

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

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The summer season was uneventful with no unusual weather. However, an interesting variety of birds was found, including a couple of unexpected shorebirds and an unexpected number of eastern wood warblers.

ABBREVIATIONS — H.D.L. = Harper Dry Lake northeast of Barstow; N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside; S.B.M.N.H. = Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial. Place names in *italics* are counties. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report. Records submitted without documentation are not published.

SHEARWATERS TO STORKS — By far the most unusual bird of the summer was a dark-morph Wedge-tailed Shearwater at N.E.S.S. July 31 (REW, GMcC)—it was not only the 2nd ever to be found in California and North America but it was also inland. Robert L. Pitman (*Atlas of Seabird Distribution and Relative Abundance in the Eastern Tropical Pacific*, 1986) indicates this species occurs off w. Mexico to as far north as near the tip of Baja California, and Warren B. King (*Pelagic Studies of Seabirds in the Central and Eastern Pacific Ocean*, 1974) indicates relatively large numbers of dark-morph birds present off w. Mexico in July. One can reasonably speculate the July 31 bird reached the Salton Sea by way of the Gulf of California from off w. Mexico, but I cannot suggest why.

Brown Pelicans were more numerous than usual on the Salton Sea with 500+ present at the end of the period (GMcC), but one on Puddingstone Res., Los Angeles, July 25 (KR), three on L. Mathews, Riverside, June 3 (AMC), and another near Lakeview, Riverside, June 24 (AMC) were the only ones reported inland away from the Salton Sea; each year these birds move northward from the Gulf of California into the s.e. portion of this Region after nesting. Five active Double-crested Cormorant nests at a deserted Great Blue Heron nesting colony in Anaheim July 12 (DRW) provided us with the first evidence for breeding in Orange and one of a very few nesting records for the coastal mainland. At least 20 imm. Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen along the coast, including exceptionally early individuals over Santa Barbara June 5 (SP) and at Santa Catalina I. June 6 (ST), as well as four together at Balboa June 28 (BA) and two that went to roost in Cayucos, San Luis Obispo, during the evening of June 30 (GPS). Single birds at N.E.S.S. July 2 (GMcC) & 31 (JO) were the only ones found inland.

The presence of two to three Am. Bitterns in the Prado Basin of extreme n.w. Riverside throughout the summer (LRH) and a "booming" bird near Imperial Beach during June (GMcC) strongly suggested nesting at those 2 localities. Single Least Bitterns on Vandenberg A.F.B. June 18 (KH) and at Oso Flaco L., San Luis Obispo, July 5 (CM) were along the n. coast of the Region, where considered rare. A pair of Great Egrets was seen nest building near Imperial Beach during April (GMcC), but even though the birds



were present through the summer there was no evidence of young; 17 occupied nests at Morro Bay S.P. in April (TME) are the only active nests known in s. California away from the Salton Sea, though small numbers now regularly summer along the coast. Up to 20 Great Egrets were present in the Prado Basin during June and July (LRH). Two pairs of Little Blue Herons successfully fledged five young near Imperial Beach in early July (GMcC), and approximately 15 were around s. San Diego Bay at the end of the month (JO'B) along with one more in Carlsbad, San Diego, July 31 (SM). About 80 ad. White-faced Ibis were at Piute Ponds near Lancaster, Los Angeles, from May 25 through the end of the period (AS) with several juveniles seen at the end of July (NBB, JLD) giving us the first record for nesting in this area. Although small numbers were present at various localities along the coast, along with up to 20 in the Prado Basin (LRH) and large numbers around the Salton Sea, no other reports of nesting were received. An imm. Wood Stork was at Piute Ponds near Lancaster in July (AS) for the 3rd record ever for the desert region of e. California.

