eagle at Stubblefield L. 9–26 Jul (DC, JP, JO) suggested the presence of an undiscovered nest in that area; elsewhere in *Colfax*, the three known nests were successful (SOW). Summering Northern Harriers were singles in the s. Animas Valley 23 Jun (J. Paton) and at Deming 4 Jul (LM). A Common Black-Hawk was n. in the Pecos Valley to Santa Rosa Dam 22 Jun (B. Rowe); noteworthy was another in the Animas Valley at Clanton Cienega 8 Jun (SOW). Ferruginous Hawks are rare breeders in *Lea*, so noteworthy was one near Hobbs 23 Jun (DH). The pioneering **Aplomado Falcon** pair in s. New Mexico, present since Oct, renested in late May, but the nest and eggs were abandoned by 4 Jun (RM). Among the several Montezuma Quail reports was a nest with eggs s. of Guadalupe Canyon 22 Jul (AC, NM-C).

## PLOVERS THROUGH CUCKOOS

Late was an American Golden-Plover at B.L.N.W.R. 8 Jun (GW). Snowy Plovers at B.L.N.W.R. peaked with 399 on 29 Jun and 402 on 27 Jul (GW), but Holloman L. could muster only 12 on 13 Jul (GE); peripheral were 2 at Maxwell 14 Jul (JP, JO) and one at Brantley L. 22 Jul (JO). Among the very few Mountain Plover reports were 3 in the n. San Luis Valley on the *Rio Arriba-Taos* line 16 Jun (JO) and a breeding group of 9 ads. near White Lakes, *Santa Fe*, where there were single chicks 12 & 28 Jun and 9 Jul (BL).

High count for American Avocets was 531 at B.L.N.W.R. 27 Jul (GW). Unexpected in *DeBaca* in summer, a pair of Spotted Sandpipers was suspected of nesting at Summer L. 6 Jun (WH). Long-billed Curlews were prevalent in ne. prairies, including highs of 17 at Springer 26 Jun (DC) and 13 at Floyd

24 Jun (SS); in *Santa Fe*, small colonies of up to 8 ads. each were discovered at White Lakes and near Stanley, and chicks were noted at both sites in Jul (BL). Unseasonal were 2 Marbled Godwits at B.L.N.W.R. 29 Jun (GW). Stubblefield L. yielded a Semipalmated Sandpiper 14 Jul (JP, JO), a Sanderling 24 Jul (DC), and 300 Baird's Sandpipers 28 Jul (DC). High count for White-rumped Sandpipers was 31 at B.L.N.W.R 1 Jun (GW); last of the northbound White-rumpeds were 2 there 15 Jun (GW). High counts for southbound Stilt Sandpipers were 53 at Stubblefield L. 26 Jul (DC), 156 at B.L.N.W.R. 27 Jul (GW), and 25 at Roswell 25 Jul (DM). The status of Short-billed Dowitcher in New Mexico is very poorly understood, and entirely undetailed reports of small flocks of the species this Jul did nothing to further our understanding. A Common Snipe in the Valle Grande, Jemez Mts. 28 Jun (SF) was suggestive of local breeding. Late were 2 Red-necked Phalaropes at B.L.N.W.R 1 Jun (GW). A **Red Phalarope** at Springer L. 15 & 18 Jun (ph. DC) was a nice surprise. Summering but non-nesting California Gulls included 15 at Eagle Nest L. 9 Jul (JO) and 3–5 at E.B.L. 6 Jun–1 Jul (WW, JO, JP). The state's 2nd **Elegant Tern** followed the first by barely two months: one at Farmington 18 Jul (ph. T. Reeves) provided one of a handful of records of the species away from the Pacific coast and California. A Forster's Tern lingered at B.L.N.W.R. 8–22 Jun (GW); early was a Forster's at Springer L. 2 Jul (DC). The Endangered Least Tern population at B.L.N.W.R. increased to 11 pairs this season, but only 9 young fledged (JM). A **Black Skimmer** at B.L.N.W.R. 10–11 Jun (JM et al., ph. JO, ph. WH) furnished the state's 3rd definite and 4th overall record.

A Band-tailed Pigeon strayed to B.L.N.W.R. 6 Jun (ph. GW); 3 near Madrid 5 Jul (LS) provided a local first. Reports of Eurasian Collared-Doves continued to proliferate from the R.G.V. eastward; relentlessly pushing w. were singles at Bloomfield 8 Jul (ph. JO), Gallup 15 Jul (ph. JO), and San Rafael 15 Jul (JO), plus 2–3 at Cuba 8 Jul (ph. JO) and a nest at Silver City that fledged 2 young by 29 Jul (RSS). Single Common Ground-Doves were in the Cliff-Gila Valley 28 Jun (HAW), the middle Animas Valley 2 Jul (SOW, PM), and Guadalupe Canyon 3 Jul (JO, NM-C). Yellow-billed Cuckoos continued to thrive in New Mexico, with often multiple reports from 25 locales nearly statewide Jun–Jul, including n. to the Chama, Cimarron, Canadian, and Tecolote drainages, in the Pecos Valley from Sumner Dam to

B.L.N.W.R and w. to Hondo, in the e. plains at N.R.T. and Hobbs, and in the R.G.V. from Española to Raduim Springs; in the sw., multiple pairs and/or nests were in the San Francisco, Gila, and Mimbres valleys, plus singles in the Animas Valley and Guadalupe Canyon (m. ob.).

## OWLS THROUGH VIREOS

Outlying Elf Owls were singles in *Sierra* at Lake Valley 6 Jun (WW) and Las Animas Cr. 12 Jul (ph. JO) and in *Eddy* at Rocky Arroyo 23 Jun (SW, RW). Unexpected was a **Short-eared Owl** near Bueyeros 16 Jun (K. Granillo); although not known to nest in New Mexico, this was the 2nd consecutive summer in which the species has been reported in Jun in the east. Chimney Swift was added to the list of New Mexico breeding species when some were discovered entering a Carlsbad chimney; the site was investigated 16 Jul, revealing egg shells and a recently-used swift nest (SW, R. Wiedenmann, B. Neiman). A female **White-eared Hummingbird** was in the Animas Mts. 15 Jun (AC, NM-C), the first for that range since 1995. Single male Blue-throated Hummingbirds strayed n. to Raton 14 Jul (JP, JO) and e. to Six Mile Dam, *Eddy* 21 Jun (SW); a likely Magnificent was at Cloudcroft 15 Jun (WH). A female Lucifer was gathering nest material in P. O. Canyon 31 Jul (JD-M, RTS), while single migrant Anna's reached Albuquerque 9 Jul (PS), P. O. Canyon 25 Jul (JD-M, RTS), and Las Cruces 25 Jul (GE). A *Calypte* hummer that may have been a Costa's was at Deming 13–14 Jul (LM); there are no previous *Luna* reports. Barely a year after the first **Allen's Hummingbird** was confirmed in New Mexico, 2 others were captured and banded at Trout Cr., *Grant*—an ad. female 13 Jul and an ad. male 18 Jul (W. Calder).

Three Lewis's Woodpeckers persisted s. to Los Lunas 1 Jul (BV). Among the very few reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers was one at B.L.N.W.R. 1 Jun (GW). Perhaps benefiting from recent fires, Three-toed Woodpeckers were much in evidence in n. New Mexico, including 3 near Los Alamos 17 Jun (JO) and 2 at Bandelier 10 Jun (JT), plus others in the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo ranges; a pair was feeding nestlings on Oso Ridge, Zuni Mts. 18 & 23 Jun (D. Arsenault). A female Yellow-shafted Flicker was at Clovis 23 Jun (JO).

For the 2nd consecutive year, Dusky Flycatchers summered s. to the Sacramento Mts. near Cloudcroft, with two pairs plus a male there 17 Jun (WH); another Dusky was

singing in the Black Range n. of Kingston 4 Jun (WW). Eastern Phoebes in possible breeding areas included one near Grenville 14 Jun (KS), 2 near Rociada, *San Miguel* 15 Jul (LS), and one singing at Las Vegas N.W.R. 14 Jun (audiotape SF); early for the sw. was one near Riverside 19 Jul (RSS). Vermilion Flycatchers at their n. periphery were single males in *Sandoval* in Jun (HAW) and near Pastura, *Guadalupe* 6 Jun (WH). A vocal Dusky-capped Flycatcher was n. to the Pinos Altos Mts. 1 Jul (WH); a Brown-crested was e. to Las Animas Cr. 6 Jun (WW). A Thick-billed Kingbird wandered ne. to Double Adobes, Animas Mts. 5 Jun (AC, NM-C). Unusual at 7700 ft was a Western Kingbird near Bluff Springs, Sacramento Mts. 14 Jul (SW). Eastern Kingbirds in the R.G.V. included a nest at Española 24 Jun (BV) and ads. tending a fledgling at Cochiti Pueblo 19 Jul (HAW).

White-eyed Vireos continued to tantalize, including a singing male at N.R.T. 2 Jun (JP, vt. JO) and another near Cliff 12 & 29 Jun (HDW); most intriguing were 2–3 at Cochiti Pueblo 5 & 10 Jul (DH et al.), one of which may have been a fledgling. Gray Vireos were unusually well represented around the state, including one to 7 on six B.B.S. routes; others of note included a pair near Madrid 2 Jun (LS), 12 territories n. of Bingham, *Socorro* 3–13 Jul (NC), 3 territories near Ladron Peak 11 Jul (NC), and an ad. feeding a fledgling in Guadalupe Canyon 3 Jul (NM-C). For the 2nd consecutive year, a Bell's Vireo was on the Mimbres R., *Luna* 30 Jun (JO). Late was a Cassin's Vireo at Clanton Cienega 5 Jun (AC, NM-C). Single Red-eyeds were at N.R.T. 2 Jun (JP, JO) and Mimbres R., *Grant* 3 Jul (HDW).

## JAYS THROUGH WARBLERS

Far e. were 5 Pinyon Jays at Ragland 2 Jun (JO). A resourceful Clark's Nutcracker captured and carried away a young Yellow-rumped Warbler at Elk Mt. 5 Jul (BL); noteworthy for summer was a Clark's at Sandia Crest 9 Jun (DE, BN). Purple Martins nested n. to *Colfax* for only the 2nd time, with 3–4 successful nests in the Sangre de Cristo Mts. at Vermejo Ranch 6 Jul (ph. DC). Bank Swallows tend to be a forgotten riparian species; encouraging this season were about 15 pairs nesting at San Juan Pueblo 15 Jun (vt. JO). North in the R.G.V. was an active Verdin nest at Sevilleta N.W.R. 15 Jul (WH). Likely providing local firsts were a pair of House Wrens plus a singing Ruby-crowned Kinglet in the Gallinas Mts. near Corona 15 Jun (HS). Noteworthy were 4 Black-tailed

Gnatcatchers near Engle, *Sierra* 4 Jul (J. Atchley); in the sw., 2 Black-taileds were at San Simon Cienega 7 Jul (JP) and 4, including a fledgling, were s. of Guadalupe Canyon 22 Jul (AC, NM-C).

A Townsend's Solitaire was at Gallinas Peak 15 Jul (HS); the species is irregular in summer in that isolated range. Only 2 Veeries were detected at Chama, one 9 Jun (JP, JO) and another 8 Jul (JO); a migrant was heard at N.R.T. 3 Jun (JO). At least 4 Swainson's Thrushes were singing at Chama 9 Jun (JP, JO). The **Wood Thrush** at N.R.T. in late May was last seen 3 Jun (JO). A Long-billed Thrasher was singing at Bosque Redondo 2–3 Jun (JP, vt. JO), where one has been present since 1997. Bendire's Thrashers exist in small, local populations in the w. two-thirds of New Mexico; one such is in the e. Bear Mts., *Socorro*, where there were 2 on 1–2 Jun (HS). Curve-billed Thrashers continued their population explosion at Eldorado near Santa Fe, where 25 of 41 pairs produced 2nd broods in Jun and 19 pairs had initiated 3rd nesting attempts in Jul (DS). Noteworthy was an American Pipit above timberline on Buck Mt., *Lincoln* 1 Jul (SW). Two Cedar Waxwings at Zuni 7 Jun (ph. DC) furnished the only summer report. Olive Warblers, unknown in *Socorro* prior to 1998, were again in evidence in the San Mateo Mts., including a nest at San Mateo Spring that produced fledglings by 27 Jun (HS).

A possible Golden-winged Warbler was heard singing at Lake Valley 17 Jun (S. Downes). Among the several e. strays was a well-documented Chestnut-sided Warbler singing at Bandelier 3–10 Jun (audiotape SF; JT); another Chestnut-sided was w. to the Cliff-Gila Valley 25 Jun (HDW). Noteworthy for summer were single Black-and-whites at Cochiti Pueblo 28 Jun–31 Jul (DH), Embudito Canyon, *Bernalillo* 17 Jun (BV), and the Cliff-Gila Valley 25 Jul (HDW), an American Redstart at Bluff Springs 13 Jul (GE), and a Prothonotary at Sevilleta N.W.R. 8 Jun (WH). Reported late was a singing Ovenbird at Cochiti Canyon 31 May (WW); another was singing along an Albuquerque ditch 28 Jun (DM). An impressive season for **Kentucky Warblers** found singles at N.R.T. 1 Jun (JO), Coyote Creek S.P. 22 Jun (PS, CR), Cochiti Pueblo 19 Jul (HAW), and Escondida 19 Jun (J. DeLong). Hooded Warblers in potential breeding habitat were singing males at Cochiti Pueblo Jun–Jul (DH), Mimbres R. near San Lorenzo 29 Jun & 3 Jul (WH, HDW), and Gila R. near Riverside 8 & 22 Jun and 2 Jul (RSS), plus a female at nearby Cliff 22 Jun (G. Sadoti). Unusual for summer was

an imm. Painted Redstart near Riverside 22 Jun (RSS).

### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Summer Tanagers in unexpected locales included 2 near Conchas L. 2 Jun (JO) and singles at N.R.T. 10 Jun (JO) and Tinnie 22 Jul (JO). Unexpected in summer in the Gallinas Mts. was a Green-tailed Towhee 15 Jun (HS). Cassin's Sparrows were conspicuous w. of their core range, including 5 at Eldorado 7 Jun (DS), 5 near Cerrillos 17 Jun (BF), 7 near Cerro Verde, *Cibola* 30 Jun (DM), one at Petroglyph N.M. 24 Jun & 8 Jul (HS, PS), 51 near Escondida 22 Jun (HS), and 5 in the San Agustin Plains 4 Jul (JO); in the sw., 19 were near Antelope Wells 10 Jun (SOW). Botteri's Sparrows showed signs of recovery from last year's Animas Valley fire, with 29 territories (but only 7 in or near burned areas) plus a nest with eggs 1–3 Jul (SOW, PM, Z. Jones). Noteworthy was a Rufous-crowned Sparrow pair with fledglings near Madrid 18 Jun (LS). E. of the known breeding range were 6 Brewer's Sparrows in saltbush at Maxwell 2 Jul (DC). Early greenup of the ne. prairies in *Colfax*, *Union*, *Mora*, *Harding*, and *San Miguel* proved irresistible to Lark Buntings, and many hundreds stayed to nest where in some years there are none; highs included 139 at Farley 3 Jun (SOW) and 203 at Grenville 14 Jun (KS); s. were one near Pastura 6 Jun (WH) and 2 near Fort Sumner 1 Jun (SOW).

Seven Savannah Sparrows were singing in the Valle Grande 28 Jun (SF), where first detected summering only last year. Unseasonal was a white-lored ad. White-crowned Sparrow at Capulin Spring, Sandia Mts. 21 Jun (GM). Continuing a trend, a Northern Cardinal was n. to Tucumcari 2 Jun (JO); 2 Pyrrhuloxias were e. of the Florida Mts. 1 Jun (LM), where rarely reported. Late was a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Moriarty 10 Jun (BV). Northerly Indigo Buntings included singles at Petaca, *Rio Arriba* 16 Jun (JO) and Sugarite S.P., *Colfax* 2 Jun (DC). A good Varied Bunting season found five territories in Guadalupe Canyon 10–11 Jun (SOW), 6 individuals (including a fledgling) s. of Guadalupe Canyon 22 Jul (AC, NM-C), and 2 pairs in Walnut Canyon, *Eddy* 9 Jul (SW). N. in the Pecos Valley was a singing Painted Bunting at Sumner Dam 6 Jun (WH); in the lower R.G.V., a Painted pair was at La Mesa 17 Jun–28 Jul (MS, ph. JZ). Dickcissel reports in areas where rarely reported came from Springer L. 14 Jul (one or 2; JP, JO) and Las Vegas N.W.R. 21 Jul (2 birds; audiotape SF).

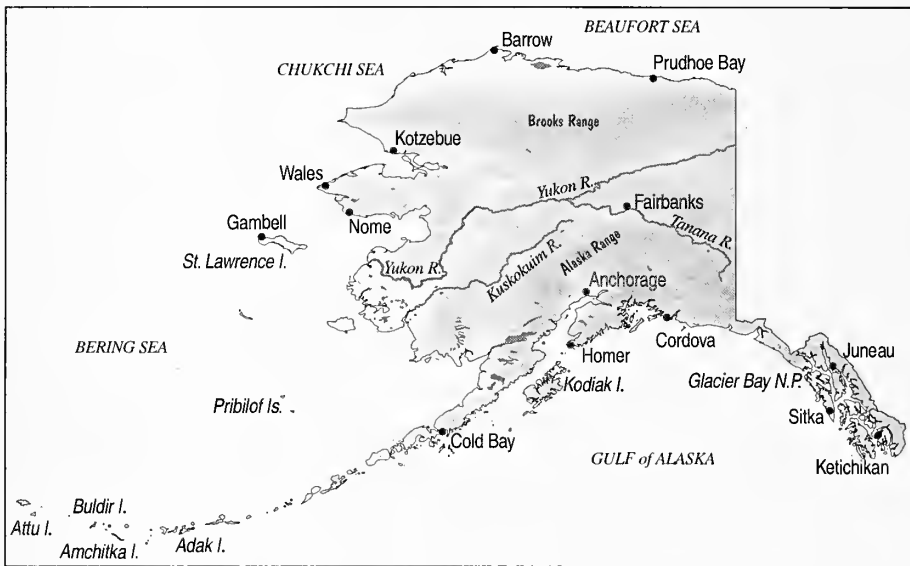
Eastern Meadowlarks are common breeders in s. New Mexico and, in recent years, have been appearing with increasing frequency in the n.; unexpected, however, were 26 singing in the Jemez Mts. at 8500 ft in the Valle Grande 28 Jun (audiotape SF). Noteworthy were 6 ad. Brewer's Blackbirds with 9 fledglings in the Sandia Mts. at Madera 20 Jun (R. Gracey, *fide* HS). Common Grackles continued to expand westward, with 8 (including fledglings) at Gallup 14 Jul (vt. JO), plus 2 at nearby Red Rock S.P. (JO) and one at Fort Wingate (vt. JO) the same day. More evidence of northward-moving Bronzed Cowbirds was provided by 2 males (one collected) at B.L.N.W.R. 2 Jun (GW) and another near there 12 Jun (WH), plus a female at Conchas L. 2 Jun (vt. JO), the latter a *San Miguel* first. Orchard Orioles n. of usual were a pair at Fort Sumner 3 Jun (JO) and one there 17 Jul (WW), a male near Clovis 23 Jun (JO), and another singing near Roswell 12 Jun (WH).

Among the very few Cassin's Finch reports were one at Capulin Spring 21 Jun (GM) and 2 near Sandia Crest 11 Jul (PS). Providing a treat for many were up to 5 **White-winged Crossbills** at the Santa Fe Ski Basin. First found 15 Jul (MM), they remained through the month (m. ob., vt. JO). Singing plus apparent courtship feeding suggested that they were initiating nesting. Red Crossbills were widespread and relatively numerous in most major mountain ranges statewide. The only American Goldfinches were 2 at Chama 9 Jun (JP). Only small numbers of Evening Grosbeaks were noted, these restricted to the Sangre de Cristo, Jemez, and Sacramento ranges.

**Cited Observers:** David Cleary, Nancy Cox, Alan Craig, Joan Day-Martin, Douglas Emkalns, Gordon Ewing, Stephen Fettig, Bernard Foy, David Hawksworth, William Howe, Eugene Lewis, Brian Long, Martin MacRoberts, Larry Malone, Patricia Mehlhop, David Mehlman, Raymond Meyer, Gale Monson, James Montgomery, Narca Moore-Craig, Bruce Neville, Jerry Oldenettel, John Parmeter, Christopher Rustay, Lawry Sager, Robert T. Scholes, Hart Schwarz, Marcy Scott, Kenneth Seyffert, Roland S. Shook, Patricia Snider, Dale Stahlecker, Scott Stoleson, Joyce Takamine, Brad Vaughn, Hira A. Walker, Gordon Warrick, Renee West, Steve West, William West, S. O. Williams, Hope D. Woodward, James Zabriskie.



# Alaska



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June 2001 surprised everyone with an abrupt weather turnaround from May, which had been unseasonably cold, held up breeding, and caused local nesting failures across the western half of the Region. Although spring migrants arrived mostly within their average dates of arrival, partial egg-laying and wholesale departures from nesting areas were fairly common occurrences, especially along the west coast and in the alpine zone. Seward Peninsula observers described alpine conditions as two weeks late and the season was felt by many to be one of the latest ever. But literally by 5 June, high pressure engulfed the Region for essentially a month. Coastal and alpine tundra shorebirds attempted to renest or finish earlier egg-laying with marginal success. Elsewhere observers either did not summarize breeding success, or deemed nesting to be about average. July quickly reversed June's warm dry theme and contributed a solid month of cool rainy conditions across the Region. Field surveys in western coastal mountains and in southern Southeast produced numerous interesting and local first nesting finds.

**Abbreviations:** A.B.O. (Alaska Bird Observatory); N.P.S. (National Park Service); P.W.S. (Prince William Sound); S.E. (Southeast

Alaska); S.C. (South-coastal Alaska); U.C.I. (Upper Cook Inlet). Referenced details (+), specimens (\*), photographs (ph.), and videotape (vt.) are on file at the University of Alaska Museum. *Italicized place names* denote especially unusual locations for the noted species.

## LOONS THROUGH RAILS

The usual handful of Arctic Loon reports came from the vicinity of Nome in the first half of Jun (m. ob.). Three described from nesting habitat at Alikotngnak L. 1 Jul (RM) along the lower Noatak R. inland and n. of Kotzebue were more unusual and perhaps suspect as nesting pioneers.

Notable shelf-edge Mottled Petrel reports included 3 e. of Kodiak 4 Jul and a single farther w. in Shelikof Strait near the Shumagin Is. 5 Jul (TH, JH). In a repeat of last summer's reports (q.v.), Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels again were drawn away from the open sea to a food source well up S.E.'s Lynn Canal, starting with 2 on 1 Jul and building to an early Aug peak of 330+ (AD). Extending a 1990s trend of apparent expansion into the s. Bering Sea was an ad. Double-crested Cormorant near Nome's Safety Sound 6–7 Jun (VENT), Alaska's northernmost record. Recent finds of nesting pairs on Nunivak I. and n. at Cape Romanzof had earlier extended the species's range considerably into the Bering Sea and n. of traditional Alaska Pen. Sites. At least one Double-crested also loafed in fresh water in Anchorage 18 Jun–12 Jul+ (m. ob.), where casual in summer, while another ventured n. of the Alaska Range to

Northway lakes 1 Jun (KWL), where accidental. Single extralimital Great Blue Herons also crossed into the Interior, along the Chisana R. e. of Tok 5 Jun (KWL), and from the Chatanika R. n. of Fairbanks 11 Jun (*fide* A.B.O.). Great Blues are casual n. of the Alaska Range.

As noted in the past few summers, imm. Brant spent portions of the season at scattered coastal sites from Juneau, Cook Inlet, and along the Bering Sea coast. A single along the Alaska Hwy. e. of Tok 11 Jun (KWL) was noted out of range and on an odd date. Four Brant from the Nome area 4–5 Jun (VENT) were described by the observers as being of the subspecies *hrota*. A single *hrota* specimen does exist from Alaska, a Jun bird from Wales, and there are occasional (mostly Jun) reports of pale-bellied individuals from the Bering Sea coast. Of the handful of normal early-season Eurasian Wigeon reports, a drake near Prudhoe Bay 11 Jun (KJB) was of greatest interest, as this species is accidental on Alaska's North Slope. Surprisingly rare in summer off the S.E. mainland, a Mallard brood noted in Ketchikan 28 Jul (AWP) was also a first local breeding confirmation. The handful of other summer waterfowl highlights included a drake Blue-winged Teal at Prudhoe Bay 15 Jun (KJB), where rare and not annual, an unusual single group of 179 presumably loafing nonbreeding Northern Shovelers at the Alaska-Canada Border ponds 29 Jun (AD), 4 Common Mergansers near Prudhoe Bay 26 Jul (KJB), where casual for the North Slope, and only a single Ruddy Duck, a drake n. of Fairbanks in the Yukon Flats N.W.R. 10–19 Jun (DS, AS).

Perhaps indicative of reported poor breeding success across most of w. Alaska, mostly female Common Eiders were concentrating in nearshore waters off the Seward Pen.'s n. side near Cape Douglas by the end of Jun (e.g., 400 on 26 Jun; RM). In more typical breeding seasons, even nonbreeding females remain on the breeding grounds with broods. S.E. scoter concentrations, likely failed breeders and itinerant imm., were drawn this year to food sources on the e. shores of Admiralty I. 10–12 Jul + (AWP), highlighted by peaks of 2700+ Surfs and 1000+ White-wingeds. Each year, Surf and White-winged Scoters regularly leave breeding areas and reconvene at food-rich stage sites where they may remain to molt, or depart later for separate molting areas.

A Bald Eagle wandered onto the North Slope tundra near Prudhoe Bay 3 Jul (KJB) where they are occasional but not annual in mid-summer. Helicopter pilots and then birders refound the "resident" Steller's Sea-



**Eagle** along its favored stretch of Taku R. near Juneau between mid-Jun and 31 Jul (*fide* SZ), where it has been seen periodically since the mid-1980s. Another Swainson's Hawk appeared in the Northway area, possibly a local breeder, 27 Jun (†AD). Most summer reports of this very local and scarce breeder originate in the e. and n. Delta Range foothills. Only slightly more regular away from North Slope riparian forest patches was a single American Kestrel also at Prudhoe 12 Jul (KDB). Soras made a good showing within the regular summer range: 2 were present all season at Gustavus near Glacier Bay NM (BP) and up to 3 in the Haines area's 25-mile marsh 17 Jun+ (AD). A single Sora was farther afield, calling from a Palmer sedge marsh 26 Jun–13 Jul+ (HG, NS). Soras remain casual basically anywhere away from annual haunts from Mainland S.E. and e. Interior lakes and sloughs.

## PLOVERS THROUGH DOVES

Always uncommon, irregular and local within its Alaska range, Killdeer made news at several sites, with a first nesting documented in the Ketchikan area, where a half-grown chick carcass turned up 1 Jul (SCH\*), and in Anchorage, where an active nest was located 7 Jun (RLS). Singles were reported at several sites between Palmer and Anchorage, with at least 5 seen in Jun. More unlikely was an overshoot Killdeer on the Bering Sea coast, where casual (mostly in Jun), at the Kotzebue airport 7 Jun (RH, ZH).

N.P.S. field survey crews in the Cape Krusenstern-W. Noatak conservation units 1–10 Jun focused in the Delong Mts., turning up interesting territorial shorebirds mostly at the periphery or beyond known nesting areas (REG, LT), highlighted by 10 Upland Sandpipers in the Noatak R. valley within 110 km of the Bering Sea coast 1 Jun, a single displaying Hudsonian Godwit in the lower Noatak in early Jun, 2 Buff-breasted Sandpiper leks, 7 birds total, 3 Jun about 8 mi. of Krusenstern Lagoon, and territorial Surf-birds. Although Buff-breasted are rare spring overshoots to the Bering Sea coast, mostly n. of Nome, this is the first definitive nesting evidence w. of known sites near Barrow. The few other summer shorebird highlights included up to 16 southbound Hudsonian Godwits in Juneau 9–15 Jul (PS, BA), a single Bar-tailed there 4 Jul (PS, GVV), and a handsome Ruff 19 Jun at Prudhoe Bay (BPG, KDB, KJB, RMF), where there are several Jun records. Jul high tides in Anchorage produced unprecedented Semipalmated Plover staging concentrations, with 800+ estimated near Ship Creek 22 Jul

(TT). While doing surveys in the Yukon Flats N.W.R., an A.B.O. biologist discovered Alaska's first **Wilson's Phalarope** nest 22 Jun (LD), while the extreme Jul Anchorage tides produced 2 juv. Wilson's 22 Jul (TT), U.C.I.'s 2nd record of juvs. Wilson's Phalarope may have nested in the nearby Eagle R. estuary in the late 1980s.