WATERFOWL — Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were more numerous than usual around S.E.S.S., with approximately 100 present during July (GMcC), and nesting confirmed at Finney L. and near Rock Hill. A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck at S.E.S.S. July 2-10 (GMcC) furnished us with the 8th record for this species in California. Two Ross' Geese that initially arrived in Lompoc in 1986 were still present July 4 (RPH), and the one found at N.E.S.S. May 7 was still present at the end of the period (MAP) to furnish us with the first summer records for

this species in s. California. As usual a few Brant remained along the coast with approximately 35 reported from at least 10 localities between Morro Bay and San Diego Bay during June and July, but 80–100 on the Salton Sea (most at N.E.S.S.) during the same period was a greater number than normal. Since Wood Ducks have been considered rare to casual in s. California in summer with few documented records of nesting, a group of up to 21 on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara, July 23–29 (RPH), along with two females accompanied by three young in Atascadero in June (JMcD) and a pair at a suitable nesting cavity in a large tree stump in the Prado Basin Apr. 21 (DRW) were of interest.

A N. Pintail, an uncommon and local nester, was sitting on 7 eggs at H.D.L. in May and accompanying young in June (EAC), and another was accompanying young near Lakeview Aug. 16 (AMC). A N. Shoveler, now extremely rare as a nesting species in s. California, was seen accompanying five young near Cartago, Inyo, May 18 (REW), and a pair was with young at Pt. Mugu, Ventura, July 24 (JSR). A Canvasback in Pico Rivera, Los Angeles, July 31 (JKA), another in the Prado Basin Aug. 5 (MAP), and a 3rd at S.E.S.S. July 31 (REW) were all believed to have summered locally as did a ♂ Ring-necked Duck at Atascadero July 9–31 (CM) and 10 on L. Cachuma July 16–29 (PEL); both species are considered casual during July. An Oldsquaw, rare at any time of year in s. California, initially found in Santa Barbara Jan. 16 was still present July 19 (PEL), and a Black Scoter, exceptionally rare in summer, was along the coast of Vandenberg A.F.B. July 7 (PEL). A White-winged Scoter spent the summer inland at N.E.S.S. being present June 25–July 31 (GMcC) and was accompanying up to three Surf Scoters present May 14 through July 31 (GMcC).

RAPTORS — A Black-shouldered Kite at H.D.L. June 16 (EAC) was far from any area of normal occurrence. The presence of 15 N. Harriers, including six young of the year, at H.D.L. June 16 (CMcG) showed this to be an important area for this species. A Sharp-shinned Hawk over Orange July 3 (MAP) and another at Upper Newport Bay, Orange, July 9 (BED) were totally unexpected since summer sightings at lowland locations are virtually nonexistent. A loose flock of up to 10 Swainson's Hawks was present along the coast near Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo, after July 3 (BrS). A pair of Zone-tailed Hawks again nested on Hot Springs Mt. in e. San Diego. An imm. Peregrine Falcon at N.E.S.S. July 2–31 (MAP) and an adult at S.E.S.S. July 9–31 (GMcC) were the only ones found away from the coast, where numbers are being released into the wild.

SHOREBIRDS — A flock of 135 Black-bellied Plovers at the Santa Maria R. mouth throughout June (CM) constituted a large number for summer at this location. An ad. Lesser Golden-Plover that showed characteristics of the Asiatic "race" *fulva* at S.E.S.S. July 2 (DRW) was an early migrant. Thirty Semipalmated Plovers along the coast of Orange during June (LRH) represented a large number for this time of the year. A Lesser Yellowlegs in Goleta July 3 (RAH) was an early fall migrant. A Solitary Sandpiper at N.E.S.S. July 23 (GMcC) was the earliest this fall. A Wandering Tattler in Santa Barbara June 8 through July (GT) clearly summered locally, and three in nonbreeding plumage on the coast of Vandenberg A.F.B. July 7 (PEL) were also likely to have summered locally. The presence of an ad. Spotted Sandpiper accompanying four young in Atascadero July 16 provided us the 2nd record for nesting in San Luis Obispo, and an adult was seen with a fledgling at L. Isabella, Kern, July 6 (RS). A pair of Long-billed Curlews was accompanying two young near Bishop June 14 (JR); there is one previous record for nesting in this Region, that being in 1978 here in the Owens Valley, where small numbers are present every summer and where it may regularly nest. A

Ruddy Turnstone near Lancaster July 24 (JKA) and four at S.E.S.S. July 31 (REW) were inland. A Black Turnstone in nonbreeding plumage in Santa Barbara June 8 (GT) and another on s. San Diego Bay June 24 (JO'B) were believed to have been summering locally, but one in breeding plumage along the coast of Vandenberg A.F.B. July 7 (PEL) was undoubtedly an early fall migrant. Three breeding-plumaged Surfbirds on s. San Diego Bay June 24–July 3 (JO'B) were remarkably early if fall migrants.

Red Knots were on the move during July with one at the Santa Maria R. mouth July 1 (CM) being the earliest; more than 30 were seen inland on the Salton Sea after July 9 (GMcC), and another was inland near Bakersfield July 24 (MH). More than the expected numbers of Semipalmated Sandpipers were found: single adults were at S.E.S.S. July 9 (GMcC), on Upper Newport Bay July 10 (GMcC), and in Anaheim July 15 (DRW); two were at S.E.S.S. July 30 (REW); at least five juveniles were along the coast after July 25 (PEL, CM, GMcC); and two more were inland near Lancaster July 30 (JLD). Two W. Sandpipers on Upper Newport Bay June 12 (DRW) and another on Morro Bay June 15 (TME) were undoubtedly summering locally, but 104 adults in Goleta June 24 (PEL) were early fall migrants. A brightly colored **Little Stint** was carefully studied on Upper Newport Bay July 10 (MH) by an observer familiar with the species from living in Saudia Arabia; two juveniles have been found in n. California but this was the first adult for California. The first Baird's Sandpipers of the fall were two at Edwards, Kern, July 23 (MH) with half a dozen more found at various localities within the Region by the end of the month.

An ad. **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** in Goleta July 21 (RAH) and another (the same?) on Batiquitos Lagoon, San Diego, July 24–25 (JO, GMcC) were totally unexpected since no adult has previously been found anywhere along the West Coast south of Alaska in fall, all other records being of juveniles much later in the year. Breeding-plumaged Dunlins at S.E.S.S. July 2 (MAP) and on Batiquitos Lagoon July 24–Aug. 3 (GMcC) were exceptionally early fall migrants; one at S.C.R.E. June 14 (JSR) and another on Morro Bay June 15 (TME) could have been very late spring migrants or were summering locally. Twenty Stilt Sandpipers at S.E.S.S. July 23 (MAP) were the earliest this fall, and one in Chino July 26 (MAP) was only the 2nd ever to be found in San Bernardino. An ad. ♀ Ruff was inland near S.E.S.S. July 29–31 (RH). Unexpected were 3–4 pairs of Com. Snipe in the Garner Valley of the San Jacinto Mts. that managed to fledge at least seven young during the summer (RMCK); this species was thought to have been extirpated as a nesting bird in s. California away from the Owens Valley. Female Wilson's Phalaropes seen pursuing males in slow flight at a marsh near Cartago, Inyo, May 25 (REW) were at the s. extreme of the species' breeding range.

GULLS TO ALCIDS — A Franklin's Gull, rare at any time of the year in California, was at the Santa Ynez R. mouth, Santa Barbara, June 26 (AA) and was followed by one at N.E.S.S. July 2–9 (MAP), another at Bolsa Chica July 17 (DRW), two together near Bakersfield July 23 (DB), and a juvenile near Lancaster July 24–30 (KLG). A Heermann's Gull, casual inland, was at N.E.S.S. July 23 (GMcC). A W. Gull, formerly considered accidental inland but proving to be regular in very limited numbers on the Salton Sea, was carefully compared to accompanying Yellow-footed Gulls at Salton City June 25 (MAP).