As is typical in summer, noteworthy gull reports spanned the Region and included overshoots, late migrants, and early fall arrivals. Larid highlights included a rare North Slope Bonaparte's Gull at Prudhoe Bay 1 Jul (KJB), another photo-documented Gambell **Black-tailed Gull**, a second-summer bird 9 Jun (vt. LS), a convincing ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull in the Prudhoe dump 28 Jun–4 Jul (ph. KJB ph.; awaiting additional review), presumably the same second-summer Slaty-backed Gull in the Kenai R. vicinity 2 Jun–18 Jul (KJB), an inshore Sabine's Gull at *Ketchikan* 3 Jun (AWP; casual in S.E.), a new U.C.I. high count of 31 Black-legged Kittiwakes in Anchorage 5 Jun (TT, LJO), where casual, and lots of late nw. coast Ross's Gulls, with up to 17 counted near Wales 9 Jun (PJB, JH, JS) and up to 9 in Barrow 16–19 Jun (VENT, MB). Ross's Gulls are casual at best on the Bering Sea shores in spring. Several Mew Gull pairs attempted to nest near Ketchikan on snags in a flooded reservoir, where two certain nests were followed 6 May–10 Jun (SCH, AWP). The closest S.E. confirmed nesting areas are well to the n. near Petersburg. Caspian Terns were quiet away from P.W.S., with up to 4 in Juneau 17 Jun–15 Jul (PS, BA) and another 2 in Homer 11–12 Jul (TH, JH), the only ones reported. Up to 4 Dovekies were spotted offshore at St. Lawrence I.'s East Cape 3–4 Jul (†PB), where they are unknown. Small Dovekie numbers have traditionally been reported around n. Bering Sea auklet colonies but annually only from the w. side of St. Lawrence I.

## DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

A Mourning Dove in Juneau 4 Jul (PS, GVV) was one of few summer reports of this otherwise occasional fall migrant. It was a quiet summer for owls, with the calling Northern Pygmy-Owl from Ketchikan 19 Jul (AWP), a first local summer record, making the only real news. Common Nighthawks were once again on territories in the Chilkat Valley out of Haines, with at least 3 on the Kellsall R. bars 19 Jul (AD), where several have been noted for the past three years. Few observers comment on Black Swifts, which are actually rather rare and local in s. S.E., so a report of 25 noted over the Marten R. in Misty Fiords N.M. 21–23 Jun (AWP) was most interesting and in classic

riparian cliff habitat.

A.B.O. field surveys produced an active (and later successful) **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** nest s. of Fairbanks in the Bonanza Cr. Forests 31 May+ (A.B.O., AMB); this was significantly w. of the Region's two previous nests, located between Tok and the Canadian border. Extralimital Olive-sided Flycatchers roamed out of the taiga to coastal tundra sites, where they are casual, with singles at Prudhoe Bay 12 Jun (DMT) and in the Kotzebue area 14 & 30 Jun (RH, ZH, RM). Casual s. of the Alaska Range, U.C.I.'s 3rd Hammond's Flycatcher was calling from birch woods near Peters Cr. 2 Jun (BM). The season's obligatory Eastern Kingbird ended up at the mouth of the Chilkat Valley near Haines 4–10 Jul (CA, AD). A few Easterns turn up each summer somewhere on S.E.'s Mainland river corridors. Hot on the heels of U.C.I.'s first-ever from two years ago, and the summer's only report, another **Cassin's Vireo** set up territory in the Anchorage area 30 May–23 Jun+ (*fide* RLS et al.). As is often the case in summer, swallows turned up at the Region's coastal periphery, highlighted by a single Bank Swallow 6 Jun (BPG), 2 Cliff Swallows 26 Jun (KDB, RMF), and a Palearctic Barn Swallow 3 Jul (KJB), all at Prudhoe Bay, where all are casual. Another white-bellied Barn Swallow showed up at Gambell 9 Jun (ph. LS), where there are a handful of spring records. Always noteworthy, Rough-winged Swallows nested at Mitkof I. 9 Jun+ (AWP) and in Ketchikan 10 Jun–15 Jul (AWP, SCH). Unusual offshore in S.E., where they are local and scarce, were single Red-breasted Nuthatches in Ketchikan 19 & 23 Jul (SCH), local summer firsts.

Especially after a poor spring showing, a male Siberian Rubythroat skulking around shrubs at East Cape on St. Lawrence I. 12 Jul (†PB) was more than a little surprising, and certainly without precedent. There may be only one previous Bering Sea record for Jul. Prudhoe Bay was also a source for extraordinary thrush discoveries, including a male Mountain Bluebird 5 Jun (RMF, DMT, RSK, KJB), accidental for the North Slope, and a first Beaufort Sea Townsend's Solitaire on the Endicott causeway rocks 5 Jul (KJB, RMF, BPG, DMT). Casual in s. S.E. and a local first, another tidewater Gray-checked Thrush was found singing near Ketchikan's Ward L. 24 Jun (†SCH, JM). Gray-cheekeds are occasionally found along S.E. mainland riparian corridors, mostly in early Jun and n. of the Stikine R. Anchorage's Northern Mockingbird, present since summer 1998, reappeared downtown 17 Jun (m. ob.) after a six-month hiatus. Of the few White Wagtail reports from the Seward

Pen., a male near MP 38 on the Council Rd. 7 Jun (VENT) e. and inland of Nome was most unusual and away from normal coastal sites. Heint found another singing **House Finch** in Ketchikan 11 Jun (†SCH), a local 2nd and the Region's 3rd ever.

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# British Columbia–Yukon



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The summer season saw many species exhibiting range expansions, particularly northward and westward, among them Great Egret, Canyon Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Tennessee Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, and Blue Jay. Some species seemed to be displaced due to prairie drought conditions, e. g., Franklin's Gull and Swainson's Hawk. Other conditions may have prohibited breeding, thus accounting for the large concentration of Long-billed Curlews in the central interior. A healthy number of outstanding rarities included

Magnificent Frigatebird, British Columbia's first Whiskered Auklet, Sprague's Pipit, Dickcissel, and Great-tailed Grackle.

**Abbreviations:** B.C.F.O. (British Columbia Field Ornithologists), Chichester (Chichester Bird Sanctuary, Kelowna), C.I.P. (Cottonwood Island Park, P.G.), F.F.T.W. (Forests for the World, P.G.), F.S.J. (Fort St. James), P.G. (Prince George), Q.C.I. (Queen Charlotte Is.), R.P.B.O. (Rocky Point Bird Observatory s. Vancouver I.), U.N.B.C. (University of Northern British Columbia), Whse. (Whitehorse, Yukon).

## LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

The only interior report of Yellow-billed Loon

was an ad. 7 Jun (RS) on Ross L. near New Hazelton. Clark's Grebes returned to Salmon Arm, where one of 2 birds was paired with a Western Grebe 2 Jun (RyT) and remained through the period. A female **Magnificent Frigatebird** was sighted from a whale-watching boat out of Tofino 18 Jun (MW). A recently-fledged juv. American Bittern was brought in to P.G.'s Northern Raptor Preservation Society's bird hospital 18 Jul (ph. CM, RM) but unfortunately died a few days later. Great Egrets continue to occur with greater regularity in the s. third of the province, where they are seen annually. Sightings are most numerous for late Apr to mid-May, suggestive of spring overshoots, whereas post-breeding dispersal produces a scattering of sightings mainly from Aug–Dec. This summer, however, produced an unusual number of egrets and from a variety of locations. It should be interesting to see if this is indicative of a larger post-breeding dispersal for the coming fall season. Single birds were reported from Scout I., Williams L. 24 Jun+ (PR, m. ob.); Mt. Lehman, Abbotsford 30 Jun (LM); and Tsawwassen 2-8 Jul (CW, PL et al.). Well n. of its usual range, a Black-crowned Night-Heron was seen in a field near Dunster 29 Jul (DA, MA) and furnished the most northerly record for the Region. A pair of Gadwall at Stokes Pt. 19 Jun on the Yukon's N. Coast (Arctic Ocean) was at the limit of the species's range (PJ). A raft of 6 ad. Black Scoters was on Eaglet L. 50 km ene. of P.G. 29 Jul (MA, DD, HD)—both an early date and a surprisingly large number.

Broad-winged Hawks are known to nest in the Peace R. area; however, summer sightings in the n.-cen. interior seem to suggest that they are more widespread. A pair at U.N.B.C. was seen sporadically through the period, but they managed to elude nest-seekers, so incontrovertible evidence of breeding in the area still

awaits us. One light-morph ad. was at Tudyah L., n. of McLeod L., 23 Jun (MP, KL). The pair of Swainson's Hawks first discovered in spring was found at the nest near Rolla 6 Jun (JF). If successful, this would be the first nesting in the ne. part of the province. Near Trapp L. s. of Kamloops, a very late female Rough-legged Hawk was studied 17 Jun (RH). The Fraser/Chilcotin R. basin was surveyed for nesting raptors this summer, with four nests of Prairie Falcon and five nests of Golden Eagle being found (*vide* JH). All three ptarmigan species were seen at Mt. Victoria in the Dawson Range, Yukon 9 Jun: 4 Willow, 6 Rock, and 3 White-tailed (CE, AM). A female Rock Ptarmigan with 8 small young was seen on top of Mt. McIntyre 2 Jul (HG, RH), a rare Whse. area breeding record.

### RAILS THROUGH TERNS

Yellow Rails put on quite a show at the s. end of Swan L. in the Peace R. area, with 2–3 territorial males calling 19 Jun–4 Jul (JF, MPh, m. ob.). A Virginia Rail well n. and e. of its usual range at McQueen's Slough ne. of Dawson Creek was thought to be territorial 21 Jun (MPh). Following an unprecedented spring invasion of **Black-necked Stilts**, the last remaining individual was reported from Lesser Green L., in company with five nesting pairs of American Avocets 23 Jun (LG). On 3 Jun there were 21 active avocet nests at Alki L. n. of Kelowna (LG, RyT). At Beaver Ranch Flats (Guichon Ranch, n. of Nicola L.) 11 Jun, there were 7 avocets (WD), and by 18 Jun, 3 downy chicks were observed (RH). On 19 Jun, a 2nd nest was located (LR), both confirming nesting for the first time in this area in 10 years. Census work conducted 5–6 Jun (LG et al.) showed that avocets had abandoned the Little White L. colony and had dispersed to form four new colonies that in total contained 35 avocets. The territorial pair of Upland Sandpipers at Fort Nelson Airport endured a barrage of adoring birders 26 Jun–7 Jul (m. ob.). Possible distraction behavior was observed 7 Jul (BS, MB), although no young were seen. Other potential ne. British Columbia nesting sites include Coal Creek Rd. e. of Kiskatinaw Park, where 4 were seen 27 Jun (JF), and Braden Rd. n. of Progress, where a single bird was seen 27 Jul (JF). Whimbrel are very rare migrants through the cen. interior, thus 6 in a field on Cranbrook Hill, P.G. 3 Jun (DL, CLL) was significant. A huge assemblage of 23 ad. Long-billed Curlews was on a field w. of McBride 14 Jun (ES), and the count there was up to 31 ads. 17 Jun (ES). This occurred at a time when ads. should be escorting young ones around in family groups, but the observer found them

surprisingly quiet and approachable, which seems to suggest that there had been a wide-spread curlew nesting failure in the Robson Valley. An ad. Ruff was discovered at Iona I. 11 Jul (RTo), one of few records for early Jul. Reports of Wilson's Phalarope from the Yukon included a pair at The Ndu L. 6 Jun (CE, AM), which provided an extension to the species's known range; 2 females at Judas Cr., Marsh L. 15 Jun (PJ); 7 at Swan L., n. of Whse. 12 Jun (HG, BSi); and 2 juvs. at the Whse. sewage lagoons 26–29 Jul (CE).

A subad. Long-tailed Jaeger was seen from shore at Clover Point, Victoria, where considered casual 9 Jul (†PL, vt. CWo). Perhaps due to the Prairie drought, Franklin's Gulls were unusually abundant in the Peace R. area, with 2000–3000 at Charlie L. Fort St. John 26 Jun (MTo, STo) and another 1500 at the F.S.J. sewage lagoons on the same day (GM). At least one individual was displaced as far as Marsh L. 15 Jun (PJ), where a second-summer bird provided the 2nd Whse. area and 3rd Yukon record for the species. A **Black-headed Gull** became the 270th species to be recorded at R.P.B.O. 10 Jul (DA). At Christmas Island, in Salmon Arm, a local Ring-billed Gull counter reported that the number of nests reached 750 (TB); also at this location 17 Jun were 2 Caspian Terns (DGC), an ad. Herring Gull, and an ad. California Gull, the latter two not yet confirmed as breeders here. A second-summer Glaucous-winged Gull was discovered on Stuart L. near F.S.J. 11 Jun (MGS, RRa) and remained there through the 19th (ph. CA, NK), a long overdue addition to the local checklist area. Summer rarities at the Whse. landfill included a second-summer California Gull 21–22 Jun (CE), a first-summer Glaucous Gull 24–30 Jul (CE, LC), and an ad. Glaucous Gull 27–30 Jul (CE). Black-legged Kittiwakes, following their above-average showing this spring in nearshore waters, were seen more regularly throughout the summer as well, with up to 7 seen from R.P.B.O. 10 Jul (DA). A Forster's Tern at Brunson L. 30 Jun (*vide* PR) is only the 2nd reported occurrence of this species in the Cariboo. Rare along the lower mainland, Black Terns were well represented this summer, with 2 over the Reifel parking lot 13 Jun (JI) and a single at the outer ponds on Iona 23 Jun (DBa).

### MURRELETS THROUGH PIPITS

Ancient Murrelets surprised observers in Tofino with numerous summer sightings: a pair of ads. were off Cleland I. 14 Jun (*vide* AD); 6 were in offshore waters 19 Jun (AD), among them a chick still covered in down, attended by parents and incapable of flight; a

dead juv. capable of flight was also discovered on the same day; another dead chick was brought to the dock in town with many of its flight feathers still in the pinfeather stage; and 3 were seen near Tofino 27 Jun (JW). One might conclude that Ancient Murrelets are nesting in closer proximity to Vancouver I. than the Q.C.I.; however, this species does exhibit rapid postbreeding dispersal. Potentially the Region's first **Whiskered Auklet** was sighted 172 nmi w. of Tasu Sound, Moresby I., Q.C.I. 7 Jun (MF).

Following this winter's Northern Hawk Owl invasion, breeding was confirmed for the P.G. area 13 Jun (*vide* JB), and the nest at Becher Prairie, Riske Creek produced 4–5 juvs. 17 Jun (PR). A **White-throated Swift** was well away from its s. interior range when sighted over Oak St. in Vancouver 3 Jul (RTo), one of few records for the area. A Lewis's Woodpecker was near the n. edge of its range at McBride 11 Jun (*vide* ES); the closest nesting area is in the Thompson Valley. Very rare in the Peace R. area was a juv. Red-breasted Sapsucker s. of Pouce Coupe 31 Jul (JF). Our knowledge of the distribution of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in the n. was edged ever forward with 2 singing birds at Keno City, Yukon 9 Jun (CE); 3 were noted at their regular location on the Mt. McIntyre B.B.S. near Whse. 13 Jun (CE). Furnishing one of few records for the lower mainland was an Alder Flycatcher at Colony Farm 22 Jun (DTy). Least Flycatcher sightings are slowly on the increase in the lower mainland: one bird was at Grant Narrows R.P. 9 Jun–1 Jul (KE, CAi). A singing Hammond's Flycatcher at Ethel L. 7 Jun (CE) established a new c. Yukon location for this species. Blue Jays continue to expand their range in British Columbia, with a probable breeding pair in Kimberley 16 Jul (RGo) and a single bird well n. of usual range in Fort Nelson 26 Jun (JB). A staggering 3000 swallows—mostly Bank, but also Tree, Violet-green, and Cliff—were staging at the Whse. sewage lagoons 26 Jul (CE). Two Northern Rough-winged Swallows, rare in the Yukon, were in the company of a group of Bank Swallows along the Yukon R. at Wolf Cr. Campground 9 Jun (PJ). Dewdrop Ecological Reserve w. of Tranquille produced a **Canyon Wren** for the first local sighting in 33 years. This may well be the most northerly record ever. Confirmation of this sighting was made 21 Jun (MH, RH). A Gray-cheeked Thrush was found singing on Mt. McLearn, just inside the boundary of Muncho L. P.P. 28 Jun (B.C.F.O.), which likely defines the ne. edge of the species's range in the province. Gray Catbirds are accidental in the Peace R. area, yet this summer singing males furnished the 3rd and 4th area

records: Clayhurst Crossing 8 Jun (JF) and McQueen's Slough 21 Jun (MPh). A report of a *Lanius* species 19 Jun (IA) at Pritchard, e. of Kamloops, was almost certainly a Loggerhead. Further expansion of the Northern Mockingbird's range included singles from Chetwynd golf course 28–29 Jun (SB, PS) and Colleymount on Francois L. 1 Jul (KW, CWa). The find of the season was a male **Sprague's Pipit** 26–30 Jun (MT, ST et al.) at the Fort Nelson Airport. The bird apparently acted like any other courting Sprague's, with alternating sessions of air and ground time. This constitutes one of very few records for the province and the first modern sighting away from Riske Cr.

### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Recently Tennessee Warbler numbers have been increasing in the cen. interior, but this year there was an explosion. Singing males popped up all over the P.G. area from widely scattered locales. Likely the best indicator was the McLeod L. B.B.S. on 20 Jun, where numbers mushroomed to 11 singing males from the usual one or 2 (CA, JB). The increase in Tennessee Warblers was also noted along Racheria Loop Road, near Upper Liard, Yukon 17 Jun (HG), where 15 were found. It would seem likely that some of these birds may find their way into the Okanagan this coming fall or perhaps even along the coast. Continuing the two late May sightings of **Chestnut-sided Warblers**, there were an additional 2 singing males, one along McKinney Rd. e of Oliver 14–23 Jun (PH, RTo), the other along a power-line cut n. of Sechelt, Sunshine Coast 15 Jun–

mid-Jul (ph. CC, DBr, RWC). Townsend's Warblers were reported in low numbers from Whse., Teslin, Montana Mt., Dawson City, and Paint Mt. near Kluane L.; this species apparently has been increasing along the N. Klondike R. in recent years (GB). A singing male Black-throated Green Warbler was near Kledo Creek, Mile 340 of the Alaska Highway 10 Jul (BS, MB). This species is apparently spreading slowly northward into the Fort Nelson Lowlands, likely via the e. foothills of the Rockies. A Blackpoll Warbler, a rare sight, was on Scout L, William's L. 2 Jun (TG). Also rare was an American Redstart along the nature dyke in Pitt Meadows 15–16 Jun (PC). American Redstarts continue to have a toe-hold in the Whse. area, with 2 at Huanka Cr. on the Atlin Rd. 17 Jun (PS) and one at Beaver Creek 7 Jun (MG). Three new locations of singing Ovenbirds in the P.G. area were detected: F.F.T.W. through the period (KF, m. ob.); 33 km s. of McLeod L. 20 Jun (CA, JB); and Crooked R. 100 km n. of P.G. 21–29 Jun (CMcG, JMcG). Yellow-breasted Chats are very rare in the lower mainland; one individual was in Pitt Meadows 10 Jun (RWO), and a pair was seen off and on 10–23 Jun (KR) at Colony Farm. If breeding can be confirmed, this would constitute only the 2nd nesting record from the s. coast.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks continued to increase at widely scattered locations across the s. half of the province: a male visited a feeder at Florence L. near Victoria 12 Jun (*vide* DM); a female visited a feeder in P.G. 5 Jun (TG); and yet another was near Kaslo 13 Jun (LS). A Vesper Sparrow, very rare on the outer

coast, furnished the 2nd local record 2 Jun at the Long Beach Airport near Tofino (*vide* AD). In recent years, Lazuli Buntings are turning up in the cen. interior with regularity. A male attended a feeder in McBride 4–10 Jun (*vide* ES), another male was near Quesnel 5 Jun (AL), and a female turned up at Colleymount in mid-Jun (KW). A male Indigo Bunting was a very rare find in downtown Sechelt 5 Jul (AS). Furnishing the 7th documented record in the province, an ad. male **Dickcissel** visited a feeder at Francois L. 20–26 Jun (ph. KW, CWa). This would also constitute the most nw. occurrence in the Region. A Clay-colored Sparrow singing at Wye L. in Watson L. 11 & 14 Jun provided a rare Yukon record (PJ). A singing White-throated Sparrow was noted right at the edge of its range on the Racheria B.B.S. route 16 Jun (HG). A female Brewer's Blackbird, very rare in the Yukon, was reported by two independent observers in downtown Whse. 2 Jun (HH; NH). Kelowna's **Great-tailed Grackle** continued to be seen throughout the period (m. ob.).

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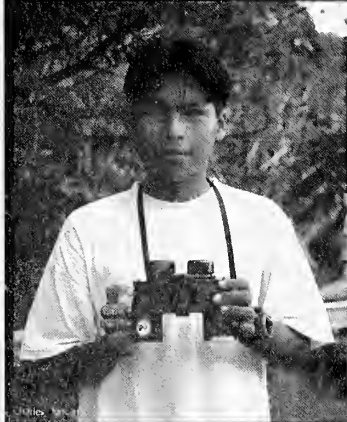


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# Oregon–Washington



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This summer provided two main themes for Pacific Northwest birders. First, the influx of Great Basin species that began this spring led to a number of unusual breeding attempts/records involving White-faced Ibis, Black-necked Stilt, Wilson's Phalarope, and Black Tern. Additionally, American White Pelicans were found on the westside in unprecedented numbers. The second theme involved vagrant "eastern" warblers. Eight species of these warblers were found this summer, the best such total in at least a decade. Most were in se. Oregon, as is usual. "Best Bird" honors goes to Malheur's Worm-eating Warbler, which was Oregon's second, and to Chelan's Northern Hawk Owl, a Regional summer first.

Weatherwise, the westside was normal to wet this summer, but the eastside remained very dry.

**Abbreviations:** F.R.R. (Fern Ridge Reservoir, Lane); Malheur (Malheur N.W.R., Harney); N.S.C.B. (N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos); O.S. (Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor); Ridgefield (Ridgefield N.W.R., Clark); W.W.R.D. (Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla); Y.R.D. (Yakima R. delta, Benton, WA). "Eastside" and "westside" denote areas east and west of the Cascade crest, respectively.

## LOONS THROUGH CRANES

A Horned Grebe nest was found at Mud L., Okanogan 6 Jul (AS); they are extremely rare breeders in Washington. Clark's Grebes are casual at best during summer in w. Washington (and rare at any time), so a concentration of 20 at Vancouver L., Clark 8–21 Jun was most astounding (WC, TA). A Short-tailed Albatross off Newport 24 Mar was about the 6th for Oregon and 8th for the Region over the last 50 years (ph. TS); most have been Nov–Jan. A Northern Fulmar was seen from shore at O.S. 14 Jul (PL); they are rare from shore in Washington, especially during summer. Offshore, numbers of fulmar averaged 85 per trip (TRW), indicating a poor summer. Pink-footed Shearwater numbers, however, were exceptional, averaging 175 per trip (TRW). Sooty Shearwaters often congregate just inside the mouth of Willapa Bay during late summer, but an estimated 200,000 on 13 Jul topped anything seen in recent years

(PL), and a count of 27,500 off Westport 15 Jul (BTw) was also very high. Two Manx Shearwaters were at Boiler Bay, Lincoln 22 Jun, and one was there 9 Jul (PP).

Large numbers of American White Pelicans were still wandering around the westside this summer, with maxima of 70 at N. Portland 26 Jul (T. Clark), 45 at F.R.R. 27 Jul (DaF), and 30 at Vancouver L., Clark 21 Jun (TA, SG). Brown Pelican numbers this summer were the poorest in several years (HN, BTw); time will tell if they are late or if the autumn peak is truly low. A Snowy Egret at Everett, Snohomish 7 Jul provided Snohomish with its first record of this rare-but-annual summer visitor to Washington (vt. BL, NL). A Green Heron, very rare in e. Washington, was at Bingen, Klickitat 16–17 Jun (WC, KK). As many as 13 White-faced Ibis remained at L. Kahlotus, Franklin until 13 Jun; some of these were carrying nest material, but the flock abandoned the area by the end of Jun (TA, BF, KK).

The Port Angeles Emperor Goose survived another summer (PL). A tally of 44 Black Brant at Tillamook Bay 2 Jun was exceptional for summer (JG, OS). A male Eurasian Wigeon at Beulah Res., Malheur 16 Jun provided the first Regional summer record (J. Gatchett); this species is rare in e. Oregon at any time. A brood of Northern Shoveler, a rare breeder in Oregon, was at Ankeny N.W.R., Marion 29 Jun (AC). Greater Scaup are very rare on the eastside during summer; this year, there were 3 at Lost L., Okanogan 2 Jun (BF) and 5 at L. Lenore, Grant 25 Jun (TA). Records of rare westside breeders included a brood of Lesser Scaup at Deer Lagoon, Island (SM, RR), two broods of Lesser Scaup at Stanwood, Snohomish (TA, SM, DD), and a brood of Green-winged Teal at Everett (SM). Bufflehead broods were at L. Lenore, Grant 3 Jul and Baker L., Okanogan 4 Jul (PL); they are very rare nesters in Washington. A Common Goldeneye brood was among the many Barrow's at L. Lenore, Grant 25 Jun (TA); not only was this the Region's southernmost breeding record, but it comes from an area with no trees! The Barrow's here breed on the nearby cliffs.

The robust Osprey colony at Everett, Snohomish boasted 23 nests with 54 young during mid-Jul (E. Schulz). Though increasing in the Region, Red-shouldered Hawks are still rare during summer n. of southernmost Oregon. Thus, singles near Halsey, Linn 20 Jun (AC), Coyote Cr., Lane 13 Jun (LM, D. Arendt), and Spencer Cr., Lane throughout the summer (G. Clarke) were noteworthy. Even more unusual was an ad. near Brady,

*Grays Harbor* 22–31 Jul, which provided Washington's first summer record (ph. RS). Washington's 4th record of a northbound **Broad-winged Hawk** was near Joyce, *Clallam* 4 Jun (†DB). A **Rough-legged Hawk** near Ritzville, *Adams* 5 Jun was about six weeks late and may be the first ever for the summer season (BN). A California Quail in a subalpine meadow at 4000 ft in *Marion* must have been a wee bit confused (SD). One of this spring's **Common Moorhens** remained at Malheur until 18 Jul (CG). Twelve Sandhill Cranes, very rare during summer on the westside, were at Sauvie I. 1–16 Jul (M. Stern); 2 of these appeared to be Lesser Sandhills (HN).

### SHOREBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Neither golden-plover is quite annual during summer, though Pacifics are almost so. This summer, an American Golden-Plover was at Boiler Bay, *Lincoln* 13 Jul (T. Love), and single Pacifics were at Baskett Slough, *Polk* 16–19 Jun (M. Cutler, PVV) and N.S.C.B. 20 Jun (TR); mid-Jun records of golden-plovers are almost unprecedented. Eight ad. Black-necked Stilts hatched 3 young at Ridgefield (RS, PtS), and 2 ads. raised 5 young at Baskett Slough, *Polk* (M. Cutler, H. Batchelder), providing the westside with its first breeding records. Additionally, 2 nonbreeding stilts were at F.R.R. 2–14 Jun (D. Brown, M. Maffei). Single Ameri'an Avocets, very rare on the westside during summer, were at F.R.R. to 5 Jun (DDW) and Ankeny N.W.R., *Marion* 11 Jul (JL). Solitary Sandpipers were unusually numerous this summer, with 13 reported, starting with 2 early birds at Riverbend, *Pend Oreille* 25 Jun (RAR) and peaking with 4 near Chesaw, *Okanogan* 21 Jun (BL, NL); the Region averages 4 per summer. An Upland Sandpiper was at N.S.C.B. 20 Jun (DL, KC, TR); this species is very rare on the westside at anytime and casual during summer. A Whimbrel at Summer L., *Lake* 4 Jun was on the eastside, where very rare (RG). For the 4th consecutive summer, Bar-tailed Godwits were found in the Region, with 2 at O.S. 7 Jul (vt. SM, DD, RR) and one remaining until 13 Jul (PL); Bar-taileds were formerly accidental as early as Jul. A late northbound Semipalmated Sandpiper was at Tenmile Cr., *Coos* 9 Jun (DL, KC), while a slightly early southbound individual was at Riverbend 25 Jun (RAR). A total of 45 southbound Semipalmateds was reported, a bit below average, with a maximum of 12 near Sequim, *Clallam* 15 Jul (SM, RR). Two Baird's Sandpipers at Baskett Slough 19 Jun furnished a highly unusual midsummer report (EM). Eight Pectoral Sandpipers this summer was well above average, and one w. of Othello 1 Jul

was early (BL). An early southbound Dunlin was at Deer Lagoon, *Island* 14–28 Jul (SM, RR); another Dunlin was at Clatsop Spit 10 Jun (JG, OS), and 2 were at N.S.C.B. 9 Jul (TR). A juv. Stilt Sandpiper on Fir I., *Skagit* 28 Jul was three weeks early (ph. RS, PtS). A male Wilson's Phalarope performing distraction displays at Brady, *Grays Harbor* 7 Jul (SM) provided the first nesting evidence in w. Washington since 1975! This species was also found breeding in w. Oregon, where very rare: several nests were at Baskett Slough (RG), one pair nested at F.R.R. (DDW, D. Brown), and nesting may have occurred at Jackson Bottom (HN).