Gull-billed Terns again nested along the coast on s. San Diego Bay with at least 5 pairs fledging at least seven young (EC). The recently formed Caspian Tern nesting colony at Bolsa Chica contained 73 active nests June 6 with many juveniles present in July (BiS); it was also used by 3 pairs of Royal Terns and about 500 pairs of Elegant Terns, the former fledging two young to establish the first record of nesting in California away from s. San Diego Bay. Three Elegant Terns were inland at N.E.S.S. June 11 (GH), for the 3rd occurrence at this locality at this time of year. Nesting Forster's Terns, first found at Bolsa Chica in 1987, increased to about 100 pairs with 50 fledglings present by June 6 (BiS). Black Skimmers were found nesting

at N.E.S.S (50+ pairs), s. San Diego Bay (200+ pairs), Upper Newport Bay (4 pairs), and at Bolsa Chica (70 pairs); stragglers were found along the entire coast with one in Santa Barbara June 2 (HM), two at the Santa Ynez R. mouth June 24–July 21 (KH), one on Morro Bay June 15 (TME). Two more at Morro Bay July 16–22 (JmCD) were the northernmost.

Up to eight Marbled Murrelets off San Simeon July 30–31 (TME) were in an area where the species is regularly found. A Parakeet Auklet found dead (about one week) on the beach about one mi south of the Santa Ynez R. mouth July 4 (RPH, *S.B.M.N.H.) furnished us the 3rd record for s. California; no living birds of this species have been found in California since Rollo H. Beck collected 14 on Monterey Bay during the winter of 1907–1908. Up to seven Rhinoceros Auklets off Shell Beach, San Luis Obispo, June 18–July 24 (JmCD) and up to nine along the Santa Barbara coast between Pt. Arguello and Pt. Peder- nales throughout the summer (PEL) were all in breeding plu- mage and could well have been nesting locally.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS — Up to four Com. Ground- Doves were found in citrus orchards in Goleta July 19–31 (KB) indicating the species has now spread as far north as this area. The only Yellow-billed Cuckoos reported this summer were 3 pairs along with three to four unmated males around Weldon, Kern (SL), and one pair along with five unmated males in the Prado Basin (LRH) indicating just how scarce the population really is in s. California. Some six to eight Flammulated Owls were on Black Mt. in the San Jacinto Mts. May 15–July 4 (RMCK) indicating just how common this secretive bird can be in suit- able habitat. Up to two Elf Owls near Needles Mar. 30–Apr. 8 (BED, MAP) may have been the last of this species in California. The presence of a young Short-eared Owl accompanied by an adult at H.D.L. June 16 (EAC) documented the 2nd occurrence of nesting in s. California. Two Com. Nighthawks on Black Mt. in the San Jacinto Mts. July 1–2 (RMCK) were the first to be found in Riverside, and a calling bird over El Cajon July 6 (G & RL) was along the coast, where considered accidental. Single Black Swifts around Ragged Pt. in extreme n.w. San Luis Obispo May 26–July 8 (GPS) were thought to be nesting locally. The only Chimney Swifts found this summer were one or two over downtown Los Angeles June 8–Aug. 4 (KLG). An Acorn Wood- pecker in Whitewater Canyon, Riverside, June 10 (DCH) was a little out of range.

FLYCATCHERS TO WOOD WARBLERS — A "Traill's Flycatcher" near L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego June 12 (MAP) was giving calls attributed to the Alder Fly- catcher (*Birding* 18:153–159, 1986). A pair of Vermilion Fly- catchers successfully fledged one young in Camarillo, Ventura, in June (JSR) and was the only pair ever to have nested on the coast outside San Diego. Three Brown-crested Flycatchers near Weldon during the summer (SL) were at the n.w. extreme of the species' range. An E. Kingbird at H.D.L. June 6 (AM) was a spring vagrant, but another in Santa Barbara June 29 (TEW) must have been lost. Two Am. Dippers in Whitewater Canyon after July 13 (DCH) were at an unusual locality. A Gray Catbird on Pt. Loma July 11–17 (B & IM) was in heavy molt and un- doubtedly summered locally, giving us the first midsummer record for s. California. A Brown Thrasher at Yaqui Wells in e. San Diego June 19–21 (LW) was exceptionally late for a spring vagrant. A pair of Cedar Waxwings unsuccessfully attempted to nest in Oceano in June (CM); a pair that fledged young in Orange in 1965 represents the only proven occurrence for nesting in s. California.