Eight South Polar Skuas were seen on four pelagic trips off Westport (TRW)—excellent for mid-summer. Franklin's Gulls continued to wander the Oregon coast, with singles at Boiler Bay, *Lincoln* 29 Jun (PP), N.S.C.B. 4 Jul (DL, KC), and Brookings, *Curry* 13 Jul (DM). In e. Washington, one was at W.W.R.D. 1–2 Jun (KK) and 2 there 17 Jun (BL, NL); one was at Othello, *Adams* 5 Jun (BF); one was at L. Lenore, *Grant* 25 Jun (TA); and 2 were at Paterson Slough, *Benton* 30 Jun (BL, NL). Franklin's are barely annual during summer in e. Washington and extremely rare on the outer coast. A first-summer **Little Gull** was at Everett from mid-Jul–1 Aug; it was found dead on the last date (EH, \*Univ. Puget Sound). Washington has only three previous summer records. A concentration of 7000 California Gulls at Cultus Bay, *Island* 22 Jul was exceptional (SM, DD). Black-legged Kittiwakes, mostly nonadults, summered in unusual numbers. Early concentrations were on the outer coast, with maxima of 250 at Clatsop Spit 10 Jun (JG, OS) and 200 near O.S. 1 Jun (PWS). Later, some moved into the Strait of Juan de Fuca, with a maximum of 75 at Sekiu, *Clallam* 15 Jul (SM, RR). Point Wilson, *Jefferson* furnished the most easterly record on 12 Jul (PL).

An Arctic Tern, very rare on the eastside, was at Confluence S.P., *Chelan* 13 Jun (†DB); most eastside records are from fall. Very rare for the westside during summer was a Forster's Tern at Brookings, *Curry* 29 Jul (DM) and one at Vancouver L., *Clark* 20 Jun (TA, S. Gerstle). Eight Black Terns chose to summer at Ridgefield, building at least three nests and providing w. Washington's first breeding record (J. Engler, BTw). In w. Oregon, Black Terns occupied one of their two known nesting locations, F.R.R. (DDW). An Ancient Murrelet was at Boiler Bay, *Lincoln* 9 Jul (PP); this species is very rare during summer in Oregon. Although most pelagic species seemed to find good forage this summer,

Cassin's Auklet numbers remained disappointingly low offshore, averaging 5 per pelagic trip (TRW). For the 4th summer of the last 5, Horned Puffins were found on the Oregon coast. One was at Cape Foulweather, *Lincoln* 23 May and 29 Jun (DFi, DP), and possibly the same bird flew by Boiler Bay 9 Jul (PP).

Five Band-tailed Pigeons were near Chelan 7 Jun (M. Spencer); they are rare on the e. slope of the Cascades. A **Northern Hawk Owl** was in seemingly appropriate breeding habitat near Sugarloaf Lookout, *Chelan* 1–12 Jul (F. deJong, DS); this is the Region's first summer record. Great Gray Owls are still rarely encountered in Washington, so one near Walker Cr., *Okanogan* 1 Jun was noteworthy (BF). A Costa's Hummingbird was at Indian Ford Cr., *Deschutes* 1 Jun (JL); Oregon averages about one every other summer. Three Acorn Woodpeckers near Lyle, *Klickitat* 7 Jun demonstrated that this species maintains its foothold in Washington (WC).

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH MIMIDS

Least Flycatcher numbers were down this summer, with one near Juntura, *Malheur* 27 Jun (TS) and one along Maloy Rd., *Yakima* 9 Jun (KK); the Region has averaged about 9 per summer over recent years. Washington's 5th **Eastern Phoebe** remained at Leavenworth, *Chelan* until 26 Jun (SA, †MD, vt. SM). An Ash-throated Flycatcher, casual during summer in w. Washington, was at Port Stanley, *Island* 18 Jul (†L. Falb); singles at Mt. Pisgah, *Lane* 6 Jul (D. Smith) and summering at Eugene, *Lane* (LM) were much closer to this species's usual range in sw. Oregon. An Eastern Kingbird, extremely rare on Washington's outer coast, was on Tatoosh I., *Clallam* 6–7 Jun (RP, TWo). Nine Clark's Nutcrackers below 500 ft elevation near Lyle, *Klickitat* 16 Jun were most unexpected, especially during summer (WC).

Very rare in e. Washington, a Purple Martin visited Bingen, *Klickitat* 11 Jul (WC). New Bank Swallow colonies continue to be found on the westside, where currently very local: about 10 birds were nesting near Auburn (B. Pendleton), and 20 were nesting near Carver, *Clackamas* (ES). A recently discovered colony near Castle Rock, *Cowlitz* sported 75–100 nest burrows (J. Sheldon). A Mountain Chickadee in Redmond, *King* 17–31 Jul provided a possibly unprecedented summer lowland westside record (G. Oliver). A Rock Wren at Clatsop Spit 3 Jun was well away from breeding habitat and on the outer coast where extremely rare (TT). Broods of Bewick's Wrens near Elgin, *Union*, at Washtucna, *Adams*, and L. Kahlottus, *Franklin* provided evidence of con-

tinued range expansion (W. Stone, CC, SM, DD). A Canyon Wren, first found in Mar, remained at Beacon Rock, *Skamania* 16 Jun (WC), and one was at Table Mt., *Skamania* 11 Jul (C. Chappell); this species is extremely rare in w. Washington. Five Northern Mockingbirds this summer, about average, included singles at Tatoosh I., *Clallam* 8 Jun (RP), near Six Prong, *Klickitat* 2–11 Jul (WC), at O.S. 13 Jul (A. Dean, PL, vt. BTw), Bayocean Spit, *Tillamook* 17 Jul (*vide* CR), and Falls City, *Polk* 26 Jul (B. Tice).

## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Virginia's Warbler was at Castle Rock, *Malheur* 16 Jun (J. Gatchett); they were first found summering in se. Oregon during 1998. Washington's 11th **Northern Parula** was a cooperative singing male at L. Ozette, *Clallam* 2 Jun–3 Jul (S. Gremel); seven of the previous 10 records were 30 May–13 Jul. One of the most peculiar finds of the summer was a male Yellow Warbler paired with a female American Redstart near Tenino, *Thurston* 20 Jun (P. Hicks). The redstart was subsequently found sitting on a nest, but some time after 28 Jun, the nest was abandoned, perhaps due to a severe storm. Redstarts are rare and very local breeders on the westside. There was a mini-invasion of Chestnut-sided Warblers, with singles at Malheur 10 Jun (M&J Rodegerdts), Catlow Valley, *Harney* 7 Jul (TM, A. Mickel), and Upper Klamath L., *Klamath* 11 Jul (J. Field); there are now approximately 40 Oregon records. A Magnolia Warbler was near Sublimity, *Marion* 17 Jun (JH, B. Thackaberry); there are now about 35 Oregon records, though relatively few from mid-summer. Similarly, Blackpoll Warblers are annual in Oregon but with relatively few mid-summer dates. Thus, one near Ashland, *Jackson* 16 Jun was noteworthy (R. Ketchum). Black-and-white Warblers were at Fields, *Harney* 3 Jun (TB), Brookings, *Curry* 1 Jul (DM), and near Agency L., *Klamath* 16 Jul (B. Wieland); the Region averages approximately 3 per summer. Oregon's 7th **Prothonotary Warbler** was banded at Upper Klamath L. 2 Jul (ph. B. Wieland); most previous records were 19 Aug–19 Oct, and this is the first for Jul. Oregon's 2nd **Worm-eating Warbler** was at Malheur 10–11 Jun (AC, HH); the previous state record was also at Malheur 16 Sep 1990 (Gilligan et al., *Birds of Oregon*). Washington's 16th **Ovenbird** was singing at Vancouver, *Clark* 15 Jun (†J. Johnson). Northern Waterthrushes again occupied their only known w. Oregon breeding site at Salt Cr. Falls, *Lane* (HH). A Yellow-breasted Chat near Camp Bonneville, *Clark* 1 Jul was the 25th in

w. Washington since 1970 (WC); most have been late May–late Jun.

Green-tailed Towhees in Washington are known to breed only at a few locations in the Blue Mts. A singing male near Copper Cr., *Walla Walla* 30 Jun was in the Blue Mts. but at a new location for this species (KA, SM). Green-tailed were also at their established site at Biscuit Ridge, *Walla Walla* (KK, BL, NL). A Clay-colored Sparrow was near Blueslide, *Pend Oreille* 25 Jun (RAR); this species is a very rare summer visitor to e. Washington, with most records from near Spokane. Even more unusual was a summer Clay-colored on the outer coast at Brookings, *Curry* 16 Jun (DM). Four Brewer's Sparrows at Big Meadow, *Linn* 5 Jul would suggest breeding nearby (RG), but one at F.R.R. 6 Jul was a very rare summer stray (V. Arnold, K. Fairchild); until recently, this species was considered strictly a vagrant on the westside. Two Black-throated Sparrows occupied their traditional site near Vantage, *Kittitas* 9 Jun–29 Jul, for the only Washington record this year (KK, BS, BL). A Lark Bunting near Eugene, *Lane* 11–24 Jun furnished Oregon with its 23rd or so record (DH); very few have been from mid-summer. A **Gray-headed Junco** in the Trout Cr. Mts., *Harney* 9 Jun provided Oregon's 6th record (SD); a small breeding population likely exists in extreme se. Oregon, as nesting was confirmed in *Malheur* during 1999. For the 3rd consecutive summer, a Lapland Longspur was found on the Oregon coast: one was at Clatsop Spit 3 Jun (TT). There are now 7 Regional summer records.

The spring's invasion of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks continued. Nine were found in Oregon, mostly in early and mid-Jun, well above the roughly 5-per-summer average. Washington, averaging only about one per summer, had 2: one near Port Townsend, *Jefferson* 1 Jun (P. Conklin) and another near Leavenworth, *Chelan* 23 Jun (†MD). A Lazuli Bunting near Lebam, *Pacific* 7 Jul furnished what is probably Washington's westernmost summer record (SM, RR, DD). Washington's 12th **Indigo Bunting** was at Roy, *Pierce* 10 Jun (†I. Holmquist); five of Washington's records have been during this and last May/June. In Oregon, an Indigo Bunting was near Alpine, *Benton* 17 Jul (E. Eltzroth); there are now about 50 Oregon records. Thirty Tricolored Blackbirds were still present at Washington's sole breeding colony near Wilson Cr., *Grant* 10 Jun (BS), and 3 remained until 23 Jun (BL, NL). A singing male **Rusty Blackbird** on Tatoosh I., *Clallam* 22–23 Jun was wholly unexpected (RP, TWo). Not only did it provide the Region's first summer record, but this

species is casual on Washington's outer coast at any season.

**Initialed observers (subregional editors in boldface):** Kevin Aanerud, Scott Atkinson, Tom Aversa, David Beaudette, Trent Bray, Wilson Cady, Kathy Castelein, Alan Contreras, Craig Corder, Mike Denny, Don DeWitt (DDW), Steve Dowlan, Dennis Duffy, Daniel Farrar (DaF), David Fix (DFi), Bob Flores, Chuck Gates, Roy Gerig, Steve Gerstle, Jeff Gilligan, Jeff Harding, Hendrik Herlyn, Dan Heyerly, Eugene Hunn, Kraig Kemper, Bruce LaBar, **Bill LaFramboise** (Columbia Basin), Nancy LaFramboise, David Lauten, Paul Lehman, John Lundsten, Larry McQueen, Ed McVicker, **Tom Mickel** (Lane), Don Munson, **Harry Nehls** (OR), **Bob Norton** (Olympic Peninsula), Robert Paine, Diane Pettey, Phil Pickering, Craig Roberts, Tim Rodenkirk, **Russell Rogers** (WA), Richard A. Rowlett, Owen Schmidt, Bill Shelmerdine, Tim Shelmerdine, P. William Smith, Elmer Specht, **Dan Stephens** (*Chelan*), Andy Stepniewski, Patrick Sullivan (PtS), **Paul Sullivan** (PS, E. OR), Ruth Sullivan, Todd Thornton, Patti Van Vlack (PVV), Terry R. Wahl, Tim Wootton.



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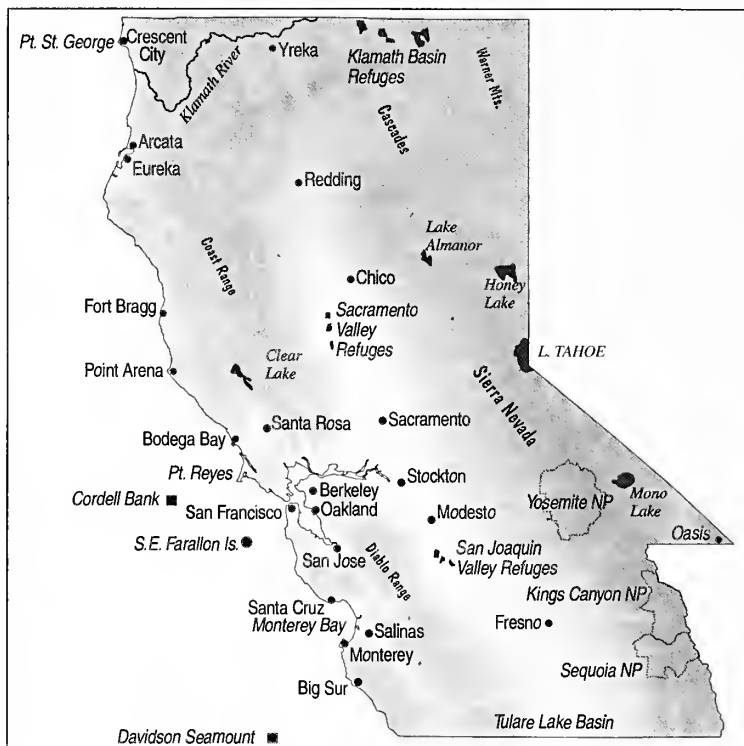


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# Middle Pacific Coast



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**S**ummer 2001 saw a continuation of drought conditions, particularly in the northeast. The coast was sunny in June but often fog-draped by July. The incursion of "southeastern" vagrants that began in mid-May continued well into June. As noted in the spring report, this influx correlated with atypical weather conditions over the Gulf of Mexico during the major trans-Gulf passerine migration period.

**Abbreviations:** C.B.R.C. (California Bird Records Committee); C.V. (Central Valley); F.I. (Southeast Farallon I.); N.S. (National Seashore); O.S.P. (Open Space Preserve); S.F. (San Francisco); R.P. (Regional Park); R.S. (Regional Shoreline); S.R. (State Reserve); W.A. (Wildlife Area).

This is Dan Singer's final report as a member of our group of Regional editors. He has analyzed the blizzard of records of waterfowl, raptor, and waders over the past decade, and his expertise will be missed. We welcome Michael M. Rogers—just off a stint as Secretary of the C.B.R.C.—in his stead. Reports of exceptional vagrants submitted without documentation are normally not published. Observers wishing

C.B.R.C. review should also send their documentation to Guy McCaskie, Secretary, P.O. Box 275, San Diego, CA 91933. Banded birds on F.I. should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory, those banded at Big Sur R. mouth to Big Sur Ornithology Lab of the Ventana Wilderness Society. Colonial waterbird counts on S.F. Bay and landbirds banded at Coyote Cr., Santa Clara should be credited to San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory.

**SA** For the 3rd consecutive year, a **Shy Albatross** occurred in waters off cen. California: this year's bird was an imm. off-shore of Sonoma 27 Jul (ph. DN). What makes this unprecedented series of occurrences even more remarkable is that this species was first recorded in California waters only three years ago. To further put this situation into perspective, Shy Albatrosses have only been recorded in the *northern hemisphere* five times outside of our records: Washington State (Sep 1951, Jan 2000), Oregon (Oct 1996), Israel (Feb–Mar 1981), and Somalia (Sep 1986). Finally, it appears that more than one taxon have likely been involved in the California records, although more research on these birds is currently underway.

Albatross taxonomy, including the Shy Albatross group, is currently in substantial flux. The Shy Albatross complex is currently treated as one species by the American Ornithologists' Union but has been considered to comprise up to four species by others. Cole (2000; *N. A. B.* 54: 124–135) summarized Shy Albatross occurrences, distribution, and the taxonomic situation, and he concluded that the first California bird (Aug 1999), an ad., was a Shy Albatross of the nominate form *Thalassarche cauta cauta*. The next Shy to occur off California on 29 Jul 2000 was an imm. and, remarkably, appears to have been a Salvin's Albatross (*T. [c.] salvini*), although the taxonomic identification of the bird is still being analyzed. These were followed by observations of imm. Shy "types" close to the same location on 10 & 17 Sep 2000. It is currently unclear how many individuals were involved in these sightings, but observers who saw the 29 Jul and 10 Sep birds thought that different individuals were involved based on bill color. This year's bird, well photographed on 27 Jul, may well be yet another individual, and its taxonomic status has yet to be determined. All of these records are currently under review, but the last three years' showing of Shy Albatrosses off our Region is mind-boggling, whatever their taxonomic dispensation turns out to be.



## LOONS THROUGH HERONS

Three Laysan Albatrosses were on Monterey Bay, *Monterey* 1 Jun (DLSH et al.). Up to 3 Least Bitterns at Clear L.'s Kelsey Cr. outlet 20 Jul into Sep comprised *Lake's* 3rd documented record (JRW, DvW, m. ob.). Single ad. Little Blue Herons were noted 4 Jul along Artesian Slough, *Santa Clara* (AV) and 10 Jul along Alameda Cr., *Alameda* (PEG). Extremely dry conditions in Sierra Valley, *Plumas* forced White-faced Ibis to look elsewhere for more favorable breeding habitat (MMC). Last year, an estimated 1700+ pairs nested there (*N. A. B.* 54: 420).

## GEESE THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A Cackling Canada Goose (race *minima*) at Roberts L., Seaside, *Monterey* 4 Jun (DR) represents one of a handful of very late migrant records from our notebooks. Sixty-four Greater Scaup 17 Jul near Petaluma, *Sonoma* was far more than usual for summer (RS). Reports of Bufflehead were slightly above average, with 5 reported coastally and individuals on Sierran lakes in *Tuolumne* 4 Jun (KJB) and *Madera* 24–30 Jun (J&DP). Two broods of Hooded Merganser at Antelope L., *Plumas* 1 Jul (RS) marked the Region's 2nd nesting since 1998 (*N. A. B.* 52: 499), but these are the only breeding records of which we have knowledge since 1981. A Ruddy Duck and her brood at Heather Farms Park 5 Jun (Hugh Harvey) was the first confirmation for *Contra Costa's* breeding bird atlas (now in its 4th year). This species can be surprisingly scarce as a breeder in parts of the greater Bay Area.

Two Bald Eagles at Don Pedro Res., *Tuolumne* 3 Jun (Linda Fruge) were considered unusually late, although breeding attempts should not be ruled out because the species is recolonizing the former breeding range in California as it continues a highly successful recovery continentwide. Two displaying Sharp-shinned Hawks along Mosquito Ridge Road 5 Jun (BDW) made for a rare summer record for *Placer*. A Prairie Falcon over Neary Lagoon 10 Jun (BMMo) was unusual near the coast on this date and represented a summer first for *Santa Cruz*.

As expected, many of the interesting shorebirds reported this season were ads. Reports of unaged shorebirds involving less common or rare species are problematic and are not likely to be published. Different individual ad. American Golden-Plovers were at Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* 12–15 Jul (RSTh, PJM) and 17 Jul (RSTh). Single Pacific Golden-Plovers were noted at Ravenswood O.S.P., *San Mateo* 23–26 Jul (RSTh) and at the mouth of Salmon Cr., *Sonoma* 31 Jul (DAsh). Snowy Plovers con-

tinued to show strong reproductive success on Eel R. gravel bars in *Humboldt* (SMcA). A Semipalmated Plover just w. of *Sierraville* 9 Jun was believed to be *Sierra's* first, though there are records nearby from Sierra Valley in *Plumas* (MMC). Four Semipalmated Sandpipers spanning 9–28 Jul were most certainly all ads., though only 2 were reported as such. Certainly one of the avian highlights of the summer was the Region's 4th Red-necked Stint: a beautiful alternate-plumaged ad. graced Moss Landing, *Monterey* 13–14 Jul (DEG; ph. JSo, †DR, †DSg). There are currently only eight records for the state. An ad. Pectoral Sandpiper at Moss Landing, *Monterey* 20–21 Jul was the only one reported but typical of most Julys (RF, DR).

## GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS

Two pairs of Western Gulls nested at Bay Point, *Contra Costa* 10 Jun. This represents an unusually e. record within S.F. Bay for this species (SAG). Three pairs of Heermann's Gulls again attempted to nest at Roberts L., Seaside, *Monterey* (DR, RC), but this year the attempts failed. Caspian Terns fledged young from at least two nests at Salinas R. mouth, *Monterey* by 21 Jul (RC, DR); they have had little success at this site in recent years. Unusual summer records of Common Terns were noted in S.F. Bay: first-summer birds included up to 5 at Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* 23 Jun–7 Jul (RSTh et al.) and between 10–27 Jul (PJM, Adam Winer, m. ob.); one at Charleston Slough 29 Jul (PJM); and one at Sunnyvale 31 July–5 Aug (RWR, FV), both *Santa Clara*. Ad. Commons included one at Charleston Slough 24 Jun and 2 in Eureka, *Humboldt* 26 Jul (EE). Forster's Terns nested at multiple sites in S.F. Bay. Among these colonies, 381 nests were counted at Evaporator Pond A16, *Santa Clara* (JTH). After returning for seven years, the Arctic Tern did not return to breed at Hayward R.S., *Alameda* this summer (RJR). Two ad. Least Terns at Berenda Reservoir 1 Jun (†LkC) made a first for *Madera*. Within the C.V., three pairs nested successfully again this year near Kettleman City, *Kings* 13 Jul (JSe, SBT). This is the only inland nesting colony in the state. The Least Tern nesting colony on artificial shell mounds at Albany, *Contra Costa* reached a new high of 51 individuals on 10 Jun. This is significant, as there is only one other nesting colony for this Endangered species in S.F. Bay (Mark Rauzon). Three to five pairs of Black Skimmers nested in the S.F. Bay area, a new high for the Region. Two pairs attempted to nest at Hayward R.S. 3 Jun–8 Jul: one pair produced 2 young, but none fledged (RJR). Another pair attempted to nest near Menlo Park, *San Mateo*

15 Jul (PJM); this pair has been here since 1996. Up to 4 ad. and 2 young were observed at Evaporator Pond A16, *Santa Clara* 3 Jun–14 Jul (JTH, RWR, MJM, FV et al.). The first mid-summer record for this species in *Contra Costa* occurred 19 Jun at Pt. Isabel R.S. (Dustin Alcalá). An unusual "dark morph" Common Murre was at Table Bluff, *Humboldt* 31 Jul (EE). The earliest pair of Xantus's Murrelet on Monterey Bay, *Monterey* this summer/fall was 3 Jul (JBo), but water temperatures there were rather cool throughout the season. A Horned Puffin in alternate plumage was just 1.6 nmi off the Mendocino Headlands, *Mendocino* 10 Jul (PAH, EE).

Out-of-range Yellow-billed Cuckoos were at Eel R., *Humboldt* 1–6 Jul (TMcK, SMcA, ANT) and Mono City, *Mono* 2 Jul (window kill; *vide* KNN). A freshly road-killed Short-eared Owl at Año Nuevo S.R. 18 Jul provided *San Mateo's* first summer record (Brian Walton). An absence of Common Nighthawk reports from coastal *Humboldt* has raised concern that the local urban population may have been extirpated (DFx). On the heels of the apparent disappearance of Black Swift as a breeder in coastal *Santa Cruz* comes news that for the first time in memory no Black Swifts were reported from *San Mateo*, not even at Año Nuevo S.R. (PJM). Early migrant Vaux's Swifts were at Ukiah, *Mendocino* 21 Jul (6; CEV) and at Lakeport 3 Aug (*Lake's* earliest; JRW), but one near S.F. Bay at Palo Alto, *Santa Clara* 5 Jul was unexpected (WGB). Unseasonal Lewis's Woodpeckers were at Summit Ridge, *Santa Clara/Santa Cruz* 1 Jun (RWR, FV) and near Woodside 8 Jun (first in summer for *San Mateo*; RSTh). An Acorn Woodpecker 21 Jun near upper Rush Cr. was one of the few ever found in *Mono* (Mark Pollock). A Nuttall's Woodpecker 1 Jul at Weaverville was the first ever found in *Trinity* during the breeding season (JCS), while another was in S.F. city, where barely annual, 26 Jun (ASH, AR). Both may represent post-breeding dispersal, but this species's range has expanded in recent decades.

Most encouraging were 3 Willow Flycatcher nests at lower Rush Cr., *Mono*, the first found in the Mono Basin in at least 15 years (CMcC). It is unknown if Willow Flycatchers currently nest in *Shasta*, but one at Hat Cr. 8 Jul is a strong indication that they do (Ray Bruun). With the exception of a single early bird in S.F. city 11–14 May (HuC, MWE), the coastal migration of Willow Flycatchers was typical, with small numbers found 2–24 Jun; however, one banded at Coyote Cr., *Santa Clara* 22 Jul was a full month earlier than they are usually recorded as fall migrants (*vide* WGB). The discovery of 2 singing Cordilleran Flycatchers by

researchers in *Mono* (KNN et al.) adds to the handful of summer records here, identified either from vocal (see P. E. Lowther, no. 556 in *Birds of North America* series) or observational evidence (*Field Notes* 52: 500), that support the finding that *E. occidentalis* is the breeding species in low densities on the e. side of the Sierra and in the White Mts. A pair of Say's Phoebes with young near Blackhawk provided the first nest record for *Contra Costa* since 1984, this apparently representing the northernmost nest site in the Coast Ranges (Malcolm Sproul).

Vagrant Eastern Kingbirds were at Pt. Reyes N.S., *Marin* 12 Jul (DFx, JCP), lower Wilson Cr., *Mono* 15 Jul (Sue Prentice), and Shasta Valley W.A., *Siskiyou* 20 Jul (RE). The Region's only nesting Easterns were at a nest at Lava Lakes Ranch, *Siskiyou* 17 Jun, and though the ads. were still present 1 Jul, the nest had disappeared. (RE). A first-summer Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* 16 Jun (RC, ph. DR), and another spent the summer near Younger Lagoon 17 Jul–Sep (*Santa Cruz's* 3rd; Brad Keitt, ph. JND, ph. LCh, m. ob.). A single food-toting Loggerhead Shrike was found 28 May just n. of Loyalton, *Plumas/Sierra* (JSL), and the first nesting for Sierra Valley was confirmed at the same spot 16 Jun, when fledglings were observed being fed (DS).

Single male White-eyed Vireos were at Trinidad 10–30 Jun (*Humboldt's* first; KI, m. ob.) and Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* 11 Jun (†RF), bringing this spring's total to an unprecedented 4. At least 3 vagrant Red-eyed Vireos were tallied: one 9 Jun near Bodie, *Mono* (KNN); a singing male 17 Jun at Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* (RF, SRv); another or the same banded there 8 Jul; and one at Samoa, *Humboldt* 23 Jun (KI). Cliff Swallows were found for the first time in 13 summers at Bennett Juniper, *Tuolumne*, where as many as 18 birds were noted 27–29 Jul (at 8400 ft; KJB). A titmouse thought to be an Oak Titmouse was at 6500 ft at Sardine L., *Sierra* 14 Jul (LCh). Though both species of titmouse can occasionally occur at such a high altitude, neither is expected in this part of the Region. A singing Winter Wren in suitable nesting habitat at Robinson Cr. 1 Jul was the first summer record for *Mono* (KNN). Golden-crowned Kinglets were confirmed nesting along Bodfish Cr. and Los Gatos Cr. 12–13 Jul, providing *Santa Clara's* first nest records since the 1950s. They were also detected widely in the s. Santa Cruz Mountains of adjacent *Santa Cruz* (DLSu). A pair of Wrentits at Pacific Grove, *Monterey* 28 Jul was only a couple mi from the nearest suitable nesting habitat, but this is noteworthy, as

they are rarely detected away from known breeding stations (SFB).

### THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

A singing Gray Catbird that frequented a yard in the Killgore Hills, Shasta Valley 23–24 Jun (†RE) was a first for *Siskiyou*. There have been a smattering of prior late Jun and Jul coastal records, but this is the first mid-summer occurrence in the interior. Sage Thrashers at Glass Beach, Ft. Bragg, *Mendocino* 10 Jun (†JRW) and Ravenswood O.S.P., *San Mateo* 17 Jul (RSTh) were first summer records for those counties and completely unanticipated.

A singing **Blue-winged Warbler** at Big Sur R. mouth 9 Jun (†DR) was the 3rd ever in *Monterey* and the first for spring; this becomes the 10th Regional record. A Tennessee Warbler was on F.I. on the odd dates of 9–12 Jul, but such mid-summer wandering far from breeding areas is known in the East (*fide* SBT).

A Virginia's Warbler at Dechambeau Cr.,

**SA**The Region was inundated with Northern Parulas, a situation reminiscent of the large-scale vagrancy and oversummering of the species in 1992 (see Terrill et al., "The Changing Seasons," *A. B.* 46: 1109–1111). For the 4th consecutive summer, up to 3 singing Northern Parulas on territory in *Monterey* (BSOL, DR) suggest that localized nesting continues there. Away from *Monterey*, a pair nested at Patricks Point S.P., *Humboldt*: the pair was first seen 18 Jun, copulation was observed 27 Jun, the nest was located 28 Jun in a clump of *Usnea* out a lower limb of a Red Alder, and finally the pair was seen carrying food to cap a nest 7 Jul and then to 2–3 fledglings 20 Jul (KI, DFx, JCP, GSL). The only previous nest in *Humboldt* was back in 1992, when 3 young were fledged from a nest on Elk Head, a few mi to the south. At L. Merced, S.F., a pair was present from 30 Jun–31 Jul+ (AR, Rich Ferrick). A singing male Northern Parula at La Honda, *San Mateo* 23 Apr was still there 6 Jun, while 3 others were in *San Mateo* or adjacent *Santa Cruz* (RSTh, DLSu et al.) this season, plus another S.F. bird at Mountain L. Park 4 Jun (HuC). *Humboldt* had 4 other singing males beyond the pair discussed above (KI, GSL, C. J. Ralph). The first summer record in *Contra Costa* was a male at Jewel L., Tilden Park 2 Jul (Brian Fitch). Two more were in *Mono* in Jun or Jul (KNN, CMcC). *Nineteen* Northern Parulas, plus fledglings!

*Mono* was carrying food to young in late Jun–Jul (Mike Green, KNN), confirming nesting for the first time in the *Mono* Basin since 1975. Likewise, a male Yellow Warbler carrying food at Jewel L., Tilden Park 9 Jun (Bob Brandriff et al.), and another near Pinole 16 Jun (Steve Hayashi, Lillian Fujii), were the first breeding records in *Contra Costa* in 50 years. Six Chestnut-sided Warblers were along the coast from 7–26 Jun, 2 in *Monterey* and 4 in *Humboldt*. More unusual were a Cape May Warbler in Trinidad, *Humboldt* 17 Jun (KI) and a singing male Black-throated Blue Warbler in Aurora Canyon, *Mono* 10 Jun (†Mark Pollack). The first breeding confirmation of Audubon's Warbler in S.F. was an ad. feeding a fledgling 28 Jun (ES, GGf), and the first confirmation in coastal *Humboldt* in many years were young in the cypress grove on n. spit at Humboldt Bay 8 Jul (DFx). Unusual summer vagrant warblers were the Palm at Big Sur R. mouth 11 Jun (RF), a Blackpoll on F.I. 8–11 Jul (P.R.B.O.), and a singing male Bay-breasted along Mill Cr., *Mono* 10 Jun (KNN). More expected were the smattered of summer Black-and-white Warblers (3 coastal, 2 in *Mono*) and American Redstarts (11 coastal, 3 in *Mono*).

Six Ovenbirds were more than a usual summer, but most extraordinary were singing birds at Dedrick 9 Jun (TMcK, a first for *Trinity*) and in a Tulelake, *Siskiyou* yard 23 Jun (KvSp). Northern Waterthrushes at Salt R., *Humboldt* 30 Jun and at Robinson Cr., *Mono* 30 Jun were very late (DFx), and one banded at Carmen Valley 11 Jun (MMC) was the first for *Sierra*. A pair of Common Yellowthroat feeding young along lower Wilson Cr., *Mono* in Jul (Sue Prentice) were perhaps the first to nest in the *Mono* Basin, while one in *Placer* 28 Jun (BDW) was in an area where no nests are known.

Continuing the spring incursion of southeastern species were an amazing 9 Hooded Warblers: 4 at Big Sur R. mouth and another at Carmel R. mouth, *Monterey* 5–22 Jun (Jason Scott et al.), 2 in *Santa Cruz* (including a male in mid-Jul; Barbara & Kevin Monahan, DLSu), and singles in *Sonoma*, *Humboldt*, and *Mono*. A Yellow-breasted Chat nest with young 26 Jun along Piper Slough (SAG) was the first confirmed breeding in *Contra Costa* in many years; one at Pike 28 May (JSL) may suggest they are more regular in *Sierra* than previously thought.

### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A male Scarlet Tanager at Live Oak 27 Jun (†DLSu) and a female on F.I. 17 Jun (†Rusty Japuntich) were extraordinary; the former was the first for *Santa Cruz*. Both Black-chinned

and Grasshopper Sparrows were widespread this summer around the n. edges of their ranges in our Region. A White-throated Sparrow in a Bayside yard, *Humboldt* 24 Jun (JCP) may have summered, as apparently did a Golden-crowned Sparrow in heavy molt at Coyote Pt., *San Mateo* 27 Jul–19 Aug (RSTh).

At least 30 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks this season matched the record 30 birds of last summer. Most were in Jun and were probably late vagrants, but at least 6 lingered into Jul and must have been attempting to summer. All were in coastal or Bay Area counties except for a male in Mendocino N.F., *Tehama* 13 Jun (Doug Shaw). In contrast, the 9 Indigo Buntings seemed average, although a male near Kettleman City 7 June (JSe) was just the 2nd ever in *Kings*.

A singing male Orchard Oriole at the n. spit at Humboldt Bay 21 Jun (KI) and a singing male Baltimore Oriole 30 May–2 Jun at Lanphere Dunes (PAH) were rare late spring vagrants in *Humboldt*. It seems as though we'll never stop reporting the continued spread of Great-tailed Grackle. News this summer included the first nesting for *Santa Cruz* (two pairs with young at Watsonville Slough 19 Jun; John Welch, Brian Voegtlen), a nest with 2 fledged young at Rooster Run Golf Course in *Sonoma* in Jul (DN, Rick Lebedeour, Alan Wight et al.), the first Mono Basin nest at Willow Springs on the s. shore of Mono L., *Mono* 9 Jun (Bartshe Miller), and a 2nd male joining the first at Tulelake, *Siskiyou* (DHpt, KvSp).

Red Crossbills were widespread in *Humboldt* and discovered in Snow Mt. Wilderness, *Lake* in Jul (DvW, JRW). For yet another summer, Lawrence's Goldfinches were widespread in the coast ranges and especially in interior Mendocino at the n. edge of their range (CEV, GEC et al.).

**CORRIGENDA**

Last fall's Yellow-green Vireo at Orick, *Humboldt* was present 28 Sep rather than 28 Nov (KI). From the winter report: the American Tree Sparrow in *Marin* 17 Dec was at Kehoe Marsh rather than McClures Beach (LLu, CLu), and the "Hooded Warbler" reported 13 Jan in *Sonoma* was actually a Hooded Oriole. We thank David Fix, Les Lieurance, Benjamin D. Parmeter, and Ruth Rudesill for these corrections.

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# Southern Pacific Coast



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**S**outhern California experienced a typical swarm and dry summer. Encouraging numbers of the Endangered Western Yellow-billed Cuckoos (*C. a. occidentalis*), and Least Bell's Vireos (*V. b. pusillus*) were reported, but populations of Southwestern Willow Flycatchers (*E. t. extimus*) remained precariously small. Reports of Brown-crested Flycatchers suggest that this species is continuing to expand its range westward. An interesting variety of wood-warblers

and other migrants from eastern North America persisted well into June. Among seabirds, Red-billed Tropicbirds were almost common off San Clemente Island. Breeding season field work for the *San Diego County Bird Atlas* was completed this summer; this county—which boasts the highest county bird species total in the United States—joins Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, and Orange Counties in having completed these important projects, though to date, only the Orange County atlas has been published.

**Abbreviations:** C.L. (China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme ne. Kern County); E.A.F.B. (Edwards Air Force Base, se. Kern); F.C.R. (Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley National Monument, Inyo); G.H.P. (Galileo Hill Park in extreme e. Kern); N.E.S.S. (n. end of the Salton Sea, Riverside); S.C.R.E. (Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura); S.E.S.S. (s. end of the Salton Sea, Imperial); S.F.K.R.P. (South Fork Kern R. Preserve near Weldon, Kern); V.C.G.P. (Ventura County Game Preserve near Pt. Mugu Naval Air Station, Ventura). Because virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included. Documentation for species on the California Bird Records Committee (C.B.R.C.) review list is forwarded to the C.B.R.C. Secretary and archived at the Western Foundation for Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.

## LOONS THROUGH HAWKS

An alternate-plumaged Pacific Loon at N.E.S.S. 7 Jul (BLS) was inland and exceptionally late if a migrant. An alternate-plumaged Horned Grebe inland at S.E.S.S. 3 Jun (GMcC) was a late spring migrant.

A Laysan Albatross seen from China Pt. on San Clemente I. 3 Jul (BLS) was remarkably close to land and in an area where previously unrecorded. A **Dark-rumped Petrel** was well seen at 34° 20' N, 122° 69' W (about 100 mi off Pt. Conception, *Santa Barbara*) 25 Jul (RS). A Flesh-footed Shearwater off Morro Bay, *San Luis Obispo* 7 Jul (GPS) was unexpected considering the time of the year. A moribund Leach's Petrel on San Clemente I. 13 Jul (BLS) suggests the possibility of nesting on the island.

Red-billed Tropicbirds were present off China Pt. on San Clemente I. 2 Jul+ (BLS) with a remarkable 15–20 on 29 Jul (BLS), the largest number ever reported in California, and 3 more were seen far off *Ventura* 19–26 Jul (RS). The only Magnificent Frigatebirds reported were one near Del Mar, *San Diego* 24 Jun (TM) and another over Carlsbad, *San Diego* 4 Jul (SW).

An ad. Little Blue Heron in the Prado Basin,



A Brown Thrasher at Cabrillo National Monument at the southern tip of Point Loma in San Diego on 9 August evidently spent most of the summer at this location. *Photograph by Leroy M. Dorman.*

*Riverside* 23 Apr–20 Jun (JEP) was the only one reported away from coastal *San Diego*. An imm. Tricolored Heron was inland at S.E.S.S. 22 Jul (SSo), where considered casual. An imm. Reddish Egret at N.E.S.S. 7 Jul (GMcC), another near Salton City 1 Aug (GMcC), an ad. at S.E.S.S. 28 Jul–19 Aug (KZK), and an imm. there 17 Aug+ (KZK) made a remarkable count for the Salton Sea; an imm. in Goleta 14 Jul+ (JRS) is the first for *Santa Barbara*. A Surf Scoter at N.E.S.S. 1 Jul (GMcC) and a White-winged Scoter at S.E.S.S. 13–31 Jul (KCM, KZK) were both evidently summering locally.

A juv. Bald Eagle at S.E.S.S. 14 Jul (GMcC) was unprecedented, the closest known nesting localities being in c. Arizona. A Cooper's Hawk in Brawley 1 Jul (GMcC) provides the first summer record for *Imperial*. An imm. Northern Goshawk near Pine Mt., *Ventura* 13 Jun (DL) suggests nesting in that area. A pair of Harris's Hawks continued at Boulevard, *San Diego* throughout the period (PU). The imm. Zone-tailed Hawk near El Centro, *Imperial* through 3 May returned 12 Jul+ (KZK).

## RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS

A pair of Clapper Rails along with a lone female at Carpinteria 19 Apr (DZ) were the only ones known present in *Santa Barbara*. A Sora's nest containing three eggs and a freshly-hatched chick near Lompoc, *Santa Barbara* 4 May (PWC) and a pair with 2 juvs. along the Mojave R. near Victorville, *San Bernardino* 23 Jun (SJM) are of note, as there are very few recent records for breeding in s. California.

Two remarkably early golden-plovers in Irvine, *Orange* 4 Jul (LO) were thought to be

Pacifics. Two American x Black Oystercatcher hybrids were on Anacapa I. 3 Jun (DVP), and another was near Prisoner's Harbor on Santa Cruz I. 9 Jun (DMH). A Solitary Sandpiper near Cartago, *Inyo* 22 Jul (JW) and another in *San Diego* 24 Jul (BMu) were the earliest this fall. A Red Knot near Lancaster, *Los Angeles* 29 Jul (MSanM) was the only one found inland away from the Salton Sea. Single Semipalmated Sandpipers at C.L. 12 Jul (JSt) and S.C.R.E. 29 Jul (DP) and a Pectoral Sandpiper near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara* 19 Jul (JCM) were the only ones reported. An alternate-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper at E.A.F.B. 24 Jul (MSanM) was the first for *Kern*. An ad. Stilt Sandpiper in Irvine 24–26 Jul (AO) and another at V.C.G.P. 26 Jul (OA) were on the coast, where rare. A Red Phalarope at S.E.S.S. 29 Jul (C-TL) was inland, where rare.

Up to five pairs of Laughing Gulls nested at S.E.S.S. (KCM); up to 3 birds in Blythe, *Riverside* 24–29 Jun (RH) coincided with a post-breeding influx of these birds into the Salton Sea from the Gulf of California, and one at San Clemente I. 3 Jun (BLS) was on the coast, where rare. An ad. Franklin's Gull at S.E.S.S. 3 Jun (GMcC) was believed to be a late spring migrant, but up to 2 at N.E.S.S. 1–12 Jul (GMcC, C-TL) were probably summering locally. An ad. Heermann's Gull at S.E.S.S. 7–19 Jul (GMcC, KZK), another in Salton City 1–2 Aug (GMcC, KZK), an imm. at N.E.S.S. 11 Jul (C-TL), and a juv. there 25 Jul (CMcG) was an average number for the Salton Sea in summer. An ad. Sabine's Gull at N.E.S.S. 1 Jul (GMcC) is the 7th to be found on the Salton Sea in summer. A **Royal Tern** at N.E.S.S. 23 Jun–1 Jul (GMcC) is only the 4th to be found inland



in California. An Elegant Tern—a species now almost annual at the Salton Sea—was near Salton City 12 Jun (BMi), 2 ads. were there 1 Aug (GMcC), up to 2 ads. and an imm. were there 1–8 Aug (GMcC, KZK), and an ad. was at S.E.S.S. 16 Jul (KCM). There were 8 reports of Least Terns at the Salton Sea this summer, including a juv. accompanying an ad. at S.E.S.S. 14 Jul (GMcC). Up to 3 Black Skimmers in the Prado Basin 21 Jun–31 Jul (JEP, DSP) were in an area that might suggest an overland route from the Salton Sea (where 400+ pairs nested; KCM) to the coast.

An alternate-plumaged Pigeon Guillemot at China Pt. on San Clemente I. 2 Jul (BLS) was unusually far south.

### DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

A pair of Eurasian Collared-Doves in Ridgecrest, Kern mid-May+ was building a nest in Jun (LL). A White-winged Dove in Bishop, Inyo 27 Jun (JZ) was unusually far n., and one in Baldwin Hills, Los Angeles 1 Jul (EB) was the only one reported on the coast. Inca Doves continue to expand their range, with one remaining as far n. as Ridgecrest to 16 Jun (JSt) and calling birds along the coast in San Diego 1–9 Jun (PU) and 20 Jul (DA), and Encinitas, San Diego 22 Jul (L&CT). Single Yellow-billed Cuckoos on San Clemente I. 18 Jun (CWB), Moreno Valley, Riverside 26 Jun (MB), G.H.P. 23 Jun (TEW), and in Sand Canyon, Kern 9 Jun (DLaB) were migrants away from suitable nesting habitat; single birds near Imperial Beach, San Diego 28 Jun (PH), in the San Felipe Valley, San Diego 6–12 Jun (TG, PJ), Irvine 5 Jul (LDT), and near Bishop 4 Jun (J&DP) were in or near suitable nesting habitat, and 14–17 pairs were at S.F.K.R.P. throughout the period (BB). Territorial Whip-poor-wills were present near Big Bear City in the San Bernardino Mts. 22–23 May (REW); nesting has yet to be confirmed in California. A Chimney Swift over the Baldwin Hills 2 Jun (RBa), 2 over downtown Los Angeles 24 Jun (TM), and another in Irwindale 13 Jul (C-TL) were in areas of Los Angeles where small numbers are present every summer. A *Chaetura* in Riverside 4 Jun (AH), at a time of the year when Chimney Swift is more expected, was believed to be a Vaux's Swift. A Downy Woodpecker at G.H.P. 19 Jul (KSG) was far from the nearest known nesting locality.

In their only stronghold w. of the Colorado River, Willow Flycatchers of the Endangered subspecies *extimus* declined at S.F.K.R.P., with 11 nesting pairs and 9 additional males present (MJW); additional single territories were noted in Fillmore, Ventura (JG), Mission Viejo, Orange, (PHB), and at Big Bear L., San Bernardino (SJM). A pair of Gray Flycatchers at a nest n. of Big Pines, Los Angeles 24 Jun (KLG) represented one of the few confirmed nestings for the San Gabriel

Mts. A Western (presumed Pacific-slope) Flycatcher at G.H.P. 20 Jul (KSG) was the earliest fall migrant for e. Kern. Say's Phoebes away from their usual summer range in the arid interior were in Goleta (ad. with three juvs., 14 Jul; GBW) and Santa Maria (2 ads., 16 Jul; JMC). A juv. at Bolsa Chica 14 Jun (LRH) suggests breeding at that coastal locality as well. Brown-crested Flycatchers are increasing at the nw. edge of their breeding range, with 9 pairs along the Mojave R. near Victorville, San Bernardino 23 Jun (SJM), and a minimum of 8 territories (and likely 10–15) in and near S.F.K.R.P. through the period (BB) Single birds in Indian Wells Canyon 18 Jun and Sand Canyon 26 Jun (DLaB) were the first for e. Kern, and additional birds were in Borrego Springs and San Felipe Ck., e. San Diego in Jul (BMu). Two Eastern Kingbirds were at S.F.K.R.P. 16 Jun (MF), and a presumed fall vagrant was on San Clemente I. 27 Jul (BLS).

### VIREOS THROUGH WOOD-WARBLERS

Least Bell's Vireos continue to recover in the Region, with a remarkable 430+ territories in the Prado Basin, San Bernardino/Riverside (DSP, JEP); a minimum of 56 territories in Orange was the highest count there in recent years (DRW), and six pairs were counted along the Mojave R. near Victorville on 23 June (SJM). Documentation of a pair of Warbling Vireos successfully raising young in an urban residential area in Los Angeles 29 Jul (RBa) offers hope for this declining riparian species. In addition to those noted in the spring report, Red-eyed Vireos were found near Santa Barbara 13–24 Jun (G&JH), Torrance, Los Angeles 12 Jun (DMH), near Pasadena, Los Angeles 4 Jul (KLG), in the Prado Basin 8 Jul (DSP), at G.H.P. 7–8 Jun and 15 Jun (KSG), and at S.F.K.R.P. 13 Jun (2; JSt, BW).

A Northern Rough-winged Swallow at 10,300 ft in Rock Creek Canyon, Inyo 29 Jul (JLD) was at an exceptionally high altitude. An American Dipper at Gaviota, Santa Barbara 19 Jun (JJH) was away from the normal summering range, and an ad. with a fledgling on Pauma Ck. 7 Jun (PU) were among the few ever documented nesting in San Diego. A California Gnatcatcher along the lower Arroyo Seco in Pasadena, Los Angeles 21 Jun (DSC) was about 8 mi from the nearest known population. Western Bluebirds fledged young in Mojave on 23 Jun (TEW), the first successful nesting in e. Kern. Swainson's Thrushes were thought to be nesting on the s. coast of Santa Barbara, where rare, in Goleta in early Jul (DS); a singing bird through the period in Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area in the Los Angeles basin was well away from known breeding localities (RBa). Wrentits were encountered in two locations near Lone Pine, Inyo 12–31 Jul

(A&LK), at the ne. edge of the species's range. The Gray Catbird reported in the spring report at Pt. Loma, San Diego was present until 2 Jun (ME). A Brown Thrasher evidently summered at Pt. Loma, being seen 24 Jul (VC) to at least 9 Aug (LMD). A juv. LeConte's Thrasher near Independence, Inyo 12–31 Jul (A&LK) was at the n. edge of the species's range.

Vagrant wood-warblers continued to be recorded well into Jun; those that follow were not included in the spring regional report. A Golden-winged Warbler, casual in spring, was at G.H.P. 13 Jun (KHL, KSG). Northern Parulas were found in Santa Barbara 13–14 Jun (G&JH), near Buellton, Santa Barbara 13 Jun (LRB, KA), near Pasadena 2 Jun–4 Jul (TR, KLG), and in the interior at G.H.P. 7 Jun (RN) and S.F.K.R.P. 15–16 Jun (BB). A Chestnut-sided Warbler was in Ridgecrest 12 Jun (JSe), and Magnolias were noted at Pt. Loma 6 Jun (REW) and G.H.P. 7 Jun (KSG). Defying explanation was a Blackpoll Warbler that came aboard a research vessel 65 mi w. of Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara 23 Jul (RS). Late spring Black-and-white Warblers were at Pt. Loma 19–21 Jun (VC), G.H.P. 6–13 Jun (KSG), S.F.K.R.P. 24–29 Jun (SSc), and in montane forest in the s. Santa Rosa Mtns., San Diego 17 Jun (RT). Three American Redstarts were found in the Region 6–12 Jun: one at S.F.K.R.P. 21 Jul (RBa) was halfway between the latest spring and earliest fall records for Kern. A Prothonotary Warbler s. of Big Bear L. 3 Jul (BL) was at a surprising locality. Other late spring vagrants included Ovenbirds at G.H.P. 6 Jun (KSG) and in Santa Barbara 11–24 Jun (KA) and Kentucky Warblers at Bishop 4 Jun (KN), G.H.P. 6 Jun (KSG), and Butterbreed Spring, Kern 13 Jun (TG). After a strong showing in May, additional Hooded Warblers were on Pt. Loma 7 Jun (BMu) and at Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo, where a singing male summered 30 Jun+ (CHI).

Among w. breeding species, Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats have benefited greatly from cowbird trapping programs in recent years, reflected, for example in counts of 227 and 678 individuals, respectively, at S.F.K.R.P. 7 Jul (BB). A Black-throated Gray Warbler in El Centro 3 Jul+ (KZK) was the first to summer in the Salton Sea region, and a Hermit Warbler in Santa Barbara 29 Jul (MAH) was an early fall migrant. Some 25 pairs of Yellow-breasted Chats were censused along the Mojave R. near Victorville 23 Jun (SJM); a singing male until at least 14 Jun at San Simeon S. P. (GPS) was in coastal San Luis Obispo, where nesting has not been recorded.

### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Summer Tanagers were widely recorded, including at six coastal localities well away from breeding

areas. A Western Tanager at S.E.S.S. 14 Jul (PAG, GMcC) was the earliest fall record for the Salton Sea region. Black-chinned Sparrows are extremely rare in the Region away from their breeding grounds, so one at Pt. Loma 5 Jun (REW) was a surprise. Cassin's Sparrows are casual in California, and the 3 recorded this Jun were the most since the influx of 1978; one ne. of San Juan Capistrano 1–2 Jun (DRW, JEP) was the 2nd for Orange, and singing birds at Castaic L. 8 Jun (BED) and S.F.K.R.P. 10–13 Jun (BB) were the first recorded in Los Angeles and Kern, respectively. Breeding of Grasshopper Sparrow on San Clemente I. was confirmed when dependent young were seen 27 Jun (BLS). A Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco in Huntington Beach, Orange 4–29 Jun (JEP) was at an unusual summer locality. In addition to those mentioned in the spring report, 10 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (divided evenly between coastal and interior counties) were found 5 Jun–26 Jul. At least 14 Indigo Buntings were seen during the period, and the first nesting for Orange was confirmed in Huntington Beach when recently fledged young were seen 19 Aug (LO, COJ). An early migrant Lazuli Bunting was in Rovana, Inyo 25 Jun (JLD).

Bobolinks were at F.C.R. 6 Jun (JT) and Prado Basin 18 Jun (JEP). The tale of the Great-tailed Grackle continues, with nesting confirmed during the period at Morro Bay (TME) and Oso Flaco Lake, San Luis Obispo (BS). Scarce along the coast, a fall migrant Scott's Oriole was on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Los Angeles 27 Jul (C-TL). The Black-backed Oriole near Imperial Beach, San Diego was last documented on 3 Jul (SFB), although it was reported by an unknown observer on 4 Jul. Red Crossbills were feeding young in Ridgecrest 3 Jun, establishing the 3rd nesting for e. Kern (JSe).

### CORRIGENDUM

The Yellow-billed Cuckoo in California City (N. A. B. 54: 423) should have been credited to MJSanM.

### ADDENDUM

Blue-winged Warblers were at G.H.P. 18 May (Scott B. Terrill) and California City 21 May (Jon Fisher).

Cited observers (county coordinators in bold-face): Kevin Aanerud, Douglas Allen, Onik Arian, Stephen F. Bailey, Larry R. Ballard, Bob Barnes, Richard Barth (RBa), Ron Beck (RBe), Peter H. Bloom, Eric Brooks, Mike Bumgardner, Christopher W. Burney, Jaime M. Chavez, Paul W. Collins, David M. Compton (Santa Barbara), Virginia Conway, Daniel S. Cooper, Brian E. Daniels, Don Desjardin, Leroy M. Dorman, Jon L. Dunn, Tom M. Edell (San Luis Obispo), Leo

Edson, Richard A. Erickson, Jeremy Ertl, Michael Evans (San Diego), Mike Feighner, Terri Gallion, Kimball L. Garrett (Los Angeles), Peter A. Ginsburg, Karen S. Gilbert, Jim Greaves, Kay Green, Robert A. Hamilton, Robert W. Hansen, George and Joan Hardie (G&JH), Sandee Harvill, Loren R. Hays, D. Mitchell Heindel, Cher Hollingsworth (CH), J. J. Hollister, Chris Howard for Tom & Jo Heindel (Inyo), Roger Higson, Brad K. Hines, Mark A. Holmgren, Pierre Howard, Andrew Howe, Curtis O. Johnson, Paul Jorgensen, Andrew and Leak Kirk (A&LK), Kenneth Z. Kurland, Denise LaBerteaux, Kevin Larson, Lisa Lavelle, Brian Leatherman, Cin-Ty Lee, Kelli Heindel Levinson, Dee Lyon, Guy McCaskie (Imperial), Chet McGaugh, Thomas Miko, Bob Miller (BMi), Kathy C. Molina, Tim Moss, Brennan Mulrooney (BMu), Stephen J. Myers, Kristie Nelson, Richard Norton, Leo Ohtsuki, Akira Okula, Jim and

Debby Parker (J & DP), Dharm S. Pellegrini, Dave Pereksta, James E. Pike, Jonathan H. Plissner, David Vander Pluym, Thomas Rahn, James S. Royer, Michael San Miguel, Michael J. San Miguel, Sylvia Schmitt (SSc), Brad K. Schram, Don Schroeder, Joyce Seibold (JSe), Ryan Shaw, Brad Sillasen, Bob Smith (BSm), Gregory P. Smith, Steve Sosensky (SSo), Susan Steele (SSt), John Sterling (JSt), John R. Storer, Brian L. Sullivan, Lee and Claudia Taylor (L & CT), Robert Theriault, John Tiffany, Larry D. Tripp, Philip Unitt, Stanley Walens, Richard E. Webster, Walter Wehtje (Ventura), Grant B. Weyburne, Mary J. Whitfield, Judy Wickman, Bud Widdowson, Douglas R. Willick (Orange), John C. Wilson (Kern), Thomas E. Wurster, Jerry Zatorski, Dick Zembal. An additional 25+ observers who could not be individually acknowledged submitted reports this season; they have our thanks.



# Baja California Peninsula



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An exciting summer season saw Black Rails resurrected from presumed extirpation on the Río San Telmo, Mexico's first nesting Gadwalls, and Black-legged Kittiwakes remaining in the tropics into July. Enticing views were had of a rail and some swallows well outside their known ranges, hopefully inspiring further exploration. The geothermal ponds at Cerro Prieto continued to support important populations of nesting terns and waders, and a couple of unseasonal passerine vagrants added spice. We received reports from only the northern quarter and southern tip of the peninsula.

**Abbreviations:** S.S.P.M. (Sierra San Pedro Mártir); U.A.B.C. (Universidad Autónoma de Baja California at Ensenada).

### LOONS THROUGH SKIMMERS

All three regularly occurring loon species were recorded this summer, with 2 Red-throated and 35 Pacifics at Bahía de San Quintín 14 Jun (REW; one Pacific still present 19 Jul—MSM et al.) and one to 6 Commons at Rosarito 17 Jul (GF). Apparently oversummering grebes at Bahía de San Quintín 14 Jun included 15 Eared, 105 Westerns, and 15 Clark's (REW). Another Eared was at Estero Punta Banda 20 Jul (MSM et al.).

Nesting herons at the Cerro Prieto geothermal ponds 19 May included Great Blue Heron (11+ nests, most with large young), Great Egret (103+ nests, most with small young), and Snowy Egret (65+ nests, no young visible) (KLG, KCM). A total of 4 Reddish Egrets at Bahía de San Quintín 14 Jun–19 Jul (REW, RAH et al.), 2 at Estero Punta Banda 18–20 Jul (TEW), 2 Cattle Egrets at Lagunita El Ciprés 17 Jul (DSC et al.), and up to 5 White-faced Ibis at Lagunita El Ciprés 17–20 Jul (RAH et al.) were noteworthy at this season.