A ♂ N. Parula in Los Osos June 16 (MC) and a female at Nojoqui Falls June 6 (CMCg) were both probably late spring vagrants. A singing ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler in montane cha-

parral at the 5500-ft level on the w. side of the San Gabriel Mts. June 18 (JKA) was at a most unusual locality and late for a spring vagrant; another singing male in Irvine June 29 into August (DRW) was the first ever to be found summering in s. California. A ♂ Magnolia Warbler at S.C.R.E. July 2–3 (JSR) was believed to be summering locally, and if so, would be the first ever to do so in s. California. A Yellow-rumped Warbler in Cuyamaca S.P. in the mountains of San Diego June 12 (JH) was in an area where nesting is suspected but yet to be proved. A Black-and-white Warbler, most unusual in summer, was in Arcadia July 30 (LF). Single Am. Redstarts at Tollhouse Springs in the White Mts. of Inyo June 12 (AME) and another in Goleta June 15 (KB) were undoubtedly late spring stragglers, but one near Weldon July 10 (SL), another in Long Beach July 18–28 (BED), and a third in Malibu July 31–Aug. 15 (KLG) were be- lieved to have summered locally. A ♂ Ovenbird in San Diego June 16–18 (B & IM) was late for a spring straggler. Two MacGillivray's Warblers on Black Mt. in the San Jacinto Mts. June 14 (RMCK) were undoubtedly nesting, though breeding is still to be documented in this mountain range.

TANAGERS TO CROSSBILLS — A Summer Tanager at Oasis June 12 (AME) and another near Santa Barbara June 3–6 (NS) were late spring vagrants; 30 territorial males around Weldon throughout the summer (SL) were at the n.w. extreme of the species' breeding range. Two singing ♂ W. Tanagers in the Santa Lucia Mts. June 18–July 9 (EV) could have been nesting, and if so, would be the first to do so in San Luis Obispo. A pair of N. Cardinals was still along the Colorado R. at the San Bernardino/Riverside line Mar. 31 (BED). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak, rare in summer, was in Goleta June 6 (LL), and an- other was in Altadena June 27 (BN). At least 20 Indigo Buntings were reported from various localities within the Region, in- cluding seven territorial males around Weldon throughout the summer (SL). A Vesper Sparrow in the Garner Valley of the San Bernardino Mts. throughout the summer (RMCK) was south of the southernmost known breeding locality in the San Ber- nardino Mts. Two pairs of Savannah Sparrow were found nest- ing at H.D.L. May 19 (AM), and another was seen carrying food to a nest in the Garner Valley in June, adding 2 more localities to the list of breeding localities for this species in s. California. Two singing ♂ White-crowned Sparrows remained around Bluff L. in the San Bernardino Mts. all summer (BAC), which would be a very low elevation for nesting.

The presence of an ad. Brewer's Blackbird feeding three re- cently fledged young in Brawley May 7 (GMCC) provided the first evidence of nesting in the Imperial Valley. Two pairs of Great-tailed Grackles successfully fledged young near Imperial Beach in July (GMCC), and stragglers were found elsewhere along the coast at the S.C.R.E. (AB) and in Oceano June 10–July 14 (CM). At least six Bronzed Cowbirds were present throughout the season in Brawley (GMCC), indicating the spe- cies is now established as a regular summer visitor to this lo- cality.

Red Crossbills continued to be reported into the summer with a dead male found in Los Osos June 28 (PP), small numbers found on Big Pine Mt. of Santa Barbara and on Mt. Pinos in June and July (PWC, MAH, AB), and one on Greenhorn Mt., Kern, July 18 (MOC).

ADDENDA — A report of an imm. Little Gull on the Salton Sea near Salton City May 8 (DS) and of single Least Terns inland at Tecopa, Inyo, May 21 (DS) and on Owens L., Inyo, May 23–24 (DS) were received too late to be included in the spring report.

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