At one of the Brant's primary wintering sites, Bahía de San Quintín, 18 were still present 14 Jun (REW), with 6 there 19 Jul (MSM et al.). **Gadwall** were found nesting in Mexico for the first time this season. On a reservoir just n. of Leyes de Reforma 25 May, two pairs were present, and a dumped egg was collected (RAE; \*U.A.B.C.). Another one to 2 Gadwall broods were at Lagunita El Ciprés 3 Jun–17 Jul (ph. SGG; RAH et al.). Details will be published elsewhere. A female Blue-winged Teal at Lagunita El Ciprés 17 Jul (RAH et al.) and a female Cinnamon Teal below the Tropic of Cancer at Estero San José 7 Jul (AJ) were unexpected. Also at Estero San José, up to 10 Redheads were seen 1–7 Jul (AJ). Redheads nested at Lagunita El Ciprés, with at least one brood produced 24 May–17 Jul (SNGH et al.). The only previously documented nesting record for the peninsula

was from the Río del Rosario estuary in Sep 1991 (\*U.A.B.C.).

The Bahía de San Quintín estuary was home to numerous aseasonal shorebirds 14 Jun: 60 Black-bellied Plovers, 11 Semipalmated Plovers, 55 Greater Yellowlegs, 175 Willets, 22 Whimbrels, 175 Long-billed Curlews, 450 Marbled Godwits, 4 Ruddy Turnstones, one Black Turnstone, 26 Sanderlings, 55 Western Sandpipers, and 225 Short-billed Dowitchers; a Wilson's Phalarope was assumed to be an early migrant (REW). More surprising were 2

**SA** On 14 Jun, Richard Webster rediscovered a **Black Rail** population long assumed extirpated on the Río San Telmo. Grinnell reported these birds in 1928 (A distributional summation of the ornithology of Lower California. *University of California Publications in Zoology* 32: 1-300), but by 1987 Wilbur (*Birds of Baja California*, University of California Press, Berkeley) judged the habitat to be lacking. (Excepting 2–3 at Bahía de San Quintín in Feb 1991 [*Euphonia* 1: 19-21], the species has been unrecorded in the Region since Grinnell's summary.) The river may have been poorly vegetated 14 years ago, but it now supports an extensive freshwater marsh dominated by species of *Scirpus*, *Juncus*, *Typha*, *Salicornia*, *Anemopsis*, and *Distichlis*, mixed with willows and tamarisk, from near Hwy. 1 to approximately 3.4 mi upstream.

On 17 Jul, Dan Cooper, Mike San Miguel, and RAH stopped at Webster's location armed with a tape of Black Rail vocalizations, eliciting several "grrr" calls from a single bird. On 19 Jul, at least 5 birds responded to tape in the river segment 1.7 to 3.4 mi inland from Hwy. 1. Most growled, but one gave the "kee-keedo" vocalization. We also heard at least one Virginia Rail, and RAH may have glimpsed a Clapper Rail (a species not known from inland locations on the coastal slope; confirmation required). Black Rails are not known to breed elsewhere in Baja California, and an inland population of Clapper Rails would be equally (if not more) remarkable, so further spring/summer investigation of the Río San Telmo is encouraged. Naturally, restraint with the use of tapes—as well as common courtesy (and common sense) in exploring this semi-remote area—are mandatory.

Wandering Tattlers at Bahía Chileno, e. of Cabo San Lucas 7 Jul (AJ).

A California Gull far s. at Bahía Chileno, e. of Cabo San Lucas 2 Jul (AJ) and different Glaucous-winged Gulls at Bahía de San Quintín 14 Jun (REW) & 19 Jul (MSM et al.) were overshadowed by up to 7 imm. **Black-legged Kittiwakes** near San José del Cabo 4–8 Jul (ph. AJ). These birds followed a winter when exceptional numbers of this species moved far s., but tropical sightings at this season may be unprecedented. A visit to the important nesting colony at the Cerro Prieto geothermal ponds on 19 May revealed 305 ad. Gull-billed Terns, with 191 nests counted and no young visible yet, 24 ad. Forster's Terns with 6+ nests, and 128 Black Skimmers with 48 nests; no Laughing Gulls or Caspian Terns were nesting at the time (KLG, KCM). At Bahía de San Quintín, 7 Common Terns were already present on 19 Jul (RAH et al.).

### DOVES THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

Ruddy Ground-Doves are now at least tenuously established in the s. Cape District, with a new high count of 10 at Estero San José 7 Jul (AJ). The Calliope Hummingbird is apparently one of the rarest summer residents of the S.S.P.M., but nesting is unconfirmed; a male was in the upper La Tassajera drainage 16 Jun (REW). The peninsula's first confirmed summer Tropical Kingbird record was of one at Estero San José 7 Jul (AJ). A 15 Jun hike along the e. rim of the S.S.P.M. at 2500–2700 m yielded five Dusky Flycatcher territories (6 birds), four Warbling Vireo territories (4 birds), a silent **Red-breasted Nuthatch** (first Regional summer record), three Hermit Thrush territories (4 birds), and 5 Yellow-rumped Warblers, including a fledgling (REW). The tip of the Baja California Peninsula is a natural concentration point for migrating swallows. Present in the vicinity of San José del Cabo 1–8 Jul were a Purple Martin, up to 2 Violet-green Swallows, up to 25 Northern Rough-winged Swallows, one or 2 early Barn Swallows 7–8 Jul, and the *Petrochelidon* discussed below.

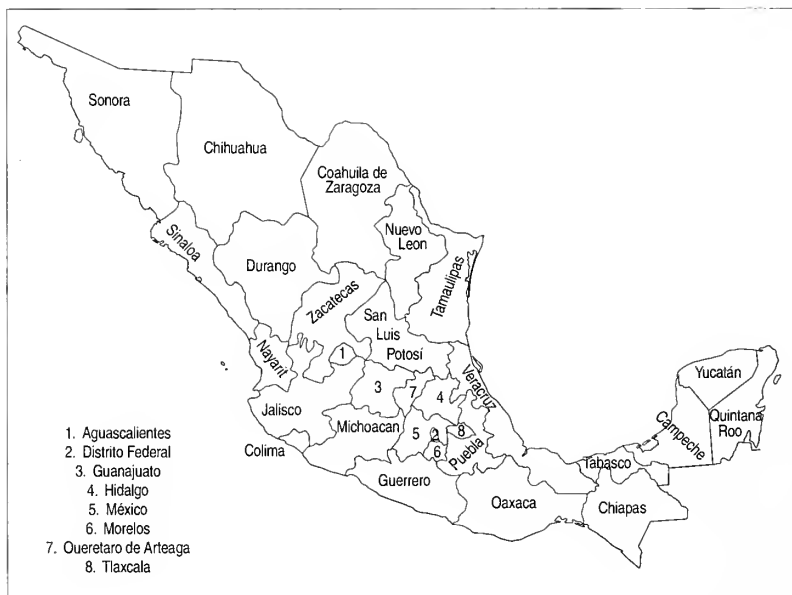
Marsh Wrens, presumably representing the newly described subspecies *clarkae* (*Proceedings of the San Diego Society of Natural History* 31, 1996), have recently been found summering at Lagunita El Ciprés, but nesting remains unconfirmed; up to 10 were there 17 Jul (MSM et al.). Four ad. and 9 juv. Orange-crowned Warblers at 1700–2500 m on the w. slope of the S.S.P.M. 14–17 Jun were considered likely post-breeding migrants or dispersants that bred elsewhere (REW); nesting is not documented in this range. Two singing male Western Tanagers were on the w. slope of the S.S.P.M. 17 Jun, at 1700

and 2000 m. One appeared to be on territory, the other prospecting. Two birds at 1770 m on 18 Jul (MSM) may have been early migrants; nesting remains undocumented on the peninsula. A female Summer Tanager at El Descanso 17 Jul (RAH, DSC) was unexpected. Two White-collared Seedeaters at Estero San José 7 July (AJ) were thought to be imm. males of one of the West Mexican forms. These birds, or their parents, may have been seen on 8 Apr, when 3 White-collared Seedeaters were reported from the same area (PP). We believe that these reports likely involve escapees. A 16 Jun walk along the w. rim of the S.S.P.M. at 2400–2600 m produced record counts of Green-tailed Towhees (7 territories, 8 birds) and Fox Sparrows (18 territories, 25 birds including 2 juvs.; REW). On 20 Jul, a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak was consorting with a male Black-headed on the lower Río Santo Tomás, but no young were seen (†RAH et al.).

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# Mexico



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This period was very rainy in most of the country. Significant contributions to this column continue to include records of birds outside their distributions mapped in Howell and Webb (1995), as well as some early and overwintering migrants, but the warm months of June and July saw overall relatively little birding activity. Because the distribution of both resident and transient species in Mexico is still so incompletely known, the records in this report carry comparatively little commentary on their relative rarity—indeed, the first three species boldfaced below are undoubtedly regular visitors to the area but were nevertheless first local records!

**SA** Among 100+ Cliff Swallows at San José del Cabo 5–8 Jul were several possible Cave Swallows (AJ). Jaramillo writes: “Almost every Cliff Swallow had a rufous forehead, typical of the largely Mexican race *swainsoni* (= *melanogaster*) rather than the white-fronted birds from farther north (*pyrrhonota/tachina*). Rump color varied from pale buff to a darker cinnamon. On ads., the dark throat was obvious. Views of the presumed Cave Swallows were always somewhat distant, and none of the birds was seen perched. These rufous-fronted birds had entirely cinnamon throats and faces, which set off a dark cap. Rump color was dark. Two appeared to be in wing molt.”

“One concern is that some juv. Cliff Swallows may show cinnamon throats with almost no dark, superficially resembling Cave Swallows. I was unable to determine if the auriculars of the presumed Cave Swallows were cinnamon or dark. Cliff Swallows in juvenal plumage are extremely variable, with most but not all showing white speckling on the face or throat. Some are cinnamon on the throat, but they usually show some dark on the lower throat. The variation in *swainsoni* has not been detailed, particularly with respect to separation from Cave Swallows, so conservative field identification is necessary. The dark rumps of these birds represent a potential problem, as Caribbean Cave Swallows are dark-rumped, whereas Mexican birds are pale-rumped. However, the fact that 2 birds appeared to be in wing molt may bode well for their identification as Cave Swallows; that species typically molts on the breeding grounds, while Cliff Swallows molt on the wintering grounds and much later in the season.”

“Given the problems discussed above, it is best to consider these as tantalizing observations that need confirmation. Although the latest *A.O.U. Check-list* attributed the Cave Swallow to Baja California, Howell et al. (*Annotated checklist of the birds of Baja California and Baja California Sur*, Monographs in Field Ornithol., in press.) were unable to find any records. Observers are encouraged to look carefully at swallows in this area in the future.”



## NORTHERN MEXICO

A pelagic trip 20 Jul (0730–1300) in Mexican waters in the w. Gulf of Mexico—conducted as part of the Brownsville International Birding Festival—produced 4 **Cory's Shearwaters**, 18 **Band-rumped Storm-Petrels**, one unidentified jaeger, and a **Sooty Tern** (PH). These are all species that have been recorded in the n. Gulf of Mexico since pelagic trips off Texas became regular in the 1990s, but they had apparently never been documented in Tamaulipan waters.

One **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was seen 23 Jun on Río Remos, Raíces, N.L., where two pairs with nestlings were discovered last year (RGG), these being the first state records. Two **White Ibis** and 5 **Wood Storks** were seen near Anáhuac, Tamps. 14 Jun (ORS, AOI). A single **Peregrine Falcon** was seen perching on the Canal 9 television antenna in Torreón, Coah. and hunting doves and pigeons in the surrounding area on 25, 26 & 31 Jul. **Peregrine Falcons** are a common sight in the Torreón city center from early Oct through early Apr, and there are a very few summer records from the nearby Nazas R. These are the first Jul sightings of **Peregrines** since 1984 in the city of Torreón (FVP, WB). Up to 17 **Black-necked Stilts** were seen near Anáhuac 11–19 Jun, and 2 **American Avocets** were there 15 Jun (ORS, AOI). **Royal Terns** in ones and twos were seen near Anáhuac 12–19 Jun (ORS, AOI). Several **Montezuma Quail** were recorded, mostly by call, in pine-oak forest below El Palmito, Sin. 5 & 6 Jun (FR). One **Burrowing Owl** was near Los Mochis, Sin. 5 Jun (FR). **Common Nighthawks** were found abundantly near Anáhuac in mid-Jun (ORS, AOI). One and 2 **Barn** and up to 3 **Cave Swallows** were seen near Anáhuac in mid-Jun (ORS, AOI). Several male **Painted Buntings** on territory were also recorded near Anáhuac 14–19 Jun (ORS, AOI). An early **Lark Bunting** in breeding plumage was seen in the campus of the Instituto Tecnológico de La Laguna, Torreón 23 & 26 Jul (FVP, WB). A couple of **Lark Sparrows** were seen near Anáhuac 13–19 Jun (ORS, AOI). Large numbers of **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were recorded together with other blackbirds near Anáhuac in mid-Jun (ORS, AOI).

**Contributors** (area compilers in boldface): **William Beatty** (WB), Ricardo Guerra de la Garza (RGG), Petra Hockey (PH), Adán Oliveras de Ita (AOI), Octavio Rojas Soto (ORS), Forrest Rowley (FR), **Francisco Valdés Peresgasga** (FVP).

## CENTRAL MEXICO

**Abbreviation:** U.N.A.M. (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

## HERONS THROUGH WRENS

One **Snowy Egret** was at Almoloya del Río, Méx. 22 Jul (HGdS, AOI, EG); this species is mapped by Howell and Webb (1995) in the state of México as a winter visitor only. Two **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were seen at the Glorieta de Colón, Toluca, Méx. 5 Jul, above the 2200-m elevation stated as the upper limit by Howell and Webb (1995). Two **Double-toothed Kites** were seen 16 Jun at Laguna La María, Col. (FR). A **Black Hawk-Eagle** was seen 25 Jun on the Elicia road about 2 km ne. of Paraíso, Gro. Single **Ornate Hawk-Eagles** were seen 16 & 19 Jun near Finca San Antonio, above Comala, Col. (FR). One **Peregrine Falcon** was seen on the se. side of Cerro del Chiquihuite, Méx. 7 Jul (HGdS, MPV, HZV), and one was seen at La Cima, D.F. 11 Jul (HGdS, EG); this species was considered a rare winter visitor in the Mexico City area (Wilson and Ceballos 1993).

A **King Vulture** was recorded 28 Jun over tropical dry forest around 14 mi s. of Atoyac, Gro. (FR). Two **King Rails** were seen 18 Jun at Laguna de Sayula, about 5 mi ne. of Ciudad Guzmán, Jal. (FR). Two **Common Terns** were reported 15 Jun at the warm-water outflow from the hydroelectric power plant in Manzanillo, Col. (FR). Eight **Bridled Terns** were seen 15 Jun near Piedra Blanca off Manzanillo, as were 2 **Brown Noddies** (FR). Two **Yellow-headed Parrots** were noted 19 Jun near Comala (FR). A **Lesser Roadrunner** was seen 3 km e. of Parres (HGdS, AOI, EG).

**Barn Owl** feathers and pellets were found on the se. side of Cerro del Chiquihuite, Méx. 7 Jul (HGdS, MPV, HZV); pellets included the jaws of different-sized rodents, a shrew skull, and the skulls of **House Finches** and an ad. **Feral Pigeon**. One **Barn Owl** was seen at La Cima 17 Jul (HGdS, EG). Two **Flammulated Owls** were recorded on Volcán de Fuego, Jal. 17 Jun (FR), and more **Flammulated Owls** were heard at El Palmito 6 Jun and at the lower campsite on Volcán de Fuego 17 Jun (FR). Two **Balsas Screech-Owls** were recorded 16 Jun on the road to Microondas La Cumbre, Col. (FR). Two **Eared Poorwills** were recorded 17 Jun at the lower campsite on Volcán de Fuego, Jal. in pine-oak forest (FR).

At least 28 **White-throated Swifts** were at Cerro del Chiquihuite 7 Jul (HGdS, MPV, HZV). **Green Violet-ears** were staking out territories both at La Cima and 3 km e. of Parres, D.F. 22 Jul (a single seen as early as 19 Jul). An estimated 11 **Short-crested Coquettes** were seen 25 & 27 Jun on the Elicia road about 2 km from Paraíso (1050 m) in humid tropical forest (FR). A **Green-fronted Hummingbird** was seen 25 Jun near San Vicente de Benitez, Gro. (FR). Several **Amethyst-throated**

**Hummingbirds** were seen in cloud forest of Volcán de Fuego 18 Jun, above Carrizal (near Xochipala, Gro.) 23 Jun, and above Nueva Dehli, Gro. 26 Jun (FR). Five **Garnet-throated Hummingbirds** were seen above Carrizal 23 Jun (FR). Nine **Long-billed Starthroats** were seen near Paraíso 25–28 Jun (FR). **Sparkling-tailed Woodstars** were considered to be in lower numbers than usual, with four sightings near El Palmito 6 Jun and above Paraíso 25–28 Jun (FR). Two **Lucifer Hummingbirds** were seen 17 Jun on Volcán de Fuego just above the lower campsite (FR). One **Magnificent Hummingbird** was seen at the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden, D.F. 20 Jun (HGdS, MPV, SA). A **Mountain Trogon** was heard at the Parque Ecológico de la Ciudad de México, D.F. 9 Jun (HGdS, SA, AE). One **Eared Trogon** was seen 6 Jun about one km w. of El Palmito (FR). **Smoky-brown Woodpeckers** were present 19 Jun near Comala (FR). A juv. **Scaled Antpitta** was detected 18 Jun 2 km above the upper campsite on Volcán de Fuego (FR). **Eye-ringed Flatbills** were recorded 25–28 Jun along the Elicia road and the El Edén Road near Paraíso (FR).

One **Pileated Flycatcher** was heard at Zapotitlán de las Salinas, Pue. 2 & 3 Jul (HGdS, MPV), and 2 were seen 23 Jun near Xochipala (FR). A **White-throated Flycatcher** was seen 3 km e. of Parres 25 Jul. **White-throated Flycatchers** were also seen in pine forest close to 8000 ft above El Palmito 6 Jun, and a group with much social interaction was in tropical dry forest near Xochipala 23 Jun (FR). One **Vermilion Flycatcher** was seen 29 Jun near the U.N.A.M.'s Instituto de Ecología, D.F., where it is a rare summer visitor. **White-throated Jays** were seen 23 Jun in cloud forest above Carrizal in small groups, apparently "leading" mixed flocks (FR). More than 30 **Sedge Wrens** were seen at La Cima and 3 km e. of Parres, D.F. through Jul (HGdS, AOI, EG).

## SWALLOWS THROUGH ORIOLES

A breeding colony of **Cliff Swallows** with 50 complete and 37 incomplete or abandoned nests was found in the relatively new library building of the Facultad de Ciencias, U.N.A.M., D.F. 11 Jun (HGdS, MPV). Although some native species lost habitat with the construction of the building (e.g., **Black-chinned Sparrow**), at least some others gained habitat (only one or two pairs of **Cliff Swallows** nested in the Facultad de Ciencias before the new library was built).

**White-throated Robins** were heard at La Cima through Jul. One **Blue Mockingbird** was seen 20 Jun at the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden, D.F. (HGdS, MPV, SA), where it had not been seen for many years, and 3 were recorded in

semiarid scrub on the se. side of Cerro del Chiquihuite 7 Jul (HGdS, MPV). At least 7 **Phainopeplas** were seen at Zapotitlán de las Salinas, Pue. 2–3 Jul (HGdS, MPV), where thought to be only winter visitors by Howell and Webb (1995). Small numbers of Gray Silky-flycatchers were present in and around the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden throughout the reporting period; they had not been recorded in this area prior to 1995. Two Hooded Yellowthroats were heard at the Parque Ecológico de la Ciudad de México 9 Jun (HGdS, SA, AE), and 2 were heard 3 km e. of Parres 22–24 Jul (HGdS, AOI). Blue Grosbeaks were not present in the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden 20 Jun but were vocal by 30 Jun (HGdS, AOI). At least 2 **Northern Cardinals** were singing at the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden on 20 & 30 Jun (HGdS, AOI, MPV, SA). At least 3 Cinnamon-bellied Flower-piercers were at the U.N.A.M. Botanical Garden 11 Jun (HGdS, MPV, SA), and one was singing in a small garden near the s. end of Avenida Revolución in early Jul. Several dozen Sierra Madre Sparrows were seen in different locations in D.F. and just across the border in Mor. and Méx. (HGdS, LCG, AOI). One **Song Sparrow** was heard at 2940 m, above the elevation stated in Howell and Webb (1995), 13 km w. of Toluca 5 Jul. Abeille's Orioles became much more active and conspicuous in Ciudad Universitaria, D.F. through the reporting period, though mostly silent or calling (song rarely heard).

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## SOUTHERN MEXICO

The very early arrivals of Lesser Scaup and Black-crowned Night-Heron were the most unusual records for the period, and Forcsey's confirmation of nesting Cooper's Hawks in the mountains northeast of Oaxaca City is likewise significant.

## BOOBIES THROUGH PARROTS

A single ad. Blue-footed Booby and many Brown Boobies, as well as 4 Red-billed Tropicbirds, were seen on a rock island off Playa Zipolite (Puerto Angel), Oax. 23 Jun (MDC). A flock of 21 Brown Pelicans was seen soaring in the fog-shrouded foothills 15 km ne. of Arriaga, Chis. 21 Jun (MDC). Great Egrets were seen at various points in cen. Oax. through the summer, up to 9 at one time. One

Great Blue Heron was around Santa Cruz Huatulco, Oax. 4 Jul (WB). An imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at the Río Salado near San Juan Guelavía, Oax. 28 Jul. On the same date, a **Lesser Scaup** was seen at the sewage discharge area w. of Tlacolula, Oax, possibly an overwintering bird. One Osprey was seen near Santa Cruz Huatulco 4 Jul (WB).

Continuing from the winter and spring, **Cooper's Hawks** were recorded in the mountains n. and ne. of Oaxaca City several times through the period (JMF), including a nesting pair with 2 young on the road to La Guacamaya. These were reported in the spring 2001 report as "*Accipiter* strongly believed to be Cooper's Hawks"; a primary feather recovered under the nest establishes the identification with certainty, as do JMF's detailed observations. A pair of Harris's Hawks was seen 28 Jul near the sewage discharge area w. of Tlacolula. West Mexican Chachalacas were heard several times, mostly above Teotitlán del Valle, Oax. where seen 22 Jun. A Spotted Rail was heard in wet grasses surrounding a ditch near Tonalá, Chis. 8 Jul (MDC). A nesting **Common Moorhen** was found in a small cattail marsh along the Río Salado 28 Jul. A Solitary Sandpiper was seen 28 Jul at Tlacolula, and a Spotted Sandpiper was seen 21 Jul at Teotitlán del Valle (RA). The first interior Oax. record of **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was at Tlacolula sewage discharge area, a single bird found with 4 Least Sandpipers 28 Jul (also the earliest record of Least Sandpiper in 2001). The Semipalmated Sandpiper was still in the area 4 Aug. Two Least and several Royal Terns were noted around Santa Cruz Huatulco 3–4 Jul (WB). One Plain-breasted Ground-Dove was seen close to Santa María Huatulco 4 Jul (WB). About 200 Band-tailed Pigeons in flocks up to 50 birds were noted at La Luz, on the Atlantic Slope about 60 km ne. of Oaxaca City 16–20 Jul. Also, a flock of 5 **Barred Parakeets** was at La Luz 19 Jul. This locality is a cloud forest at 2000 m elevation. Several Lilac-crowned Parrots were seen around Santa Cruz Huatulco 4 Jul (WB).

## CUCKOOS THROUGH FINCHES

One Mangrove and one Pheasant Cuckoo were recorded at El Sumidero, Chis. 7 Jul (MDC). Flocks of 25–30 Black Swifts were reported between 1–2 km inland of Santa Cruz Huatulco on the cloudy afternoons of 2 & 4 Jul (WB). There was a Berylline Hummingbird on a nest above San Felipe, Oax. 26 Jun. A Cinnamon-sided Hummingbird was noted on the road to Pluma Hidalgo, Oax. 4 Jul (WB). One male Green-throated Mountain-Gem was seen along with many Amethyst-throated and

Garnet-throated Hummingbirds on the summit of Cerro Huitepec, near San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chis. 19 Jun (MDC). A **Belted Kingfisher** was seen 4 Jul near Santa María Huatulco (WB). A family group of 4–6 White-throated Jays was seen visiting a fruiting tree at San José del Pacífico, Oax. 24 & 29 Jun (MDC). A Wedge-billed Woodcreeper was studied at El Sumidero 20 Jun (MDC). An ad. and an imm. **Violet-green Swallow** were at Teotitlán del Valle 22 Jun (this species is very rare in central Oax. in summer). Apparently the first recorded nest of Golden Vireo in the Oaxaca Valley was seen above Teotitlán del Valle 16–17 Jun. An ad. female and an imm. Hooded Yellowthroat were seen at La Luz 17 Jul (JMF), and 3 or 4 calling males were recorded at San José del Pacífico 24 & 29 Jun (MDC). A pair of Red-breasted Chats was near Santa Cruz Huatulco 3 Jul (WB). One singing Rusty-crowned Ground-Sparrow was reported 8 km above the Pluma Hidalgo turnoff 23 Jun (MDC). A singing male Slate-blue Seedeater was seen 12 km n. of Iguala, Gro. 11 Jul (this species has been found at this locality in spring and summer for the last three years, per MDC). One **Melodious Blackbird** was reported 30 Jun at the Santa Cruz Huatulco marina (MDC), and another was reported 5 Jul at Tangolunda, 6 km n. of the marina (WB). These records very probably refer to different individuals. This species was absent from the Pacific coast of Oax. until a few years ago, when singles were reported from Mazunte (50 km to the w. of Huatulco) in 1995 and 1996 (Gómez de Silva 1998) and again in 2000 (HGdS). **Black-headed Siskins** recorded 20 & 26 Jun at San Felipe Park were low in elevation. Early nesting for Lesser Goldfinch was noted at Monte Albán, Oax. 29 Jun.

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## YUCATAN PENINSULA

It is requested that all sightings of Swallow-tailed Kite from the Yucatan Peninsula be reported to Gina M. Zimmerman (email: Zimmerman@arcinst.org).

## PELICANS THROUGH TERNS

A hundred **American White Pelicans** were reported at Celestún, Yuc. 17 Jul (DB), and at least 95 were still present on the same sand spit 29 Jul (DB, BM). These and other reports—BM photographed this species at the Greater Flamingo nesting colony at Punta Meco, Yuc. 3 & 7 Jun 1979—raise the possibility that some

individuals oversummer in the Region. Black-throated Bobwhites were calling constantly from the vegetation bordering the salt ponds n. of Celestún 29 Jul (DB, BM). Early records of migrant shorebirds in Celestún, where there is continuous monitoring, are of one Black-bellied Plover 20 Jul, 3 Snowy and 9 Semipalmated Plovers 29 Jul (DB, BM), one Greater Yellowlegs 27 Jul, at least 6 Lesser Yellowlegs 29 Jul (DB, BM), 5 Ruddy Turnstones 20 Jul, and 3 Sanderlings with 16 Least Sandpipers 29 Jul (DB, BM). Only 5 Willets were seen at Celestún 29 Jul (DB, BM), whereas 80 Willets were seen 17 Jul (together with the possibly oversummering American White Pelicans). Willets are extremely plentiful on the w. and n. coasts of the peninsula, particularly during migration, but they usually arrive in late Jul. The Spotted Sandpiper is an early arrival on the peninsula, so it was no surprise to find 4 together at Celestún 29 Jul (DB, BM). A small number of nonbreeding individuals of this species oversummer each year. A basic-plumaged ad. Caspian Tern was observed in the estuary at Sisal, Yuc. on 8 Jul (BM). Nonbreeding individuals are known to oversummer in the Region. A single Forster's and a molting Black Tern were observed in Celestún 29 Jul (DB, BM).

### CUCKOOS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen in Celestún's coastal vegetation 29 Jul (DB, BM). It is not known to nest there and so was assumed to be a migrant. A Belted Kingfisher was studied in Celestún 29 Jul (DB, BM). Prior to this record, this species had been recorded on the peninsula only as early as 31 Jul near Escárcega, Camp. (in 1983; BM). A Rufous-breasted Spinetail was found in Jul building its enormous stick nest a short distance into the woods from the road leading to Laguna Muyil, near Chunyaxché, Q. Roo (IC). Three South American migrants—Piratic and Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers and Yellow-green Vireos—made themselves at home in the archeological zone of Muyil, Q. Roo through the spring and summer. The Piratic Flycatcher appears to favor the nests of the Social Flycatcher and Rose-throated Becard; stealing of the nest of the White-eyed Flycatcher, as occurs in Costa Rica, was not noted, although White-eyed Flycatcher is also common in Muyil (IC). A single **Piratic Flycatcher** was recorded in Celestún 28 Jun (ISO), this being the first record for n. Yucatan.

### SWALLOWS THROUGH HONEYCREEPERS

Approximately 30 Purple Martins were observed feeding over the coast of Celestún 29 Jul, along with a few Barn Swallows (DB, BM). The call of Yucatan Wren could be heard fre-

quently in Celestún through the summer. Between 31 Jul and 3 Aug, a Tropical Mockingbird was observed at Celestún feeding a Bronzed Cowbird chick, indicating that its nest had been parasitized, as has been observed before. The only migrant warblers reported during Jun and Jul were 2 female Yellow Warblers in Celestún 29 Jul (DB, BM)—this is the earliest date noted for this species on the peninsula, the previous early dates being one 4 Aug 1982 and 4 on 10 Aug 1983, per BM) and a Louisiana Waterthrush at Chunyaxché 30 Jul–4 Aug. A pair of Red-legged Honeycreepers had young in the nest in Chunyaxché 4 Aug.

**Contributors (area compiler in boldface):** David Bacab (DB), Ismael Camaal (IC), Barbara Mackinnon (BM), Javier Salgado

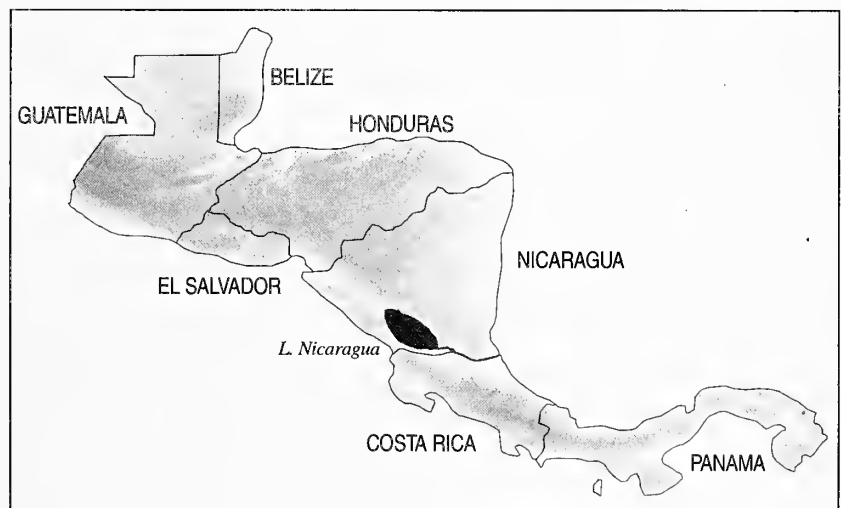
Ortiz (JSO). Uncredited observations are by David Bacab.

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# Central America



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**O**liver Komar continues to rewrite the chapter on bird distribution in El Salvador. Relatively little avian field research has been undertaken in this small country in the past, and Oliver continues to demonstrate how much we still have to learn. In just two months, June and July, he and his field associates found heretofore-unknown resident or likely resident popu-

lations of four species each in Dept. Morazán (Green Violet-ear, Brown-backed Solitaire, White-throated Robin, Slate-throated Redstart) and Dept. Chalatenango (King Vulture, Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift, Wine-throated Hummingbird, Bar-winged Oriole) and found evidence of breeding for three other species (Zone-tailed Hawk, Red-throated Green Parakeet, Common Nighthawk) previously not known to nest in El Salvador. By way of contrast, reports of species found only a few km beyond their known distributional limits in heavily birded Costa Rica are noteworthy. But if someone wants to be a twenty-first-century trailblazer in Central American ornithology, may I suggest Nicaragua? Other than Thomas Howell's

**SA** Quite exciting was the discovery of a sizable Agami Heron nesting colony in mangroves near the mouth of the Moho R. just seven km s. of Punta Gorda, Belize 4 Aug (WRM). This may be the first documented nesting colony for Belize. The colony, estimated at 60 ads., still had occupied nests with eggs and young when last visited on 15 Aug (WRM, LJ). This species is rarely seen in s. Belize, yet it is practically common at Crooked Tree in n. Belize during the dry season (Jan–May), a locality where it appears to be seasonal and does not nest. Not unlike other, more familiar herons, it apparently nests in widely scattered colonies along the coast and outside the breeding season disperses inland to forest-lined lagoons, streams, and swamps.



The discovery a large colony of Agami Herons south of Punta Gorda—involving some 60 adults and photographed here 15 August—was one of the many highlights in Belize this season. *Photograph by H. Lee Jones.*

work, primarily in the 1960s, few ornithologists have spent any length of time in the country, and Nicaragua has not exactly been a mecca for birders. The end of the protracted civil war in the late 1980s has made birding exploration feasible once again. *In addition to Nicaragua, we still need contributors and compilers from Guatemala and Honduras in order to have more balanced reporting for the Region.* Any volunteers?

**Abbreviations:** Crooked Tree (Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary); Lamanai (Lamanai Outpost Lodge, Belize); La Selva (La Selva Biological Station, Costa Rica); Monteverde (Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, Costa Rica); S.F. (shrimp farm); U.K.N.H.M. (University of Kansas Natural History Museum).

## HERONS THROUGH SANDPIPERS

The status of Least Bittern is still unclear in Belize. It appears to be an uncommon and elusive resident in the n. half of the country, but it occasionally turns up on some of the small cays, so probable migrants do occur. One at Dawson Cr., a small tributary of the New R. near Lamanai 18 Jul (MM), was at a locality where it is seen regularly and probably breeds; however, one bird two days later at the San Pedro (Ambergris Caye) sewage ponds (MM) was most likely a post-breeding wanderer or migrant.

Ad. King Vultures flying over La Montaña 25 & 27 Jul, respectively (OK), established the first records for Dept. Chalatenango, El Salvador. The breeding status of Zone-tailed Hawk in much of Mexico and Central America is unclear. Although nesting has been suspected

in a number of areas where the species has a year-round presence (especially parts of Costa Rica and Panama), there are very few documented nesting records between cen. Mexico and South America. In El Salvador, it is thought to be a winter visitor only; however, records of an ad. e. of Cerro Las Nubes in nw. Dept. Chalatenango 25 Jun (OK) and a juv. repeatedly vocalizing from a pine tree at Cerro La Montaña in e. Dept. Chalatenango 26 Jul (ph. OK) suggest that the species may breed locally in montane pine-oak forest near the Honduras border.

One Greater and one Lesser Yellowlegs at Aqua Mar S.F., along with a Willet at Punta Gorda and 2 more at Aqua Mar S.F., all on 21 Jul (LJ), established the earliest fall migrant records to date for each of these three species in Belize. A Least Sandpiper in Punta Gorda 13 Jul (LJ) established the earliest record for that species in Belize. These species undoubtedly occur earlier, at least in some years, but shorebirding is not yet a popular pastime in Central America, and much is still to be learned about their seasonality and abundance through the year.

## PARROTS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

Evidence is mounting that the Red-throated subspecies of Green Parakeet (considered by many to be a full species) nests in El Salvador. In summer 2000, OK found circumstantial evidence of breeding in Dept. Morazán. This summer, he again had frequent sightings of pairs and flocks (up to 14 birds) in the pine forests of n.

Dept. Morazán in early Jun and mid-Jul, where local residents claimed to have seen nests. Common Nighthawk may also be a local summer resident in El Salvador. OK heard and saw one bird at Perquín, Dept. Morazán 19 Jul, where locals say that it is present all summer.

Both Great and Lesser Swallow-tailed Swift are rarely reported in El Salvador. Typically, Great occurs at higher elevations, but the two have also been seen in mixed flocks. Although the Great is now reported regularly throughout much of the country, it was not documented until 8 Jun, when OK obtained photographs of several birds in a flock of 6 at Perquín. Three Lesser Swallow-tailed Swifts at La Montaña 27 Jul (OK) established the first records for Dept. Chalatenango. They were seen with the larger Great Swallow-tailed Swift for comparison.

A Green Violet-ear at Perquín 18 Jul (ph. OK, \*U.K.N.H.M.) provided the first record for Dept. Morazán. Violet-crowned Woodnymph reaches its n. distributional limit in extreme s. Belize, where it is seldom reported. Thus, a female seen near San Pedro Columbia, Toledo Dist. 2 Jun (LJ) is noteworthy. The Blue-tailed Hummingbird is rarely seen in Costa Rica but in recent years has been reported occasionally from the Monteverde area. One seen between San Luis and Monteverde 21 Jul (RD, LG) continues this trend. A bit s. of its normal range in Costa Rica was a Cinnamon Hummingbird coming to a feeder in Escaleras, 6 km se. of Dominical, 12 Jun–25 Jul (BN). In El Salvador, a female Wine-throated Hummingbird well studied at Cerro El



Pital 26 Jun (OK, KZ, EG-T) was the first ever reported in Dept. Chalatenango.

**WOODPECKERS THROUGH JAYS**

The taxonomy of the *Centurus* subgenus of woodpeckers is complex, with ill-defined species limits, extensive geographical variation, and, not surprisingly, frequent hybridization between some forms in their zones of overlap. The Golden-fronted and Hoffmann's Woodpeckers are two such species (or are they subspecies?). They are known to hybridize only in one small area of s. Honduras where their ranges overlap along one river drainage. In Dept. Morazán, El Salvador, 50 km to the nw., OK obtained photographs, a specimen, and written descriptions of several presumed hybrids on 6 Jun and 19 Jul. Hoffmann's has yet to be recorded in El Salvador. A Western Wood-Pewee at Perquín, Dept. Morazán 17 Jul (OK) was probably an early fall migrant or wanderer, as it was in an area where the species is not known to breed. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher in Punta Gorda 13 Jul (LJ) was in an area of Belize where it does not breed and is rarely seen. The population in Belize is not known to be migratory, but a migrant from farther n. in Mexico or from South America (nominate *savanna* is a long-distance austral migrant) cannot be ruled out.

The Lovely Cotinga was recorded on the Pacific slope of Costa Rica for the first time when one was found at Los Llanos, 3 km sw. of Santa Elena (near Monteverde) on 31 Jul (CG). A Bare-necked Umbrellabird at La Selva 28 Jul (EC) was the first reported from the lowlands this season. In Costa Rica, an isolated population of White-throated Magpie-Jays has been established around Dominical for about 10 years. There are no reports from Quepos, Savegre, Damas and other frequently birded areas between Dominical and the nw. (Nicoya Pen., Guanacaste), where they are common. In Jun, small groups of birds were seen in several locations down the coast from Dominical as far as Bahía Ballena N.P. (BN), suggesting that the population may have expanded in that direction, but interestingly, not in the other direction to cover the existing population gap.

**SWALLOWS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS**

The Purple Martin is the earliest fall migrant in much of Central America. One in Belize City on 19 Jun (PC) was quite early, even for this species, but still not the earliest date on record. The first Purple Martin was not recorded in Costa Rica until nearly a month later—17 Jul (JA, IA, EC) near La Selva. The Barn Swallow is also one of the earliest fall migrants, but one at Puente Colima, El Salvador 25 Jun (OK, KZ) may have been summering, or lost. The first southbound

migrants (6) in Belize were seen 19 Jul (MM), and they were being seen frequently a week later. The earliest fall date on record for Belize is 9 Jul. Two more firsts for Dept. Morazán were 11 singing male Brown-backed Solitaires found 5 km ne. of Perquín 6–7 Jun (OK) and 3 White-throated Robins at Cerro Cacahuatique 11 Jul (KZ, JdL).

A Yellow-throated Warbler at La Montaña, Dept. Chalatenango 27 Jul (OK) was only the 4th ever recorded in *El Salvador*. Several species of warblers begin arriving in Jul. Four this year matched or established the earliest arrival dates on record for Belize: Black-and-white Warbler, 23 Jul (PB); Prothonotary Warbler, 28 Jul (PH); Worm-eating Warbler, 29 Jul (MMA); and Louisiana Waterthrush, 14 Jul (MM). A Louisiana Waterthrush on 24 Jul (OK) was the earliest yet for El Salvador. Two singing male Slate-throated Redstarts 7 Jun (OK) 5 km ne. of Perquín established the first records of this species from Dept. Morazán. Four Elegant Euphonias at Cerro Cacahuatique, Dept. Morazán 13 Jul (OK) were a pleasant surprise, as

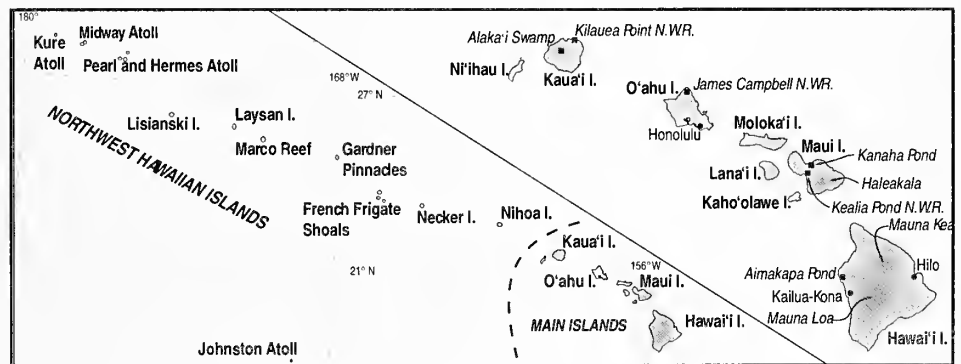
this species is rarely reported in El Salvador.

In Costa Rica, the Melodious Blackbird has been expanding its range southward for several decades, presumably in response to deforestation and human settlement. First recorded in the mid-1980s, it is now common in nw. Costa Rica. One was at Escaleras at the extreme s. edge of the species's range on 16 Jun (BN). Several male Bar-winged Orioles were found at La Montaña 23–27 Jul (OK), establishing the first records for Dept. Chalatenango. The first 2 Orchard Orioles of the season were at Playa Guapil near Dominical on 26 Jul (JRZ).

**Cited observers (country coordinators in bold-face):** Iliana Alvarado, Joel Alvarado, Eduardo Amengual, Philip Balderamos, Eric Castro, Robert Dean, Erick Garcia-Trejo, Leonardo Guarrigues, Carlos Guidon, Peter Herrera, **Lee Jones** (Belize), **Oliver Komar** (El Salvador), Jorge de León, Mark MacReynolds (MMA), Martin Meadows, Brian Nice, Wilfred Requena-Mutrie, **James R. Zook** (Costa Rica), Kristof Zyskowski.



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It has been a quiet summer in the Hawaiian Islands. A long drought continues. Most areas of Kauai and Oahu received above normal rainfall in June, and the east side of the Big Island received above-normal rainfall in July, but rainfall for the year remains well below normal. There were few reports of rare species or unusual numbers. Reintroduced Hawaiian Geese seem to be doing well, but the plight of

the Hawaiian Crow is desperate.

**Abbreviations:** E. (Endangered Species); H. (Hawai'i I.); Hakalau (Hakalau N.W.R., Hawai'i I.); Hanalei (Hanalei N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); Honouliuli (Honouliuli Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu I.); K. (Kaua'i I.); Kealia (Kealia Pond N.W.R., Maui I.); Kii (Ki'i Unit of Jas. Campbell N.W.R., O'ahu I.); K.P. (Kilauea Pt. N.W.R., Kaua'i I.); M. (Maui I.); O. (O'ahu I.); Waiawa (Waiawa Unit of Pearl Harbor N.W.R., O'ahu I.); T. (Threatened Species).

## PETRELS THROUGH TROPICBIRDS

One Bulwer's Petrel was found on Popo'i'a I. in early Jun (DS). This small island off O'ahu has been used to launch Fourth of Jul fireworks despite the presence of nesting seabirds. This year, the fireworks were fired from a floating barge instead. At sunrise 19 Jul, Wedge-tailed Shearwaters were flying past La'ie Pt., O. at the rate of 20 per minute. Over 300 birds were seen (PD). One Red-tailed Tropicbird was seen at Kii 28 Jun (MS), a location where they are seldom reported. Fourteen Red-tailed Tropicbirds were counted near Ako'ako'a Pt., H. 15 Jul. This is twice the number seen there a year earlier (RP).

## HERONS THROUGH PHEASANTS

A Snowy or Little Egret was observed from a distance at Hanalei 28 Jul (†MRo). The bird was not seen well enough to determine which of those species it was. There are no previous records of Snowy or Little Egrets on Kaua'i. A Cattle Egret was observed on Midway 28 Jun & 1 Jul (JH). Cattle Egrets are rare on the nw. Hawaiian Islands. There were 350 Cattle Egrets, an unusually high count, on newly planted lawns at a park in cen. O'ahu 19 Jul (DB).

Reintroduced Hawaiian Geese (Nene) (E.) have been doing well at Hakalau. Three goslings hatched in Jan, and 3 hatched in May had survived into Jul+ (JJ). Seventeen captive-raised birds were released on the refuge in Jun, bringing the total number of Nene in the area to around 40. Some of these birds have dispersed as far as 12 mi from the release site and joined a previously established flock (JJ). A Brant observed at Kealia during the spring was still present 6 & 21 Jun (MN).

An Osprey was seen at Waiawa 28 Jun (MS). A large raptor seen on Kaho'olawe 19 Jul may also have been an Osprey (*vide* LT). Red Junglefowl or feral chickens were reported to be widespread on Kaua'i in Jul, with both gray-legged and yellow-legged birds from sea level to high elevations (†MRo). It has been assumed that gray-legged birds at high elevations are wild descendants of birds introduced to Hawaii by the Polynesians; while birds at lower elevations

(generally yellow-legged birds) are recent escapees. This report casts doubt on the idea that these birds can be separated. More reports would be useful.

## SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

Hawaiian (Black-necked) Stilt (E.) nesting was still going strong at the end of Jul. It is too early to say how the season will turn out overall, but more chicks had fledged at Kii by 31 Jul than fledged all last year (PD, MS et al.). There were some unusually high counts of oversummering

**SA** Only 2 Hawaiian Crows ('Alala) (E.), a mated pair, remain in the wild. The pair attempted to nest again this year but abandoned their nest in late Jun. The female is probably now too old to breed. She has laid no eggs since 1996. There is a population of captive Hawaiian Crows, but no captive-reared birds have survived for long when released in the wild. There are currently no plans to release any more captive birds (GK).

shorebirds this year. Around 100 Pacific Golden-Plovers were seen on Midway 1 Jun (LT). Even more unusual was a flock of 87 at Honouliuli 28 Jun (MS). There have been other counts of 100+ Pacific Golden-Plovers on the Northwest Hawaiian Islands in Jun, but the 87 birds at Honouliuli is by far the largest Jun count recorded on any of the main islands. Seven to 10 Bristle-thighed Curlews oversummered in the pasture behind Kii (MO, RPy et al.). A **Black-tailed Godwit** (the only one recorded in Hawai'i) remained at Kii Jun+ (PD et al.). A **Bar-tailed Godwit** at Hilo Airport Jun 12-19 (ph. TO) represented only the 2nd Jun record for Hawaii and the first on the main islands.

A Ring-billed Gull was observed at the Chevron Refinery, O. through 19 Jul (LG). Ring-billed Gulls are uncommon in Hawaii. A 2nd unidentified gull was there through 29 Jun (LG, ABW, H.A.S.). A Caspian Tern that has wandered around the islands for the last several months apparently remained on O'ahu in Jul. The bird was seen in Kane'ohe 10 Jul and at Kii 17-23 (GF) & 29 Jul (PD). One to 3 small *Sterna* terns remained on Midway Jun+ (LT, JH, WS). Two of the birds nested, and 3 eggs were seen 22 Jun (NG). These birds were reported as Least Terns, but no details were submitted. Both Little and Least Terns have nested on Midway. One small tern was photographed at Honouliuli 1 Jun (ph. KH, GF). The bird

appeared to be either a Least or Little Tern, but photos of the perched bird were not diagnostic. Least and/or Little Terns are rare but regular in Hawaii, but most records do not allow us to tell which species was observed.

## PASSERINES

Hawaii 'Elepaio and Oma'ο juvs. were first spotted at Hakalau the last week of Jun, several weeks later than usual (JJ). Single Northern Mockingbirds were seen in sw. Kaua'i 25 & 27 Jul (†MRo). Mockingbirds are seldom reported, so their status is hard to determine. 'I'iwi and 'Apapane were virtually absent from the Pua 'Akala unit of Hakalau, probably due to the lack of lehua blossoms (JJ). 'I'iwi were also reported to be hard to find on Kaua'i 27 Jul (MRo), and 'Apapane were also reported as being scarce on O'ahu (MW). Three Akiapola'au (E.) nests were located at Hakalau in Jun (LP). It is hoped that Akiapola'au eggs can be collected for captive-rearing efforts, but the nests discovered in Jun were near the tops of tall trees and none could be reached (JJ).

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# West Indies



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The summer season in the West Indies is the seam between late spring and early fall. Before the 60 days of this season, most resident landbirds have already begun nesting, even before the departure of Neotropical migrants. It is usually too hot and often dry for most species to breed after late spring. Although landbird nesting may be recorded through Jun, it is usually supported by late spring rains that fuel fruit, flower, and insect production into the summer months. Resident landbirds may have two breeding attempts, but their peaks are not usually in June and July. By July, songbirds have shifted from constant to only regular singing; and a few (Northern Mockingbird, Thick-billed Vireo, Bananaquit, and Black-faced Grassquit) in the Bahamas reduce vocalizations to infrequent song (Brudenell-Bruce 1975). In the Lesser Antilles, resident landbirds may breed into early July when conditions are favorable (Keith 1997).

Resident shorebirds (several plovers, Black-necked Stilts, and Willets) may nest through this period, but most waders (herons and

egrets) and seabirds began laying by mid-February (shearwaters) to late May and early June (terns), leaving July as a mop-up month when second attempts or late learners may be underway before the early fall fronts and tropical storms arrive. For migrant seabirds, particularly young of the year, this is not a good time to be unprepared. This also the season when transient birders also have left the islands, making data on birdlife more difficult to obtain.

## SHEARWATERS THROUGH TERNS

During a 23 Jun pelagic trip out of Bermuda, 22 Greater, one Manx, and 4 Cory's Shearwaters were counted (DBW); the Manx represented the latest seasonal record for this species here.

A Wilson's Storm-Petrel was noted at Guadeloupe 4 Jun (MF), one of the few reports during this season from the Region. There was also an unidentified shearwater noted during a seawatch here. An ad. Brown Pelican in definitive alternate plumage noted at No Name Cay

**SA** The vulnerability of seabird colonies was unfortunately demonstrated this summer at the Audubon's Shearwater colony on Allen's Cay, Exumas, Bahamas. In Jun, researchers studying the endangered Allen's Cay Rock Iguana (*Cyclura cythura inornata*) found over 100 desiccated carcasses of ad. shearwaters with their breasts eaten out and heads missing (JI). There was no indication of human predation (unlike the shearwater kill on Cay Sal Bank in 1999; *N. A. B.* 53: 333). Several carcasses have been saved and will be examined to determine the cause of death. Possible causes include the resident Ospreys, a wintering Peregrine, the iguanas, and death from pollution or red tide, with scavenging by iguanas and land crabs. Discussions about this incident also brought to light at least one case of an iguana killing and eating a shearwater chick (BD & SY).

off Abaco, Bahamas on 24 Jun may be a local breeder (EB, BB). B.N.T. members found 50 Neotropical Cormorants at Great Inagua, where they breed, on 30 Jun–1 Jul. A Limpkin and a Least Bittern were noted at Paradise Is., New Providence, Bahamas 12 Jun (CW).

At Trou Caiman, a shallow lake ne. of Port-au-Prince, Haïti, JRC counted upwards of 200 Greater Flamingos 2 Jun. This number swelled to nearly 400 on 28 Jul. At Great Inagua, the B.N.T. counted about 700 Greater Flamingos 30 Jun. A record of Ring-necked Duck at Spittal Pond, Bermuda 8 Jun was very unusual (AD), as any anatid in summer other than resident Mallard is a rarity there. A Purple Gallinule was found at New Providence, Bahamas (CW) 12 Jun, one of the few summer records for this location.

A lingering Black-bellied Plover was heard at Trou Caiman, Haïti on 2 Jun (JRC), where nesting Killdeer and a pair of Snowy Plover were also found. Eleven Black-bellied Plovers were noted at the mudflats at Gonaives, Haïti 23 Jun (JRC, IP, KK). Among the 20+ Wilson's Plovers at Gonaives, Haïti 23 Jun was a downy chick (JRC, IP, KK). Among the nonbreeding contingent of Nearctic charadriids at Gonaives, Haïti were 14 Semipalmated Plovers and 6 Ruddy Turnstones (JRC, IP, KK). A Greater Yellowlegs noted at Trou Caiman (JRC) 2 Jun was joined by 30 Lesser Yellowlegs 28 Jul, indicating an early fall arrival. Twelve Willets were noted at Gonaives 23 Jun and were no doubt local breeders. On 30 Jun–1 Jul, 3 Spotted Sandpipers, 5 Ruddy Turnstones, a Short-billed Dowitcher, 2 early Least Sandpipers, and a very early Common Snipe were noted by B.N.T. members at Great Inagua (LG, HN et al.). There were one Stilt and 2 Pectoral Sandpipers at Trou Caiman on 28 Jul, providing early records for these species from w. Hispaniola. Twenty Least Sandpipers there were within three days of their early date (Wetmore and Swales 1931). A moribund Least Sandpiper found at Saba, Netherlands Antilles 26 Jul (MW-M, GL) provided only the 2nd record for that location and is consistent with other arrival dates from Haïti to the Bahamas.

A Solitary Sandpiper seen on 5 Jul at North

Pond, Bermuda was the earliest report of this species by seven days (DW). On 31 Jul at Cooper's I., Bermuda a Red Knot was recorded, one of the few summer period reports. Another unusual report for Bermuda was a Semipalmated Sandpiper on 8 Jun at Spittal Pond (DBW). A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** seen on 29 Jul at North Pond, Bermuda is the 4th island record and the first reported there since 1979 (EA). An **American Woodcock** seen 1 Jun at Dolly's Bay, Bermuda represents the first summer report of this species on the archipelago. A rare 14 Jun report of South Polar Skua off Cooper's Pt., Bermuda was logged by PW. The Braceys found 80 Roseate Terns, 50 Brown Noddies, and 4 Bridled Terns nesting at Whale Cay, off Abaco, Bahamas 24 Jun. At Crab Rock, Abaco, the Braceys found an additional 50 Roseate Terns 24 Jun. Among the breeding Roseates were 2 "*portlandica*"-plumaged (non-breeding) birds. At Peterson Cay, Grand Bahama, KNT reported 100–150 Bridled Terns, the first report of breeding Bridleds in the area of Grand Bahama (TW). There were 2 Caspian Terns accompanied by a Royal Tern at Trou Caiman, Haïti 2 Jun, a very unusual early summer record (JRC). Two Sandwich and 2 Least Terns were found at Gonaives, Haïti 23 Jun (JRC, IP, KK); breeding probably occurred nearby. A Sooty Tern was seen off Nonsuch I. (DBW, JM) on 16 & 27–29 Jul, for one of the few reports in Jul.

### PIGEONS THROUGH GRASSQUIT

At Finley Cay, off Eleuthera, Bahamas, the B.N.T. banded 159 squab White-crowned Pigeons in Jun, a large number of young of the year to be banded this early (*fide* TW). Over 30 Cuban (Bahamian form) Parrots were noted by the B.N.T. at Great Inagua on 30 Jun–1 July

**SA** On 2 Jun, a man was caught at Nassau Airport with 3 young **Cuban Parrots** (Cuban form) and 19 **Yellow-faced Grassquits** in his possession. The three-week-old parrots were from Cuba and on their way to the United States, having passed through U.S. Immigration, Customs, and Bahamian security. A traveler noticed the man in the bathroom transferring the grassquits, which were stored in pill vials; the smuggler was fined \$1000. The birds were confiscated and turned over to the Ardastra Conservation Center in Nassau, where they were doing well. The parrots may be returned to Cuba, but it is not known if the authorities there will receive them.

(LG, HN et al.).

Attendees at the Society for Caribbean Ornithology (S.C.O.) meeting 15–22 Jul at Topes de Collante, Cuba found both Stygian and Cuban Pygmy-Owl in close proximity to the meeting site. Also at the meeting, attendees found a Black-and-white Warbler 17 Jul (AD), the earliest date recorded by 12 days (*fide* OG). Louisiana Waterthrushes and a Black-throated Blue Warbler were also found at Topes de Collante 19 Jul; the previous early date here for the latter species is 1 Sep (AD). Dobson wondered whether the Black-throated Blue had possibly overwintered in the mountainous area. A Yellow Warbler 26 Jul at Nonsuch I., Bermuda was the first returning parulid reported during the "fall" migration. Regrettably, none of the participants of the S.C.O. meeting in Cuba saw a Cuban Grassquit during field trips. This species is a popular cage-bird in Cuba, and the pet trade has made it scarce in the wild.

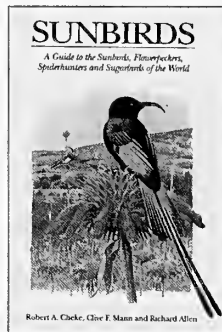
### ADDENDUM

At Middle Caicos, Turks and Caicos Is., researchers for the Darwin Initiative Project found "several" Kirtland's Warblers in the dry woodlands, as reported in the May newsletter of the Turks and Caicos National Trust (tc.nat-trust@tcway.tc).

**Contribuors (subregional editors in bold-face):** Eric Amos, Bahamas National Trust (B.N.T.), Betsy and Elwood Bracey, **J. R. Crouse**, **Andrew Dobson**, Bruce Dunham, **Martin Frost**, Lynn Gape, Erika Gates, Orlando Garrido, John Iverson, Kayak Nature Tours, Ken Kratzer, Greg Lashley, Jeremy Madeiros, Leila Madeiros, Henry Nixon, Isaac Pady, David Wallace, Mandy Walsh-McGehee, Carolyn Wardle, Paul Watson, **Tony White**, David B. Wingate, Sheila Young.



## A B A S A L E S



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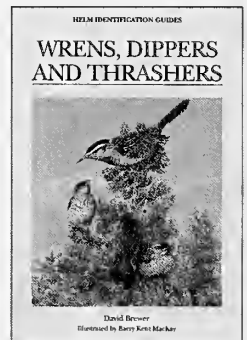
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# THE INCREASE IN WINTERING HOODED MERGANSERS IN NEW ENGLAND:

## *Some Statistical Inquiries*

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### **Abstract**

In New England during the past decade, there has clearly been an increase in the number of wintering Hooded Mergansers (*Lophodytes cucullatus*). The present paper summarizes a statistical investigation of that increase based on New England Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.) data (archived electronically and accessible on the World Wide Web at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>). Specifically, the paper provides a comparative analysis of the numbers of Hooded Mergansers counted on New England C.B.C.s during the 86th, 87th, 88th, and 89th and the 97th, 98th, and 99th counts. For comparative analysis, the data from the four counts from the 1980s were averaged, and the three counts from the 1990s were averaged. Variables used in the analyses were the latitude and longitude of the count; the presence or absence of coastline in the count's circles; the numbers of mergansers counted per each count's number of party-hours; and the air temperatures reported on the count day.

Significant differences were discovered in the numbers of Hooded Mergansers reported between the two decades, in the numbers of mergansers by latitude, and in the reported temperatures from the 1980s to the 1990s. Correlates for these changes in values are also discussed herein.

This increase in wintering mergansers raises questions that cannot be answered by a limited study based on C.B.C. data. Such questions include whether this increase betokens a general trend for Hooded Merganser across its range or whether it indicates a more local geographic shift in wintering areas, and whether the apparent increase in temperature has a causal role in such changes.

### **Methods**

I compared the average number of Hooded Mergansers reported on the 1985-1988 New England C.B.C.s with the average number reported from the same C.B.C.s in 1996-1998. I used a total of 87 counts, all of which had an adequate number of years reported (at least six of the seven years had reports).

Data from the counts as reported in *American Birds* for the above years were entered into a statistical program. The number of Hooded Mergansers counted per party-hour (HMs/P-Hr) for each count was calculated. An average count per party-hour was calculated for each C.B.C. area for each decade grouping. Comparisons could then be made between the decades for each count. Comparisons between the decades by latitude-longitude (Lat-Long) units were also made for the 23 Lat-Long units in New England where counts occurred.

Inasmuch as there has been a warming trend for the past decade, a secondary analysis and comparison were made for the temperatures on the count days as reported for the counts for the same years. Both the high and low temperatures were recorded, and an average temperature for the day was calculated. The average temperatures from the late 1980s were compared to the average temperatures from the 1990s. These tem-

perature changes were also compared by individual count to the changes in the numbers of Hooded Mergansers.

### **Results**

The number of counts that reported Hooded Mergansers (HMs) out of the total C.B.C. counts made in the region clearly increased over the period investigated (Table 1). Likewise, the total number of HMs counted on all of the New England counts shows an increase between the decades (Table 2). The large increase for 1998 is particularly noticeable.

The number of HMs/P-Hr ranged from a low of zero on many counts in all the years to a high of 4.34 on the Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts count in 1998. Interestingly, the second highest individual count was 4.30 in 1985, also on the Buzzards Bay count. These high numbers compare surprisingly well to the continent's peak of 2.80 HMs/P-Hr as cal-

**Table 1. Number of CBCs Each Year That Included Hooded Mergansers**

1985	35 out of 83 or 42%
1986	34 out of 84 or 40%
1987	38 out of 87 or 44%
1988	40 out of 87 or 46%
1996	57 out of 87 or 66%
1997	60 out of 87 or 69%
1998	64 out of 86 or 74%

*\*The data analyzed are available from the author on a Statview 512 program for the Macintosh.*

**Table 2. Total Number of Hooded Mergansers on New England Counts by Year**

1985	.....1074
1986	.....1152
1987	.....1580
1988	.....1189
1996	.....2430
1997	.....2844
1998	.....3980

culated by Root (1988). That peak calculation, however, was an average for the ten years reported on individual counts from 1962-1963 to 1971-1972 and did not include the top one percent of counts for a species; this was for reasons peculiar to Root's graphics needs. Consequently, the values are not strictly comparable.

The average number of Hooded Mergansers per party-hour for the count years appear in Table 3. Not surprisingly, there was a very strong positive correlation between the average number of mergansers per party-hour for each count in the 1980s correlated with itself in the 1990s (Table 3). Although expected, the extremely high correlation ( $r=0.90$ ) is in part produced by about one-sixth of the counts having an average count of zero for all the years and hence a zero average for both decades.

When the aggregate average counts from the late 1980s were compared to those from the late 1990s, the difference was significant: the 1980s average of 0.174 ( $\pm 0.43$ ) Hooded Mergansers per party-hour and the 1990s average of 0.387 ( $\pm 0.67$ ) produced a paired t-test with  $t=-6.056$ . (The difference is negative, as it expresses the values for the 1980s minus the values for the 1990s.)

**Table 3. Average Number of Hooded Mergansers per Party Hour by Year**

1985	0.15
1986	0.15
1987	0.21
1988	0.17
1996	0.32
1997	0.36
1998	0.5

The Buzzards Bay count had the highest average for its four counts from the 1980s (2.97 HMs/P-Hr) and also the highest average for the three years in the 1990s (4.04). The New London, Connecticut count was second in both of these averages: 2.20 for the 1980s counts and 3.38 for the 1990s.

For each count, the average Hooded Mergansers counted per party-hour in the 1980s was compared to the average counted from the 1990s. There were 15 counts on which none were counted in any of the 7 years. There were 66 counts on which the average count number increased. There were 6 counts where the average decreased from the 1980s to 1990s: Athol, Massachusetts (HMs/P-Hr decrease = -0.74: 0.87 to 0.13), Old Lyme, Connecticut (-0.18: 0.35 to 0.17), Hartford, Connecticut (-0.018: 0.025 to 0.007), Errol/Umbagog, New Hampshire (-0.010: 0.018 to 0.009), Biddeford/Kenebunkport, Maine (-0.006: 0.017 to 0.011), and Storrs, Connecticut (-0.003: 0.045 to 0.042). Interestingly, three of these counts—Old Lyme, Hartford, and Storrs—are in the same Lat-Long block ( $41^\circ, 72^\circ$ ). A sign test reveals that 66 counts' Hms/P-Hr increased, 6 decreased, and 15 stayed the same ( $P<0.01$ ).

The greatest increases in count averages between the four counts in the 1980s and the three counts in the 1990s occurred in New London (+1.18), Plymouth, Massachusetts (+1.13, from 0.75 to 1.88), South Kingstown, Rhode Island (+1.13, from 0.26 to 1.39), Worcester, Massachusetts (+1.08, from 0.13 to 1.21), and Buzzards Bay (+1.07).

Changes in count averages from decade to decade were compared to the latitude and longitude of the counts (decimalized). Interestingly, there was not a significant correlation with the longitude of the count

and the magnitude of the increase in numbers ( $r=0.005$ ), but there was a significant relationship between the count latitude and the increase in numbers ( $r=0.40, P>0.001$ ). This result suggests that the more southerly counts had larger increases but that the longitude of the count had relatively little bearing. When direction variables were run as a multiple regression on merganser numbers, a similar effect was determined: the north-south direction had a significant result; the east-west direction did not.

### Temperature Changes

There were statistically significant changes in the average temperatures reported (in Fahrenheit degrees) for the New England C.B.C.s between the two decades. These changes were similar for all three factors considered: high temperature, low temperature, and mean temperature. The aggregate mean temperatures for the count years appear in Table 4.

When each count's mean temperatures for the 1980s were compared to its means for the 1990s, there are also significant differences (Table 5). Again, the differences are similar for each temperature value. The results of paired t-tests' average high, average low, and average mean for the 1980s compared to those for the 1990s are presented in Table 5. Changes in temperatures were not, however, significantly correlated with latitude ( $r=0.06$ ) or longitude ( $r=0.10$ ).

More importantly, there is not a significant relationship between the average temperature changes between the decades and the changes in the average counts of HMs ( $r=0.02$ ). This is in spite of the observation

**Table 4. Average High, Low, and Mean Temperatures on Count Days by Year**

YEAR	AVE. HIGH	AVE. LOW	AVE. MEAN
1985	27.3	12.0	19.7
1986	35.7	24.0	29.8
1987	32.3	18.0	25.2
1988	26.7	11.8	19.3
1996	36.0	23.0	29.4
1997	37.2	24.7	30.9
1998	35.4	20.1	27.7

that both the average temperature and the average numbers of HMs increased for nearly all the counts. These temperatures, naturally, are single-day temperatures from each count for each year, and, as such, may not be representative of the actual "climate" or average temperature change. It would be worthwhile to attempt to correlate the change in numbers of HMs with the actual average climatological data.

**Table 5. Average Temperature Changes From the 80s to 90s**

	AVE. LOW	AVE. HIGH	AVE. MEAN
TEMPERATURE DIFFERENCE	+6.1	+5.6	+5.8
PAIRED -t VALUE	7.62	9.13	9.11
p value	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001

When the analysis of temperature change between the decades and change in numbers of HMs is done by individual C.B.C. with a regression, the statistical values are as follows:  $r=0.02$ ,  $F=0.041$ , and  $P=0.84$ . When the same comparison is made by Lat-Long blocks, there is also no significant relationship ( $r=0.08$ ,  $F=0.131$ , and  $P=0.72$ ). For both of these analyses, similar results were obtained for all three temperature values (Table 6).

### Coastal Factor

Also entered into the data set was whether or not each count circle included the Atlantic coast. Hooded Mergansers winter on both salt water and fresh water. In New England winters, the fresh water is often frozen. Whether or not the local fresh water was frozen was not included in this analysis. Of the 87 counts considered, 34 or 39% included the coast. When the coastal variable was considered in the changes in Hooded Merganser numbers, it was independently correlated with higher count numbers and with increases between the decades. The coastal counts in the 1980s recorded an average of 0.352 HMs/P-Hr versus an average of 0.057 for the non-coastal counts ( $P<0.01$ ). For the 1990s, the averages were 0.717 for the coastal counts and 0.181 for the non-coastal ( $P<0.001$ ). The calculated increase in HMs/P-Hr per count was also significant on this variable: the increase for the coastal counts was 0.379 versus 0.128 for the noncoastal counts ( $p<0.001$ ). This difference is not just the difference between the averages for the 1980s and those for the 1990s, as it includes the differences for each count, not simply the differences by decade.

To determine if the coastal variable was independently related to merganser increases, it was run in multiple regressions with latitude, longitude, and temperature. More of the eastern counts and more of the southern counts were coastal; similarly, both in the 1980s and 1990s, the coastal counts had warmer temperatures than the counts in the interior, but the temperature changes between the 1980s and 1990s did not differ significantly between the coastal and noncoastal counts (Table 7).

The multiple regression analysis for the variables COASTAL, LATITUDE, and LONGITUDE as correlates with TEMPERATURE CHANGE, however, both clarified and obscured the effects: none of the

**Table 6. CHANGE IN NEW ENGLAND WINTERING HOODED MERGANSER AND CHANGE IN AVERAGE TEMPERATURE BY LATITUDE-LONGITUDE BLOCKS**

	73°	72°	71°	70°	69°	68°	67°	66°
	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	1
44°	0.18	0.0	0.01	0.16	0.18	-0.01	0.17	0.38
	3.4	8.3	2.6	10.8	5.4	2.3	12.1	7.1
	1	5	3	4	1	1		
43°	0.0	0.05	0.41	0.03	0.50	0.01		
	4.3	1.5	4.6	6.5	8.8	1.8		
	3	6	8	5				
42°	0.06	-0.04	0.24	0.14				
	6.2	6.3	4.1	7.1				
	7	8	5	7	1			1
41°	0.39	0.39	0.55	0.65	0.21	also 45°-71°: 0.01		
	6.7	5.7	0.0	8.1	11.6			7.8

**KEY:** # of counts in the Lat-Long block  
change in HM/P-Hr for the counts in that block  
change in temp in degrees Fahrenheit for the counts in that block

three variables was significantly correlated with the temperature change between decades ( $r=0.106$ ,  $F=0.289$ , and  $P=0.833$  for the multiple regression).

On the other hand, those variables were definitely related to the average temperatures for both the 1980s and the 1990s. For the 1980s, both coastal and lower latitude counts had significantly higher temperatures (Table 8). Actually, the three variables accounted for 70% of the temperature variation between counts; the coastal and latitude variables taken alone account for 69% of the variation.

Similar results are obtained for the 1990s (Table 9), although the coastal variable is only marginally significant ( $P<0.10$ ). Clearly, latitude is by far the most important variable related to temperature; longitude does not matter much at all; and the coastal variable is intermediately important. When all of these variables are used in a combined analysis to tease out their independent relationships with the increase in numbers of Hooded Mergansers, the results are not surprising given the above analyses. The four-variable model (LATITUDE, LONGITUDE,

**Table 7. Average Temperature Changes for Coastal and Non-Coastal Counts**

	COASTAL	NON-COASTAL	p-VALUE
80s AVE. TEMP.	26.9	21.3	<0.0001
90s AVE. TEMP.	33.0	26.9	<0.0001
TEMP. CHANGE (from 80s to 90s)	+6.2	+5.5	NS ( $P=0.61$ )

TEMPERATURE, COASTAL) is not as good a predictor as the three-variable model (LATITUDE, LONGITUDE, COASTAL), and the three-variable model is not as good as the two-variable model (LATITUDE, COASTAL; Table 10). The temperature change is the least correlated variable, so that variable is left out in the next multiple regression (Table 11). As shown before, the longitude is not a very influential component, so it is dropped in the next analysis (Table 12).

**Table 8. Average Temperature for the Counts in the 80s Correlated With Latitude, Longitude, and Coastal Variables**

$r=0.836$     $R^2= 0.699$     $F= 60.26$     $p< 0.0001$

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>p-VALUE</u>	<u>partial-F</u>
COASTAL	0.0128	6.486
LATITUDE	0.0001	68.7
LONGITUDE	0.7312	0.119

### Discussion

This study demonstrates an increase in the numbers of Hooded Mergansers reported on the New England C.B.C.s over the past decade. Counts that are farther south not only had larger merganser counts in the 1980s and 1990s on average, but also had larger increases in merganser numbers between decades. New England C.B.C. areas that include the coast have higher numbers of Hooded Mergansers.

A subanalysis demonstrates an increase in the temperatures (high, low, and mean) reported for the count days. These temperature changes are not correlated with the increase in the counts of Hooded

**Table 9. Average Temperatures for the 90s Counts Correlated With the Latitude, Longitude, and Coastal Variables**

$r=0.688$     $R^2= 0.473$     $F= 24.55$     $p< 0.0001$

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>p-VALUE</u>	<u>partial-F</u>
COASTAL	0.0515	3.905
LATITUDE	0.0001	28.8
LONGITUDE	0.5460	0.367

Mergansers. I could not determine whether there actually has been a warming trend over the past decade, or whether some nuance of the C.B.C. dates chosen (e.g., earlier dates) accounts for the temperature increases.

An increase in wintering Hooded Mergansers in New England was clearly demonstrated by this analysis; however, no explanation for the increase, other than a possible association with warmer temperatures, is feasible within the scope of this paper. Further analysis would be needed to assess whether other regions of the country have had corresponding increases (in which case the total numbers are increasing) or rather decreases (in which case there may be a shift in wintering range for the species). The recent availability of C.B.C. data online should aid such

**Table 10. Four-variable Model: Change in Hooded Mergansers per P-Hr by Latitude, Longitude, Temp. Change, and Coastal Variables**

$r= 0.482$     $F= 5.743$     $p= 0.0004$

<u>Variable</u>	<u>partial-F</u>	<u>p-value</u>
COASTAL	.36	0.129
LATITUDE	6.65	0.012
LONGITUDE	0.25	0.622
TEMP. CHANGE	0.05	0.827

**Table 11. Three-variable model: Change in Hooded Mergansers per P-Hr by Latitude, Longitude, and Coastal Variables**

$r= 0.483$     $F= 7.914$     $p< 0.0001$

<u>Variable</u>	<u>partial-F</u>	<u>p-value</u>
LATITUDE	6.75	0.011
LONGITUDE	0.23	0.632
COASTAL	2.54	0.115

**Table 12. Two-variable model: Change in Hooded Mergansers by Latitude and Coastal Variables**

$r= 0.481$     $F=11.87$     $p< 0.0001$

<u>Variable</u>	<u>partial-F</u>	<u>p-value</u>
LATITUDE	10.12	0.002
COASTAL	7.02	0.010

analyses. If the continental population has increased, an investigation of potential reasons for this increase could also prove interesting.

Further evaluation of the relationship of increasing numbers with increased temperature would also be in order: temperature changes, if indeed fully demonstrable, could be a causal factor or simply coincidental. If Hooded Mergansers appear to seek out a specific temperature range, it might prove fruitful to investigate whether numbers of other mergansers and of other ducks underwent similar changes in wintering for the same period. On a more basic statistical level, the degree to which the temperatures recorded for the Christmas Bird Counts represent the actual climatological data trends might likewise be an object of research.

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# Evidence of post-migratory movements among landbirds wintering on Block Island, Rhode Island 2000-2001

## *Winter movements of landbirds*

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### **Abstract**

C.B.C.-style counts conducted on Block Island, Rhode Island (B. I.) in November, December, and February (2000-2001) provided evidence of facultative, post-migratory movements among 12 or more species of thicket-dwelling landbirds. As predicted, species that increased in density on B. I. between November and December were composed disproportionately of half-hardy species, for which southern New England is at or near the northern limit of normal winter distributions, and for which stereotyped southbound migration is typically expected to have been completed well before mid-November. In contrast, several true late-fall migrants (the species most likely to continue stereotyped migration November-December) occurred at highest density in November and were essentially absent by February (or even December). Finally, the most numerous winter residents of B. I.'s thickets typically occurred at relatively stable densities in November and December and at somewhat lower densities in February.

These results support the existence of a natural distinction between late migrants and half-hardy wintering species in northeastern North America, mitigate concerns that the early-winter timing of C.B.C.s exposes them to the widespread presence of lingering southbound migrants in northeastern North America, and cast doubt on the popular assumption that the diminution of half-hardy species from mid- to late winter must reflect mortality rather than post-migratory dispersal.

### **Introduction**

The extent to which migratory landbirds undertake major facultative movements outside of typical migratory periods is poorly known (Gauthreaux 1982), and such movements have seldom been documented (e.g., Niles et al. 1969, Terrill and Crawford 1988). These movements, which could result in winter population declines among birds near the northern limits of their winter ranges, might easily be mistaken for mortality and therefore overlooked. For instance, many species accounts in regional ornithological summaries (e.g., Bull 1964, Beardslee and Mitchell 1965, Veit and Petersen 1993, Levine 1998, Walsh et al. 1999)

ascribe mid-winter diminution to mortality with little or no supporting evidence—even as they occasionally acknowledge the equally undocumented possibility of facultative withdrawals.

Southern New England is at or close to the northern limits of the normal winter distributions for many species of medium- and long-distance migrants (National Geographic Society 1999). Annual variation in the numbers of such species have long been of interest to ornithologists and birders in the region, and questions regarding their true winter status—particularly the desire to distinguish between post-migratory movements and mortality as agents of winter population changes—were the focus of Mitra and Raithel's (2001) analysis of population trends among landbirds wintering on B. I.

Curiously, that study revealed that mid-winter declines among several "half-hardy" species on B. I. were no greater than those of several more numerous and characteristic wintering species. Furthermore, comparisons with other C.B.C.s across North America revealed unexpectedly high absolute winter densities of several half-hardy landbirds on B. I. and in other coastal thickets in southern New England (Mitra 2002). One possible explanation for these surprising patterns is that coastal populations of half-hardy species might be augmented under some circumstances by individuals dispersing from the New England interior, long after normal southbound migration has ceased. The present paper represents an effort to derive predictions concerning patterns of post-migratory dispersal from Mitra and Raithel's (2001) results and to test these predictions with data gathered on B. I. during the winter of 2000-2001.

### **Methods**

C.B.C.-style counts were conducted on Block Island on 13 November 2000, 21 December 2000, and 19 February 2001 (100 observers, cf. Acknowledgments). Although all species of birds were counted, the present analysis focuses on a subset of the landbird species—namely, those passerines that characteristically inhabit thickets during the winter (see Table 1). All raw counts were adjusted for effort by dividing them by the total number of party-miles on foot (foot-miles) employed on the count in question (36.5, 29, and 42 foot-miles in November, December, and February, respectively). Standardized densities and population trends from November to December and from December to February were calculated for each species by dividing effort-adjusted densities for November and February by the December density value.

As described in detail in Mitra and Raithel (2001), B. I.'s geographical setting facilitates the study of landbirds' winter population dynamics in several ways. The absence or near-absence of breeding populations for many species enhances detection of individuals arriving via migration or

**Table 1. Winter densities of thicket-dwelling landbirds on Block Island, Rhode Island (2000-2001).**

Species	Raw Counts			Densities (inds./foot-mile)			Std. Dens. (prop. December dens.)		Stat <sup>1</sup>	Traj <sup>2</sup>
	Nov	Dec	Feb	Nov	Dec	Feb	Nov	Feb		
Black-capped Chickadee	106	117	120	2.90	4.03	2.86	0.72	0.71	WR	A
Carolina Wren	173	140	108	4.74	4.83	2.57	0.98	0.53	WR	B
Winter Wren	2	4	0	0.05	0.14	0.00	0.40	0.00	HH	A
Marsh Wren	1	2	0	0.03	0.07	0.00	0.40	0.00	H	A
Golden-crowned Kinglet	35	23	0	0.96	0.79	0.00	1.21	0.00	LMN	B
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	11	6	1	0.30	0.21	.02	1.46	0.12	LMS	D
Hermit Thrush	31	80	24	0.85	2.76	0.57	0.31	0.21	HH	A
Gray Catbird	40	38	19	1.10	1.31	0.45	0.84	0.35	HH	B
Northern Mockingbird	39	30	28	1.07	1.03	0.67	1.03	0.64	WR	B
Brown Thrasher	9	4	2	0.25	0.14	0.05	1.79	0.35	HH	D
Orange-crowned Warbler	0	2	0	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	HH	A
Yellow-rumped Warbler	726	865	787	19.9	29.8	18.7	0.67	0.63	WR	A
Pine Warbler	6	0	0	0.16	0.00	0.00	NA	NA	LM	D
Palm Warbler	32	2	0	0.88	0.07	0.00	12.7	0.00	LM	D
Common Yellowthroat	2	3	0	0.05	0.10	0.00	0.53	0.00	HH	A
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	1	0	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.79	0.00	HH	A
Eastern Towhee	21	29	8	0.58	1.00	0.19	0.58	0.19	HH	A
American Tree Sparrow	4	1	1	0.11	0.03	0.02	3.18	0.69	WR	D
Chipping Sparrow	29	0	0	0.79	0.00	0.00	NA	NA	LM	D
Field Sparrow	2	1	0	0.05	0.03	0.00	1.59	0.00	WR	D
Fox Sparrow	4	18	10	0.11	0.62	0.24	0.18	0.38	HH	A
Song Sparrow	434	377	232	11.9	13.0	5.52	0.91	0.42	WR	B
Swamp Sparrow	36	15	12	0.99	0.52	0.29	1.91	0.55	HH	D
White-throated Sparrow	577	514	361	15.8	17.7	8.60	0.89	0.48	WR	B
White-crowned Sparrow	1	1	0	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.79	0.00	HH	A
Dark-eyed Junco	231	91	39	6.33	3.14	0.93	2.02	0.30	LMN	D
Northern Cardinal	57	76	72	1.56	2.62	1.71	0.60	0.65	WR	A
Purple Finch	6	0	0	0.16	0.00	0.00	NA	NA	LMN	D
House Finch	56	50	85	1.53	1.72	2.02	0.89	1.17	WR	C
American Goldfinch	32	22	13	0.88	0.76	0.31	1.16	0.41	LMN	B

<sup>1</sup> Winter status on Block Island; see text for explanation of codes.

<sup>2</sup> Population trajectory 2000-2001; see text for explanation of codes.

dispersal. The eight-mile water barrier is large enough to inhibit stochastic density changes arising from local movements, but it is small enough for most species to cross via directed movements. Finally, its location south of the New England mainland, its maritime climate, and its dense thickets rich in fruiting shrubs—e.g., Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*), Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*), Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), and roses (*Rosa* spp.)—appear to present an attractive refuge to species only marginally adapted to the winter environment of the New England interior.

Counts of Carolina Wrens on B. I. provide a useful standard of comparison for other species, as this species is abundant and widespread throughout the island; it is extremely sedentary, so that changes in its

density outside of the breeding season are unlikely to reflect any factor other than mortality; and it is known to be relatively intolerant of severe winter weather in the region (Veit and Petersen 1993, R. Ferren in litt.). We used these properties and the species' observed density trajectory during the winter of 2000-2001 (stasis November-December followed by decrease December-February) to conclude that this winter was not particularly severe for the species (had it been so, Carolina Wren density should have decreased November-December).

#### Definitions of population trajectories

Changes in density of >25% between successive counts were considered qualitatively meaningful, whereas those <25% were considered to reflect

relative stasis. Twenty-four species of thicket-dwelling birds exhibited four qualitative types of trajectories on B. I. over the period November-December-February 2000-2001: increase/decrease (A), stasis/decrease (B), stasis/stasis (C), and decrease/decrease (D). For simplicity, species occurring in moderate numbers (>5 individuals) in November, but completely absent thereafter, were regarded as showing a Type D Trajectory.

### Classification of species by winter status on B. I.

Winter status categories on B. I. were derived in part from those inferred by Mitra and Raithel (2001), and in part to facilitate testing of predictions concerning winter population trajectories. Each species was assigned to one of the following categories: late migrant, normally wintering south of southern New England (LMS); late migrant, normally wintering in southern New England (LMN); half-hardy winter resident likely to have completed southbound migration by mid-November (HH); characteristic winter resident, including sedentary species and migratory species likely to have completed southbound migration by mid-November (WR).

Although Orange-crowned Warbler and Common Yellowthroat were previously identified as likely late migrants/lingers (Mitra and Raithel 2001), both popular perception and an increasing body of local data (Mitra, unpubl. banding data) support the notion that Orange-crowned Warbler and Common Yellowthroat are half-hardy wintering species rather than late migrants in southern New England. The LMN category is intended to accommodate such winter residents as Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco, and American Goldfinch, whose normal southbound migrations in our region continue through November (Veit and Petersen 1993).

### Predictions

Based on a priori considerations, previous results (Mitra and Raithel 2001, Mitra 2002), and the Carolina Wren data, the following predictions were tested:

- 1) Trajectory A (increase/decrease) reflects arrival of numerous individuals between mid-November and mid-December, either by stereotyped migration or by facultative dispersal. If the former can be excluded, this trajectory is strongly indicative of the latter. We reasoned that even the latest migrants in our area (among the thicket-dwelling species under consideration) were likely to have peaked by 13 November, and that the type A trajectory was more likely a consequence of facultative movements. Therefore, we predicted that, in a mild or normal season, such as 2000-2001, Type A was more likely to characterize half-hardy winter residents (HH) than late migrants (LMS, LMN) or hardier winter residents (WR).
- 2) Trajectory B (stasis/decrease) is generally equivocal with regard to post-migratory movements. For most species (especially in mild or normal winters, such as 2000-2001), it probably reflects genuine stasis (no significant immigration, emigration, or mortality) November-December, followed by mortality and/or post-migratory withdrawal December-February. Thus we predicted it would characterize B. I.'s most numerous and characteristic winter residents—both migratory and sedentary (WR).
- 3) Trajectory C (stasis/stasis) is generally equivocal with respect to post-migratory movements, but in mild or normal seasons such as 2000-2001, this trajectory was predicted to characterize B. I.'s hardiest winter residents (WR).
- 4) Trajectory D (decrease/decrease) is generally equivocal with respect to post-migratory movements. In general, this would appear to be the most likely trajectory for late migrants bound for wintering areas well to the south of B. I. (LMS). Such species might still be present in moderate to large numbers during November but are expected to decrease

abruptly thereafter (even to the point of complete absence by December—e.g., Chipping Sparrow). Late migrants wintering farther north (LMN) are also likely to occur in large numbers on B. I. during November (as passage migrants and winter residents). These might be expected to occur in somewhat smaller numbers thereafter, following the departure of passage migrants. Given this, and the fact that virtually all species tend to decline on B. I. from December to February (Mitra and Raithel 2001), LMN species were also predicted to exhibit type D trajectories.

### Results

Perhaps the most striking trend on the B. I. winter counts of 2000-2001 was the abundance of half-hardies during the December C.B.C. (Table

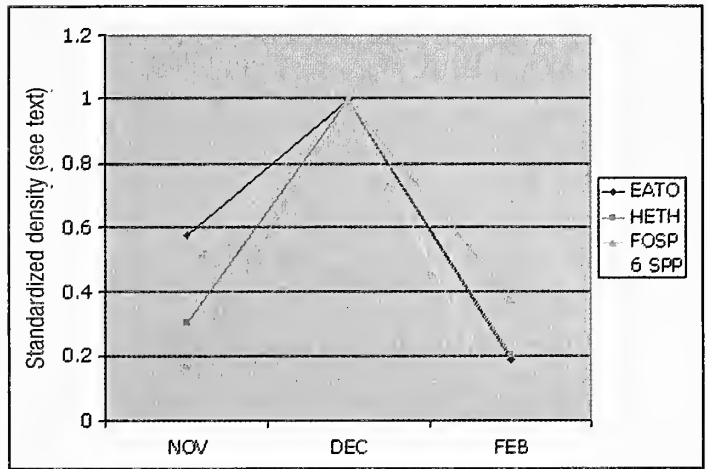


Figure 1. Standardized winter population trends (2000-2001) for nine half-hardy species suspected of undertaking facultative movements to Block Island November-December. The first three species are Eastern Towhee (EATO), Hermit Thrush (HETH), and Fox Sparrow (FOSP). The "6 spp." refers to pooled trends for Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, and White-crowned Sparrow.

- 1). Densities of Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, and Eastern Towhee were among the highest for all of North American C.B.C.s (Mitra 2002). Among half-hardy species, December densities consistently exceeded their respective November values, implying that many individuals of these species, which by definition generally winter south of southern New England, arrived on B. I. between November and December. Without exception, all species increasing November-December decreased December-February (Type A; see Fig. 1).

Several of the most numerous and characteristic winter residents of B. I.'s thickets (e.g., Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Song Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow) showed stable densities (or perhaps slight increases, in the cases of the two sparrows) from November-December, followed by ca. 50% decreases from December-February (Type B; see Fig. 2). The only species showing a Type C trajectory was, as predicted, a very hardy species: House Finch.

In view of historical patterns of occurrence (Conway 1992) and previous results (Mitra and Raithel 2001), two birds detected 2000-2001 stand out as seasonal vagrants: Yellow-throated Warbler and Baltimore Oriole on the November count. These were not classified by trajectory or winter status. As predicted, really late migrants tended to exhibit type D, rather than type A, trajectories: Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Palm Warbler, Pine Warbler, and Chipping Sparrow (LMS); and American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and Purple Finch (LMN). Species classified

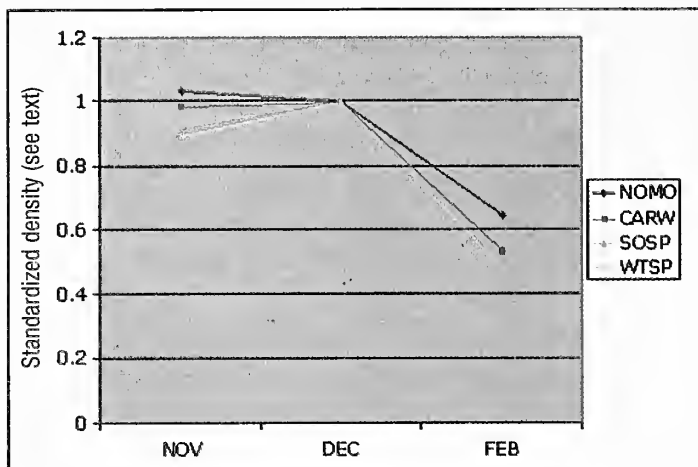


Figure 2. Standardized winter population trends (2000-2001) for Northern Mockingbird (NOMO), Carolina Wren (CARW), Song Sparrow (SOSP), and White-throated Sparrow (WTSP), landbirds regarded as typical winter residents on Block Island.

as LMS were invariably recorded in moderate to large numbers in November and were absent (or nearly so) by February—or even by December. Purple Finch, although regular in mid-winter on the mainland, resembled these species in its occurrence on B. I. Trajectories of the two other species classified as LMN (Golden-crowned Kinglet and American Goldfinch) were technically type B by virtue of slightly smaller declines November-December (21% and 16%, respectively), but otherwise qualitatively resembled the predicted type D trajectories of other late migrants.

## Discussion

In general, results supported predictions very closely. This concordance is especially meaningful given the vagaries of sampling error, the coarseness of our definition of stasis (up to 25% change between counts), and some inevitable arbitrariness in our classification of various species as late migrants, half-hardies, and the like. Systematic detection biases were unlikely to have produced this concordance spuriously because we predicted—and observed—increases for some species and decreases for others on the same days, under the same circumstances of weather, effort, skill, and technique. Although some might question the study's inclusion of certain species (e.g., Marsh Wren, Winter Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, and White-crowned Sparrow) whose very small sample sizes were vulnerable to accidents of sampling, collectively such species provided useful qualitative information that would have been lost had they been ignored or obscured had they been pooled together a priori.

Furthermore, trajectories other than A-D were perfectly possible, and the fact that they were not observed during the winter of 2000-2001 deserves mention. For instance, trends such as [increase/increase], [increase/stasis], or [stasis/increase]—none of which characterized any of the species under consideration in 2000-2001—might be more likely during particularly severe winters among hardy species, such as Song and White-throated Sparrows, if these were able to make successive post-migratory movements to escape deteriorating conditions in the New England interior.

In interpreting these results, it is important to draw a distinction between those representing rigorous deductive inference and those representing an extension and refinement of the descriptive explorations of Mitra and Raithe (2001). In the first category, the coincident, large-

scale increases observed November-December across a dozen species of thicket-dwelling landbirds—and their predicted correlation with New England half-hardiness—represent real evidence of post-migratory dispersal by these species over a considerable water barrier. With the possible exception of Fox Sparrow, none of these species is expected to be continuing stereotyped migration after 13 November on any kind of scale adequate to produce the increased densities we observed. Likewise, the preponderance of type D trajectories among really late migrants, including the near-absence of category LMS by December, strongly implies that, at least for thicket-dwelling landbirds, birds detected on northeastern North American C.B.C.s are more likely attempting to winter than actually migrating. In the second category, the details of the classification of various species in Table 2—and the degree to which these details matched our predictions—ought not to be interpreted dogmatically but rather should be refined a posteriori to reflect more accurately the local situation on Block Island.

For instance, Gray Catbird could be regarded as an expected winter resident on B. I. on the basis of previously published results—in which case, it would have fallen in line with predictions in 2000-2001. Alternatively, even considered as a half-hardy species, it came close to meeting our criterion for a Type A trajectory (as predicted) but fell just short because its increase from November-December (19%) was not quite large enough. Similarly, the decreases November-December of both Golden-crowned Kinglet and American Goldfinch fell just a few points short of 25% and the predicted type D trajectory.

One surprising result is particularly interesting in view of previous results: Northern Cardinal's increase in density from November-December. This assumedly relatively sedentary species might appear unlikely to move in large numbers across miles of water during late fall/early winter—but such a pattern was precisely what we inferred in

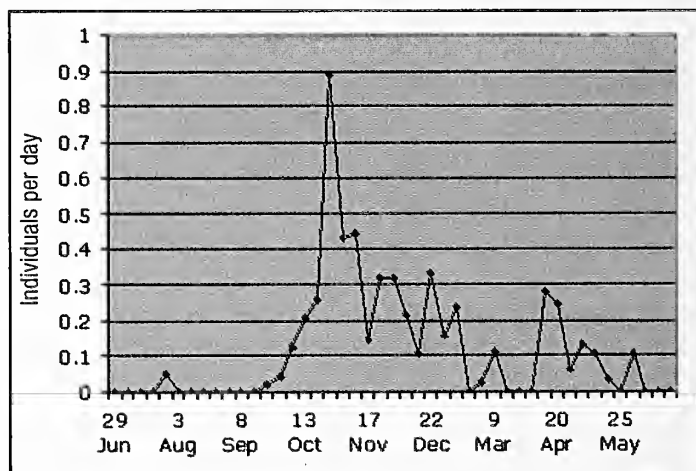


Figure 3. Seasonal occurrence of Northern Cardinals at Napatree Point, Rhode Island, 1982-2001 (weekly means of daily counts).

several previous seasons (Mitra and Raithe (2001), and it was supported again by this year's (2000) data. Furthermore, Raithe's (unpubl.) systematic observations (1982-present) at Napatree Pt. (a barrier beach on the Rhode Island mainland, where Northern Cardinals do not breed) clearly show secondary fall peaks November-January, several weeks after the primary peak of coastal movement around 1 November (Fig. 3). The timing of these secondary peaks varies from year to year, obscuring the mode in the pooled sample, but such modes are evident in most individual years.

The results of the present study underscore several important conclusions concerning the status of landbird species wintering in northeastern



**Table 2. Population trajectories of thicket-dwelling landbirds on Block Island 2000-2001, classified by their winter status there (Mitra and Raithel 2001).**

**Boldfaced type indicates agreement between predicted and observed status categories for each observed trajectory.**

Species classification	Trajectories, with predicted species compositions in 2000-2001			
	A (incr./decr.) Pred.: HH	B (stas./decr.) Pred.: WR	C (stas./stas.) Pred.: WR	D (decr./decr.) Pred.: LMS, LMN
Late migrants wintering south of New England (LMS)				Ruby-crowned Kinglet Palm Warbler Pine Warbler Chipping Sparrow
Late migrants wintering New England (LMN)		Golden-crowned Kinglet American Goldfinch		American Tree Sparrow Dark-eyed Junco Purple Finch
Half-hardies (HH)	Winter Wren Marsh Wren Hermit Thrush Orange-crowned Warbler Common Yellowthroat Yellow-breasted Chat Eastern Towhee Fox Sparrow White-crowned Sparrow	Gray Catbird <sup>a</sup>		Brown Thrasher Swamp Sparrow
Winter Residents (WR)	Black-capped Chickadee Yellow-rumped Warbler Northern Cardinal	Carolina Wren Northern Mockingbird White-throated Sparrow Song Sparrow	House Finch	Field Sparrow

<sup>a</sup> Species could be regarded as WR on B. I., which would strengthen agreement of results with predictions.

North America. Most importantly, it is clear that the presence of such species as Hermit Thrush, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, and Eastern Towhee on New England C.B.C.s is in no way an indication that the C.B.C.'s early winter timing exposes it to "lingering migrants." Indeed, application of our simple methodology should easily distinguish between actual late migrant species and what might be termed "true" half-hardy wintering species in any given region. This result is important not only because it supports the notion of a natural distinction between these two classes of unusual C.B.C. birds but also because it further mitigates concerns that the C.B.C.'s early timing compromises its value as a barometer of mid-winter bird populations (Peterjohn 2000). Furthermore, the evidence presented here in support of facultative winter movements—of half-hardies in particular, but of other species as well—implies that such movements must be considered a likely alternative to mortality as the cause of mid-late winter population decreases among some landbird species.

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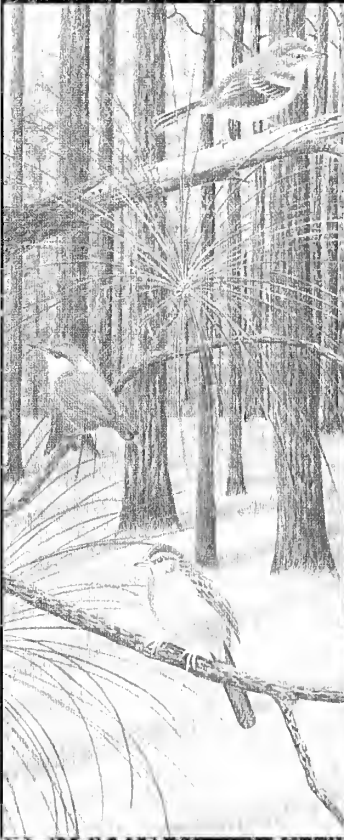
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# PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS



This Curlew Sandpiper delighted many observers at Whitewater Lake, Manitoba between 2 and 7 June, while frustrating a few Manitoba birders "stranded" at Churchill for the week! *Photograph by Dennis Fast.*



Completely unexpected this summer was the discovery of nesting Boreal Owls in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. This image of a juvenile bird was captured 4 August 2001 near the summit of Mount Pierce. Other northern owls (Northern Hawk Owl and Great Gray Owl) also nested well south of typical range in other regions, following a remarkable winter invasion of all three species. *Photograph by Steve Mirick*



This dapper Brown-headed Nuthatch was present from 11 July through 15 September at Illinois Beach State Park, the same site occupied by last year's unbelievable Red-cockaded Woodpecker! The nuthatch provided Illinois's first confirmed record. *Photograph by David B. Johnson.*

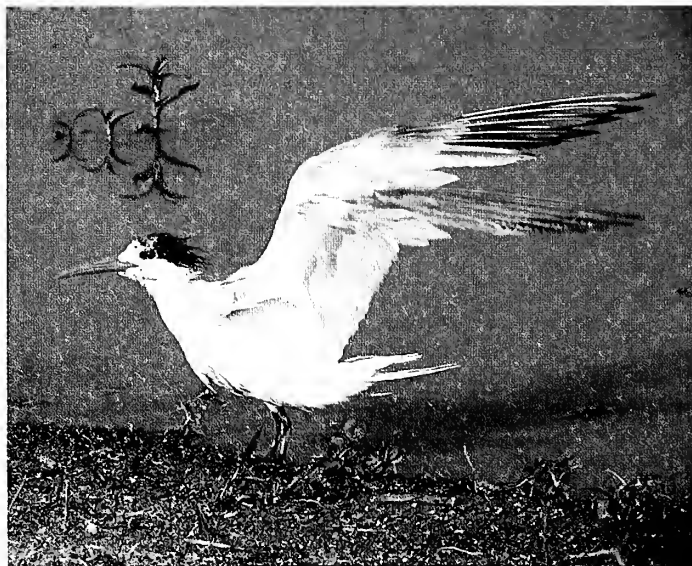


One of two birds present, this somewhat ragged Cave Swallow at Cheyenne Bottoms, Barton County, Kansas raises prospects that they may be breeding in the Region. The cinnamon auriculars (not dark, as in juvenile Cliff Swallow), pattern of face/cap and early wing molt indicate Cave Swallow. *Photograph by Ted Cable.*





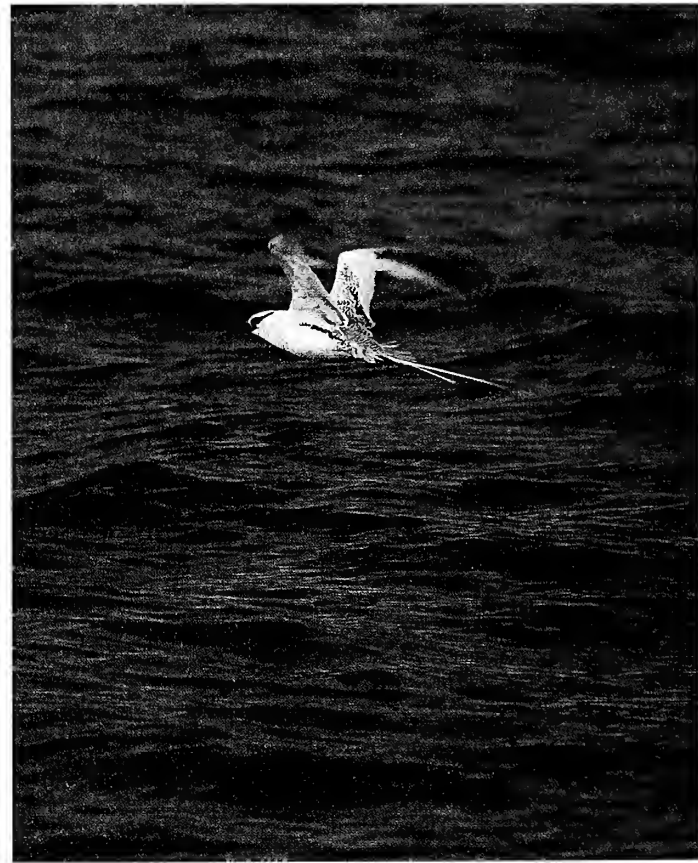
The second documented record for North Dakota, this male Yellow-throated Warbler was photographed 8 June 2001 in the Ponderosa Pine Area of Slope County in the southwestern corner of the state. *Photograph by Jack Leflor.*



The second Elegant Tern in New Mexico was found at Farmington 18 July 2001, just two months after the state's first record. *Photograph by T. Reeves.*



This juvenile Short-tailed Albatross was photographed 24 March 2001 at Perpetua Bank, off Newport, Oregon. This record constitutes the state's third but first photographically documented. *Photograph by Timothy Shelmerdine.*



This adult Red-billed Tropicbird was one of 15 to 20 seen off China Point on San Clemente Island on 29 July 2001. *Photograph by Brian Sullivan.*



# PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS



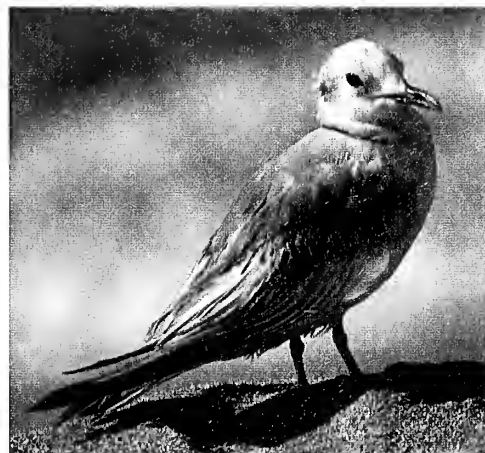
This Shy Albatross photographed over Bodega Canyon, Marin on 27 July 2001 may be the same individual, or one of the same individuals, involved in multiple sightings in the same waters in 2000, but this has yet to be determined. Amazingly, this is the third year in a row in which this species has occurred in California waters. *Photograph by Dan W. Nelson.*



A Pomarine Jaeger at Lubbock on the first of July 2001 represents the first record of this species for the High Plains of Texas. Are Pomarine Jaegers the most likely summer jaeger in the continent's interior? Read the "Changing Seasons" essay for thoughts on jaegers and more. *Photograph by John Brunjes.*



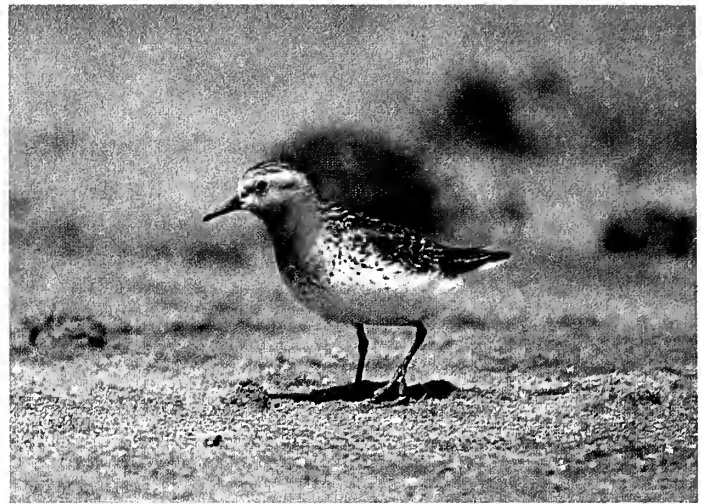
This digiscoped image taken on 20 July nicely documents Colorado's first Black Skimmer from Jet Lake, Kiowa County, which remained 19-21 July. The species was also found as a vagrant in New Mexico this summer. *Photograph by Chris Wood.*



One of up to seven immature Black-legged Kittiwakes near San José del Cabo 4-8 July 2001. Even one kittiwake in Mexico would seem a good find, but seven in summer is extraordinary! *Photograph by Alvaro Jaramillo.*



The *yumanensis* subspecies of the Clapper Rail is a taxon federally listed as Endangered; its status in Nevada was virtually unknown until the late 1990s. In recent years, however, this furtive denizen of emergent wetlands has been documented as a breeder at various sites in the Colorado River drainage above Lake Mead. This bird was photographed at Overton Wildlife Management Area. *Photograph by Jack Walters.*



The shorebird highlight of the summer in California was this alternate-plumaged Red-necked Stint at Moss Landing, Monterey County photographed on 14 July. *Photograph by John Sorensen.*



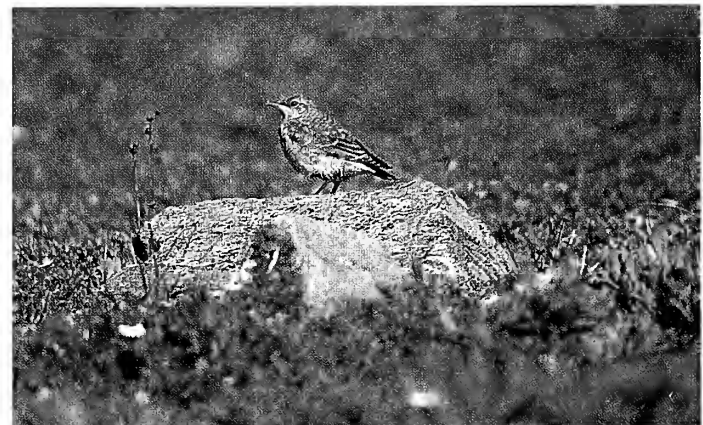
With only about 14 previous Northern Hawk Owl sightings in Idaho, the report of a hawk owl found by Earl Chapin on 7 July 2001 at Snow Lake—a remote cirque lake in the Selkirk Mountains of Boundary County—was truly exciting. News of this find enticed Pocatello birder Marty Collar to make the long trip north to Snow Lake, where he then discovered Idaho's first nesting pair of Northern Hawk Owls with two small nestlings on 12-14 July. This image of fledgling was taken 18 July. *Photograph by Larry Barnes.*



This Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet photographed at Cibolo Creek Ranch on 19 July 2001 was a first for West Texas and well away from its normal haunts of the Lower Rio Grande Valley in that state. It was so far out of range, in fact, that observers wondered whether it might not have strayed from western Mexican populations. *Photograph by Barry Zimmer.*

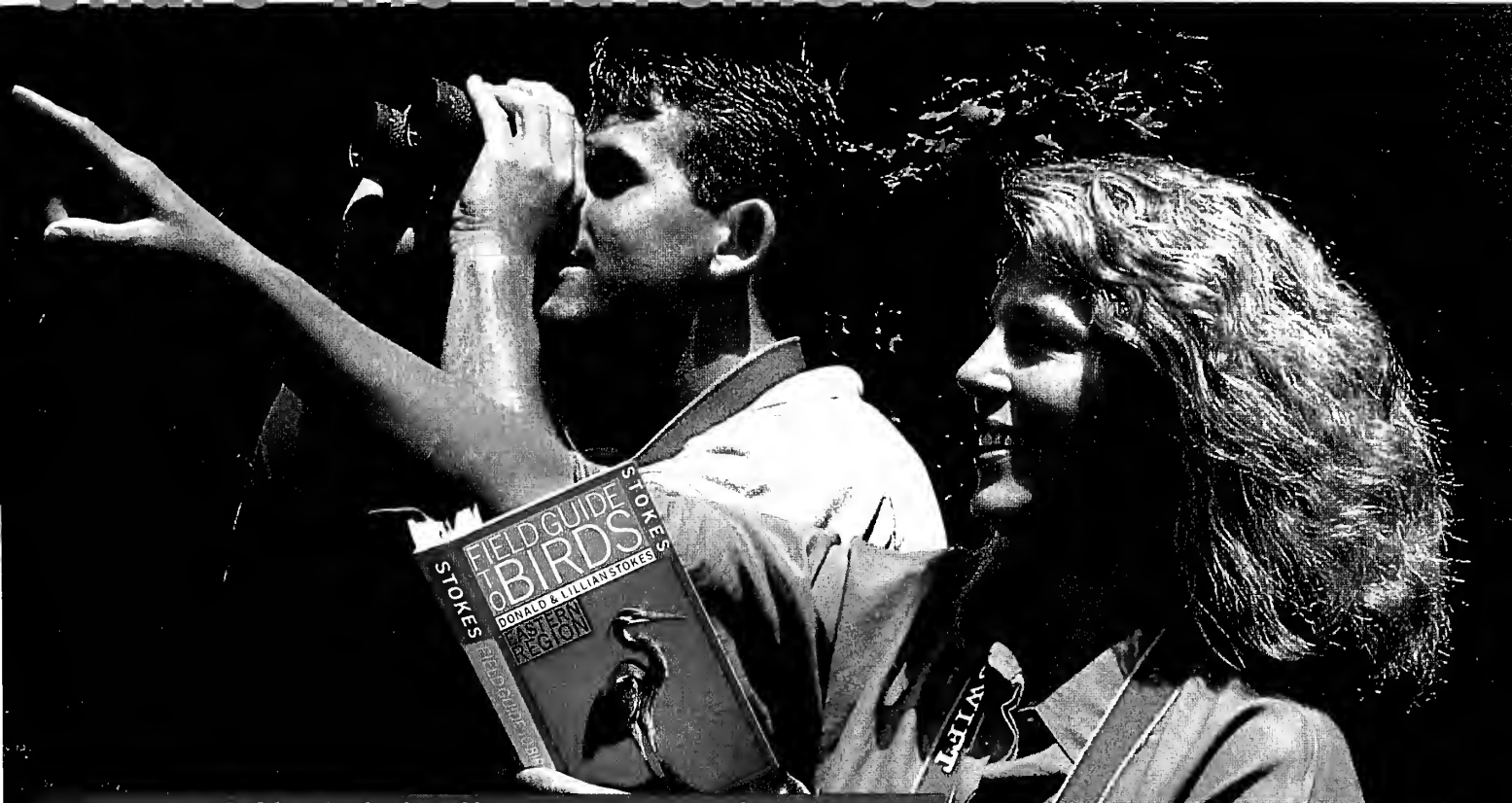


One of four Chestnut-sided Warblers reported at the end of spring and early summer in the Yukon/British Columbia Region, this individual furnished the first record for the Sunshine Coast; it was present 16 June to 1 July. *Photograph by Chris Charlesworth.*



This fledgling Northern Wheatear was one of a brood of six raised at Cape Pine, Newfoundland. This location is 700 km south of the southern breeding limit at Black Tickle, Labrador. *Photograph by Bruce Mactavish.*

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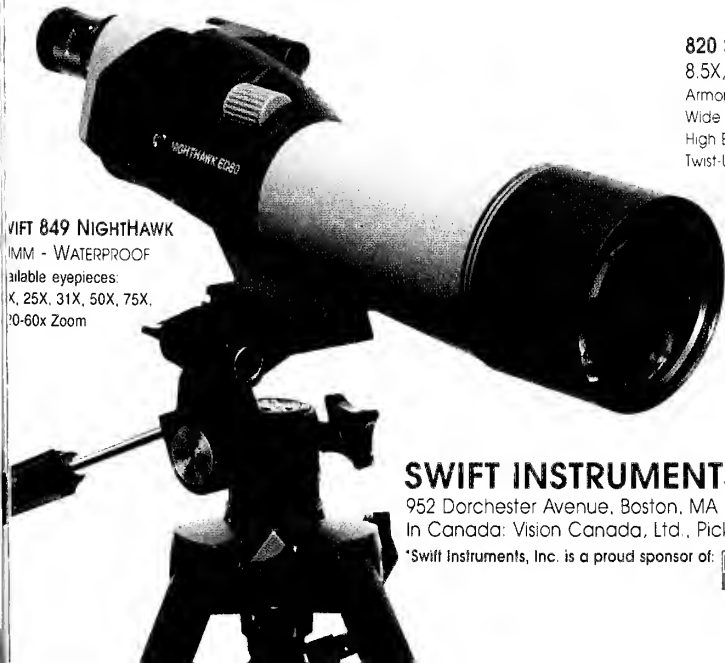
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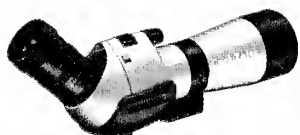




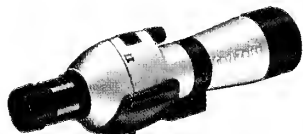
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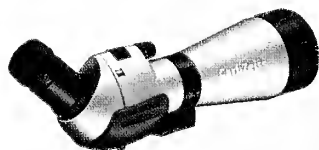
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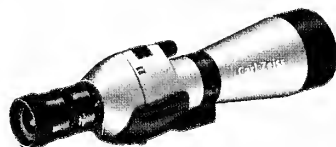
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